



Minutes of the 128<sup>th</sup> meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board

Held on Thursday, 10 May 2018 at 10:30

**safefood** office Dublin.

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**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)

Mr Brendan Kehoe (BK)

Mr Stephen Moutray (SM)

Mr Mervyn Oswald (MO)

Prof Dolores O'Riordan (DOR)

Mr Alan McGrath (AMG)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Ray Dolan, Chief Executive (RD)

Ms Patricia Fitzgerald, Director, Corporate Operations (PF)

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

Dr Gary Kearney, Director, Food Science (GK)

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

Dr Linda Gordon, Microbiology Manager, Food Science (LG)

Dr James McIntosh, Chemistry and Toxicology Manager, Food Science (JMI)

Ms Alison Dries (secretary) (AD)

**APOLOGIES:**

Ms Margaret Jeffares (MJ)

## **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.

The Chair extended her gratitude to the Chief Executive Officer of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Pamela Byrne, on behalf of the Board thanking her and her colleagues for their hospitality during the recent flooding of **safefood**'s offices.

**Noted:** Apologies of MJ 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, 22 March, 2018**

**Noted:** The minutes were adopted with no amendments

**Proposed:** SM

**Seconded:** MO

## **4. Matters arising from the minutes**

**Noted:** There were no matters arising from the minutes

## **5. Declarations of interest**

**Noted:** The Chair advised members that Declaration of Interest Forms should be completed and returned to AD at Board Members' earliest convenience.

## **6. Presentation from Food Science Directorate**

**Noted:** Three members of the Food Science Directorate presented the work of the Food Science Directorate.

**Noted:** Dr Gary Kearney, Director of Food Science presented an overview of the Food Science Directorate. The main topics the presentation covered were;

- Context
- Legislation
- Food Science
- Role & Audiences
- Programmes & Activities
- Research
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Partnership & Collaboration

**Noted:** The presentation was followed by questions.

**Noted:** MO asked if **safefood** should address the issue of food waste. GK confirmed that **safefood** have covered this topic in the past with a campaign informing the public on the difference between 'best before' and 'use by' date.

**Noted:** BK enquired as to how **safefood** are addressing Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and climate change. GK informed that **safefood** published a research report titled '*Climate Change Ireland: The potential impacts of climate change on food safety from an island of Ireland perspective*' which is available on the **safefood** website. GK said there was a lot of information already available relating to AMR. **safefood** is now looking into a pilot intervention programme.

**Noted:** Dr James McIntosh, specialist in Chemistry and Toxicology presented on the work of **safefood** in the areas of Food Hypersensitivity and Chemical Food Safety and Emerging Issues.

**Noted:** **safefood** first began providing training in food allergen control to Environmental Health Officers and catering colleges in 2007 and have been doing so ever since.

**Noted:** **safefood's** aim in this area is for food allergens to become part of the culture of a food business in the same way food hygiene is.

**Noted:** A round table discussion around food allergens followed the presentation.

**Noted:** JMcl advised that under EU law a restaurant is required to look at 14 ingredients. This is an EU wide list and some of the allergens are more prevalent in other EU countries. MU asked if there is any evidence of sensitivity in the population increasing. JMcl confirmed that this is increasing, especially in relation to Peanut allergies.

**Noted:** Dr Linda Gordon, specialist in Microbiology presented on the work of **safefood** in the area of food hygiene and **safefood**'s Knowledge Network programme.

**Noted:** The Chair thanked GK, JMcl and LG for their presentation.

## **8. 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 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:** In the absence of a Northern Ireland Assembly and the NSMC, **safefood**'s 2017-2019 Corporate Plan awaits formal approval.

**Noted:** To facilitate the development of the draft 2019 Business Plan, a meeting involving **safefood**'s directors and managers is scheduled to take place on 13<sup>th</sup> June.

**Noted:** RD and PF are scheduled to meet with both sponsor departments on 18<sup>th</sup> May. This meeting was originally due to take place in March.

**Noted:** Following an open recruitment competition to fill the temporary vacancy in the post of Director of Marketing & Communications from 27<sup>th</sup> February, we are happy to report that Dr

Aileen McGloin is the successful applicant and filled this vacancy with effect from 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018. This has created a temporary vacancy in the post of Communications Manager – Digital and Health and **safefood** is currently running an open competition to fill this temporary vacancy. Closing dates for applications is 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

Following an open recruitment competition to fill the post of HR & Governance Executive which will be vacated on 16<sup>th</sup> May, we are happy to report that Ms Nicola Power has accepted this position and started with **safefood** on 30<sup>th</sup> April to facilitate a two week handover period.

