

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1: Should the scope of the new food body extend beyond the current scope of the FSA in Scotland? If yes, what specific extensions of scope would you suggest, and why?

- SOCOEHS would support the new food body extending its scope to include strategic leadership for areas such as obesity, food poverty, provenance and food security and to contribute towards improved agency working in the areas of alcohol, environment and sustainability

2: Should the new food body and the Scottish Government continue the arrangements for independent and partnership work on diet and nutrition set out in Annex A? If not, what changes would you suggest, and why?

- The partnership arrangements outlined in appendix A should continue although it would be appropriate to review the specific roles and responsibilities of parties.

3: Are there any additional roles, responsibilities or functions in respect of diet and nutrition that you think the new food body could take on to help deliver an improvement to the health of the people in Scotland? Please give details and reasons.

- No additional comments.

4: What steps do you think could be taken to ensure the new food body is able to access the best available independent expert advice it needs to underpin its work on food safety and public health nutrition in Scotland? Please give reasons.

- Retain and strengthen existing links with independent Scottish bodies such as universities, public analysts etc. Secure where appropriate access to scientific expertise in the UK and internationally.

5: Do you consider that the new food body should focus its research and surveillance activities on issues that are particularly pertinent to Scottish citizens or should it also contribute to science and evidence programmes on wider issues which have relevance to the UK as a whole? Please give reasons.

- The new food body will be required to prioritise its research and surveillance activities; this will allow it to focus on some areas particularly relevant to Scotland. However, it should also recognise the international nature of the food industry by contributing to wider issues where appropriate.

6: Do you agree that the new food body should be responsible for the coordination of all Scottish Government funded research on food safety and public health nutrition? What steps could be taken to raise the profile of the new food body as a research funder across the UK and beyond? Please give reasons.

- No additional comments.

7: Do you have any further suggestions for how the new food body could establish a strong independent evidence base for food safety, food standards and nutrition policy? Please give reasons.

- SOCOEHS would recommend that the new body work in partnership with local authorities who have the capacity to collect and input local information which can contribute towards independent evidence base.

8: Do you consider that the new food body would require any further statutory powers, in addition to those that the FSA already has, to equip it to deal effectively with incidents such as the recent horse meat substitutions, and to prevent such incidents happening? Please give reasons.

- Members of our Society will comment individually on this matter, reflecting the views of their local authority.

9: Do you have any further comments about how the new food body might ensure that it can deal effectively with contraventions of food standards and safety law? Please give reasons.

- Members of our Society will comment individually on this matter, reflecting the views of their local authority.

10: Should the new food body take on any roles and responsibilities not currently fulfilled by the FSA in Scotland? If yes, please give details and reasons.

- Members of our Society will comment individually on this matter, reflecting the views of their local authority.
- Local Authorities currently have the capacity to deliver integrated enforcement services at a local level; complying with the Scottish Government's better regulation agenda. SOCOEHS is concerned that any significant transfer of function/resource from local government to the new food body will jeopardise this capacity.

11: Please tell us your views about these suggestions for changes to the delivery of official food and feed controls. Do you think that the new food body should work in a different way with local authorities? Please give reasons.

- Members of our Society will comment individually on this matter, reflecting the views of their local authority.

12: Do you have any views on how the new food body should assure delivery of official controls and meet the relevant EU obligations? Please give reasons.

- Members of our Society will comment individually on this matter, reflecting the views of their local authority.

13: Are there any additional or alternative relationships that you would suggest that would help the new food body achieve the Scottish Ministers' objective of longer, healthier lives for the people of Scotland? Please give details and reasons.

- Members of our Society will comment individually on this matter, reflecting the views of their local authority.

14: Do you have any suggestions about how the new food body can engage effectively with consumers, both in developing policy and providing information and advice?

- The new food body should use the expertise of Local Authorities to engage with consumers ensuring that information and advice relevant to local communities is passed on through existing channels.

15: Do you agree with the suggested approach to ensuring the new food body's independence from Government and the food industry? Do you have any further suggestions for how the new food body could best establish and maintain its position as an arms length part of Government? Please give reasons.

- Agree.

16: Do you have any further comments, or suggestions, on the creation of a new food body for Scotland that are not covered by any of the previous questions?

- No additional comments.