



Although a formal committee of Brighton & Hove City Council, the Health & Wellbeing Board has a remit which includes matters relating to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the Local Safeguarding Board for Children and Adults and Healthwatch.

Title:	Food Strategy Action Plan 2025-30
Date of Meeting:	11 February 2025
Report of:	Director of Public Health
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Wards Affected:	All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Executive Summary

This report is to inform the Board of the refreshed Brighton and Hove Food Strategy Action Plan 2025-30, which aligns with the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy priority action area 'A whole city approach to food and wellbeing will be adopted, prioritising those with the poorest diets or least access to healthy food' and core outcomes of the Council Plan 2023-27.

The Food Strategy Action Plan 2025-30 is a city wide, whole population approach led by Brighton and Hove Food Partnership and supported by the council and other partners. The action plan was endorsed by Cabinet on 23 January 2025.

Delivery of the action plan will strengthen our poverty reduction approach contributing to 'A fair and inclusive city'. Cooking, food growing, and food waste prevention activities improve the city's social infrastructure creating 'A city to be proud of' and increasing opportunities for healthier and more sustainable food choices helps us be 'A healthy city where people thrive'.

1. Decisions, recommendations and any options

- 1.1 That the Board notes the refreshed Brighton and Hove Food Strategy Action Plan 2025-30 and shares plans and progress throughout the health system.

2. Relevant information

- 2.1 The Food Strategy Action Plan outlines how collectively as a city we can achieve a healthy, sustainable and fair food system for Brighton & Hove, from production and distribution to consumption and waste management.
- 2.2 The process of refreshing the city's Food Strategy Action Plan is overseen by the Food Strategy Expert Panel – a group of experts represented by business, academia, local government, NHS, and the voluntary and community sector.
- 2.3 Members of the public were consulted through five city-wide events during January to July 2024 and expert teams/organisations (including teams within the council and colleagues in the Integrated Care System) have been consulted alongside gaining feedback from the expert panel.
- 2.4 Feedback included the desire to include less and more focused actions with metrics that can be systematically monitored and reported by action leads.
- 2.5 The themes that emerged from the review and refresh process informed the Food Strategy Action Plan 2025-30 and its eight aims. The action plan identifies deliverable actions over a five-year period. The overall focus is on prevention and on being proactive, rather than reactive.

Table 1. The 8 aims of Brighton & Hove's Food Strategy Action Plan 2025-30

1	Champion healthy and sustainable food
2	Take a preventative upstream approach to food poverty and ensure equal access to healthy food
3	Nourish a vibrant, diverse and skilled community food sector
4	Improve sustainability and security in urban, rural and marine food production
5	Encourage a vibrant and sustainable food economy
6	Transform catering and procurement and revitalise local food chains
7	Become a food use not a food waste city
8	Ensure healthy, sustainable, fair food is embedded in policy and planning, and has a high profile right across the city.

- 2.6 While life expectancy has been steady, people are now living longer in poor health. Diet related disease and being an unhealthy weight contribute to this. Only 38% of adults in the city consume five or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day.

- 2.7 We continue to buck the national trend on childhood obesity with 28.8% of Year 6 children overweight or obese compared with 35.8% for England¹. Those living in more deprived areas of the city are at higher risk of being an unhealthy weight, with up to two thirds of 11-year-olds being overweight or obese in some schools. Breast-feeding rates in the city remain 20% higher than national rates with three quarters of babies breastfed at six to eight weeks.
- 2.8 Obesity costs the NHS around £6.5 billion a year, causing an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, musculoskeletal problems and is the second biggest preventable cause of cancer.
- 2.9 Poverty and food poverty is an ongoing challenge in the city, impacting on the health and wellbeing of many residents. Recovery from the covid pandemic has been exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis, making it hard for many residents to access healthy nutritious, sustainable and affordable food.
- 2.10 Key health and wellbeing Food Strategy Action Plan 2018-23 achievements:

Champion healthy and sustainable food

- Through the city's Green Wellbeing Alliance, 1,601 residents with complex needs were able to access food growing and nature, improving their physical activity (30%), wellbeing (50%), and social networks (40%).
- The Taste Ed programme is being piloted in early years settings to promote consumption of fresh fruit and veg.
- Healthy Start bitesize sessions were delivered to 70 professionals across the city to increase take up.
- BHFP opened the Community Kitchen providing more than 1000 community cookery sessions, including 1000 children and young people.
- Councillors agreed recommendations to include restrictions in the advertising of high fat, sugar and salt foods within the procurement for a new contract for city-wide bus and taxi shelter advertising

