

**Minutes of a meeting of the Cross Party Group on Food held in Committee
Room 4 of the Scottish Parliament on 28 March 2018**

Present

Rhoda Grant	MSP (Chair)
John Scott	MSP
Mary Lawton	CPG Secretariat
Melanie Weldon	Scot Government
Heather Peace	Food Standards Scotland
Leslie Clarke	Halogen Communications*
Ann Packard	Independent*
Ray Lorimer	Kafoodle*
Jackie McCabe	REHIS
Rachel Mirfattahi	Interface
Cat Hay	FDF Scotland
Gregor McNie	Cancer Research UK
Laura Wyness	Nutrition Research and Communication*
Julie Armstrong	Glasgow Caledonian Uni*
Jon Wilkin	Abertay Uni
Karen Barton	Abertay Uni
Sarah Cottin	Abertay Uni
Lesley Stanley	Independent
Lorraine Tulloch	Obesity Action Scotland
Pat Abel	Transition Edinburgh South
Fran Thow	Food Train
Claire Hislop	NHS Health Scotland
Yvonne Traynor	NHS Health Scotland
Christine Fraser	Food Training Scotland
Alan Rowe	Rowett, Aberdeen University
Peter Morgan	Rowett, Aberdeen University
Baukje de Roos	Rowett, Aberdeen University
John Armour	National Farmers Union Scotland
Willie Macleod	British Hospitality Association
Gordon Gilchrist	Scottish Government
Pete Ritchie	Nourish Scotland

To meet requirements of CPGs, organizational non-members (as submitted on re-registration) are denoted by an asterisk.

1. Apologies for Absence

These had been received from Helen Muir, Martin Meteyard, Maggie Gordon, Stan Blackley, Gordon Gilchrist, Graeme Findlay, Ian Land, Rob Davidson, Julian Mercer, Sue Whittle, Geoff Ogle, Elspeth Macdonald, Constantinos Stathopoulos, Willie Fergusson, Greg Sandilands, David Lonsdale, Martin Hunt, Ceri Ritchie, Miriam Smith, Brian Ratcliffe, Tony McElroy, Alan Rowe, Dave Simmers, Richard Lochhead, Wendy Barrie, Bosse Dahlgren, Julie Edgar, Aileen Bearhop, David Watts, Viv

Collie, Jeff Justice, Lynne Stevenson, Uel Morton, Kirsten Leask, Rory Fletcher , Wendy Wrieden and Moyra Burns.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting (17.1.18)

These were agreed.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. The Obesity Consultation and Ways Forward

Melanie Weldon Obesity Strategy Lead, Scottish Government (MW) gave a presentation; *Developing a Scottish Healthy Weight Strategy* where she reviewed the consultation and responses and reviewed possible approaches Scottish Government could take to tackle obesity.

Heather Peace, Head of Public Health Nutrition , Food Standards Scotland (HP) then presented on the ways forward, focussing mainly on the Out of Home (OOH) market in Scotland.

Both these presentations are attached to the minutes.

Open Debate

Ray Lorimer Kafoodle (RL) said it was important that GPs had information about food and nutrition and noted a new website on [culinary medicine](#).

John Scott MSP (JS) suggested that there should be mentoring sessions for those with high BMI, a bit like the Weightwatchers programme. **MW** said it was an option that could work for some. They were evaluating weight management programmes and developing a framework for those with diabetes based on evidence.

Jon Wilkin Uni of Abertay said that consumers must not be overburdened with information so it was hard to make healthy choices. **HP** agreed that consumers should not be bombarded with confusing advice. There was an issue with strong evidence based information such as the dietary guidelines getting drowned out. In many cases those close to consumers were not giving the same advice. There needed to be a coming together and common script agreed.

Lesley Stanley (Independent) noted that there seemed to be a focus on what we shouldn't eat rather than what we should such as fibre, vegetables and those with a preventative cancer effect. This would be a more positive long term message.

Alan Rowe Uni of Aberdeen said that the way people ate now was different and consumers needed help in working out how many calories they consumed over a whole day. **HP** said that Public Health England was starting to address this with a “rule of thumb” guide for calories for breakfast/lunch/ evening meals. Snacks also needed to be considered. However she noted the importance of enjoying food and thought that removing calories or ingredients by stealth was a useful tool; for example removing salt from bread.

