

FINAL MINUTES

FSA Science Council

Final Minutes of 2nd Meeting: 13 December 2017

Location: Conference rooms A and B, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH

Attendees: See Annex 1

Materials: Agenda and meeting papers¹

Summary of Actions:

| Number | Action | Owner | Deadline |
|-----------|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Dec 17-1 | Publish as final the minutes of the first meeting held on 16 June 2017 | Secretariat | 31 Jan 2017 |
| Dec 17-2 | Invite comments from Sarah O'Brien on interaction of the Council with the other Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs) | Chair | 31 Jan 2018 |
| Dec 17-3 | Consider scheduling longer Working Group and Council meetings | Secretariat | 31 Jan 2018 |
| Dec 17-4 | Consider how best to provide information to the Council on relevant aspects of the FSA's work | Secretariat | 31 Jan 2018 |
| Dec 17-5 | Include in the Working Group's report the need for the FSA to increase number of FSA science staff with external visibility and profile | Laura Green/ Secretariat | 31 Jan 2018 |
| Dec 17-6 | Use Working Group 2 recommendations 1 through 4 as core principles for the three Working Groups | Secretariat | 31 Jan 2018 |
| Dec 17-7 | Provide briefing material to Science Council on the other FSA SACs | Secretariat | 31 Jan 2018 |
| Dec 17-8 | Discuss further how the Council could engage with the SACs | Chair and CSA | 31 Jan 2018 |
| Dec 17-9 | Share the GACS report on data exploitation with Patrick Wolfe for consideration on what further work the Council could undertake in this area | Secretariat, Patrick Wolfe | 31 Jan 2018 |
| Dec 17-10 | Discuss future work programme and timing for discussion on this with the FSA Chair, CSA and Secretariat. | Chair, CSA and Secretariat | 31 Jan 2018 |
| Dec 17-11 | Inform the Secretariat of any changes to their declarations of interests | Members | 31 Dec 2017 for current changes (then ongoing as they arise) |
| Dec 17-12 | Circulate draft minutes to Members for comment within 2 weeks of the meeting | Secretariat | 20 Dec 2017 |

¹ <https://science-council.food.gov.uk/science-council-meetings>

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Agenda item 1: Welcome and introductions

1. The Chair welcomed attendees to the second meeting of the Science Council. Joining the meeting were FSA Chairman Heather Hancock, Deputy FSA Chair Laura Sandys and FSA Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) Guy Poppy. A full list of attendees is provided at Annexe 1.
2. The Council's register of interests is published on its website. Members confirmed to the Chair that they had no specific interests to declare in relation to the meeting agenda and no additional interests to add to the register at the time.
3. The Chair outlined the agenda and the format for the meeting.

Agenda item 2: Draft minutes of 1st meeting and actions arising (Papers: Draft minutes and SC 2-1)

4. The draft minutes of the first meeting 16 June 2017 were tabled for agreement. A draft had been circulated to Members after the meeting and Members' changes were reflected in the draft that was then published on the Science Council website. Members formally agreed the minutes as final.

Action December-17-1 – Secretariat to publish as final the minutes of the first meeting held on 16 June 2017

5. Gwen Aherne in the Secretariat noted that the actions arising from the first meeting were either complete or covered in other papers for the meeting.

Agenda item 3: Science Council Chair's report

6. The Science Council Chair reported back on engagement activity including her attending the FSA Board dinner on 5 December (with other Council Members) and a workshop of FSA Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) Chairs on 30 November which she attended as Chair of the Council. These opportunities for engagement were very useful.
7. At the Board dinner, she had provided a brief progress update on the Science Council work, and there was particular interest from Board members on horizon scanning. It had been beneficial to have other Science Council Members attend the dinner. The Chair encouraged further opportunities for Members to engage with the Board in the future alongside formal reporting and engagement.
8. The SAC Chairs' workshop provided the first opportunity for the Council Chair to meet with the Chairs of the other SACs that advise the FSA in this roughly biannual workshop with the FSA CSA and senior officials. The Chair found it a useful forum for engagement and discussion of the issues that each Committee is facing. Building on this, the Chair had included at agenda item 8 an opportunity for the Council to consider what forms effective interaction with the other SACs could take in the future. The Chair noted she would particularly welcome comments from Science Council Member Sarah O'Brien on this, given her former role as Chair of the Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF). There had been some discussion about the new advisory committee on social sciences to which the FSA is currently inviting

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applications². The Council looked forward to interacting with that Committee once established.

