

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

25th April 2023



Subject: **BIRMINGHAM FOOD SYSTEM STRATEGY: A BOLDER, HEALTHIER, AND MORE SUSTAINABLE BIRMINGHAM**

Report of: **Dr Justin Varney, Director of Public Health**

Relevant Cabinet Member: **Councillor Mariam Khan - Health & Social Care**

Relevant O &S Chair(s): **Councillor Mick Brown - Health and Social Care**

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Are specific wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):		
Is this a key decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference: 011156/2023		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Creating a Healthy Food City forum is a sub-forum of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Forum has co-produced the Birmingham Food System Strategy: “A Bolder, Healthier and More Sustainable Birmingham”. This is the first food system strategy for Birmingham.
- 1.2 The Food System Team conducted a comprehensive public consultation, following our attendance at Cabinet in March 2022. The consultation on the Birmingham Food system Strategy 2022-2030 was successful. We received 87 responses on BeHeard and engaged citizens through more than 10 events. Overall, feedback on the strategy was consistently positive, with high levels of agreement throughout.

- 1.3 Following the analysis of all the feedback from the comprehensive consultation, we incorporated all the key suggestions into the final Birmingham Food System Strategy. The changes included an additional workstream of “Food Safety and Standards”, reorganising all the workstreams into four cross cutting themes and six strategic workstreams, and ensuring key text such as the vision are succinct and focused.

2 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Formally approve the Birmingham Food System Strategy: A Bolder, Healthier, and More Sustainable Birmingham, as set out in this cover report and appended documents.
- Endorses immediate implementation of the Birmingham Food System Strategy: A Bolder, Healthier, and More Sustainable Birmingham.
- Enables the Health and Wellbeing Board and its sub forum, Creating a Healthy Food City Forum, to review and provide oversight of the Birmingham Food System Strategy.
- Ensures future updates on the progress of the Birmingham Food System Strategy are provided to Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Birmingham Food System Strategy has been developed by the Food System Team in the Public Health Division, with input from public and local stakeholder groups, The Food Foundation, and best practice from national and international organisations (e.g. the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact). It has also been informed by research projects focused on the Birmingham’s food system and associated factors that shape people’s diets such as the Birmingham Food Survey, Childhood Obesity Trailblazer, and the Birmingham Seldom Heard Voices Food Conversations
- 3.2 The strategy sets out the Creating a Healthy Food City forum’s ambitions for the next 8 years (2022-2030). “A Bolder, Healthier and More Sustainable Birmingham” is based on a series of work streams and settings (the Big Bold City approach).
- 3.3 It includes ambitions, objectives, and potential actions to be taken, alongside the key partners, levers, and leaders who will help us achieve them. Throughout the strategy is a commitment to achieve positive change across the city’s socio-economic groups to help reduce dietary and health inequalities.
- 3.4 The vision of the strategy: to create a fair, sustainable, and prosperous food system and economy, where food options are nutritious, affordable and desirable so everyone can thrive.
- 3.5 The Creating a Healthy Food City Forum has developed a framework for action which are broken down into four cross-cutting themes and six strategic work streams. These work streams are; -

3.5.1 Cross-Cutting Themes:

- **Food Skills & Knowledge** - Empowering citizens with knowledge and skills in relation to the food system.
- **Food Behaviour Change** - Developing the capability, opportunity and motivation for key behaviours that will enable long term change.
- **Food Security & Resilience** - Increasing access to sufficient affordable, nutritious and safe food for all citizens, all the time, in every community, and at every age.
- **Food Innovation, Data & Research** - Gathering insights and data and facilitating innovation, collaboration, learning and research across the food system.

