

---

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee – 15 December 2015

**Subject:** Sustainable Food Update

**Report of:** Director of Public Health and Deputy Chief Executive (Growth & Neighbourhoods)

---

**Summary**

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the work that has progressed on the Manchester Food Board's priorities since the Food Motion was passed at full Council.

**Recommendations**

Members are asked to:

1. Note the report
  2. Support work to achieve Sustainable Food City status
  3. Support the next steps as outlined in the report
- 

**Wards Affected:** All

---

**Contact Officers:**

**Name:** Jessica Bowles

**Position:** Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research

**Telephone:** 0161 234 4412

**Email:** j.bowles@manchester.gov.uk

**Name:** Elaine Heggie

**Position:** Head of Business Units, Corporate Services

**Telephone:** 0161 234 1290

**Email:** e.heggie@manchester.gov.uk

**Name:** Sarah Doran

**Position:** Strategic Lead, Children and Young People, Public Health for Manchester

**Telephone:** 0161 234 3742

**Email:** s.doran@manchester.gov.uk

**Name:** Lindsay Laidlaw

**Position:** Project Manager, Public Health for Manchester

**Telephone:** 0161 234 3540

**Email:** l.laidlaw@manchester.gov.uk

**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Report commissioned by Manchester City Council

- **Sustainable Food in Manchester**, Mike Berners-Lee, Small World Consulting, October 2013. Report can be viewed at <http://www.foodfutures.info/www/images/stories/pdf/ManchesterSustainableFood131122Final.pdf>
- **Manchester - A Certain Future** Annual Report 2014 [www.manchesterclimate.com](http://www.manchesterclimate.com)
- **MCC Climate Change Action Plan 2014/15-2016/17** <http://www.manchester.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2042/executive>
- **Neighbourhood Scrutiny Committee Sustainable food report 2014** can be viewed at [http://www.manchester.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2222/neighbourhoods\\_scrutiny\\_committee](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2222/neighbourhoods_scrutiny_committee)
- **Feeding Manchester Sustainable Food Strategy** can be viewed at <http://feedingmanchester.org.uk/GMSusFoodStrategy>
- **Demos - British Aisles report** can be viewed at [http://www.demos.co.uk/files/476\\_1501\\_BA\\_body\\_web\\_2.pdf?1427295281](http://www.demos.co.uk/files/476_1501_BA_body_web_2.pdf?1427295281)
- **Fabian Commission on Food and Poverty – Hungry for Change Report** can be viewed at <http://www.fabians.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Hungry-for-Change-web-27.10.pdf>
- **Manchester Fayre’s Sustainable Procurement and Food Strategies paper** – available upon request.
- **Health Scrutiny Committee Reform of Public Health report** can be viewed at [http://www.manchester.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2427/health\\_scrutiny\\_committee](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2427/health_scrutiny_committee)

## **1. Background and Introduction**

- 1.1 This report will provide an update on the work that has progressed on the Manchester Food Board's priorities since the Food Motion was passed at full Council. The report will also provide additional information as to the wider context of the organisations supporting the work of the Manchester Food Board.

## **2 The Manchester Food Board**

- 2.1 The Manchester Food Board is supported by the Food Futures Partnership, led by Public Health Manchester. The Food Futures Strategy and Partnership has been in existence since 2003 when it began as an informal collaboration between Manchester City Council and the NHS. The Partnership has a clear vision to improve the health and sustainability of food in Manchester and this is supported by a wide range of stakeholders, who together, through concerted action aim to make local food better, healthier, more accessible, and more enjoyable. The strategy has five key aims:
- To improve the health of the people of Manchester
  - To protect the local and global environment
  - To strengthen the local economy
  - To build stronger and more sustainable communities
  - To promote culinary diversity and the enjoyment of good food across the city.
- 2.2 In 2012, Food Futures convened an 'Expert Advisory Panel' of leading national academics and policy makers to provide external challenge and advice to the Food Futures programme with a view to scaling up efforts to deliver healthy, sustainable food for Manchester. The Expert Panel recognised that the strategy and vision developed by Food Futures remained sound and ahead of its time, but recommended changes to enable more of the energy, interest and goodwill of the public, private and third sectors and civil society as a whole to be harnessed. To follow this, 'Sustainable Food Cities' was established, a new national initiative led by the Soil Association, Food Matters and Sustain, to support organisations in using food to promote positive change through networking. Together, these initiatives prompted the establishment of a new Manchester Food Board, for representatives across the food sector to come together and truly harness the convening power of food.
- 2.3 Councillor Rabnawaz Akbar joined the Manchester Food Board in late 2013 to chair the Manchester Food Board and crucially champion and progress this work in the City, alongside the Assistant Director of Public Health and Food Futures Programme Manager. Councillor Akbar took a food motion to full Council in January 2014 to define the commitments that the Manchester Food Board would work to. The motion outlined the following commitments:-
- Commits to working towards Sustainable Food City status
  - Commits to develop a policy on health and take-aways to support improvements in the diets and health of our residents
  - Commits to working towards reducing food waste in the city
  - Commits to working to alleviate the scandal of food poverty in the city

