

Glasgow City Food Plan Development Day

9th December 2019, Tontine Building

Summary Notes from the Children & Young People's Group

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Exercise 1 – Evidence missing, additional information or strategies to discuss, filling the gaps.

A learning programme recently took place between Glasgow Life and Education Services. It focussed on food and provided some useful insights into the relationship between school food uptake and young people's attitude to school meals.

In respect of food served in school and the role of Education Services, it was asked what was happening to support those who work around children and young people. This could identify how they be assisted in the task of promoting to the young people the food available within the school premises.

The work of the new Public Health Oversight Board, which has input from Health and Glasgow City Council, also requires to be used as an information source. It was seen as important that, on the agenda for the Board, food poverty and the impact it has on young people should be seen as an issue that requires consideration on its own.

The food plan should link to areas where work is already going on and it's possible to exert influence. An example of this is the community growing programmes which takes place in schools.

It was noted that a number of effective programmes which impact on food poverty are being changed or discontinued due to funding being withdrawn/changed. Examples included Access Health hubs (lost funding), Fairshare (restructure which will increase costs) and Family Food Share (being monitored with possibility of changes). The sustainability of these initiatives is questionable without support. It was also observed that the work of these projects required to be made more visible and applied, where appropriate, across the city. The evidence of their impact has been established so the need is now to take these areas of work forward with secure, long term funding.

The issue of food and its place in communities is on the agenda within health and Glasgow City Council decision making groups and spheres of influence. It is important to take advantage of this position.

The revisions being made to the Integrated Grant Funding process gives the opportunity to better match money to areas of need. However demand outstrips supply. This will require any work undertaken in this area to be as effective and efficient as it possibly can be.

Data profiling of those who foodbanks, are being impacted on by universal credit and making applications to the Scottish Welfare Fund are not as clearly linked to families and young people as perception suggests. Given this it is important that we do not look to generalised causes and impacts in Glasgow, but instead we develop unique solutions which are properly focussed.

The stigma of receiving a school meals is very nuanced and complex to unpick. This requires work not only within the school, but also with local food outlets. Even when school provision tries to compete with local fast food outlets, the school still finds it difficult to keep children on site. A trial in Eastbank Secondary, which has 38 local eating outlets nearby, looked to provide more high street type foods (chips and curry sauce, chips and fried rice etc.) to young people. But it was not as successful as had been anticipated. What are the reasons behind this and what's the attraction of leaving school?

Young people benefit from understanding where their food comes from and how it's grown, produced, prepared and delivered in their communities. The example of the Dumfries Food Farm and the possible extension of visits to it by young people in First and Second Year was highlighter. This communality is further established when the young people eat together in a more social way than usually experienced. Using tablecloths, cutlery, tables etc. all add to this communality and sense of seeing food, and eating, as something more than functional.

It was also noted that new food regulations in respect of school meals will reduce salt/sugar intake while increasing the fibre content in foods. This will impact on items like yoghurts and bread type. Additionally sugar free drinks will return to being available in secondary schools. All these changes make it difficult to provide meals which a majority of young people want to eat and further turn them off using the school as the place to eat.

Amongst the decisions and discussions taking place, it is important to identify the view of young people and have them consider the merit of what we are trying to do.

Exercise 2 – Vision and long term outcomes

Broadly agree with the prepared outcomes. However existing systems work to frustrate their realisation. Structures require to be more flexible with questions needing to be asked with regards areas which inhibit positive change. Almost need to have a blank sheet when moving towards reaching outcomes.

Food should be part of the school curriculum. Children and young people should have an idea of food, what it is, how it exists and their role in making choices when consuming it.

Schools can be poorly prepared to provide food lessons due to their design. Some have no or inadequate kitchen facilities and this makes lessons complicated or impractical. Issues also exist with the number of Home Economics teachers available to teach meaning that some schools children have no access to lessons. An extension of this issue is the lack of space for school meals to be served in, although this is secondary to the matter of encouraging young people to eat within the building.

How do we make healthy food affordable food? Must aspire to achieve this.

