

**Environment Committee – 14 June****Transcript of Item 6 – Draft Food Strategy**

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** That brings us to today's main discussion item on the Mayor of London's Draft Food Strategy, and can I now welcome our guests? We have Claire Pritchard who is the Chair of the London Food Board (LFB). Welcome.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Thank you.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** We have Mark Ainsbury who is the Principal Policy Officer here at the Greater London Authority (GLA). Welcome.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Thanks.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** We have Anna Taylor who is the Executive Director of the Food Foundation, and we have Sarah Williams who is the Programme Director at Sustain. Welcome to all of you.

We are going to start by looking at the aims and approaches of the Strategy, and I am going to start with you, Claire, with a fairly open question: why has the Mayor produced a food strategy and what does he hope to achieve with it?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Yes, thank you very much. The aim of the Strategy is to try to ensure that we capture the cross-cutting impact of food across London. There have been a lot of strategies coming out - like the Health Inequalities Strategy - and we have embedded food as much as we can in all of the other strategies but, because of its cross-cutting theme, we thought it was important that we have a strategy focused on food.

When you are talking about supporting a small business or maximising the opportunity for urban food production there are a wide range of themes, so you have to have a strategy that captures all of those and maximises the opportunities to develop this work and address these. Because the Mayor's manifesto looked at food poverty, food insecurity and the high levels of childhood obesity, we knew that we needed a strategy that would look at all of those very significant issues and challenges that London is faced with at the moment.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. Very broadly speaking, how do you think that the Strategy document actually furthers these aims?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** The idea of separating it into the different areas - food at home and looking at household food insecurity, shopping and the food environment, and things like the obesogenic environment, improving the food environment, maternity early years - separating it into the different areas gives us a clearer idea of the Mayor's responsibility, what local authorities can do, the role of businesses, the role of communities and the role of individuals. Putting it into those different sections makes that very accessible. It makes quite clear the work that needs to be done.

It also helps with that cross-cutting message: that food is a massive part of our economy. It is also having a massive impact on our environment and a horrendous impact on our health. It also provides us with loads of

opportunity, so if it is £17 billion for the London economy it is a massive opportunity. The way it has been divided into the six areas - and I have to say that being part of the consultation process of developing the Strategy - when you are starting to talk about food it is very hard to know how to develop a strategy. We had some very interesting conversations about how to describe this. Is it the theme? Is it the setting? The idea of describing it by the setting and then the different roles that people can play makes it much more accessible.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Do you think there is an overarching or most important target? Is there one or two things that cut across all those different areas that the Strategy covers?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Household food insecurity is incredibly significant. It is important and we need to address that urgently. The increasing dependence on food banks is terrifying and it does not look as though it is going to slow down. We need to look at that. Childhood obesity - up to 40% at age 11 - is terrifying. It is impacting on our communities, our individuals, the cost for health and the long-term sustainability of London. That is very significant. I still think the growth of small businesses, so the opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprise in London - there are some significant things - as well as the environmental impact of food, and 30% of our emissions and issues are around plastic. There are key themes within each setting. I would not want to say it is one thing. They all contribute to each other.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Which we see through it being in so many of the other strategies.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Exactly, yes.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** One of the overarching philosophy - if one was to distil it into a sentence or two - is that we want all Londoners, irrespective of their circumstances and irrespective of where they live, to be able to enjoy access to good food, healthy food, and food as a mechanism to help us celebrate the diversity of this city and the riches that it offers. There are problems and challenges. There are also massive opportunities and a great chance for us to bring all Londoners together to celebrate each other's different cuisines, so that is the thing about everyone being able to have access to good diets.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** I am very happy for Londoners to enjoy good food, but Claire also mentioned things, like childhood obesity and that sort of issue. One of the things for me is having some firm targets so that I can measure - which is something we quite regularly come back to on this Committee - what action has been taken.

