

Management commentary

Management commentary for the accountability report.

Preparation of accounts

The Consolidated Resource Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the direction given by HM Treasury. They are presented to the House of Commons pursuant to Section 6(4) of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000. The costs of FSA offices in Wales and Northern Ireland are funded through the relevant devolved authority.

Supplier payment policy

It is FSA policy to pay all invoices not in dispute within five days of receipt. During 2021/22, 85% of all invoices were paid within this target. The policy is to remain the same for 2022/23, and we aim to improve the results.

Financial instruments

The FSA has no borrowings. It relies primarily on departmental grants for its cash requirements, and is therefore not exposed to liquidity risks. It also has no material deposits. All material assets and liabilities are in sterling, so the FSA is not exposed to significant interest rate risk or currency risk.

Going concern

The FSA has significant net liabilities relating to the pension liabilities of staff who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The accounts, however, are prepared on a going concern basis since, as a government department, all liabilities will be met by future funding from Parliament.

Pensions

FSA employees are civil servants. Most are members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) and Civil Servant and Other Pension Scheme (CSOPS). These are central government unfunded pension schemes. Pension payments are made through the resource account. Board members are not civil servants therefore they are not members of these schemes. However, some previously had similar pension arrangements independent of them.

Some employees are members of the LGPS. This is a defined benefit scheme governed by the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1995. It is administered by the London Pension Fund Authority (LPFA), whose financial statements are prepared for the whole LGPS.

Disclosure of Board members' interests

Board members are appointed to act collectively in the public interest, not to represent specific sectors. Provisions for declaration of interests and withdrawal from meetings are intended to

prevent the Chair, Deputy Chair, and members being influenced or appearing to be influenced, by their private interests in the exercise of their collective public duties. All personal or business interests which may, or in the judgement of the member may, be perceived by a reasonable member of the public to influence their judgement, should be declared. Such interests include, but are not limited to, involvement in the agriculture, food, and related industries. The Code of Conduct for Board members includes a guide to the categories of interest that must be declared. Details of Board members, their register of interests, and the Code of Conduct are on our website: [FSA Board Meetings](#).

Auditors

The accounts have been audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General in accordance with Schedule 4 of the Food Standards Act 1999. The audit fee for all the FSA's accounts for the year was £97,000 (2020/21 £96,000). I have taken all necessary steps to make myself aware of relevant audit information and to ensure that information is made available to the auditors. No payments have been paid to the Comptroller and Auditor General for non-audit work in 2021/22 (2010/21 £nil).

Important events which have occurred since the end of the financial year

No events have occurred since the end of the financial year.

Departmental core tables, Westminster only

This information can be found on our website: [Reports and Accounts page](#).

Performance in correspondence with public and MPs including Parliamentary Questions

The FSA does not centrally record all incoming and outgoing correspondence and contact with members of the public. Contact details for FSA business areas are available on the FSA website for members of the public and food businesses to contact directly. During 2021/22, the FSA's general enquiries helpline handled 5,542 emails and 5,347 phone calls from members of the public (in 2020/21, 7,279 emails and 3,550 phone calls were handled).

Additionally, FSA Private Office managed 127 items of correspondence, including items sent by members of the public to members of Parliament, the FSA Chair, FSA Chief Executive or other, replying to 97% within target (in 2020/21, 134 items of correspondence were managed and 97% were replied to within target). The FSA also drafted answers for 15 Parliamentary Questions, returning 80% on time to the Department of Health and Social Care to answer via their ministers.

Better Regulation

Better regulation is an integral to our regulatory approach and we apply the principles of good regulation to all our regulatory activities. The FSA strives to take a clear, proportionate and risk-based regulatory approach to protecting public health.

Excessive or unclear regulations place unnecessary burdens on business and hinder the intended regulatory benefits to consumers and business.

We support the government's Better Regulation agenda and the ambitions of the Industrial Strategy, including on innovation, where we strive to identify and remove unnecessary barriers to new technology and support industry advancements in the interest of consumers. All new regulations are subject to post-implementation reviews to ensure the objectives are being met and the regulations remain necessary.

Business Impact Target (BIT) reporting

The FSA introduced no qualifying regulatory provisions under the BIT in the last Parliament. In line with our statutory reporting requirements the FSA published details of its regulatory activities in December 2021, as well as contributing to the Government's End of Parliament BIT Report. Details of the [FSA BIT reporting are published on our website](#).

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