

Subject:	Food Growing and Development Planning Advice Note		
Date of Meeting:	15 September 2011		
Report of:	Strategic Director, Place		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Francesca Iliffe	Tel: 29-0486
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Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No: PEERCMM23890	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report seeks endorsement of the draft 'Food Growing and Development' Planning Advice Note. Planning Advice Notes (PANs) are prepared by the Council to provide technical advice and information on certain policy areas. This particular PAN provides technical guidance on the delivery of food growing opportunities and facilities as part of development schemes.
- 1.2 The PAN is intended as helpful technical advice for those preparing planning applications. It does not introduce new requirements or administrative burden for planning applicants.
- 1.3 The PAN accords with Brighton and Hove Local Plan 2005 as provision of food growing areas can support and meet the following policies: SU2 Efficiency of development; QD15 Landscape Design; QD17 Protection and integration of nature conservation features; QD20 Urban open space; HO6 Provision of outdoor recreation in housing schemes; QD2 Key principles for neighbourhoods; and QD21 Allotments.
- 1.4 The delivery of greater local food production and consumption is an objective of emerging local planning policy and is a strategic aim of: the Sustainable Community Strategy; the Sustainability Strategy; and the City Food Strategy ("Spade to Spoon").
- 1.4 The draft National Planning Policy Framework sees the delivery of multiple and effective uses of land ('such as food production') as a Core Principle of planning.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Employment, Economy & Regeneration approves the draft 'Food Growing and Development' document as a Planning Advice Note to provide information and guidance for use by Development Control, Planning Policy officers, applicants and their agents.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 3.1 A Planning Advice Note provides technical advice and information to applicants (or their agents) seeking planning permission. It does not introduce new requirements but seeks to encourage good practice. It will clarify and expand on local planning policies as adopted in the Brighton & Hove Local Plan (2005), and emerging planning policy (in the draft Core Strategy Proposed Submission (2010)). Although the latter document is to be withdrawn for technical reasons, it still provides the most recent expression of intent with regard to a wide range of council planning policies.
- 3.2 The PAN itself is split into 3 parts:
- Section 1 deals with the policy framework: national and local;
 - Section 2 looks at technical, planning and design issues; and
 - The final section contains Appendices with examples of potential approaches, case studies and resources.
- 3.3 The PAN is the first of its kind nationally. It is designed to be an innovative model that other Local Planning Authorities might adopt. Brighton & Hove has been at the forefront of food policy nationally since the creation of Brighton & Hove Food Partnership in 2003, the publication of the “Spade to Spoon” Food Strategy in 2006, and the inception of the Harvest project in 2008 (see paragraph 3.15).
- 3.4 Impacts from the food system are recognised in ecological foot printing analyses such as the draft One Planet Living Plan to be responsible for one quarter of the total environmental impact of a Brighton & Hove resident. This is as a result of the cultivation, packaging, transportation, processing and disposal of food. Brighton & Hove Food Strategy recognises that the current food system is unsustainable and seeks to reduce these impacts across all sectors.
- 3.5 Planning has the potential to play an important role in delivering a more sustainable food system. The development of this PAN is one of the initial steps towards delivering this.
- 3.6 Several strategic Brighton & Hove policy documents include the aim to increase local food production. These cover the aim to increase allotment provision; develop further community food growing projects; increase the production and consumption of local food; and to increase access to local food. These policies are referenced in the PAN and cited here at paragraph 1.3 and 1.4.
- 3.7 The Sustainable Community Strategy aims to:
- ‘increase the amount of food grown and consumed within the city and reduce food miles and emissions from production, transportation, packaging and disposal’; and
 - ‘increase the amount of land available within the city on which to grow food, extending allotments, growing in schools, around estates, and other available land within the city’.
- 3.8 The PAN will be complemented by the revised online Sustainability Checklist for Planning (launched July 2011). This includes questions on whether food growing elements are being included in development proposals. The submission of a

completed checklist is a validation requirement for applications for residential new build developments and conversions.