There is one primary school in my constituency where there is not a single obese child. That has been achieved by having very good school lunches and controlling what children are allowed to bring to school in their lunch boxes and not having anything to drink on the school premises other than water. In conjunction with that they also go swimming a lot. Where are the targets that are going to deliver, not just enjoyment but also tackle childhood obesity? We are going to ask you some more questions about the how, but where are the targets is the important thing for me?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** The first London food strategy we wrote 14 years ago did have loads of targets - I do not know if you have ever read it - and I was involved in writing it. This Strategy is about engagement, principles and identifying the key players but there will be an implementation plan and there will be targets, and that will be the role of the LFB, the GLA and all the partners that commit to engaging in this Strategy to help us achieve. It will be an outcome of a final strategy that we will have targets in different areas.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** I suppose, with the targets, it is a question of being able to tell what kind of a difference you are making.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Absolutely. We think it is important that we understand where we are starting and where we want to get to. We do believe it is important that we have an action plan for the LFB. The GLA Food unit has its work programme. We will also have targets within that, but it is also targets around engagement. We know we are not going to be solely responsible for targets around reducing childhood obesity. I work in that in my day job. I look at those figures all the time and we look at those targets all the time, but we want to be a part of it. We do want to set ourselves goals and we do want to measure the impact of our work.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** When you have a strategy that is cutting across so many different policy areas - from the economy to health, to transport, to the environment - how do you find an overall priority? Obviously, this Strategy is trying to put food at the centre and acknowledging how cross-cutting it is, but how do you get to an overall priority when you have so many different areas that it is cutting across?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** In terms of an overall priority, I want to reiterate what Mark said. The idea that every Londoner has access to an affordable, healthy diet is our overall priority; every single Londoner. That has to be our overall priority. What sits under that are all of the issues that are covered in the themes. It is where you shop, how much you earn. Are you earning enough? Is it the London Living Wage? What is the retail strategy like? What is the retail offer and all the other support? Do you have the skills? Are you living in accommodation without cooking equipment? If we want to achieve our key aim of everyone accessing a healthy, affordable diet, that is underpinned by quite a lot of complex issues.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** In the structure and the prioritisation that you see in the draft of the Strategy, the LFB was re-recruited at the start of 2017. We started writing this on 10 March, at their first meeting in 2017. It has taken 14 or 15 months with the LFB, with its satellite working groups and with its broad groups of stakeholders, to break it down into the six chapters that you see, but also to talk about which of those areas are within the Mayor's gift to effect change and where we can work with partners, what you have seen in the structure. Therefore, that prioritisation has already involved a large de facto ongoing consultation with the main players across the city.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** I would like to add that one of those subgroups is the boroughs subgroup, which I have chaired since 2009. Typically, 25 London boroughs come to it and they are normally public health. I have worked closely with public health in London boroughs for about 16 years. It will say it has come to the conclusion that, "If we want to address providing everyone with a healthy, affordable diet, these are the things we have to address". We have to address all of this. That is: breastfeeding, what is on sale and what is being advertised, how much you earn and are you using your benefits? Is everyone maximising the use of their Healthy Start Vouchers? We have to be cross-cutting because what we have understood, just on the issue of obesity, is it is a complex cross-cutting issue and we have to respond in that way.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Also, if I may add to that, between Sunday and last night I was in Stockholm at a global food policy conference with countries from around the world and, because we have been out to consultation for around five weeks, they have seen it in cities around the world. They were coming up to me saying, "How did you get to this? How can we replicate you in our city?" Therefore, Toronto, New York City, cities in South America and around Europe, are

