



Minutes of the 111th meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board

Held on Friday, 04th December 2015 at 10:30 am

safefood offices Dublin

PRESENT:

Mr Paul Gibbons (PG) (Chair)
Dr Mary Upton (MU)
Ms Jane Wells (JW)
Mr Brendan Kehoe (BK)
Mr Thomas Burns (TB)
Ms Helen O'Donnell (HOD)
Ms Hannah Su O'Callaghan (HOC)
Mr Alan McGrath (AMG)
Ms Julie Andrews (JA)
Mr Campbell Tweedie (CT)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Ray Dolan, Chief Executive (RD)
Ms Patricia Fitzgerald, Director of Corporate Operations (PF)
Dr Gary Kearney, Director of Food Science (GK)
Mr Dermot Moriarty, Acting Director of Marketing and Communications (DM)
Ms Alison Dries (secretary) (AD)

APOLOGIES:

Ms. Darina Allen (DA – Vice chair)
Mr Edward Spellman (ES)
Ms Fiona Gilligan (FG)
Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan, Director of Human Health and Nutrition (CFN)

1. Introduction and apologies

Noted: The Chair welcomed all members of the Advisory Board to the meeting.

Noted: The apologies of DA and ES were noted.

Noted: The Chair thanked members of the Advisory Board for their input and commitment throughout 2015 and extended Christmas wishes to the Board and staff members.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 16th October 2015

Agreed: The minutes were adopted with no amendments.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

Noted: No matters were arising from the minutes

4. Advisory Board dates for 2016

Noted: A provisional calendar of Board dates for 2016 was circulated. It was agreed to keep the meeting to Fridays.

Action: AD to make any necessary changes and email the updated calendar to all members.

5. Presentation on analytics of the *safefood* website by Colman Kelly, Digital Content Executive.

Noted: there are between 500 and 3,000 visits to the *safefood*.eu website every day. Google analytics is used to understand the user journey. Using this software, *safefood* is able to determine where traffic comes from, the busiest pages on the site and how long, on average, the user stays on the site. The information can then be used to determine which sites to advertise with, what pages to do the most work with. *safefood* can also see what days and times are the busiest, which helps us plan when to release content so as to achieve greatest reach.

Noted: The Chair thanked CK for his presentation

8. Chief Executive's Report

Financial statements 2014

Noted: The financial accounts have now been signed off by the auditors and the Annual Report was printed last week and copies were sent to both Sponsor Departments for laying before both Parliaments.

Business plans 2015 and 2016

Noted: **safefood** remains on target to meet its 2015 budget and to deliver all main elements of the Business Plan. **safefood's** 2016 Business Plan has been cleared by both Sponsor Departments and will be presented to the North South Ministerial Council on the 11th December.

Corporate Plan 2017-2019

Noted: Work has commenced to develop a three year Corporate Plan and this will continue in quarter one 2016.

HR Issues

Noted: Interviews were held in October to fill a temporary maternity leave vacancy in the Human Health and Nutrition directorate and a fourteen month contract has been filled.

Noted: A refreshed staff handbook was published electronically. Updates include a requirement from the Department of Health that **safefood** adopts the 'tobacco free campus' policy.

Cork facilities

Noted: unfortunately progress has been slow in finalising the lease agreement for the vacant part of the ground floor in the Cork Headquarters in Little Island. The solicitors requested a hard copy letter from the landlord stating he was happy to the sub-lease. **safefood** will seek to recover rent for part of 2015 although this may be rejected in the absence of a lease.

Key stakeholder engagement

Noted: Following on from a meeting between **safefood**'s CEO and the CEO of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI), **safefood**'s senior management team met with Karen Brosnan, an external facilitator for the FSAI to discuss the FSAI's draft strategic plan and other issues of mutual interest.

Noted: MU stated this was very important as there could be a perception of duplication so it is beneficial to both agencies to have cooperation between them.

Noted: **safefood**'s senior management met yesterday with the senior management team of the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland (FSA NI) to discuss business plans.

safefood Advisory Committee

Noted: 27 applications were received for five positions on the **safefood** Advisory Committee. Recommendations regarding filling these vacant positions will go before the North South Ministerial Council on 20th January 2016.

Noted: MU offered to speak with GK to offer pointers regarding the Committee.

Campaigns

Noted: DM gave an overview of current activity taking place in campaigns

Noted: A meeting took place between **safefood** and partners involved in the Childhood Obesity campaign (HSE and Healthy Ireland) to discuss the next steps in 2016.

safefood is due to meet the HSE to discuss how they will support the campaign on the ground.

Noted: Copies of the Folic acid evaluation were available to Board Members.

Noted: The food safety campaign covering the Four C's (cleaning, cooking, chilling and avoiding cross contamination), with a focus on vulnerable groups (targeting the 65+ age group in this phase), launched on the 23rd November. The basic food safety messages continue to remain the same so the challenge is to keep reminding consumers in a creative way.

Operation Transformation

safefood signed a contract with RTE to be the main sponsor of the 2016 weight loss programme 'Operation Transformation'.

Weight loss app – 'Weight Mate'

safefood's new weight loss app 'Weight Mate' is due to be launched in January and will be free to download on android and Apple phones. Board Members were invited to download the app and their feedback would be very welcome.

Energy drinks report

A **safefood** report compiled in the context of recent reviews, considerable media and public interest and as a follow-up to a **safefood** review of 'The health effects of 'stimulant drinks' in the Irish context in 2002', provides details on the current situation in Ireland. The report details the range of energy drink products available, their caffeine and calorie contents, labelling and promotional practices, consumption levels and use with alcohol; insights into public perceptions, and available health-related information. The report also sets out a number of recommendations in relation to energy drinks. During the research, it became clear that caffeine is the main ingredient in energy drinks and so it is the focus of this report.

Food Authenticity: protecting your business from food fraud information seminar

This event was held in Belfast on 12th November and was deemed very successful. The Chair reiterated that the area of food fraud is very big and will continue to grow whilst there is money to make out of it. The event was filmed and will be available on the web shortly.

9. Feedback from the Audit Committee

The Annual report will be laid before both Parliaments shortly. The 2016 Business plan has been cleared by both Sponsor Departments and will be presented to the North South Ministerial Council on the 11th December. **safefood** are currently awaiting the report from the auditors.

10. AOB

Noted: There been no other business the meeting closed.

Date of next meeting: Friday, 22nd January, Dublin