

CABINET

8 June 2016

SUSTAINABLE FOOD – RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF MOTION

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (ECONOMY & COMMUNITIES)

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RECENT REFERENCES:

[Motion to Council](#) by Cllr Janet Berry, 16 January 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report sets out the options for developing a Sustainable Food initiative in the Winchester District, in response to a Motion brought to Council in January 2016. It explores the benefits and disadvantages of these options, and seeks a Member decision about which one to take forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That the options for action in response to the Council Motion proposed by former Councillor Janet Berry be considered by Members, and a preferred option selected for implementation by officers (section 4.3 refers).
- 2 That Cabinet's decision be reported back to full Council as its response to the Notice of Motion.

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#### DETAIL:

##### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 On 16 January 2016, Council considered the following motion, moved by then Cllr Janet Berry:

“This Council notes that food is essential to life, has a major influence on health and well-being, is important in our ability to participate in society, that poor diet is a significant contributor to ill-health, and that food poverty is damaging to the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

This Council believes that taking action on food can provide an opportunity not only to address these issues, but also to improve the economy and vitality of the city, promoting a vibrant and varied sustainable food economy.

This Council is further concerned that more needs to be done to reduce food waste and the impact of the food system on the environment.

This Council resolves to work in a cross-sector partnership approach to investigate action around food that can bring economic, social, educational and environmental benefits to Winchester and its residents, including working towards Sustainable Food City status and developing a food strategy and action plan.”

- 1.2 During the debate which followed, the following points were raised for future consideration:
- The importance of the key objectives from achieving Sustainable Food City Status was acknowledged.
  - Bournemouth Borough Council’s Food City status was referred to, as were the various associated initiatives delivered to date.
  - It was suggested that all councils had a key role in promoting all aspects of the associated wellbeing of individuals and communities from action on food.
  - It was proposed that the Council investigate (via the Health and Wellbeing Board) the possibility of establishing Winchester as a Sustainable Food City.

- 1.3 Council resolved that the Notice of Motion be referred to a future of Cabinet for further investigation and report back to Council.
- 1.4 Officers subsequently commissioned Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC) – which has an active Food Group - to carry out a desk-based exploration of the proposals in the motion. This Report sets out in brief options for the Council to consider, with the potential benefits of each and the respective resource implications.
- 1.5 Appendix 1 lists stakeholders who provided additional information face-to-face, by telephone or by email. Appendix 2 summarises sustainable food initiatives identified in Winchester District, and some potential partners for future work. Appendix 3 provides some examples of actions which could be included in a Sustainable Food Action Plan for the Winchester District.

## 2 Sustainable Food

- 2.1 According to the organisation [Sustain](#) (The Alliance for Better Food and Farming):

“There is no legal definition of 'sustainable food,' although some aspects, such as the terms organic or Fairtrade, are clearly defined.

Our working definition for good food is that it should be produced, processed, distributed and disposed of in ways that:

- Contribute to thriving local economies and sustainable livelihoods - both in the UK and, in the case of imported products, in producer countries;
- Protect the diversity of both plants and animals and the welfare of farmed and wild species,
- Avoid damaging or wasting natural resources or contributing to climate change;
- Provide social benefits, such as good quality food, safe and healthy products, and educational opportunities.”

- 2.2 The issues that the Council might address listed in the motion to Council overlap with but are not identical to the six key food issues identified by the [Sustainable Food Cities](#) network, which has [44 members](#) across the UK. This states:

“Sustainability is a very broad concept and is about direction of travel rather than reaching a specific destination, so no one definition is ever perfect. In developing their programmes, however, many places have found it useful to think about food across six areas:

1. Promoting healthy and sustainable food to the public
2. Tackling food poverty, diet-related ill health and access to affordable healthy food

3. Building community food knowledge, skills, resources and projects
4. Promoting a vibrant and diverse sustainable food economy
5. Transforming catering and food procurement
6. Reducing waste and the ecological footprint of the food system.”

2.3 This report suggests that Cabinet consider actions which seek to incorporate both these issues and those raised in former Councillor Berry’s motion to Council. They fall under seven themed areas as follows:

1. Reducing food waste – from shops, hotels/restaurants, business and homes
2. Increasing access to affordable, healthy food
3. Engaging more people in growing their own food
4. Increasing public education about healthy eating including cooking skills
5. Promoting a vibrant, diverse and sustainable food economy
6. Increasing the sustainability of procurement practices of all organisations, and the hospitality trade in particular
7. Reducing the ecological impact of agriculture.

