



Lord Jeff Rooker
Chair
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12 April 2013

Dear Jeff

ADVICE FROM THE WELSH FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE BOARD OF THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY ON ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE COMMITTEE: APRIL 2013

The key role of the Food Advisory Committees is to advise the Board of the Food Standards Agency. To that end, the Welsh Food Advisory Committee (WFAC) discussed, at its meeting on 11 April, the following issues that are shortly to be discussed by the Board:

- FSA Response to the UK Government's Growth Duty
- Update on Review of Official Animal Feed Controls; and
- Operations Group Quarterly Report

I was invited, in the absence of John Spence, to Chair this meeting of the WFAC.

In each case, the Committee was able to consider the paper that will be put to the Board next week. I am grateful, on behalf of the Committee, to John Barnes and Chris Edwards for presenting the papers to the Committee and for answering questions from members.

[FSA Response To the UK Government's Growth Duty](#)

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The WFAC discussed the paper, which included a draft FSA response to two consultations (Growth Duty and the revised Regulators' Code) aimed at promoting growth. The WFAC considered the proposed response and commented that it could stress the role of regulation in creating certainty around expectations of businesses and facilitating free competition in the market place. The WFAC considered that good examples of the role of regulation in facilitating free competition could be highlighted by referencing the FSA's Food Hygiene Rating Scheme/Food Hygiene Information Scheme and the recent horse meat contamination issue. The first, as an example of correcting information asymmetry and so empowering consumers; the second, as an example of ensuring compliant businesses, did not suffer as a result of unfair competition from non-compliant businesses. Subject to this, the WFAC, agreed the proposed response and, in doing so, was mindful that the response did not conflict with the Welsh Government's own growth agenda.

Feed Review Implementation Programme Update

The WFAC considered the paper which provided an update on action underway and progress being made on the review of feed controls. The WFAC welcomed the progress made and acknowledged the sustained and effective input being made by a number of delivery partners, other government departments, and feed businesses. Further, the WFAC welcomed the collaborative work being undertaken in Wales, between the FSA and Welsh local authorities, in relation to animal feed controls.

Operations Group Quarter 3 Performance Update: 2012/13

The WFAC considered the report and welcomed the improved presentation of the information including the addition of performance statuses and trend indicators. The WFAC raised a number of enquiries in relation to certain specific aspects of the report, which are currently being clarified, and it looks forward to receiving further update reports as appropriate.

Other Matters

Separately, the WFAC received a further update on actions undertaken since evidence of horse meat contamination was first identified in meat production in the UK.

The WFAC's discussions on the above issues were in open session and, in line with the views of the Committee 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.

pp Dr Hugh Jones (approved by Hugh Jones and signed in his absence)
Acting Chairman, Welsh Food Advisory Committee