



## Glasgow City Food Plan – Summary of consultation responses

Between the beginning of October and end of December 2020, citizens, communities, businesses and organisations in Glasgow were invited to submit their views on the proposed Glasgow City Food Plan. The online consultation was hosted on the Glasgow City Council consultation page. In addition to the online consultation, the Glasgow City Food Plan (GCFP) team organised 2 virtual engagement events. Responses were collected at these events, and at various community engagement events organised by Glasgow Community Food Network and community organisations. Health Improvement Teams sent out a survey asking questions about the Children & Young People's section of the plan via email and social media. A separate survey was also sent out to businesses asking their opinions on the Food Economy section of the plan. Locavore also posted their response on their website and gathered a large number of responses, which were forwarded to the planning team. The GCFP team also took part in a number of external events discussing the Glasgow City Food Plan and invited people to comment on the plan via Twitter. 620 responses were collected using the methods described above. GCFP team is currently going through all the responses before developing the final plan to be launched in Spring 2021.

### General Responses about the Plan

Most respondents welcomed the development of GCFP and felt that Glasgow has an opportunity to lead by example in showing how beneficial embracing sustainability can be for its citizens. However, many felt that the plan should aim higher and be bolder in its vision; and that because of the climate emergency the plan should be more radical, ambitious and immediate. GCFP should include more specific numerical targets and clearer progress indicators and timescales. At the same time some felt that we should reduce the amount of detail in the plan and make it more accessible for a wider audience.

There was a strong feeling that access to good, nutritious food should be a right, not a privilege and that the plan should better acknowledge the problem with food insecurity is the lack of money to buy food. There was support for food pantries but also concern that these might actually worsen the problem of food insecurity. Many also felt that relying on food vouchers, charities and surplus food was an unacceptable way to feed people.

The important role of planning was highlighted; many would welcome actions to make land (including vacant and derelict land), assets and markets available and more affordable for socially responsible businesses and social enterprises. Implementation of '20-minute Neighbourhoods' was mentioned; this would tackle availability of food working with convenience stores and community organisations.

People would also like there to be drastic changes to the local authority procurement practices and would like the council to be the main procurer of locally produced food. An idea for the adoption of 'Glasgow Good Food Standard' was supported; this would cover social and environmental criteria (including Living Wage Employer) with a guide to purchasing decisions.

Respondents felt strongly about the importance of organic food and that commitments were needed to support an increase in organic supply and demand. Many also felt that the plan should address the

ecological emergency, not just the environmental emergency ('climate friendly food' vs. 'nature friendly food').

There was extensive support for embedded education around food systems in the school curriculum and that children and young people should be involved in decisions about school food. Community food organisations should be involved in the delivery of this training including food growing skills. People also made reference to community benefits and how this could be utilised better across Glasgow.

### **Food Poverty- Fair Food for All**

The consultation responses were in general agreement and support the content and actions in this section. However, there were also some really good suggestions on how to strengthen and add to these, being more robust and ambitious. Noted that some medium term actions could shift to short term. It was noted that all actions should be inclusive to all groups in society. A rights-based approach to transforming the food system where "everyone has a right to food" was advanced as most important. Much support came through for utilising "advice first" and "cash first" approaches for tackling food insecurity. It was noted that tackling food poverty should be partnership focused and a whole system approach.

The responses can be summarised in the below themes:

1. **Mapping and understanding current levels of food insecurity** in Glasgow is very important to know where the need and gaps are and to then respond with directed action/support to address these gaps. Although noted as an action, it was expressed that stats on access to emergency food provision should align to child poverty rates for a clearer picture. Also noted that the role of Planning (Urban Planners) should be included.
2. **Partnership focused action and building on existing partnerships** - Positive feedback on the partnership between Glasgow City Council and GCVS on telephone support lines/Glasgow Helps resource and the opportunity to further build on this, as well as GCFN hosted "Free Food Map" resource. Build into actions on partnerships that they ensure consistency in services provided, pathways and enhanced access to resources from the business community (Community Benefits).
3. **Accessibility to services/information** –Plan needs to strengthen the actions/narrative to ensure that all services and supports are accessible to all e.g. all vulnerable families, those with disabilities, BAME groups, those with no recourse to public funds, homeless people, students etc. Transport issues (costs), delivery options, special dietary needs or cultural diet provision as well as nutritious microwave meals for those requiring this due to disability/other were noted. A resource information hub to host all support information was seen as an excellent vehicle for going forward. However, recognised that not everyone has access to digital means so needs to be formed accessibly. Include that public campaigns on supports available should be timely and shared methodically across all key organisations/networks.
4. **Dignity, choice and quality is very important** – Cash first approaches were widely supported. Validation received for the action on the Rose Voucher Scheme and Food Pantries as providing a dignified response to addressing food insecurity, but noted that they need to be long term resourced. Action should feature support for more outdoor/indoor markets and social enterprises (including organic provision). Noted that all food/services should provide nutritious foods and be delivered with dignity and respect. Under "advice first" action, noted

