

DIET AND NUTRITION: UPDATE ON SETTING THE DIRECTION FOR THE SCOTTISH DIET

1. Purpose of the paper

- 1.1 This paper provides an update for the FSS Board on diet and nutrition progress in relation to proposals contained within the [January 2016 diet and nutrition paper¹](#), as well as reference to governance arrangements and collaborative working.

2. Background

- 2.1 In terms of taking work forward, there have been three areas of development that encompass the combined requirement to achieve effective solutions, and FSS has moved forward on all three. These are:

- Industry engagement and related work;
- Developments within Government; and,
- Focus on personal responsibility.

3. Industry engagement and related work

3.1 FSS engagement with the food and drink industry

- 3.1.1 Within the FSS package of proposals approved by the Board in January are a number of measures relevant to the food and drink industry, including reformulation, price promotions, advertising and marketing of high fat, salt or sugar (HFSS) foods and drinks. Since January, FSS officials have undertaken an extensive programme of engagement with food and drink industry representative bodies and with individual companies to ascertain whether there are viable alternatives to regulation.
- 3.1.2 Views differ, but there is an apparent recognition (presented as a requirement in some quarters) by retailers that government regulation may be a more effective means of creating a level playing field than could be achieved through voluntary measures. However this view is not generally mirrored by manufacturers who believe there is more they can contribute on a voluntary basis.
- 3.1.3 FSS officials have been kept advised of an industry forum, comprising retail, catering and manufacturing sectors, established by the Scottish Food and Drink Federation in early August to consider the feasibility of an industry-led response to actions recommended in the January Board paper. FSS will provide an update from that forum in February and, if applicable, areas identified for potential industry-led action.

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<http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/sites/default/files/Board%20meeting%20%202016%20January%20%20%20Diet%20and%20Nutrition%20Proposals%20for%20setting%20the%20direction%20for%20the%20Scottish%20Diet%20160104.pdf>

3.2 Food eaten outside the home

- 3.2.1 FSS recognises the importance of the out of home (OOH) sector in relation to dietary improvement. Over a quarter of total UK spend on food and drink is on food eaten outside of the home, contributing an estimated 10% of total calories.² Furthermore, we are aware of OOH influence on the retail sector, for example in trends such as supermarket provision of takeaway style meals and OOH products available to purchase and cook at home.
- 3.2.2 A new report by NPD Group Inc, commissioned by FSS, and published today provides an overview of the OOH market in Scotland. This [report](#)³ includes information about the share of the different types of food providers (e.g. quick service restaurants, cafes, full service restaurants etc.), as well as the share of OOH visits divided by Brand and independents, the top foods and drinks consumed OOH in Scotland, and information on some of the motivations for eating out.
- 3.2.3 Drawing on information provided by NPD Crest, additional FSS engagement is planned with individual food service businesses to ascertain how willing they are to contribute to improving Scotland's diet. In the first instance, this engagement will target larger Brands and, while we recognise the positive steps taken by many of these businesses, the challenge is that the nature of food and drink consumed OOH is still skewed towards less healthy food and drink categories. It is therefore essential these businesses are encouraged and expected to play their part, for example through reformulation to reduce calories, fats, sugars and salt, reductions in portion sizes and less promotion of HFSS foods.
- 3.2.4 FSS continues to support Scottish Government (SG) and NHS Health Scotland (NHS HS) to deliver the Healthy Living Award which supports caterers to provide healthier options in both the public and private sectors. The uptake of the award has been expanded with a key focus on the public sector, particularly hospitals and caterers across the SG estate.

3.3 Out of home consumer information

- 3.3.1 The provision of calorie labelling on menus is a way to help consumers choose lower calorie food and drink options outside the home. Some, although not all, large businesses already provide this information. To support small businesses, with limited resource and expertise, to provide this information, FSS has purchased MenuCal which is a free-to-use web based tool. It is designed to help caterers provide consumer information on calories and allergens on their menus.
- 3.3.2 FSS is currently working with local businesses to develop an understanding of how MenuCal is used in practice. MenuCal and calorie labelling will then

² Family Food 2014, Defra <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/family-food-statistics>

³ <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/assessment-out-home-food-and-drink-landscape-scotland>

be piloted across 6 Local Authorities in collaboration with the Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee Diet, Nutrition and Health Working Group later this year before rolling out across Scotland in 2017.