### 3 Existing Sustainable Food Initiatives in Winchester District

- 3.1 The initiatives identified so far in the Winchester District are listed in Appendix 2. Further work might identify others: this is not an exhaustive list. In summary, the voluntary and community sector focuses on increasing access to affordable food by giving away food donated by shops and shoppers. There is also some activity around reducing domestic food waste, engaging more people in growing their own food and education about healthy eating including cooking skills.
- 3.2 The business sector focuses on promotion of the food economy, with several sustainable aspects such as the farmers’ market and local street food.
- 3.3 No activity has been identified that aims to increase the overall sustainability of procurement practices of organisations and the hospitality trade, though there are a number of institutions such as the University of Winchester with good practice to share.
- 3.4 No initiatives have been identified to reduce the ecological impact of agriculture as a whole, though again there are individual businesses that farm sustainably.

#### 4 Resourcing a Sustainable Food Initiative

4.1 The themes for action to promote Sustainable Food are cross-cutting ones, relevant to a number of Council teams. However, to make impact in this area – and indeed to co-ordinated any partnership working - there would be a need for some focussed resource to co-ordinate and drive forward action. Such resource might be provided at the outset in one of the following ways:

- a) Commissioning another organisation or individual to lead on this area of work on behalf of the Council, in the way that Winchester Action on Climate Change currently provides support on climate change;
- b) Kickstarting an initiative through a ‘One Team’ staff secondment, and then considering the desirability of a longer term staff post based on this experience;
- c) Applying for external funding towards a time-limited project with its own project manager, again providing evidence on which to base decisions on longer term resourcing.

4.2 There are also opportunities to support initiatives being delivered by other organisations under the Sustainable Food themes. For example, community grants can be awarded to non-profit organisations; staff volunteer days and/or apprentice projects might be a source of manpower, and the advice and experience of technical officers could be made available.

4.3 Five options for action by the Council are set out below:

No	Action	Benefit	Disadvantage
1	Take no further action	No resource implications for the Council	No significant, co-ordinated improvement to health, wellbeing, or economic prosperity and no reduction in the environmental impact of agriculture
2	Aim for a Sustainable Food City award	A catalyst for action under each of the Sustainable Food themed areas	Significant resourcing cost (staff and budget potentially diverted away from other priorities), even for basic bronze level accreditation  Raised expectation of future action by the

No	Action	Benefit	Disadvantage
			Council
3	Adopt a policy of supporting Sustainable Food without aiming for accreditation	<p>A demonstration of community leadership by the Council</p> <p>Potential to make minor impact under some of the Sustainable Food themes</p>	Unlikely to make much impact unless accompanied by some focussed planning and partnership working, which would require resource
4	Create a Sustainable Food Partnership and develop and action plan for the District, without aiming for accreditation	<p>A demonstration of community leadership</p> <p>Greater potential to make impact under the Sustainable Food themes</p>	Unlikely to make efficient progress/impact without some kind of resourcing, based on past experience, as most organisations are stretched and have limited capacity for additional areas of work – none of those approached so far have said they could contribute money or volunteer time for this purpose.
5	Develop a Sustainable Food Action Plan for the City Council only	<p>Much reduced resourcing requirements to produce the actual plan</p> <p>A gesture of support for Sustainable Food</p> <p>Could be scaled down to address just a few of the Sustainable Food themes at the outset</p>	<p>A meaningful action plan will require officer and potentially financial commitment if it is to be delivered</p> <p>An action plan which is not delivered has potential for negative media comment/reputational damage</p>

- 4.4 Members are invited to determine which of these options they wish to pursue, bearing in mind the existing commitments in their Portfolio Plans. It may also be helpful to refer to Appendix 3 for the list of possible actions that could be included in a Sustainable Food Action Plan in considering this.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

5 COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

- 5.1 As the original Motion to Council indicated, a Sustainable Food initiative has the potential to support delivery of several outcomes of the Winchester District Sustainable Community Strategy (Active Communities, High Quality Environment and Economic Prosperity).

