

OFFICIAL

Minute

Version: Draft

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Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee Minute

Microsoft Teams
06 December 2024 10:00 – 13:00

Attendees	
Andrea Carson – North of Scotland Food Liaison Group	Lorna Murray – Food Standards Scotland SFELC Rep
Andrew Morrison – Co Vice-Chair	Lorna Starkey – East of Scotland Food Liaison Group Chair
Bruce McCall – Scottish Craft Butchers	Lynne Bissett – Food Inspection and Interventions Sub-Committee Chair
Devina Sankhla – British Retail Consortium	Melanie Torrance – Aberdeenshire Council
Eva Ablett – Consumer Scotland	Paul Birkin – Chair
Hazel Stevenson – COSLA	Paul Bradley – Honorary Secretary
Izzy Childs – Lothian and Borders Food Liaison Group Chair	Rachel Mirfattahi – Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST)
Karen Wardrope – West of Scotland Food Liaison Group Chair	Sandra Williamson – REHIS
Kate Richards – Food Standards Scotland Board Member	Scott Anderson – Scottish Bakers
Lorna McCoull – Co Vice-Chair	Sophie Yule – Secretariat

Apologies	
Andrew Richardson – Scottish Salmon Association	Kirsty Tinsdale – Food and Drink Federation Scotland
Jane White – Public Analyst	Sheena Redmond – REHIS
Jenny Wares – Consultant in Public Health Medicine	Tracey Reilley – Consumer Scotland
Kirsty McGuigan – Strategy and Collaborative Working Sub-Committee Chair	

Agenda Items

Item No.	
1	Chairman's welcome
	<p><u>Guest speakers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kate Richards presenting on being an FSS Board Member • Sandra Williamson presenting on REHIS Training Opportunities <p><u>Observers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melanie Torrance – Aberdeenshire Council <p>The Chair passed on the Committees thanks and good wishes to Cat Hay as she moves roles within Food and Drink Federation Scotland. Colleagues David Thomson and Kirsty Tinsdale will be the FDF contacts going forward.</p>
2	Declaration of potential conflict of interest
	None
3	Minutes & matters arising
	Minutes from 06 September 2024 were approved and made final.
4	Actions outstanding
	<p>Actions 10.2024, 8.2024, 7.2024, 6.2024, 5.2024, 14.2023, 14.2021 were marked as complete.</p> <p>Actions 9.2024 and 4.2024 remain ongoing.</p> <p>Actions 23.2022, 22.2022 and 10.2021 remain on hold.</p>
5.1	FSS Board Member – Kate Richards
	<p>Kate Richards (FSS Board Member) expressed her thanks to the Committee for the invitation to outline her background and roles with FSS. Kate highlighted that she graduated in Edinburgh as a vet and is a member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (MRCVS), who regulate vets and vet nurses in the UK. Kate's current roles, background and experience with Food Standards Scotland can be found in the presentation link below.</p> <p><u>Question, Answers & Observations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Chair highlighted the shortage of vets in the UK and emphasised how Environmental Health are facing similar issues, and asked Kate if there are any actions or initiatives that the Royal College have introduced to promote the profession and recruit more vets that could also help Local Authorities. Kate outlined that 25% of new registrants every year were from non-UK vet schools, however this number plummeted after Brexit in terms of non-UK EU vets coming over for work. Lots of work has been done to promote working in public health in the country, ensuring undergraduates and vet schools know what working in public health is about and how important the role is. There is work ongoing where the RCVS are working with vet schools in the

	<p>EU to directly accredit them, meaning when students graduate, the RCVS automatically recognises their degree so they can come to work in the UK.</p> <p>Presentation slides can be found on the SFELC KHub page (link)</p>
5.2	REHIS Presentation
	<p>Sandra Williamson introduced herself to the Committee as the Director of Training at REHIS. Sandra outlined that REHIS are an independent self-financing registered Scottish charity who don't receive Scottish Government or NHS funding; finances come through membership and courses, and fees received for professional qualifications or for Approved Training Centres. The main objectives of REHIS are for the benefit of the community to promote the advancement of Environmental Health. Sandra provided a presentation covering: an overview of REHIS, community training, REHIS courses / qualifications, and credit rating / level of courses.</p> <p><u>Question, Answers & Observations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scott Anderson at Scottish Bakers raised that as part of Scottish Bakers mission, they are similarly trying to propose schools' programmes to highlight food and drink into schools as part of the educational curriculum to promote profession in the food and drink sector. Sandra highlighted she also works on food education partners with Food and Drink Federation Scotland, who have been promoting STEM ambassadors to promote different professions. Scott and Sandra will meet to discuss schools' programmes in relation to education on food safety. - Rachel Mirfattahi highlighted that SmartSTEMs (a charity who work with schools in Scotland) are working on holding a food and drink event next year to promote the sector to schools. Details on this will be circulated round the Committee. - The Chair noted that East Renfrewshire have been working on 'Developing the Young Workforce' representatives and are attending careers fairs to promote Environmental Health. The Chair recommended that representatives within Local Authorities seek out the 'Developing the Young Workforce' to open doors into the profession. The Chair is going to provide information to Andrea Carson / Hazel Stevenson to ask the Society of Chief Officers about EH ambassadors becoming STEM ambassadors. <p>Presentation slides and key findings can be found on the SFELC KHub (link)</p>
6	Intelligence gathering – Consultations, Horizon Scanning and Safe spaces
	Nil
7	The SFELC Executive update
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Standards Scotland Science team provided a presentation on LA food sampling in Scotland in 2023-24. Sample numbers are continuing to increase post-pandemic. Discussions were had on the 'UKHSA guidelines for assessing the microbiological safety of ready-to-eat foods placed on the market' and it was agreed the guidance is applicable in Scotland and will be used in place of the former health protection agency guidelines. • The Scottish Food Law Intervention manual has been finalised and is now a live document for enforcement officers. The Executive recorded their thanks to