Action December-17-2 - Chair to invite comments from Sarah O'Brien on interaction of the Council with the other Scientific Advisory Committees

9. The Chair outlined her impressions of the Science Council Working Groups' progress, of which the main points were:
 - a. The Working Groups have made good and steady progress and the Members have contributed significant effort to this with each Member on two of the Groups and the Chair on all three. The membership brings a good blend of expertise and perspectives.
 - b. It has been valuable to have a clear steer from the Board on the top priority questions for the Council to answer, and the Council regularly returns to these questions to check progress against them.
 - c. There is very good engagement and support from the CSA Guy Poppy and the Secretariat. There is also a good relationship developing with the FSA, in particular through the contribution of Guy Poppy and other FSA officials at Working Group meetings and the frankness from the FSA about its needs and opportunities to improve.
 - d. The phased approach to the work is necessary to have a realistic approach to deliver useful outputs for the FSA. The horizon scanning working group (Working Group 3) is working to a longer timetable than the other two.
 - e. There are common themes emerging from the three groups' initial considerations of different aspects of the FSA's science capability and practice. There is a lot of good practice and capability in the FSA as well as areas that can be strengthened, including opportunities to be more strategic, consistent, and to articulate how the FSA works and how it follows good practice.
 - f. The Council Chair and CSA noted that the rapid progress and pace has been possible due to significant contribution and time from the Council Chair and Members, and the FSA and Secretariat. If this level of resource and input continues the Council can look forward to continued progress at pace.

10. The Chair invited overall impressions from Members on the work to date, noting there would be further opportunities to discuss this in more detail during the meeting. The following points were made by the Council:
 - a. Close and direct interaction with the FSA Board is motivating and encouraging.
 - b. The Council needs to maintain focus and be selective, and make sure it remains strategic.
 - c. Longer Working Group and Council meetings may be needed.
 - d. Discussion on technology has been limited. There is a question to consider about what technology the FSA needs to access and use in the future.

² <https://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2017/16782/applications-invited-for-new-advisory-committee-for-social-sciences>

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- e. There is a need to be clear about how and when the handover of advice from the Council to the FSA takes place, how the FSA will use that advice, and how it will demonstrate that it has used it.
- f. Members will require more input and information on how the FSA works, to inform its own work. The update on FSA science and assurance to the FSA Board Business Committee 6 December 2017 is a useful, recent reference document.³

11. The FSA Chairman responded to the question on how the FSA will receive and respond to the Science Council's advice. Broadly, the Board would expect to consider and take final decisions on advice relating to strategic aspects (such as, for example, the adoption of FSA principles). It would look to the FSA Executive to develop proposals to operationalise recommendations, working closely with the FSA CSA, and to elaborate what this could mean in practice for the FSA, and how the Board could be reassured that the actions it has agreed were being delivered. The Board would wish to take a view on this in the context of its role to direct the FSA's priorities and resourcing at a strategic level, and to check how these were being delivered in practice. The Chairman added that the Science Council should quite rightly take an ongoing interest in how the FSA responds to its advice, and would have a role in commenting on how the FSA is doing on implementing the measures it has adopted. She would expect the Executive and Secretariat to ensure that effective feedback and dialogue takes place on this.

