

**WFAC 21/03/03  
FOR DISCUSSION**

**WELSH FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE (WFAC) DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Summary

1. The attached report from the Director of the FSA in Wales reports on issues of relevance which may be of interest to members of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee (WFAC), covering the period 04/02/21 to 03/03/21.
2. The Director for FSA in Wales will supplement the information provided in this report with an oral update where necessary.
3. Members of the Committee are invited to:
  - **note** the update;
  - **invite** the Director to expand on any issues for further discussion.

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**1. Food Law Code of Practice**

1.1 The FSA in Wales has facilitated a series of webinars for local authorities in Wales as part of the consultation exercise on the Food Law Code of Practice, Practice Guidance and Competency Framework. These have been well attended by local authority officials and positive comments have been received from the Chair of Directors of Public Protection in Wales (DPPW) and from the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) in relation to the professional approach portrayed by the FSA in Wales' team leading on the consultation. The FSA in Wales has also presented at a meeting of DPPW on 22 February on the consultation and will be providing a separate webinar for the Executive Board of DPPW on 2 March. The consultation closes midnight on 25 March.

**2. Publication of the FSA Report on the Review of the Implementation and Operation of the Statutory Food Hygiene Rating Scheme and the Operation of the Appeals System in Wales**

2.1 The Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 places a duty on the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to conduct a review of the implementation and operation of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (the Scheme) one year after its commencement, with further reviews every three years. The FSA is also required to review the operation of the appeals system annually. These review reports must be laid before the Senedd and a copy sent to the Welsh Ministers. The report for the period from 28 November 2017 to 27 November 2020 includes an annual review of the operation of the appeals system to 27 November 2020. The report was laid before the Senedd on 26 February 2021, and a copy will be circulated to Members.

2.2 Key findings from the report are that the Scheme in Wales continues to have a positive impact. The proportion of food businesses achieving broad compliance during the period of this report has continued to rise from 95 per cent to 97 per cent with the numbers of food businesses achieving the highest rating increasing by more than 4 percentage points to nearly 70 per cent. It also demonstrates a continuing increase in consumer awareness in Wales with 94 per cent, compared to 89 per cent in 2017, recognising images of the ratings.

**3. Safe Sustainable Authentic Food Wales (SSAFW)**

3.1 I provided a full report on the last meeting of the Safe Sustainable Authentic Food Wales partnership which was held on 1 February at the last meeting of the Committee. SSAFW will meet next on 23 June 2021.

**4. FSA in Wales organisational updates**

4.x We are progressing with our recruitment into the posts to deliver the new functions of the FSA. We are at the early stages of this process, and we are within plan for the recruitment. I will share a revised organisation chart that will set out how the team will be structured once we have confirmed the distribution of responsibilities.

4.1 The FSA in Wales has been working with Chwarae Teg, the charity working to support the economic development of women as well as working with businesses and organisations to develop and improve working practices. Chwarae Teg has been undertaking a Gender Equality Review in response to the then First Minister's commitment in 2018 to making the Welsh Government a feminist government. We agreed to undertake a programme of work with them – known as the [FairPlay Employer Award](#) which supports, connects and recognises organisations that are leading on inclusive growth and to deliver gender equality. This work would also benchmark where the FSA in Wales is in relation to other organisations. To benchmark the FSA in Wales, Chwarae Teg asked us to evidence FSA Equality and Diversity Strategies, Networks and other supporting material. Additionally, Chwarae Teg carried out a detailed gender and diversity survey targeting all FSA in Wales staff. The benchmark is against the industry average and leads to categorisation in one of four FairPlay Employer award levels: Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze.

4.2 I am pleased to report that the FSA in Wales has been awarded a **Gold FairPlay Employer Award**. We outperformed in each of the 10 areas assessed and we are currently the only Gold FairPlay Employer organisation in Wales. Recognition as a Fairplay Employer means that we now have access to digital assets to use to demonstrate and promote our commitment to Gender Equality and Diversity. FairPlay Employer Certification can be used in job adverts, e-mail signatures, on our website and promoted through FSA internal and external communications.

<https://chwaraeteg.com/projects/fairplay/#fairplay-employer-award>.

## 5. External engagement

5.1 Since the last meeting of WFAC (on 04/02/21) I have carried out the following engagement activity of which members may wish to be aware:

- 8 February - The FSA/FSS four-country working group, fortnightly. This group provides updates on any emerging matters of relevance across the four countries.
- 18 February – an introductory meeting with Huw Brunt, the new Welsh Government Chief Environmental Health and Public Protection Officer.
- 23 February – the quarterly liaison meeting of the Welsh Government and the FSA to discuss funding, objectives, and shared intelligence.
- 23 February - I presented anon the activities of the FSA at a meeting of Directors of Public Protection in Wales. .

- 25 February – The UK Government in Wales leaders group. This group is intended to strengthen the government leaders' network in Wales and share best practice.

## **6. Information Sharing**

6.1 Since the last meeting of the WFAC, the following information has been shared with members:

- Further detail on the key points raised at the SSAFW partnership meeting on follow up email on 1 February
- Speak up allergy campaign launched by the FSA on the 24 February
- The new relationship with the EU: What it means for Wales document <https://gov.wales/the-new-relationship-with-the-eu-what-it-means-for-wales>
- Summary of WFAC meeting on the 10 February

Nathan Barnhouse  
Director, FSA in Wales  
26 February 2021