

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### 1. Chief Executive's engagements

1.1 Since the last Board meeting in March 2018, I presented on the future of food regulations post Brexit at the Westminster Food and Nutrition Forum Seminar – "The Future of Food Regulation". The Director of Operations also attended this seminar. During April 2018, I attended the Quality Meat Scotland Board meeting with the Chair, Ross Finnie, Elspeth MacDonald, Deputy Chief Executive and Ian McWatt, the Director of Operations we attended the Scottish Association of Meat Wholesalers Annual Conference.

1.2 With Jason Feeney, Chief Executive of Food Standards Agency (FSA) we met with Food and Drink Federation to discuss Brexit; Regulating our Future; Regulatory Strategy and general issues around business attitude and culture in food businesses.

1.3 On the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2018, the Chair and Director of Operations attended the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland Annual Environmental Health Forum in Stirling.

1.4 On 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018, myself and the Deputy Chief Executive attended the Four Nations Policy Conference in Edinburgh which covered policy development across the UK. The conference was hosted by the Scottish Government (SG) Permanent Secretary, Leslie Evans.

### 2 Brexit

2.1 Discussion continues between SG and United Kingdom Government (UKG) on issues related to the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill and the UKG list of 24 areas which are devolved, but where the UKG wish to reserve powers, on a temporary basis, after the UK leaves the EU. Related to this the Chair's letter to Mike Russell, Member of Scottish Parliament and Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe in March 2018, and the Minister's reply, were published on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018. This Chair's letter set out FSS's concerns in relation to the potential consequences to FSS' remit and both our and SG's ability to make improvements in the area of public health.

2.2 Work continues with SG with regular official engagement at all levels and we are finalising the detail of the Brexit programme, workstreams and staff allocation. Given the significant dependency between Brexit and the Regulatory Strategy programmes it made sense to streamline the governance into one Programme Board. Work continues on a range of areas including legislation and analysis of the implications for imports and exports.

2.3 A paper on Brexit will be tabled at the Board Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

### 3 UK-wide review into meat cutting plants and cold stores and challenge group appointed

3.1 The Director of Operations is the joint Senior Responsible Officer with Colin Sullivan the Chief Operating Officer of FSA of the UK-wide review into meat cutting plants and cold stores. The review is focusing on how these establishments operate, how controls are delivered, what the gaps in enforcement are and what the opportunities are to better tackle non-compliance. There are nine workstreams in total, one of which is being led by Sandy

McDougall, FSS Head of Operational Delivery and is intended to look at the competency issues for delivering official controls in these plants on behalf of FSS and FSA.

3.2 The challenge group appointed to scrutinise this review into UK meat cutting plants and cold stores convened for the first time on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018 in London to oversee the process made so far.

3.3 The Chief Executives of FSS and FSA respectively, Geoff Ogle and Jason Feeney outlined to the group the objectives of the review jointly launched in March 2018 by both UK food regulators to look in more detail at sites where meat is processed and stored in the UK. Teams from both organisations have been working together to gather available evidence on this sector of the food industry and scoping out where further gathering of evidence is required.

3.4 The challenge group will provide scrutiny to the process by having the ability and authority to challenge the activities being carried out against the objectives that have been set whilst also being able to bring to bear their outside perspective and wealth of experience.

3.5 The group is chaired by Alexis Cleveland CB who brings significant experience to the role having previously been the Chair of the Board for the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and the Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA).

3.6 The other members of the group include:

- Isobel Garner who has an in depth understanding of risk and regulation through her previous non-executive roles at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and as the current chair of the Wales Audit Office.
- Nigel Gibbens CBE who has worked in all aspects of veterinary public health for over 30 years, including being the UK Chief Veterinary Officer for close to a decade.
- Uel Morton who has experience of the food business sector as the co-chair of the Scottish Food Commission and, until last year, as the Chief Executive of Quality Meat Scotland for more than a decade.

3.7 The review will provide regular updates to the FSS and FSA board meetings held in May, June and August before final recommendations and delivery plan are presented in September 2018.

#### **4 Independent Scrutiny of the FSS Audit of Delivery of Official Controls by Local Authorities**

4.1 In 2016, DG SANTÉ Directorate FL of the European Commission (SANTÉ FL) started a series of audits to assess implementation of Article 4(6) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on Official Controls. This requires competent authorities in Member States to implement appropriate arrangements for audits of official controls by the designation of operational criteria. Those audits carried out to date by SANTÉ FL have included the arrangements in place for independent scrutiny. The UK has been formally notified that we will be audited with regard to this in October 2018.

4.2 We have reviewed our arrangements and concluded that we need to put in place a more transparent process of independent scrutiny with regards to our Local Authorities. In the coming months, the Executive intend to appoint an official from FSA who has suitable auditing experience to conduct the Independent Scrutiny of the FSS Audit of the Delivery of Official Controls by Local Authorities.

