

29 AUGUST 2007

AGENDA ITEM 3

**Consideration of the Recommendations of the Scottish Consumer Council's report  
on 'Young People and Food Safety – Five Years On'**

**Executive Summary**

The Committee is asked to:

- **DISCUSS** the recommendations made by SCC in this report and **CONSIDER** forming an SFAC Working Group to review these recommendations.

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## **BACKGROUND**

1. The report<sup>1</sup>, published by the Scottish Consumer Council, is based on a survey of 1567 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Secondary School pupils across Scotland in 2006. This survey is a follow-up to a similar SCC survey of 2210 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Secondary School pupils undertaken in May 2000<sup>2</sup> just after FSA's inception.
2. It states that overall, young people have a good knowledge of some food hygiene issues, noting that comparable research shows their knowledge is generally better than that of adults.
3. It indicates areas of good, reasonable and poor food hygiene knowledge and notes that these areas are similar to those highlighted in the previous SCC survey. It goes on to make recommendations to both the FSA and SFAC.

## **SUMMARY OF SCC REPORT**

4. The report identifies six areas of poor knowledge, noting that these were remarkably similar to those in the 2000 research:
  - storage & cross contamination (raw meat & fish)
  - reheating of rice
  - how to cook eggs safely
  - storage times and 'use-by dates'
  - at-risk groups
  - meaning of the term 'piping hot'
5. The report has five key findings:
  - there has not been a great increase, if any, in food safety and hygiene knowledge among young people in many areas
  - issues targeted by FSA and Foodlink have been the correct ones
  - poor knowledge areas have not altered and future campaigns should focus on these areas
  - food hygiene and safety training in schools is of paramount importance
  - adults also need to have many basic food hygiene messages reinforced

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<sup>1</sup> Young People and Food Safety – Five Years On; Scottish Consumer Council; May 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Young People and Food Safety; Scottish Consumer Council; February 2002.

6. The report concludes with recommendations to both FSA and SFAC:

- FSA should continue to provide educational resources to schools and should also target parents & guardians so that they are able to provide appropriate food safety and hygiene messages to children.
- SFAC should review the areas of poor knowledge and set targets for the FSA to improve these. In particular they should focus on:
  - reviewing the language used in food safety advice to ensure the consumer understands the message. e.g. the terms 'piping hot' & 'cross-contamination'.
  - reheating rice and inform the public of the dangers of *Bacillus cereus*
  - evaluating the impact of the June 2006 Food Safety Week

## **ISSUES**

**7. Members of the committee are invited to discuss the recommendations made by SCC in this report and consider forming an SFAC Working Group to review SCC's recommendations.**