

## **ACTION NOTE**

**Ninth meeting: Tuesday 11 December 2012  
Public Health Responsibility Deal Food Network High-Level  
Steering Group**

**BOARD ROOM, RICHMOND HOUSE,  
79 WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2NS**

Chaired by Dr Susan Jebb, Head of Nutrition and Health  
Research, MRC

With attendance by Anna Soubry the Parliamentary Under-  
Secretary of State for Health

### **Attendees**

Sue Davies – Which?  
Helen Walters – Faculty of Public Health  
John Dyson – British Hospitality Association (BHA)  
Ian McDonald – Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition  
Melanie Leech – Food and Drink Federation  
Andrea Martinez-Inchausti – British Retail Consortium  
Karen Tonks – Tesco  
Phil Hooper – Sodexo

### **Officials**

Richard Cienicala – Deputy Director, Obesity and Food Policy  
Jo Newstead – Food Network Manager  
Mark Hennis – Food Network Secretariat  
Corinne Vaughan – Food Strategy Lead  
Julia Thomas – Responsibility Deal (RD) Programme Lead

## **ACTIONS ARISING**

### **Item 1: Welcome and introductions**

1. The Chair welcomed members to the ninth meeting of the High Level Steering Group (HLSG). Papers had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

2. The Chair said apologies had been received from Richard Evans. Ian McDonald would be arriving late due to other commitments. The Chair thanked Fiona Dawson, whose last meeting was 2 October, for her work on the HLSG.

**Item 2: Actions from the meeting held 2 October, and matters arising**

3. On the Actions from the last meeting, the Chair reported that work on preparing a *pledge suitable for the weight control sector* (WCS) would get under way shortly.

**A1: Secretariat to pursue the development of a WCS pledge.**

4. The Chair said no *paper has actually been circulated on behaviour change from the fruit and vegetables behaviour change workshop*. Louis Levy should be the first point of contact in respect of questions on fruit and vegetables.
5. The *fruit and vegetables and calorie reduction pledge packages* had been re-circulated to the HLSG, the Food Network and the trade bodies (see paragraph 11).
6. A *paper setting out options for action* on salt had been drafted for discussion at this meeting.
7. The Chair recommended that a *briefing event for CEOs* on salt would be considered when members had reached agreement on new salt targets.
8. The secretariat had given *further thought as to how best to engage the catering sector* and this point was addressed in the salt paper tabled for today's meeting.
9. The dates for reporting back on *guidance to Chinese restaurants and monitoring returns* had now passed. Members who still wished to comment should do so as soon as possible.
10. At this point Sue Davies flagged to members the recent publication of the Which? report on the RD – 'A Taste for Change'.

11. Matters arising – the Chair said that initial signatories to the fruit and vegetables pledge were announced on 15 November 2012. There were currently 18 partners signed up to this pledge, with signatories from across the sectors, including retailers, producers, caterers and out of home. The Chair said that whilst the early signatories covered a good range of businesses there was plenty of scope for more signatories.

### **Item 3: Salt – next steps**

12. The Chair introduced this item and referred members to the secretariat paper. The Chair said that since the last meeting of the HLSG, both she and Anna Soubry had held discussions and meetings with business and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to help inform the salt work beyond 2012. The Chair said that she would be seeking agreement from members on the detailed activities which will be taken across each of the four strands of the salt reduction strategy, namely broadening sign-up; behaviour change; action by the catering sector, and reformulation.

#### Broadening sign-up

13. The Chair invited members' views on the proposal to offer a stepped approach to new businesses to achieve the targets, by initially signing up to meet the 2012 targets and progressing from there. The Chair concluded from the discussion that members were of the view that if flexibility was to be offered to new businesses to encourage sign-up, allowing businesses a period of time to achieve all the targets was preferable to a pledge which focused on meeting a proportion of targets.

#### Consumer behaviour change

14. The group discussed consumers' awareness and understanding about the health effects of too much salt, and identified a range of potential additional activities for inclusion in the paper. The Chair invited members' views on how a best to frame a new pledge to enable organisations across all sectors to sign up.
15. The Chair referred to the January 2013 Change4Life campaign which would have a focus on salt and offer a welcome opportunity to amplify the good work business was doing on

reformulation, and offer businesses the opportunity to participate as partners.

16. Members were asked to consider what actions they could take to encourage behaviour change, for example a specific pledge for the NGOs/public health sector to encourage behaviour change amongst consumers.

