

Corporate Plan 2026-2028



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(Abridged Version)

Table of contents

1. Executive summary	4
2. Vision, Mission and Values Statement	5
3. Strategic goals and business objectives 2026 - 2028.....	6
(1) Leading cross-border working and partnership in the promotion of safer and healthier production, provision and consumption of food.....	7
(2) Being the trusted voice on food safety and healthy eating for people across the island of Ireland.	7
(3) Driving continuous improvement through using best practice, innovation, technology, staff development and growing the evidence base.	7
Appendix A: Organisation Chart	8
Appendix B: Safefood’s strategy map.....	9

1. Executive summary

Since 1999, Safefood has worked across the island of Ireland to promote food safety and provide trusted advice on nutrition and healthy eating, in line with our legal role. We focus on the public and on everyone involved in producing and providing safe food. Our mission is to improve public health by supporting positive behaviour change. We communicate clearly, positively and based on strong evidence, which has helped Safefood earn a high level of public trust. Over the next three years, we will continue to develop our work in line with public sector priorities, with a strong focus on innovation, collaboration with the public and building future skills.

Food systems, technologies and lifestyles are changing how food is produced and consumed. Safefood will use innovative tools and proven behaviour-change approaches to support safer and healthier food choices, while continuing to provide clear and reliable advice in a digital environment where misinformation is common.

Partnerships are central to Safefood's success. We work closely with health agencies, regulators, researchers and community organisations, including through our Community Food Initiatives programme, which supports healthier choices in disadvantaged communities.

This Corporate Plan 2026–2028 builds on Safefood's strengths and includes the development of Safefood 2036, a 10-year plan to guide future strategy. The plan focuses on increasing impact, supporting staff, maintaining strong governance and improving health and wellbeing across the island of Ireland.

Dr Gary A. Kearney

Chief Executive Officer
Safefood

2. Vision, Mission and Values Statement

Vision statement

An island where safe, healthy and sustainable food is part of everyone's daily life.

Mission statement

To help people make safe and healthy food decisions.

Values

Safefood recognises that to fulfil its strategy, there must be strong values that embody the vision and mission statements of the organisation. These values are fundamental and underpin the overall culture at the core of the organisation. Our Values are:

Respect – We value everyone within and outside the organisation for their time, views, and contribution in achieving our strategy.

Integrity – We are passionate about working for public good. We do the right things, with an evidence-based approach underpinning our work.

Impact – We do the right things, and we do things right. We are passionate about delivering our work to the highest standards and we use best practice in measuring our performance.

Partnership – We are a diverse group of professionals who achieve more by working together and working with others across the island of Ireland who share common goals.

Person-centred – We place the understanding of our audience at the centre of our work aiming to support and empower them.

Innovation – We encourage our staff to continuously bring new ideas and ways of working to our activities and support a culture of innovation in the organisation.

3. Strategic goals and business objectives 2026 - 2028

This Executive Summary sets out the main food safety, nutrition, communications and operational challenges Safefood will address in its next Corporate Plan. Rapid social change and global uncertainty have made the food environment more complex, affecting what food is available, how it is bought, prepared and eaten.

With over 26 years of experience in public health promotion, Safefood is well placed to provide clear, trusted and evidence-based guidance to the public and small food businesses. The people and food environment of the island of Ireland remain central to our work. We will use behaviour change approaches to help people make safer, healthier and more sustainable food choices, and support food businesses to do the same.

Safefood will take a whole-system approach and ensure the public helps shape our work. We will use research, audience testing and behaviour change science throughout planning and evaluation. Co-creating messages with target audiences will be essential to success, ensuring communications reflect real life and what matters most to people about food.

People make better food choices when their environment supports them. Safefood will continue to promote key food hygiene practices at home and in food businesses, and support actions that make the healthier choice the easier choice across everyday settings.

We will deliver this through public information, campaigns, research and policy input in both jurisdictions. We will also stay alert to emerging challenges such as regulatory change, rising food costs, antimicrobial resistance, food contamination risks and climate change.

Safefood works within a complex food system and maximises impact through strong partnerships across the island of Ireland. Partnership working remains central to our mandate, and we will continue to strengthen networks and formal collaborations.

This Corporate Plan 2026–2028 aligns with sponsor Department priorities and focuses on food safety, healthy and sustainable food access and food poverty, while recognising differences between jurisdictions. Annual Business Plans will set out detailed actions and targets.

In the years 2026-2028, our Primacy Strategic Objectives are:

- (1) Leading cross-border working and partnership in the promotion of safer and healthier production, provision and consumption of food.**
 - Work with public health partners to support safer, healthier and more sustainable food choices.
 - Raise awareness of current and emerging food issues through joint learning and programmes.
 - Support vulnerable groups with practical food safety and nutrition guidance.
 - Ensure communications are accessible and consider health inequalities.
 - Build strong relationships across the food sector to increase impact.

