

## Food Poverty Core Group Workshop

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> October

10:00am – 12:00pm

Agenda item	Action notes	Action/Recommendation Owner
<b>Welcome, apologies and introductions:</b> Sarah Pullen	<b>Attendees:</b> Sarah Pullen, Bradley Yakoob, Rosie Jenkins, Atif Ali, Helen Shervington, Rhys Boyer, Janet Mahmood, Beccy Crosby, Richard Schneider, Mike Davis, Manny Sandhu, Rose Bray, John Hardy  <b>Welcome and introductions:</b> from Sarah Pullen  <b>Apologies:</b> Monika Rozanski	
<b>Objectives of the workshop</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive updates on the different groups/projects around the city that aim to tackle food poverty.</li> <li>• Outline any actions that will need to be taken by the core group regarding food poverty.</li> <li>• Discuss what direction the group will go, where the food poverty core group sits, what our objectives are and how we can influence the actions needed to tackle food poverty.</li> </ul>	
<b>Recommendations for the Food Poverty Core Group and poverty agenda - Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A common theme brought up by attendees was the overlapping issue of poverty, which is not limited to food, but applies to fuel etc and is impacted by many things outside of the food agenda, such as welfare, disability, employment etc. and cannot be tackled in isolation.</li> <li>• As a result of this, we recommend a poverty action group (with a holistic view of poverty which is wider than food poverty) is set up under the inequalities forum to have oversight. One representative from The Financial Inclusion Partnership was present at the meeting, and this recommendation will need to be discussed and</li> </ul>	MR, Inequalities Team Public Health Division, BCC

	<p>aligned with the inequalities and the financial inclusion agenda, in order for it to move forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additionally, a BCC Public Health representative should support the Food Justice Network, attend their meetings to represent BCC and close any gaps with food poverty.</li> <li>• Explore whether further funding for the Food Justice Network could extend its reach/power and achieve a partnership co-production approach not under Birmingham City Council's leadership.</li> <li>• Any actions recorded within the new poverty action group should be sent to the Food Team and other organisations such as the Food Justice Network to refocus the approach from discussion to actionable change.</li> <li>• With regards to food poverty specifically, we should create a more informal Team's network (or online intellectual sharing platform) to share information and then organise meetings, if and when needed, such as if there is a strategy to review or a consultation requiring feedback.</li> </ul>	<p>SP/BY, Food Team Public Health Division, BCC</p> <p>SP/BY, Food Team Public Health Division, BCC</p> <p>Inequality Team and Food Team Public Health Division, BCC</p> <p>SP/BY, Food Team Public Health Division, BCC</p>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The notes below represent the feedback, comments and discussions received during the workshop. However, draft objectives and corresponding actions will be pulled out from this, in relation to tackling food poverty. This will then be shared with the group for approval and added into the Food Strategy and the Financial Inclusion Strategy.</li> </ul>	Action for all
<b>Meeting minutes and workshop notes</b>		
<b>Atif Ali – Update on the Poverty Truth Commission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 8 recruited commissioners out of the expected aim of 15-20. Progress has slowed down due to summer holidays, sickness of staff and Covid. However, work is now accelerating, and recruitment will be completed by the end of December in 2021.</li> <li>• Preparations to begin the conversation on the first theme, which is housing, are already on the way with connections being made with relevant council officers.</li> </ul>	No Actions – Update

