

	<b><u>Agenda Item: 12</u></b>
<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Birmingham Health &amp; Wellbeing Board</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup> November 2022</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>CREATING A HEALTHY FOOD CITY FORUM</b>
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Birmingham City Council</b>
<b>Presenting Officer</b>	<b>Sarah Pullen, Service Lead (Food System), Public Health</b>

<b>Report Type:</b>	<b>Information</b>
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### 1. Purpose:

- 1.1. To provide an update on delivery to date, and current and planned activity on selected workstreams within the context of the Creating a Healthy Food City Forum and wider food portfolio of work

### 2. Implications (tick all that apply):

Creating a Bolder, Healthier, City (2022-2030) – Strategic Priorities	Closing the Gap (Inequalities)	Y
	Theme 1: Healthy and Affordable Food	Y
	Theme 2: Mental Wellness and Balance	
	Theme 3: Active at Every Age and Ability	
	Theme 4: Contributing to a Green and Sustainable Future	
	Theme 5: Protect and Detect	
	Getting the Best Start in Life	
	Living, Working and Learning Well	
	Ageing and Dying Well	
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment		

### 3. Recommendation

- 3.1. Note the past and ongoing work by the Creating a Healthy Food City forum.

#### **4. Report Body**

##### **4.1 Background**

###### **Vision:**

Our shared vision is to create a bold, fair, sustainable and prosperous food system and economy, where food choices are nutritious, affordable and desirable so all citizens can achieve their potential for a happy, healthy life.

The main purpose of the Forum is to work together to apply a whole system approach to understanding the food landscape of the city and improving the food behaviours at a population level across Birmingham by ensuring that a joint action plan is developed and delivered.

The food system team oversees the forum:

Sarah Pullen, service lead (G6)

Bradley Yakoob, senior officer (G5)

Rosemary (Rosie) Jenkins, senior officer (G5) (primary person overseeing forum administration including agendas and minutes)

Chloe Browne, graduate officer (G3)

Emily Machin, graduate officer (across Healthy Behaviours and Communities) (G3)

The team is currently seeking to become substantive, and recruit two officers (G4s).

The forum minutes are in the appendix.

##### **4.2 The Food System Strategy**

The draft Birmingham Food System Strategy: Creating a Bolder, Healthier and More Sustainable Food City was published in June 2022 and is the outcome of three years of collaboration and co-production with citizens, partners, national and international organisations. It sets out our ambitious eight-year approach, with the vision of creating a bold, fair, sustainable, and prosperous food system and economy, where food choices are nutritious, affordable, and desirable so all citizens can achieve their potential for a happy, healthy life. The Birmingham Food System Strategy and subsequent Birmingham Food System Strategic Working Groups will be delivered from 2022 to 2030. The Creating a Healthy Food City Forum gave feedback throughout the strategy development process and contributed to the consultation. We completed the supporting documents, including an Equality Impact Assessment for the Consultation, and ran the consultation from June to September 2022.

###### **4.2.1 The draft strategy**

The draft strategy is available to view through this link [Food revolution | Birmingham City Council](#). The draft consisted of the following key aspects:

**Vision:**

Create a bold, fair, sustainable and prosperous food system and economy, where food choices are nutritious, affordable and desirable so all citizens can achieve their potential for a happy, healthy life.

**Principles:**

Collaborate – strengthen partnerships and build on existing good practice.

Empower – remove barriers and facilitate solutions.

Equalise – focus actions where they are needed most to reduce inequalities

**Ambition:**

A thriving food system is built on a strong foundation where we regenerate and improve our environment, communities and economy. It is no longer enough to reduce negative outcomes by being sustainable or neutral. If we do this nothing will improve so we must aim higher.

**Aims:**

- Grow the Birmingham Food Revolution
- Build a sustainable, ethical and nutritious food system and a thriving local economy
- Build stronger resilient communities that support those who most need it, and mitigate food insecurity
- Empower citizens to consume a sustainable, ethical, healthy and nutritious diet

**Big Bold City Approach – taking action:**

- Across people and communities
- Across the life course
- Across the city
- Across settings – food businesses, supply chain, third sector & not-for-profits, community & faith settings, education settings, further education settings. Birmingham City Council, public services, research and innovation, workplace and employers, industry networks, home.