Take a preventative upstream approach to food poverty and ensure equal access to healthy food

- Nearly a thousand employers have signed up to the Brighton Living Wage campaign raising the salaries of almost 5,000 people
- Brighton and Hove is a thriving hub of community cafes, lunch clubs and shared meals services which help to tackle social isolation, provide activities, support and advice as well as a nutritious, affordable meals.
- The action plan was also informed by recent research partnerships including: [Building Back Better from Below](#) - Harnessing Innovations in Community Response and Intersectoral Collaboration for Health and Food Justice Beyond the Covid-19 Pandemic
[Food Systems Equality](#) - Co-developing new products, new supply chains and new policy frameworks that deliver an affordable, attractive, healthy and

sustainable diet.

[Cultivate Programme](#) - Helping cities navigate towards resilient and sustainable food sharing

[NHS Health Inequalities Project](#) - Understanding the experiences of people living with long term health conditions and disabilities in their ability to access the food they need to be well.

[Emergency food access research project](#): Food access needs of Black and Racially Minoritised communities and Refugee and Asylum seekers.

- 2.11 The Food Strategy Action Plan will be delivered by a partnership approach underpinned by partnerships and networks including community and voluntary sector, businesses, academia and health sector.

3. Important considerations and implications

Legal:

- 3.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Lawyer consulted: Siobhan Fry Date: 29 /01 / 2025

Finance:

- 3.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report. Resource supporting the Action Plan from 2025/26 will be funded from other funds releasing core general fund budgets as savings. For 2025/26 resource will be supported by the UK Shared Prosperity fund.

Finance Officer consulted: John Lack Date: 29/ 01/ 2025

Equalities:

- 3.3 The Food Strategy and Action Plan outlines how collectively as a city we can achieve a healthy, sustainable and fair food system for Brighton & Hove, from production and distribution to consumption and waste management. Brighton and Hove are unique in capturing this level of data. The whole action plan has been developed to reduce inequalities and be led by data to enable fair access to healthy, sustainable food for all residents.
- 3.4 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and SMART actions are proposed (Appendix 2):
- Monitoring of Equality Diversity and Inclusion to be embedded through Food Strategy Expert Panel
 - Improve our understanding and analysis of food insecurity data across the city working with data and intelligence teams in the council and the health sector

- Increase diversity in Expert Panel by inviting people with lived experience to specific meetings

3.5 This is a city strategy, led by the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership, with the council as one of the delivery partners supporting delivery and evaluation. Monitoring activity and evaluation must be appropriate and proportionate to the capacity of the council and the various partners.

Sustainability:

3.6 The Food Strategy Action Plan 2025-30 will contribute towards the City Council's ambitions in response to the climate crisis. The actions have been charted in line with sustainable food and farming objectives in the City Downland Estate Plan and support the ambitions and aspirations of The Living Coast Biosphere. The food work offers the focus for collaboration to transition to net zero through work with e.g. working with the hospitality sector to develop circular food systems, with anchor institutions to increase procurement of local food and with local producers to shorten the supply chain and encourage regenerative practices.

Health, social care, children's services and public health:

3.7 There is a direct link between food systems and major health issues, such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Costs associated with the rising burden of preventable chronic disease include healthcare costs, social care costs, welfare, productivity losses and human costs.

3.8 One of the six policy objectives of the Marmot Review into health inequalities was to 'Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities' and includes a specific recommendation on 'Improving the food environment in local areas across the social gradient'.

3.9 The Food Strategy Action Plan 2025-30 is aligned with Brighton and Hove's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy priority action area is 'A whole city approach to food and wellbeing will be adopted, prioritising those with the poorest diets or least access to healthy food'. It is also aligned to public health's whole system healthy weight work. The refreshed actions contribute to council Outcome 3 (a healthy city where people thrive) i.e. help develop prevention and family support work; help people to be physically active and maintain a healthy weight; and helping the city be age and dementia friendly.

Supporting documents and information

Appendix 1: Brighton and Hove Food Strategy Action Plan 2025-30

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment

Background documents

1. [Food Farming and Countryside Commission Food Conversation report 2024.](#)



2. Fair society, healthy lives : the Marmot Review : strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010.
 3. Brighton and Hove Food Strategy Action Plan 2018-23
 4. Working together to inform a fair food system in Brighton. University of Sussex Broadcast: News Item
 5. Data from the Public Health Outcomes Framework
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