

Wider Consumer Interest Working Group - Update (January 2022)

Paper 8.5

1. Background

1.1. The FSA is currently embarking on a programme of work drawing on our understanding of consumers' wider interests in relation to food as we develop our new strategy and approach for the coming years. This is an opportunity to demonstrate that the FSA lives up to its commitment to openness and enhances social equity by bringing the consumer perspective into wider food policy and providing evidence on some of the big challenges in the food system such as diet and nutrition, sustainability of food, food insecurity, provision, and choice.

1.2. The main aims of this Programme is to amplify the consumer voice in food policy in the FSA and across Government and broaden the scope of our evidence gathering to include wider interests of consumers, helping to join up food policy.

1.3. A number of projects have recently been delivered under this Programme of work, with many of the workstreams underway to be delivered by end of March 2022.

1.4. The ACSS has been asked to consider how best to support the FSA's research to evidence the wider interest of consumers and have agreed that the creation of a Working Group will help support and assure the quality of this workstream.

2. Members

2.1. The following members have expressed interest in the Working Group to date. Membership will soon be confirmed.

- Dr Hannah Lambie-Mumford
- Dr Seda Erdem
- Professor Spencer Henson
- Professor George Gaskell
- Professor Julie B
- Ms Julie Hill

3. Working Group Aims

3.1 The main objective of the Working Group will be to provide impartial, ad-hoc advice, peer review the research and support broadening the scope of our evidence gathering to include wider interest of consumers and to help provide timely, relevant and robust evidence to join up food policy.

4. Key activities to date

4.1. After circulating the proposition paper in November 2021, ACSS members reviewed the paper, contributed to discussion points and decided if they wanted to join this new Working Group.

4.2 The ACSS members met together as a group in December 2021 with the FSA lead where they spoke about how the Working Group can contribute to the Programme.

5. Future Activities

5.1. The next Working Group meeting is on January 24th 2022.

Key activities for 2022 include:

- Formally agree on members and Chair for the Working Group
- Developing terms of reference
- Providing ad hoc advice on the 'Consumers interest in Food' project
- Keeping abreast of other external sources of information that could inform, improve and guide the Programme.

- Discussing and advising on the direction of work for the Programme for 2022/23 by providing a steer on evidence gaps that we may want to address, in line with our Strategy.
- Exploring if we need/want to investigate and explore specific issues with certain groups of the population/consumer groups with protected characteristics
- Providing ad hoc support to the FSA Lead, e.g. peer review research material and final report, review and provide advice on research specifications, providing Board with updates etc