



Minutes of the 129th meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board

Held on Thursday, 21 June 2018 at 10:30

safefood office Cork.

PRESENT:

Ms Helen O'Donnell (HOD) (Chair)

Mr Paul Gibbons (PG) (Vice Chair)

Dr Mary Upton (MU)

Dr Eddie Rooney (ER)

Mr Brendan Kehoe (BK)

Mr Stephen Moutray (SM)

Mr Alan McGrath (AMG)

Ms Margaret Jeffares (MJ)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Ray Dolan, Chief Executive (RD)

Ms Patricia Fitzgerald, Director, Corporate Operations (PF)

Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan, Director, Human Health and Nutrition (CFN)

Dr Gary Kearney, Director, Food Science (GK)

Dr Aileen McGloin, Director, Marketing and Communications (AMcG)

Mr Dermot Moriarty, Manager, Marketing and Communications (DM)

Mr Andrew Castles, Marketing

Ms Alison Dries (secretary) (AD)

APOLOGIES:

Ms Wendy McIntosh (WMI)

Mr Mervyn Oswald (MO)

Prof Dolores O'Riordan (DOR)

1. Introduction and apologies

Noted: The Chair welcomed all members of the Advisory Board to the meeting in the **safefood** Cork office.

Noted: The Chair thanked all attendees for travelling to Cork.

Noted: MO's brother sadly passed away, the Board send their sympathies.

Noted: Apologies of MO, WMcl and DOR were noted.

2. Conflicts of interest

Noted: The Chair asked members if there were any conflicts of interest and no conflicts of interest were noted.

3. Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 10 May, 2018

Noted: The minutes were adopted with no amendments

Proposed: BK

Seconded: SM

4. Matters arising from the minutes

Noted: There were no matters arising from the minutes

5. Presentation from Marketing and Communications Directorate.

Noted: Three members of the Marketing and Communications Directorate presented the work of their Directorate.

Noted: Mr Dermot Moriarty, Marketing and Communications Manager presented an overview of the media landscape on the island of Ireland (IOI). The main topics from the presentation were;

- The size of various media outlets on the IOI
- Current trends
- How this all applies to **safefood**.

Noted: Dr Aileen McGloin, Director of Marketing and Communications presented on **safefood Digital Strategy**.

Noted: **safefood** reviewed its digital strategy to take into account a 5 year period of rapid change and development, the changing media landscape and the changing use of devices.

Noted: The development of the digital strategy involved reviewing the following;

- Horizon scanning
- Policy development
- Procurement
- Risk assessment and management
- Training
- Customer service
- Evaluation - monthly reporting and campaign analysis.

Noted: **safefood** has seen an increase in people accessing its website from mobile devices; for this reason **safefood** has a mobile first approach to its digital work.

Noted: Accessibility is very important to **safefood**, therefore it offers browse aloud audio, which was used over 50,000 times this year; and subtitles on videos.

Noted: **safefood**'s digital work operates across a number of platforms and it recognises the merits each platform can provide

- Recipes – all include a food science message and are nutritionally analysed
- Turkey calculator – is a key resource and generates a spike in web traffic at Christmas
- Hubs – provide the opportunity to showcase seasonal information for example summer bbq advice.
- Instagram – has scope for creativity
- Pinterest – can reach niche audiences for example teachers can access resources for the classroom
- LinkedIn – is used for recruitment, Corporate and professional purposes
- YouTube – hosts **safefood**'s videos.

Noted: The Digital Strategy included some recommendations on how **safefood** can improve its website.

Noted: BK asked how the digital team keep an eye on what is going on? AMcG informed that examining data is core so **safefood** can assess what information consumers want. For example, at Christmas time, consumers look for help on cooking the turkey, so a turkey calculator was developed and put at the forefront of the web around the festive period, Christmas is now **safefood**'s busiest time of year for web traffic. **safefood** also uses software to track online conversations to see if it needs to contribute, react, report or take the conversation offline.

Noted: Mr Andrew Castles presented on **safefood's** events and used the All-island obesity action forum workshop as a case study to;

- Demonstrate how the event marketing plan is formed
- How digital supports events
- Map growth rates of attendees at events.

6. Presentation on the nutritional content of yoghurts

Noted: Dr Cliodhna Foley-Nolan presented on the nutritional content of yoghurts and the difficulties consumers face in deciphering labels and the many brands on offer.

7. Chief Executive's report

Corporate

Noted: In the absence of an Northern Ireland Assembly and the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC), **safefood's** 2017 and 2018 Business Plans and the 2017-2019 Corporate Plan await formal approval. On 16 March 2018, **safefood** received a letter from the NI Department of Finance clarifying the ongoing contingency arrangements in the absence of the NSMC to enable sponsor departments to seek approval for the grants to be paid to the N/S Bodies between 1 April and 31 December 2018.

Noted: To facilitate the development of the draft 2019 Business Plan, a meeting involving **safefood's** directors and managers took place on 13 June.

Noted: The drafting of the 2019 Business plan has begun.

