

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee – 13
January 2022

Subject: Manchester Food Board

Report of: Consultant in Public Health Manchester Health and Care
Commissioning

Summary

This report outlines the strategic aims and objective of the Manchester Food Board (MFB) in influencing and addressing climate change, including an overview of the MFB Action Plan, updates on recent action, and priorities for 2022.

Recommendations

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider and make comments on the content of the report.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

Food is included as one of the 6 key themes in the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25. Reducing carbon emissions from the food system is a priority for the Manchester Food Board, and this report outlines the actions we have taken and are planning to take to support this.
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Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The MFB's strategic priorities include: "Build a more inclusive food and beverage economy, creating a more skilled and efficient workforce." Additionally, the MFB Action Plan contains the aim: "Promote a vibrant food culture and grow a dynamic and robust food economy".
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The MFB's strategic priorities include: "Build a more inclusive food and beverage economy, creating a more skilled and efficient workforce." Additionally, the MFB Action Plan contains the aim: "Promote a vibrant food culture and grow a dynamic and robust food economy".
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The MFB's strategic priorities include: "Preventing malnutrition and hunger in vulnerable groups" and "Building a shared, sustainable food culture across society engaging our ethnically diverse population". Additionally, the MFB Action Plan contains the aim: "Improve Manchester's food security, and reduce inequalities by ensuring that safe, appropriate, and nutritious food is available to all".
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The MFB's strategic priorities include: "Reduce the carbon impact of the food system by elimination of avoidable food waste, excess packaging and ineffective utilisation of natural resources." Additionally, the MFB Action Plan contains the aim: "Reduce environmental impacts throughout the food system with a focus on food waste and a shift to more ecological practices".
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The MFB's strategic priorities include: "Support innovation which drives more sustainable food systems through the use of data, research and technology." Additionally, the MFB Action Plan contains the aim: "Facilitate collaboration, research and innovation in the food system".

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1.0 Introduction: Why food?

- 1.1 The Manchester Food Board (MFB) brings together leading decision-makers from across the business, health, environment, housing, farming, academic, policy, and social sectors. The Board works to provide clarity and strategic leadership on how food can be used to bring about positive, meaningful, and lasting change in Manchester.
- 1.2 The ways in which we produce, access, and eat food is fundamental to our lives. The work of the MFB reflects the breadth of issues at play in the wider food system, including food poverty, climate change, retail and hospitality, green spaces and food growing, economic development, waste and recycling, health and wellbeing, and community engagement.
- 1.3 The MFB is part of the Sustainable Food Places (previously Sustainable Food Cities) network of local food partnerships. The MFB also sits on the steering group of Good Food Greater Manchester.
- 1.4 This report provides background information about the MFB, an update of the MFB's work in the past 6 months and outlines our plans for the next 6 months.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In 2018, the Manchester Population Health Team commissioned Manchester-based consultancy firm FoodSync to review the MFB's structure and governance, and to facilitate the work of the MFB moving forward. FoodSync works across the food system, delivering projects for local authorities, the commercial sector, housing associations, and the community, voluntary and social enterprise sector.
- 2.2 Following consultation with stakeholders of the MFB, local businesses, the public and community voluntary sector, and other key local organisations, the following strategic priorities were agreed in 2019:
 1. Preventing malnutrition and hunger in vulnerable groups.
 2. Making diets more sustainable.
 3. Building a shared, sustainable food culture across society engaging our ethnically diverse population.
 4. Increasing local food production.
 5. Creating short, transparent supply chains.
 6. Build a more inclusive food and beverage economy creating a more skilled and efficient workforce.
 7. Reduce the carbon impact of the food system by elimination of avoidable food waste, excess packaging and ineffective utilisation of natural resources.
 8. Support innovation which drives more sustainable food systems using data, research and technology.
- 2.3 Since then, the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lockdowns have created societal change on a huge scale. To reflect these challenges, an Action Plan

of current priorities has been set, which aims to support a sustainable and equitable recovery for Manchester.

2.4 The Action Plan aims to:

1. Secure access to sustainable, appropriate and nutritious food for all people
2. Promote a vibrant food culture and helps create a dynamic and robust hospitality sector
3. Create more resilient supply chains
4. Reduce the environmental impacts of the food system
5. Facilitate collaboration, research and innovation in the food system

3.0 The past 6 months

3.1 Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration

3.1.1 We co-ordinated Manchester City Council's (MCC) signing of the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration as part of COP26. In doing so, MCC has committed to pursuing integrated food policies as part of its actions to tackle the climate emergency.

3.2 Ward Climate Action Plans

3.2.1 At the East Didsbury and West Didsbury climate action plan launch workshops in November 2021 we spoke to residents about sustainable food, reducing food waste, and what they could do in their wards to support climate action on food. In doing so, we inspired individuals to become more active 'food citizens'. As other wards launch their action plans, we plan to attend more of these events across the city.

3.3 Food Wave Policy Seminar

3.3.1 The EU-wide FoodWave programme supports young people in campaigning for sustainable approaches to food consumption and production, climate change mitigation, and climate adaptation efforts. We ran a seminar focusing on food-related policy-making as part of the Manchester branch of this programme, working with over 60 young people to help them to influence policy making and create meaningful change in the food system. This event generated support for clear and committed local leadership around sustainable food.

3.4 Community Assembly on Climate Change

3.4.1 We ran five workshops on sustainable food as part of the Manchester Community Assembly on Climate Change, which feeds into the In Our Nature Programme. Over 60 people attended over the course of the week, in five different areas of the city (Levenshulme and East, City Centre and North, Moss Side and Hulme, Wythenshawe and South, Whalley Range and Chorlton). A mandate of actions has been produced by participants in the Assemblies. By providing an opportunity for people to learn about, share, and

enjoy healthy and sustainable food, we supported local people to become more active 'food citizens'.

