



NORTH EAST SCOTLAND AGRICULTURE ADVISORY GROUP BULLETIN – 23 SEPTEMBER 2020

DIMBLEBY REVIEW OF UK FOOD AND DRINK SECTOR

1 Recommendation

1.1 It is recommended that the Group notes this report

2 Discussion

2.1 In June 2019 UK Government announced the first major review of the UK food system in its entirety for 75 years. The indicative terms of reference covered food, nutrition and the environment and the review was to be led by Henry Dimbleby who was appointed lead non-executive board member of DEFRA in March 2018. Mr Dimbleby, son of David Dimbleby, is a writer, businessman and co-founder of a restaurant group and the Sustainable Restaurant Association.

2.2 The remit of the Dimbleby Review was to assess the UK food system ‘from field to fork’ and to consider what may need to change to ensure that it:

- Delivers safe, healthy, affordable food, regardless of where people live or how much they earn;
- Is robust in the face of future shocks;
- Restores and enhances the natural environment for the next generation;
- Is built upon a resilient and sustainable agriculture sector;
- Is a thriving contributor to our urban and rural economies, delivering well paid jobs and supporting innovative producers and manufacturers;
- Does all of this in an efficient and cost-effective way.

It was expected that the Review’s recommendations would pave the way for a new UK National Food Strategy. Part One of the National Food Strategy was published on the National Food Strategy website on 29 July 2020:

<https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/partone/>

2.3 Among the recommendations of the 110-page high level report, there were calls for a new statutory duty giving the UK Parliament the authority to scrutinise any new trade deals, ‘bolder and faster’ progress to ensure the UK land-based sector delivers more effectively on climate change mitigation and on environmental and biodiversity priorities, including water quality. NFU has welcomed the report - in particular the proposed safeguards to ensure high welfare and food safety standards. The second stage report is scheduled for publication in 2021 and is expected to examine the food and farming sector’s relationship with climate change, biosecurity, biodiversity and pollution in more detail.

2.4 In 2017 Scotland Food and Drink published Ambition 2030, a sustainable growth strategy for agriculture, fishing, food and drink in which progress over the previous ten years was reviewed (industry turnover up 44% to £14Bn and

exports by 56%) and the factors driving success were analysed (collaboration, reputation and produce diversity). The title is drawn from the future envisioned for the sector in 2030, mostly notably growth in turnover value to £30Bn. Key challenges are outlined and include investment in people, research and development alongside market development and enhanced collaboration, profitability and sustainability credentials. Market and consumer trends are also considered across Scotland, the UK and beyond and three key pillars of growth are described: people and skills, the supply chain and innovation. <https://scotlandfoodanddrink.org/resources/publications/ambition-2030-industry-strategy-for-growth/>

In March 2016 NESAAAG published 'The Land Based Sector in NE Scotland – Facing the Future'. The main report is a highly detailed strategic analysis based on empirical data which extends beyond agriculture, food and drink to the wider land-based sector. A summary report was also produced and is accompanied by regional summaries (infographics) for Aberdeenshire, Angus and Moray. Whilst the report's conclusions and recommendations are NE Scotland-centric (and have helped inform the Regional Economic Strategy for NE Scotland), they nevertheless align broadly with the national growth trajectory mapped out in Ambition 2030. Food & drink industry analyses have also been carried out by Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Opportunity North East and others.

- 2.5 It seems likely that the Dimbleby Review will influence the shape of structural fund support for food and drink in the UK post-Brexit. Given the wealth of evidence and analysis available in Scotland and the NE in particular, a member of the Review team will be invited to attend a forthcoming meeting of the Group.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 3.2 NESAAAG is able to consider this item in terms of its remit to provide a NE Scotland focus to enable issues and concerns across the agricultural and related sectors to be addressed. This includes strengthening economic development links across the wider land-based sector and food industry, contributing to regional and local priorities, improving links between industry, the environment and biodiversity and contributing to policy development and consultations.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 4.1 The table below sets out whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial		x	
Staffing		x	
Equalities		x	
Fairer Scotland Duty		x	
Town Centre First		x	
Sustainability		x	
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing		x	

5.3 An equality impact assessment is not required because the recommended actions do not have a differential impact upon people with protected characteristics.

5.4 No risks have been identified at Corporate or Strategic level.

Stephen Archer
Director, Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Derek McDonald, Industry Support Executive (Rural & Maritime)
15 September 2020