- Commits to supporting sustainable food procurement through its own purchases and through its influence with other public sector organisations
  - Commits to investigate options for attracting investment in high tech sustainable food growing industry to create jobs and prosperity in the local economy.
- 2.4 Following and during the development of the Manchester Food Board, it was announced that there would be a funding gap of £59 million from 2015/16 budget and possible £91 million in 2016/17. Public Health for Manchester prioritised wide ranging consultation on options put forward to make the cuts with residents, staff, businesses, providers and others, which required significant internal resources. There was subsequently a gap in the meeting of the Manchester Food Board.
- 2.4 Following a change of portfolio, Councillor Rabnawaz Akbar stood down from Chair of the Manchester Food Board and Councillor Kate Chappell, Executive Member for the Environment joined the Manchester Food Board as food board Chair from May 2015, until which point the board elect their own Chair. The Manchester Food Board has now agreed a Terms of Reference, based on the key aims of the Food Futures Strategy. The Terms of Reference outline that the board should meet a minimum of 4 times a year. The board has also since met in October 2015.
- 2.5 A key priority for the Manchester Food Board is to ensure that the Board is representative across all sectors of the food sector in Manchester, in order that the relevant expertise is present to both challenge the Board and work collaboratively to progress the Board commitments. This is an ongoing priority for the Manchester Food Board, however good progress is being made, with membership or participation to include the following organisations:-
- Manchester University
  - Food Standards Agency
  - Manchester City Council
  - Shlurp
  - Kindling Trust
  - Independent Consultants
  - FareShare Greater Manchester
  - Small World Consulting
  - The Manchester Food & Drink Festival
  - Manchester BME Network
  - The Trussell Trust (representatives thereof)
  - The Real Junk Food Project
  - Healthy Me, Healthy Communities
  - Manchester Veg People
  - Steady State Manchester
  - Volunteers
  - Ralph Livesey
  - Sustainable Fish Manchester

### **3 Manchester Food Board Priorities (from the Food Motion)**

#### **3.1 Commits to working towards Sustainable Food City status**

The Sustainable Food Cities Network is a partnership project, led by the Soil Association, with Food Matters and Sustain, that brings together public, private and third sector organisations that believe in the power of food as a vehicle for driving positive change and that are committed to promoting sustainable food for the benefit of people and the planet. The Network aims to help people and places to share challenges, explore practical solutions and develop best practice in all aspects of sustainable food.

The Sustainable Food Cities Award is designed to recognise and celebrate the success of those places taking a joined up, holistic approach to food and that are achieving significant positive change on a range of key food issues. The awards are Bronze, Silver, Gold. For each level of the award, a place must meet a number of minimum requirements relating to their food partnership, action plan and the extent to which healthy and sustainable food is embedded in local policy. This includes a partnership that has met at least 4 times spanning the last 12 months, evidence that meetings are leading to implementation and an action plan outlining key objectives for at least one year ahead. As well as meeting these minimum requirements, applicants will have to provide evidence of action and outcomes across six key food issues:

- Promoting healthy and sustainable food to the public.
- Tackling food poverty, diet-related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food.
- Building community food knowledge, skills, resources and projects.
- Promoting a vibrant and diverse sustainable food economy.
- Transforming catering and food procurement.
- Reducing waste and the ecological footprint of the food system.

The priority for the food board is to pull together and evidence the work underway and priorities for the future in order that the Board can apply to the Sustainable Food Cities award system in Spring 2016.

#### **3.2 Commits to develop a policy on health and take-aways to support improvements in the diets and health of our residents**

In Britain more adults are overweight than obese. Current figures show that 41 per cent of men and 33 per cent of women are overweight and around a quarter of adults are obese. By this year (2015) reports estimate that obesity figures will rise and in Manchester, it is estimated that 94,700 adults are now obese.

The prevalence of obesity in children has increased since 1995, when 11% of boys and 12% of girls aged 2-15 were obese. The National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) is one of the six mandated responsibilities and requires the weighing and measuring children at school in Reception Year and Year 6. The Public Health team currently have eight years of NCMP data. The year-on-year obesity levels in Manchester have varied but with the high levels of children measured the Team are confident that there is an accurate

picture of obesity in primary school aged children.

