

UPDATE ON THE WORK OF OTHER ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Purpose

1. This paper outlines issues from other advisory committees that may be of interest to **COT**.

Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS)

Last meeting: 2nd April 2019

Formally established in April 2018, the Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS) provides expert strategic advice to the FSA on the use of the social sciences. The Committee met for the fourth time on 5th December 2019 to give updated on activities since the last Committee meeting (April 19). Updates were given from each working group:

- **The Assurance Working Group** had discussed relevant FSA processes and identified future themes for the working group around: tender activity, post project reviews and guidance for drafting research specification and evaluation tender application.
- **The EU Exit Working Group** had provided valuable input into evidence specification for FSA planned commissions. The group will continue to provide advice on approaches currently takes by the AU to assess the economic impact of EU exit and to identify research gaps.
- **The Risk Communications Group** had advised on the specification, commissioning and reporting of a review of the current state-of-play of available risk communication guidance that is potentially applicable to food.
- **Horizon Scanning Working Group** had identified a risk of duplicating efforts as there is already an established FSA workstream on horizon scanning with annual workshop events being held with input from the Scientific Advisory Committees (SAC). The Committee has subsequently decided that instead of a separate working group it would prefer to feed into horizon scanning alongside the SAC.

Minutes from the 5th December meeting are under review and will be published on the website in due course. The next open meeting of the ACSS is proposed for June 2020.

Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)

Last meeting: 17th October 2019.

Next ACMSF meeting is scheduled for Thursday 30 January 2020 at Clive House.

- ACMSF Terms of Reference (The committee will be asked to comment on their terms of reference).
- Ad Hoc Group on non-proteolytic *Clostridium botulinum* and vacuum and modified atmosphere packaged foods (*The Chair of the Ad Hoc Group on non-proteolytic Clostridium botulinum and vacuum and modified atmosphere packaged foods will present the group's report to discuss*).
- Tickborne Encephalitis virus risks to public health (The Committee will be asked to comment on draft risk assessment).
- Food and You Survey: Wave 5 Findings (*The Committee will receive a presentation from the Food Standards Agency on the Food and You Survey: Wave 5 Findings*).
- Areas Research Interest (*The Committee will receive a presentation on the Food Standards Agency's proposed areas of research interest*).
- Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group (*Dr Paul Cook will update Members on the outcome of the EFIG meeting held on 6 December 2019*).
- Proposed Horizon Scanning Workshop (The Committee will be briefed on a proposed horizon scanning workshop).
- **Committee update**
- Ad Hoc Group on QACs and Biocides used in food processing (The Chair of the group will provide an update on the group's activities).
- Update on estimates of norovirus burden. The Committee will be updated on the findings of an FSA funded study on the estimation of norovirus burden attributed to the food chain. This item will be considered in closed session.

Next meeting – 25 June 2020.

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)

Last meeting: 27th November 2019

- **Traditional Food Dossiers:** The Committee assessed a traditional food dossier for Coffee Leaves. The summary for consultation is being constructed and will be up for a consultation once PRUDAH is ceased.
- **Looking Forwards:** The Committee complete a horizon scan covering four topic areas, the circularly economy, new protein sources, Genetic editing technologies and healthy eating trends. The information will be collated and will be assessed to see if any of the points need to be taken forwards.
- **Terms of Reference:** The Committee reviewed the terms of references to provide comments and assist in its re-formatting.
- **Allergy Workshop:** The Committee partook in an allergy workshop. This was led by experts who covered the scientific basis of developing allergy and what this meant for risk assessment in novel foods.

Next meeting: 12th of February 2020

The agenda is subject to applications that are received ahead of the meeting but are likely to include discussion of notifications for traditional food from third countries and GM workshop.

FSA Science Council

Last Meeting: 27th June 2019 (Open session)

The Science Council met in Open Plenary Session on the 27th June and the following key areas were covered:

- A report was given by the Science Council Chair on how she and the FSA are exploring the building of stronger relationships with other Scientific Advisory Committees within the FSA and wider Government.
- The Chief Scientific Adviser reported on the Science Capability Review, a cross-government exercise commissioned by Treasury, and the recent National Audit Office report on the FSA.
- The FSA's Deputy Director of Science updated the Science Council on the implementation of the Science Councils Working Group 1 and 2 recommendations, informing members that the FSA has made good progress in building science capacity well as developing a robust risk analysis process.
- In a report on Working Group 3 on Horizon Scanning, its Chair Prof John O'Brien informed members that that groups report and recommendations had been welcomed by the Board and the FSA Chair, Heather Hancock, had thanked the Working Group for its work, saying that what had been delivered was in excess of expectations. Going forward the FSA will ensure that high-level horizon scanning is embedded into the FSA's work.
- The Working Group 4 Chair, Prof Patrick Wolfe reported on discussions on the Internet of Food Things Network (IoFT) and Data Trust Proof-of-Value study that

will be delivered in 12 months. Following discussions at the FSA Board on food hypersensitivity, there was a closed workshop after the morning plenary meeting to consider how the Science Council may provide further support and assurance in this area, with the FSA Director of Policy, Rebecca Sudworth.

Update

The Working Group Workshop on **12th Sept 2019** unpicked what the Science Council can do to support FSA initiatives on Food Hypersensitivity, discussing Terms of Reference for a new working group. Progress on Working Group 4 was also discussed with an updated delivery schedule proposed and timing for delivery of the Phase 1 report. Finally, the Science Council started to explore key principles when setting outcome-based measures to determined success.

Next meeting: Open Plenary session on 17 December 2019.

This meeting will include discussion of progress on Working Group 4 and the new Working Group 5 on food hypersensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE)

The Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF)

ACAF has not met since June 2019. Although the Committee was scheduled to meet in October 2019 and February 2020 both these meetings have been cancelled.

Next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 2 June 2020.

Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COC)

Last meeting: 7th November 2019

The Committee heard a presentation on Toxtracker and considered items including; a guidance statement on potency estimation and points of departure; risk assessment of carcinogenicity, risk assessment of multiple exposure. The committee then undertook some horizon scanning.

Next meeting: Thursday 12th March 2020

The Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COM)

Last meeting: 10th October 2019

There are three vacancies – two expert and one lay member. Three members including the chair are up for renewal.

The agenda included a presentation on Tox tracker, continuing the update of the COM guidance documents and notes on the joint workshop on the interpretation of genotoxicity data, CBD oil and patulin.

Next meeting: tbc

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)

Last meeting: 18 June 2019

SACN discussed the draft report on saturated fats and health, and the joint SACN, NHSE, Diabetes UK draft report on low carbohydrate diets and type 2 diabetes. SACN heard a presentation on the NDNS years 1-9 report and discussed the findings. SACN heard updates from working groups and subgroups and discussed updates from government departments.

Agenda items are likely to include updates from working groups and subgroups. SACN are also likely to discuss the joint SACN, NHSE, Diabetes UK draft report on low carbohydrate diets for type 2 diabetes and the draft position statement on older adults.

Next meeting: Next meeting: 5 November 2019

COT Secretariat

January 2020