



Minutes of the 126th meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board

Held on Thursday, 25 January 2018 at 10:30

safefood Dublin office.

PRESENT:

Ms Helen O'Donnell (HOD) (Chair)

Mr Paul Gibbons (PG) (Vice Chair)

Dr Mary Upton (MU)

Dr Eddie Rooney (ER)

Ms Wendy McIntosh (WMI)

Ms Margaret Jeffares (MJ)

Mr Brendan Kehoe (BK)

Mr Stephen Moutray (SM)

Mr Alan McGrath (AMG)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Ray Dolan, Chief Executive (RD)

Dr Gary Kearney, Director, Food Science (GK)

Ms Patricia Fitzgerald, Director, Corporate Operations (PF)

Ms Fiona Gilligan, Director, Marketing and Communications (DM)

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

Ms Alison Dries (secretary) (AD)

APOLOGIES:

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** Dublin office.

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

Noted: Apologies for DOR and MO 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 Friday, 8 December, 2017

Noted: The minutes were adopted with no amendments

Proposed: PG

Seconded: MJ

4. Matters arising from the minutes

Noted: There were no matters arising from the minutes

5. Presentation

Noted: **safefood's** market research company Ipsos MRBI presented the results of the yearly consumer tracking research titled 'safetrak'.

Noted: This is the 19th completed research survey in the safetrak series and was in field from November 2017 to January 2018.

Noted: The research consists of a stratified sampling approach by region and population of face-to-face in-house surveys. The data is weighted to the census.

Noted: The PowerPoint slides from the presentation are available to all members of the Advisory Board on request.

Noted: The Chair thanked Aisling Corcoran and Rebecca Porter from Ipsos for their presentation.

Noted: A question and answer session followed the presentation, with the following noted;

- AMG observed that respondents all assigned responsibility for childhood obesity to particular people/sectors and asked whether **safefood** could address this.
- FG explained that the new START campaign focuses on a message of support for parents, acknowledging that parenting is tough.
- BK asked if **safefood** could write to the Department of Health and seek to have the funds raised through the sugar tax ring fenced for health.
- The Chair responded to the above point by clarifying that the Advisory Board had previously written to the Minister for Health requesting the above.
- CFN suggested that with the amount of reformulation of sugary drinks taking place in industry the sugar tax may not generate the expected amount.

6. Chief Executive's report

Corporate

Noted: While the NI Executive Ministers are not in post, the Business Plan 2017 and Corporate Plan 2016-2019 had yet to be approved by the NSMC.

Noted: Following feedback regarding the stg/EURO exchange rate from the sponsor departments, the draft 2018 Business Plan will be amended and re-issue to the sponsor departments.

Campaigns

Noted: FG gave an update on campaigns.

Noted: Advertising under the START campaign will feature during January and February during ad breaks for Operation Transformation on RTE1. The campaign advertising is next scheduled to run from April 2018 across TV, radio, outdoor and digital/social.

Noted: Between the 4th and 28th of December **safefood** carried out a Christmas food safety campaign with a focus on driving traffic to our Turkey Cooking Time Calculator. This included radio advertising, website hub redevelopment, social media advertising and the development of a Facebook Messenger Bot to support customer service. Early results indicate that 80,000 people visited the **safefood** website between the 24th and 25th of December alone. To give this figure context **safefood**'s average daily visits are between 3,000 and 4,000 and in 2016 we received 35,000 visits on Christmas day. Overall there was an increase of 53% in web traffic compared to 2016 for the campaign period. 62% of traffic came from the ROI, 23% from NI and the remaining 15% from a total of 124 countries with Australia and Canada coming top.

Noted: BK congratulated GK and Dermot Moriarty on their T.V. appearance publicising the Christmas food safety campaign.

Noted: the pre and post-campaign research of the folic acid campaign show positive results.

Noted: CFN advised the rate of Neural Tube Defects (NTD's) is increasing slightly which shows there is a real need for the campaign.

Noted: Post campaign research results of the Handwashing campaign which ran in September 2017 show awareness levels of the importance of handwashing was very high and there was no significant behaviour change based on the benchmark results which were already very high. In 2018 **safefood** will work with the crèche sector where we shall drive new initiatives to enhance good handwashing habits.

Noted: The CEO thanked all staff who were involved in Christmas PR and the social media team involved in Operation Transformation.

Public relations

Noted: CFN will feature in an episode of Operation Transformation which will feature Energy drinks. Also on energy drinks, **safefood** issued a press release welcoming the move of Aldi in banning the sale of energy drinks to person's under 16 years of age in their stores.

Events

Noted: GK provided feedback on the Whole Genome Sequencing in Food Safety Seminar which was held on the 28th November 2017. The seminar which looked at what is coming down the tracks in food microbiology testing was very successful.

Noted: CFN provided feedback on the All-island obesity workshops which 'are going from strength to strength' and the last workshop held in November attracted a record number of attendees. The next workshop to be held in June will explore the 'nudge' behaviour theory.

Customer engagement

Noted: social media figures continue to improve month on month.

Other activities

Noted: **safefood** along with the Food Standards Agency, Public Health Agency and the Innovation Lab established a Governance group in December 2017 to oversee the implementation of the Minimum Nutritional Standards for Healthcare Facilities (NI). The position for Lead Dietitian/Nutritionist is now being re-advertised

Noted: **safefood** and the HSE finalised the first draft of the Minimum Nutritional Standards for Healthcare Facilities (ROI) in December 2017. The HSE will now establish a working group to finalise these and plan for implementation.

7. Financial Report

Noted: PF's presentation of the Financial Report for full year 2017.

Noted: **safefood** came in just under budget for 2017. The underspend could be attributed to a provision in the budget for an increase in rent for the Dublin office arising from a rent review which is due from 1 January 2017 which had not yet materialised.

Noted: The total budget for 2017 was 7.48 million, however some of this was lost due to the currency exchange rate. The same budget has been allocated to **safefood** for 2018.

8. Tour de table

Noted: AMG referenced a campaign which is taking place in the UK which instructs consumers they can have 2 snacks a day but they shouldn't exceed 100 calories each and asked if there was any merit in this message.

Noted: FG confirmed **safefood** are due to re-look at the treats message as part of the new START campaign. **safefood** commissioned researched is also due to be published at the end of 2018 which looks into the reasons parents give treats to children.

9. AOB

Date of next meeting: Thursday 22 March, in Dublin.