As part of its commitment to develop a policy on health and take-aways to support improvements in the diets and health of our residents the Manchester Food Board has been working with Planning to explore ways in which our Planning policy can help support this. As a result, the Council has recently begun a process to prepare new planning policy guidance relating to hot food takeaways, called a supplementary planning document (SPD). The hot food takeaway SPD will build on the objectives and policies in the Manchester Core Strategy. These objectives include promoting a healthy population, sustainable communities and thriving district centres. The Core Strategy seeks to promote centres as locations for a mix of uses that includes food and drink, and as places that improve access to healthy food. The SPD will explore how planning policy can help promote this.

Production of an SPD has three stages: an initial evidence gathering stage including an initial consultation; consultation on a draft SPD; and finally adoption. The initial consultation stage began on 26 August 2015 and closed on 7 October 2015. The second (and current) stage will involve preparing a draft SPD and carrying out consultation on this document. The content of the draft SPD is informed by the comments gathered at the initial stage and other relevant evidence. The Council will propose policies and publish the draft SPD for a consultation period of six weeks and representations can be made suggesting alternative approaches and other amendments. The final stage is adoption and this takes place after the Council has considered all the representations received and made any revisions to the SPD. The Manchester Food Board are pleased to have instigated the SPD process and will support the development of the SPD through all the relevant stages.

### **3.3 Commits to working towards reducing food waste in the city**

Reducing food waste is a key priority for both the Manchester Food Board, the City Council and M:ACF. It has been estimated that 30-50% of food produced globally is wasted. Most of this is generated either at source (i.e. on the farm) or by the consumer. Avoidable post-purchase waste in the UK is estimated to represent approximately 12% of all food purchased and the figure for Manchester is likely to be similar. Supermarket waste is much lower but also significant at around 1% of checkout sales.

There are a number of schemes in Manchester aimed at redistributing and recycling discarded food from the food production and wholesale sector which would otherwise end up as waste. FareShare Greater Manchester and New Smithfield Market (NSM), has been set up to address food waste and acts as a storage and distribution hub for surplus food, or food (for instance) with damaged packaging. FareShare and the Irish social enterprise FoodCloud have recently announced a collaborative partnership designed to help UK retailers address the issue of edible surplus food they may have within their stores. This innovative partnership, known as FareShare FoodCloud, brings together a technology platform and FareShare's knowledge of the UK charity

food redistribution market to address this issue across the UK & Northern Ireland. It is their aim to connect even more charities with edible surplus foods and a number of vacancies have recently been advertised to help facilitate this important work.

The Manchester Food Board are fortunate to have representation on the board from a range of organisations and projects that aim to address food waste, either at source, by the Supermarkets or the consumers. FareShare Greater Manchester, New Smithfield Market, The Real Junk Food Project and Healthy Me, Healthy Communities are all members of the Manchester Food Board and work together to identify opportunities to impact on food waste in the City. The Board are actively seeking to broaden out membership of the Board to include representation by Supermarkets and will link in with complimentary work streams with the Waste and Recycling Group.

### **3.4 Commits to working to alleviate the scandal of food poverty in the city**

Food Poverty is multi dimensional and affects vulnerable people the most. It is caused by a range of factors: low or no income and a rising cost of living including food and fuel costs make it more and more difficult for people to feed themselves and their families. Food Poverty in the UK has attracted considerable attention over the last couple of years, particularly in relation to food banks and emergency food provision and there is much evidence to show that the number of people having to rely on emergency food provision is increasing in Manchester.

Activity to tackle food poverty is wide ranging and is taking place on multiple levels – from strategic programmes that address the wider food agenda, large scale initiatives and campaigns to small scale community projects, directly addressing immediate crisis. In a little over a year, Manchester City Council has made £750,000 available to assist voluntary and third sector groups to address issues around longer term food access and to provide food (or other essential goods) to people in need.

Some influential research and recent thinking supports a more innovative and community asset approach to tackling long term food poverty, with a growing recognition that a more sustainable solution is needed – one which addresses the underlying causes of food poverty, but also helps to restore to whole communities, a degree of control over food security. The Demos report ‘British Aisles’ supports the ‘community supermarket’ model, where food is available for sale at below the market value, with the social purpose of tackling food poverty. The report recommends supporting food banks to transition or ‘scale up’ to reduce the number of Food Banks by 2020. Similarly, the recent report by the Fabian Commission on Food and Poverty ‘Hungry for Change’ proposed five long term principles which should underpin strong government-coordinated action, one of which being that Food banks and other forms of charitable food provision should become unnecessary by 2020.