**Framework for action:**

- Food production – empower citizens and local producers to grow and preserve food and connect to the city's food system
- Food sourcing – increase sourcing of local, environmentally sustainable, ethical and nutritious foods across the food system
- Food transformation – transform diets to contain more diverse and nutritious ingredients, and less fat, salt and sugar
- Food waste and recycling – maximise the repurposing and distribution of surplus food and minimise waste and unsustainable packaging
- Food economy and employment – create a thriving local food economy for all and maximise training and employment opportunities
- Food skills and knowledge – empower citizens with knowledge and skills in relation to the food system from farm to fork

- Food behaviour change – ensure the capability, opportunity and motivation for key behaviours that will enable long term change
- Food security and resilience – ensure all citizens in every community, at every age, have access to sufficient affordable, nutritious and safe food.
- Food innovation, partnerships and research – gather insights and facilitate innovation, collaboration, learning and research across the food system.

**Food Action Decision-Making and Prioritisation (FADMaP) tool** in order to aid decision-making and prioritising actions. This will ensure actions are:

- Citizen-first
- Celebrating diversity
- Addressing poverty and inequalities
- Healthy and safe
- Environmentally sustainable
- Economically sustainable
- Empowering
- Evidence-based
- Cost-effective
- Scaled and paced
- Learning and improving
- Risk-aware and resilient.

An encouraging moment on our journey with creating the Birmingham Food System Strategy, is that in October 2022, the Birmingham Food System Strategy was recognised internationally by Hellbars Sustainability Research Institute and Gourmand Awards, as Winners in the Local Free Food Publications for 2022 and the only UK city in this award level and category to be recognised. The Birmingham Food System Strategy will be platformed at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization Headquarters and at the World Food Forum in Rome later this month and will be showcased internationally as a winning approach to food system strategic direction.

#### **4.2.2 Consultation Responses**

We had 87 respondents on BeHeard and ran more than 10 consultation events (schools, presented to networks, Lunch and Learn, Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, community events). People who took part in the consultation included:

- Key National Organisations including The Food Foundation, NFU, Sustain, Sustainable Food Places, BiteBack 2030, Sorted Food, Feeding Britain, the Mandala Consortium and the Urban Agriculture Consortium
- Key Regional Organisations including The Trussell Trust (Midlands), FareShare Midlands,
- Individuals from Birmingham organisations including BCC, 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, and Bring it on Brum

- Members of the public

With regards to the vision of “creat[ing] a bold, fair, sustainable and prosperous food system and economy, where food choices are nutritious, affordable and desirable so all citizens can achieve their potential for a happy, healthy life”, 68% of respondents strongly agreed with this statement and a further 26% agreed, demonstrating a high level of agreement. Qualitatively, people commented positively, for example:

- “An excellent goal, articulates all key elements necessary for change and for success.”
- “It’s great to see the vision statement includes the need for a fair system and the focus on nutritious and affordable food. It’s also great to see the reference to ‘all citizens’.”
- “We welcome the opportunity to contribute to Birmingham City Council’s food strategy, and we strongly agree with the vision statement

Overall, feedback on the strategy was consistently as positive, with high levels of agreement throughout. Key suggestions for improvement included:

- Making the vision, principles, ambitions and aims link together more clearly
- Add additional groups into the Big Bold City approach
- Add Food Safety as a workstream
- Recognise the overlap between some of the workstreams with others
- Need to be precise regarding what FADMAP is and who it is for
- Suggestions for things to be included in the 9 different workstreams.

The feedback given on the strategy was specific and actionable, and we are currently in the process of rewriting the strategy based on this feedback. We are taking the above suggestions seriously, including adding an additional workstream on food safety and standards and making the four areas with overlap (food skills and knowledge, food behaviour change, food resilience and security and food innovation, research and partnerships) into cross-cutting themes to explicitly recognise their cross-cutting nature with the 5 main workstreams. We have also added in a clearer focus on data in the food innovation, research and partnerships workstream. We are also working to link more clearly the vision, ambition, aims and principles. We aim to go to Cabinet with this strategy in April of next year, with a view to publish the final strategy in early summer.

#### **4.2.3 Action Plans**

In January 2022, we ran an action planning workshop with each of the (then) 8 workstreams. This was to bring together key people in each of these areas, and the workshops were attended by members of the Creating a Healthy Food City forum and others in this sphere. In the workshops, we got valuable feedback on the content of each of the workstreams which aided in the writing of the strategy. There was then a chance to suggest actions for each workstream. These suggested actions will form part of the Food System

Strategy Action Plan, which will be a living document, to go alongside the Food System Strategy. Early next year, we plan to reconvene the workshop groups (with additional members) to act as working groups for each of the ten workstreams.

#### **4.2.4 The Birmingham Food Revolution**

The launch of the Birmingham Food System Strategy consultation captures the revolution that has been building for years across the city and the regenerative change being led by Birmingham citizens making a real difference. We are seeing a cultural shift in desire for sustainable, local and nutritious food in Birmingham and want to build on that momentum!