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 The resource implications depend on the options chosen. Members might wish to consider how such an initiative might be resourced – for example, areas of other work that might be scaled back to accommodate a Sustainable Food initiative.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 7.1 Whatever Members decide, there is a potential for reputational risk: in doing nothing; in developing a plan that is unresourced; or in taking resources away from some other activity. Officers are not aware of a high level of community pressure to take action on Sustainable Food at this time, however, and feel this would be a relatively low risk.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX 1 – Stakeholders who provided additional information

APPENDIX 2 - Sustainable food initiatives in Winchester District

APPENDIX 3 - Examples of Actions that Might be in a Sustainable Food Action Plan for Winchester District

**APPENDIX 1: Stakeholders who Provided Additional Information**

- Former Cllr Janet Berry, Winchester City Council, who proposed the motion to Council
- Joy Carter, Vice-Chancellor, University of Winchester
- Deborah Lockett, FareShare volunteer who hopes to set up a community kitchen
- Seb Mayfield, Food Up Front
- Geoff Meads, Winchester Basics Bank trustee
- Susie Phillips, WinACC Climate Action Co-ordinator who leads on food matters
- Lorraine Ronan, Head of Health and Wellbeing, Winchester City Council
- Matthew Wilkinson, Operations Manager, FareShare Southern Central



## APPENDIX 2: Sustainable Food Initiatives in Winchester District

Community food supply	
FareShare	<p>FareShare Southern Central is operated by Southampton's anti-poverty charity SCRATCH. They redistribute surplus food donated by the food and drink industry to charities and community groups working with vulnerable people. The surplus comes from over-production, food coming close to the end of its life, errors on packaging including cooking instructions, ingredients and incorrect weights; food that hasn't passed quality control though it is safe to eat; unexpected changes in the weather. They do not work with restaurants as the surplus food is minimal.</p> <p>Demand for FareShare in our region continues to grow (last year by 48%) with growing numbers of children (1300 for this year in Winchester). In November 2015 Hampshire County Council gave them a large grant to develop local collection points around the county to reach more locations. The grant pays for the cost of a van, fuel and operational costs.</p> <p>Around a ton of food is delivered to Winchester every week. Since 2015, they provide food to Winchester Basic Bank, Winchester Night Shelter, Trinity Centre, Vineyard Church, Elderfield and the Salvation Army. They are now at full capacity, yet know of many lunch clubs for older people, school breakfast clubs which would benefit. FareShare FoodCloud app which provides a solution for Tesco store surplus will launch in Winchester in September.</p> <p>Many of their 80 volunteers have experienced food poverty. FareShare offers them training and a sense of purpose. Last year 12 volunteers were helped back into employment, the first step to breaking the cycle of poverty.</p>
Winchester Basics Bank (several outlets e.g. Vineyard Church)	<p>Winchester Basics Bank provides emergency food and clothes to individuals and families in need and aims to make appropriate resources available to the maximum number of people at their point of greatest need. <a href="http://winchesterbasicsbank.co.uk/">http://winchesterbasicsbank.co.uk/</a> Once it receives a voucher from one of its partners – who range from local housing associations to NHS professionals - they provide a week's food and a full outfit of clothes (e.g. for a job interview for somebody leaving prison or out of work for a long time) without questions or judgements. From 300 people a year when they started they have expanded to 3,000 a year now including lots of families.</p>

	<p>In October 2015, they held an event “Food Poverty – The Local Options” funded by Winchester City Council and facilitated by Seb Mayfield of Food Up Front to discuss approaches to reducing food poverty in the District. Discussion identified preferred ideas including creating a partnership of organisations across the district, increasing education and the best way to support people.</p>
Low cost / free food	<p>Various agencies provide nutritious meals to their service users or people in need (e.g. Hope Church, Trinity Centre, Winchester Night Shelter).</p>
Lunch clubs	<p>Various organisations such as Age UK run lunch clubs for elderly people</p>
Community kitchens / cafés	<p>Community kitchens / cafés exist in several locations including the Acorn Community Centre, run by Wecock community association, in Waterlooville.</p> <p>There is an aspiration in the community to set up such a café in Winchester. Planning is still at an embryonic stage</p> <p>The characteristics which some or all of these share are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using donated food that would otherwise go to waste</li> <li>• Offering healthy meals free, at low cost, or for a donation set by the customer</li> <li>• Employing (paid or volunteer) staff who are unemployed, or ex-offenders, or apprentices, or have learning disabilities.</li> </ul> <p>For example, <a href="#">The Real Junk Food Project</a> is about cafes that legally intercept food (waste) from supermarkets, restaurants and other sources, transforming it into healthy, nutritious meals that are served to the local community on a pay-as-you-feel basis.</p> <p>SOVA Winchester District Employment Mentoring trains and supports mentors to work with unemployed people to support them back into work. It has been suggested that they might want to play a role in developing apprenticeships in the food industry</p>
Fruits of Fulflood	<p>This small local scheme that grew out of a Greening group collects and redistributes surplus fruit from gardens.</p>

