

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

1 Chief Executive's engagements

1.1 In December 2018, I attended a joint meeting with Scottish Retail Consortium; Food and Drink Federation Scotland and Scottish Government colleagues to discuss resilience planning. This meeting was followed by a discussion with British Retail Consortium on our Out of Home consultation.

1.2 On the 3rd December 2018, Operational Delivery team colleagues and myself, attended the Romanian Ambassador to the UK's reception at Edinburgh City Chambers. The purpose of the reception was to celebrate the start of the Romanian Presidency of the European Union which commenced on the 1st of January 2019.

1.3 In January 2019, I met with officials from Scottish Government and Department of Food and Rural Affairs to discuss no-deal planning for Brexit. I and Jason Feeney, Chief Executive of Food Standards Agency, met with the Managing Director and senior representatives from Aldi to tour their site and discuss a number of current issues. I attended a meeting chaired by Fergus Ewing, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy which was attended by a number of food and drink stakeholders including Scotland Food and Drink, the Scottish Association of Meat Wholesalers and the Scottish Retail Consortium. I have met with senior representatives from the retailers, M&S and Sainsbury's.

1.4 In early February 2019, I attended the Great Taste of Scotland reception at the Scottish Parliament, held by Asda and Scotland Food and Drink. The key messages delivered by James Withers, the Chief Executive of Scotland Food and Drink and Fergus Ewing, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy highlighted the importance of Scottish produce, its quality and growth of the sector. It means for us as a regulator, there's a need to continue to be effective as possible in what we do.

2 Health and Sport Committee Meeting

2.1 On 18th December 2018, the Chair, Elspeth MacDonald, Deputy Chief Executive, Garry Mournian, Corporate Services Director and myself attended the Health and Sport Committee at the Scottish Parliament. The purpose of our attendance was to give evidence on a number of themes and issues emerging from the Committee's consideration of food related statutory instruments, namely:

- The readiness of Food Standards Scotland (FSS) to take over various schemes and processes from the European Union;
- The financial and practical implications for FSS to give evidence as a result of these changes;
- FSS's wider work, performance and outcomes

2.2 The Committee asked a number questions in advance of the meeting, the submission document we provided in response and the committee papers are available [here](#).

3 Defenders UK

3.1 At the end of 2018, the Defenders UK first series was broadcast on BBC One and featured Ian McWatt, Chief Operating Officer. This is a consumer facing programme following the

work of dedicated enforcement officers across the UK. The feedback and statistics for the programme was very good and they are looking to work with us again for series 2, and if it is successful for series 3 and 4. Their view was the programme showcased the excellent work of a variety of agencies in protecting the public.

3.2 The series was a ratings hit with an audience peaking at 1.6 million viewers and an audience share of up to 34.6 per cent. In broad terms, a third of those watching TV at that time were watching Defenders UK. This is an exceptionally high percentage, with a volume that was significantly higher than the slot average. The series also scored well above average on Audience Appreciation – which you may know means people not only watched it in large numbers, they also enjoyed what they saw.

3.3 This is another good opportunity for FSS to promote the work we do to protect the public in Scotland.

4 Nutrition, Science and Policy

4.1 Out of Home Consultation

4.1.1 On the 22nd of November 2018, we launched our Out of Home consultation, to seek views from the public, out of home sector and all interested organisations on proposals to give people in Scotland healthier options when eating out. The [consultation](#) is open for responses until 28th February 2019.

4.1.2 The consultation has received wide-spread coverage across print, online and broadcast media in Scotland. The Chair has been interviewed by BBC Radio Scotland, The Times, The Herald, Kingdom FM and Radio Clyde. We welcome the public support already received on the consultation from key stakeholders including Diabetes Scotland, NHS Scotland and Obesity Action Scotland.

4.2 INTAKE 24

4.2.1 FSS, and prior to this Food Standards Agency (FSA) in Scotland commissioned work, undertaken by the University of Newcastle, to develop an online dietary assessment tool, INTAKE24. The tool is a fully automated online 24 hour recall system. All food and drink entries are automatically coded, providing comprehensive and cost effective dietary data to monitor dietary intake. FSS has also commissioned work, led by ScotCen Social Research, to pilot INTAKE24 in the Scottish Health Survey. This will be reported on later in 2019.