Empowering and energising more than 1.1 million citizens to join the Birmingham Food Revolution is key. We are encouraging people to join in as Local Food Legends and enable change. We want to recognise, champion, and showcase the many citizens, organisations, businesses and partners that are making a real difference in Birmingham Food System as our Local Food Legends. They have been leading the way for many years and it's time for Birmingham to "Be Bold, Be Proud" of our quiet food legends. They are an inspiration and we can all learn from them and be empowered to be legends, too.

A handful of our CHFC members are local food legends and we have been scoping and capturing others. We currently have more than 20 local food legends, and the next phase will be capturing their stories and sharing details about them – we are currently in the process of commissioning this work.

#### **4.3 The Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme**

The Food System Team has now submitted the final evaluation report for the Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme (COTP) to the Local Government Association and the ICF. The Creating a Healthy Food City Forum have been given an update on the final evaluation report. The COTP was funded by the Department of Health and Social Care and managed by the Local Government Association with support from Public Health England. It was a national project, and several Local Authorities across the country, (Pennine Lancashire, Bradford, Lewisham and Nottinghamshire), participated in the programme to tackle childhood obesity at a local level. The overarching aim of the programme in Birmingham was to create a city which enables all citizens to eat healthily and be active every day, including supporting children and families to achieve a healthy weight.

Over the last year, the COTP workstreams have been consolidated to ensure that there is a lasting legacy at Birmingham City Council. This has involved:

- Reinforcing the overarching aims of each of the three COTP workstreams, so that the legacy integrates with other BCC work and priorities.
- Taking a whole system approach to achieving these objectives through strengthening partnership and coordinated working.



- Integrating the COTP projects and outputs with other work and initiatives happening within the council and across the city.
- Through integrating the projects and outputs, we have prioritised ensuring the legacy of the COTP beyond the end of the programme.

This shift from seeing the COTP work streams as a collection of single projects, to working towards broader objectives, has been instrumental in enabling a whole system approach and a joint vision across the council.

### **The Three Workstreams**

Our approach to the project evolved over time, with a shift from a collection of single projects to three work streams. The three work streams are as follows:

- **Work Stream 1-** Integrate Public Health into Built Environment Processes
- **Work Stream 2-** Capture Food System Insights and Data
- **Work Stream 3-** Embed Health Literacy Development: Identify Barriers and Enablers to Implementation and Practice.

### **Work Stream 1**

**What was involved?** The environment we live in impacts our health, with a poorly designed built environment having the potential to negatively impact our health and lead to inequalities in health and wellbeing. Due to this, we aimed to unite planning with public health through the adoption of specific policies, practices and frameworks. We created a Healthy City Planning Toolkit Health Impact Assessment tool and explored how we could embed this into public health and planning.

**What did we achieve?** The Healthy City Planning Toolkit was created as a living document that can be built upon in the future. Birmingham's toolkit goes beyond the approach of national toolkits and considers protected characteristics and digital technology. We have also developed an action plan to support the future work of embedding public health into planning processes. Furthermore, we looked at how planning and land use can be considered from other angles, including from a community growing perspective.

**What now?** This work stream has instigated projects and relationships across Birmingham City Council that will drive forward the public health and planning agenda.

### **Work Stream 2**

**What was involved?** We aimed to develop tools, metrics and techniques to effectively capture insights and data across the food system in order to identify where we should focus our work and to measure the impact of our actions. We initially planned to create a Birmingham Basket tool with consumer data to capture food purchasing habits in Birmingham. However, through our work with stakeholders our plan changed to developing a number of different tools. These

included: a food affordability toolkit, asset mapping, community researchers, youth researchers, focus groups and surveys and questionnaires.

**What did we achieve?** Through this work stream we have developed strong relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders and partners across Birmingham. This avoided duplication of work and has increased innovation and solutions. Our early conversations led to a research group called the Mandala Consortium focusing their food system research in Birmingham. Our ongoing work with community researchers and young people will have an impact for years to come, with the tools they develop to be shared in the future.

**What now?** The projects within this work stream are ongoing and they have been embedded into our innovative food system work in Birmingham. There are many conversations taking place with partners to explore further solutions.

### **Work Stream 3**

**What was involved?** Health literacy is about an individual's or community's ability to understand and use information to make decisions about their health. Low levels of health literacy are associated with increased use of health services, poorer health outcomes, higher mortality in older people and less preventative care. Due to this we aimed to develop accessible health literacy training modules for different apprenticeship training levels on offer within Birmingham City Council.

