

Minutes of the 66<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Board of **safefood**  
Held on Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2009 at 11.00 am  
**safefood's** Dublin Office, Block B Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1

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**PRESENT:**

Mr John Dardis (JD - Chair)  
Ms Lynn Ni Bhaoighealláin (LNB)  
Mr Joe Byrne (JB)  
Ms Aoife Healy (AH)  
Dr Ken Baird (KB)  
Ms Susan Heraghty (SH)  
Mr Campbell Tweedie (CT – Vice Chair)  
Mr Seamus Sheridan (SS)  
Mr Neven Maguire (NM)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Ray Dolan, Director of Corporate Operations (RD)  
Mr Peter Dewhurst, Finance Manager (PD)  
Ms Fiona Gilligan, Director of Marketing (FG)  
Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan, Director, Human Health & Nutrition (CFN)  
Dr Aileen McGloin (AMcG)  
Dr Marian Faughnan (MF)  
Mr Martin Higgins, Chief Executive (MH)  
Dr Gary A. Kearney, Director of Food Science (GK)  
Ms. Erin Brennan, Secretary (EB)

**APOLOGIES:**

Ms Jane Wells (JW)  
Mr Brian Cunningham (BC)  
Mr Con Traas (CTR)

**1. INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES**

**Noted:** The Chair opened the meeting by congratulating GK and AMcG on their new appointments at **safefood**. NM was congratulated on his new RTE program, "Neven's Food from the Sun". The apologies of JW, BC, and CTR were noted.

**2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2009**

**Agreed:** There being no matters arising, the minutes were approved.

**3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

- Noted:** Report Layout
- The layout of the CEO report has been changed and will now be organised under the following headings: corporate issue, policy issues, research, events, information resources, and campaigns.
  - Members' feedback on this change would be appreciated.
- Noted:** North-South Ministerial Council (NSMC)
- The next meeting of the NSMC will be held in Dublin on 10<sup>th</sup> June.
  - Items to be discussed include: approval for the extension of the term of the present Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC); the 2007 Annual Report; and the 2009 Business Plan. An up-to-date progress report will also be presented.
  - The public service pension levy will apply to staff of North South bodies, including **safe food**.
- Noted:** Irish Times Editorial Piece
- Positive feedback about the Little Steps campaign in the Irish Times "Tackling Obesity" editorial piece was noted.
- Noted:** Audit
- The audit of the financial statements to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2008 will commence on 27<sup>th</sup> April.
- Noted:** Enteric Reference Service
- 36 responses were received and these are currently being analysed and collated.
  - Dr Jon Bell will present his findings to the **safe food** Executive Board on 16<sup>th</sup> April.
- Noted:** Dioxins
- Following the dioxin contamination incident, an interagency review has been established in the ROI under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food.
  - **safe food** has made a submission highlighting a number of concerns from the incident.
  - These include concerns on the effectiveness of the procedures in the feed industry, awareness/knowledge of dioxin as a potential hazard in feed businesses, communications during such crises, the ability to identify hazards at other points in the food chain, the capacity for dioxin testing and the importance of utilising national expertise to evaluate the risks.
  - KB noted the importance of traceability in the events surrounding the dioxin contamination incident.
  - MH noted that traceability was mentioned in the **safe food** document produced for the Oireachtas committee.
  - Research addressing consumer attitudes towards pork in the post-dioxin crisis climate found that people's behaviour and attitude towards pork products have not changed significantly.
- Action:** FG to circulate the pork omnibus results to Advisory Board members.