applauding the simplicity and clarity of what we have in here, acknowledging that it is good to have targets. It is also good to have the flexibility because, as you know, priorities change and emerge all the time and we have to be fleet of foot on this to respond. That is built into our theme as well. This has helped us to be seen literally as world leading in this discipline. Therefore, yes, it has been very well received.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** That is presumably because what you have managed to do is get that mission focus on food across all those different areas?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Yes, but also the feedback I was getting - for example, from New York City - is they can see that we are meaningfully consulting with Londoners, and we will take Londoners' comments on board in the debate that we are currently having in the eight weeks' consultation to inform the final Strategy. That is about the inclusivity or the democracy of our approach.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Talking about the democracy of your approach, there are calls in each section for personal action, so what you can do as a Londoner. How do you think that is going to reach out to the community groups, the different organisations in London who might be able to make a difference? I am talking to one of the tenant and residents' associations about a fun day they are organizing in September. They are planning a free food café made with surplus foods that they are planning to get from local suppliers, but it is: how will the community learn about what is in here and understand what you are asking Londoners to do?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** This has had a lot of response, and you have seen that there has already been a lot of coverage but the most valuable thing, and the challenge, is to get this out to the whole population, if we can. I do not know if you are aware of a programme called Sustainable Food Cities, but I am involved in it. It is very much one of the things that we considered when we looked at the structure of this Strategy. Sustainable Food Cities, which has been developed by the Soil Association, Food Matters and Sustain, has also looked at: what can a city do to do the best it can to ensure that every person can access a healthy, sustainable, affordable diet?

A lot of cities like London have formed these partnerships and the conclusion that those cities are coming to is: we need the whole population to get behind this because, if we are going to change the food for the whole population, it needs to engage as many people as possible. That is about how we brand, how we talk about it, how we engage our local authorities and how they participate with their communities. That is why the different settings help in identifying the opportunity for the different settings and allowing them to incorporate this and use it as an opportunity for engagement.

I have not been at any of the consultations but, in Lewisham today and Greenwich on Monday, the Sustainable Food Cities Partnership is holding consultation events. It is the first time that I have seen consultation events with large attendance of local communities and local residents, based on a GLA strategy.

Sustainable Food Cities already exists. It is very much based on the principle of whole population engagement. They are using that opportunity to say, "Right, how does this support our strategy?" It is a real challenge and it is about branding and communication routes, but the fact is that we have said, "Well, here are five different sectors. Help us communicate. Help us talk to people".

Also, the role of the London boroughs, which are challenged in terms of budgets and are thinking that, “We need to empower and encourage people through positive communications around food”. We see this as a real opportunity but, yes, it is a challenge.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** Is it possible that I can add something on that? The whole idea of sustainable food, sometimes people find that quite complicated. You go into the supermarket; do you buy British tomatoes or do you buy Fairtrade products or do you buy local? Trying to navigate that minefield for people is very complicated, so Sustain has produced guidelines on what sustainable food is and ten tips on how you look for it. That is our most read publication. We have hundreds of thousands of people visit our website, so it shows that the public are looking for that sort of guidance. There is a real potential that, if you can make it quite simple for people as to what they can do to help, and you can broadcast that from where you sit, in terms of the reach of the Mayor, that message will get to people, because people want it, people search for it, people are hungry to know what they can do to make the sustainability story easy.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Yes, although the many Londoners who are literally hungry are looking for the tomatoes that are cheapest, if they are looking for tomatoes at all.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** Of course, yes.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** London has big food challenges.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** I have been working in public health and looking at obesity and food poverty for 16 years in Greenwich. I have been on the street on market stalls and I do a surplus feast in December using surplus food. Last December [2017] we made 700 meals. That is where we have conversations about Sustainable Food Cities. We can have those conversations because you can join it up, but I think this Strategy will need to get out onto the streets. It will have to get to those events. I would like to see opportunities with the City of Culture and all of the work that was done under the City of Culture, because loads of those bids had an amazing public consultation, social media and good public events.