that a wraparound holistic support for families' e.g. financial inclusion advice and wider supports should be provided.

5. **Ownership, Involvement and Volunteering** –Public participation in the Food Plan is vital and should be an action. People with lived experience should be involved in the food plan's implementation.
6. **Enhancing/New outcomes and actions**– suggestions were made on this and are reflected in the revised outcomes and actions.

## Community Food

Overall, responses to the Community Food chapter were very positive. There was strong support for many of the proposed actions. As with other themes, there was a feeling that the language used should be strengthened - for example shifting from 'we will look at' to 'we will do'. Should be action orientated. There were calls from across the responses to increase the scale and pace of Community Food activity.

Comments to the Community Food chapter and actions can be summarised as:

### 1. **Community Food Information and Resource Hub**

This was seen as being a good idea, a one stop shop for all types of community food activity - mapping, workshop signups etc... Ongoing sustainability and resourcing/staffing for back room admin was highlighted, along with accessibility e.g. for people not online, different languages and abilities and so on.

### 2. **Food Education**

From the responses, it's clear from across all City Food Plan themes that citizens of Glasgow want more and better food education. Suggestions included:

- Linking each school with a community food project or allotment, ensuring a long term connection and input from people who are passionate and knowledgeable about food and food systems.
- Embedding food education in the curriculum for *all ages* - understanding where our food comes from, how it is produced, food insecurity, food waste - taking a food systems approach.
- Tangible outcomes such as 'every child should be able to cook a pot of seasonal vegetable soup by age 12'.

### 3. **Skilling up the Sector**

There was a broad understanding from responses that we need more people able to work as facilitators and practitioners across the Community Food sector. Suggested ways to do this included apprenticeships and training for young people (or indeed anyone!) with Community Food projects being resourced and having additional capacity to be able to support people through a learning plan. This could lead to a set of qualifications - accredited by one or more of Glasgow's colleges - to encourage people to take up these learning opportunities.

#### 4. **Increasing Community Involvement in Local Food Planning**

There was very strong support for *meaningful* community involvement. Respondents emphasised that communities of all types should be at the heart of local decision making, with a wide range of stakeholders. Additionally, people wanted to see more cooperative working being promoted and supported, and agro-ecological or nature friendly principles underpinning this work.

There were links to other themes via suggestions that community led market gardens could be supplying locally grown produce to schools (Procurement). Finally, there were suggestions that the Council should be less risk averse and not shy away from letting local people lead.

#### 5. **Additional Suggestions**

This theme links explicitly to the Council's Food Growing Strategy and the Open Space Strategy, so does not include many specific actions related to community growing since these are well covered by those documents. However, we think some targeted actions can and should be included in the City Food Plan, and some of these suggestions include:

- Make it easier to access land for community growing AND market gardening
- Incorporate edibles into council planting schemes
- More fruit trees in parks and as street trees
- Give residents incentives to grow food in their own backcourts and shared greens
- Set up a Community Supported Agriculture project as a short term not long term action

Other suggestions not related directly to growing are to support communities to establish social eating spaces such as community kitchens, and supporting more resource sharing between projects.

### **Catering and Food Procurement**

There was general agreement and support for the actions set out in this section. Generally comments related to the need to strengthen the actions and to increase the ambition, pace and scale. The responses can be grouped into 4 broad themes:

#### 1. **Sourcing and procuring local produce**

- There was strong support for specific targets to be set for local sourcing for public sector food procurement. Examples were given of the positive impact of local spending on local economies.
- The benefits of sustainable low carbon agriculture was a frequent theme; in particular there was strong support for increasing spend on organic food and increasing the percentage of organic in public procurement. In relation to action required to help tackle the climate emergency, the need to shift towards plant based diets was highlighted.
- More needed to be done around the infrastructure for local produce: supporting small local businesses, doing more to support the development of local markets and making these affordable for small producers and making more land available for market scale food production.