Fresh doesn't just mean it is the only healthy choice and that other types of foods aren't healthy. Frozen vegetables can be healthy and we need to recognise and promote that. Also, fresh can mean using unseasonable foods which are environmentally damaging.

We should look to support the cooperative movement in order that standards and health benefits can be driven upwards.

Lots of poverty strategies exist – but how will this work relate, complement and interact to them? Linkages exist between all strategies at some level, but it seems no oversight exists which leads to confusion and lack of coordination. It is also the case that policies can clash and cause friction. This can lead to tensions between those involved in implementation and work to inhibit change or progress.

Need to promote, where we can, the ability of communities to develop solutions. However it was recognised that the communities/people who are most impacted on can also be the least likely to engage. Given this situation, how can we address the disconnect they feel from the system. Following on from it, how do we then get them to contribute and/or participate?

It was noted that food which originates in the city and stays in the city circulates money more locally with the positive benefits that this type of economy brings. We should also only recruit and work with organisations that pay the real minimum wage as this is an important route out of poverty.

What are we looking to achieve in the next 5 years

- Young People be given a breakfast and lunch that they will and do eat. Find a way of better distributing any excess food which is generated.
- Keep issue of food poverty on the policy table – from presentation it is clear that this is an opportunity to advocate and achieve change.
- Develop a marketing campaign which is formulated and rolled out in such a way that it involves young people/parents of the opportunities that school meals present while involving them in take up.
- Promote the issue of food poverty and school meals in the context of climate change.
- Rebrand what currently exists in schools with regards food and meals preparation to make it more inclusive and effective.
- Government needs to make schools accountable for food being a priority within the life of the school.
- Look at food provision around schools and how we work with council services to make this advantageous to the health of young people.
- Promote joined up working – the example of family cafes was used – to promote and illustrate the ideas of all being together.
- Need to better use school facilities for cooking properly. This should be augmented by home economics classes not charging for materials used in food preparation.
- Need to change the food environment around schools – take advantage of the Glasgow Food Pledge.
- Keep at front of thinking the concept of place and community of young people.

Exercise 3 – Who involved, who should lead and possible resource implications

The following was suggested as a framework for taking the work of the Children and Young People theme forward.

Within this framework, the intention would be that a design structure is outlined with the intention that someone local to the area would overs its implementation.

The geographical area of implementation could mirror existing geographical boundaries (Multi-member wards, school learning communities, broad city classification)

Element One: Community Design goals

- Promote current free school meals/food better (this also to include breast feeding)
- Promote the role of climate emergency in the context of food. This provides a drive to young people when considering how and where they eat.
- Promote the idea/benefit of young people getting breakfast and moving more towards the family café model.
- Promote and support the community aspect of food. Home Economics facilities used properly and without charge.

Element Two: Legislative goals

- Local/National Government promoting and supporting schools to set food as a priority for young people in terms of the school environment.
- Work with council services to make licensing around schools as effective and focussed on positive food outcomes as they possibly can be.

Within these framework, it was further proposed that they be divided into the following age bandings to allow more sophisticated and appropriate work to take place

Priority Area 1 – 0 to 5 years

involves working more with parent/parents/guardians to encourage good food habits while equipping them with food preparation skills.

Priority Area 2 – Primary school age

Priority Area 3 – Teenage/Secondary school age

Proposed areas to develop in short term (possible quick wins)

- Tie local food economy which surrounds the school into the goals. Involve those who wish to move the agenda forward. Promote partnerships between business and young people.
- Look to get celebrity chefs into schools and demonstrate that food and knowing how to make it can be sexy.
- Involve Social Bite and see if we can learn anything from their experiences. Look to also involve, if useful, Social Bite in work/conversations with young people.
- Educate how food can be related and important to communities e.g. Castlemilk sourced, Castlemilk prepared, Castlemilk consumed.
- Look at how the concept of food and growing can be tied into community responses to global warming and the need to act now.
- Look at what we can do with the cooking bus and the experiences of PEEK in progressing this initiative.

It was also noted that the group required to continue learning from best practice and this may not be restricted to the confines of food poverty – innovate work going on in community building that could be of assistance.

It was agreed that the group would aim to meet end of January/early February to advance the outline of the plan.