4.2.2 Recently, the UK National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) Project Board made the decision to move to an automated online dietary assessment system to obtain dietary data in the survey. After assessing a number of options, Public Health England (PHE) and the NDNS consortium have decided to adapt and update INTAKE24 for use as the dietary tool for the NDNS. This will be used to collect dietary data within the survey from autumn 2019.

5 Animal Feed Update

5.1 Following withdrawal of the recent procurement exercise relating to animal feed official controls, FSS is working on delivery of a hybrid delivery model that was approved by the Executive at the January 2019 Regulatory Strategy Programme Board meeting.

5.2 The hybrid model will seek to work with those Local Authorities who submitted a bid via the procurement exercise and explore whether there remains interest from other Local Authorities to do the same. We are currently seeking opportunities to work with other Scottish Government Departments who have on farm presence with a view to collaborative working similar to our existing model for the delivery of primary production hygiene controls on farm. It is anticipated that there will remain areas within Scotland that will require specialist coverage due to gaps in delivery from the above partners. We will therefore be recruiting a Lead Feed Officer and a Feed Officer to support the service and to ensure that high risk feed activities are subject to official control inspection activity. These will be fixed term appointments in the first instance.

5.3 In order to support the service we are working with the 4 Scottish Public Analyst Laboratories to agree a suitable sampling timetable for 2019/2020. These laboratories will be appointed formally as the FSS Agricultural Analysts. Following successful procurement, a contract has been awarded for the provision of the IT platform system that will ensure that all activity is effectively recorded and managed, the build for this system will be underway shortly. Scottish Government Legal Directorate are currently working on the Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) that will transfer the Animal Feed function to FSS. However, due to a two week parliamentary recess for Easter and ongoing Brexit-related demands, it is envisaged that the SSI will be laid in May 2019, a few weeks later than originally planned.

6 Brexit

6.1 A number of key statutory instruments (SIs) covering food and feed hygiene and legislation relating to nutrition, including nutrition and health claims, have now been laid in Westminster, following consent from the Scottish Parliament's Health and Sport Committee, and we have made good progress on a number of other SIs on composition, standards and labelling where Defra is the UK lead department.

6.2 We also continue to work on a number of Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSIs) that will need to be in place for our domestic law. Further work has progressed on a UK-wide approach to risk analysis with a paper presented on this issue for the Board's consideration, to support delivery of the proposals for a UK wide Framework for food and feed safety and hygiene.

6.3 We have a dedicated [page](#) about Brexit on our website. This page provides information on our ongoing activities to prepare for EU exit to ensure that whatever happens as a consequence of the UK leaving the EU, there is no reduction in the level of protection to consumers in Scotland.

7 Regulatory Policy

7.1 Consultation on provision of Allergen information on pre-packed food

7.1.1 A [UK-wide](#) consultation on the provision of allergen information on prepacked food for sale opened on the 25th January 2019 and closes on 25th March 2019. This consultation is a collaboration between FSS, FSA and Defra. It follows the publication of the coroner's report into the tragic death of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse, who died from an anaphylactic reaction to sesame in a baguette from Pret a Manger, which had no information warning consumers of the presence of this ingredient.

7.2.1 The consultation aims to improve the level of allergen information for consumers and provide greater health protection to consumers who suffer from food allergies. There are both

non-regulatory and regulatory options to be consulted on and FSS will be engaging with stakeholders in Scotland including consumers, industry and local authorities. After the consultation, all responses received will be shared and considered by FSS and the collaborative partners involved. Advice will then be provided to Scottish Ministers to consider the next steps.

8 Food Protection, Science and Surveillance

8.1 UK Review of the Capacity and Capability of Official Control Laboratory Services

8.1.1 FSS is currently co-funding a programme of work with FSA to review the capacity and capability of official control laboratory services across the UK, and what will be needed from these services in a post European Union (EU) exit future.