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of the food strategy action plan is also being considered as part of the Poverty Truth Commission.</li> </ul>	
<b>Helen Shervington – Update from Finance Inclusion Partnership, Emerging Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Birmingham Financial Inclusion Partnership Strategy is being reviewed to make sure it is fit for purpose and reflects the new challenges such as the financial impact on people in Birmingham.</li> <li>First workshop to review this has taken place already - Vision reviewed and their definition of what financial inclusion is, and what this means. The definition of this will be tweaked moving forward.</li> <li>6 strategic objectives which have its own separate lead and action plan. The approach of the strategy is underpinned by 3 principles - Prevent, Survive, Recover.</li> <li>There is a need to discuss a potential 4<sup>th</sup> element which is to help people to Thrive.</li> <li>They also focus on life stages and preventative work including supporting young people in schools by addressing poverty.</li> <li>Final section of the workshop is the action plan for the rest of the financial year which considers furlough ending, people losing their jobs, universal credit £20 uplift, energy crisis and so on.</li> <li>This will be a focus in Talk Money Week campaign taking place from 12<sup>th</sup> November 2021.</li> </ul>	No Actions – Update
<b>Beccy Crosby - Update from Food Justice Network, Emerging Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In March, 60+ organisations came together to discuss food and distributing it to those who needed it - data showed 62% requesting food parcel are doing so don't have enough income to pay for essential costs.</li> <li>Altogether, they have distributed around 600,000 parcels. FJN have grown to around 200+ organisations joining their mailing list or WhatsApp group. There is now a focus on what needs to be done to stop poverty, and not just food poverty.</li> </ul>	Action For All – Contact Beccy or Food Team Public Health Division with interest in being involved in the FJN.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have a campaigning work group that meets separately, which is linking in with the Right to Food Campaign.</li> <li>• The Growing Group network is a sister network to FJN and has its own monthly virtual meetings and newsletter.</li> <li>• The Street Feeding Group support the vulnerably housed and homeless.</li> <li>• The Cooked Food Group creates coordinated approach to hot food provision and delivery across the city. They look at mapping to see what organisations can support over Christmas period and share the information across the city.</li> <li>• They regularly receive requests for support around emergency food provision.</li> <li>• FJN survey went out in August to members on the email list and had 36 - 40 respondents with a range of representation.</li> <li>• Next steps for the FJN work groups is for them to continue to meet bi-monthly, share their weekly newsletters, and continue with the two active WhatsApp groups, and respond to requests for support and information sharing.</li> <li>• FJN has created a platform where people can get their voices heard and amplify people issues such as food storage issues, limited equipment etc.</li> <li>• FJN relay this information to spaces like this meeting and generate ideas.</li> <li>• They are also talking to Commonwealth Games about distribution of surplus food that will come out from the games.</li> <li>• Long term plan – continue to create space where this work is happening, identify challenges, people's barriers and adapt to the needs of people.</li> </ul>	Action For All – Contact Beccy or Food Team Public Health Division if you are able to support or add to any FJN initiatives.
<b>Rhys Boyer – Update on Right to Food work – Food Affordability Tool &amp; Food Justice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birmingham City Council is a part of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, which has a yearly global forum which will be taking place in Barcelona this October.</li> <li>• We will be sharing the lessons we learnt from the impact of Covid on food system and the global impact. We will launch a Food City Pledge to address this and to</li> </ul>	Action for All – Utilise the Food Affordability Toolkit and complete the tool of food availability and affordability in two shops. Share with colleagues and teams to encourage

	<p>generate support for affordable nutritious food for all. Cities that sign up to the pledge will join Food Cities 2022, led by The Food Foundation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Food Affordability Tool has been created to gather information on availability and affordability of food. This started this week but will finish in November.</li> <li>• Cohorts from Aston University and Birmingham University are being asked to collect data using the tool.</li> <li>• The ask is for more people to visit two food outlets and shops, in two wards across the 10 constituencies in Birmingham and complete the tool.</li> </ul>	<p>further completion. The tool can be completed via <a href="#">this link</a> or via the excel tool in the zip folder. Send results to <a href="mailto:rhys.boyer@birmingham.gov.uk">rhys.boyer@birmingham.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Sarah Pullen – Birmingham Food Strategy, BCC Food System Team</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It will be a city-wide approach, made up of 8 main work streams, indicators for measuring success and decision-making tools to tackle inequalities and priorities.</li> <li>• It is governed by a Food Action Decision-Making and Prioritisation Tool to raise key considerations when proposing action, aid decision-making and prioritisation and to strengthen proposed plans.</li> <li>• The work streams consider action required across the following settings: home, community, education settings, further education settings, workplace and employers, food businesses, supply chain, research and innovation, public services and Birmingham city council.</li> <li>• The work streams are food sourcing, food transformation, food production, food waste and recycling, food economy and employment, food skills and knowledge, food behaviour change, and food innovation, partnership and research.</li> </ul>	<p>No Action - Update</p>
<p><b>Food Poverty Action Workshop</b></p>		
<p><b>Sarah Pullen – Workshop Part 1 – What strategic objectives do we need to develop to tackle food poverty in the city?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and intelligence - a real understanding of root causes</li> <li>• We really need to be looking at the various ethnicities in the city and how we can link in with the faith groups like mosques, temples, gurdwaras to ensure we work with them to support communities</li> <li>• Understanding the barriers to accessing good food – is it just affordability? Also access/choice/travel/confidence etc.</li> </ul>	

