



Food
Standards
Agency
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13/12/17
Working Group 1

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WORKING GROUP 1
CAPABILITY AND ASSURANCE

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**OVERALL PACKAGE TO
DELIVER**
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Question set by FSA Chairman Heather Hancock on 16 June 2017

What: To advise the Board on how it can be confident that FSA has access to the right science capability and we are using it to the best of our ability

Why: Heather Hancock noted that the FSA wants to reinvigorate science at the heart of the organisation, ensure access to the best capability and capacity and have a good framework for this. The FSA wants advice on the smartest and most efficient way to get the right science, considering the balance of in-house and external expertise, ensuring appropriate independence and impartiality, and achieving value for money.

When – Council to provide advice in next six months maximum

Ways of working

1. The Working Group is Chaired by Laura Green and the members are Sandy Thomas, Sarah O'Brien, Patrick Wolfe and Paul Turner
2. The Council Chair, Working Group Chair and FSA Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) developed the Terms of Reference for the Working Group
3. The Working Group is taking an iterative approach working with the CSA and FSA officials
4. The Working Group met on 30 September and held a teleconference on 14 November, and it testing working by correspondence. The details of its meetings are on the Science Council website

Overall package to deliver

The Group is taking a phased approach so that the Council can deliver useful outputs as it works. Phase one will focus on accessing science and phase two on using science:

Phase 1 – identifying and accessing the science FSA needs

Establishing how FSA can ask the correct questions, gather / create evidence in the best way, and has the internal expertise and intelligent customer capability

Phase 2 – Using science to inform decisions and policies

Ensuring that evidence is used effectively and transparently by the FSA in decision-making at executive and Board level

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WORKING GROUP PROGRESS PHASE 1

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Progress

Approach taken by the WG:

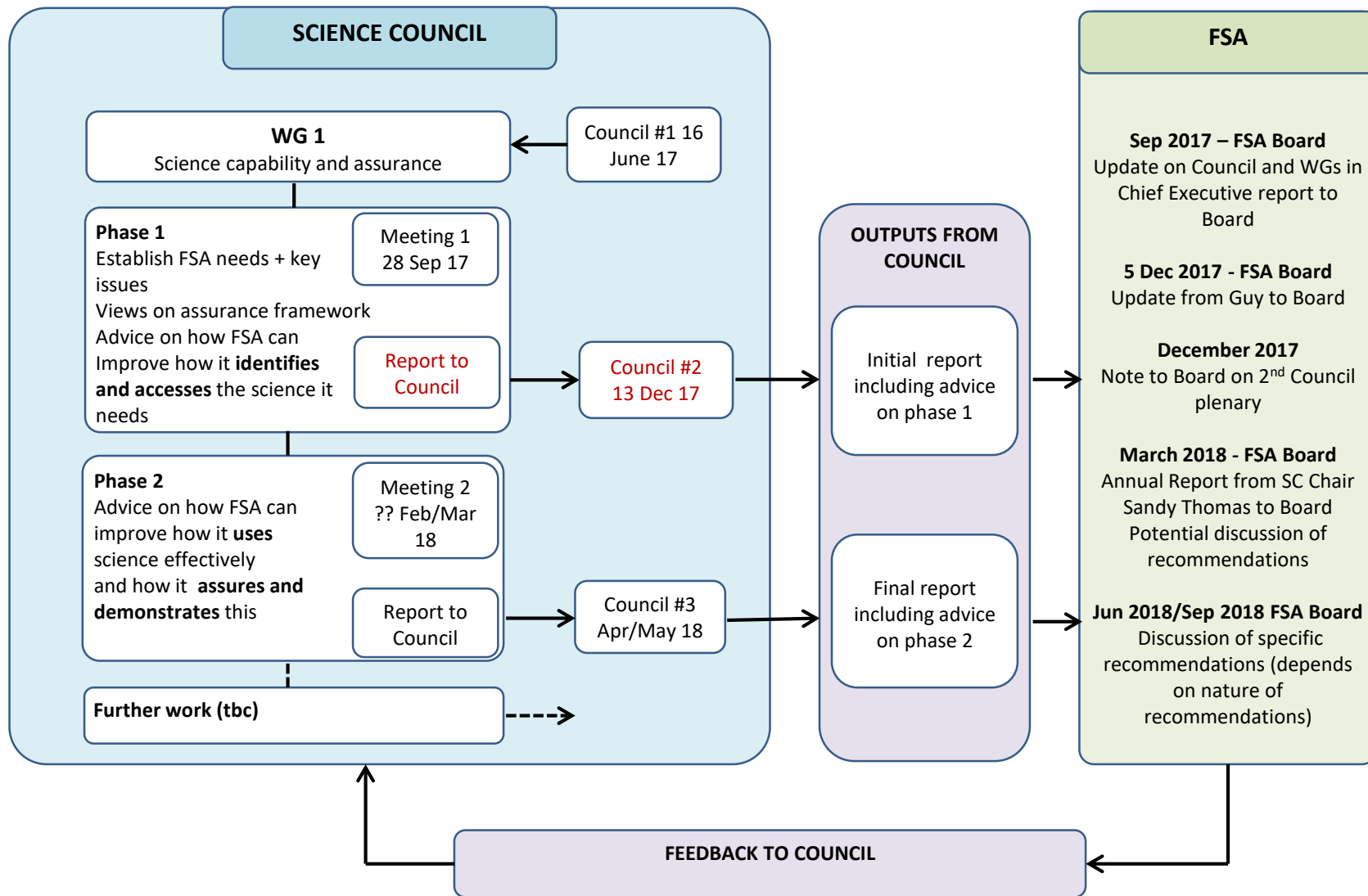
The WG considered strengths and weaknesses of current FSA processes using a heat map developed by FSA

The WG agreed five high level issues where the WG could advise:

- Issue 1: Identifying new ideas, groups and expertise
- Issue 2: Accessing the science the FSA needs
- Issue 3: The role of Scientific Advisory Committees and external expert advice
- Issue 4: Internal science capability: intelligent customer function
- Issue 5: Assurance

The phased approach offers preliminary advice within 6 months but it became apparent very quickly that the request is complex and the overall task will take longer than six months.

Science Council process – WG 1



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DRAFT PRODUCT PHASE 1

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Initial conclusions, advice and draft recommendations from the WG

The WG identified some key elements of good practice for each issue with draft recommendations as to how FSA could improve

These will be developed further in Phase 2, particularly on issues 4 and 5

Paper SC 2-3-a has the detail for each of the 5 issues on the main observations, key elements of good practice and the draft recommendations

Questions for the Science Council

The WG would like input on the detail in the paper:

- Are there issues or suggestions which have been missed?
- Is there any other advice to add?