

Heather Hancock  
FSA Board Chair  
Food Standards Agency  
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15 September 2017

Dear Heather

**ADVICE FROM THE WELSH FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE (WFAC) TO THE BOARD OF THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY ON ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE COMMITTEE: SEPTEMBER 2017**

The key role of the Food Advisory Committees is to advise the Board of the Food Standards Agency. At yesterday's meeting, the WFAC considered the following issues that will be discussed by the Board:-

- EU Exit
- Animal Welfare Update

On behalf of the Committee, I am grateful to Rod Ainsworth, Rebecca Lamb and Julia Williams for joining by video conference and Collin Willson who joined in person to present their papers, and for answering questions from members.

EU Exit

Members considered the paper which sets out the approach of the FSA, to prepare for the UK's departure from the EU in 2019.

In its discussions on the paper, the WFAC noted the set of principles outlined in the paper to guide the approach taken for EU Exit and noted that it was a clear paper covering a complex issue. The WFAC commented that there is minimal information in relation to the devolved administrations. A committee member

advised that they had attended a Welsh Government EU Exit workshop and expressed concern that the FSA had not been involved in this forum.

The committee discussed a number of issues associated with the exit and agreed that it was imperative that food security is not compromised. Indeed, recent consumer surveys have shown that food security is a concern in Wales. In relation the principles outlined in the paper, in particular, “Minimising disruption for consumers and industry” there is potential to highlight food security as part of this work. WFAC noted that there is detailed planning underway and going forward would be interested in learning the details of the costs and resources required to execute this work.

In conclusion, the WFAC is content with the principles outlined in the paper.

### Animal Welfare

WFAC members discussed the paper which provided an update on activities in England and Wales on the FSA “Deter, Prevent, Detect, Enforce” programme to drive improvements in animal welfare standards in slaughter houses.

The WFAC welcomed this paper and commended the work that has been completed to date. The WFAC supported the approach taken on Animal Welfare and mandatory CCTV.

Other observations made by the WFAC included:-

- that the CCTV equipment used in abattoirs needs to be of a good quality with common standards and more importantly situated in key areas of the abattoirs in order to ensure Animal Welfare standards.
- that the FSA can draw upon and make comparisons with data collected by DAERA in Northern Ireland in relation to charging and cost recovery.

The WFAC was pleased to see the data obtained via Chronos and would welcome Wales specific data. The committee also expressed an interest in seeking progress on Wales’s position regarding mandatory CCTV. The committee enquired about the possibility of DEFRA exploring further intelligence in relation to poultry, in particular, free range, caged or battery to further enhance intelligence on Animal Welfare issues on farm and during transport.

### Other Matters

As is usual, I provided a written report to the WFAC which gave a summary of discussions at the last Board meeting which included discussions on the

Chemical Contaminants Strategy, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Developing our Approach to Identifying Risks and Issues Across the Food System. I also provided a report on my involvement in the recruitment process to appoint two new members to the WFAC, and thanked members for their involvement in FSA Wales' summer engagement programme which provided excellent opportunities to informally engage with consumers. This engagement will help inform future consumer insight work in Wales and I am proposing to scope this out, in more detail, when the WFAC meets for a planning session in October.

The WFAC also had a number of ideas on how the FSA in Wales might build on its existing engagement programme particularly in relation to increasing its visibility at key events. In light of the recent correspondence received from CIEH in relation to burgers less than thoroughly cooked the committee enquired about the status of the work being undertaken and was pleased to hear that consumer messaging has now been approved and will be issued shortly.

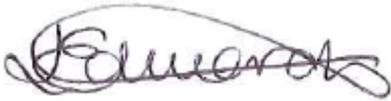
The WFAC was pleased to receive the report from the interim Director in Wales, which informed the Committee on a number of issues including an update on the new working group which has been established by Welsh Government to consider wider engagement with the Regulating Our Future programme, particularly in respect of the Welsh Local Government landscape and local authority updates and consultations. The report also provided an update on a recent outbreak of *Campylobacter* associated with raw drinking milk (RDM) supplied from a farm in Ceredigion and informed of the publication of the Revised Statutory Guidance for the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in Wales.

In relation to RDM, the Committee observed that there has been an increase in the number of incidents and outbreaks associated with RDM in the last 12 months. Members were informed that there were a number of contributing factors to this. First, there have been notable changes in the RDM market with an increase in registered producers. A significant proportion of the recent incidents have been associated with producers who were new to the sector. Second, there has been an increase in the use of vending machines (at farm gate) and in turn local authority surveillance has increased, which has resulted in identification of the presence of pathogens at some farms. The Committee noted that the FSA will be carrying out further work to better understand the developments in the market and whether there are implications for the current controls and enforcement activities. The Committee also welcomed that the Board would be receiving an update on the application of the controls of RDM by the end of the year.

The Committee's discussions on the above issues were in open session and, in line with the views of the WFAC regarding the openness and transparency of its advice to the Board; it is my intention that this advice will be published.

I am copying this letter to the Board Secretariat and to the Chief Executive.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Edward". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'E' and a long, sweeping tail.

pp Dr Ruth Hussey CB, OBE  
Chair of WFAC  
(Authorised by and signed in her absence)