3.5.2 Strategic Work Streams:

- **Food Production** - Empowering and enabling citizens and local producers to grow food throughout the year and connect to the city's food system.
- **Food Sourcing** - Increasing both supply and demand for local, environmentally sustainable, ethical and nutritious foods in the food system.
- **Food Transformation** - Transforming the food offer and diets to contain more diverse, nutritious and sustainable ingredients, and less fat, salt and sugar.
- **Food Waste & Recycling** - Minimising food waste and unsustainable packaging throughout the food system and maximising the repurposing and redistribution of surplus.
- **Food Economy & Employment** - Facilitating a thriving local food economy for all and maximising training and employment opportunities.
- **Food Safety & Standards** - Improving food safety and standards for Birmingham's citizens and businesses.

3.6 As we develop the Food System Strategic Action plan, it is important that we consider whether proposed actions are people focused, addressing key priorities, and if they are effective and realistic. This has led to the development of the Food Action Decision-Making and Prioritisation tool, which will enable effective prioritisation of different actions to improve the food system. We will use this tool to compare potential actions, aid decision-making and prioritisation and to strengthen proposed plans. Actions will be people focused by ensuring they are citizen-first, celebrating diversity, empowering. They will be working towards addressing key priorities by ensuring actions are addressing poverty and inequalities, healthy and safe, environmentally sustainable and economically sustainable. The actions will be effective and realistic by ensuring they are evidence-based, cost-effective, risk-aware and resilient, scaled and paced, learning and improving.

4 Consultation

4.1 Consultation was completed in 2022 and the consultation findings summary can be found in the appendices. Over ten consultation events took place in a variety of locations such as schools, colleges and universities, Birmingham Community Heath Care NHSFT, community locations. We communicated with many Birmingham citizens throughout CWG Events and with organisations such as Birmingham FoodCycle, Slow Food, Aston

University, Clean Cuisine, Pip's Hot Sauce, Minor Weir and Willis, Birmingham and District Allotments Confederation, Fircroft College of Adult Education, Bring it on Brum.

- 4.2 The BeHeard Survey received 87 in-depth responses. We also consulted national organisations such as The Food Foundation, National Farmers Union (NFU), Sustain, Sustainable Food Places, BiteBack 2030, Sorted Food, Feeding Britain, the Mandala Consortium, and the Urban Agriculture Consortium.

5 Risk Management

- 5.1 There are no perceived risks associated with the Birmingham Food System Strategy. We will embed continuous monitoring to identify, mitigate, and manage any risks should they arise in the future.

6 Compliance Issues:

6.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?

- 6.1.1 The Birmingham Food System Strategy links to all City Council's priorities, plans, and strategies; including the Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy.

6.2 Legal Implications

- 6.2.1 There are no directly legal implications arising from the report however aspects of the Strategy and Action Plan may require legal support as and when necessary

6.3 Financial Implications

- 6.3.1 There are no direct immediate financial implications resulting from the Birmingham Food System Strategy.
- 6.3.2 All financial connections for the Birmingham Food System Strategy and Action Plan, such as the Food System Team and the contracts commissioned by the team are funded from the Public Health ring-fenced Grant.

6.4 Procurement Implications (if required)

- 6.4.1 None identified.

6.5 Human Resources Implications (if required)

- 6.5.1 None identified.

6.6 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 6.6.1 Equality Impact Assessment completed on 23/01/23 and is appended.

6.7 Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 6.7.1 All environmental and sustainability implications have been considered and measured as part of the Environmental and Sustainability Assessment. See appended.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 **Appendix 1:** Birmingham Food System Strategy 2022-2030
- 7.2 **Appendix 2:** Consultation Outcome and Findings Summary
- 7.3 **Appendix 3:** Equality Impact Assessment
- 7.4 **Appendix 4:** Consultation Findings Report
- 7.5 **Appendix 5:** Be Heard Survey Response Tables
- 7.6 **Appendix 6:** Environment and Sustainability Assessment

8 Background Documents

- 8.1 Cabinet Report 22nd March 2022 (Forward Plan Reference: 009677/2022) – Draft Birmingham Food System Strategy: Creating a Bolder, Healthier and More Sustainable Food City