

Report for: Cabinet 19th September

Title: Food Action Plan

Report authorised by : Jess Crowe, Director of Culture, Strategy and Engagement

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Ward(s) affected: N/A

Report for Non Key Decision:

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Presenting the Draft Haringey Food Action Plan and the proposal for ongoing working groups to support the prioritisation and development of this work. This is for information and discussion: No formal decision is requested.
- 1.2 A draft of the Action Plan has been included as an appendix, but this will be further refined and completed by the working groups.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1 The cost of living crisis has impacted many Haringey residents ability to purchase and access healthy and good quality of food with many relying on food banks across the Borough which emerged in the pandemic due to the unmet demand during that period of time. The price of food rose by 14.9% in the year to July 2023, according to the latest Consumer Prices Index and this is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.
- 2.2 The primary aim of the food action plan presented in this paper is to support efforts across the Borough to tackle food insecurity. The plan will
 - a) support access to good quality and nourishing food, recognising the important role this has in improving educational attainment and mental health,
 - b) acknowledge the important role food plays in bringing communities together, and
 - c) the important role that food businesses play in the local economy and can play in economic development across the Borough.
 - d) encourage residents to participate in food sustainability by supporting them and their neighbours to grow food
- 2.3 Due to the urgent and pressing demand to support efforts to tackle food insecurity and emergency food provision, the plan is designed to be a dynamic and action focused document. There are four main pillars including:
 1. Emergency and crisis provision of food

2. Healthy eating
3. Sustainability
4. Food businesses

2.4 The pillars will be overseen by a core oversight group which will monitor the development and direction of the action plan.

2.5 The Plan is a collaborative effort setting out the Council's role and relationship in working with partners and key stakeholders to support resilient food networks that ensures that no resident goes hungry, the role of food in promoting health and wellbeing is understood and food culture within the Borough is understood and maximised.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Cabinet is asked to note the content of this report and the draft action plan at Appendix 1.

3. Reasons for decision

N/A: For information and noting

4. Alternative options considered

N/A: For information and noting

5. Background information

5.1 Access to healthy, affordable food is critical for survival and enables people to thrive. No one in the borough should have to go without food or buy poor-quality food which does not nourish them. Lack of access to good food has far-reaching consequences, from poorer educational outcomes to poor mental health. We also acknowledge the role that food plays in bringing communities together and the importance of the food economy in creating a food-secure borough. As well as seeing food as an aspect of broader wellbeing.

5.2 The development of the Haringey Food Action Plan will allow the Council, partners, community groups, and residents to come together to support food security. The Action Plan will strategically bring together the rich breadth of ongoing work in the borough whilst identifying gaps and areas for future action. The Action Plan will be a dynamic document supported by a series of working groups which will take forward and support the activities identified.

5.3 The current, draft, action plan is a starter document arising from:

- Discussion and engagement with the VCS and partners (largely during and immediately after the Covid pandemic)
- Haringey Council's Corporate Delivery Plan and 'Haringey Deal'

5.4 There will be a 'Core Working Group' with defined attendees. These attendees will monitor the overall strategic direction of the Haringey Food Action Plan. The proposed attendees include the responsible Cabinet Member, key officers

from the Council and Public Health, representatives from the Haringey Food Network and resident representatives.

- 5.5 There will be a further four working groups who will consider the Action Plan through a particular focus. These are:
1. Crisis Food Aid Provision
 2. Health
 3. Food Business
 4. Sustainability
- 5.6 Each working group will be led by a lead Councillor. Attendees may change depending on the actions for discussion but will include key Council and Partner Officers, VCS organisations, local businesses, and residents.
- 5.7 It is envisaged that the key working groups will meet at least quarterly recognising that further work between interested parties will happen outside of the formal working groups.
- 5.8 The Action Plan will be a collaborative document which will be updated and shared regularly. It will detail where the Council's role includes acting as a system leader advocating and supporting broader structural change – encouraging teams across the Council and beyond to work towards this vision. It will also set out where partners are taking the lead in key areas of delivery recognising the vibrancy and breadth of food support and activity in the borough. Together, we hope to achieve a borough with resilient food networks and a robust safety net for residents, where no one goes hungry, and where we maximise the role of food in culture, wellbeing and business to create a food-secure borough.

6. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes?

