

Minutes of the 142nd meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board
Held on Thursday, 18 June, 2020 at 10:30am
Zoom

PRESENT:

Ms Helen O'Donnell (HOD) (Chair)
Dr Eddie Rooney (ER)
Mr Brendan Kehoe (BK)
Ms Wendy McIntosh (WMI)
Mr Alan McGrath (AMG)
Mr Stephen Moutray (SM)
Dr Mary Upton (MU)
Mr Mervyn Oswald (MO)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Ray Dolan, Chief Executive (RD)
Dr Gary Kearney, Director, Food Science (GK)
Ms Patricia Fitzgerald, Director, Corporate Operations (PF)
Dr Aileen McGloin, Director, Marketing and Communications
(AMcG)
Dr Catherine Conlon, Director, Human Health and Nutrition (CC)
Ms Alison Dries (secretary) (AD)

APOLOGIES:

1. Meeting of Advisory Board members – without Executive present

Noted: The members of the Advisory Board met without the Executive present.

2. Matters arising from the Meeting of Advisory Board members – without Executive present

Noted: No matters were arising

3. Introduction and apologies

Noted: The Chair welcomed all members of the Advisory Board to the meeting hosted by zoom.

Noted: No apologies were noted.

4. Conflicts of interest

Noted: The Chair asked members if there were any conflicts of interest relating to the agenda. No conflicts of interest were raised.

5. Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 18 June 2020

Agreed: The minutes were adopted with no amendments

Proposed: SM

Seconded: WMcI

6. Matters arising from the minutes

Noted: There were no matters arising.

7. Presentation

Noted: Joana Caldeira Fernandez de Silva from **safefood** and Carrie Donoghue from Ballyhoura Development community food initiative joined the zoom meeting to present to the Advisory Board. The presentation showed how Ballyhoura continued to deliver the Community Food Initiative Programme in the North Cork/East Limerick area during lockdown of the Covid-19 Pandemic when participants could not come to them.

Presentation overview;

Ballyhoura created a 4-week remote CFI during lockdown

The **Aim** of this Initiative was to help families

- Learn new cooking skills at home
- Build their confidence in their own kitchen
- Create healthy affordable meals for the whole family
- Do something together during lockdown at home

The project worked in the following way;

- 57 interested families were recruited across the Ballyhoura Area
- Each week ingredients for a healthy meal were carefully put together by a local retailer, collected, bagged up at a social distance & delivered to each of the family's front doors by Ballyhoura Staff
- It was a mystery to families each week what they would be having for dinner that evening
- Children waited patiently for staff to pull up outside before running to their front doors to see what was in the bag
- A Printed recipe was placed in each bag with a **safefood** YouTube link noted. This link was also sent via text to each household soon after the Ingredients arrived demonstrating how to prepare, cook and present each meal
- Follow up calls to each family were made each week to see how they were getting on and provide help where it was needed.

The outcomes of the project were

- New dishes and ingredients eaten
- New cooking skills learnt
- Encouraging family time/activity
- Child development and independence.
- Encourage cooking from scratch healthy nutritious meals.

It was noted that the project was achievable due to the many existing assets already available from **safefood** (videos, recipes, 101 square meals cookbook).

Noted: The Chair thanked Carrie for the presentation and congratulated all involved on the project's success.

8. Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report.

Noted: ER and AMG provided feedback on behalf of the Audit and Risk Committee on the publication of the Committees 2nd Annual report to the end of 2019. The following points were noted;

- Alan Myles has taken over the position of Chair of the Committee
- Mairead NíCeadagáin has joined the committee
- The Committee thanked Angela Cahill from **safefood** for all her support.
- Good controls are operating within the organisation; the internal and external auditors also support this opinion.
- The annual report listed no high-risk findings
- Chris Donnelly from Comptroller and Auditor General attended the March meeting to feedback on the external audit – One low risk issue was reported regarding evaluation of campaign spend and KPI's. As is the nature of public health campaigns, the outcomes are very difficult to measure in the short-term and **safefood** is constantly seeking ways of measuring its direct impact.
- The risk register is reviewed annually. A new section was recently added for the Covid pandemic. The Senior Management Team will consider the updated register.
- The Marketing and Communication Department undertook a risk audit for digital and social terms of reference.

Noted: The Chair informed of the importance to the Board that two members sit on the Audit and risk committee.

Noted: The CEO thanked ER and AMG for the comprehensive feedback.

9. Chief Executive's report

Corporate

Noted: safefood is responding to Covid-19 in line with the Government's four-stage roadmap for reopening society and businesses along with the Protocol for Returning to Work Safely in the office.

Noted: safefood await formation of a government in Dublin so that the NSMC can clear the backlog of work that has built up in relation to the North-South Bodies. For **safefood**, priorities are appointments to the Advisory Board and Advisory Committee as well as approval for **safefood's** 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 Business Plans and the **safefood's** 2017-2019 and 2020-2022 Corporate Plans.

Noted: Due to Covid-19, the audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General took place remotely and is now complete and **safefood** await sign off on the accounts before publishing the 2019 Annual report and financial statements.

Campaigns

Noted: AMcG informed of the following taking place in **safefood** campaigns.

- The May phase of the START campaign ran from 2 – 24 May across traditional radio and online, and 11 – 31 May across digital radio. The campaign theme “*You don’t need to do it all*” was a reference to the glut of lifestyle advice on how to cope during lockdown. The campaign emphasised the little daily wins that parents could aim for instead i.e. a little less screen time, fewer treats and a bit more physical activity. The May phase is currently being evaluated.
- Qualitative research on the Rufus handwashing pack is now complete which shows its suitability for primary school aged children with some minor alterations. Work will commence on this with a view to launch to primary schools in September.
- The summer food safety campaign will focus on barbeques given Covid-19 travel restrictions and the sharp increase in barbeque retail sales during March & April. The campaign ‘*Well done*’ will run in phases from May to beginning of July and will include temperature triggered advertising.
- The 2020 campaign for World Food Safety day on 7 June will repeat the 2019 theme of ‘*Never Wash Raw Chicken*’ and will be aimed at three distinct audiences – young adults; young adults with children and older/retired adults.

Events

Noted: CC informed **safefood** ran its first event using the zoom platform to host the All-island obesity action forum on 9 June. High attendance was seen with 159 delegates joining to hear presentations on the theme *What can the public believe? Navigating weight and health information*.

Knowledge Network

Noted: GK informed of the following taking place under Knowledge Network;

- The KN expert group recently met and discussed food safety in Covid times, particularly how the network could support food businesses through the challenging time.
- Takeaway service (call and collect) during Covid has implications for food safety. KN are providing guidance in the area as well as around the area of allergens.
- Thought leader articles have been published in the *Food Chain* magazine
- Work continues on developing the eLearning platform for SME’s.

Action: The Chair noted that the Food Safety Newsletter to wrapped in plastic for delivery purposes. GK agreed to assess whether a more sustainable solution was possible.

10. Financial Report

Noted: PF referred to the summary Financial Results for five months Jan – May 2020. **safefood** is currently behind budget due to Covid but has forecast to end the year on budget.

11. Tour de table

Nothing to note.

11. AOB

Noted: AMcG referenced the Covid-19 month 2-evaluation report, which was shared with Advisory Board members and advised that the purpose of the evaluation is to document how communications were repurposed. Traffic to the website was up by 20 % during the month 2 evaluation.

Action: The Chair noted that one or two members of the Board had not yet returned a completed Declaration of Interests form for 2020 and asked that this be actioned as a matter of urgency by members.

Date of next meeting: Thursday, 20 August 2020