

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cross Party Group on Food held in Committee
Room 4 of the Scottish Parliament on 7 September 2016

Present

John Scott	MSP (Chair)
Richard Lochhead	MSP
Rhoda Grant	MSP
Mark Ruskell	MSP
Amanda Brown	Kantar
Cathy Capelin	Kantar
Mary Lawton	SFDF
Cat Hay	SFDF
Angelica Lorenzo	Scottish Government
Orchid Liu	UK Chinese Times
Rebecca Harvey	Taste Communications
Stuart Young	Taste Communications
Paul Birkin	Glasgow City Council
Wendy Barrie	Scottish Food Guide
Bosse Dahlgren	Consultant
Ceri Ritchie	Scottish Agricultural College
Kevin Patrick	Lantra
Aoife Behan	Soil Association Scotland
Geoff Ogle	Food Standards Scotland
Alana McDonald	Food Standards Scotland
David Watts	Aberdeen Uni
Sue Bird	Aberdeen Uni
Julian Mercer	Aberdeen Uni
Gillian Kynoch	Fareshare
Jackie McCabe	REHIS
Anna Strachan	Obesity Action Scotland
Peter Faassen de Heer	Scottish Government (Health)
Miriam Smith	QMU
Julia Brown	Pinsent Masons
Pete Ritchie	Nourish
Margaret Smith	Scottish Wholesalers Assn
Willie Fergusson	Zero Waste Scotland
Christine Fraser	Food Training Scotland
Bill Gray	NHS (Health) Scotland
Alison Taylor	RHASS
Robbie Beattie	Edinburgh Scientific Services
Callum Chomczuk	Pagoda Porter Novelli
Karen Barton	Abertay Uni

1. Apologies for Absence

These were received from Patrick Harvie, James Graham, Lesley Stanley, James Withers, John Armour, Alan Laidlaw, Viv Collie, Nicki Holmyard, Pam Rodway, Martin Hunt, Tony McElroy, Douglas Scott, Brian Ratcliffe, Martin Meteyard, Jennifer Bryson, Moyra Burns and Jonathan Wilkin.

2. Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting (27.1.16) were proposed by Christine Fraser and approved.

3. Matters Arising

Following the last meeting on Addressing Malnutrition in Scotland, letters had been sent to Ministers as agreed. **Mary Lawton CPG Food (ML)** had received a reply from the then Public health Minister Maureen Watt saying that officials were considering next steps and that recommendations for action would be provided to be taken forward in the next Parliament. **Peter Faasen de Heer (Scottish Government (Health) (PFdH))** confirmed that none had yet been made and offered to report back to the Group with an update.

ACTION: PFdH

4. Election of Co-Conveners and Secretariat

There was an election for Co-Conveners and the following were proposed by Cat Hay, seconded by Callum Chomczuk and duly elected:

John Scott (Conservative)
Richard Lochhead (SNP)
Rhoda Grant (Labour)
Mark Ruskell (Green)

John Scott proposed Mary Lawton SFDF as Secretary; this was seconded by Mark Ruskell and she was duly elected.

5. Health and the Scottish Consumer –Comparison of Scottish consumption Habits with the rest of UK

There was a presentation by Amanda Brown, Strategic Insight Director Scotland and Cathy Capelin, Head of Nutrition Service at Kantar World Panel.

Kantar collect real information based on actual behaviour and have 30,000 panel members in GB and 3,000 in Scotland. They record food and drink purchasing and

look at the 8 main nutrients to see trends. Food and drink consumption diaries and consumer questionnaires are also used.

It was confirmed during the presentation that sugar measured was that declared on the pack and for fruit and vegetables, McCance and Widdowson figures were used.

The headlines for Scotland were:

- Retail environment has changed –discounters and on-line more important
- 24% of in home consumption in Scotland driven by health
- 8% of out of home purchase driven by health
- People are engaged with health and buy less sugar and sodium
- 13% of calories purchased in take home baskets come from free sugars
- Taste and enjoyment are key for Scottish consumer
- Soft drinks have seen a decline in sugar due to reformulation and diet drinks with only 1/3 eligible for the proposed food tax.

A summary of their slide presentation is attached. This was then followed by an open debate.

David Watts (Aberdeen Uni) (DW) asked whether they had done any work on the understanding of what a healthy diet is by different social groups.

Cathy Capelin (CC) said that they can look at purchasing and consumption by social groups but had not asked that question of the Panel. Their work was generally observational and care had to be taken not to influence participants.

Willie Fergusson said there was anecdotal evidence that food donated to food banks at supermarkets was high in sugar and fat. **CC** answered that did not have information on donated food.

Wendy Barrie Scottish Food Guide (WB) asked if Kantar had done any work on processed and value added food as opposed to ingredients or unprocessed food. **CC** said they had not asked that particular question but they did track ready meals, ingredients and the relative costs.

WB noted that the figures showed that there had been a lot of reformulation of soft drinks to reduce sugar and asked if this meant the drinks tasted less sweet or whether sweeteners were added. It would be better to try and change the palate. **CC** said that they only currently measured the big 8 nutrients on the pack which did not include sweeteners. They would need a commercial reason to do this.