Action December-17-3 - Secretariat to consider scheduling longer Working Group and Council meetings

Action December 17-4 - Secretariat to consider how best to provide information to the Council on relevant aspects of the FSA's work

Agenda item 4 - Update from Guy Poppy, FSA Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) (Paper SC 2-2)

12. The CSA provided an update on FSA science and on his recent engagement activity. He outlined the FSA's strategic priorities which include FSA preparations for the UK exiting the European Union and the FSA's Regulating Our Future programme. He updated the Council on FSA work on surveillance, developments in the FSA's social science capability, and introduced his recently published CSA report on the FSA's flagship Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. Guy outlined his own role and the benefits of his involvement in the government CSA network.
13. The Chair invited Members' comments and questions on Guy's report and on any other aspects of FSA science, or science relevant to the FSA. The following points were raised:
- a. Council Members asked whether a business with the highest Food Hygiene Rating of 5 could, hypothetically, still engage in food fraud. The FSA Chairman and CSA noted that this was possible, however it was felt to be less likely for such establishments, since to achieve higher ratings businesses must demonstrate management to a high standard, which should extend to proper management of areas other than food hygiene. Guy noted that food hygiene ratings are being used by other organisations as an indicator for regulatory compliance in other areas.

³ <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/fsa171215n.pdf>

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- b. Council Members noted that allergen management is not considered as part of the FHRS at present; the FSA Chairman confirmed that the FSA is actively considering how the scheme could be developed or improved, and that food standards, including allergens, will be part of those considerations⁴.
- c. Members welcomed the report from Guy on the FSA's updated advice on consumption of runny eggs by vulnerable consumers. The revised advice, based on the latest scientific evidence, means that people vulnerable to infection or who are likely to suffer serious symptoms from food poisoning (such as infants, children, pregnant women and elderly people) can now safely eat raw or lightly cooked eggs that are produced under the British Lion Code of Practice. Science Council Member Paul Turner noted that the updated advice has led to positive and unexpected developments in other scientific fields, such as on the ease of early introduction of allergenic foods into the infant diet (lightly cooked/softer eggs will be easier to introduce than hard boiled eggs).

Agenda item 5: Report from Working Group 1 Science Capability and Assurance, and Council Discussion (Papers SC 2-3-a and SC 2-3-b)

14. The Council Chair invited the Working Group Chair Laura Green to introduce the report from this Working Group on Phase 1 of its work. The Group was established after the Council's first meeting in June 2017 to answer the question put to the Council by the FSA Chairman: to advise the Board on how it can get confident that the FSA has access to the right science capability and capacity.
15. Laura Green outlined the Working Group's membership and approach⁵, and noted that the Working Group's draft recommendations on Phase 1 were included in its written report (Paper SC 2-3-a). The Working Group is taking a phased approach - phase one focusses on how the FSA identifies and accesses the scientific evidence, advice and capabilities it needs; phase two will address how the FSA uses these inputs to inform its decisions and policies. Having reviewed material from the FSA on its current capabilities and practice, the Working Group has agreed five high-level issues which are key to a good use of science, where there was a need or opportunity to improve, and where the Working Group was best placed to advise:
 - i. Identifying new ideas, groups and expertise
 - ii. Accessing the science the FSA needs
 - iii. Scientific Advisory Committees and external expert advice
 - iv. Internal science capability: intelligent customer function
 - v. Assurance
16. For each of these issues the report covers the Working Group's main observations, key elements of good practice, and draft recommendations. There are also some issues which were identified during Phase 1 which would be of benefit for the Working Group

⁴ Note from the FSA – inspections that are used to derive food hygiene ratings do include cross contamination controls, under the Food Safety Act, thereby including allergens from that perspective. The provision of allergen information for consumers, which is covered by The Food Information Regulations 2014, enabling local authorities to enforce the European Food Information to Consumers Regulation No 1169/2011, is not currently included as part of a food hygiene inspection.

⁵ Further information on the Working Group's membership and its meetings is available on the Science Council website at this link: <https://science-council.food.gov.uk/science-council-subgroups>

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to explore as its work continues and moves from Phase 1 to 2. Laura Green noted plans for Phase 2 will include her meeting key FSA staff to better understand how the FSA uses science and to gauge its intelligent customer capability.