**What did we achieve?** Health literacy modules were developed and a team at the University of Birmingham conducted an evaluation which captured valuable insights and learning that will guide future health literacy projects.

**What now?** Our learning from this evaluation will be valuable in future health literacy project development. We are working on increasing the variety of resources that citizens can access to improve their health. For example, we are currently working with the Diverse Nutrition Association to develop cultural healthy eating guides.

### **In Summary**

All projects in the COTP have made progress towards achieving the aims of our work streams, and Birmingham is still on a journey to achieve them. There will be a lasting legacy as they have been integrated into other projects and embedded into the Birmingham Food System Strategy. The learning we have gathered will shape future approaches to ensuring that citizens in Birmingham can lead happy and healthy lives. The evaluation report is currently being made accessible, in line with Birmingham City Council's accessibility standards, so that it can be published on the Food Systems Team's section of the council website in due course [Food revolution | Birmingham City Council](#).



#### **4.4. Food Poverty and Justice**

##### **4.4.1 Global Food Justice Pledge**

Birmingham City Council is leading the way by calling for cities to acknowledge the challenges our food systems face, to situate themselves in this changing landscape and be a key driver of a progressive, meaningful and impactful Food Justice movement to address them.

We are asking cities to commit by signing the Food Justice Pledge to create a united global movement that has a local and national impact. Signatory cities commit to put their political weight into the collective voice of cities emphasising the need for policies which create and support an affordable, safe, nutritious, and sustainable food system for all citizens, irrespective of social or economic grouping.

*The pledge: “As city leaders, we are committed to addressing food justice by acknowledging that all our citizens irrespective of status are entitled to safe, nutritious and sustainable food at all times. We recognise the benefits of a collaborative partnership to address the global challenge of food insecurity exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, climate crisis, and disaster displacement.”*

This pledge was signed by the Leader (Cllr Ian Ward), the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care (Cllr Mariam Khan) and the Director of Public Health (Dr Justin Varney) on the 28th July 2022. It was also signed by a number of Birmingham individuals and organisations who were present, including The Active Wellbeing Society, Incredible Surplus, FareShare Midlands and The Clean Kilo, demonstrating the backing of organisations in Birmingham who are committed to reducing food insecurity and actively promoting food justice.

##### **4.4.2 Cost of Living Response**

The Food System Team is currently leading on the Food Provision workstrand of the Cost-of-Living Crisis Response – largely due to our ongoing work in food insecurity and food justice placing the Food System Team as leaders in this key area. We have put forward proposals to the cost of living strategic group to help support foodbanks, food pantries, food clubs and community cafes and to maximise capture and use of surplus food in Birmingham. We have also built a work package including: exploring approaches to increasing uptake of Healthy Start vouchers and Free School Meals, greater signposting and co-ordination of food provision projects, reviewing causes of shame and stigma in accessing food-related help and ways to mitigate this, and maximising the uptake and utility of the HAF programme.

##### **4.4.3 Other food justice work**

We have been working on an ever-expanding portfolio of work in this area, including:

- A student project assessing different affordable food models (e.g., food pantries, mobile food projects etc.) and their utility in Birmingham

- Commissioned insight work to ascertain the proportion of Birmingham's population at risk of food insecurity
- Facilitated availability of food parcels for social care workers, so they can give them out to people in need
- Supporting the Holidays, Activities and Food programme (e.g., writing breakfast club guidance)
- Supporting a student project where they volunteered and undertook participant observation in a community café to ascertain successes, challenges and solutions.
- Supporting the Food Justice Network in validating their foodbank map.

#### **4.5 Diverse Eating Guidance**

The Food System Team at Public Health identified a major opportunity for Birmingham to both better support the diets of our culturally and ethnically diverse community and set the innovative standard for the world.

The EatWell Guide, which is a national tool to support people to eat a balanced and nutritious diet, was introduced in the UK in 2007 and has been a useful tool for many. However, the EatWell guide can be difficult for people to understand, hard to follow for daily guidance, and most importantly not very culturally diverse.

Our Culturally Diverse Healthy Eating Guides, will provide tailored and easy to follow healthy eating guides that are culturally diverse, demonstrating ingredients and diets from around the world. We will create seven Culturally Diverse Healthy Eating Guides based on geographical diets of Eastern European, African, Middle Eastern and North African, South Asian, East Asian, South American, and The Caribbean.

