



Minutes of the 152nd meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Board
Held on Thursday, 11 November 2021 at 10 am
Ballymascanlon House Hotel, Dundalk

PRESENT:

Ms Helen O'Donnell (HOD) (Chair)
Dr Eddie Rooney (ER)
Mr Brendan Kehoe (BK)
Ms Wendy McIntosh (WMI)
Dr Mary Upton (MU)
Dr Sinead McCarthy (SMcC)
Mr Alex Attwood (AA)
Prof Maeve Henchion (MH)
Mr Alan Lewis (AL)
Ms Teresa Canavan (TC)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Ray Dolan, Chief Executive (RD) (Dublin)
Dr Gary Kearney, Director, Food Science (GK)
Ms Patricia Fitzgerald, Director, Corporate Operations (PF)
(Dublin)
Dr Aileen McGloin, Director, Marketing and Communications
(AMcG) (Dublin)
Ms Joana Calderia Fernandez da Silva (JCFDS)
Ms Angela Cahill (AC)
Ms Alison Dries (AD) Secretary (Dublin).

APOLOGIES:

Mr Stephen Moutray (SM)
Mr Alan McGrath (AMG)

1. Meeting of Advisory Board members – without Executive present

Noted: The Board met without the Executive present.

2. Introduction and apologies

Noted: The Chair welcomed members of the Advisory Board to the meeting in Ballymascanlon House Hotel, Dundalk and thanked all for travelling.

Noted: The apologies of SM and AMG were noted.

4. Conflicts of interest

Noted: The Chair asked members if there were any conflicts of interest relating to the agenda. No conflicts of interest were raised.

5. Matters arising from the meeting of Advisory Board members – without Executive present

Noted: No matters arising

6. Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 21 October.

Proposed: WMcI

Seconded: ER

7. Matters arising from the minutes

Noted: No matters arising.

8. Presentation on Community Food Initiatives (CFIs)

Noted: JCFDS presented on the 4th phase of the CFI programme

- The CFI programme developed by **safefood** has been running since 2010 to create awareness of the benefits of healthy eating and empower families throughout the island of Ireland with the skills and knowledge to be able to provide healthy food options for themselves and their families.
- The 4th phase of the programme was launched in March 2019, with 14 community organisations appointed to deliver projects and events. The projects are in the 9 Community Healthcare Organisation in Ireland and the 5 trust areas in Northern Ireland.

- The focus of the CFI 2019-2021 is to support families with children up to the age of 12 years by focusing on:
 - Increased awareness/knowledge around healthy eating
 - Healthy shopping
 - Budgeting and food/meal planning skills
 - Cooking skills
 - Improving the availability and access to safe and healthy food in the community and complementing existing structures that offer healthy options such as community cafés and community events
 - Preventing food waste and promoting food safety and hygiene
- The CFI's demonstrated resilience, innovation and creativity during Covid-19.
- Positive outcomes of the CFIs 2019-2021 are the CFI at home programme, Tusla funding for the Ballyhoura CFI and learnings which were adapted into the Transform your Trolley programme.

Noted: The Chair thanked JCFDS for her informative presentation and the insight into the CFIs. The Chair and the CEO also extended their thanks to AC for her financial and audit work on the CFIs and also Aoife O'Reilly for the excellent video production.

9. Chief Executive's report

Corporate

Noted: Interviews for recruitment of the CEO position is ongoing.

Noted: safefood continues to adhere Government guidance on Covid-19 working arrangements.

Action: The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) at their October meeting discussed and raised concerns in relation to the risk for **safefood** of not having a suitable and experienced Data Protection Officer. The ARC requested **safefood** raise this issue with the Sponsor Departments at the earliest opportunity and seek approval for an additional resource.

Campaigns/Communications

Noted: AMcG updated on the following:

- Phase ten of the public health campaign titled START – A healthy weight for children is currently on air and will run until 21 November.
- The resource 'handwashing with Rufus' is currently being evaluated.
- The second phase of the meat thermometer campaign will be the focus of Christmas 2021 food safety. The campaign will feature advertising on TV, radio

and online from 9 -23 December. Butchers Associations and several supermarket retailers on the island of Ireland will carry campaign materials in their stores.

- Web statistics increased on the previous month.
- The recently launched education resource '**safefood** for life' remains very popular.
- The **safefood** Newsletter 'FoodWise' continues to be a small but important part of our communications.
- Press release for October and November featured content on the START campaign and **safefood** for business.

Health promotion and nutrition

Noted: JCFDS informed on the following working taking place in health promotion and nutrition.

- The Transform your Trolley programme which ran for the first 3 weeks in October has completed showing encouraging engagement with the programme. There were 2,340 page views on the website hub with other encouraging figures on social media channels being reported.
- **safefood** in partnership with the administrator of the CFIs, SECAD, hosted a webinar on the topic of 'designing community food programmes that last. Speakers discussed community cooking programmes and training opportunities on the island of Ireland. The importance of collaborative working and support from other community public service stakeholders were also discussed.
- Board Members were informed registration for the next All-island Obesity Action Forum workshop 'Whole systems approach to addressing obesity on the island of Ireland' is now open. information regarding the speaker line up can be found on **safefood** .net.
- The Healthy Ireland progress report 2015-2020 highlights two important **safefood** projects 'National nutrition standards published for the provision of food and beverages for staff and visitors' and the START campaign.
- Dr Charmaine McGowan from **safefood** will participate in a group meeting on the topic of 'healthy and sustainable diets' which will be hosted by Teagasc in December.
- The Newry, Mourne and Down District Council have asked **safefood** to participate in a sub-group which will discuss 'building public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement'.

Knowledge Network

Noted: GK informed of the following activity taking place in Knowledge Network.

- The 10th meeting of the **safefood** Knowledge Network Expert Group will take place in Dundalk on 9 December.
- Membership of the Knowledge Network currently stands at 3,558.
- The research report titled 'The impact of the SARS-Cov-2 Pandemic on the food chain on the island of Ireland' was published on **safefood.net** and a report was included in the latest edition of the publication 'Network News'.
- The free elearning resource '**safefood** for Business' aimed at small food businesses has been launched. The launch is supported by targeted advertising on social media, radio, print and trade publications.
- **safefood** continues to work with the Public Analysts labs in Cork, Dublin and Galway, a working relationship which has spanned 20 years.
- Events for October and November include; shelf-life Training workshops, Laboratory Internal Auditing, Thermal processing for food businesses webinar, An overview of *Listeria monocytogenes* webinar, Microbiology method validation and verification workshop.

Research

Noted: GK informed one contract has been filled following the recently advertised **safefood** research tender call for the project 'Reducing the exposure of children and adolescents to digital marketing of unhealthy foods'.

There was no successful candidate for the following project 'Communicating food poverty – understanding the current discourse on the island of Ireland'. The project will be advertised again next year.

Noted: AA asked is it common to only receive two applications and not appoint a successful candidate. GK informed the project is a niche and specialised area. **safefood** appoints outside, independent evaluators. MH informed two terms used in academia are 'food systems' and 'transitions' and by including these terms the tender may be more attractive to researchers. GK thanked MH for the advice.

10. AOB

No other business was raised.

Date of next meeting: Thursday, 2 December 2021