Pete Ritchie Nourish (PR) asked if they thought that their data was more robust than the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) and the Family Food Data. **CC** said their work was different; it was based on accurate take home purchases that were scanned, participants were not asked about their diet. Kantar sold information to industry and got lots of commercial feedback so if the data was not correct they would know. Adjustments were made for small shopping baskets. The key was that Kantar looked at trends and so their data should be considered alongside other data sources.

PR said there was DEFRA work suggesting that low income families could reduce sugar more quickly. **CC** said they had not observed this and said that sugar concern had led to a reduction and the concerned groups tend to be middle age/ middle class. They had found that free sugar intake was higher in households with older children.

CC pointed to their work that showed that 26% of consumers were concerned about sugar with 40% saying they were more concerned than last year. Of those concerned 92% were trying to do something about it. This has led to a change in behaviour. One area where change was not happening was that of chocolate confectionary. The first category to be reduced when considering sugar was drinks.

Julian Mercer Aberdeen Uni (JM) queried since tea and coffee were the top snacks in Scotland, whether purchasing of package sugar for these also going down. **CC** said that purchasing had gone down over the long term with spikes seen when the Bake Off was on television. However it could be bought and left in the cupboard and not used.

John Scott MSP wondered about the contribution of sugar in alcohol. **CC** said that the sugar data did include alcohol brought into the home but not out of the home and offered to report back.

ACTION: CC/AB

JM asked whether 5% of calories sourced from free sugars was achievable. **CC** said she thought it was recognized as a target by government and welcomed the ongoing work on reformulation and emphasised the need to change consumers' palates.

PFdH said that retail sales were only part of the picture and asked if they were aware of what was happening outside the home and how this had displaced some retail consumption. **CC** said that out of home purchases were flat in terms of volume but increased in terms of spend. Out of home always dipped in recession but was now picking up. For soft drinks there was still 50/50 share of volume between them with less diet drinks being bought out of home.

Ceri Ritchie SAC asked if there was evidence that people dieted in the week and not at weekend. **CC** said it was difficult to measure nutritional values of out of home consumption due to issues such as cooking methods and portion sizes. Usually the number of servings was recorded.

Aoife Behan (Soil Association) (AB) asked whether they tracked industry purchasing for the hospitality sector or public procurement. **CC** replied not, but they could look at food service in the future.

Paul Birkin (Glasgow City Council) said that many takeaways were now booked on line with information on the web so that could assist in out of home work. **CC** agreed that would be useful as information was available for many of the big takeaway providers but not for independents.

CF asked about promotions and whether consumers bought and kept them. **Amanda Brown (AB)** said they checked how they were used by diaries that recorded what they ate, how and ingredients. If for example chocolate was on promotion they knew if it was kept or more bought.

Mark Ruskell MSP said that he sat on a Licensing Board and had found an opposite trend to food with much more alcohol now being purchased for the home. He queried the cost/calorie of different food choices and the push to choose the cheapest rather than health being a driver. He asked if any analysis had been done on this. **CC** said they had and high sugar products gave more calorie/pence but promotions were an important factor. Promotions were important across all social classes but for different products.

DW asked which groups of food were most susceptible to promotions. **CC** said chocolate, soft drinks, savouries and snacks. These items were expandable due to wider occasions to eat them, for example meat had a limit, as there were only certain times when it would be eaten.

AB asked about promotions and consumer behaviour. **CC** reported that Public Health England had looked at the role of promotions on sugar and estimated that 8% of sugar purchased in GB could be attributed to promotions.

PR asked if the reported increase in fibre was due to increased fruit and vegetable consumption (albeit still low). **AB** said that there was now more fibre in lots of other categories such as bakery but she would look into this in more detail and report back.

ACTION: AB/CC

ML quoted figures published in June that said following Brexit, 37% of consumers planned to change their supermarket and 31% buy more British groceries and asked

if they had seen any effect yet. **CC** said that consumer confidence had dipped but had bounced back.

Kevin Patrick Lantra wondered if with respect to Scottish consumption habits whether there was any good practice elsewhere that could be picked up. **CC** thought that the UK Sodium reduction programme had been the envy of the world.

Angelica Lorenzo Scottish Government said that since convenience was important for the consumer whether it was possible to track ready meals and look at healthy versus non healthy. **CC** said that Kantar tracks the purchasing of all food and drink products but the difficulty was defining healthy was it for example low calorie, low fat, low sugar or healthiest product in category.

The speakers were thanked for their excellent presentations.

Karen Barton Abertay Uni mentioned work that had been carried out by the Universities of Dundee, Glasgow and Newcastle on [*Diet and Excess Mortality in Glasgow and Scotland exploring the differences in diet and nutrition*](#). (This is hyperlinked).

6. Suggestions for Themes for Future Meetings

ML asked for everyone to email her with ideas for themes they would like to see.

ACTION: ALL

7. AOB

ML drew attention to the [Good Food Nation Food and Drink Fund](#) that was now open.

8. Date of the Next Meetings

These would be

Oct 5th –theme of productivity

Jan 18th 2017

April 26th 2017

These would all be at 6pm in Committee room 4 of the Scottish Parliament.