

**LONDON ASSEMBLY**  
Economy Committee

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By email

**Date: 16 February 2015**

*Dear Rosie*

**Food poverty in London**

Almost two years ago the London Assembly published *A Zero Hunger City: Tackling food poverty in London*. The report set out a number of recommendations to address food poverty in the capital directed at the Mayor and London Food Board, London boroughs and Health and Wellbeing Boards, schools and food aid organisations.

I led the original investigation on behalf of the Assembly, and I am now following up on the report on behalf of the Economy Committee. I am therefore writing to you for an update to inform any further work the Committee may undertake in this important area.

The Committee has noted recent welcome progress, for example in establishing the two flagship boroughs and the opening of London's first community shop. I would be grateful if could you set out:

- your current assessment of food poverty in the capital;
- progress on initiatives led by the London Food Board, or of which the board is a key partner, in the last two years; and
- any outstanding challenges or barriers to further progress.

For ease, I have appended the two original recommendations made to the London Food Board and the Mayor.

I would be grateful for a response by 20 March 2015. For any queries in the first instance please contact Simon Shaw on the contact details below.



**Fiona Twycross**  
Deputy Chair, Economy Committee

## **Recommendation 1 – The London Food Board**

**The London Food Board should take on strategic responsibility for addressing food poverty in London – aiming for a Zero Hunger City. This responsibility should be included in a new revised London Food Strategy and implementation plan. This should be in place by September 2013.**

This strategic oversight would require monitoring both the prevalence of, and the response to, food poverty in London. The Board should take the lead in bringing together the public, private and third sector organisations from across the capital.

The London Food Board's strategy should include:

- monitoring the risk factors for food poverty, including implementation of welfare reform and low income and regularly sharing this knowledge with local and national government;
- facilitating greater sharing of intelligence and good practice with a wide range of agencies – including boroughs, the education and health sectors and the police;
- ensuring the response to food poverty in London addresses the needs of all groups, including older people;
- working with partners, including the commercial sector, to establish sustainable funding models for free breakfast clubs in schools; and
- publishing a paper on the possible models for delivering universal healthy school meals in London.

Given the importance of access to healthy school meals for all, the Food Board should explore the different models for funding this. Sustain has recently proposed a model for funding universal school meals via a duty on sugary drinks. Such proposals should be seriously considered by the London Food Board and government.

## **Recommendation 2 - The Mayor**

**The Mayor should champion working towards a Zero Hunger City.**

The Mayor should review the resources available to the London Food Board's programme to ensure it has the capacity to take a strategic lead in working with partners to explore the extent of and address food poverty among older people.

The Mayor should, as a minimum, take an active role in calling on government to agree eligibility for free healthy school meals for all families in receipt of Universal Credit.

The Mayor should seek funding from government and other agencies to help boroughs fund Universal School Meals.

The Mayor's work in the education sector, including his championing of new free schools, should include a coordinated approach to promoting healthy school meals across the capital. This should be linked into the Healthy Schools London Programme.