



Minutes of the 104th meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board
Held on Friday, 5th December 2014 at 10:30am
safefood Dublin offices

PRESENT:

Mr Thomas Burns (TB)
Ms Helen O Donnell (HOD)
Mr Brendan Kehoe (BK)
Mr Campbell Tweedie (CT)
Ms Julie Andrews (JA)
Ms Hannah Su (HS)
Dr Mary Upton (MU)
Mr Alan McGrath (AMG)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Ray Dolan, Chief Executive (RD)
Dr Gary Kearney, Director of Food Science (GK)
Ms Fiona Gilligan, Director of Marketing & Communications (FG)
Ms Angela Cahill, Finance Manager (AC)
Ms Alison Dries (secretary) (AD)

APOLOGIES:

Mr Edward Spellman (ES)
Ms. Darina Allen (DA – Vice chair)
Ms Jane Wells (JW)

1. Introduction and apologies

Noted: The Chair, Lynn Ní Bhaoigheallain, has resigned her position due to her commitments in the European Parliament. The Vice-Chair sent her apologies to the meeting therefore RD asked the Board's permission for JA to Chair the meeting. Permission was granted.

It was decided if the matter should arise in the future where no Chair has been appointed and the Vice-Chair sends her apologies the role of Chair will rotate around Board members.

The apologies of ES, DA and JW were noted.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 10th October 2014

Agreed: The minutes were adopted with no amendments.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

Noted: No matters were arising from the minutes

4. Proposed Board meeting dates for 2015

Noted: Proposed dates for Board meetings were circulated prior to the meeting.

Noted: It was agreed to bring the suggested date for the December meeting forward by one week to Friday, 4 December, 2015.

Noted: All other dates were agreed

Noted: It was confirmed the August meeting will be held in Belfast.

5. Kantar media clippings

Noted: **safefood** advised Board members that they have changed their media monitoring service provider and welcomed views on the service?

Noted: All members agreed Kantar provided a very thorough service, if not too thorough in some instances, depending on Board members background, they could be receiving too much information. It was suggested that two options be provided;

- **safefood** only mentioned
- Other relative information

Action: FG to ascertain if splitting the media clippings can be provided.

6. Audit Committee feedback

Noted: The Audit Committee met prior to the Board meeting, AC fed back to the Board the outcomes of the meeting.

Noted: Kieran Scott, lead auditor from the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office attended the meeting; he confirmed there were no issues or findings regarding **safefood's** accounts.

Noted: HD stated that AC and her team were complimented at the meeting on the impeccable accounts kept.

7. Chief Executive's Report

7.1 North/South Ministerial Council

Noted: RD attended the North/South Ministerial Council meeting accompanied by CT. This was RD's first attendance in his role as CEO. Ministers Jim Wells, Michelle O'Neill, Leo Varadkar and James Reilly were also in attendance and were very encouraging to **safefood's** work.

7.2 Tripartite Meeting

Noted: RD met with the Public Health Agency (PHA) and the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland (FSANI). The three agencies committed to working together on a project based approach. Eddie Rooney, CEO of the PHA, congratulated **safefood** on being the lead agency in communicating public Health messages on Obesity.

7.3 Press release

Noted: RD shared a press release from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety highlighting the publication of a two year progress report against NI's obesity prevention strategy entitled *A Fitter Future for All 2012-2022*.

Noted: The considerable work **safefood** has undertaken in this area was not acknowledged in the press release. As an agency that has carried out a lot of positive work on obesity it was the feeling of Board members **safefood** deserved this acknowledgement and was deemed demotivating to **safefood** staff members.

Noted: It was agreed that it would be worthwhile if Board Members took every opportunity to discuss the good work **safefood** undertake where the opportunity arose.

Noted: GK stated **safefood's** expenditure on combatting obesity is out spending every other agency on the island of Ireland.

7.4 Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting

Noted: The 9th meeting of the current Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) met on Friday, 14 December.

Noted: Tánaiste Joan Burton attended the meeting.

