

Minutes of Food Poverty Network Meeting #35

Date: Wednesday, 4th December 2019

Venue: VC rooms in **safefood** Cork & Dublin offices and Food Standards Agency NI, Belfast

Time: 11:00am – 12:30pm

In Attendance

Sharon Gilmore (SG) (Chair)	Food Standards Agency (FSA) NI
Fionnuala Close (FC)	Food Standards Agency (FSA) NI
Jennifer Mc Gonagle (JMcG)	Food Standards Agency (FSA) NI
Catherine Conlon (CC)	safefood
Marian O'Reilly (MOR)	safefood
Joana Caldeira Fernandes da Silva (JdS)	safefood
Tracey Thompson (TT)	safefood
Bertrand Maitre (BM)	ESRI
Tracey Colgan (TC)	HSC (NI)
James Elliot (JE)	Dept. of Communities (NI)
Sinead Conroy (SC)	SECAD
Maeve Carey (MC)	Causeway Coast & Glen
Nicola Murphy	Irish Heart Foundation
Edel McNamara	HSE
Ashlee McVeigh	Consumer Council NI
Darren Moan	Health Development Policy Branch, (DOH) NI
Ursula O'Dwyer (UO'D)	DOH ROI

Apologies

Bernadette McMahan (BMcM)	Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice
Eimear Delahunty (ED)	Food Cloud ROI
Ellen Finlay (EF)	Children in Northern Ireland
Margaret O'Neill (MO'N)	HSE (ROI)
Saoirse Brady	Children's Rights Alliance
Meadhbh McDaid	Northern Ireland Chest Heart & Stroke

1. Welcome and apologies

SG welcomed all to the meeting and noted apologies. SG welcomed Catherine Conlon from **safefood** who has replaced Clíodhna Foley-Nolan.

2. Minutes from last meeting

SG asked all present if the minutes were correct and if there was a need for any changes. JE wished it noted that he was present at the previous meeting. TT to amend minutes to reflect accordingly.

ACTION 1: TT to amend list of attendees to reflect that James Elliot was in attendance.

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3. Matters arising

Actions from the previous meeting were all reviewed and noted as complete where relevant. JDS advised she would follow up with GMcF & UO'D (UO'D joined the meeting later).

ACTION 2: JDS agreed to follow up with GMcF relation to Action 2 from previous meeting – as well as UO'D if Action 3 to confirm if it was completed.

4. Updates from Dept. of Health NI & Dept. of Health ROI

DoH NI – Update provided by Darren Moan

- The DoH has published their short-term outcomes on Fitter Future for All 2019-2021 and have been approved and formally published on the website. On the back of that, a Strategic Innovations Lab was held to consider the challenge question “how can we create a society in which children grown up a healthy weight?” The report from the lab has been sent to the Ministers for consideration and the next step action will be to implement any recommendations that are within the existing parameters of their current remit.
- The Food Poverty Indicator subgroup – it has been agreed that the FPI will move from Health Survey to the Family Resources Survey and the results will be available Jan/Feb 2020. DM advised he has been working with JDS to pull together a Minimum Nutritional Standards workshop and JDS has been liaising with stakeholders to establish a date for the workshop in early 2020. FC offered further clarity and advised that The Health survey will still continue to monitor food poverty but only every 2/3 years whereas the Family Resources survey will monitor food insecurity every year using a different set of indicators from the NI Health Survey.

DoH ROI – Update provided by Ursula O'Dwyer

- The DoH has been working on the 1 – 5yr old Healthy Eating Guidelines. The scientific recommendations from the FSAI have now been finalised however this won't be available until January 2020 but they have passed on the food based dietary recommendations from this in confidence and these are being used to move ahead. DoH will be working with **safefood** using these recommendations to develop the guidelines for Early Learning & Care settings.
- Also on the Nutrition Standards for School Meals, there is also currently a hot meal pilot scheme ongoing presently. This pilot is mainly but not exclusively in deis schools with 30 schools are taking place in the first part of the pilot. During the pilot it became apparent that Standards for this project were necessary so together with **safefood**,

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HSE and in conjunction with the Department of Employment Reform & Social Protection an interim nutrition standards for the hot meals pilot. These were due to go before the Minister for Employment Reform & Social Protection in the coming weeks. It is also hoped that the DERSP will move forward on a recommendation to set up their own Nutrition Team.

- The joint working group on Food Poverty is still working on the resource to facilitate bringing this forward. This will be reviewed in the 2020 business plan.
- EU Joint Action – UO'D asked if the Kantar data on the promotions could be shared whenever it became available as they are co-leading the EU Commission now working on a co-lead work package on "The Marketing of Unhealthy Food to Children". It is expected to start in April 2020 and will run for 36 months. SG advised that FSA had purchased this piece of data and would be happy to share it with UO'D. MO'R advised **safefood** has the equivalent data for ROI based on 2018 data and would be happy to share this as well as soon as the report was available in 2020.
- UO'D advised that the Healthy Ireland survey was published recently. There was a reduction in males since 2016 and there has been a stabilisation right across the numbers surveyed. This stabilisation however is not happening in the disadvantaged.
- Results of National Children's Food Survey which first took place 14 years ago – this was the 2nd one. Results show that there has been a reduction of 16% in childhood obesity. Results of these will be released in the coming months and will be circulated as soon as they are available.

