



Minutes of the 119th meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board
Held on Friday, 27th January 2017 at 10:30am
safefood Dublin office

PRESENT:

Ms Helen O'Donnell (HOD) (Chair)
Mr Paul Gibbons (PG) (Vice Chair)
Dr Mary Upton (MU)
Mr Brendan Kehoe (BK)
Mr Alan McGrath (AMG)
Mr Mervyn Oswald (MO)
Dr Eddie Rooney (ER)
Prof Dolores O'Riordan (DOR)
Ms Wendy McIntosh (WMI)
Mr Stephen Moutray (SM)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Ray Dolan, Chief Executive (RD)
Ms Patricia Fitzgerald, Director of Corporate Operations (PF)
Ms Fiona Gilligan, Director of Marketing & Communications (FG)
Dr Linda Gordon, Chief Specialist in Food Science (LG)
Dr Marian O'Reilly, Chief Specialist in Nutrition (MOR)
Ms Alison Dries (secretary) (AD)

APOLOGIES:

Ms Margaret Jeffares (MJ)

1. Introduction and apologies

Noted: The Chair welcomed all members of the Advisory Board to the meeting, especially ER, SM and WMI who were recently appointed to the board and attending their first meeting.

Noted: The apologies of MJ were noted.

Noted: The Chair reminded all members to fill in the circulated 'Declaration of Interests' forms and return to AD. The Chair also reminded members to declare conflicts of interests at all meetings and that this would be added as a standing agenda item.

2. Tour de table

Noted: For the benefit of new members a tour de table of introductions took place.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 9th December 2016

Agreed: The minutes were adopted with no amendments.

Proposed: MO

Seconded: AMG

4. Matters arising from the minutes

Noted: No matters were arising from the minutes.

6. Briefing of the work of *safefood*.

Noted: For the benefit of new members to the board and, as a recap for existing members, an overview of the work carried out by **safefood** was given by a member of each directorate.

Noted: Ms Fiona Gilligan, Director of Marketing and Communications gave an overview of the work carried out by her directorate. Mainly the following campaigns; Childhood Obesity, Folic acid and Food safety and how these campaigns are measured through the use of Qualitative and Quantitative market research.

Noted: Ms Patricia Fitzgerald, Director of Corporate Operations gave an overview of the work carried out by her directorate. The directorate supports the organisation to comply

with all legal obligations and provides support in key areas including finance, HR and Information Systems and promotes best practice in all areas of corporate policy making and governance.

Action: Following on from PF's update on the role of Corporate Operations, MO asked that the Board be presented with financial information. PF clarified that **safefood's** audited financial statements are published on **safefood's** website and it was agreed that a one page update on current year financial activity be presented for each meeting.

Noted: Dr Linda Gordon, Chief Specialist in Food Science gave an overview of the work carried out in the Directorate. Food Science incorporates all aspects of food safety such as microbiology, chemistry and toxicology and includes scientific assessments, identifying research and surveys and surveillance of foodborne diseases. Specialist scientific advice and support is also provided to external stakeholders through the Knowledge Network programme. The Food Science Directorate provide the robust science behind consumer food safety campaigns.

Noted: Dr Marian O'Reilly, Chief Specialist in the Human Health and Nutrition Directorate gave an overview of the work carried out. The remit of the Human Health and Nutrition directorate is in the nutritional advice regarding healthy eating and food and the prevention of infectious foodborne diseases through **safefood's** communication and research programmes.

Noted: HOD advised it was useful to have a reminder of the work **safefood** carries out and congratulated the social media team on their work.

5. Chief Executive's report

Financial statements

Noted: The Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2015 have been published on **safefood's** website.

Report from the Audit committee

Noted: The final meeting of the audit committee for 2016 was held on the 19th December. Mr Kieran Scott from the Comptroller and Auditor General's office attended the meeting and presented the C&AG's report on the audit of the 2015 financial statements. There were no issues or differences to report. Matters which will be included in the management letter will include measures of effectiveness of campaign expenditure and the disclosure

and classification of campaign expenditures. The management letter for 2015 is expected to be issued in January 2017.