	<p>Luke Henderson and the Interventions Working Group for their work in producing the manual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheena from REHIS gave an update on the professional exams and student numbers, advising that the University of the West of Scotland BSc course in Environmental Health is currently closed to new entrants but will support second, third, and fourth year students through to completion. The first student to progress through the alternative pathway to Environmental Health has passed. If anyone would like further information on the alternative pathway then this can be found on the REHIS website.
8	<p>Committee work plan</p> <p>The Chair has asked for any agencies who are interested in providing a 10-15 minute presentation on their organisation, to contact the SFELC mailbox and the Committee welcome representatives to future meetings.</p> <p>2025 dates have been issued to the Committee; the Secretariat is in the process of contacting those against unassigned items to assign to 2025 meetings.</p> <p><u>Main SFELC Committee Workplan</u></p> <p><u>21 March 2025 – Microsoft Teams / In Person (TBC)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC <p>Please send in any suggestions for the SFELC Committee work plan to SFELC@fss.scot</p>
9 & 10	<p>Food Standards Scotland Update / SAFER Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSS have had several visits including Canadian authorities who were over for an audit of cutting plants, cold stores and abattoirs. FSS have also recently finished a dairy audit from Sante F, Lorna Murray thanked the Local Authorities and officers involved in this. FSS have a heavy audit schedule that Sante F are intending for 2025, and the first will be on live bivalve molluscs around February-March. • There is a paper going to the December Executive Management Board (EMT) on the Food Law Rating System to discuss ways forward, considering alternate ratings within bandings with the intention for this to be an interim measure before being considered against ambitions for SAFER. This was the recommendation from the FLRS report. • FSS are looking at the 'Fife Pilot' and are taking a paper to the EMT meeting in December to advise other managers within the organisation of this pilot. • There is work being carried out on cultivated protein where there will be a 2-year trial taking place. FSS have partnered with FSA on this to consider safety and labelling considerations, consumer appetite, and potential legal change necessary. FSS Policy colleagues are leading on this. • Discussions have been ongoing on research programme activity for 2025-26, FSS have proposed social research in relation to business compliance. • 3 HACCP courses are currently being run. Around 51 officers expressed interest but only 35 can be accommodated this year. Internal discussions have been ongoing on future training possibilities for LA officers and how best to make this as accessible as possible. • Work is ongoing in relation to SAFER and the CivTech programme, which allows for digital developments and innovation within governance framework. There will be an 18-week piece of work in terms of discovery phase and

	<p>research phase. It is likely that during this, LAs and industry will be contacted to gather their views as part of the research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All LA members should now have the Resource Calculator. • FSS Comms team are looking for people to user test the website, details of this are in the Monthly Enforcement Report.
11	Sub-Committee Chair Updates
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sub-Committee Chairs have pulled together a report with an overview of the different groups with updates. This can be found on the SFELC KHub page (link). Lynne Bissett ran through the updates within the document at the meeting.
12	Food Liaison Group Chair Updates
	<p><u>Lothian and Borders Food Liaison Group</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil <p><u>North of Scotland Food Liaison Group</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil <p><u>West of Scotland Food Liaison Group</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions were had around large dairy manufacturers moving more towards using best before dates and away from use-by dates. <p><u>East of Scotland Food Liaison Group</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions were had on virtual brands on takeaways on online platforms, a discussion needs to be had on how LAs deal with these requests for putting on virtual menus / brands and the implications for FHIS.
13	Update by Non-Enforcement Members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachel Mirfattahi highlighted that the IFST will be holding an event next year in the springtime at the new seed pod hub opening in Aberdeen. Information will go out to IFST members, but IFST are keen to have FSS and LA colleagues too, more information will be available next year. • Rachel Mirfattahi highlighted that Specialist Cheesemakers Association sent out an email recently to try and arrange a meeting with FSS, Scottish Government, and LAs to discuss primary authorities. Andy Morrison confirmed this has been received and has gone to the relevant authorities.
14	AOCB
	Nil
15	Review of Action Points
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If anyone is interested in becoming a member of REHIS or interested in any of the training opportunities highlighted in the REHIS presentation to contact Sandra Williamson at REHIS. • Scott Anderson at Scottish Bakers and Sandra Williamson at REHIS to meet to discuss schools' programmes in relation to education on food safety. • Rachel Mirfattahi to send details on SmartSTEMs food and drink event being held next year to secretariat to circulate round the committee. • The Chair to provide information to Andrea Carson / Hazel Stevenson to ask Society about EH ambassadors becoming STEM ambassadors.

16	Meeting Dates
	<p>Date of next meeting: 21 March 2025</p> <p>Venue: Microsoft Teams</p> <p>Then: 13 June 2025 05 September 2025 21 November 2025</p>