ACTION 3: UO'D to send TT link to survey for circulation to all members.

5. Cost Of A Healthy Food Basket

MO'R advised that earlier in the year **safefood** published ROI & NI Cost of a Healthy Food Basket research results and there was a slight decrease in spend in the ROI for most household types in terms of what they needed to spend in 2018 relative to their take-home income. In NI there was a slight increase the percentage in spend of their take-home income, this reflected a food price increase in particular for those in receipt of social welfare and there was no increase over a number of years in terms of social welfare and any benefits people were in receipt of. Infographic and a full report is available on **safefood's** website. Discussions are currently underway for an updating this data in 2020 based on the average inflation over a 12 month period (2019 into 2020) with Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice and this would be ongoing on a 2 yearly basis. MO'R advised that this data has also been very useful to highlight "holiday hunger". SG informed the meeting that there will be

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a change to the welfare system in NI which would have an impact on the takehome income for those in receipt of universal credit when the new system is implemented. SG advised that after the General Election the matter of a Brexit subgroup will be revisited as there will be a clearer picture of how Brexit will impact food prices and accessibility of fresh food.

6. Network Action Plan 2019

NI Action Plan 2019

DfC – Social Supermarket Pilot Programme - JE advised that he had shared a report card on the learnings from the Social Supermarket pilot in late August which covered the period until the end March 2019 and advised there was a further one up to the end of September which will be updated. JE reported that the results were positive and the department was interested in doing something post-March as well as source funding for this.

FareShare NI & DfC – Supply 20+ tonnes surplus food to Social Supermarket Pilot: JE advised that FareShare achieved this target.

FareShare NI & FSA & PHA – Redistribute surplus fresh food to 80+ charities: TC also informed the meeting that that FareShare exceeded all their targets and are now starting to work with schools in particular with breakfast clubs.

Safefood & FSA – Co-ordinate conference/workshop in 2019 in NI (ref. Item 9).

FSA, safefood, DH, FfC, Trusell Trust/FareShare - Set up subgroup to keep updated on Brexit – SG advised that this was postponed pending the election. SG suggested that she'd touch base with TT with regard to Brexit subgroup and determine who from the FPN would be best to be part of this subgroup. SG also asked all member to forward any becomes aware of any studies or research relating to Brexit to TT to share with all the FPN members.

FSA – Labelling campaign – Know Your Calories (Phase 1): SG advised Phase I was complete and Phase II will begin in November.

Safefood & FSA - Publish newsletter to be shared with member organisations: JDS advised that this had been done and the next newsletter was due out in December 2019 (date of publishing was adjusted earlier in the year). There are a few articles and reports to include but JDS asked if there were was anything of interest to forward it on to Joana for inclusion. JDS asked DM of DoH if there was someone within his team who could replace Claire Wright on the Editorial Group. DM advised that a replacement had been identified who will support on the Editorial Group. JDS informed the meeting all were welcome to take part in the Editorial Group.

FSA & safefood - Assist in organisation of workshop showcasing current research on food poverty throughout island of Ireland: SG advised that this had been completed at the last FPN Workshop.

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Safefood – Publish evaluation of CFI Programme 2015-2018: SG informed that this had been completed in March 2019.

Safefood /SECAD – Establish the CFI Programme 2019-2021 across island of Ireland: SG advised this was completed.

Safefood /VPSJ & FSA – Publish cost of minimally acceptable healthy food basket for 4 households: This was completed.

Safefood /VPSJ – Determine feasibility of updating the cost of a minimally acceptable healthy food basket for 4 households in 2019 (to monitor impact of Brexit on food costs): This will be a new piece of work in 2020.

Safefood, PHA & DH – Continue to promote practical tips for parents through the START campaign (2 phases): MOR asked if all the FPN members could promote the messages to the consumer through the www.makeastart.org website.

ACTION 4: ALL FPN to forward any research relating to Brexit to forward to FPN members.

ROI Action Plan 2019

FoodCloud Hubs/DEASP – FoodCloud (Hubs) not available to attend so a written update will be requested.

FoodCloud & FoodCloud Hubs – Improve FoodCloud Food Banking Models include a technology platform and three warehouses nationwide: request written update

The Irish Heart Foundation – Continue to fund three projects for three years in Dublin, Monaghan & Wexford. These projects were completed in November 2019 with the pilot project being very successful however there are no updates on this for 2020. The final evaluation report is due to be completed in January 2020 and will be published and circulated when available.

The Irish Heart Foundation – Finalise legislative provisions on food marketing: The Childhood Obesity Manifesto which aims to cut Childhood Obesity by 50% 2030 was published and a copy of this manifesto is on the website.

The Irish Heart Foundation – Support IHF Sponsored legislative proposals on data protection: No update.

The Irish Heart Foundation – Schools research on school food: No update.