- Noted:** All Island Obesity Action Forum
- This group, resourced by **safefood**, will support the obesity policies in both jurisdictions by promoting collaboration, networks and facilitating the exchange of best practice.
  - Meetings will take place in June and October.
  - Minister Mary Wallace has created an interdisciplinary group to address the issue of obesity in the ROI. CFN represents **safefood** on this group.
- Noted:** Infectious Disease Telephone Survey
- **safefood** and the Irish College of General Practitioners are discussing the scope and potential of an all-island telephone survey of the population.
  - Feedback, although self-reported, will provide useful information on reported illnesses, many of which have never come to the formal attention of the health services.
- Noted:** Smoothies:
- **safefood** commissioned consumer research on smoothies was released last week.
  - Interestingly, 38% of people surveyed thought that a fruit smoothie contributed to four or more portions of fruit per day.
  - There has been a lot of media interest surrounding the release.
- Noted:** Men's Health Initiative
- Will target specific population groups with weight loss messages.
  - A pilot with road hauliers is currently being developed.
- Noted:** Consumer Focused Review (CFR)
- The publication of the next CFR, "Where does our food come from?" is scheduled for early May 2009.
  - The topic for the next CFR is currently under review.
- Noted:** Other Research Projects
- A list of new projects selected for commissioning in 2009 is listed in the CEO Report Appendix 1.
  - If members require more information, please speak with MH.
- Noted:** National Food Safety Week
- National Food Safety Week will occur in June in NI.
  - This year's theme is food safety advice people over the age of 60.
- Noted:** Stakeholder Events
- A **safefood** funded project is providing training for poultry farmers at various safety locations around the island of Ireland to disseminate practical advice to enhance food safety associated with poultry production.
- Noted:** Junior Chefs' Academy

- The Junior Chefs' Academy is a training programme, currently running in NI, which aims to attract and develop young talent in the catering and hospitality sector.
- It is hoped to develop the programme on an all-island basis.

**Noted:** Consumer Resources

- A leaflet for "food for sport", aimed at teenagers, is being revised in cooperation with the Irish Nutrition and Dietetics Institute.
- An updated fridge hygiene leaflet has been produced, together with a fridge magnet.
- A leaflet/poster has been designed to heighten hygiene awareness on open farms and petting zoos. It is being re-launched in April and will be featured at the Balmoral Show.

**Noted:** Educational Resources

- **safe food** is exploring distribution opportunities in the ROI, through county childcare committees, for the pre-school healthy eating book "When Sammy Met Sally".
- The book is produced by Bartlett's, a vegetable grower and packer, and has already been distributed in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

**Noted:** Community Resources

- "Food Values" is a short programme showing how to get nutritional value for money when shopping.
- A good practice guide for school food initiatives in the ROI has been developed for disadvantaged schools. An all-island good practice guide for community groups is nearing completion.

**Noted:** Web Re-launch

- So far there have been 40,000 unique visitors to the new website, an increase in traffic by 50% since last year.
- The Little Steps campaign microsite will be promoted on key parenting websites, as well as via a search campaign from April to December.
- The Weigh2Live weight loss microsite is currently being reviewed and plans are being formulated to redesign and develop the site for a more mixed audience.

**Noted:** Press

- A list of recent press releases can be found in the CEO Report.

**Noted:** Little Steps Healthy Eating Campaign

- The Little Steps campaign will be re-run on television and radio from 30<sup>th</sup> March for three weeks.
- The television advertisement now includes two NI accents (in comparison to one NI accent in the last phase).
- The HPA, as it is now being merged with the Public Health Agency in NI, will no longer be a campaign partner.

**Noted:** Food Safety

- **safefood** is currently reappraising the Speak Out campaign.
- AH noted that at the last Board meeting of the ROI Restaurant Association, possible consumer confusion between **safefood**'s Speak Out campaign and Bord Bia's Just Ask campaign was discussed.

#### **4. FOOD LABELLING PRESENTATION BY DR MARIAN FAUGHNAN AND DR AILEEN MCGLOIN**

**Noted:** Skill is required in reading and understanding nutrition labelling.

**Noted:** New legislation is currently being developed to provide a more consistent approach to nutrition labelling.

**Noted:** SS suggested that a letter from **safefood** be forwarded to the Department of Communications regarding the portrayal of authenticity in food advertising.

**Noted:** KB noted that readily transparent traceability technology is available, but that a willingness to use it is still lacking.

#### **5. PLANNING MEETING FOR THE ADVISORY BOARD**

**Noted:** Forward planning is to be discussed at the August meeting of the Advisory Board.

**Action:** MH to circulate a questionnaire to Board members for the next meeting, thus providing a foundation on which forward planning can be discussed.

**Action:** EB to circulate the revised 2009 Advisory Board dates to all.

#### **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Noted:** PD will contact members of the Board in regards to voluntary disclosure of personal details in the annual report.

There being no further business the meeting ended.

**Date of next meeting:** Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2009 in Dublin.