- Assigning actions and ownership of objectives. No one team/organisation should be responsible for making things happen.
- Tackling the root causes of poverty – through access to advice and support services for people, through lobbying for policy change etc.
- Reaching smaller communities who historically don't access support services
- Working with schools and young people.
- Working to increase healthy start vouchers uptake.
- Remove stigma attached to healthy start vouchers.
- Understanding of current barriers why some parents who have access to current food voucher schemes do not redeem the vouchers.
- Move away from the Eurocentric view of healthy food.
- Partly this is about lobbying government as they have a responsibility to ensure citizens have enough to live on and provide for their families. We need more emphasis on advice and maximising income for citizens attending foodbanks.
- Maximising use of, and access to, Local Welfare Provision as a first line of support.
- Distribution of surplus food, working with food providers, businesses across the city.
- Integration of Financial Inclusion Support (income/max/debt/benefits/welfare) into frontline services. Affordability of food isn't just about food costs.
- Focus on "cash first" responses to poverty – giving dignity and trust to individuals.
- Should be a focus of the food forum in collaboration with the FIP with a link officer between both strategic groups. Elevate the food poverty agenda to strategic boards consistently.
- Building dignity and choice into the whole food strategy – reducing stigma.
- An overall anti-poverty strategy for the city.
- Increased access to financial and relationship support, linking to local need.
- Integrate the views of people with lived experience of poverty into developing strategies and initiatives.

<p><b>Sarah Pullen – Workshop Part 2 – What should be developed and included in action plans to deliver the strategic objectives?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping food assistance.</li> <li>• Maximising access to affordable, nutritious food.</li> <li>• Having a co-ordinated (co-operative) approach to distributing surplus food.</li> <li>• Establishing a representative steering group, that truly represents all the diverse Birmingham communities, to have a voice in action planning to tackle food poverty.</li> <li>• Food growing projects.</li> <li>• Licensing – fast food takeaways.</li> <li>• Embedding of support and advice into food settings.</li> <li>• Building confidence/skills/resources around cooking, nutrition, growing.</li> <li>• Think about all aspects of poverty e.g. set up fuel banks in food projects that are at risk of disconnection from gas/electricity.</li> <li>• Education around food labels and policy simplification.</li> <li>• Maximising incomes – cash first approach.</li> <li>• Interest in exploring affordable food projects – pantries etc.</li> <li>• Employability pathways/opportunities.</li> <li>• Recognising that food parcels are really important, but don't necessarily solve the problem. How can we get upstream? A hand up, not a handout.</li> <li>• Recognition of pinch points e.g. school holidays/winter.</li> <li>• Ensuring food provision that meets people's needs – dietary, culturally, kitchen equipment etc.</li> <li>• Commitment and visibility across all city leaders (BCC Cabinet, WMCA mayor, GBCoC). Not just those involved in leading inequality and poverty.</li> <li>• Thinking about routes out poverty – how do you support people to stop needing emergency food support? Ladders/stepping-stones out of this.</li> </ul>
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