

SUSTAINABILITY CABINET COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 53

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Review of City Food Strategy
Date of Meeting: 8 May 2009
Report of: Acting Director of Strategy & Governance
Contact Officer: Name: Francesca Iliffe Tel: 29-2246
E-mail: francesca.iliffe@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Purpose of the report is to inform Sustainability Cabinet Committee that a review of the *Brighton & Hove Food Strategy and Action Plan, Spade to Spoon: Making the Connections* will be undertaken within the council and across the city by Brighton & Hove Food Partnership may-December 2009.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Sustainability Cabinet Committee note the review is being undertaken and encourage participation amongst council officers where relevant.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The original City Food Strategy was published in 2006, produced by the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership (<http://www.bhfood.org.uk/page.php?id=138>). The city council was a key partner in its production, writing around 50 targets for the Action Plan. The Strategy was endorsed at Policy & Resources Committee 9 November 2005.
- 3.2 The review will be undertaken by Vic Else, Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Food Partnership (see below and appendix 1 for information on the Food Partnership).
- 3.3 At the time of publication in 2006, the Brighton & Hove Food Strategy was celebrated nationally and considered the most far reaching food policy in the UK. It brought together work from the public, private and community/voluntary sector to enhance health, social, environmental and economic benefits through the food sector, and minimize the many negative impacts of food from production, transportation, consumption and disposal.
- 3.4 The Food Strategy includes targets from the city council, Primary Care Trust, the Food Partnership and community/voluntary organisations in the city. The review will involve consultation with all stakeholders in the production of the new draft.

3.5 Departments, sections and teams previously involved in providing targets for the Food Strategy 2006 *as they were then called*:

- Children, Families & Schools: Healthy Schools; B&H Learning Partnership, Children's Commissioning Team; Primary Link Advisers.
- Environment: Cityclean; City Enforcement; Allotments Service; Planning Policy; Public Transport Team; Env Health & Licensing; Food Safety; Trading Standards; Sustainability Team; Countryside Management Team.
- Adult Social Care: Older People and Physical Disabilities; Social Care Contracts.
- Cultural Services: Voluntary Sector & External Funding Unit; Neighbourhood Renewal; Economic Development.
- Corporate Services: Finance; Property & Design; Client Contracts; Procurement.

3.6 Corporate Drivers:

- Corporate Plan targets: Reduce city & council carbon emissions; reduction in obesity in primary schools; positive activities for young people; improving the health of residents; encourage people to live healthy active lives.
- LAA targets: NI 56 Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6; NI 119 Self-reported measure of people's overall health and well-being; NI 186 Per capita CO2 emissions in the LA area; NI 185 L 26 CO2 reduction from Local Authority operations.
- Sustainable Community Strategy: Reduction in rise of obesity in children under 11; reduce CO2 emissions by 3.5% p/a.
- Sustainability Strategy: aims around health; access to basic elements of life; economy & work; education & training; land use; natural environment; transport; waste.

3.7 Proposed timeline 2009:

May-July	Review existing and negotiate new targets within the council. Engage/consult with community.
June-August	Redraft Action Plan.
September-November	Take relevant targets to appropriate Trust, Boards, committees for amendment, approval and endorsement.
November	Redraft as appropriate.
December	Publish revised Food Strategy.

Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

- 3.8 The Brighton & Hove Food Partnership (BHFP) is a cross sectoral body, established in 2003 with Brighton & Hove Primary Care Trust (BHPCT) and city council support. Historically BHFP reported to the Sustainability Commission and Healthy City Partnership to which it still reports in addition to having a seat on the City Sustainability Partnership. Cllr Cobb (council sustainability lead) sits on the BHFP Board.

- 3.9 BHFP is an independent body applying for charity status, with a turnover of approximately £450K p/a. employing 10 people (Further information: appendix 1 or www.bhfood.org.uk).
- 3.10 The Partnership delivers substantial health work on the obesity and health promotion agenda through a service level agreement with BHPCT. It is now seeking to make equivalent progress in the local food/food growing/food access agenda through Big Lottery funding for '*Harvest Brighton & Hove*'.

Harvest Brighton & Hove

- 3.11 The Brighton & Hove Food Partnership has applied to the Big Lottery 'Local Food' fund for a Beacon grant of £500,000. The outcome of the application is expected in April 2009, prior to this meeting. '*Harvest*' aims to explore the feasibility of a city increasing the food produced within its boundaries, providing opportunities for local people to grow and eat fresh, nutritious food. If successful '*Harvest*' will bring £500,000 into the city over 4 years, creating 3 new posts and cascading money to existing academic, community and voluntary sector organizations.