Peter Morgan Uni of Aberdeen (PM) said in considering reformulation by stealth it was important to consider what to put in as well as what to take out. For example the Rowett had worked on adding protein to increase satiety and there was scope around fibre etc. More research in this area was needed.

Willie Macleod British Hospitality Association (WM) welcomed the fact that going forward HP had noted the complexities of the OOH sector, it could not be treated as homogenous and only some were BHA members. The sector responded to consumer demand and urged those taking forward the obesity work to engage with stakeholders. In particular he had concerns with regulation for calorie content and labelling, how portion sizes could be developed given different people/occasions and given that businesses in Scotland worked in the UK, commonality was needed across the border and Westminster and Holyrood should work together. **HP** said that engagement was definitely on her agenda and agreed to contact BHA.

ACTION: HP

Cat Hay FDF Scotland pointed out that HP had said for OOH there was now a lot of on line delivery using apps. This could be a great opportunity to get messages over to the public and they could filter by calorie content etc. **HP** agreed this had potential.

RL said that there were apps out there that could be studied. He thought it was important that there was nutrition education for chefs, caterers, apprentices etc.

NOTE: after the meeting WM provided the link for the [BHA Nutrition Guide for Catering Managers and Chefs](#)

Ann Packard (Independent) asked about food education for children and the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). **MW** said that she did not have information on the adequacy of the CfE but was aware that within a crowded curriculum there needed to be focus on Home Economics and a current shortage of teachers was being addressed. **WM** agreed that education was an issue and referred to the 2017 BNF study which found that children thought fish fingers contained chicken. **MW** said that a group had been set up to keep up to date on research. She agreed that education was important, however evidence showed that in the past policies had relied on education and personal responsibility and whilst this needed to continue and not be

dialled down, there also needed to be action on the obesogenic environment. **HP** said that education was vital and FSS and other bodies were doing a lot of good work

Julie Armstrong Glasgow Caledonian Uni thought that in Scotland there had been good work in setting standards for meals in schools, which were launched with enthusiasm and had a good evaluation but wondered if there was work to keep them up to date and review them as the momentum could be lost. **HP** said that school food was still being reviewed and leadership was essential in driving the issue forward.

PM agreed that leadership in the obesity challenge was needed and thought that there should be a well-co-ordinated government led campaign, possibly with role models, so everyone realised they must be involved.

John Armour NFUS said that understanding the dietary guidelines had not translated to behaviour change. The nutritional science evidence was there but what was being done regarding, culture, beliefs, environment etc to help healthy eating?

Pete Ritchie Nourish said that it was important to engage the community in healthy weight innovation; it should not be clinically led. He also thought we should look at culture and regulation in other countries to see what learnings we could take.

Rhoda Grant MSP said that those in food poverty did not have much choice what to eat. They often had to use food banks and choose familiar food that they knew would be eaten. The question was how to make healthy food affordable. **MW** said that they were funding initiatives but that this was not the whole answer and it was a topic that needed to be addressed. **HP** said that there was a fundamental issue in how to get people out of poverty.

AP asked about how changes in CAP would influence that obesity work. **MW** said she would get back separately on this.

ACTION: MW

AP also asked about vending machines with non-healthy options in sports centres. **MW** said this was on her radar.

JS said that there had been the Scottish Diet Action Plan, its Review, the Obesity Map and Action Plans and now this new initiative. The focus could no longer be on education, for many it was a life style choice and he thought there should be a more hard hitting campaign more like the Aids one. **MW** answered that she felt that now the difference was there was a political will to regulate. She agreed that strong messages were needed and if the balance was not tipped towards healthy food they would not succeed. New ideas needed to be tried. **HP** still felt optimistic regarding tackling obesity and agreed there was the political will,

particularly in changing the environment. She hoped all would engage and collaborate going forward.

5. **AOB**

There was no AOB

6. **Date of Next Meetings**

These would be at 6pm on

Wednesday 23 May

Wednesday 19 September

Wednesday 16 January