### Campaigns

**Noted:** AmcG gave an overview on **safefood**'s campaigns since the meeting held in March.

**Noted:** The childhood obesity campaign titled 'start' aired for four weeks from the 9<sup>th</sup> April. The campaign's message was to encourage parents to reduce the amount of treat foods they give their children and increase fruit and vegetables. PR used Kantar data which showed parents are spending more on treat foods than fruit and vegetables. Press coverage in both jurisdictions was very good with all major radio and newspapers covering the campaign.

**Noted:** AMcG presented on behalf of the START campaign to the Environment and Social Committee of the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly (BIPA) in relation to the Committee's ongoing work into Childhood Obesity. The Committee, which is made up of parliamentarians from Westminster, the Oireachtas, and the devolved institutions, were very engaged and interested in **safefood**'s work.

**Noted:** Research, to inform the next phase of the handwashing campaign, is currently in planning.

### Events

**Noted:** CFN attended the TouRRoir event hosted by Good Food Ireland. The event acts as an interface between food and tourism.

**Noted:** **safefood** partnered with the National Dairy Council to run a free event for transition year students. 3,000 TY students and teachers from across the country attended the event at the National Sports Campus in Dublin. The full day seminar was designed to educate young people about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in a practical, engaging and fun environment. The focus of **safefood**'s stand was energy drinks.

**Noted:** The All-island Food Poverty Network was represented at the Multi-disciplinary research conference on food and poverty in the UK: 'taking stock, moving forward' by **safefood** and FSA NI. Findings from the **safefood**, FSA in NI, Consumer Council NI and the Vincentian partnership for Social Justice research project "What is the cost of a socially acceptable and healthy food basket in Northern Ireland in 2014 and 2016?" were presented at the event.

**Noted:** CFN informed that **safefood** were represented at 2 recent events on social prescribing. Social prescribing takes a citizens advice approach whereby medical and primary care professionals can refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services. For example physical activity or cooking classes in the local area. This overlaps on mental health and loneliness.

**Noted:** Board members were notified of diary notices for up-coming events.

#### Education

**Noted:** MediaWise was promoted to primary school teachers at the Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO) Annual Conference in Killarney in April.

**Noted:** **safefood** have submitted an application for Feilte 2018 to showcase MediaWise in October.

#### Customer engagement

**Noted:** AMcG reviewed the social and digital media figures which were dominated by the Start campaign in April. The campaign was extremely popular online and in the media and an in depth analysis of marketing data will be available at the next meeting.

#### Minimum Nutritional standards

**Noted:** The position for Lead Dietitian/Nutritionist to lead the implementation of the Minimum Nutritional Standards for Healthcare Facilities in Northern Ireland has been filled. The work on the standards will be presented at ECO2018, the 25<sup>th</sup> European Congress on Obesity.

**Noted:** The final draft of the Standards will be sent out for consultation to relevant departments in the Health Service Executive (HSE) in May. The Healthier Food Environment Advisory Group plan to commence the review of the HSE policy on vending machines. This work will inform the development of a vending policy for Health and Social Care settings in Northern Ireland. These projects are a good example of **safefood's** role in promoting collaborative work with Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

#### All staff briefing

**Noted:** Members of the Human Health and Nutrition Directorate presented findings from two recent pieces of work;

- The nutritional survey of yoghurts on sale in retail outlets on the island of Ireland.
- The **safefood**-funded research project on the nature of foods on promotion in retail outlets in the Republic of Ireland. This research has already been conducted in Northern Ireland so this current research will give an island of Ireland perspective.

**Action:** Members of the Advisory Board were interested in the nutritional survey of yoghurts on sale in retail outlets on the island of Ireland and it was agreed this would be presented at the next meeting in June.

#### Knowledge Network

**Noted:** Information in the Chief Executive's Report relating to the Knowledge Network was covered during in the presentations.

### **9. Financial Report**

**Noted:** PF referred to the summary Financial Results for the first 3 months for 2018. **safefood** is approximately €270k under budget at this stage due to timing differences. Primarily research and promotional spend takes place slightly later than budgeted.

### **11. Tour de table**

### **12. AOB**

**Noted:** The Chair advised Members that tickets for the Balmoral show were available from **safefood**.

**Date of next meeting: Thursday, 21 June, 2018, Cork office.**