

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND INCIDENT COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

1 Purpose of the paper

1.1 The Board is asked to:

- **Consider and Agree** the finalised Incident Management Framework (IMF) outlining FSS's incident handling response to non-routine incidents (Annex A).
- **Consider and Agree** the finalised Incident Communications Plan (ICP) outlining FSS's communications response during incidents (Annex B).
- **Consider and Agree** the role of the Board in Incident Management (Annex C)

2 Strategic Aims

2.1 This work supports FSS Strategic Outcomes: 1 – Food is safe, 2 – Food is authentic, 4 – Responsible Food Businesses Flourish, 5 – FSS is trusted and 6 – FSS is efficient and effective.

3 Developments

- 3.1 At the last meeting on 16 May 2018, the Board agreed that the Scheme of Delegation should be amended to reflect the Board's responsibility for approving the IMF and thereafter delegating the implementation of the IMF to the Executive .
- 3.2 The Executive will implement the agreed IMF in accordance with the internally held Operational Incident Team (OIT) and Strategic Incident Team (SIT) plans.
- 3.3 Lessons learned from all staff training and a desktop exercise carried out at the beginning of May have been incorporated into the IMF and the ICP. The ICP has also incorporated previous comments from the Board.
- 3.4 A workshop was held on the 14 May 2018 with available Board members to build a better understanding of the Board's role during an incident. A role overview was developed based on these discussions and outlines how the Board receives the assurance it requires and the support it will provide to the Executive in Incident Management (Annex C).

4 Risk Appetite

- 4.1 The current draft of the risk appetite is below with suggested amendments highlighted as per the Board discussion in May 2018.
- 4.2 With regards to public health the Board has generally a low appetite for risk. This is because consumer protection and public health are at the core of what we do. Ensuring food is safe is our primary, non-negotiable, function and forms the basis of the trust consumers have in FSS.
- 4.3 On public finance the Board has a low tolerance and would expect the Accountable Officer to apply the principles of sound financial management, managing within budget. Clearly any organisation needs to think about its reputation and how an

organisation is perceived is important. Perceptions will vary between different stakeholders but the trust of consumers is paramount. In this regard the Board's appetite for risk is medium tolerance.

- 4.4 However, during Level 2, 3 & 4 incidents, for reputation the risk appetite is low tolerance to align with the low tolerance risk appetite in relation to protection of public health. It is important to take a proactive, not a reactive, stance which requires being more prepared to share what information we do and don't have. It is important to ensure that consumers, via the media understand the context within which incidents are managed so even if we are unable to comment in detail on an on-going incident that doesn't mean information cannot be shared.
- 4.5 Obviously, it is important that we work collaboratively and effectively but it is possible given the breadth of our remit that there are opportunities for disagreement. As our organisation is non-Ministerial, it is important that we retain and use that independence from Government wisely, taking account of, but not being wholly influenced by the views of others.
- 4.6 Given the current landscape and the challenges the organisation faces, the Board has a high tolerance for innovation and taking well managed and thought-through risks in areas such as piloting of new ideas, delivery models etc.

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ANNEX A – FSS Incident Management Framework

ANNEX B – FSS Incident Communications Plan

ANNEX C – Role of the Board

Role of the Board – Incident Management

The role of the Board with regard to incident management is as follows:

- **Risk:** Review and agree FSS' incident risk appetite annually for the Executive and how this may be impacted during an incident
- **Governance:**
 - Review and approve FSS' Incident Management Framework to determine the appropriate response structure and be assured that procedures are in place to deliver consumer protection
- **Assurance:** gain assurance that FSS can effectively manage incidents through receiving updates on:
 - training and exercising taking place as appropriate to build incident management capability within the organisation
 - continuous improvement is in place and lessons are learnt from recent incidents and reflected in future updates of the Incident Management Framework and plans.
- **Board preparedness:** participate in incident management exercises

During incidents, the Board supports the Executive and receives assurance in the following ways:

- **Stakeholders:** where appropriate, support with stakeholder engagement, for instance with Ministers, Members of Scottish Parliament and industry
- **Reputation:** support Executive actions to protect public health during an incident, whilst ensuring FSS's reputation as a trusted organisation remains intact.
- **Assurance**
 - Through the Chair, or deputy, receive assurance that that the incident is being prosecuted in accordance with the Incident management framework

Role of the Chair

The Chair acts as the key liaison between the Executive and the remainder of the Board during incident management. The responsibilities of the Chair, or their deputy, are as follows:

- Act as the link between the Executive and the Board
- In discussion with the Chief Executive, determine if and when the Board should be briefed on issues and incidents that constitute a level 3 and above or may escalate to cause significant concern
- Support the Executive in strategic stakeholder management (i.e. Members of Scottish Parliament) on incident and crises, as required
- Act as FSS' media spokesperson during certain incidents, as required.
- Act as a sounding board for the Chief Executive, as required.