

Minutes of the 137<sup>th</sup> meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board  
Held on Thursday, 22 August, 2019 at 10:30  
**safefood** Dublin Office

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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)  
Mr Brendan Kehoe (BK)  
Ms Wendy McIntosh (WMI)  
Prof Dolores O'Riordan (DOR)  
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 Joana da Silva, Human Health and Nutrition (JdS)  
Mr Dermot Moriarty, Manager, Marketing and Communications (DM)  
Mr Andrew Castles, Executive, Marketing and Communications (AC)  
Ms Alison Dries (secretary) (AD)

**APOLOGIES:**

Mr Mervyn Oswald (MO)  
Ms Margaret Jeffares (MJ)  
Mr Stephen Moutray (SM)

## **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 the **safefood** Dublin office.

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

**Noted:** The apologies for MO, MJ and SM 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, 20 June, 2019**

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

**Proposed:** BK

**Seconded:** WMI

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

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

## **7. Presentation**

**Noted:** Mr Andrew Castles and Mr Dermot Moriarty from **safefood**'s Marketing and Communications Department presented on Behaviour change theories and how these are applied to **safefood**'s consumer advertising campaigns. This was demonstrated using the food safety Rufus handwashing campaign.

**Noted:** A behaviour is classified as a physical event that takes place in the body which is controlled by the brain. In order to change a behaviour you have to know the determinants and external factors

which influence behaviour. A lot of the framework and techniques used by **safefood** come from University College London, including the Behaviour change wheel and COM-B approach which helps **safefood** to focus on the following;

- What behaviour are **safefood** trying to change?
- What will it take to bring about change?
- What interventions might work?
- Which specific components should your intervention involve?

**Noted:** In applying the Behaviour change theory to the Rufus campaign the following was determined;

- Audience – childcare provider
- What behaviour are you trying to change? – increase handwashing through the use of **safefood**'s resources.
- The audience are unaware of the risk of E.coli and how easily the bacteria can spread, therefore **safefood** needs to communicate the risks and importance of good handwashing habits.
- There is limited interest in handwashing, so **safefood** needs to make the topic easy and fun so it becomes part of the routine.
- By using the behaviour change wheel **safefood** were able to identify which interventions will work for the audience.
  - A letter to childcare providers was used to increase knowledge and understanding of the behaviour to be changed
  - Posters were provided to persuade behaviour change
  - A staff booklet was created to train on how to use the childcare pack
  - A poster to be displayed at the behaviour change point (sinks) was used to change the physical and social context.
  - Rufus the messy monster character was created so the audience could relate, aspire and also find fun in the topic.

**Noted:** AC informed 4,500 packs (including the above resources) were distributed through Early Childhood Ireland, Early Years and Libraries Ireland. DOR asked what reach this provided. AC informed that 30-40% of crèches in the ROI were reached through Early Childhood Ireland. **safefood** also plans to work with Irish language Associations to reach 500 crèches and will investigate other avenues to increase the reach to crèches on the island of Ireland.

**Noted:** **safefood** will look at primary schools as a distribution channel for 2020, subject to budget availability.

**Noted:** PG suggested contacting Tulsa as **safefood** may be able to coordinate the message with their pre-school inspections as there are issues with staff washing hands after nappy changes.

**Noted:** The Chair asked what other organisations have used the Behaviour change theory? DM informed the theory is used by Public Health bodies across Scotland, England and Canada and also the Innovation Lab in Northern Ireland who work on the Minimum Nutritional standards in Healthcare project in which **safefood** is a partner.

**Noted:** DOR asked how the campaign is evaluated given there is a complex chain involved in handwashing e.g. the child could take on the campaign and wash hands but the chef might not and then there is an outbreak. PF informed that the logic model approach has been adapted by **safefood** to plan and evaluate **safefood**'s initiatives/programmes. **safefood**'s adoption of this model recognises that, as only one of the participants in the complex food chain and in the absence of extensive randomised control testing, it is not possible to ascertain if changed consumer behaviour results from **safefood**'s interventions or from a combination of interventions across the system. **safefood** assesses whether its promotions have registered with the target audiences and also seeks self-reporting of whether the target audience has changed behaviours.

**Noted:** The Chair thanked AC and DM for their presentation

## **8. Chief Executive's report**

### Corporate

**Noted:** In the absence of an NI Assembly and the NSMC, **safefood**'s 2017 and 2018 Business Plans and the 2017-2019 Corporate Plan await formal approval. Drafting of the 2019 Business Plan is at an advanced stage and should be issued to the sponsor departments in October.

Concern was expressed at the implications for **safefood** of the prolonged absence of the NSMC, which will also impact on Board appointments. The CEO clarified that **safefood** regularly raises this issue with the Sponsor Departments, however, at present no mechanism for addressing this has been forthcoming. MU commented that this will have significant implications for quorum and governance. AMG informed that with Brexit impending it is very important North/South bodies like **safefood** are supported. There was a discussion between Board members on the above matter.

**Decision:** it was decided that PF would flag the concerns of the Board raised at this meeting with the Sponsor Departments at **safefood**'s next meeting with them on 3 September. If this fails the Board would consider written correspondence to record its concerns regarding Governance and good corporate practice.

**Noted:** A second draft of the Corporate Plan 2020-2022 is being prepared, as instructed by the Sponsor Departments on the same basis as the guidance issued for completing previous plans.

**Noted:** The position for Director of Human Health and Nutrition has been filled and the new Director will commence 18 September.

### Campaigns

**Noted:** DM informed of updates in Campaigns. Two creative concepts for the next phase of the START campaign were tested with the target audience (parents). The next phase is due to go live on 21 October.

**Noted:** Printed materials for the Rufus handwashing campaign will be arriving in crèches from week commencing 2 September onwards and the campaign will be supported by social and digital advertising as well as publicity during September.

### Publicity

**Noted:** JdS informed results from the research into 'the cost of a healthy food basket' in the ROI were launched in July. There was a decrease in the cost in ROI and an increase in benefits. JdS informed the results of the 2020 research will be interesting in terms of effects of Brexit.

### Events

**Noted: **safe food**** and the HSE will present the START interactive stand at this year's ploughing championships 17 – 19 September. The stand will have prominent position within Healthy Ireland's health and wellbeing marquee alongside other health agencies.

**Noted: **safe food**** will present the START interactive stand within the family enclosure at Croke Park during the GAA semi-finals, over 30,000 fans are expected.

**Noted:** A Community Food Initiative event is taking place in Finglas tomorrow which will be attended by the Lord Mayor of Dublin. Board members were invited to attend.

### Minimum nutritional standards for healthcare facilities NI and ROI

**Noted:** JdS informed on the progress being made in both projects (NI and ROI). In NI the Standards document is being reviewed and implementation tools are in development. The CEO informed there has been no opportunity to get additional resources for the Standards, nevertheless it remains a success.

**Noted:** JdS informed Cooperation North-South is very impressive.

**Noted:** sugary drinks are being removed from shops and vending facilities in healthcare facilities and a maximum calorie of 200 kcal is being introduced. DOR informed all sugary drinks were removed for UCD campus and it had no effect on sales.

## **9. Financial Report**

**Noted:** PF referred to the summary Financial Results until the end of July 2019. **safe food** is slightly under budget at present due to timing differences and expects to spend the full budget at year end.

## **10. Tour de table**

**Noted:** discussion of increased type II diabetes.

## **11. AOB**

**Noted:** Board member requested a presentation on GM foods and Meat imported from Brazil.

**Date of next meeting: Thursday, 17 October, 2019, Belfast**