3.4 Research relevant to industry action

- 3.4.1 In August, FSS commissioned the University of Stirling to explore factors that influence the retail environment and to identify potential levers to help consumers purchase healthier food and drinks. The report, due to be published early 2017, will include a set of recommendations for consideration by FSS.
- 3.4.2 FSS officials are currently developing a research specification to assess the extent of publicly available nutrition and portion size information provided by OOH establishments and to explore possible ways of influencing calorie reduction in this sector. This work is due to be commissioned in December 2016.

4. Developments within government

4.1 Changes in the political landscape relevant to diet and nutrition

- 4.1.1 There have been a number of changes to the political landscape since January 2016, each of which has the potential to directly, or indirectly, impact on the FSS proposals agreed by the Board in January for the improvement of the Scottish diet.
- 4.1.2 In March 2016, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a soft drinks industry levy (SDIL). The Chair of the FSS Board has responded to the recent consultation on the SDIL from HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs. <http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/news/fss-response-soft-drinks-industry-levy>
- 4.1.3 In August 2016, the UK Government released their long awaited Childhood Obesity Strategy, now rebadged as a Childhood Obesity Action Plan (COAP). The COAP did not contain the anticipated set of actions to improve the food and drink environment and, as such, it fails to adequately address key issues such as advertising and marketing, price and promotions and provision of large portions sizes of HFSS food and drink. In January, the Board agreed that adopting the widest possible range of measures is essential for improving diet. In our view, the limited set of actions contained within the COAP restricts its potential impact on public health. As a consequence, the FSS executive now intends to take forward discussions with industry on a wider range of actions including portion size, the use of price differentials, and advertising and marketing as outlined in our January paper to the Board. More positively, a reformulation programme led by Public Health England (PHE) to remove 20% of sugar from products by 2020 is encompassed within the COAP.
- 4.1.4 It is clear from the issues discussed above that recent approaches by the UK Government to implement health policy for England are likely to present

difficulties for FSS. The COAP applies to health policy in England and whilst some of its features align well with our aims, it is significantly more constrained in terms of its scope for action than FSS seeks to achieve.

- 4.1.5 In general terms our approach is more widely based on whole population (and not just focussed on children) and our range of proposed actions is broader, particularly around the scope of changes to the food environment. Devolution of health and food policies should allow each Administration to implement these policies in a way that best suits the needs of its population and it is therefore expected that this will necessitate some variation in approach.
- 4.1.6 Taxation and advertising policies are reserved matters but a tension arises when these are used as levers to implement health policies that apply only to England. Achieving our full policy potential in Scotland will therefore require a consistent and concerted effort to ensure that relevant Whitehall departments appreciate that, if reserved matters are to be used as tools to implement dietary health objectives, the measures should be discussed and agreed by devolved Administrations.
- 4.1.7 Nutrient profiling, for use as criteria for restrictions on advertising which is a reserved matter, is an area of future work for development of the advertising Codes of Practice and one where FSS will seek to ensure that advice to the advertising regulators, on the applicable nutrient standards should be on a basis agreed jointly by all the Administrations.
- 4.1.8 In September 2016, publication of A Plan For Scotland: The Scottish Government's Programme for Scotland 2016-2017 makes extensive reference to food including, *'work in 2017 on a consultation on a Good Food Nation Bill to provide the potential for a statutory framework to join up the Government's approach on food, consider what steps can be taken to improve the effectiveness of the food and drink supply chain, working in partnership with all relevant players'*. This programme for Government also contains reference to a new strategy on diet and obesity which aligns with other health improvement initiatives and will be consulted on and brought forward in 2017.