## **2. Accreditation schemes**

While the commitment to these schemes (Food for Life Bronze and Healthy Living Awards) was welcomed, it was felt these could be more ambitious e.g. Food for Life Silver or Gold or a commitment to work towards that by a certain time frame.

## **3. Community involvement**

In particular this related to the involvement of children and young people in school menu design. There were some comments relating to the need to take steps to restrict access to less healthy choices/ encourage healthy choices among secondary

## **4. Working in catering/food sector**

There was strong support for the need to change the perception of catering careers as low value and do more to improve wages and working conditions. Could public procurement be used as a lever to help drive up wages and working conditions in catering and food businesses? The impact of Covid on this sector needs to be better understood as recovery plans are developed.

## **Food Economy**

Most respondents did support the proposed actions included in this section of the draft plan, but some hoped the actions would be more ambitious and measurable. This section could be strengthened by clear targets and indicators for success. The actions that gained most support and also received most comments were:

### **1. Explore ways to further engage with food businesses and restaurants to encourage reduction in food waste and adoption of circular economy principles as part of Glasgow's Circular Economy Route Map.**

- It was suggested that single use plastic food and drink packaging to be phased out completely and that any wasted food should be distributed better (supermarkets, food businesses and restaurants).
- Implementation of recycling regulations and penalties for non-compliance could be introduced and supermarkets should be made to pay to redistribute their excess food.
- Local businesses could be linked to local groups who need food.
- Providing opportunities for composting unpreventable food waste to support local growing (Micro AD).

### **2. Bring partners together (potentially as part of the Sustainable Glasgow Partnership) to explore opportunities to increase the production and provision of local, sustainably produced food.**

- There was strong feeling that there should be better provision for easily accessible farmers/neighbourhood markets in all areas of the city. Also, cheaper stalls to those offering local organic/local produce and subsidised travel and other costs for producers. Subsidised food vouchers should be allowed to be spent at local markets.

- Respondents felt there should be more support for socially and environmentally conscious/local producers/food retailers through policy action like rates relief and making it easier for people to rent vacant shops to sell local food.
- Procurement policy which supports the local, progressive food economy should be implemented.
- Role of urban planning needs to be recognised, so that prices and quality are the same in all areas of the city. This should include the assumption against further provision of 'big box', out of town style supermarkets.
- Better access to markets for local producers.

**3. Increase the production and availability of locally grown, climate-friendly food, in particular the establishment of an urban farming project. This will require more vacant land and assets in the city to be available for food economy use such as market gardens and small enterprises.**

- Large number of respondents believed that it is vital to invest in organic/agroecological/local food production and to include 'biodiversity/nature-friendly food' (not just climate friendly food).
- Economical support to the agricultural sector is fundamental; more help is needed to increase the amount of food grown locally by providing starter/incubator farms.
- Local economy should be developed by supporting local farmers/organic production.
- The need to work with planning was emphasised in order to utilise unused land/rooftops/new buildings and to increase more land available for food growing.

**Other suggestions for this section included:**

- Some respondents wondered if there could be a requirement for suppliers over an agreed size to be *Real Living Wage Employers*.
- We could also explore the opportunities for crossover between community & enterprise and better acknowledge the impact of social enterprises.
- Local businesses to work with communities/fund food hubs/pantries.
- Education and information is needed about the benefits of buying locally.
- Could we adopt a '*Glasgow Good Food Standard*' covering social and environmental criteria with a guide to purchasing decisions; could this include labelling for food mileage?
- Distribution and logistics is missing from the plan, as is a focus on wholesalers.

## Food and the Environment

The consultation responses were generally supportive of the proposed actions in this section, however, there were many responses that felt that the content was too limited in scope and that the proposed actions lacked aspiration. However, responses suggested constructive ways of revising the content and helpful proposals to make the section stronger and more comprehensive.