## **5 FSS Incident Management Training**

5.1 On the 30<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018, we held incident management training sessions organised by the FSS Food Emergency Planning Manager and Register Larkin by Deloitte to introduce the revised FSS Incident Management Framework and Incident Management Plans. The purpose of the training was to ensure we have incident management structures in place which are aligned to the size of the organisation and processes that are well documented and understood by staff.

5.2 Staff representatives from branches across the organisation were able participate in a desktop exercise in a variety of roles in both the Operation Incident Team and the Strategic Incident Team. The desktop exercise provided an opportunity to test the new and updated incident management procedures, tools and templates and for incident management teams and incident communications team (which included a member of staff from the FSS PR agency, 3x1) to rehearse their response to a food incident and identify any areas for further development in the revised plans and framework.

## **6 Communications and Marketing**

### **6.1 FSS Conference 2018 – Fresh Thinking on Food**

6.1.1 On the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018, we held our first conference “Fresh thinking on Food” on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. Two hundred delegates attended and the conference topics covered the full remit of FSS from food safety and food fraud to diet and nutrition.

6.1.2 The conference was formally opened by the Chair and Heather Kelman gave an introduction to the conference and chaired the morning session. Sir Kenneth Calman, Chancellor of the University of Glasgow and formerly the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, England and Wales gave the keynote address. We had a range of specialist speakers from the international food and drink industry, the third sector, Scottish Government (SG) and public bodies presenting on food and drink and public health issues.

6.1.3 The event was a success and one of the key tasks will be to formally evaluate and reflect on the outcomes of the conference and feedback received. The presentations from speakers at the conference are available [here](#).

### **6.2 FSS Kitchen Crimes campaign shortlisted for Marketing Society Star Award**

6.2.1 We are pleased to announce that the FSS Kitchen Crimes campaign has been shortlisted at this year’s Marketing Society Star Awards. It has been shortlisted in the ‘Food and Drink’ category. The winner will be announced at the awards ceremony on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018.

### **6.3 Edinburgh International Science Festival**

6.3.1 At the start of April 2018, we exhibited at the Edinburgh International Science Festival. We had our usual interactive stand which included the award-winning Calorie Countdown bike challenge and the new addition of the “kitchen crimes” detective scene.

## **7 Official Control Verification Pilot in FSS Approved Meat Establishments**

7.1 We have commenced a pilot of an improved system for the approval and inspection of food establishments in Scotland that produce food of animal origin, helping to drive a consistent approach across national and local regulators in line with better regulation commitments. This pilot will operate in conjunction with eight Scottish Local Authorities and will be subject to third party evaluation. Following which, it may then be applied over all approved establishments across Scotland from 2019.

7.2 The new system will apply uniform official control standards across the sector to improve the overall consistency and quality of the approval process and regulatory activity. The enhanced system will involve a greater degree of scrutiny and verification of businesses’ food safety management systems, as well as greater levels of business support to food manufacturers in achieving compliance where required, thereby ensuring the maintenance of high levels of consumer protection. Verification visits will be both announced and unannounced.

7.3 Six FSS approved establishments have been selected for the pilot during the course of this next year. This is an opportunity to be one of the first businesses to preview the system, which will inform on the structure of the final model. In addition to these six pilot plants, any new request for approval during the pilot period will be subject to the new approach.

7.4 Whilst the legislation and standards remain unchanged, the assessment process is to become more rigorous in that the assessment by the Officer will focus in more detail on the verification of the businesses food safety management system; their procedures and the evidence gathered to demonstrate that their system is both safe and is being implemented. The aim is that compliance is easier for businesses to achieve if they get it right from the start. The audit and inspection (verification visits) will continue to include an assessment of the specific regulatory requirements applicable to the business. As part of this pilot the Officers involved have received FSS funded training in official control verification techniques.

7.5 The Scottish National Protocol followed by Food Control Officials when dealing with approved establishments is available [here](#). The Scottish Meat Industry are fully aware of the new protocol and were advised via the Scottish Meat Industry Forum of the pilot.

## **8 Equality Mainstreaming Report**

8.1 On the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018, we published our second Equality Mainstreaming Report. This document sets out our current position and our commitment to fully embed equality as a key component of our business, both as a consumer protection body and also as an employer.

8.2 We also want to be an excellent employer. We cannot deliver our vision without skilled and committed people. We are committed to equality of opportunity for all, and we want

everyone who works here to be treated fairly and consistently. We value diversity in our workforce; it brings a range of talents and different perspectives to our work, and rightly should reflect the diversity of our customers. It is important that we seek to ensure that our services are accessible by, and benefit everyone. This is equally important whether you are a food business operator or a consumer.

8.3 The report is a demonstration of our commitment to delivering equality of opportunity across the range of services we deliver and in our employment practices. The report is available [here](#).

Geoff Ogle, Chief Executive

[Geoff.ogle@fss.scot](mailto:Geoff.ogle@fss.scot)

10<sup>th</sup> May 2018