17. The Chair invited comments from Members on the Working Group's report. Members welcomed and endorsed the work so far, and raised the following points and questions:
- a. Issue 1 – The FSA is moving in the right direction in identifying and engaging with new expertise; however, it relies too heavily on Guy's engagement and profile as CSA, and should involve a wider range of FSA science staff in this and raise their external visibility and profile.
 - b. The themes coming out of this Working Group report cut across the other two Working Groups.
 - c. Can the Working Group advise on where the priority is for investment, what is optimal investment, and what activities should be undertaken in-house or brought in? The FSA Chairman noted that it will be for the FSA to consider implications for science spend and resourcing; the Council should set out its view on what the FSA needs in terms of capability and the right science and evidence.
 - d. The challenge in recruiting high quality scientific staff, which is a challenge shared by universities, can be somewhat addressed by building broad networks through science collaboration.
 - e. The Working Group may be able to advise on conferences, meetings and interfaces which the FSA could get involved in; this may be more of an ongoing or regular role for the Working Group or for the Council as a whole.
 - f. The approach to assurance and capability should be flexible to anticipate how things might change, and should include an assessment of impact, and the extent to which good practice is purposeful or serendipitous.
 - g. Examples of good practice (such as the evidence-based advice on consumption of runny eggs) should be highlighted so that groups outside the FSA are attracted to work in, or with the FSA.

Action December-17-5 – Working Group 1 Chair and Secretariat to include in the Working Group's report the need for the FSA to increase number of FSA science staff with external visibility and profile

18. On the question on optimal science investment, the FSA Chairman noted that the FSA Chief Executive is responsible for deployment of FSA resource; the CSA has a role in overseeing the effectiveness of this in relation to accessing and using science and evidence; the Board is interested in assurance and impact of science; the Council's work bridges the link between the FSA Executive and the Board in this respect.

Agenda item 6: Report from Working Group 2 Risk and Uncertainty, and Council Discussion (Papers SC 2-4-a and SC 2-4-b)

19. The Council Chair invited the Working Group Chair Mark Woolhouse to introduce the report from this Working Group on Phase 1 of its work. The Group was established after the Council's first meeting in June 2017 to answer the question put to the Council by the FSA Chairman: What does the Council advise to be best practice in establishing and communicating risk and certainty?
20. Mark Woolhouse outlined the Working Group's membership and approach⁴ and noted that the Working Group is taking a phased approach - Phase 1 focusses on principles

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and how the FSA establishes risk and certainty, and Phase 2 will look at best practice in communication of risk and uncertainty. Mark outlined the progress in Phase 1, which included producing draft principles for establishing risk and uncertainty, and initial recommendations. The draft principles had been developed through close discussion with the FSA including its risk assessment teams, and in consultation with the Chairs of the other FSA SACs. They are set out in the accompanying Paper (SC 2-4-b). He noted some key points from the work so far:

- a. This is a significant undertaking but a good exercise for the FSA to do to ensure a continuous process of improvement and that its approach is clearly set out and formally documented.
- b. The draft principles are a work in progress and the FSA may wish to develop or consult on them further before finally adopting them.
- c. It is important that the FSA has ownership of the best practice principles (rather than the Working Group or Council) and it is for the FSA to determine how they should be operationalised – the Working Group has identified some options.
- d. The Working Group can assist the FSA in understanding how it can make the principles operational.
- e. The Group had identified some areas which will need further work including further elaboration of advice on the approach to uncertainty. There are also aspects which it felt were more for the FSA to consider and develop, including whether and how the approach could be adapted or expanded to cover other types of risk besides impacts on health, and how the FSA determines acceptability of risks.