One of the key themes that came out through loads of those applications was food. If you talk about the boroughs and you talk about culture, people identify food. I want to build on that and use that as a positive opportunity to talk to people about the fact that we do have an amazing, multicultural city and our food culture is our multicultural amazing cuisine. It is easy sometimes for other cities to connect their food culture because it is around agriculture or local food production - and we do have a lot of that - but what we have is an incredible cuisine in amazing neighbourhoods. I spend a lot of time in Woolwich. I know more about Jollof and I have had 30 different types of Jollof. I would like to have a Jollof festival. I want to celebrate that. We need to take it to those communities and we want to talk about that. That is what we need to be doing through every opportunity that we can. It is the biggest challenge but the biggest opportunity.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** I am sitting here thinking, “Why are people buying unhealthy food?” They have known for so many years what healthy food is and 40% of our children are still obese, and then you have the cultural food. Cultural food does not necessarily mean all healthy food, right? Who defines healthy food and where have we gone wrong so far? Why are people not buying healthy food?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** For 16 years I have been delivering cookery classes to help people understand healthy food. My personal experience is that people do understand what a healthy diet is - a lot of people do - but if you work two jobs and you are getting a bus home at 8 o'clock at night, and you are picking your children up, or you are feeding them on a bus and when you get home there is no shop. I could

take you to parts of London where you have -- even at the top of Woolwich it is a mile down to a supermarket. If you have lots of young children or you do not have transport or you do not have good cooking facilities or you are immobile, you can know the messages but you do not have the access.

I have to say that I have worked in public health for 16 years and I did a degree in hotel and catering. When I have done a 12-hour day I come home, I cannot think, and I will still order a takeaway; I mean because I cannot think and I am too tired.

Harry Rutter [Senior Clinical Research Fellow at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Honorary Senior Clinical Lecturer at University of Oxford] gave the best presentation ever--

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Claire, how is this Strategy going to change that behaviour that you so want to do?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Yes, we have to look at things like retail environments: do people have good access to affordable food? If you go to the areas of highest deprivation in London, you can pay three times as much for a healthy basket of food as you would if you had access to a supermarket. That is a difficult and complex thing to deal with.

These are independent retailers working long hours so, as communities, how can we help them think about their supply chains? How can we give them support? The average independent retailer in the United Kingdom (UK) loses £5,000 a year through theft. How can we develop community relationships, which they did in a place in Birmingham, which help people feel more secure? How do we support them with supply chains so that they can access more affordable fruit and veg, so their fruit and veg can be sold at the same price as supermarkets? How can we get those messages out?

I do work with a lot of cultural food events but we do procurement guidance that says, "If you are doing an event in this park, you have to meet the Department of Health and Eatwell guidance for your menu". It is embedded within our food business training. We have to join those messages up but we also need to address the big barriers. We have people in London that are living on less than the London Living Wage. We have people with babies in houses where they do not even have fridges, so when we are --

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Chair, I will come back to these themes when I come to my question but we need to go a bit deeper into this. I am not convinced at the moment that this Strategy addresses what you want to do, but we will explore it more deeply later on.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Entirely relating to what Onkar is saying, a question on healthy food. Sometimes foods are healthy and sometimes they are unhealthy. I am sure you remember the time when we had healthy food.

The overall Strategy suggests that a particular food is unhealthy by suggesting we should reduce our consumption of meat. I was very struck by what Mark said about how this affects all of the GLA's Strategy. If you look at our economic strategy, it is based on having a thriving and buoyant London economy. Have you done any work on the importance of the meat economy to London?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** I should start by saying we are not advocating banning or restricting the consumption of meat. From memory, the context in which we talk about it in the Strategy is partly for the environmental impact of the way meat --

**Tony Arbour AM:** No, forgive me; the question I am asking relates to how this Strategy affects other strategies and have you modelled it? For example, a very easy and quick piece of research, the beef industry generates 440,000 jobs in England and creates £2.8 billion expenditure. Your phrase in the overall strategy, and I am simply looking at the summary as an important thing “Consider reducing your consumption of meat”.

