



Minutes of the 65th Meeting of the Advisory Board of **safefood**
Held on Friday 30th January 2009 at 11.00 am
safefood's Dublin Office, Block B Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1

PRESENT:

Mr John Dardis (JD - Chair)
Ms Lynn Ni Bhaoighealláin (LNB)
Mr Joe Byrne (JB)
Ms Aoife Healy (AH)
Mr Con Traas (CT)
Ms Jane Wells (JW)
Mr Brian Cunningham (BC)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Ray Dolan, Director of Corporate Operations (RD)
Mr Peter Dewhurst, Finance Manager (PD)
Ms Fiona Gilligan, Director of Marketing (FG)
Mr Martin Higgins, Chief Executive (MH)
Dr Gary Kearney, Manager Corporate Operations (GK)
Ms. Erin Brennan, Secretary (EB)

APOLOGIES:

Dr Cliodhna Foley-Nolan, Director, Human Health & Nutrition (CFN)
Dr Ken Baird
Ms Susan Heraghty (SH)
Mr Campbell Tweedie (CT – Vice Chair)
Mr Seamus Sheridan (SS)
Mr Neven Maguire (NM)

1. INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES

Noted: The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all members to the first meeting of 2009. The apologies of CT, NM, CFN, KB, SH and SS were noted. Congratulations were extended to EB, who joined **safefood** on a permanent basis on 26th January as Executive Assistant (PA) based in Dublin.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7TH NOVEMBER 2008

Noted: Junior Chef's Academy

- JW mentioned that **safefood** is a sponsor of the Junior Chef's Academy. It is to be launched in Belfast next Thursday. MH, CT, and JD are to attend.
- The Junior Chef's Academy is a 10-week course that targets 12-16 year olds, teaching them hygiene and health & safety.

- On 22nd April the two best students will prepare a meal in Stormont for the Minister. **safefood** has been invited to this event.

Noted: LNB raised the issue of food labelling; MH suggested a presentation on food labelling at the next meeting of the Advisory Board.

Agreed: As no other matters were arising, the minutes were approved.

3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Noted: North South Ministerial Council

- The meeting of the NSMC is not expected to be scheduled until early April 2009.
- The agenda items include the approval for the extension of the term of the present Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), the 2007 Annual Report, and the 2009 Business Plan. A progress report will also be presented.

Noted: Business Plan 2009

- The Business Plan has not yet been approved and is currently under discussion.
- There is still no indication of a budget for 2009.

Noted: Oireachtas Agriculture Committee

- **safefood** were asked to present at the Oireachtas Committee meeting in regards to the dioxin/pork crisis.
- JD, RD, MH, and Dr James McIntosh (**safefood**) were all in attendance.

Noted: Corporate Day

- Corporate Day for all staff was held on 18th December in our Cork headquarters.
- Andy Pollock from the Centre for Cross-Border studies addressed staff on successful aspects of Cross-Border cooperation and prospects for future developments.

Noted: Research Projects

- A list of completed projects since October 2008 can be found in the CEO Report.
- To commission research, adverts are placed in print/web media and invites are sent to tender.

Noted: Lablink Activities

- The training and mobility programme has been very successful.
- **safefood** is considering the possible involvement of other stakeholders.

Noted: Enteric Reference Service

- To be discussed in GK's presentation.

Noted: **safefood** 2008 Christmas Campaign

- To be addressed in FG's presentation.

- Noted:** Allergy Training Workshops
- Targeted towards environmental health officers and 3rd level catering colleges.
- Noted:** All-Island Obesity Action Forum
- The inaugural meeting of this forum took place on 4th December 2008 in Dublin.
 - The next meeting of the forum will take place in April/May 2009.
 - The inaugural meeting of the ROI interdepartmental group, chaired by Minister Mary Wallace, took place in January. **safefood** is represented on this group by CFN.
- Noted:** Obesity
- Smaller family budgets are resulting in a higher consumption of processed foods and a poorer quality of ingredients.
 - ¼ of Irish children starting school are overweight.
 - Obesity is an important public health matter that needs to be addressed.
- Noted:** Men's Weight Loss Initiative
- This social marketing campaign will target long-distance lorry drivers.
 - Norfolk line will be involved in the pilot.
- Noted:** Weigh2Live
- This program follows individuals in a weight-loss project and outlines their progress.
 - A link to this program is currently on the **safefood** website.
- Noted:** Drinks and Smoothies
- **safefood** has commissioned qualitative research to refine communication and practical advice for guardians and teenagers in relation to sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Noted:** Community Health Initiatives
- 94 applications were received; 12 of these were from Northern Ireland.
- Noted:** Consumer Focused Review
- The second meeting of the External Steering Group took place on Tuesday, 13th January 2009.
 - This review should be completed in February 2009.
- Noted:** BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition
- **safefood** sponsored an award and had a stand to showcase new educational resources.
- Noted:** Website
- **safefood**'s new website was launched in December 2008; development is ongoing.

Noted: Christmas Campaign

- The Christmas Campaign was very successful.
- 2300 people texted in to the helpline.
- The Afternoon Show on RTE picked up on the campaign, as did the Ray Darcy radio show on Today FM, Radio Ulster, Downtown Radio and Newstalk.

Noted: Infectious Intestinal Disease Project

- Before Christmas, the UK partners pulled out of the project.
- No data had been generated, so the ICGP and **safefood** decided to discontinue the project.
- The system of information exchange will still be of benefit to **safefood**.
- A reallocation of these funds must be made; the departments have been alerted to this.
- PD and RD will review the money thus far spent on the project and determine how it may be used for projects going forward.
- Benefits of what has taken place include a telephone survey and investment in infrastructure.

4. LATEST MARKET RESEARCH RESULTS PRESENTATION BY FIONA GILLIGAN

Noted: Safetrak 10 is an advertising evaluation that considers concerns about food safety and healthy eating.

Noted: The Omnibus Survey evaluates brand awareness and understanding.

Noted: The latest market research results are very positive overall, but outline low branded memorability in regards to radio and outdoor advertising.

Noted: The Christmas campaign results indicate the popularity of the SMS text mechanic in NI. It is a tool worth pursuing in future campaigns.

5. ENTERIC REFERENCE SERVICE PRESENTATION BY DR. GARY A. KEARNEY

Noted: A reference service is a laboratory that conducts specialised confirmatory testing for certain bacteria that cause gastrointestinal illness.

Noted: Reference services link isolates from human cases of illness to those from food/water samples.

Noted: A consultation paper on an Enteric Reference Service was published in January 2009, outlining 3 possible options for the IOI.

Noted: These 3 options were circulated to 200 key stakeholders across the island.

Noted: Next steps include collating and analysing consultation responses, deciding on options for further consideration, conducting an Economic Appraisal, and reporting to the NSMC with a recommendation.

There being no further business the meeting ended.

Date of next meeting: Friday 3rd April in Dublin.