4.2 Advertising and marketing

- 4.2.1 In July, FSS officials responded to the Committee on Advertising Practices (CAP) consultation for the extension of broadcasting restriction of HFSS to non-broadcast media. The FSS response supported extension of the current restrictions across all media, both broadcast and non-broadcast, highlighted the need to monitor the effectiveness on restrictions to advertising as part of this work. In addition, we strongly advised that the Nutrient Profiling Model (NPM), which is currently used to identify HFSS products, be revised to reflect current dietary guidelines for sugar and fibre. Until a new NPM is adopted, foods and drinks advertised to children will remain out of line with current dietary recommendations. PHE are reviewing the NPM and FSS officials are currently represented in this process as observers.

4.3 Taxation

- 4.3.1 The January Board paper stated that all options, including non-voluntary measures such as taxation, should be considered to drive dietary improvement. The package of measures specifically recommended consideration of a sugar tax on high sugar products including sugar sweetened beverages (SSB) to create price differentials as a means of shifting consumer behaviour towards lower sugar, healthier foods and drinks. The SDIL announced in March is a totemic measure, and on that basis it is a welcome step. However, the levy is not a tax on consumers but instead it is a charge levied on the soft drinks industry to drive reformulation of their products. The UK government has stated that it has no plans to extend the levy to other foods or drinks or to introduce new taxes on food. Therefore, the SDIL falls short of fulfilling the measures agreed by the FSS Board and its introduction is expected to reduce the scope for FSS to initiate discussions on further fiscal measures to improve diet.
- 4.3.2 The recently published FSS Food in Scotland consumer tracking survey, managed by Kantar TNS, reported a good general awareness of the tax on sugary soft drinks (85%), with 53% of participants in favour of this measure. 46% and 45% were in favour of taxing other high sugar foods and high fat foods respectively. Some 59% indicated that they would be more in favour of taxation of unhealthy products if linked to reductions in the price of healthy food. 75% of participants favoured regulation to limit the amount of fats, sugar and salt added to manufactured products.
<http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/wave-2-tracker-holder>

4.4 Reformulation

- 4.4.1 In our paper to the Board in January 2016, we supported a UK approach for reformulation to reduce calories, fats, sugars and salt in manufactured products. We also called for challenging time bound targets to be set.
- 4.4.2 In October, FSS officials met with PHE and discussed development of a formal agreement for collaborative working, including reformulation.
- 4.4.3 The UK Government's recent COAP contains plans for sugar reformulation with an aim of reducing sugar in 9 categories of foods by 20%, by 2020. Set within a wider reformulation programme, it is our view that this target will help us meet the Scottish Dietary Goal for sugar.
- 4.4.4 A reformulation programme will be taken forward by PHE on an open and transparent basis and will include setting sugar targets per 100g and calorie caps on single serve products. Progress will be monitored from a 2015 baseline to take account of sugar reduction work already being undertaken. Reductions in sales weighted averages will be sought, as well as reductions in portion size and sales shifts towards no/reduced sugar alternatives.
- 4.4.5 From 2017, the PHE reformulation programme will be extended to set targets to reduce total calories in a wider range of categories and work on reducing saturated fat will be further reviewed in light of the Scientific

Advisory Committee on Nutrition recommendations due in 2017. The extension of the programme to include calories and saturated fat reduction, together with a continued emphasis on the 2017 salt targets, is in line with the FSS approach to reformulation agreed by the Board in January.

4.5 Affordability and acceptability of a healthy diet

4.5.1 FSS officials have met with partners across Scottish Government (SG) and in NHS Health Scotland to discuss and support research into affordability and acceptability of a healthy diet. This is an area of strong interest across partners with issues of food poverty, food security, social justice and diet related health inequalities all being considered. Key principles underpinning both research and policy include the right to food, the need to respect and value the contribution of all involved, including those with lived experience⁴. We will continue to support NHS HS to work with local and national stakeholders to identify any gaps in the current knowledge base and to draw together on-going research, with a view to improve understanding and develop effective action to positively impact on diet related health. It is also recognised that other potentially beneficial outcomes, such as addressing isolation and improving employability, can result from policy initiatives in this area.

4.6 Update on governance arrangements and collaborative working

4.6.1 A forum of senior officials from SG, FSS and NHS HS has been established by FSS with the principal aim of providing a co-ordinated approach and identifying contributions by each partner towards the development, implementation and communication of policy and interventions relevant to dietary improvement.