Now then, surely, if one is reducing one’s consumption of meat, that is going to substantially affect these figures that I have just read out and will have a substantial effect on the London economy, so I am asking you: have you looked at how your Food Strategy impacts on the GLA’s other strategies?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** We have worked tirelessly to embed the food element into the other strategies. In the Economic Development Strategy you refer to, that it is often around skills, jobs, incubation of businesses and all that, purely economic indicators. We have not modelled the meat industry in the way that you describe, no, but we are not seeking to ban or restrict or to put any businesses under the cosh, so to speak.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I am sorry, what does the phrase “Consider reducing your consumption of meat” mean then?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Can I respond?

**Tony Arbour AM:** No, please, I am asking Mark because this is a GLA strategy. He is the man who has worked on it. Anybody looking at this would think, “The GLA thinks there is something wrong with meat”.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Let Claire --

**Tony Arbour AM:** This is for Mark.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** That would be a wrong inference for people to take. We are talking about it from environmental and health grounds, so if people eat meat one day less a week, for example, then it opens them up to a broader diet and different kinds of foods. We are not seeking to damage the economic prospects of any meat producers, no.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** All public health strategies are suggesting a reduction in meat and dairy. If you look at the Eatwell Plate and the proportion, at the moment we eat more than we should in terms of our health but, also, in terms of the environmental impact; however, also economically. I am a food business specialist and there are a lot of --

**Tony Arbour AM:** I have had my specific question about the conflict between your strategy and the other strategies. I am not sure it has been resolved but, anyway, thank you, Chair.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** We are going to pick this up in a moment. I am going to bring in Assembly Member Cooper on the environmental impacts of London’s food consumption, but I first want to give Anna and Sarah a chance to say very briefly anything you want to say particularly about the strategy overall.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** For us working as Sustain we use food as a lever for change, as a lens through which we want to achieve change across social, environmental and health arenas. The challenges that are being raised here are part of the complexity and some of the stuff we are trying to unpick.

I would say that the Mayor has a great opportunity to put his weight and his voice behind this and to show some leadership here and to support a lot of the organisations we work with as well. For the third sector that are out there trying to deliver the stuff that you are talking about, having a strategy that shines a spotlight on what we are doing is incredibly valuable. The boroughs that we met with yesterday, for example, were talking about the proposed ban on advertising junk food. For them, those sorts of things enable them to do their job and to deliver the things that we are talking about here. All of this creates the framework for change at that borough and at that third sector level and we are incredibly appreciative of having this document.

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** There are a number of questions at the heart of which were accountability, impact and prioritisation within the Strategy and important questions about what is actually contributing to these bad outcomes that we are all concerned about with childhood obesity, food poverty and so forth.

What is good about what we have here is that we have this overall goal and these sections, which are creating a framework for the Mayor's specific actions with boroughs, combined with a wider set of stakeholders, to take action. The action plan which is going to follow, which Claire alluded to, and the metrics which go in that for tracking progress are going to be really important. What is important about these metrics is, if you set a target around childhood obesity, it is important for accountability purposes, but multiple actors are going to contribute to that. We cannot say that the Mayor single-handedly is going to under his jurisdiction be able to achieve that. Having those metrics which cut across everybody's action in this action plan is where the teeth, if you like, of the Strategy come in.

The point that was made around the complexity of this challenge - and Claire described it really well from the perspective of an average person who might be struggling on a low income, for example - is why this Strategy is so broad. There are no magic bullets here. We have to be really pulling on multiple levers at once and using the breadth of this Strategy to do that.

I just want to briefly pick up on the comment about meat because, while we all should be eating a little bit less meat both environmentally and certainly processed meat from a health perspective, there are opportunities from eating less meat for eating more of other things which are really good for us. The horticulture industry in Britain has a tremendous opportunity if we are eating more fruit and vegetables. We have done a lot of modelling on that potential if we were to actually eat what we should be eating on fruit and veg and the economic benefits are potentially huge. It is not a zero-sum game here. We can look at how there might be some impacts on the meat industry, but where are the other opportunities for the economy in London? With the urban growing environment, there is huge potential.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Anna, would you be able to share that? You were talking about some modelling you have done on the economic benefits.