The Irish Heart Foundation – Research on attitudes to food advertising. No update.

The Irish Heart Foundation – Exposure of Irish Children to food marketing: No update.

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Safefood - Publish evaluation of CFI Programme 2015-2018: (ref NI 2019 Action Plan updates above).

Safefood - Establish the CFI Programme 2019-2021 across island of Ireland: (ref NI 2019 Action Plan updates above).

Safefood & VPSJ – Publish 2018 cost of a minimally acceptable healthy food basket for 6 households: Completed

safefood & VPSJ – Determine the feasibility of updating the cost of a minimally acceptable healthy food basket for 4 households in 2019 (to monitor impact of Brexit on food costs): Deferred to 2020.

Safefood, HSE, Healthy Ireland & DOH – Continue to promote practical tips for parents' through the START campaign (2 phases): (ref NI 2019 Action Plan updates above).

Safefood & FSA – Publish a newsletter to be shared with member organisations and other relevant stakeholders on the subject of food poverty: (ref NI 2019 Action Plan updates above).

FSA & safefood - Assist in the organisation of workshop showcasing current research on food poverty throughout the island of Ireland: Completed. (ref NI 2019 Action Plan updates above).

FSA & safefood - Host annual All-island Food Poverty Network conference: Completed (ref NI 2019 Action Plan updates above).

Dept. of Health – 1-5yr old Healthy Eating Guidelines: Delayed – awaiting FSAI Scientific Report).

Dept. of Health/HSE/safefood – National Food Standards for Early Learning Centres (once HEGT – 1-5 yr olds published) Healthy Ireland will lead: Deferred to 2020.

Dept. of Children and Youth Affairs/DoH – First 5 Food Poverty & Establish joint Advisory Food Poverty Group:

DEASP (DoH) – Hot School Food Pilot: Pilot launched in Jan 2019.

ACTION 5: JDS to request an update from FoodCloud on status of 2019 actions.

7. Action Plan 2020 – proposals

JDS advised that TT will circulate a 2020 Action Plan template and invite members to submit their proposals by mid-January. SG urged members to put forward their proposals and invited members to look for opportunities joint working and to share data. SG advised that TT will carry over any deferred actions from the 2019 Action Plans to 2020. MOR reminded the members that the Action Plan goes to the Implementation for Fitter Futures for All lead

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by the Public Health Agency so it is shared quite broadly and shows the level of commitment around the area of Food Poverty as well as the joint working and highlights the work being carried out.

ACTION 6: TT to circulate template for 2020 Action Plans NI & ROI to all members and request responses by mid-January and also to include deferred actions from 2019.

8. Update from Food Poverty Indicator Subgroup

FC advised that the representative from NISRA had advised it wasn't possible to continue collecting data on the 4 questions that are currently collected on the Health Survey every year because it was too onerous on the other questions but has committed to doing this every two to three years and 2019 was the last year that this was collected annually. However, parallel to this, the Dept. for Work and Pensions in the UK have decided to start collecting food security data will now be collecting data for the UK which is a different set of questions (approx. 10 questions for adults and 8 for children) and this is the first year that the data will be available UK wide. The Dept. of Communities is collecting this data for NI and the Dept. for Work and Pensions will collect for UK and this data should be available by Spring 2020 and will provide a UK wide picture and whilst the data sets will be different there should be some comparables that will help to give an island of Ireland so the next time the subgroup will meet will be when this data is available. MOR advised that the EU SILK data may also be available and may offer another avenue to explore.

9. Feedback from Workshop 2019 & Themes for 2020 Workshop

SG invited feedback from anyone that had attended the workshop. JDS informed the meeting that whilst it was useful to explore the new format for this last workshop she felt that the workshop should moves back to the previous format as there was a lot of value to having a face to face meeting. JDS informed the meeting that she had had a conversation with FC following the last workshop and they felt that holding a Research themed workshop could prove challenging due to the fact that Food Poverty Research on the island of Ireland was not as rich as hoped therefore it would be challenging to host a full day workshop on Research alone. JDS suggested that once a theme had been agreed upon then an invitation could be extended to researchers and then give the researcher with the best abstract the opportunity to present at the workshop meaning there would be 5 presenters rather than the usual 4. JDS asked for the support of the Network members for suggested themes as well as putting

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them in touch with potential speakers for the workshop and if these could be sent to JDS before the end December for discussion in the new year.

10.AOB

BM mentioned that the CSO had released new poverty figures for 2018 which showed positive results. BM advised he would forward the report to TT to circulate. BM also advised that the GUI study which focused on a specific group of children. The study deals with a broad range of areas including obesity. The study showed there was a significant increase in the age group under 20 years old while rate was much the same between 9, 13 & 17, figures show there has been an increase around "obesity" rather than "overweight" in a particular age group and the report shows that there is a strong association of obesity in the socially disadvantaged children. BM will share this report with the Network.

ACTION 7: BM to forward report to TT to circulate.

11.Date of next meeting

ACTION 8: TT will circulate a doodle for proposed dates for next meeting.