



Minutes of the 60th meeting of the Advisory Board of **safefood**
held on Friday 4th April 2008 at 11.00 am
safefood's Boardroom, Block B, Abbey Court, Lower Abbey St, Dublin 1

PRESENT:

Mr John Dardis (Chairman)
Mr Campbell Tweedie (CT)
Ms Lynn Ni Bhaoighealláin (LNB)
Mr Joe Byrne (JB)
Ms Aoife Healy (AH)
Mr Seamus Sheridan (SS)
Mr Con Traas (CT)
Ms Jane Wells (JW)
Dr Ken Baird (KB)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Martin Higgins, Chief Executive (MH)
Mr Ray Dolan, Director of Corporate Operations (RD)
Dr Cliodhna Foley-Nolan, Director, Human Health & Nutrition (CFN)
Ms Fiona Gilligan, Director of Marketing (FG)
Dr Thomas Quigley, Director, Food Science (TQ)
Mr Peter Dewhurst, Finance Manager (PD)
Dr Margaret Patterson (MP)
Ms Emma Corbett (EC) Secretary

APOLOGIES:

Mr Brian Cunningham (BC)
Ms Susan Heraghty (SH)
Mr Neven Maguire (NM)

1. INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES

Noted: Chairman John Dardis opened the meeting by welcoming Emma Corbett who had taken over secretariat Eileen O'Connor. He thanked Eileen for her help. The Chairman noted apologies and welcomed Dr Ken Baird to his first Advisory Board meeting and mentioned that Dr. Baird is a member of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) also.

Action: The Chairman asked members to indicate whether they would prefer the meeting papers to be emailed and/or posted out and asked if they could inform EC when lunch was served.

Action: The Chairman invited the members to attend a **safefood** event called 'A view from up here' being held to obtain an insight into communication with Northern Ireland stakeholders and enhance strategic development.

The event is being organised by Smarts PR. Presentations will be given by David Cullen, Nuala McKeever and an independent journalist.

Noted: The Chairman suggested the event might be particularly useful for members from the South.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 1ST FEBRUARY 2008

Agreed: The minutes were approved, subject to one minor change.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Noted: There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Noted: The Declaration of Interest (DOI) forms sent previously to the members were addressed. The Chairman informed the members that full details of interest were not required. An example of the types of interest that should be declared was given to the members for reference.

Action: All members were asked to complete the form and return it to EC.

Noted: MH stated that the DOI are not published, owing to the advisory nature of the Board.

Action: The Chairman stated there was no specific timeline for changes but DOI should be submitted annually or if members' circumstances changed significantly.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Noted: The North-South Ministerial Council (NSMC) meeting will be held on May 28th. **Safefood** will be submitting a progress report on obesity at the meeting. A progress report will also be presented by the CEO.

Noted: The Report of St. Andrew's agreement review group is scheduled for the plenary NSMC meeting in October 2008.

- Noted:** The Department of Health & Children, ROI and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, NI have agreed to a coordinated meeting with the food agencies (North and South) to ensure complementary and coordinated approaches to working. This targets the objective of the Corporate Plan 'to promote a 'joined-up' approach to food safety and nutrition strategies across the island of Ireland'
- Noted:** Fellowships with NUI Galway, Queens University and the University of Ulster are being considered with **safefood** to strengthen available in-house resources. Fellowships with UCC are already in place.
- Noted:** **safefood** have sought sponsor approval for an additional staff member for a three year period to support its work in tackling obesity.
- Noted:** The Audit for 2007 commenced in April. Subject to no extenuating circumstances the financial statements should be certified by June 30th.
- Noted:** The Enteric Reference Service review process is underway. Dr. Jon Bell, former Chief Executive of the UK food Standards Agency has been recruited as the facilitator and along with Prof. Henrik Wegener.
- Noted:** A food allergy pilot training programme was conducted in 2006/07 in NI with EHO's and third level catering trainers and will be rolled out across ROI.
- Noted:** Preliminary discussions have been held with the Food Standards Agency in London to establish a mechanisms for sharing scientific information.
- Noted:** Surveillance working groups have met a number of times investigating surveillance across food, animals and humans on the island of Ireland.
- Noted:** **safefood** are involved with the Broadcasting commission of Ireland on the review of the Children's Advertising Code.
- Noted:** **Safefood** are involved in the National Food Safety Week in Northern Ireland in June in partnership with the FSANI and the district Councils.
- Noted:** The Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety has established an obesity prevention steering group. **safefood** is represented in the group. The scope has expanded from childhood obesity to a full life-course approach.
- Noted:** A draft nutrition strategy is being developed internally and will be presented to the Advisory Board in due course.

- Noted:** The Infectious Intestinal Disease (IID) All Island conference is set for 13th – 14th May, in Clontarf Castle.
- Noted:** The Scientific Advisory Committee last met on 7th February. Mr. Graham Wood of the Food and Veterinary Office gave a presentation on the role of the Office.
The Antimicrobial Resistance subgroup will present a draft paper to the SAC in April and a full paper in October.
A SAC mini conference will be held on 1st October in Cork.
- Noted:** Phase two of the 'Speak out' campaign was launched. There has been considerable media interest in the campaign.
It was agreed that the campaign needs to balance the responsibility for food hygiene between consumers and the catering industry.

6. INVITATION TO SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINI CONFERENCE

- Noted:** Advisory Board members were invited to attend the SAC mini-conference on October 1st in Cork.
- Action:** AB members were asked to inform EC if they are able to attend.

7. NORTH SOUTH WORKING GROUP (NSWG)

- Noted:** NSWG will focus on All-Island work to enhance North South partnership. Dr. Margaret Patterson will facilitate the working group. Lynn Ni Bhaoigheallian and Joe Byrne volunteered their involvement. Two or three meetings are envisaged before the year end.

8. CORPORATE PLAN

- Noted:** SS suggested **safe food**'s focus should concentrate more on healthy eating as it is as important as food safety. MH outlined **safe food**'s legislative remit which requires it to communicate on food safety as well as nutritional issues.

9. Any other Business

Audit Committee

John Dardis and Seamus Sheridan volunteered to sit on the audit committee. There are three meetings held each year, usually before the Advisory Board meeting.

- Noted:** In a tour de table portion size, accurate portion-sized plates, the food pyramid and consumer's ability to cook were identified as issues for consideration.

- Noted:** The water supply and genetically modified food were also identified as issues of interest.

Action: Genetically modified food will be put on the agenda to discuss at next AB meeting.

Date of next meeting

Date of next meeting is to be held on May 30th in Cork.

There being no further business the meeting ended.