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** Sure. Yes, absolutely.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** That would be really useful for the Committee.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Just a quick example. We used phrases like the 'urban growing environment'. I live in Hackney. Just give me a couple of urban environments in Hackney. Where would I go?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Do you know Growing Communities?



**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Where are the allotments? Where are the spaces?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Springfield Gardens; Allens.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** You are on a 10-year waiting list for Springfield.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** No, there is a community garden in Springfield.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** It is full at the moment.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Anyone can be involved in it.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** All right. You can go and get stuff and --

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Yes. They have a box scheme. They have a farmers' market. They grow --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** That is the urban environment that you are talking about?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** All over London --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** No. Can I just follow up on something that the lady has said? You have talked about an 'urban environment'. I just wanted a few quick examples to actually unpick that phrase.

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** There is community growing and also, in the business community, there is the growth of urban horticulture. That is probably the best way to describe it. For example, we have Growing Underground in Clapham where they are growing herbs underground. There are those kinds of initiatives which are quite low in terms of carbon use but also create shorter supply chains to businesses in the City and the growers, and are creating jobs and economic growth. That is right from community to commercial and everything in between.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** We have about five larger farms on the peri-urban fringe of London: Sutton, Dagenham, Forty Hall Farm in Enfield, OrganicLea up in Walthamstow. There are large-scale and then there are much smaller-scale ones more in the city. I can give you a list of gardens in Hackney that are growing. I can give you a list of 100.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Excellent. Let us have it. I am going to move us on to bring Leonie in to look at the environmental impacts.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** We are looking at the draft Strategy here, which acknowledges that there are various elements of the Environment Strategy and other existing policies that talk about reducing the environmental impacts of our food consumption. I just wondered if you could outline briefly, Claire, probably, what new measures are proposed in the draft Strategy to make London's food more sustainable.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** There are proposals about reducing food waste and also, hopefully, there is going to be a commitment to have very ambitious targets about reducing food waste. I have to remind myself of all the targets.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** Are there any kind of figures on that? We are at 30% food waste or something horrific like that.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** The idea is to sign up to -- remind me of the title.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** The Courtauld Commitment to reduce food waste by 20% by 2025.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** That is in the Strategy. Also, I believe it is OK to say about the more ambitious strategy now, is it not? We are hoping to sign up to the Champions 12.3 for a 50% reduction in food waste by 2030.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** That is a 20% reduction by 2025, in line with Courtauld, and then 50% by 2030?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** That is the Champions 12.3 sustainable development goal.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** These are very large figures. One of the things that we were just talking about there was about people who are unable to access cheap, wholesome food, perhaps because they are working long hours and are not earning very much money. Would you be tying that together when dealing with some of the food waste? We do still have this problem with supermarkets and sell-by or use-by dates. There are a number of London projects that are now starting to recycle that food to projects where they cook it or projects where they redistribute it. I was aware when Sure Start was first being set up that there were a lot of co-ops to distribute free fruit. That ran with the Sure Start projects. Is that something that we are going to see again?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** The idea of surplus going to people in poverty is not a sustainable answer. We need to change the way manufacturing and distribution is done. The biggest waste product in the UK is bread and it is great to say that we can use this bread and distribute it to people in need of food, but it is not really a sustainable answer. A sustainable answer is to change to the production method, a sustainable answer for people in poverty is to increase the amount of money they have and improve their access to a sustainable, healthy diet. A long-term solution to people in poverty is not to give them food surplus. However, I work --

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** We are in the real world. We have had austerity with no pay rise and they may be going up by 1% now. Let us be real. Let us talk about how we can deal with people in poverty.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Yes, absolutely. We have FareShare, which sits on the LFB, and a number of us have very close relationships with FareShare. In my day job, I host a FareShare distribution hub. In my day job, I drive bread all around the borough that comes from bakery. Also, I do meals two or three times a year using surplus. We know that there is an emergency need now to use that food and to provide food for people who are in poverty, and using surplus is an intelligent thing to do at the moment. It is certainly not a long-term, sustainable, ideal solution but, at the moment, we have to be pragmatic. There are FareShare hubs and FareShare pantries that are being now developed with housing associations.