Noted: RD and PF attended a meeting with representatives from both sponsor departments on 18 May in Dublin. The next meeting is scheduled to take place in September 2018.

Noted: Following the appointment of AMcG to fill the temporary vacancy of the post of Director of Marketing and Communications, an open recruitment competition was undertaken to fill the temporary vacancy in the post of Communications Manager, Digital and Health. Aoife O'Reilly accepted this position and is due to commence in the role on 9 July.

Noted: The Marketing and Communications Directorate were invited to take part in a staff briefing at the Department of Foreign Affairs in May. Titled *Communicating with our people – how to ensure excellence in public outreach*, the event was attended by Consular staff and their stakeholders as well as Consular Mission offices from around Europe via video conference. During this briefing a representative of Wicklow County Council and Youth Outreach Group showed interest in the Community Food Initiative Programme. The Co-creation method used to form our campaigns was identified as best practice, **safefood's** work was well received.

Noted: The first meeting in 2018 of the **safefood** Advisory Committee took place on 11 May.

Noted: The CEO and Gary Kearney attended a meeting with the Department of Health's Food Unit's Brexit group (including the FSAI and the HSE) and submitted a paper estimating potential additional costs in terms of a hard exit from the European Union for the United Kingdom.

Noted: The CEO's of the North/South Bodies were invited to meet the Taoiseach on 8th June in Belfast. Unfortunately the CEO was on annual leave at the time and ER attended to represent **safefood**. ER reported a very engaging and positive meeting. All the North/South Bodies reported they were finding it harder to carry out their remit due to financial squeezes and the absence of the North South Ministerial Council given the impasse in re-establishing the NI Assembly.

Campaigns

Noted: AMcG informed on the progress of the next phase of the START and handwashing campaigns.

Noted: Discussions were held with the original Community Food Initiative co-creation groups around the issues of 'screen time' and 'physical activity'. Feedback from these groups will inform the development of the next phase of START.

Noted: Focus groups held with pre-school workers provided useful feedback and provided an indepth understanding of their environment.

Events

Noted: AC provided feedback on the Balmoral Show. The **safefood** stand was located in the DEFRA Government area and focused on the START campaign.

Noted: CFN informed on the 'All-island obesity action forum' event which was held in June and focused on nudging as a behaviour change concept to encourage positive attitudes in relation to health and wellbeing. 'Nudges' such as making stairways attractive and displaying motivational health messages were cited as examples of how to encourage behaviour change.

Noted: GK informed on the 'Belfast summit on global food integrity' event which ran over 4 days in May. The support of members of the Board was greatly appreciated in making a successful event.

Noted: HOD congratulated **safefood** on its participation at an international event.

Noted: PG offered his congratulations to the team involved in a successful event which shows regulatory bodies are emerging as proactive rather than reactive in terms of food security.

Noted: The 'All-island food poverty Network workshop' on the 18 September was flagged to members of the Board as an upcoming event.

Education

Noted: **safefood's** education resources are continually reviewed to ensure content is up-to-date and relevant. An audit of GDPR compliance and implementation of the same is in progress.

Customer engagement

Noted: AMcG updated on the customer engagement figures for May. The 'Belfast summit on global food integrity' event and content on BBQ food safety generated a lot of content and discussion on social media.

Minimum nutritional standards for healthcare facilities (NI)

Noted: The lead nutritionist who will lead the implementation of the Standards in Northern Ireland will commence in July.

Minimum nutrition standards for healthcare facilities (ROI)

Noted: The finalised draft of the Standards is out for consultation with stakeholders.

Knowledge Network

Noted: GK informed on the work to date in Knowledge Network and welcomed members of the Board to attend the remaining workshops for Small Medium Enterprises (SME's).

Noted: The Munster discussion group for small food producers which was noted in the CEO report as taking place on 12 June was rescheduled. The new date is TBC.

8. Financial Report

Noted: PF referred to the summary Financial Results for the first 5 months for 2018 with no specific areas to highlight at this stage of the year.

9. Audit and Risk Committee feedback

Noted: ER informed of items discussed at the Audit and Risk Committee (A&R Committee) meeting

- Tenure for members of the A&R Committee will be discussed at the December meeting with a view to staggering retirement dates.
- The draft 2017 financial accounts look good. The A&R committee feels it would be more transparent if the actual fee a Board member is paid is listed in the Annual Report.
- The Comptroller and Auditor General are implementing more stringent disclosure in the Annual Report for foreign travel
- The Committee advised the Board a letter should be drafted to the Sponsor Departments showing concern that the Business Plan and Corporate Plan have not yet been approved.

Noted: HOD agreed that a letter should be drafted considering the valuable work undertaken by **safefood**.

Action: AD to draft letter as above.

10. Tour de table

Noted: HOD thanked Orla Walsh for the **safefood** mention.

Action: AD to draft a letter of congratulations to Martin Higgins on his appointment to Chair of the Board of the Food Safety Authority Ireland.

11. AOB

Noted: No other business

Date of next meeting: Thursday, 23 August, 2018, Dublin office.