The review was undertaken in two stages:

1. A review (contracted to Food and Environment Research Agency, FERA) of the current official control laboratory network and the scope of services provided to government departments and Local Authorities to support food and feed enforcement. This review will generate a map of capacity and capability for Day 1 of EU Exit and any gaps, deficiencies and areas for improvement that can be made within the current legislative framework.
2. An in depth analysis (contracted to Ernst and Young) of FSA and FSS requirements with regard to scientific services post EU Exit, the strengths and weaknesses associated with the current model of provision across the UK, and recommendations for ensuring a more efficient, effective and resilient laboratory system into the future, including how the services should be structured and responsibilities for oversight, co-ordination and funding.

8.1.2 We will advise the Board when further updates on this work are available.

9 Enforcement

9.1 Food Enforcement Partnership Event

9.1 On the 24th and 25th January 2019, FSS held its fourth annual Food Enforcement Partnership event in collaboration with the Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee and the Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland. Elspeth MacDonald, Deputy Chief Executive, Ian McWatt, Chief Operating Officer and members of the Enforcement, Audit, Communications and Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit teams were attendance.

9.2 The event was extremely well supported with over 110 attendees on each of the two days. A variety of topics were covered during the event including updates and workshops on EU exit, food standards, allergens and Food Crime. Guest speakers attended from Animal and Plant Health Agency and Scottish Government.

10 Communications and Marketing

10.1 The Great Turkey Defrost Live

10.1.1 Just before Christmas, 'The Great Turkey Defrost Live' social media event took place. We worked with our digital agency, Whitespace, to film a turkey defrosting live in the fridge on Facebook over 24 hours to highlight the best way of safely defrosting the Christmas centrepiece. A camera was focused on the defrosting turkey, with food safety messages displayed at different times.

10.1.2 The campaign proved to be highly effective and was picked up by Scottish broadcast media, trade magazines and local news outlets. Over the period the campaign was live, there were around 15k views of the videos and a significant number of engagements and shares. For what was effectively a very low budget public relations exercise, this worked really well for us and was an innovative way to communicate some of our key Christmas food safety messages.

10.2 Kitchen Crimes Food Safety Campaign

10.2.1 Our 'Kitchen Crimes' food safety campaign was re-launched on 15th January 2019 and ends on the 14th February 2019. The independent evaluation of last year's campaign showed that two-thirds (66%) of people who had seen the campaign claimed to take action to improve their kitchen behaviours. Whilst wave 7 of our tracking survey indicates that there has been some improvement in the number of actions being undertaken in peoples' kitchen to prevent food poisoning, it was also clear that the messages needed to be given reiterated. For example, fewer than a third of Scots (31%) check the 'use by' date as the best indicator for deciding whether a food is safe to eat or not, and 44% don't always use different chopping boards for different foods.

10.2.2 We are asking people in Scotland to make small steps to improving their kitchen habits in order to reduce the likelihood of them or those they cook for getting food poisoning. TV and digital advertising has been encouraging people to find further safety tips on our [website](#) and check their own kitchen crime records via an [online quiz](#). The campaign has received press and radio coverage and internationally with [Food Safety News](#) and [World News Report](#).

10.3 Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit

10.3.1 We are currently running a business-to-business campaign to promote the free and confidential Scottish Food Crime hotline number - 0800 028 7926 and awareness of the Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit. Throughout the campaign, we are looking for industry and other stakeholders to show their support by helping us promote the hotline number and also show they are committed to protecting the quality of produce in Scotland via printed and digital media.

10.3.2 Partners will be distributing leaflets and posters within their businesses, and will upload a 'stamp of support' to their website, and update their email signature, all with the hotline number at the forefront. The campaign has seen us attend AgriScot to reach the farming community. On 28th February 2019, Ron McNaughton, Head of Food Crime & Incidents Unit, is a panel member at the Food Fraud Conference in London, speaking on the subject of "Examining types of fraud being investigated and what happens when the food fraud squad turns up at your door".

11 Healthy Working Lives – Silver Award

11.1 We have been successful in achieving the Silver Award in the [Healthy Working Living Scheme](#). The FSS Healthy Working Lives team went to tremendous efforts in organising a range of activities and campaigns for staff to take part. In order to achieve the Silver Award, the FSS Healthy Working Lives team had to benchmark, gather evidence and present a portfolio which was then reviewed by an approved assessor. We are now aiming high and working towards achieving the Gold Award.

Geoff Ogle, Chief Executive

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