The Manchester Food Board continues to develop strong partnership links to continue to support emergency food providers and their clients, whilst

exploring opportunities and models to upscale or transition. The Board also recognises, and supports, the approach of the Manchester Family Poverty Strategy (2012-15) in setting out Manchester's approach to addressing child poverty, with a particular focus on sustainable work as a route out of poverty. The Manchester Food Board will work closely with City Policy in influencing the delivery of the strategy to highlight the specific concerns around food poverty.

### **3.5 Commits to supporting sustainable food procurement through its own purchases and through its influence with other public sector organisations**

Public sector organisations have considerable procurement power. The Manchester Food Board want to understand more about sustainable food procurement through the City Council procurement process, with the attention on Manchester Fayre as one of the leading agencies to provide meals/catering to many Manchester schools, Academies and Children and Families Directorate 'resource centres'.

Manchester Fayre procures all its food supplies via the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) contracts enabling Manchester and the other Greater Manchester Authorities to access best value from suppliers through economies of scale and high volume procurement. The AGMA Procurement Group have recently adopted the Greater Manchester Social Value Policy and this will be included going forward with all food tenders - including the recent Groceries/Chilled and Frozen Foods tender. This policy looks in broad terms how activities can positively impact on six key social value areas that include assessing impacts on the society and economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment. The Social Value Policy will carry a significant quality percentage weighting to ensure that its completion and implementation will have a positive impact on procurement outcomes going forward.

In order to understand how the sustainable food procurement practices compare against local sustainable food policy, Manchester Fayre have completed a comprehensive Food Board paper, outlining their activities against the 'Feeding Manchester' Sustainable Food Strategy, which covers six areas of action and is intended as a guide (and to provide inspiration):-

- Support healthy and sustainable diets for all
- Build community food knowledge, skills and resources
- Ensure food equality for all by tackling food poverty and increasing access to healthy and affordable food
- Support sustainable food enterprises and a diverse resilient food economy
- Develop sustainable food supply chains in all sectors
- Create a strong foundation for sustainable food production at all scales

Manchester Fayre has recently been awarded the bronze 'Food for Life' Catering Mark. Achievement of the Food for Life Catering Mark provides Manchester Fayre with the independent recognition that their school meals are freshly prepared, using environmentally sustainable and seasonal ingredients.

The Food for Life Catering mark follows the 'Apse Best Performer for Education Catering of the Year 2014' achievement and coming in the final three on two separate categories in the EDUcatering Excellence Awards.

Sustainable Fish Cities is an initiative conceived and supported by an alliance of not-for-profit organisations already working on sustainable seafood issues. Sustainable Fish Cities is a featured campaign of the Sustainable Food Cities network and promotes Cities, town and counties where sustainable fish policies are in place. Manchester Fayre have now pledged support for the Sustainable Fish Cities Manchester campaign.

The Manchester Food Board recognise the achievements of Manchester Fayre and are working to promote the achievements in sustainable food whilst providing external challenge as to how we can further strengthen sustainable food within Manchester City Council procurement practices. This will include an emerging work stream around the metrics of food waste in schools.

### **3.6 Commits to investigate options for attracting investment in high tech sustainable food growing industry to create jobs and prosperity in the local economy.**

The Food sector in Manchester is vast, with the food and drink industry positively contributing towards the City's economic growth and expansion. There are a small number of known organisations that are designing and implementing advanced ecological systems in relation to urban food production with Greater Manchester, however this is a relatively specialised field. The extent to which high technology sustainable food growing options can impact positively on wider prosperity and the creation of employment in this field needs to be explored in detail, as to what already exists and the capacity and opportunity to maximise on this to realise the Board priority.

The Manchester Food Board has developed links with Dr Michael Hardman of the Environment and Life Sciences department at the University of Salford. Dr Hardman is working with us to explore drawing down potential external funding from the BBSRC research council to explore this Food Board commitment and how we might be able to take this forward within Manchester.

### **3.7 Additional priorities**

Following a recent review of the Manchester Food Board Commitments, it was agreed with partners that the Board would widen the scope of the commitments to include **Malnutrition in a Social Care Setting** (older people) and **Celebrating Manchester's Food Culture**.

### **3.8 Next Steps**

This report illustrates the importance of food for the city and its resident's, the breadth of the influence food has across the broader sector and the scope of some of the work being carried out to ensure a healthier and more sustainable food system. There is a continued need to scale up our efforts to achieve

results. The Manchester Food Board therefore requests continued support to:-

- Move forward to achieve the Sustainable Food Cities award status
- To promote the achievements of Manchester Fayre, Manchester City Council's in-house catering provider.
- To develop and widen the scope of the Manchester Food Board governance structures
- To ensure the Manchester Food Board is represented across the wider food sector and that members are empowered to effect change in a meaningful way.
- To build and develop links with food policy partnerships within Greater Manchester.