Without making too much commitment - we are still waiting for the consultation to come back from the Strategy - the LFB is convening meetings with all of the social housing providers asking how they can support

this Strategy, particularly around household food insecurity. They have resources; they can talk to the people who live in their housing; they can support those people. They are really interested because they absolutely need to ensure that they protect their rental income. They are looking at intelligent ways to support people who are on low incomes. The examples of pantries that I have been involved with are large social housing providers and registered social landlords. You are absolutely right. We have to be pragmatic about solutions at this --

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** That is dealing with the poverty side and we are going to come back to some further questions about food poverty shortly. In terms of making London's food more sustainable, I am actually going to reverse Tony's question. It is not sustainable with the amount of meat that people eat. While the industry might be worth £2.8 billion, the cost to the health service is £120 billion from our incredibly unhealthy food lifestyles. What messaging are we going to do that is going to be stronger? I am not saying that people cannot eat any meat at all, but there are the food miles that are involved in the production of many foods, not just meat but other foods as well. One of the Mayor's big targets is to make London a zero-carbon city by 2050. How is the Food Strategy going to help the Mayor achieve that?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** The message around a healthy diet and the Eatwell Plate and the Department of Health messaging is really supportive of a more sustainable diet.

The thing that we need to do with the Mayor's Strategy is to look at the work the boroughs are doing around this and all of the programmes that come under the boroughs, and all of the procurement opportunities. The procurement opportunities are not just school meals. You talked about school meals and the impact school meals can have. The thing is that now schools are autonomous and so how do we engage all schools around their procurement to ensure we support them to provide the food that we would hope they would provide to those children? We have voluntary standards within early-years settings - Eat Better, Start Better - and we have the Healthy Early Years group that can support us with that.

With procurement at a local authority level, if we can encourage the local authorities when they procure their early-years providers to ensure that within that contract they ask the provider to meet with the standards or use the procurement capacity we have --

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** That would include, for example, food miles and how far the food travels before the children eat it, and that is what you are talking about?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Yes, things based on the Eatwell Plate with seasonal vegetables because we also know that seasonal vegetables are the cheapest. It is cross-cutting. A sustainable diet is also potentially a more affordable diet and healthier. If you base your diet on vegetables and seasonal veg and plant-based foods, then it is likely to be more sustainable, healthier and - if it is in season - cheaper. We need to embed it within procurement opportunities and events.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** Will we be setting targets for that? Are there going to be people at the GLA - can I just bring this on to Mark - who are going to be working with those schools? I know we have made it much more complicated by taking schools out of local authority control and perhaps the Secretary of State for Education, who now seems to control everything, is the person we need to be talking to about this. They are doing individual procurement now because they are all academies and whatever else. Is that something realistically we are going to be able to do? Sorry, I wanted to ask Mark.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Yes. The Healthy Early Years team sits in the Health team. They are working with individual schools. Yes, that is true. We also have the GLA Group responsible for procurement commitment, which we are revisiting and ramping up in parallel with the timeline of this Strategy. The GLA serves 7 million meals a year and so we are building into that.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** We would put food miles into our procurement in the GLA family?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Yes. To be precise, food miles is not necessarily the best indicator. It is more complex.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** Or something equivalent, then.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Yes, quite a different indicator or different terminology, maybe. We know that London's food system is responsible for 30% of the City's greenhouse gas emissions. Most of that impact, by the way, is from outside London with the way we suck food in and then spit it out. We are working on that with the Environment team. We know that the C40 World Cities Food Working Group is working on global indicators and seeking to --