Work on the culturally relevant Healthy Eating guides is on track for publication in January 2023. The team has received research findings and food lists from the initial commissioned project from the Diverse Nutrition Association and is currently working with a designer to scope what the guides could look like. Once the base designs are created, we will workshop with specific community groups that represent the diversity of the key geographical regions.

#### **4.6 Cook the Commonwealth**

Cook the Commonwealth is a project that forms part of the council's Commonwealth Games legacy work in Birmingham, to celebrate the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The first stage of this project involved capturing recipes from the 72 different Commonwealth countries on an app called Whisk, which originated in Birmingham. We contacted more than 250 food businesses, community groups, tourist agencies and other organisations to ask for recipes, and some organisations such as the British Dietetics Association (BDA) and Healthy Brum shared the call for recipes on their social media. We also scoped online recipes. In total, nearly 800 recipes were uploaded onto the Whisk platform, in

different communities of recipes such that each country had at least ten recipes. The majority of recipes were from the online scoping but more than 70 came from local chefs, members of the community and tourist agencies. The recipes were uploaded to Whisk, an online recipe platform and app which is free to download, making these recipes accessible to all citizens of Birmingham. Once on the platform, citizens can search '[CWG](#)' where they will find the community pages for each country containing the recipes.

In order to keep healthy eating at the heart of this project, we aimed to ensure that the majority of recipes had a health score of greater than 7 (the health score is generated by the Whisk app), with some leniency with regard to baked items etc. A high number of the recipes scoped and uploaded to Whisk for this project did not meet this standard following the recipe capture. There were also recipes from the community and online which needed to be tested to ensure that the recipes were tasty, that portion sizes were accurate, that cooking times ensured meat etc. was cooked through, or that ingredients substituted to ensure availability worked in the recipe. Furthermore, evidence from Whisk suggested that recipes with photos are significantly more likely to be interacted with and cooked, and there were some recipes which did not have photos and therefore need to be cooked and photographed.

Thus, many recipes in the Cook the Commonwealth project required testing, tweaking, and photographing to ensure that they meet the standards set. Through a link with the BDA, freelance dietitians applied to test, tweak and photograph recipes. They were paid £60 per recipe. Overall, a cohort of 19 dietitians tested, tweaked and photographed 267 recipes (a third of the recipes included in the project). Overall, the dietitians involved in this project gave very positive feedback about taking part, for example: "I really enjoyed cooking all the recipes and discovering new foods and techniques and others that felt quite familiar." They wrote a positive article for the BDA website, which can be found [here](#). Overall, the dietitians tested and tweaked 180 recipes (the remaining ~90 were photographed only). In doing this work, they increased the median health score of these recipes from 5.1 to 7.3. They also removed a total of 11,000 calories and 1370g fat, whilst adding 380g of protein to these recipes.

We also developed communities on Whisk which were collections of recipes. Four of these were made as part of a development project in the Public Health division (shown with a \*). These were:

- Recipes for gatherings (tasty but easy dishes to impress at gatherings)
- Easy and child friendly recipes for families to cook together over the school holidays\*
- Affordable recipes (focused on recipes with: 6 or less ingredients, cheap cuts of meat or mainly vegetables and lentils, a cost of £3 or less per person or where a Healthy Start card could be used to purchase the ingredients)\*
- Dietitians' pick (each dietitian gave their top two recipes following their testing, tweaking and photographing)
- Community picnic (created in partnership with the Birmingham Community Games, this consisted of recipes that could be cooked in advance and taken to a picnic)

- Vegetarian and vegan recipes\*
- Low equipment recipes (one pot recipes, tray bakes and recipes using only a microwave, steamer, kettle or slow-cooker)\*

We also created resources for [gatherings](#), [cooking together as a family over the summer](#) and [picnics](#). The gatherings resource included medals which could be printed off following a cookery competition-style dinner party. Minor Weir and Willis shared the cooking together as a family resource with 2,300 schools in the West Midlands. The Picnics resource was shared by the Community Games on their social media pages and they wrote a blog about Cook the Commonwealth.

Over the summer, we ran the Cook the Commonwealth campaign. Overall, this aimed to unite our city and celebrate our cultural diversity - bringing people together to celebrate and connect with their local community through food during the Commonwealth Games.

Prior to the games, we shared a video of the different Commonwealth flags, inviting people to cook the Commonwealth. We then ran a countdown to the Commonwealth Games with a “50 days of Cook the Commonwealth” campaign on the HealthyBum Instagram, twitter and Facebook, where we shared a recipe each day. During the Games, we shared the recipe collections and resources above. Other organisations including the British Dietetics Association, Tan Rosie, Birmingham Wholesale Market, Walsall council social media and Community Games shared about the project on their social media pages. In the days after the games, we shared a medal table for each of the five Commonwealth regions with the three most popular recipes from each region. The Coconut Tree, a restaurant which contributed the most popular Asian recipe, also shared details of the recipe and that they were a gold medal winner on their Instagram page.