21. The Chair invited comments from Members on the Working Group's report. Members welcomed and endorsed the work so far, and raised the following points and questions:

- a. The formulation of phase one recommendations 1-4 are a useful structure to adopt across Working Groups 1 and 2, and possibly also for future topics, to provide a consistent approach.
- b. Mark Rolfe, Science Council Member representing citizens' perspectives, noted that the FSA's advice needs to be trusted and public confidence can be affected by other things besides direct impacts on health. The Working Group had therefore made a recommendation (number 8) that the FSA should consider types of risk other than those that relate directly to impacts on health (such as related to food authenticity and fraud) in the wider application of its advice and consider whether the principles for health risks might apply or be adaptable to these other risks.
- c. There is an opportunity for the FSA to be ambitious, and to build consistency, traceability and transparency into its operational approach which will increase public trust.
- d. The Working Group wanted to understand the magnitude of the challenge to the FSA of implementing the recommendations, noting that making the principles operational is a significant task and shouldn't be underestimated – but it does help to deliver ownership.
- e. Experience shows that the culture of the organisation will be fundamental to successful operationalisation and to developing a position as a leader in good practice.

Action December-17-6 – Secretariat to use Working Group 2 recommendations 1 through 4 as core principles for the three Working Groups

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22. The FSA Chairman noted that the FSA is undertaking work to develop overarching performance measures for public trust in food and to understand the contribution the FSA makes to this.
23. The FSA CSA noted that in his view the FSA teams can deliver implementation of the recommendations provided that they are properly resourced and that staff are not diverted to competing priorities.

Agenda item 7: Report from Working Group 3 Food Systems Risks and Horizon Scanning, and Council Discussion (Papers SC 2-5-a and SC 2-5-b)

24. The Council Chair invited the Working Group Chair John O'Brien to introduce the report from this Working Group on Phase 1 of its work. The Group was established after the Council's first meeting in June 2017 to answer the question put to the Council by the FSA Chairman: What should the FSA do to improve its horizon scanning and its understanding of global food systems risks (and opportunities)?
25. John O'Brien outlined the Working Group's membership and approach⁴ and noted that the Working Group is taking a phased approach. In the first phase, the Group had identified a need for a desk study, to synthesise information and insights from existing work on global food systems and to draw out the implications for the UK and for the FSA. It had defined the scope and approach for the study, which was in the process of being commissioned and was planned to start in January 2018. The Group had also developed some initial recommendations on how the FSA could develop its capability for horizon scanning (HS). The Group had identified some common themes across HS and surveillance and had received a report on the FSA's surveillance programme at its first meeting.
26. The second phase will involve working closely on delivery of the desk study and elaboration of the implications and recommendations for the FSA, including on how to maintain and develop its HS capability. The approach includes extensive expert and stakeholder input to the study and to the elaboration of implications for the FSA including at a workshop planned for spring 2018.
27. The Chair invited comments from Members on the Working Group's report. Members welcomed and endorsed the work so far, and raised the following points and questions:
 - It will be helpful to identify who is good at HS outside the food area and bring them into the work - the extended peer review input and workshop are intended to provide for this.
 - The use of scenarios is one way to foster discussion and help people to think beyond the status quo and current paradigms.
 - The FSA has some current capability and activity in HS but it is relatively modest and could be more strategic and connected, and address the longer-term and wider views. The SACs carry out some HS which, understandably, tends to focus on their immediate areas.
 - As well as delivering a picture of current food systems and implications for the FSA the work will need to consider how the FSA can maintain and refresh its knowledge and insights in this area, to ensure it can help shape an ongoing capability.
 - This capability will need to be able to capture weaker signals and to help the FSA deal with the uncertainty associated with HS insights.