**A2: Secretariat to draft a further iteration of the paper to include elements on consumer behaviour**

**A3: Members views were invited on how best to frame a pledge on, and specific actions they might take to encourage, consumer behaviour change.**

Action by the catering sector

17. Further discussion on salt reduction included how best to maximise sign up among the remaining major high street caterers and the largest remaining unsigned contract caterer. Members agreed that the largest caterers should be prioritised for engagement, but reflected that DH should extend this to caterers with more than 50 outlets. BHA offered to help facilitate this.
18. Anna Soubry said that she would be willing to hold further meetings with businesses if it would help encourage sign up.

**A4: Secretariat to advise on priorities for Ministerial meetings and to support the Minister's office on these**

19. The Chair said that the secretariat would be working with the British Nutrition Foundation to see how their current on-line nutrition package could evolve to support the RD, and in the slightly longer term about plans to develop training which was based on the guidance 'Catering for Health'. John Dyson said that the BHA was developing a training package and offered additionally to engage in the DH initiative. Members felt it was important that this work was informed by learning from existing RD partners and current initiatives, and should not be limited to salt.

### Reformulation

20. Members were supportive of the proposals and agreed that the reformulation framework effectively balanced the need to maximise public health gains, and provided the flexibility and incentives to encourage business sign-up. Members reflected upon the challenges to implementation including resource needs, and striking the right balance between essential and business-specific targets to maximise progress. Some members felt the revised targets should be delivered earlier if possible, and others that the review of all targets should inform the development of maximum targets for new products. The Chair said that targets would need to be both credible and achievable.

### **A5: Secretariat to develop a document setting out the agreed salt reduction strategy beyond 2012 and timeline for reformulation activity to share with members in the New Year.**

21. The Chair requested that members provide further information about the potential use of potassium-based salt replacers, the foods which they might be used in, and the impact this had on sodium and potassium levels in products.

### **Item 4: Work Programme**

22. Richard Cienciala introduced this item. He said that the forward work programme agreed in May needed some adjustment to take account of current work activity, including related work outside the RD on front of pack labelling.

23. Richard said that a second tranche of signatories to the calorie reduction pledge would be announced in the New Year but that there was still time for other companies to sign up. Many of the initial signatories to the pledge had committed to specific actions. Richard asked members to consider if there was scope for some of these signatories to commit to additional calorie reduction activities in the second tranche.

24. Sue Davies suggested that specific types of products should be targeted as part of the calorie reduction pledge. The Chair invited Sue to share her ideas with the secretariat. The Chair added that discussions with the cinema chains and soft drink companies were also in the pipeline.

25. Richard said that the calorie reduction programme as a whole would be reviewed in the spring and members were invited to share ideas on how to progress the pledge beyond January.

**A6: Secretariat to send names of second tranche signatories to members in order for them to encourage those not signed-up of the media opportunity of the tranche 2 announcement.**

**A7: Secretariat to ask existing signatories if they would like to announce further initiatives in their delivery plans to include in the tranche 2 announcement.**

26. The Chair said that she had been in contact with Dame Carol Black, Chair of the Health at Work Network about framing a food pledge suitable for hospital Trusts. The secretariat would take this forward.

27. Richard said that looking forward, work to complete the coverage of the initial list of 'priority nutrients', notably saturated fat, would be a priority for next year, alongside work on the promotion of food. He asked members to consider the possibility of a pledge on front of pack labelling once the four UK Governments had agreed a consensus approach.

28. Members requested that detail on engagement and communications on the RD website should be improved.

**A8: Members' views were invited to send any comments on the sequencing and detail of the work plan to the secretariat.**

**A9: Secretariat to draft an initial paper on 'priority nutrients', with particular reference to saturated fats, for circulation to members before the next HLSG meeting.**

**A10: Secretariat to provide communications and engagement information for each HLSG meeting, and review the RD website.**

### **Item 5: Localising the RD**

29. The Chair introduced this item and referred members to the secretariat paper. She said that positive discussions had taken place at the Plenary Group on broadening the profile of the RD through localisation. An outline proposal for a toolkit to support

engagement of local business on public health improvement has now been developed. The RD central team would develop and test this toolkit with a range of stakeholders.

30. A schedule of engagement with local authorities, Public Health England and local businesses was planned and the Chair asked members to consider which organisations the RD central team should engage.

**A11: Members views on the draft toolkit and suggestions of organisations to engage with are sought by 11 January.**

**Item 6: Any Other Business**

31. There was no other business to report. The Chair advised members that the date of the next meeting was **Tuesday 12 March 2013, 1400-1600, Richmond House**. Meetings thereafter would be on 12 June, 25 September and 12 December, times to be confirmed.

**Food Network Secretariat**

**19 December 2012**