4.6.2 A second group of senior officials from across SG has also been established to coordinate development of overall SG food policy. This group includes Scottish Government's Strategy Unit, representatives from the Food Industry Division, Education, Social Justice, Procurement, Health, and FSS. A key aim is to assess the cross-impacts of food policy proposals on the different portfolios represented by the group with a view to further integration of food policy in line with the SG Programme for Government.

4.6.3 A third officials group comprising policy officials, research analysts and economists from across SG, NHS HS and FSS has also been set up to take forward work to coordinate research, including looking at the overall economics of poor diet for the purpose of better informing development of food policy. NHS HS has agreed to provide the Secretariat and the first fully convened meeting was held on 04 October to agree terms of reference and a future work plan.

⁴ The term lived experience is used to describe the first-hand accounts and impressions of living as a member of a minority or oppressed group

5. Focus on personal responsibility

5.1 Social marketing campaign

- 5.1.1 On the 5 September 2016 FSS launched a new social marketing campaign to motivate behaviour change with the aim of reducing consumption of discretionary food and drinks, such as confectionery, biscuits, cakes, pastries, savoury snacks and SSB.
- 5.1.2 The campaign was developed based on bespoke qualitative research commissioned to gain insight into snacking knowledge, behaviours and attitudes amongst the target audience (parents and carers of children aged 2-15). Its aim was to encourage the target audience to reflect on their and their children's consumption of unhealthy snacks and treats and to take steps to cut back and swap for healthier options.
- 5.1.3 The campaign included TV, outdoor and digital advertising and a radio partnership with Bauer media, supported by PR, social media, field marketing, a press partnership with the Scottish Sun and partnerships marketing.
- 5.1.4 Campaign activity was directed to our website, where new campaign pages gave advice and ideas. A campaign toolkit and printed collateral was distributed to partners including several multiple retailers, NHS Health Boards, Local Authorities and other public sector bodies.
- 5.1.5 Feedback from extensive consumer engagement, during campaign road-shows in supermarkets, shopping and leisure centres has been excellent, with many participants stating how much the campaign has made them assess their behaviour. Furthermore, FSS as an organisation, has received a number of messages of support from key stakeholders regarding the campaign aims.
- 5.1.6 The campaign is being independently evaluated by TNS-BMRB amongst a sample of the target audience to assess awareness levels and claimed behaviour, with results expected in November 2016.

5.2 Provision of consistent dietary messaging

- 5.2.1 Following the publication of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) recommendations for carbohydrates and health, the *eatwell plate* was replaced by the Eatwell Guide in March 2016, as the main tool for communicating advice on a healthy balanced diet.
- 5.2.2 Development of the Eatwell Guide was led by PHE in association with the Welsh government, FSS and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland. Throughout the development period FSS worked collaboratively with PHE officials to provide dietary modelling data, provide comment on drafts and to ensure Scottish consumer views were reflected in the final Guide. Alongside the new Guide, we also published supporting documents including: an explanatory booklet; an assessment of the environmental

impact of Guide (prepared by the Carbon Trust); and a report of the Scottish consumer testing.

- 5.2.3 The new Eatwell Guide continues to be widely disseminated by FSS officials to partners and stakeholders and it is being integrated into FSS resources for schools. A new interactive version of the Eatwell Guide is also being developed by FSS as a teaching tool and should be available on our website later this year.
- 5.2.4 Expanding on the information provided by the Eatwell Guide, and as outlined in the January Board paper, we are now planning to develop a set of Dietary Guidelines for Scotland to encompass advice on broader diet related issues.

5.3 Empowering consumers

- 5.3.1 The FSS Board will receive a paper and presentation on behaviour change from Dr Julia Allen of the University of Aberdeen in December, which will help identify the challenges to be addressed in bringing about change in consumer behaviour.

6. Summary of progress

- 6.1 The Board will be aware of the request by Scottish Ministers in March 2016 to develop an implementation plan for mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid for the prevention of neural tube defects. Although this is currently impacting on available resource within FSS, we are still continuing to make significant progress towards achieving the package of measures agreed by the Board in January for setting the direction of the Scottish diet.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 The Board is asked to note that there will an update paper on diet and nutrition activity in 2017.

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