

Committee on the Inquiry into the E.coli outbreak in Wales

E.Coli(2) 01-05(p2a)

Meeting date: 7 November 2005

Meeting time: 2:30pm

Meeting venue: Committee Room 3, National Assembly for Wales

PAPER FROM JOY WHINNEY, DIRECTOR

FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY, WALES

Purpose

1.1 This paper provides suggestions from The Food Standards Agency on the possible terms of reference for the Inquiry.

The Food Standards Agency suggests the terms of reference should be fairly broad and recommend that the inquiry should look at the following:

- The causes of the outbreak
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities of the various organisations involved
- Food hygiene measures and their enforcement
- Identification, handling and management of the outbreak
- Lessons to be learned in relation to the above
- Any additional and proportionate measures which could be taken to reduce the risks of serious outbreaks occurring in the future.

The Agency believes that these broad terms of reference will allow the inquiry to focus on learning for the future. They would not, however, prevent the inquiry from pursuing particular aspects within these broad headings to a greater or lesser extent where it concluded that this would be beneficial. For example, the issue of resources would underpin a number of the points listed, and the "handling and management of the outbreak" would encompass care given to those who were affected by illness, and communication issues. "Food safety measures and their enforcement" would include the inspection and audit regimes; responsibilities of food business operators; the adequacy of current legal controls and procurement arrangements, among other

issues.