



Minutes of the 117th meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board
Held on Friday, 21st October 2016 at 10am
Queens University Belfast

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

APOLOGIES:

Ms Margaret Jeffares (MJ)
Prof Dolores O'Riordan (DOR)

1. Introduction and apologies

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

Noted: The apologies of DOR and MJ were noted.

Noted: The Chair thanked all members for travelling to Belfast for the meeting.

Noted: The Chair thanked Lynn Boylan MEP and her staff for hosting the Advisory Board on a visit to the European Parliament in September. Thanks also to JA who arranged a meeting with Dianne Dobbs MEP and to BK who arranged a visit to the European Commission and a meeting with Commissioner Philip Hogan.

Noted: The Chair thanked The Institute for Global Food Security at Queens University Belfast for hosting the Advisory Board and in particular Joyce Watterson for assistance in arranging the meeting.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 26th August 2016

Noted: AD to change the location of the meeting to Cork

Agreed: The minutes were adopted with no other amendments.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

Noted: No matters were arising from the minutes

4. Presentation from Professor Andy Meharg, Institute for Global Food Security, Queens University Belfast.

Noted: Professor Meharg gave an overview of the research carried out by the Institute, the role of the food sector on the island of Ireland today and its effects on the environment and economy and a look to the future of food.

Noted: An interesting discussion followed the presentation with great engagement.

A summary of points discussed were;

The cause of BSE on the island of Ireland and how this can be avoided in the future – Chris Elliot set up a 'Food Fortress' project in Northern Ireland in collaboration with the animal feed industry and as a result meal imported into NI is screened more than any other country in the world.

The island of Ireland's reliance on importing animal feed – it is a big challenge on this island to produce Carbohydrates for animal feed and is cheaper to import it.

The cost of the food basket – 20% of income in France is spent on food versus 10% in the UK. There needs to be an emphasis on ensuring consumers from low socio-economic classes have access to quality foods.

The importance of consumers to possess cooking skills and the problems associated with cheaper, more convenient foods being made available.

The advantages and dis-advantages of genetically modified foods.

Noted: The Chair thanked Professor Meharg for his interesting presentation and facilitation of the discussion.

5. North South Ministerial Council

Noted: The Chair and the CEO will attend the North South Ministerial Council meeting on the 9th November.

6. Chief Executive's report

Financial statements 2015

Noted: The Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2015 have been certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General in the South and the Northern Ireland audit Office. **safefood** are arranging to have them laid before the Dail and the Stormont assembly, following this they will be published.

Corporate Plan

Noted: **safefood** are awaiting guidance from the NSMC on the Corporate Plan and 2017 Business Plan. The Sponsor Departments have outlined their expectation that budgets

will remain at 2016 levels for the period of 2017-2019. On foot of this **safefood** have commenced revising its draft Corporate Plan to reflect the lower budget. A second campaign for 2017 has been dropped and planned research has been delayed. A meeting with the Sponsor Departments is scheduled for 25th October. The sterling loss in the exchange rate has had a considerable negative impact on the 2016 budget and stands now at approximately €5m for 2016.

Community Food Initiatives (CFI's)

Noted: The leaders of the CFI's are planning their second network events, under the theme 'learn from each other'. This must be completed under the 1st year evaluation of the project.

Tenders

Noted: The tender completion for Market Research services has come to completion. Ipsos were announced as the successful tenderer for both quantitative and qualitative market research service and the necessary paperwork will be completed when the necessary standstill period has elapsed. The Design and Print tender process will hopefully commence in the next couple of weeks.

Campaigns

Noted: The three year childhood obesity campaign is currently being evaluated with learning and key findings to help formulate a brief for a campaign in 2017 and beyond with the relevant public health stakeholders being consulted.

Noted: The Folic Acid campaign will air again from the 14th November for three weeks across digital, social and PR. The campaign was awarded a Bronze medal at the recent IAPI Advertising Effectiveness Awards. Results from the first phase of the campaign in 2016 saw manufacturers reporting a 3% increase in sales.

Noted: Phase three of the food safety campaign 'Listen to the voice of food safety' will air from the 5th to 18th December.

App

Noted: Due to budget reasons **safefood** will not be in a position to deliver the App for RTE's 'Operation Transformation' in 2017 as originally proposed. The app will continue to be available and will be maintained through 2017.

Press/publicity

Noted: Significant PR coverage was achieved for the 'portions' message of the childhood obesity campaign during September with an extended interview on TV3's 'Ireland AM' show. **safefood** also conducted its first live Facebook video Q&A which yielded strong engagement. 'Facebook live' which has just been introduced by Facebook featured Dr Aileen McGloin of **safefood** and Dietitian Louise Reynolds from the INDI discussing and showing the correct portion sizes. **safefood** also produced a number of 30 second cooking videos, detailing the amount of daily calorie intake in the recipe. The videos have been very successful on social media.

Action: AD to circulate the videos to Board Members.

Events

Noted: The CEO directed the Board members to review the events taking place as detailed in the CEO report and advised all events are open to members of the board.

Customer Engagement

Noted: The CEO invited Board members to review the figures for social media and web.

Noted: **safefood**'s Instagram account is relatively new with the number of followers increasing daily. In September **safefood** launched a social media campaign for University students and this audience is engaging well with the campaign through Instagram.

Education (media literacy resource)

Noted: FG gave an overview on the new education resource currently been developed by **safefood**. The resource which will include age specific content for pupils ranging from Junior Infants through to sixth class will be delivered through the SPHE syllabus and will educate pupils on the role media and advertising plays in our everyday lives. It is hoped the resource will be launched in early 2017 in ROI and will then be developed for NI.

Knowledge Network

Noted: GK updated on Knowledge Network. The first meeting of the Knowledge Network expert Facilitator Group was held. The Group consists of nine members (5 ROI, 3 NI, and 1 London) whose backgrounds are reflective of the whole food chain. The role of the group is to identify key existing issues and emerging issues.

A Healthy weigh for Ireland – Obesity Policy and Action Plan 2016 - 2025)

Noted: The Minister for Health, Simon Harris TD, together with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr Katherine Zappone TD and the Minister of State and Health Promotion, Marcella Corcoran Kennedy TD launched 'A Healthy Weight for Ireland – Obesity Policy and Action Plan'.

Noted: Fiona Gilligan, Director of Marketing Communications, **safefood** and Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan, Director of Human Health and Nutrition, **safefood** attended the launch.

Noted: The policy and action plan aims to reverse obesity trends, to prevent health complications and reduce the overall burden for individuals, families, the health system, wider society and the economy.

Noted: FG gave an overview of the policy and plan. **safefood** are noted in four areas of the five year strategy. **safefood** are currently reviewing the document in order to plan the next Childhood Obesity campaign around it. **safefood** plan to work closely with Healthy Ireland ROI and involve PHA in NI.

6. AOB

Noted: MU voiced her concern over Eva Orsmonds comments on the RTE programme 'Claire Byrne show' when she stated that exercise has no role to play in weight loss and encouraged viewers to consume 800 or less calories per-day in order to loose weight.

Noted: It was the consensus of the board that as the National broadcaster RTE should not be issuing irresponsible messages.

Date of next meeting: Friday, 9th December, in Dublin