3.5 Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)

3.5.1 We supported the Manchester Climate Change Agency by compiling data and information relating to food emissions, for inclusion in Manchester's CPD response. This supported our work in helping reduce the environmental impacts from food in Manchester.

3.6 Academic research: Incorporating Food into Manchester's Climate Change Response

3.6.1 Dr Jo Mylan at The University of Manchester has published Part One of a two-part report that outlines the need for Manchester to have a 'sustainable food mission' to support a 'green and just recovery' from COVID-19. The MFB was approached for comment in the early stages of this research, and provided further comment when the final draft was made available. Part Two of this report will be published in the new year, and we have also shared our comments on this report. By supporting and developing innovative approaches to tackle the wider challenges of the food system, our aim is to ensure that resources can be targeted effectively when developing policy and other mechanisms to improve food sustainability.

3.7 Community food growing in Manchester

3.7.1 Working with the MCC Parks team and other local stakeholders, we conducted two online surveys to find out more about demand for food growing activities in Manchester:

1. For people who currently grow (or used to grow) their own food
2. For people who have never grown their own food

3.7.2 We received 134 responses across the two surveys and will be using the results to inform food growing related policy development across the city.

3.8 Media and marketing

3.8.1 We launched the MFB Twitter page, which now has over 400 followers. We also launched the MFB Newsletter, which is sent out quarterly and showcases good practice and news from across our partner networks. The Newsletter includes an Events section, and we welcome contributions from anyone working on projects that support our Action Plan.

4.0 The next 6 months

4.1 Meetings

4.1.1 The MFB's next meeting will be held in February with further meetings in April and June.

4.2 Food Security Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

4.2.1 We are working with the Population Health Team to develop a JSNA on Food Security. This will outline the challenges associated with poverty and hunger, and provide a comprehensive, integrated overview of the ways in which food insecurity poses a threat to health and wellbeing. Through this approach, we hope to identify barriers to change and make recommendations on how food security can be addressed in Manchester.

4.3 Sustainable Food Week event

4.3.1 This project aims to open up a long-term conversation about sustainable food with key anchor institutions and other partners located on the Oxford Road Corridor. This project will do that by offering those institutions and partners the chance to showcase the actions they have taken (or are planning to take) and the impact they have made (or will make) to ensure their food offer is more sustainable. This showcase will take the form of a week-long event, provisionally called 'Oxford Road Sustainable Food Week'.

4.3.2 The Oxford Road Partnership have lent their provisional support. We are now scoping out this event with members of the Partnership, including the University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, and Bruntwood, and with potential speakers and delivery partners. The provisional date for this event is May 2022.

4.4 Reducing commercial food waste

4.4.1 Each year, food waste costs the Hospitality and Food Service (HaFS) sector £3.2 billion – an average of £10k per outlet, per year. On average, 18% of the food purchased by the HaFS sector is thrown away, and 75% of this is food that could have been eaten. This project aims to support food businesses in Manchester to reduce the amount of food that goes to waste in their premises.

4.4.2 We are working with WRAP (waste reduction specialists) and their Guardians of Grub food waste reduction programme, which is aimed at the HaFS sector, to develop a workshop specifically for HaFS businesses in Manchester. WRAP offers a range of tools, resources, and training opportunities to help HaFS businesses understand how to measure, monitor, and reduce their food waste.

4.4.3 We will be approaching HaFS businesses in January 2022 to share details of this project and the Guardians of Grub programme, and to invite them to a workshop in Spring.

4.5 Sustainable Business Pioneers Programme

4.5.1 The MFB will be working with local businesses in spring 2022 to coproduce a scheme of work that improves the sustainability of the catering and hospitality sectors. In preparation for that, this project aims to ensure that Manchester small and medium enterprises (SME) food and drinks businesses have the

right knowledge, skills, and support to feed into the development of that scheme.

4.5.2 This project will provide training, information, and support to Manchester-based SME food and drinks businesses on a range of sustainability-related topics, including: food waste; sustainable packaging; carbon literacy; sustainable procurement; seasonal and local food; less but better meat; and meat-free Mondays.

4.5.3 Through this Programme, we will create an unofficial network of sustainability-focused businesses in the city, who can support the work of MFB moving forward.

4.6 School food

4.6.1 Following the closure of Manchester Fayre, MCC's internal school catering provider, all schools in Manchester are now using private catering contractors. We are working with the Education team to identify ways of promoting healthy eating, sustainable diets, and ethically sourced food in schools. We will work with schools, headteachers, parents, and governors, to develop a school food policy or similar mechanism that can be used by all schools to protect and maintain good food standards. We are also in the process of linking with the Manchester Healthy Schools Team.

4.6.2 The aim of this work is to encourage an integrated approach to school food at school level, from lunchtimes and breaktimes to breakfast clubs and food education. We will connect school governors, headteachers, and kitchen catering staff with experts in sustainable procurement, food education, and nutrition, as appropriate.

4.6.3 This is a long term piece of work that we are co-designing with interested schools. We are reaching out to schools via the Education team's internal communications channels to identify potential partners in this work.

4.7 Media and marketing

4.7.1 As well as communicating regularly about our work via Twitter and the MFB Newsletter, the following public national campaigns complement our Action Plan:

- Veganuary (January)
- Fairtrade Fortnight (February)
- Food waste action week (March)
- National Vegetarian Week (May)

4.7.2 We will put additional tailored content out for these events.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 The recommendations are summarised at the beginning of the report.