

Agenda items for 2026

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This is a paper for discussion. It does not reflect the views of the Committee and should not be cited.

Ongoing items

7. There are a number of ongoing items, either on the current agenda or scheduled for further discussion at a future meeting:

- COT input into the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) review of the maternal diet. Topics are expected to include echinacea, tea, phytoestrogens, selenium and vitamin E.
- Biologically based food contact materials.
- Ashwagandha.
- Garcinia cambogia.
- COT Working Group on PFAS.
- COT Working Group on Guidance.

Upcoming items

8. Upcoming items may include:

- Arsenic - review of the recent Health-Based Guidance Values from EFSA and JECFA with a view to establishing the most appropriate for risk assessment purposes.
- Dioxins - review of the final EFSA opinion when available.
- Acrylamide – An FSA call for data on acrylamide levels in foods has recently been completed. The Committee may be asked to consider the implications of UK exposures.
- Fluoride – review toxicity information with respect to fluoride in relation to neurotoxicity, effects on bone and effects on the thyroid, and to consider the potential risks in the context of UK exposure levels through dental products, drinking water, and other exposure sources.
- Nanoplastics- Currently there is no internationally agreed definition of a nanoplastic however some organisations have proposed certain criteria. Nanoplastics are usually defined as synthetic particles or heavily modified natural particles with a high polymer content with a diameter from 1 nm to 100nm. The COT has reviewed the potential effects of microplastics by the oral and inhalation routes with statement being published in 2021 and 2024, respectively. Given the increase in the database, Members will wish to consider whether it would be appropriate to consider nanoparticles separately. The proposal is to review the recent data for the potential effects nanoplastics via the oral route.

Proposed Workshops

9. The two most recent COT workshops have been “Gut Reactions: Xenobiotics and the microbiome” and “Exploring Artificial Intelligence in Chemical Risk Assessment” which took place in October 2024 and 2025 respectively.

10. A possible topic for the 2026 workshop could be weight of evidence assessment, do Members have any suggestions?

COC and COM horizon scanning

11. Following discussions by COC on horizon scanning over the past few years, the Committee has agreed to hold a list of topics categorised by topics that will be progressed, topics on which a watching brief is being kept or which are not yet prioritised, and topics which have been raised but are not considered a priority or which are outside of COC’s remit. This table is provided in Annex A.

12. COM continues to monitor activities at OECD on the development of Detailed Review Papers (DRPs) as well as proposals for new Test Guidelines (TGs): papers on error corrected sequencing and recent advances in γ H2AX biomarker-based genotoxicity assays will be considered in 2026.

13. In addition, the literature and specific meeting agendas are periodically scanned for any interesting advances in mutagenicity and genotoxicity methods for the detection of DNA damage or non-genotoxic mechanisms.

14. A more formal horizon scan strategy has not been developed/implemented by COM.