Agenda item 8 Engaging with the FSA Scientific Advisory Committees

28. The Chair had requested this item on the agenda to discuss with Members how the Council can engage effectively with the other FSA SACs. This follows a discussion at a workshop with SAC Chairs on 30 November, a roughly biannual workshop which the Council Chair attended for the first time. The workshop generated some useful ideas on how to build engagement, such as: invited presentations at Council meetings from SAC Chairs on their Committee's activities; inviting SAC Chairs' input on early scoping of Working Group tasks (especially to help to identify relevant existing work and capability); Council Chair or Members attending SAC meetings; pairing each member of the Council with one SAC; including SACs in Council work as and when a joint interest arises (this is already happening through some SAC input to current Working Groups).
29. The CSA noted that the SAC Chairs had found the Council's predecessor, the General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS), to be a useful forum for fostering engagement and cross-Committee working (under the GACS model the Chairs of the SACs were members of GACS *ex officio*). However, it had tended to skew the discussion in GACS towards those aspects of science which were close to the SACs' areas of interest/expertise. The SAC Chairs workshops seek to create a similar opportunity for engagement and discussion. The workshop model is still evolving in terms of how best to foster discussion and how often, but the FSA plans roughly biannual workshops.
30. The CSA noted that SACs undertake horizon scanning (though in practice it is sometimes very focused on SAC remit and near-term issues) so there may be an opportunity to involve the SACs in phase 2 of Working Group 3.
31. The Council asked to have an overview on how much the Committees work on strategic versus operational issues. To gain a better understanding of the SACs' role and work, Members asked to have some briefing material such as the agendas and minutes for recent meetings. This would help Members to familiarise themselves with the Committees and identify appropriate areas/routes for collaboration and engagement.

Action December-17-7 – Secretariat to provide briefing material to Science Council on the other FSA SACs

Action December-17-8- Council Chair and CSA to discuss further how the Council could engage with the SACs

Agenda item 8 (9) Update on FSA preparations for the UK's Exit from the European Union

32. The CSA, Guy Poppy introduced this item, to update the Council on FSA preparations for the UK exiting the EU. He noted the importance of a joined-up approach and that the FSA is represented on some forty cross-government groups and has attended select committee meetings as appropriate. The Chair invited Carles Orri (the FSA's EU Exit Risk Assessment Workstream Lead) to provide an update on FSA preparations.
33. Carles noted that the FSA approach is outlined in the September 2017 Board paper⁶. The plans have been carefully developed to provide the flexibility to respond to a wide range of possible negotiated outcomes. The FSA priority across all scenarios is to ensure that as the UK prepares to leave the EU there remains a robust and effective

⁶ FSA Board Paper September 2017, <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/fsa170904.pdf>

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regulatory regime for maintaining the safety of food, for the benefit of UK consumers and of the UK food industry. The FSA is working closely with other government departments to understand the potential impacts, including on our relationship with EFSA and other organisations; the future relationship with EFSA is currently undetermined and will be shaped as the UK and EU negotiations evolve. The FSA's contingency planning for EU Exit does not pre-empt the outcome of the ongoing negotiations. The FSA is planning to deliver a smooth exit under any scenario and contingency planning for all scenarios is being undertaken.

Agenda item 9: Future Work Programme (Paper SC 2-6)

34. The Chair noted that the Council will discuss its future work programme in more detail at its 3rd meeting, but that she and Guy wanted to invite early thoughts from the Council on this now to inform the discussion at the next meeting and identify any new priority activities if any that should be taken forward before then.
35. The Chair noted that the Council was at full capacity at present with work progressing on three working groups but will need to think about what its future work programme will be once the three Working Groups complete their work.
36. Gwen Aherne outlined some early ideas in the paper which had arisen in discussions with the FSA Chair, CSA, Council Chair and Secretariat – these were ideas for discussion and not a set of agreed priorities.
37. The Council Chair invited Members to raise initial thoughts and ideas, and Members noted the following:
 - a. The Council could consider the FSA's data science capability and translation of data into evidence which is a core function of the FSA. The CSA noted that the GACS had produced advice to the FSA on data exploitation in the past; he suggested revisiting the GACS report and considering what might be a useful second phase of this work for the Council to take on. Patrick Wolfe agreed to help to take this action forward.
 - b. Risk benefit analysis is a potential area for further consideration
38. The Chair will discuss with the FSA Chairman whether the Board will have more questions for the Council or if the Council is moving in to a phase of self-generated work (or both). She noted the need for a clear timeline for when the Council will consider and agree its future programme of work in advance of the next Council meeting (planned for June, date to be confirmed). The Council should aim to develop a more detailed position on its future direction of work by next Easter to prepare for substantive discussion at the next Council meeting.