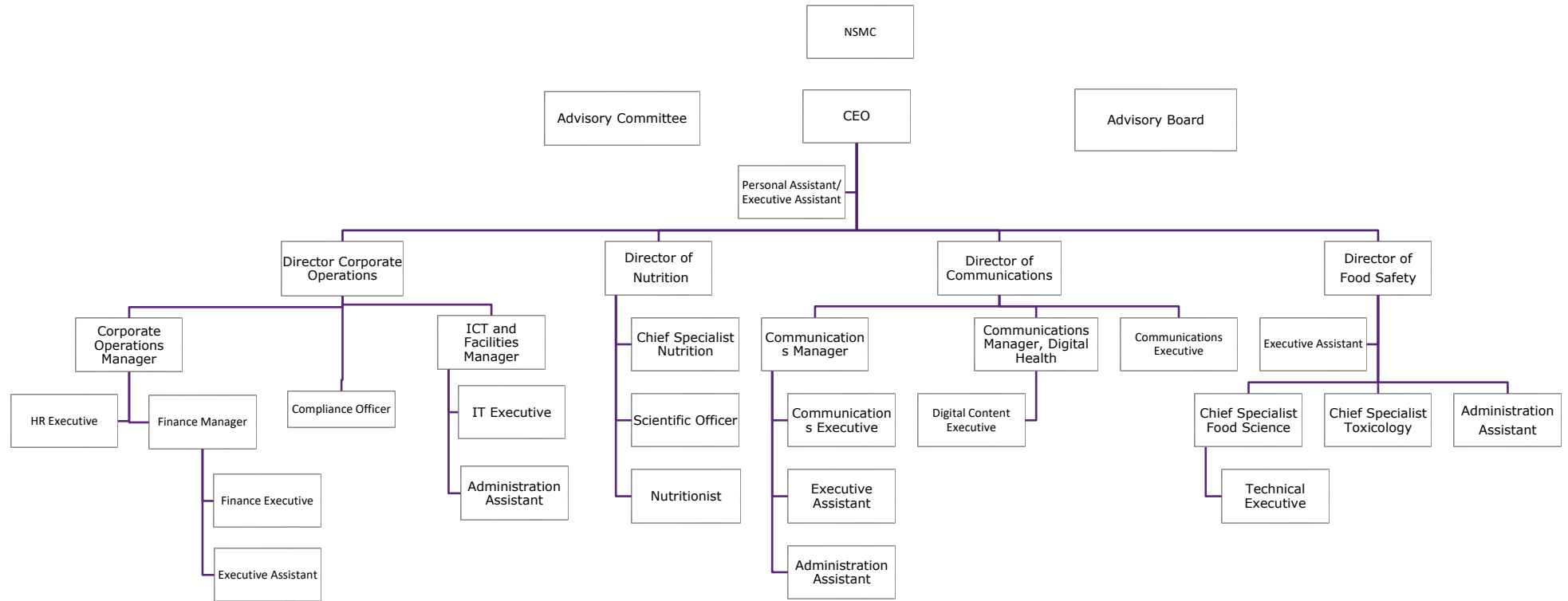
- (2) Being the trusted voice on food safety and healthy eating for people across the island of Ireland.**
 - Improve understanding of food safety and healthy eating among the public and professionals.
 - Help people navigate a complex food environment with confidence.
 - Share reliable food safety and nutrition research with industry and professionals.
 - Lead best practice in public health communication.
 - Represent public concerns, encourage industry change and inform policy through evidence and partnerships.

- (3) Driving continuous improvement through using best practice, innovation, technology, staff development and growing the evidence base.**
 - Use strong scientific evidence to support behaviour change.
 - Apply data-driven and best-practice communication methods.
 - Track public trends to inform interventions.
 - Support innovation, staff development and value for money.
 - Monitor relevant developments in technology and artificial intelligence.

These Primary Strategic Objectives are closely aligned with our Mission Statement:

Safefood's Corporate Plan 2026–2028 builds on more than 26 years of partnership working across the island of Ireland. As a North/South public body, we are committed to equality of opportunity and inclusion, including for people with disabilities. Our focus is to ensure our work is relevant, effective and improves public health and wellbeing.

Appendix A: Organisation Chart



Appendix B: Safefood’s strategy map

<p>Our Mission: To help people make safe and healthy food decisions that support well-being and strengthen public health.</p> <p>Our Vision: An island where safe, healthy and sustainable food is part of everyone's daily life .</p>	
<p>What we need to be good at (our core deliverables)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CD1: Enhance relevance, profile and reputation of Safefood as a trusted business partner who supports collaborative working and adds value • CD2: Use relevant evidence to promote policy development and design and deliver multi-media campaigns, programmes and other initiatives that support food businesses, communities and the public to make healthier food choices • CD3: Promote food safety practices and policy development across the food chain 	<p>Deliver Value for Money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VFM1: Balance our budget • VFM2: Ensure the best procurement • VFM3: Manage our projects and programmes effectively and efficiently to ensure benefits are realised • VFM4: Satisfy accountability requirements
<p>What will help us do it (enabling factors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EF1: Optimise our support functions • EF2: Build new and strengthen existing partnerships • EF3: Commission, analyse, collect and share high quality research and data • EF4: Use good quality research and data to promote policy development, practical solutions, clear advice and support the public and food businesses to make improved food choices 	
<p>How we will align our resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R1: Our staff are engaged, motivated and high performing • R2: Our staff understand their contribution • R3: Use training and technology to support our staff in working more innovatively, effectively and efficiently 	
<p>Our Values: Respect – Integrity – Impact – Partnership – Person-centred - Innovation</p>	