Further to the social media campaign, we also took the project into the community to engage with Birmingham citizens face to face. We ran a “where in the world” interactive game at 5 Community Games events, two BEACH events and the Hillstone school community mela. This involved a game for children where they had to guess where in the world a laminated recipe was from, then stick a sticker onto a map as their guess. Through these events, we engaged with hundreds of people and had lots of positive interactions about the Cook the Commonwealth project and flyer in the following areas: the city centre, Shard End, Northfield, Kings Norton, Sutton Coldfield, and Moseley.

We also worked with the Communities team in the Public Health division on the events that they had commissioned to celebrate different Commonwealth cuisines. These events involved cookery demonstrations, music or poetry celebrating that country, recipe cards and free herbs, spices, and plant cuttings which could be taken away. We ensured that all the recipes and recipe cards were uploaded to Whisk. Communities Engage and Thrive were commissioned to undertake the following events:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> June, Ghana, Nechells POD
- 23<sup>rd</sup> July, Nigeria, The Birchfield Jazz Festival
- 29<sup>th</sup> July, Live, India, Farnborough Fields

- 2<sup>nd</sup> August, Sri Lanka, 'Live' Edgbaston Reservoir
- 3<sup>rd</sup> August, Jamaica, the Glee Club
- 6<sup>th</sup> August, 'Live', Handsworth Park, Kenya
- 8<sup>th</sup> August, 'Live' Ward End Park, England/Wales
- 20<sup>th</sup> August, 'Live' Aston Park Community Games
- 27<sup>th</sup> August, Lozells Cinema Night, Pakistan

We are currently working with Birmingham Wholesale Market on a Cook the Commonwealth event for school children that may be broadcast by the BBC in January.

We have been able to evaluate this programme using data provided by the Whisk analytics team. In total, the recipes in the Cook the Commonwealth communities were viewed 39,000 times. Views of recipes by people in Birmingham (5,000) made up 22% of total UK views (22,000), demonstrating a much higher level of engagement with recipes on the app than normal where Birmingham views tend to only make up 2% of UK views. Overall, the recipes had a median health score of 7.2, and there was not much difference in healthfulness of recipes viewed in Birmingham compared to the rest of the UK – the average healthfulness of recipes viewed in Birmingham was 6.2. Birmingham's most viewed dishes were: bacon and egg pie, pumpkin soup, Grenadian chicken stew, family corned beef, cauliflower soup, coconut-baked chicken and khalay choley.

Overall, this programme was successful and highlights the utility of the Whisk app over a physical cookbook.

#### **4.7 Creative Dinners**

The first of the Creative Dinners, in collaboration with University College Birmingham, will take place on 28<sup>th</sup> November and will focus on the impacts of the cost of living crisis on the food systems in Birmingham.

There will be a meal prepared by students at UCB (in collaboration with community chefs from The Active Wellbeing Society), and the menu has been designed and costed with reference to a universal credit budget. We have key speakers to include Dr Justin Varney, Dr Anne Coufopoulos, Executive Dean at UCB, Dr Deborah Lycett, Director of the Centre for Intelligent Healthcare at Coventry University and Andrew Forsey, National Director of Feeding Britain to give local, regional and national context and invite debate.

The guests will include the Food Justice Network, UCB colleagues and partners as well as members of the local community invited by The Active Wellbeing Society. With a knowledge exchange focus, students from UCB will be documenting using digital technology to capture the event.

#### **4.8 National and International work & collaboration**

The Food System Team have ensured that Birmingham's Food System innovation, collaborations, and commitment are showcased around the world through our international food partnerships. We work in partnership with the Food Foundation to maximise the potential of these collaboration and the work is overseen by the Creating a Healthy Food City Forum.



#### **4.8.1 MUFPP**

The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) is a European partnership for action on creating healthy food environments in cities and towns. The partnership enables connection with a network of 250 cities across the world to share learning on approaches to food in urban environments. Birmingham has continued to be a key member of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, holding one of two European secretariat seats for MUFPP and leading on food justice and food cultural diversity for the MUFPP network.