<b>Food growing in the community</b>	
Allotment	Societies such as Winchester New Allotment Holders Society enable people to grow their own food. Demand has reduced and waiting lists are now shorter within Winchester town, but there remains more demand than supply.
Food Up Front <a href="http://foodupfront.org/">http://foodupfront.org/</a>	'Food Up Front: Elderfield' is a not-for-profit community food enterprise that is utilising land at Winchester, incorporating food production, volunteering and training, set up by Seb Mayfield, an activist at the forefront of the UK food movement.
Incredible Edible Winchester (WinACC's Food Action Group)	Incredible Edible Winchester promotes local food growing, buying local seasonal food and reducing food waste. The aims: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Raising awareness of the carbon footprint of food</li> <li>2. Encouraging people to think about where food comes from and promoting locally sourced, seasonal food.</li> <li>3. Raising awareness about the environmental damage of wasted food and way people can reduce their waste at home.</li> </ol>
Learning through Landscape	a nationally acclaimed organisation based in Winchester, which has played a key role in promoting food growing in schools, and in the community.
<b>Commercial including relevant associations</b>	
Restaurants and chefs	Some examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raymond Blanc is President of the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA) sustainability accreditation for food destinations (<a href="http://www.thesra.org/about/">http://www.thesra.org/about/</a>;</li> <li>• Rick Stein Winchester has accreditation.</li> <li>• River Cottage Canteen <a href="https://www.rivercottage.net/canteens/winchester">https://www.rivercottage.net/canteens/winchester</a> send nothing to land fill</li> <li>• Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall campaigns against food waste –<a href="https://www.rivercottage.net/war-on-waste">https://www.rivercottage.net/war-on-waste</a></li> <li>• Jamie Oliver has long been known for his campaign to improve children's access to healthier food. On 20 May he launched Food Revolution Day to tackle child obesity and malnutrition <a href="http://www.jamiesfoodrevolution.org/">http://www.jamiesfoodrevolution.org/</a></li> </ul>
Winchester BID	Winchester town centre businesses

Hampshire Farmers Markets	<p>“We’re a community-interest, non-profit organisation that is committed to helping the local community benefit from Hampshire’s rural economy”</p> <p><a href="http://www.hampshirefarmersmarkets.co.uk/">http://www.hampshirefarmersmarkets.co.uk/</a></p>
Winchester street food markets	For example, Wednesday is “Taste of the South” day
Supermarkets	Various national chains have schemes, e.g. Tesco signed a deal with FareShare in March 2016 to ensure all its unused food is given to charity.
LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming)	<p>“LEAF is the leading organisation promoting sustainable agriculture, food and farming. LEAF is a national charity that helps farmers improve the way they farm by encouraging them to take up Integrated Farming. LEAF also helps to create a better public understanding of food and farming. We bring farmers and consumers together to raise awareness of how farmers are working in harmony with nature to produce good food with environmental care. We help farmers produce good food, with care and to high <u>environmental standards</u>, identified in-store by the <u>LEAF Marque logo</u>.”</p> <p><a href="http://www.leafuk.org/leaf/home.eb">http://www.leafuk.org/leaf/home.eb</a></p>
National Farmers Union (Hampshire branch)	Potential support in engaging with agricultural sector
Country Landowner’s Association	Potential support in engaging with agricultural sector
Fair Trade	Local group run activities in fair trade week each year
<b>Public sector</b>	
Council housing	Osbornes, the City Council main maintenance contractor, has a corporate social responsibility arm led by Neal Allison have already carried out several projects related to growing food in Winchester – at Winnall Primary school, at Osborne school and at Firmstone Road sheltered housing in Winnall, f e.g. building raised beds, greenhouses made of plastic bottles.
Registered social landlords	Possibilities for promoting healthy eating e.g. cookery classes, subject to resources
Schools	<p>A new set of standards for all food served in schools came into force in January 2015</p> <p><a href="http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/actions/school-food-standards/">http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/actions/school-food-standards/</a></p>