Action December-17-9 – Secretariat to share GACS report on data exploitation with Patrick Wolfe for consideration on what further work the Council could undertake in this area

Action December-17-10 – Science Council Chair to discuss future work programme and timing for discussion on this with the FSA Chair, CSA and Secretariat

Agenda Item 10 Science Council Register of Interests (Paper SC 2-7)

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39. Patrick Miller noted that this paper was provided for information and transparency and reminded Members to inform the Secretariat of any changes to their declarations of interests as they arose.

Action December-17-11 – Members to inform the Secretariat of any changes to their declarations of interests

Agenda Item 11 Wrap up and close of formal business

40. The Chair noted the significant progress on the Working Groups and expressed her thanks to the Council, Secretariat and audience. The Secretariat aimed to circulate minutes to the Council within two weeks of the meeting for comments and a draft reflecting Members' changes would be published in due course.

Action December-17-12 - Secretariat to circulate draft minutes to Members for comment within 2 weeks of the meeting

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Annexe 1 Science Council 2nd meeting Wednesday 13th December 2017

Meeting attendees

| Science Council | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Sandy Thomas | Council Chair |
| Laura Green | Council Member |
| John O'Brien | Council Member |
| Mark Rolfe | Council Member |
| Paul Turner | Council Member |
| Patrick Wolfe | Council Member |
| Mark Woolhouse | Council Member |
| Apologies | |
| Sarah O'Brien | Council Member |

| Food Standards Agency | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Heather Hancock (items 1-7) | FSA Chairman |
| Guy Poppy | FSA Chief Scientific Adviser |
| Laura Sandys (items 1-7) | FSA Deputy Chair |
| Patrick Miller | Science Council Secretary |
| Gwen Aherne | Science Council Secretariat |
| David Lau | Science Council Secretariat |
| Emma Lamb | Science Council Secretariat |
| Carles Orri (item 8) | EU Exit Risk Assessment Workstream Lead |

Annexe 2 Science Council 2nd meeting Wednesday 13th December 2017

Note of Q and A session

The Chair invited questions from members of the audience after the end of the formal meeting. There were three questions.

1. John Bassett (Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST) Policy and Scientific Development Director)

John offered assistance from IFST with access to the science experts; IFST has a wide cross-sector membership and can usually identify members with specific expertise. He also suggested that the Science Council support the FSA in a more systematic mapping of stakeholders.

In response, the Chief Scientific Advisor, Guy Poppy thanked John and IFST for this offer and noted that the FSA Private Office is conducting an exercise to review how the FSA's stakeholders are mapped and this would include science stakeholders.

2. Helen Munday (Food and Drink Federation, Chief Scientific Officer)

Helen asked what the role of the Science Council is, and could be, in dealing with real time issues in food safety.

In response, the Chief Scientific Advisor, Guy Poppy noted that the Council's focus is on more strategic issues but it could be consulted on live issues if needed. It is more usual for the FSA to consult the other Scientific Advisory Committees on live issues, particularly those with a remit on risk assessment - for example the COT and its Chair Alan Boobis had been involved in the FSA's response to the recent incident of contamination of eggs with fipronil.

3. John Points (Consultant Analytical Scientist, John Points Consulting Limited)

John asked if the Science Council had mapped all of the food expert committees that provide advice to different government departments, for overlaps, gaps in the current requirements, and potential future gaps if the UK loses access to EU bodies.

In response, the Chief Scientific Advisor, Guy Poppy agreed that co-ordination should consider wider groups; the SAC Chairs workshop focused to date on a core group of SACs for which the FSA was a sole or shared sponsor or which advised the FSA directly. He noted that the network of Government Chief Scientific Advisers is currently looking across at the range of scientific advisory groups and he will inform the Science Council of any further groups and committees which will be helpful for their work.