

**REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE WELSH FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Executive Summary**

1. The attached report provides an update on issues emanating from the Welsh Food Advisory Committee.
2. The Board is invited to **note** the report by the Chair of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee. **No action** is required.

**Food Standards Agency Wales  
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**Advisory Committee Meetings**

1. The Welsh Food Advisory Committee held a closed meeting on 5 September in Cardiff, chaired by the acting Chairman for the Committee. Part of the meeting was devoted to a session on the review of the Agency's Strategic Plan. The Committee was informed of the purpose of the review and the proposals to reflect and adjust the strategic Plan's targets in the light of experience to ensure they remain fit for purpose and reflect changing priorities. The Committee supported regular reviews of the Strategic Plan and updating of the Corporate Business Plan. The Committee was keen to see a strong Welsh element to the plan and will consider this further.
2. In preparation for Board discussions, the Committee received a presentation on Consumer Engagement. This looked at the Agency's proposals for a new way of working with consumers. The Committee recognised the importance of this and was supportive of further work with "hard to hear" groups within Wales. In preparation for Board discussions the members also received observed a progress report on Scientific Governance which informed of the steps taken by the Agency to develop the role of the FSA Chief Scientist and to ensure that effective scientific governance processes are embedded in procedures.
3. The open meeting, which followed the next day, was held in St David's Hall in Cardiff. This was an open business meeting, which also primarily focussed on issues to be addressed in forthcoming Board discussions.
4. On Food Labelling, the Committee considered an outline paper identifying key strategic priorities, which will inform the Agency's UK response to the EU labelling review. Discussions revolved around the importance of a simplified, clear, and consistent labelling approaches. The importance of County of Origin labelling was discussed and the Committee highlighted the importance of ensuring that any future labelling arrangements continued to enable the identification of food produced in Wales.
5. In preparation for Board discussions on the Scores on the Doors concept, members received a presentation which updated them on the development of the "Scores on the Doors" pilot projects. The Committee supported the principle of a progressive approach to enforcement, which would increase awareness and transparency for consumers and drive up compliance in businesses. Members requested that they be informed on the outcome of the pilot work being undertaken and wished to know more about the scoring system used in the Welsh

Food Hygiene Aware scheme. The Committee noted that two Welsh local authorities were participating in the pilot projects and another was piloting a similar scheme. On Food Safety Management, the Committee was briefed on forthcoming Board discussions, which would update on the progress being made thorough the UK in helping business comply with the new EU food hygiene regulations.

6. Members observed a presentation on Foodborne Disease and, in particular, the delivery of the 2001/2006 foodborne disease targets and progress made on delivering the 2005/2010 Campylobacter target. In noting the presentation, the Committee identified the need for the Agency to look again at the significance of food as a vehicle for toxoplasma.
7. The Committee received a presentation on the recent European Commission paper on the setting of minimum and maximum levels of vitamins and minerals in foodstuffs. The Committee endorsed the Executive's emphasis on the safety based approach, and agreed with four principles adopted by the Board, for use in discussions on setting levels. The Committee identified no specifically Welsh issues but were strongly supportive of the need for the evidence base to take into account the risk assessments carried out by scientific experts in the UK.
8. The next meeting of the Committee will be a closed session in Cardiff on 6 November where the Committee will receive a briefing on aflatoxins. This will be followed the next day by an open business meeting in Swansea where the Committee will consider issues to be addressed by the Board at its December meeting.

### **Forward Look**

9. Please note that items listed are provisional, and are therefore subject to change.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Agenda Items</b>
6 November	Closed business meeting Cardiff	Briefing on aflatoxins and discussion on Strategic Plan
7 November	Open business meeting Swansea	Covering issues for December Board meeting To include: Review of the Framework Agreement LA Monitoring Data Sustainable Development Openness NDNS
4 January 2007	Closed business meeting Cardiff	Covering issues for January and February Board meeting. To include: Presentation from the Food Fraud Unit
7 March 2007	Closed business meeting N Wales	

## **Other Activities**

10. Mr Chris Pomfret, Dame Deirdre and John Harwood will be meeting with the Minister for Health and Social Services in Wales on 25/26 September. Additionally, the Acting WFAC Chairman will make a presentation at the Welsh Consumer Council Conference which will be held on 25 January 2007 in N Wales.