	Some schools grow vegetables in the school gardens that are then used for school dinners.
University of Winchester	Would be interested in being informed of developments. Only university in Europe to have free-range meat policy All catering is LIFE Can encourage student volunteers
Health and Wellbeing Board (Winchester; Hampshire)	Winchester Health and Well-being Board has no resources of its own. Childhood obesity is a priority for the Board. When relevant funding opportunities arise, the Board aims to make use of them. For example they secured Public Health Funding from Hampshire County Council for six week courses of Community Cookery Skills classes aimed at men over 55 years of age, including how to cook a range of simple meals, food shopping, food hygiene & storage and the importance of healthy eating to health & wellbeing.
NHS and related agencies	Childhood obesity is a priority for the Public Health. There may be opportunities for funding or influence through County-wide bodies such as Health and Wellbeing Board (Hampshire), Hampshire Director of Public Health, Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Nutritionist.
Sparsholt College	Sparsholt College is a Further Education and Higher Education college providing courses from sixth form to degree level, primarily countryside-based subjects including Agriculture, Fishery, Forestry and Woodland Management, and Horticulture. Potential for working with a sustainable food partnership.

**APPENDIX 3:****Examples of Actions that Might be in a Sustainable Food Action Plan for Winchester District**

<b>1. <u>Minimal resources</u></b>	<b>Theme</b>
Task each City Council service area to identify how they can build support for sustainable food into their current activities, identifying what they will do by the end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2016.	all
Health and Well-being Board to track and encourage actions within the Council that support for sustainable food in respect of health-related issues.	2,3,4
Economic Development and Tourism to track and encourage actions within the Council that support for sustainable food in respect of economic issues.	5,6
Promote community grants as an opportunity for community food schemes to secure funding for such activities as to create a sustainable food network or partnership; to organise redistribution of allotment gluts; to buy tools for community growing schemes or equipment for cookery classes.	all
Use the Guildhall café to model good practice e.g. apprenticeships in catering; local and seasonal food; healthy eating; no sugary drinks	
Stop selling sugary drinks in any City Council outlet	2
Having taken steps within the City Council, to promote the idea externally in ways that require few resources e.g. adding sustainable food category in the business award scheme	
Encourage "Refill your water bottle" notices in windows of public buildings, shops etc	2
Encourage take-up of tree and fruit bush planting schemes in schools, communities	3
Encourage take-up of allotments	3
Give licences for spare Council-owned land to be used for community growing	3
Encourage community initiatives by, for example, creating raised beds	3
Encourage developers to create space for community food-growing in new schemes, even if only temporary while development is taking place (e.g. at Barton Farm)	3
Include space for small allotments or community food-growing areas in new Council developments (new Council housing; Station Approach; Bar end; in	3

Supplementary Planning Document for Winchester town centre)	
Encourage restaurants to register with the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA) sustainability accreditation for food destinations ( <a href="http://www.thesra.org/about/">http://www.thesra.org/about/</a> )	5

<b><u>2 Significant resources</u></b>	<b>Theme</b>
<i>Both time and finance could be supplied by community or commercial sectors, with the Council providing encouragement and facilitation if officer time were allocated for this purpose.</i>	
Declare Winchester town and/or the four market towns in the district to be "Slow Food" towns movement	all
Set up community café.	1,2
Set up food co-op to reduce cost by cutting out retailer	2
Increase availability of cheap meals in community settings, not only for elderly but for all	2
Increase availability of lunch clubs for elderly	2
Teach cooking in schools; to young parents; to men; to people leaving hospital; to bereaved; etc	4
Support new sustainable food entrepreneurs	5
Set up scheme for local restaurants to employ apprentices from homeless shelters etc	5
Reduce use of fossil fuel for fertiliser	7
A publicity and education campaign to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage people to eat locally grown food to reduce food transport miles</li> <li>• encourage people to eat seasonal food to reduce emissions from heating glasshouses</li> </ul>	7
Set up community growing schemes on Council housing estates	7
Encourage farmers to adopt farming methods that do not release CO2 from the soil	7
Encourage farmers to reduce use of artificial fertilisers and pesticides that consume fossil fuels and damage wildlife	7