National concerns

- 3.12 An estimated 10-15% of the UK population experiences poor access to adequate food due to lack of money?
- 3.13 Obesity levels in B&H children are rising towards 20%. The World Health Organisation has warned of an 'obesity epidemic'. Treating diet related health conditions costs the NHS an estimated £2billion a year.
- 3.14 Food transport in UK currently account for 25% of the distance covered by HGVs and accounts for 19million tonnes of CO2, about 10% of annual UK CO2 emissions.
- 3.15 The UN recently expressed deep concern about global food shortages and food security as a result of: climate change; water shortages; energy, land and labour issues and population increase.
- 3.16 A recent report by the Chatham House *thinktank* 'Food Futures: Rethinking UK Strategy' concludes: the prospect of the UK being hit by a food crisis is "highly likely". The report claims: "What we had thought of as abundant food supply is anything but. Western societies, in particular, have tended to take their food supply for granted. The global system will reach breaking point unless action is taken."
- 3.17 In the context of the recession, concerns about food price volatility add to the financial worries of householders: From 2005-2008 global food prices rose at an unprecedented rate: butter 74%; chicken 62%; US wheat 120% and milk powder by 69%. UK consumers were hit by food-price inflation peaking last summer at 12.8%. This resulted in families that spent £100 a week on food in 2007 spending nearly £13 a week more in 2008 for the same goods. John Beddington, chief scientific adviser to the government, observed: "We are going to have to expect to have - throughout the world and not just in the UK - higher food prices."

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 A paper went to TMT asking for officer support on 1 April 2009 at which full support was granted.
- 4.2 Extensive consultation will be undertaken internally and externally for the Food Strategy review by the Food Partnership.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The food strategy review will be undertaken by the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership at a cost of £2,900. This will need to be met from within the BHCC Sustainability Team's budget which for 2009/10 is £216k, of which £178k relates to salary costs.

Finance Officer Consulted: Peter Francis Date: 06/04/09

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Oliver Dixon Date: 20/04/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The existing strategy has within its vision statement and aims commitment to addressing inequality. An Equalities Impact Assessment is planned for the Food Strategy Review to ensure that the review improves its robustness in addressing inequality.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Sustainability considerations are central to the Food Strategy which aims to address environmental, social and economic implications of the food system.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Any implications for the prevention of crime and disorder will be considered in relation to any existing or new targets in the Food Strategy.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The review presents opportunities to contribute to the delivery of the council's strategic objectives and LAA objectives outlined in paragraph 3.6, and for positive publicity for the council. Risks are that council may face adverse publicity where council targets are not met or are not developed in areas perceived as important. Proposed new targets may involve additional council resource or financial commitment.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 Contribution to Corporate objectives is noted at paragraph 3.6. The Food Strategy intends to have citywide benefits through enhancing environmental, economic, social and health benefits possible through the food system. The potential impact will be broad due to the strategy being developed collaboratively between Brighton & Hove Food Partnership, the council, the Primary Care Trust, and other community/voluntary sector, business and academic organisations in the city.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 There are currently inadequate resources within the sustainability team in terms of officer time and capacity to undertake the work of the review internally, although the review by the Food Partnership will be managed by the Sustainability Team.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The council put forward around 50 targets into the existing Strategy, many of which have been achieved. A review will highlight this success and offer opportunities for positive communications around these achievements.
- 7.2 Brighton & Hove Food Partnership have a £500,000 bid to the Big Lottery for food work in the city and also deliver substantial work around health (commissioned by the PCT). A review of council work by the Food Partnership is likely to lead to further collaboration and joint working from which the council can benefit from support and resources from the Food Partnership.
- 7.3 The food agenda is just as high in the public's mind as it was when the food strategy was produced (simultaneous to the Jamie Oliver/school dinners agenda)– this time the issues are particularly around food price volatility, global food shortages and food security. A review will facilitate consolidation of council action around this agenda – in which the city is already a perceived national leader through the existing Food Strategy.
- 7.4 New targets may simply reflect work already undertaken by the city council – raising its profile and providing strategic support.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Background on Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

Documents in Members' Rooms

None.

Background Documents

1. *Brighton & Hove Food Strategy and Action Plan. Spade to Spoon: Making the Connections.* <http://www.bhfood.org.uk/page.php?id=138>