

Minutes of the 139th meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board
Held on Friday, 6 December, 2019 at 10:30am
safefood office, Dublin

PRESENT:

Ms Helen O'Donnell (HOD) (Chair)
Mr Paul Gibbons (PG) (Vice Chair)
Dr Eddie Rooney (ER)
Mr Brendan Kehoe (BK)
Ms Wendy McIntosh (WMI)
Mr Alan McGrath (AMG)
Mr Mervyn Oswald (MO)
Ms Margaret Jeffares (MJ)
Mr Stephen Moutray (SM)

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

APOLOGIES:

Dr Mary Upton (MU)
Prof Dolores O'Riordan (DOR)

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: There were not matters arising.

3. Introduction and apologies

Noted: The Chair welcomed all members of the Advisory Board to Dublin and thanked those who travelled.

Noted: The apologies for DOR and MU were noted.

Noted: The Chair informed that three members, PG, MJ and DOR, have completed their term on the **safefood** Advisory Board. The Chair and the CEO outlined their thanks and appreciation of their hard work and support to **safefood**.

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, 17 October, 2019

Agreed: The minutes were adopted with no amendments

Proposed: MO

Seconded: BK

6. Matters arising from the minutes

Noted: Members of the Board remain concerned in relation to quorum and governance relating to vacancies created from the completion of the term of three Board members. The CEO informed that he asked both the Sponsor Departments and the NSMC to write to the Board to explain the situation.

Action: **safefood**'s to circulate copies of the presentation by Teagasc to the Board at the October meeting.

Noted: **safefood**'s 20th Anniversary took place on 2 December.

7. Presentation

Noted: The Chair welcomed Simon and Laura from PHD Media. PHD currently hold the contract for media buying services for **safefood**. The presentation gave an insight into media trends on the island of Ireland.

Noted: A question and answer session and discussion followed. The main points discussed were;

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Podcast versus radio
- Range of advertising the public are exposed to which has made it more difficult to get the public's attention. Also, attention span has decreased therefore messaging needs to be quick and to the point.
- Voice activation
- Ad smart – targeting advertisement in terms of demographic, postcode driven.
- Traditional media forms of T.V. and radio are still the bedrock of reaching a broad audience.

9. Chief Executive's report

Corporate

Noted: In the absence of an NI Assembly and the NSMC, **safefood's** 2017, 2018 and 2019 Business Plans and the 2017-2019 and 2020-2022 Corporate Plans await formal approval.

Noted: A final draft of the Business Plan 2020 is currently being reviewed by **safefood** and will be issued to the Sponsor Departments in December.

Noted: An open recruitment competition for an ICT Executive due to resignation of the previous holder of the position was unsuccessful. This is worrying for **safefood** as IT is constantly changing and it is proving difficult to recruit the required calibre of personnel due to salary.

Noted: Fort Privacy have been appointed for a period of six months to act as Data Protection Officers. An audit was undertaken of **safefood's** data protection compliance and a report issued to the Audit and Risk committee. The HR and Compliance Executive is currently being trained to take up the role of Data Protection Officer.

Noted: The 2018 Annual Report was issued to both Sponsor Departments.

Campaigns

Noted: AMG informed of the following taking place in campaigns;

- Phase 5 of the START campaign, which focused on reducing treats, launched late October across TV, Radio, Out of Home, Social & Digital, and has now completed. The second year of the post campaign survey is currently under way
- The hand washing campaign is currently being evaluated to inform 2020 activity.
- Never wash raw chicken campaign evaluation is being finalised and will inform discussions on activity for 2020.
- The 2019 Christmas food safety campaign will repeat Radio and Out of Home advertising from 2018 to drive awareness of the Turkey Cooking Calculator and other practical information on the **safefood** website. The advertising campaign will run from 13-23 December and will be supported by publicity and social/digital activity.

Publicity

Noted: AMG informed the **safefood** research report titled 'A survey of high-protein snack foods' received significant media attention.

Education

Noted: 120,000 copies of **safefood**'s Healthy lunchbox leaflet were provided to the *Food Dudes* programme to incorporate into their messaging to schools this year.

Noted: A new education resource for schools on the island of Ireland titled *Tastebuds* is now available through the **safefood** website.

Noted: safefood were invited by the GAA to participate in two workshops with the aim of considering how the GAA might best support the curricular area of wellbeing in the junior cycle of post primary in the ROI. **safefood** welcome this opportunity.

Events

safefood hosted or took part in the following events took place between October and December;

- Start stakeholder briefing (Dublin and Belfast) – sharing the START campaign with stakeholders
- British Dietetic Association education event – Highlighting **safefood**'s resources
- European Public Health Nutrition Alliance Annual Meeting
- Workshop - What advice does the public believe? – Challenges for researchers, policy makers and practitioners. **Noted:** topical and well attended
- Green Health Symposium RCPI – Enhancing Sustainability in the Health Sector
- Association of Teachers of Home Economics

- Food safety Risks and challenges in the produce sector 5 November
- Food allergen masterclasses for 3rd level catering & hospitality students (Kinsale & Sligo) **Noted:** PG attended and informed feedback from colleagues was very positive and horizon scanning very useful.
- Food labelling and consumer trust. **Noted: safefood** seminar looking at the term 'clean labelling' which involves an alternative ingredient being added to a food product so preservative do not need to be used to kill bugs and enhance shelf life.

Digital

Noted: Topics covered by **safefood**'s digital team from October – December included;

- Raising awareness of *Listeria* to coincide with *Listeria* awareness week. There were over 199,000 video views and over 740,000 impressions across social media
- START Facebook group - a closed group to encourage parents to discuss and share experiences around the seven behaviours of the START campaign. A partnership with Herfamily.ie saw membership of the group increase by 254%.

Noted: MJ informed her view of the cooking video was excellent. This video was created to inform T.V. production of good food hygiene practices.

Knowledge Network

Noted: GK informed of activity taking place in Knowledge Network.

9. Financial Report

Noted: PF referred to the summary Financial Results until the end of October 2019. **safefood** expects to come in under budget at the end of 2019 due to the strength of sterling and savings in staffing costs.

10. Feedback from the Audit and Risk Committee

Noted: ER informed the Audit and Risk Committee discussed the paper 'Audit and Risk Committee Effectiveness Review 2019 Self Evaluation' at the meeting held on Thursday, 5 December. The summary paper was circulated to all Board Members and PF informed of the main points during the Board meeting.

Noted: The C&AG were not able to attend however they issued their findings in relation to their audit and no matters of any significance arose.

Noted: The draft Business Plan 2020 was considered.

Noted: Fort Privacy presented findings in relation to its audit of Data Protection compliance and the programme of work scheduled with **safefood** over the coming months.

Noted: Aoife O'Reilly, Digital Manager presented on the Risk Register in place for Digital.

Noted: ER expressed the Committee's satisfaction at the high levels of governance in **safefood** which brings assurance to the Board.

Noted: The Chair thanked PG for his work on the Committee and Alan McGrath was formally appointed to replace PG on the Audit and Risk Committee.

Proposer: PG

Seconder: MO.

11. Advisory Board Performance 2019 Self Evaluation

Noted: A paper summarising the results of the Board self-evaluation was circulated to all members and PF informed of the main points during the meeting.

12. Tour de table

Noted: no matters were raised.

13. AOB

Noted: The schedule of dates for Board meetings for 2020, which was tabled.

Date of next meeting: Thursday, 23 January, 2020, Dublin