Birmingham (represented by Sarah Pullen) attended the 2022 MUFPP Conference in Rio. There were three days filled with insightful and very diverse sessions focusing on the nexus between food, people and the climate. Thanks to the extensive expertise and great support of the partners, there was a variety of parallel and interactive events on promoting biodiversity conservation for climate and health, innovative approaches to tackle food waste in cities, establishing sustainable urban food governance, fostering green public procurement for people and the planet, but also policies and tools to support urban agriculture, mapping and analysing data for climate transition, and much more. The learning gained from this event is being embedded into the Birmingham Food System Strategy and our approach.

The MUFPP awards have six categories. We submitted three programmes of work which, although unsuccessful, demonstrates our engagement with this work. 133 cities applied with 251 programmes of work.

#### **4.8.2 Commonwealth Food Futures event**

Birmingham also hosted a two-day “Commonwealth Food Futures” conference for cities in July. Public Health co-hosted the Commonwealth Food Futures summit held on 28 - 29 June during the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games and was launched by Lord Mayor Cllr Maureen Cornish. The Commonwealth Food Futures event was part of the UK House Business Hub events and brought together key officials from around the UK and the world. The event was attended by over 150 delegates from around the world including representatives from India, South Africa, Namibia, Milan, and Malawi as well as several significant national and international policy leads.

This enabled international discussion and collaboration on a range of food system issues with a number of different international cities. Birmingham hosted a food celebration event with key stakeholders in Birmingham’s food system and presented their food strategy to both the local and national delegates. The Public Health Division, Leader Cllr Ian Ward and Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care Cllr Miriam Khan re-launched the Global Cities Pledge on Food Justice as part of the event and with many of the international leaders and delegates signing the pledge with our local leaders. It was also signed by a number of Birmingham food system stakeholders, demonstrating buy-in by national and local Food Legends.

#### **4.8.3 Food Cities 2022**

Food Cities 2022 Learning Partnership is an initiative that supports cities to develop and implement city led food policies and action plans. The aim is to build a network of cities who are developing their food agendas, with a



particular focus on low to middle income countries in the Commonwealth. Through the partnership, responsive support and advice will be offered through a combination of events, resources, peer-to-peer learning and access to experts. Birmingham has been an active member of the Food Cities network. We have submitted a profile and best practice case studies for the website. We have also attended their webinars, including presenting on how Birmingham is leading the way with regards to our food strategy and work on food insecurity.

#### **4.8.4 DELICE network**

Birmingham continues to be a member of the DELICE network. DELICE funded and helped film a “Birmingham at the table” video, showcasing Birmingham’s food systems work through a conversation with Cllr Paulette Hamilton (then the Cabinet member for Health and Social Care), school chef Matthew Knight and youth food activist Yumna Hussen. It is available to view here ["Cities at the Table" Video Series | Delice Network \(delice-network.com\)](https://delice-network.com/Cities-at-the-Table-Video-Series/)

#### **4.8.5 BINDI partnership**

The BINDI project (Birmingham Public Health partnership with Pune, India) has a focus on how we can maximise sharing knowledge on food systems and work together on creating food smart cities. Both Pune and Birmingham are second cities in their respective countries, both have significant educational footprints of universities and schools, strong links to manufacturing and industry and growing and evolving economies. The partnership is supported by the Food Foundation who are funded to do this by DIFD and Tata Foundation. Work to date through the partnership has included using a shared survey tool for the food conversations with input from the CHEFS unit at KCL, shared learning on Covid food response and sharing of social marketing campaigns. Next steps work is looking to explore drivers of uptake of fast food and out of home hot food rather than home cooking in young adults and exploration of global exchange of food beliefs between urban diverse communities. Birmingham continues to be part of the BINDI partnership.

#### **4.8.6 Applying for a Sustainable Food Places award**

The Sustainable Food Places Award is designed to recognise and celebrate the success of those places taking a joined-up, holistic approach to food and that have achieved significant positive change across key food issues. Birmingham is working to achieve this award by meeting the following criteria:

- Establish a broad, representative and dynamic local food partnership
- Develop, deliver and monitor a food strategy/action plan
- Inspire and engage the public about good food
- Foster food citizenship and a local good food movement
- Tackle food poverty
- Promote healthy eating
- Put good food enterprise at the heart of local economic development
- Promote healthy, sustainable and independent food businesses to consumers
- Change policy and practice to put good food on people’s plates
- Improving connections and collaboration across the local supply chain
- Promote sustainable food production and consumption and resource efficiency

- Reduce, redirect and recycle food, packaging and related waste

A food strategy and action plan need to be in place for 12 months to be eligible to apply for the award, so Birmingham is aiming to apply in 2023.

Applying for this award gives us access to funding streams, and through a food resilience grant from Sustainable Food Places, The Active Wellbeing Society has been commissioned to develop a growing network, to deliver workshops and to explore how unused land could be used for growing.

