

Meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Committee

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**safefood**, 7, Eastgate Avenue, Little Island, Co. Cork

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## DRAFT MINUTES

**SAC members present:** Prof Elizabeth Keane (Chair)  
Dr Martin Rose  
Prof Mary Brennan  
Ms Claire Mac Evilly  
Dr Nazih Eldin  
Prof Eileen Gibney  
Prof Frank Monahan  
Ms Mary Daly  
Ms Anne Marie Crowley  
Dr Rhodri Evans

**SAC apologies:** Prof Mary Corcoran  
Dr Muiris O 'Céidigh

**safefood staff:** Dr Gary A. Kearney  
Dr James McIntosh  
Dr Aileen McGloin  
Ms Fiona Gilligan  
Ms Colette O'Shea

**safefood apologies:** Ms Patricia Fitzgerald

### 1. Welcome, introductions & apologies

The chairperson welcomed the **safefood** Advisory Committee (SAC) members to Cork for their first in-person meeting.

Apologies were noted from Prof Mary Corcoran, Dr Muiris O 'Céidigh and Ms Patricia Fitzgerald.

There were no conflicts of interest expressed from Members regarding the agenda items.

The Chair congratulated the new CEO of **safefood**, Dr Gary Kearney, who also welcomed the members to the meeting. This was followed by an introductory tour-de-table.

### 3. For Consideration

#### [Community Work](#)

Presented by: Dr Aileen McGloin, Director Nutrition

**Noted:** Dr McGloin gave an overview of **safefood**'s Community Food Initiative programme.

**Noted:** Islands of food poverty exist and while discount retailers have made a difference they haven't necessarily gone into deprived areas. Transport and fuel poverty remains an issue.

**Noted:** We should consider partnering with local authorities in the development of our programmes. A reference was made to the Community Empowerment Act 2015 in regard to the development of local food strategies, and also to the Scottish Good Food Nation Bill which has generated local food plans for environmental, public health and a wider holistic approach to food.

**Noted:** Sustainability and economics will be important considerations for any CFI-type programme. The duration of the programme should be longer than 1 year to justify investment and measure outcomes.

**Noted:** Community work should be scaled up and **safefood** could facilitate the co-ordination and provide guidance. Perhaps use existing structures, e.g., Marian Quinn, CI Tallaght and Partnership and Participation Ireland.

**Noted:** **safefood** may be the most appropriate organisation to lead in this area, in partnership with other interested parties. A mapping exercise of all activities currently underway in this area would immensely beneficial.

**Action (1):** MB to forward on the systems report detailing the Scottish local council approach to food mapping and information on the Scottish Good Food Nation bill.

### [Relationships with retailers](#)

Presented by: Fiona Gilligan, Director Marketing & Communications

**Noted:** Some retailers are more open to partnership working than others and all retailers are in competition with each other. We need to target the right retailers in the right areas to make an impact.

**Noted:** HFSS legislation in the UK targets all retailers - this model could be a way in to work with retailers on the lol.

**Noted:** An understanding of retailers' own health/food strategies would be very helpful.

**Noted:** It may be worth considering a retailer forum to highlight the resources we have and to partner with them in the delivery of our programmes.

**Noted:** **safefood** need to consider potential regulatory divergence between the UK and EU.

**Noted:** Consider the approaches taken by certain retailers in the UK to the control of food waste.

### [Communicating to influence](#)

Presented by: Dr James McIntosh, Chief Specialist Toxicology

**Noted:** NSAI Guidance document 340 (hygiene for food catering) explicitly excludes mobile food units. May be a case for engaging with NSAI to update this guidance. Current relevant NSAI docs do not expressly state the requirement to demonstrate a food culture, despite the new legislative requirements.

**Noted:** **safefood** to investigate the potential for liaison with Failte Ireland as there may be a possibility to inculcate food safety into their systems.

**Noted:** The Scottish Regional Ambassador Programme funded through the Agriculture & Rural Economy Directorate may prove a relevant model as a conduit to link in with the tourism sector.

**Noted:** Legally there is a requirement for a FBO to have a person working in the premises trained to Level 3 QQI standard.

**Noted:** Enterprise Ireland support small businesses and are trusted by the wider small business community. They have a team dedicated to food businesses which may be worthwhile investigating with a view to partnering with them for the dissemination of our resources.

**Noted:** Important to consider building in more in-depth evaluations into our programmes, including training. Digital badges are an example of an award – important to encourage interest and participation and give some thought as to what the accrual of these badges would mean for the student. There is no requirement in law for a training certificate, but a badge/cert is important for the individual. In addition, it is important to target a ‘champion’ within a business.

**Noted:** A Directory of Bord Bia Incubator kitchens is going to print soon - these are linked to LEOs with a requirement for a food safety element.

**Noted:** MOOCs are versatile models for linking training to the more professional elements of social media such as LinkedIn. MOOCs have been developed for food safety and food authenticity - it may make sense to link to already-established MOOCs.

**Noted:** An understanding of the importance and relevance of HACCP and the businesses to which it actually applies is an area of confusion and needs clarity.

**Action (2):** MB to send on further information on the Scottish Regional Ambassador Programme

#### 4. For Discussion

[Horizon scanning: Changing world, new challenges for food safety and healthy eating](#)

Presented by: Chair, Prof Elizabeth Keane

**Noted:** Obesity continues to be one of the major public health challenges on the island of Ireland - combined with overweight, approximately two thirds of the population are at risk.

**Noted:** There is an increased move towards healthy sustainability which includes a balance between nutrition and sustainability, e.g., the consequences of the shift toward plant-based diets.

**Noted:** Will increased sustainability involve increased food processing? What will the environmental balance be between animal and plant protein? This is an area of active research.

**Noted:** New foods and sources of food of relevance to the island of Ireland should be considered, e.g., harvesting of algae as a food/feed source. There may be food safety issues associated with these.

**Noted:** There will not be a white paper in response to the National Food Strategy in the UK - Scotland is adapting its own model.

**Noted:** Malnutrition in the elderly will become increasingly important with an aging population.

**Noted:** Basic consumer knowledge of the food environment is generally poor. There may be opportunities or partnering with other agencies (e.g., Agriaware) to redress this deficit.

**Noted:** Food waste will become increasingly important. This has ramifications for both consumers and food businesses in terms of food safety risks.

**Noted:** Cooking at home will decrease even further in the future – even some new houses very often don't have cooking facilities. People will rely on delivery and outside eating. Food will increasingly become an aspect of e-commerce (e.g., Amazon) with sustainability a central consideration of consumers (e.g., Bcorp accreditation).

**Noted:** Energy security will impact the food chain and will influence various risks including food safety and food fraud.

## **5. AOB & date for next meetings**

**Noted:** The next meeting will be held on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022 in Northern Ireland with dinner on the evening of Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> of October. The venue will be confirmed in due course. The Chair encouraged the members to network with **safefood** personnel on the different issues discussed in the intervening period.

**Noted:** The Chair thanked the members and asked them for their opinion on the format of the meeting. The members for generally happy with the format and in particular with the advance reading. All members were enthusiastic for subsequent meetings to be held in person if possible. Guest member speakers would be a good idea depending on the issues.