Noted: MU, the Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee, advised that the two guest speakers (Ken McKenzie and Jim Power) were very entertaining and informative. There was great engagement from members of the committee, and the next meeting scheduled for February will hopefully build on this.

Noted: The Tánaiste showed an interest in the area of school meals and breakfasts.

Noted: MU advised that information generated at the SAC needs to feedback to the Advisory Board.

Noted: It was suggested that the guest speakers could be invited to present at a Board meeting next year. This was agreed by members.

7.5 Business Plan 2015

Noted: The Business Plan is currently sitting with the Sponsor Departments as are the Financial Statements for 2013.

7.6 Pensions

Noted: All staff have now been issued with information packs regarding their pension. The information details the reforms proposed to the core scheme as well as details of the option to revert to a reserved rights scheme.

Noted: This is a very complicated process for staff - Unions are involved.

7.7 Recruitment

Noted: The post for Director of Corporate Operations should hopefully be filled on Tuesday 9th December as the second round of interviews concludes.

7.8 Childhood Obesity Campaign

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Noted: FG presented the top-line research results from year 1 of the Childhood Obesity Campaign. Increases were noted across most of the KPIs, most notably there was considerable increase in parents providing water as a drink to children and decreases in the portion sizes being served to children.

Noted: A reduction in the sale of fizzy drinks was noted in the press and sales figures.

Noted: A more in-depth presentation will be given in the New Year.

7.9 Northern Ireland Food and Drink Show

Noted: safefood sponsored 'The Open Kitchen' at the NI Food and Drink Show. This was deemed a great success.

7.10 All-Island Obesity Action Forum.

Noted: The All-Island Obesity Action Forum was held on Tuesday, 11 November. This was a successful event that received good PR coverage. Gerrard Wheeler was an inspiring speaker.

7.11 Allergy workshops

Noted: safefood hosted an event titled 'The New Allergy Law –What Caterers/Producers Need to Know on Tuesday, 2 December.

Noted: GK advised that new European legislation is coming into force on 13th December this year. This affects 14 different food allergens covering packed and non-packed foods. The legislation in the Republic of Ireland was only passed one month ago. Clear guidance has not been provided for those working in the food industry as to how the new legislation will affect them. **safefood** hosted this event in attempt to help those working in the food industry prepare for the labelling requirements as required by the legislation.

Noted: AMG agreed with the labelling changes but issued a word of caution; allergens can still be carried on chopping board's utensils etc. therefore a rigorous cleaning and separation system needs to be in place.

7.12 Consumer Focussed Review of Men's Health Behaviour

Noted: This research will be published next week. The report reviewed existing desk research and includes **safefood**'s own research which was carried out with the market research company IPSOS Mori.

Noted: The research showed, among many things, that men are removed from food, through a lack of boys taking Home Economics in school and not cooking with their mothers. Men were shown to be more overweight than women.

Noted: HD asked if the **safefood** run competition 'Takeaway my way' in conjunction with St Angela's college had come to completion, as a high proportion of boys took part in this.

Noted: FG confirmed this competition had completed but **safefood** will review this for the future.

7.13 Folic Acid

Noted: **safefood** have been asked by the Sponsor Departments to run a campaign promoting the importance of ensuring women meet the recommended daily intake of Folic Acid during pregnancy. This campaign is scheduled to run in 2015. A new piece of **safefood** research will also be commissioned around this topic in the new year.

8. Presentation on the food safety campaign 'Don't wash Chicken'

Noted: Dermot Moriarty, campaign manager with **safefood** presented an overview of the campaign designed to educate and encourage consumers not to wash chicken due to the spread of the bacteria *Campylobacter* around the kitchen. Research has shown that washing poultry can spread *Campylobacter* around kitchen surfaces, up to a distance of 80cm. Adequate cooking is a effective method in killing the bacteria.

AOB

Noted: HD enquired as to information available on teenagers involved in sports and taking sport/food supplements.

Noted: **safefood** produced a leaflet titled 'Fuel your body for the teenage sports person, whereby the advice is to follow a healthy diet over food supplements

Date of next meeting: Friday, 23 January, 2015 at 10:30am.