#### **4.8.7 Work with The Food Foundation**

The Food Foundation Partnership contract, established in July 2020 and in place for two years, assisted with the implementation of national and international food policies and guidelines, and specialist advice, support and management of Birmingham's international relationships. The partners have been in ongoing conversations with the Food System Team to discuss key project deliverables by quarter over the life of the contract. The Food Foundation contributed to the strategy, wrote a food team justification, organised the Commonwealth Food Futures event, led on the Food Cities 2022 work, amongst other things prior to the end of the contract in August 2022. We are currently in the process of scoping out a new contract for them, aiming to re-commission them in early 2023.

#### **4.8.8 The Mandala Consortium**

The Mandala Consortium is a large research project funded by UKRI focusing on transforming urban food systems for planetary and population health. Centred on the city of Birmingham and the regional economy of the West Midlands, Mandala brings together internationally renowned teams from the Universities of Cambridge, Birmingham, Warwick, Exeter, and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Their research is connected across 6 work packages:

1. Stakeholder engagement and system mapping
2. Creating an integrated data and analytics platform
3. Envisioning and prioritising interventions
4. Optimising and evaluating system change
5. Modelling health, equity, environmental & economic impacts
6. Synthesise findings and creating impact

The Food System team has worked with the Mandala at every stage. We met with them during their preliminary visit to Birmingham in December 2021 and attended and facilitated their meetings with stakeholders. We have regular meetings to ensure that both parties are mutually up to date on work in Birmingham's food system. The project was also presented by Professor Martin White (the PI) to the Creating a Healthy Food City Forum, and we have helped them engage with stakeholders across the city. They also contributed to the Birmingham Food System strategy consultation.

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Rewrite the Birmingham Food System Strategy based on the consultation feedback
- Set up action planning groups and write action plans
- Capture stories and best practice from the local food legends
- To make the COTP final evaluation report accessible, in line with Birmingham City Council's accessibility standards, so that it can be published on the Food Systems Team's section of the council website.
- To continue the project management and supervision of the two remaining projects which were funded from the COTP grant (Young People Developing Food System Assessment Tools and East Birmingham Food System Exploration).
- Continue to work on the food provision element of the cost of living response
- Work with graphic designer and run focus groups to co-create the culturally diverse eating guides
- Host and evaluate the first of the Creative Dinners (on the cost of living crisis).
- Continue national and international work
- Prepare to apply for SFP award in 2023

**5. Compliance Issues**

**5.1. HWBB Forum Responsibility and Board Update**

All work within the remit of the Forum will be reported to the Board as either a presentation or as part of the information updates detailing all Forum activity as per current governance arrangements.

Day-to-day responsibilities are managed:

- Internally via regular Food System Team meetings in line with Agile project management principles (bi-weekly updates as a minimum), and regular updates to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing through the Public Health Cabinet Member Briefing sessions (as requested).
- With partners through the Creating a Healthy Food City Forum itself, as well as multiple interfaces on shared work packages, objectives, and outcomes.

## 5.2. Management Responsibility

Rosie Jenkins, Senior Public Health Officer (Food System), Public Health, Birmingham City Council

Sarah Pullen, Service Lead (Food System), Public Health, Birmingham City Council

John Forde, Assistant Director (Healthy Behaviours and Communities), Birmingham City Council

## 6. Risk Analysis

Identified Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Actions to Manage Risk
Continuity if members of staff in Food System Team off sick or other prolonged absence	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Well organised folders accessible by the whole team</li> <li>-Actions and key dates on calendar and tasks app</li> <li>-All team briefed on whole food system agenda</li> <li>-Team members copied into emails for their information and so they can find information as required</li> <li>-Detailed workplan</li> </ul>

## Appendices

Appendix Minutes from CHFCs (Appendix 1 18/11/21, Appendix 2 10/03/22, Appendix 3 11/05/22, Appendix 4 14/07/22, Appendix 5 15/09/15)

Appendix 6 – Presentation - Creating a Healthy Food City Forum

The draft strategy is available to view through this link [Food revolution | Birmingham City Council](#).

The following people have been involved in the preparation of this board paper:

Rosie Jenkins, Senior Officer (Food System team), Public Health, BCC

Sarah Pullen, Service Lead (Food System team), Public Health, BCC

Bradley Yakoob, Senior Officer (Food System team), Public Health, BCC

Chloe Browne, Graduate Officer (Food System team), Public Health, BCC

Emily Machin, Graduate Officer (Healthy Behaviour and Communities), Public Health, BCC