

MAYOR OF LONDON

Fiona Twycross AM
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA

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Date: 25 JUL 2013

Dear Fiona

Further to my letter of 16 May I am writing to provide a full response to your letter of 24 April highlighting some of the recommendations from the London Assembly Health and Environment Committee's report, "A Zero Hunger City: Tackling food poverty in London".

My 2020 Vision for London, published in June, confirms my aspiration to work towards making London a Zero Hunger City. To this end I fully support the work that Rosie Boycott and her London Food Board are undertaking, much of it newly-developed since March, to make food poverty a priority area.

They are forming the range of partnerships that are needed to transform the way vulnerable Londoners can access food through shops, community settings and schools, and their work is gaining ever-greater traction.

To help provide solutions to these and other food poverty-related issues, the London Food Board and my Mayor's Fund for London have undertaken a lot of work already, including:

- The Mayor's Fund for London granting £650,000 to Magic Breakfast for three-year school breakfast clubs for 5,000 pupils in 50 schools in London's most deprived boroughs;
- Capital Growth – 2,012 new urban community food growing spaces in London - these were a great way hundreds of thousands of Londoners could access affordable food with 44 per cent of spaces in the 20 per cent most deprived wards of London;
- Worked with food redistribution charities such as FareShare and Food Cycle - we created a Food Waste Pyramid for London which encouraged businesses to prioritise redistribution of food to Londoners instead of sending to landfill. This was launched at the Feeding the 5,000 event in Trafalgar Square where 5,000 people were fed on food that would have otherwise gone to waste;
- Created a London-wide public sector food procurement cluster through which 13 boroughs collaboratively purchase food for schools, hospitals and other public sector settings.

MAYOR OF LONDON

Some of the things that the London Food Board is now working on include:

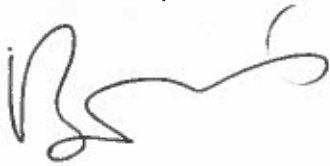
- **Research on food poverty in London** - being undertaken by Ipsos MORI, to be published in a report soon, which will illustrate the extent to which particular children in London are adversely affected by food poverty and hunger;
- **Kids' Company/University of Leeds research** - with children aged 5-18 in 8 London boroughs to highlight extent of hunger and dietary deficiencies experienced by children in London;
- **An Interactive London map of crisis food interventions** - working with partners the Board has developed a web-based map showing settings (food banks, charities, community cafes, food co-ops, etc.) where people can access food if they are in severe need and if they meet eligibility criteria set by referral agencies. The map will be updated regularly.
- **"Social Supermarkets"** - working with supermarkets, redistribution charities and others, the London Food Board is working on a programme to alleviate food poverty in London in creating an alternative, innovative system to provide food to people struggling to feed their families. The programme will also provide skills, employment and economic growth.
- **School Food Plan London borough pilots** - The London Food Board has been working closely with Henry Dimbleby, who was appointed by Michael Gove to develop a school food plan for England, which was published on 11 July. I attended the launch of the plan at Sacred Heart School in Battersea where we announced that we will be recruiting two London boroughs to implement a wide range of school food-based interventions. The Department for Education have agreed to provide £600,000 towards the cost of those two pilots.
- **Fruit and vegetable doubled-value vouchers** - The London Food Board is looking at opportunities to pilot a scheme based upon the successful American model in which charities and local government double the value of publicly funded vouchers when spent on fresh fruit and vegetables. We are currently investigating the use of Healthy Start Vouchers as the vehicle for this scheme in London and looking into the settings which will participate in the project such as farmers' markets, street markets and box schemes.
- **Every School a Food-Growing School** - The London Food Board is working to help support every state school in London become a food-growing school. The activity will act as the catalyst for a number of benefits for those involved, including health and wellbeing benefits, improved learning and behaviour, skills development and enhanced community cohesion. By making the growing of food, and healthy eating, an integral part of school life and by supporting schools to be an integral part of their communities, this project will help to address the related issues of food poverty and obesity.

I understand that you are convening a roundtable meeting with London boroughs in September and I know that Rosie Boycott and her team are keen to attend that and help in any way that they can.

MAYOR OF LONDON

I hope that my letter reassures you and highlights that I am fully committed to giving Rosie Boycott and the London Food Board all the support and resources that they need to help solve the problems of food poverty in London. I know that she and her team appreciate the support and profile that you and fellow Assembly Members continue to give to the vital work that they are doing and I hope this will continue.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Boris Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London