Objective	CDP Detail	Contribution of Food Action Plan and Working Groups
<p style="text-align: center;">Inclusive Public Participation</p>	<p>Residents will have a greater number of meaningful opportunities to directly influence how specific funding is spent</p>	<p>Having an Action Plan as a dynamic document supported by working groups will offer an opportunity for resident inclusion and participation</p> <p>We will work towards our food actions using the key principles that underpin all our work as part of the Haringey Deal. These include:</p>
	<p>All residents have a range of inclusive ways to participate and influence decisions that matter to them</p>	
	<p>Through adopting the Haringey Deal resident voice</p>	

	will be at the heart of decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting dignity not stigma • Focusing on what's strong not on what's wrong • Sharing power • Hearing the voices that are too often overlooked
Enabling Community Collaboration	The VCS in Haringey is demonstrably more resilient, sustainable and collaborative	Having an Action Plan as a dynamic document supported by working groups will offer an opportunity for VCS inclusion and participation
	The VCS have a stronger voice in council decision making and strategic decision making	
A Greener and Climate Resilient Haringey	Increased food growing in Haringey	<p>A specific working group will be looking at sustainability in Haringey's food system. This will include identifying sites where local food-growing can take place and seeking external funding to support local food growing, to be led by VCS and resident groups.</p> <p>It is hoped that the working group approach held strategically by the Action Plan will allow for the right connections to be made across the Council, partners and the borough to get things done</p>
Happy Childhoods	More parents are aware of, and take up, our local school holiday offer, particularly from those who would benefit most from this provision	Those who qualify for central government free school meals are a particular cohort who are likely to be facing wider food insecurity. The holiday offer illustrates an area where it is hoped that collaboration can achieve a greater range of outcome for example wider

		reach and deeper support to identified households
Healthy and Fulfilling Lives	Food poverty, food cultures and food opportunities will be a visible council priority	<p>The Food Action Plan and working groups will ensure that this not only remains a priority for the Council but continue to progress towards the range of objectives.</p> <p>These will include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding our understanding and work on food security beyond poverty groups • Developing shared language around food security and celebration and working together on clear messaging for residents and partners. • Exploring community cooperative solutions to food poverty • Providing insight and evidence to wider Council decision making for example expanded Free School Meal provision
	Food help will be easy to find, accessible and non-stigmatising	There will be a designated working group for crisis food aid provision ensuring that we are supporting this delivery and enabling collaboration and a Haringey Deal approach
Arts, culture and heritage is fostered, celebrated and valued, and is woven through everything the council does	Celebrating and inspiring will enhance Haringey's cultural reputation and profile in London and beyond	Our food cultures are one of our greatest strengths and as such are reflected in our Food Action Plan
	Markets across the borough are supported to thrive, new	A specific working group will be looking at food businesses.

Towards an Inclusive Economy	entrepreneurial activity is supported alongside existing traders, small business creation and growth encouraged	This will include how our food businesses can support our food crisis provision and food growing but also how food as a business can grow and support our residents and communities
	Increased new business creation activity and business growth, with a focus on minority-owned business	

7. Carbon and Climate Change

- 7.1 The types of food we eat and how we produce it are significant drivers of the climate crisis. It also makes our residents vulnerable to uncertainty in international supply chains, especially those on low incomes. With the Haringey Food Action plan we recognise the importance of encouraging more sustainable and resilient eating habits.
- 7.2 A specific working group will consider 'Sustainability' and how our Food Action Plan supports our environmental endeavours.

8. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

8.1 Finance

No resources are required to action this, and will have no bearing in the financial position of the council.

8.2 Procurement

N/A

8.3 Head of Legal & Governance

The Head of Legal and Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and advises that there are no legal implications arising from this report.

8.4 Equality

The council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not

The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics:

age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

Haringey Council recognises that food insecurity is fundamentally a form of poverty and as such impacts many residents with protected characteristics that are disproportionately impacted by poverty. In Haringey, local data show that these include single adult households with and without children the majority of which are headed by women and households including a member with a disability. Older residents are a further group who can be disproportionately impacted by insecurity of adequate and appropriate food. Additionally, Haringey Council recognises socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic. Those with a lower socioeconomic status disproportionately experience and are impacted by food poverty and food insecurity. The work of the Food Action Plan is designed to both alleviate some of the impacts and address root causes of food insecurity and as such the work will have a positive impact on Haringey's progress towards greater equality, including for those with protected characteristics.

The Food Action Plan's promotion of the food cultures and support to food businesses of Black and Minority Ethnic residents is an opportunity for Haringey to advance their duties to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not. This will be done by bringing together different communities and cultures through projects to encourage community cohesion and celebrating diverse food cultures. Intersectionality is a consideration here, recognising the inequalities experienced by Black and minority ethnic women and young people in the borough.

Consideration will be given to how experiences of discrimination or marginalisation can create challenge for participation for some people with protected characteristics. The Food Action Plan has a stated objective to deliver support with dignity and without stigma. Some residents with protected characteristics experiencing greater levels of discrimination or marginalisation may be more likely to experience stigma or difficulty in accessing services. For example, disabled residents may experience greater difficulties in accessing crisis food provision or accessing an appropriate diet; they may also experience stigma when choosing or not choosing to disclose these difficulties or the reasons for them.

The work of the Food Action Plan recognises the interplay between the Climate Crisis and food insecurity. Haringey recognises the disproportionate impact of the Climate Crisis on citizens of low- and middle-income countries and Black and Minority Ethnic citizens.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix One: Draft Food Action Plan

10. Background papers

N/A