

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FOOD STANDARDS SCOTLAND (FSS)
BOARD HELD ON 7 JULY 2015 FROM 13:00 TO 14:15 AT ST ANDREW'S
HOUSE, EDINBURGH**

Present:

FSS Board

Ross Finnie, Chair
Carrie Ruxton
Sue Walker (part)
Anne Maree Wallace
Louise Welsh
Heather Kelman (by TC)

FSS Executive

Geoff Ogle, Chief Executive
Elsbeth Macdonald, Deputy Chief Executive (by TC)
Susan Pryde, Head of Nutrition (by TC)
Heather Peace, Nutrition Branch (by TC)
Anne Milne, Nutrition Branch (by TC)
Maria Tocher, Communications Branch (by TC)
Karen McCallum-Smith, Private Office
Hazel Stead, Board Secretary (by TC)

1 Introduction and apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to this inter-sessional meeting of the FSS Board, which had been called for the purpose of discussing a single agenda item, namely the recommendations contained in the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) Carbohydrate and Health Report. The item was to be taken in private because the report was to be published on 17 July in advance of the next FSS meeting. The Board was discussing the recommendations before the Report's publication date in order to be in a position to provide timely advice to the Scottish Ministers.
- 1.2 There were two apologies for absence: George Brechin and Marieke Dwarshuis. Sue Walker was able to attend the meeting from 13:00 to 13:50 only.

2 Declarations of interest

- 2.1 The Chair called for declarations of interest. Carrie Ruxton referred to her prior written declaration of interest (annexed), and declared that she had provided nutrition advice to several companies that use sugar and/or fibre as an ingredient, giving examples of soft drinks and chocolate.
- 2.2 The Chair decided that while there could be a perception of conflict of interest, his view was that there was no direct conflict of interest. He was content that Carrie take part in the discussion.

3 The SACN Carbohydrates and Health Report (15/07/01)

- 3.1 Elspeth Macdonald introduced the paper, which set out the recommendations in SACN's final Carbohydrates and Health Report, and sought the Board's agreement to accept those recommendations and to advise the Minister for Public Health accordingly. The SACN recommendations overall, recommend that the total intake of dietary carbohydrates should remain at 50% of total energy intakes, but with a significant rebalancing of the types of carbohydrates in the diet.
- 3.2 Elspeth explained that SACN's final report followed the publication of a draft report in 2014, which was followed by public consultation and reconsideration in light of any new information that was brought to the Committee's attention through the consultation. FSS staff, in their current capacity and in their previous roles within FSA, had held observer status throughout the process leading up to the draft and final reports. SACN's recommendations were now being considered from the basis of the FSS's new position and remit with respect to diet and nutrition.
- 3.3 Elspeth distinguished between risk assessment, which was SACN's function, and the focus of its recommendations, and risk management, which would be the responsibility of FSS if the SACN recommendations were accepted. FSS would work with others to develop recommendations on risk management, and the Board would be fully engaged with the process and able to decide how SACN recommendations could be implemented.
- 3.4 The Chair welcomed clarification of the separate functions of risk assessment and risk management, and emphasised that while FSS was committed to partnership working and collaboration its decision making would be as an independent body.
- 3.5 In discussion the Board sought assurance about the process that led to the recommendations in the final report, and the level of scrutiny that had been applied since the draft report was published in 2014. The Board was assured that there had been rigorous scrutiny following the publication of the draft report, including consultation and three working groups were held to discuss matters raised in the consultation.
- 3.6 The Board discussed the challenging nature of the 5% recommendation on free sugars and how this could be translated into actions to effect behaviour change. The executive clarified that this was a recommendation, not a target, and that the recommendations are what SACN believes are needed to achieve health benefits. The Board expressed concerns that the SACN ambition would be difficult to achieve. The Chair re-emphasised that the decision to be made at this point was whether to recommend acceptance of the SACN recommendations which were the outcome of risk assessment. The recommendations were not in themselves targets, and the options for managing the risk would be a matter for further development, discussion and decision, in which the Board would be engaged.

3.7 The Board:

- **agreed** to accept the recommendations in the SACN Report on Carbohydrates and Health;
- **noted** the scale of the challenge that will be required to effect dietary changes that will deliver health benefits;
- **agreed** that the chair should write to the Minister of Public Health with the Board's advice to accept the recommendations, and to note that FSS will provide further advice on risk management actions in due course; and
- **agreed** that in developing advice on risk management actions, FSS will work collaboratively with officials in the relevant parts of the Scottish administration.

ACTION: EXECUTIVE

Annex

Declaration of Interest – Carrie Ruxton

To confirm, I have not received any income from the sugar industry in this financial year. The last project was ghost-writing a booklet for the European sugar trade body, CEFS, and was finalised/paid on 31/1/15.

Some current clients use sugar as an ingredient and are listed below with a note of what I was paid to do plus any sugar-related media activity:

- Association of Cereal Food Manufacturers – stakeholder engagement, writing health professional articles. Appearances on Radio 4 Today and Three Counties radio in January to discuss sugar content of breakfast cereals.
- Cereal Partners Worldwide – ghost writing stakeholder newsletter. No media activities
- Ferrero – advice on Corporate Social Responsibility, in-house nutrition training, technical writer of sponsored conferences. No media activities
- Fruit Bowl (snacks made from fruit juice/pulp) – advice on reformulation and claims, in-house nutrition training, writing health professional articles. Quoted in press release
- British Soft Drinks Association/Food and Drink Federation – as a freelance dietitian, chaired a stakeholder engagement panel in March to discuss sugar, advertising and reformulation
- Danone Europe (yogurt division) – advice on research. No media activities