



HFMA UPDATE

by Graham Keen,
Executive Director

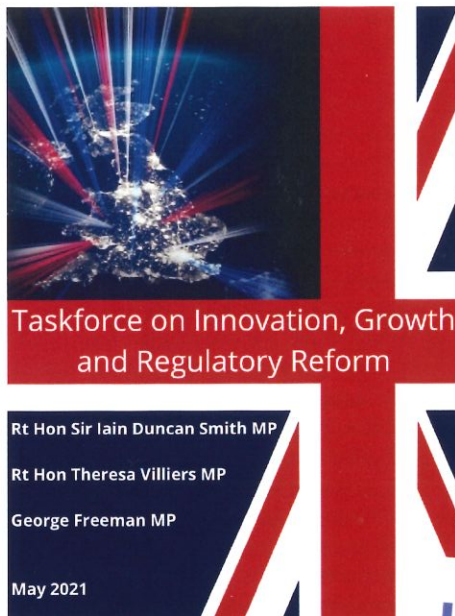
The Brexit Dividend?

Two important new documents published in the last week or so represent the two extremes of the challenges our sector still faces in this brave new post-Brexit world. One is the report of the Taskforce on Innovation, Growth and Regulatory Reforms (TIGRR), perhaps the first clear practical example of some sort of sanity prevailing now that we are free from the shackles of 'one size fits all' harmonising EU legislation – what I have often referred to as the potential 'Brexit Dividend'.

The other is a new report from the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of EU 'Food supplements in the Union market – a way forward', setting out their thoughts on "How to implement harmonization of market entry for food supplements in the EU". This report, amongst other things, talks about a need to "...promote education programmes and health campaigns aimed at reducing the consumption of food supplements or, at least, at proposing informed choices".

As background to the first of these, the Terms of Reference of the Taskforce on Innovation, Growth and Regulatory Reform (TIGRR) were announced in February 2021. The objective of the Taskforce was to identify and develop proposals across a range of areas that will "drive innovation and competitiveness, reduce barriers to start-ups and scale-ups, create opportunities for innovation" and "support growth and dynamism across the UK economy".

The Taskforce is made up of three Conservative MPs, Rt Hon Sir Iain Duncan Smith MP (Chair), former Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP, former Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural



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George Freeman MP

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Affairs, and George Freeman MP, former Minister at the Department for Transport. The report itself was published on June 16, 2021, and it sets out their vision for the UK's approach to regulation post-Brexit, while making 120 recommendations across a range of sectors.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson MP responded to the report and said it "shows what a fully sovereign United Kingdom can achieve given sufficient ambition and vision on the part of its government. I look forward to drawing on your work in the months and years ahead as we build back better than ever before". The Prime Minister also committed to publishing the Government's response to the report "as soon as is practicable" while consulting "widely across industry and civil society" on the recommendations.

Some of the language being used in the report borders on 'Brexit Dividend' territory, so maybe this really is, in fact, the start of some sort of sanity prevailing? For example, this, on P6 of the report, which looks like it could have been

lifted from the HFMA's own Manifesto, 'A healthy Future for Health Foods':

10. UK regulation should aim to be as simple, agile and proportionate as possible. The complexity of the modern economy means a degree of regulatory complexity is unavoidable, but we should aim for a simpler, more streamlined approach. Freed from the obligation to compromise with 27 other countries, our regulatory system should be reformed to better support the needs of UK businesses and citizens.

So, what next, you may ask? Well, the Government will now review the recommendations. It is not duty bound to follow the recommendations, but it would not have commissioned the report if it did not align with its priorities. In terms of a timeline, if the proposals are taken forward, they would likely require further consultation by Government, followed by possible legislation and time to implement. The process could, therefore, last between 18 months to three years.

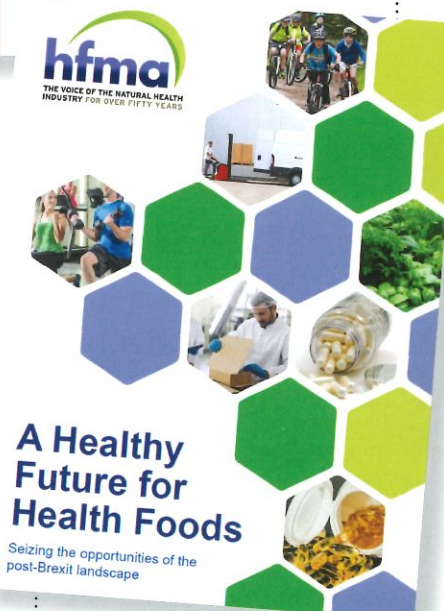
The HFMA will now establish its position as a major stakeholder and will write to the authors of the report, congratulating them on their forward thinking and

welcoming the report.

This will be followed by a targeted approach to the stakeholders within Government, who will determine how to take forward the recommendations. This includes Ministers, advisers and civil servants and this outreach will incorporate specific details and may include HFMA's official response to the report.

Regarding the report of the Portuguese EU Council Presidency, needless to say we – along with our ever-alert European federation, EHPM – will be putting forward a strong response and rebuttal to the report, which contains certain recommendations that, given the events of the last 18 months or so, are completely out of touch with reality. And who would have thought the EU might be capable of that? **hfb**

To help us in our efforts to protect this industry and benefit from the gold-standard advice we provide, join the HFMA at the earliest opportunity. To learn more about our activities, please contact graham@hfma.co.uk



In our Manifesto, we say this:

■ **Recognition of national characteristics:** Brexit therefore provides an opportunity for sensible regulatory reform that reflects the specific needs and circumstances of the UK.

And this:

■ **Proportionate regulation:** In addition, a bespoke UK regulatory regime can explore much-needed reforms to approval processes, labelling, and the failure to address certain supplement sub-categories.

HFMA membership is vital to ensure that your company keeps abreast of the fast-changing regulatory environment. The HFMA is the UK's best source of information and most effective defender of our industry's interests. To help the HFMA defend your business at this most critical time contact hfma@hfma.co.uk or call 020 8481 7100.