Corporate Plan 2017-2019

Noted: **safefood** is still awaiting guidance from the NSMC on its Corporate Plan and Business Plan. **safefood**'s sponsor departments have outlined their expectation that budgets will remain at the same level as 2016 for the period 2017-2019. On foot of this **safefood** has prepared a revised draft corporate plan and 2017 Business plan to reflect the lower budget and this will be issued to the sponsor departments following receipt of the revised guidance.

Community Food Initiatives (CFI)

Noted: The first year of the CFI programme 2016-2018 has completed and the administrators (SECAD) of the programme will present the year-end report to **safefood** in early February. Board members were invited to a network event for CFI leader groups in February where they will share their experiences of year one and plans for year two.

Action: AD to circulate invitation.

Campaigns

Noted: Briefs for new Childhood obesity, folic acid and food safety campaigns are currently being prepared.

Noted: **safefood** is currently sponsoring the 11th series of RTE's Operation Transformation which began on 4th January. Our sponsor stings for 2017 focus on healthier foods swaps and are supported with further information on the **safefood** website and social media channels. As the show is also focusing on simple healthy recipes this year, a range of 'how to cook' videos have been developed by **safefood** for online distribution.

Customer engagement

Noted: Board members were invited to review the Customer engagement figures which show a monthly increase in traffic to the digital channels.

Knowledge Network

Noted: LG updated on the Knowledge Network Expert Facilitators Group (EFG) whose third meeting is scheduled for the 16th February. The group will prioritise what to focus on over the next 18 months and investigate how these priority issues can be addressed.

Noted: Membership of the Knowledge Network has been steadily increasing year-on-year with 434 new member joining in 2016.

Noted: Knowledge Networks have developed a number of videos on different topics. An introductory video promoting the Network model was completed at the end of 2016 and is available to view on the **safe food**TV YouTube channel. Videos on food allergies and intolerances, and food hygiene are also available.

Noted: Building on the success of the SME workshop in 2016, 12 workshops are planned for this year and will cover an array of topics such as basic microbiology, hygiene and cleaning, allergens and labelling.

Food pyramid

Noted: MOR gave an update on the revised food pyramid. **safe food** were part of a group set up by the Department of Health in 2015 to review the food pyramid and healthy eating guidelines. The group looked at the evidence around healthy eating and held focus groups with the public.

Noted: Treat foods have been taken out of the pyramid and resources have been developed to support and to aid understanding of the pyramid.

Research

Noted: LG gave an overview of new research projects recently commissioned and recently completed projects.

Noted: The research project on acceptability of poultry decontamination methods on the island of Ireland was noted as particularly interesting as it provided a consumer point of view. The research found consumers preferred Natural/organic labelling, freezing methods vs acid washing, and the importance of communicating in a language which consumers understood rather than science heavy.

Noted: MU inquired about the research project 'Trust Makers, breakers and brokers: Building trust in the food system on the island of Ireland.

Action: FG to advise MU on the project.

Noted: The research project 'Folate status in pregnant women: current situation on the island of Ireland' was noted as an important project to feed into the Folic acid consumer campaign in 2017.

Noted: The research project which is looking into the Cost of childhood Obesity on the island of Ireland was noted as important on supporting initiatives to tackle obesity.

Noted: safefood are taking part in a multi-agency project with the Food Safety Authority, Food Standards Agency in NI and the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine to enhance consumer protection by conducting a 'Food Chain Vulnerability Analysis of the Dairy supply chain on the island to determine areas of vulnerability that could potentially be exploited for fraudulent purposes and could present a risk to public health.

Noted: The research project 'Investigation into the potential food safety economic and environmental impacts of climate change on the dairy production chain on the island of Ireland' will input into the above multi-agency project.

Noted: BK was interested on the above research project.

Action: Dr. James McIntosh to attend the next meeting to provide more information on the research projects.

Noted: Board members were invited to contact AD at any time should they like more information on any research projects.

6. AOB

Noted: The Chair advised that **safefood** are looking for two members of the Board to sit on Audit committee which meets four times per-year prior to scheduled Board meetings.

Noted: ER and PG volunteered their services

Proposed: MO

Seconded: AMG.

Date of next meeting: Friday, 24th March, in Dublin.