- 3.9 Recently the Local Planning Authority has seen a proliferation of major application approvals with a food growing element. These include: One Brighton; Sackville Estate; Falmer Academy; Varley Halls; NEQ Greenway. This reflects the growing movement and technological developments supporting growing opportunities in small spaces in the urban environment.
- 3.10 The incorporation of food growing areas is recognised as good practice by national organisations such as CABI, Natural England, DEFRA and the RTPI.
- 3.11 There is no expectation that the PAN will deliver large scale urban agriculture or a profound increase in food grown in the city. Results may be small scale: the provision of allotment space within residential developments; landscaping with edible plants; planting fruit trees in place of non productive varieties.
- 3.12 Rather, the intention is to encourage food growing into the mainstream so that more residents, visitors, and those who work in Brighton & Hove become familiar with how food is grown, and have the opportunity to develop food growing skills. As an example, the 'Demonstration Garden' at Preston Park implemented by the Food Partnership has had great success in engaging the public with food growing in a confined area.
- 3.13 Public food growing projects offer multiple benefits to those involved. These include: community cohesion; the potential to enhance biodiversity; health benefits associated with outdoor activity and consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables; improving life skills; making productive use of land; and reducing the negative impacts of the food system.
- 3.14 The PAN has been developed on behalf of the council by [Food Matters](#) with support from the council. It is an initiative forming part of [Harvest Brighton and Hove](#). Food Matters is a local organisation operating nationally and internationally on food policy issues.
- 3.15 **Harvest Brighton & Hove**
Harvest is a 'beacon project' funded by the Big Lottery Fund (Local Food Grants) and co-ordinates a city wide, integrated approach to increase the amount of and access to food grown within the City. Harvest is lead by the [Brighton & Hove Food Partnership](#) and Food Matters.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 There is no statutory requirement for specific consultation processes to be implemented when developing PANs. Nevertheless, consultation has been widely conducted. The document has been strongly welcomed by respondents. Where comments were received all strongly endorsed the PAN.
- 4.2 Internal consultation has incorporated: Allotments; Ecology; Arboriculture Team; Environmental Health; Healthy Urban Environment Group; Housing Development; and Economic Development.

- 4.3 External consultation has included: City Sustainability Partnership; Housing Delivery Partnership; Brighton & Hove Food Partnership; Sustain (Alliance of Food and Farming); Health Protection Agency; Environmental Protection UK; Brighton University; and planning agents on the Brighton & Hove Planning Agents Forum. Endorsement has in particular been given by the three city Partnerships consulted.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There have been no direct financial costs associated with the production of this Planning Advice Note other than the use of officer time, as the project has been funded by *Harvest*, which is a 'beacon project' funded by the Big Lottery Fund

Finance Officer Consulted: Karen Brookshaw Date: 05/08/11

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The PAN is not a statutory planning document and has limited weight as a material planning consideration. However, as stated in the body of the Report, the purpose of the PAN is to encourage food growing in the city and in so doing the PAN supports the adopted planning policies to which it refers and which are themselves material planning considerations in the determination of relevant planning applications.

Lawyer Consulted: Hilary Woodward Date: 08/11/11

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 An Equalities Impact assessment has not been carried out. The strategic aim of this work is to incentivise the delivery of food growing generally across the city in order that access to these projects is increased for all members of the community.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Sustainability objectives to increase land used for local food production and to reduce negative impacts of the food system are the key driver for this Note.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Food Projects which are well set up and managed offer the opportunity for community cohesion, and can enhance the sense of ownership that local people have over the land used, increasing surveillance and potentially reducing crime.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 Whilst a Risk Management Plan has not been undertaken, the risks with endorsement and publication of this Planning Advice Note are not considered to be significant. The Note offers the opportunity for Brighton & Hove to be at the forefront of delivering policy in this area, strengthening its reputation as a leading authority on this agenda.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 The intention of creating positive health impacts through the planning system has been an important consideration in this policy approach. The PAN has been endorsed by Health Protection Agency, and Primary Care Trust colleagues. Engagement by residents in food growing projects encourages outdoor activity, mental wellbeing, social interaction and cohesion, and greater consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 Increase in local food production is an aim within the Sustainable Community Strategy and submission version of the Core Strategy and other policy and Local Development Framework documents.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The alternative option would be not to develop and adopt a PAN on the subject of food growing. The opportunity to benefit from the offer by Food Matters to draft this note for use by the city council was considered beneficial to the local planning authority in supporting the delivery of policy objectives.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The PAN will offer technical advice to developers on how to deliver good quality food growing areas within development sites. It is an innovative document intended to draw together good practice and further the duty for the local planning authority to deliver sustainable development through the planning system.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Draft Food Growing and Development Planning Advice Note.

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. Brighton and Hove Submission version of the Draft Core Strategy (2010)
<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1148443>
2. Brighton & Hove Local Plan (1995)
3. Brighton & Hove Sustainable Community Strategy
<http://www.bandhsp.co.uk/index.cfm?request=b1158724>
4. Spade to Spoon; A Food Strategy and Action Plan for Brighton and Hove (2006)
http://www.brighton-ove.gov.uk/downloads/bhcc/sustainability/food_strategy/SpadeToSpoon-WEB_FINAL_SEPT06.pdf