It was noted that there needs to be much stronger statements about the relationship between our food system and the twin climate and nature emergencies, and how changes to our food system can help add pace and scale to our work to address these crises. There were also strong views expressing the importance of increasing the supply of locally sourced, sustainably produced food through providing better support to socially and environmentally responsible food producers, suppliers and providers, by increasing the availability of land for local growers, including community supported agriculture and food growing cooperatives, and by using the purchasing power of public sector procurement. In particular, there was a strong view expressed by many respondents who supported the position that the food plan should be more explicit about the benefits of organic food for the environment and should be more ambitious in increasing the proportion of organic food in public sector food procurement. There were also strong views expressed about the need to improve knowledge and understanding about the impact of the food system on the environment and the potential of our food system choices to contribute to a more sustainable, resilient and green local food economy. Climate justice was considered to be inadequately covered and concerns were expressed about the perceived inadequacy of Glasgow's food, and food-related, waste recycling services.

The responses can be summarised in the following key points:

1. **There should be more explicit and stronger statements about the twin climate and biodiversity crises.** Environmental issues go beyond food waste and carbon emissions and include poor soil and water quality: these are threatening our planetary health and global food systems but respondents felt the section inadequately reflected this.
2. **The plan should do more to promote organic food and address the impacts of conventional agriculture.** Comments called for stronger support for organic food and commitments to support increases in organic supply and demand (through procurement). A number of respondents felt that the food plan in its consultation form does not adequately convey the importance of organic agriculture nor acknowledge the strong national recognition of this, for example by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations who have stated that organic agriculture/organic principles are what will drive a sustainable food system.
3. **Refuse services and recycling of food and food-related waste needs to be improved.** Many responses noted concerns about the current food waste recycling service in Glasgow City as well as concerns about the levels of single use food and drink packaging in use and resulting in litter across the city. Several responses called for better and more consistent approaches to recycling, with a particular request for better information in student accommodation about how to recycle food waste. Some respondents wanted a greater focus on more sustainable packaging and greater opportunities to use unavoidable food waste productively (e.g. animal feed, more composting opportunities, anaerobic digestors, etc)
4. **Strong support for reducing food waste.** This should be achieved through increasing public knowledge, understanding and skills, by focused action in public sector food outlets, and by increasing redistribution of surplus food. However, several respondents expressed their view that food redistribution is not addressing the fundamental problem of food insecurity and

supports (and perhaps rewards) the overproduction of food. There was also support for stronger links with the circular economy work in Glasgow.

5. **More ambition and improved support requested for local food producers and suppliers, including markets**, in recognition of the contribution this would make to building a more resilient local economy. If food enterprises are socially and environmentally responsible, this also contributes to Glasgow's social, green recovery from Covid-19. Responses included support for local markets which sell local, sustainable food – a number of suggestions and examples (Portugal) and proposals (Slow Food's 'Earth Markets').
6. **Increase availability of more locally produced and more locally grown food**. Responses reflected a widely held view that growing local food is essential for the overall food plan to work and that the plan should be more ambitious in this respect. Land Use/management strategies should look beyond community growing and enable more spaces and places to be made available for food growing (over and above community food) using agroecological or organic principles. Community supported agriculture and food growing cooperatives were considered to be important but are, to date, poorly supported in Glasgow.

## Children and Young People

In general the consultation responses were in agreement with content and actions in the children and young people chapter. The responses provided common areas that were viewed as a priority for action and highlighted areas in which the actions could be strengthened.

This can be summarised in the below themes:

1. **Children and young people need to be involved** from the beginning with their experiences and options at the core to shape any actions or developments. Although this is already included in the actions it needs to be explicit and strengthened.
2. **Food provision** in early years establishments, primary and secondary schools received the greatest amount of responses supporting a review of food in schools. This included reviewing the procurement, preparation, quality and delivery of food to children and young people. This was in addition to the strong support to improving the food environment outside of school, that involved not only limiting the clustering of food outlets but supporting local businesses.
3. **Food education** should be viewed as life skill that is essential for all children and young people in education. Curricular input should include practical cooking for all children and young people but should be much broader and include growing, the food system and the environmental impact of food. There was a general consensus that all children and young people should have access to growing spaces. Limited teaching staff, especially in home economics was raised as a challenge.
4. Some of the other actions need to go further such as breastfeeding actions should be wider than promoting business to become 'breastfeeding friendly' and promoting uptake of Best Start Food alone.