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** We would be looking to grow local to reduce those miles?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Growing locally is one of the potential things that we would support more of, yes.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** No, I just want to try to bring in some of the others as well, Claire. Thank you. Can I just ask? This might be for Sarah. It is the issue that Claire and Mark have alluded to, which is about transporting the food around. Another one of the impacts we started looking at is the waste. One of the things that we are often told - and certainly we have been told here - is that we need to put everything into multiple layers of plastic and into black plastic containers, and all the rest of it, because it would go off immediately if it is not covered in huge amounts of plastic. Is there anything that the Strategy can do to set targets and goals and timescales on packaging?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** It feels like we always come back and say that it is complicated, but that is the reality of it. The supermarkets have made food systems in a way very simple but in a way very complicated. What is really exciting about the Strategy and how it ties in is the retail element of that. How do we create a diverse local retail system that can much more easily provide everyday shopping, which is what people look for, and street markets and that sort of thing? We work quite closely with sustainable food enterprises like the box scheme and Growing Communities. There are a number of those being replicated and now there are also food assemblies. They are completely aware of all of that stuff and so they do not sell anything with packaging. They link up with farmers. Growing in the City is complicated because of housing and it is very difficult to earn a living as a farmer if you have to rent a house in London, but we are working with the farmers who are nearer to London and building in those supply chains.

The most important thing is creating a market. That is, again, where procurement comes in. If procurement contracts can guarantee farmers a market, then there is much more opportunity to create localised food systems. Does that answer your question?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Do you mind if I just say two things that might be value for you to know?

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** If that would be helpful, yes.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** We have the Healthy Schools London programme, which has a standard on it, and so that really covers procurement.

The other thing that is a really important piece of work that has been done - led by Sustain and supported by the LFB over a long time - is Procurement Across London (PAL). PAL was based on Good Food on the Public Plate, and it was started when we had a Government Office for London. It was bringing together the local authorities and the way they bought and linking them with big local producers. PAL now is worth millions of pounds and is led by the London Borough of Havering. The boroughs can sign up to it and then they can buy through it from British producers. It was one of the best pieces of work. Well done to Sustain for initiating it and the GLA for supporting it. It means that if you do not stay with the borough contract and you opt out, you can still buy through this incredibly brilliant buying group, and that is really important. Allowing schools to become more independent and autonomous means they still get the benefit because in lots of cases schools have lost all the benefit of joint purchasing. PAL provides that and it is one of the best pieces of procurement work. It is a really brilliant opportunity and we need to make more of it.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you very much. That is really helpful. I am going to bring in Tony Arbour now to look at food security and climate change.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Yes, indeed. Essentially, these questions are to you, Mark. This relates to assessing London's food security. Who are the partners who are going to be involved in making this assessment and how will existing knowledge be used?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Food security or food insecurity - its flipside, I guess - is on a lot of different levels. The Mayor undertook to assess household food insecurity in London, for example, because we know that a lot of Londoners are struggling. We are currently partnering with the GLA Intelligence team, which is about to launch a wide-ranging survey of Londoners on indicators including household food insecurity, the most detailed survey of its type that there has ever been, to tell us the extent to which families are struggling or, compared to last year, for example, whether they have skipped meals or changed their buying or eating patterns because of the insecurity of their household budgets or for other reasons. On that level, we are taking that work forward in a way that has not been done before.

We are also doing work with the London Climate Change Partnership, partnering with Chatham House and others, on what you might call the more macro study of London's food security, including its resilience to unforeseen events. We will have more of a handle than we have had before on how London feeds itself, what could potentially disrupt that regime and what we could do to mitigate any problems that come our way. We are looking at the macro level as well as at the household.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I see. As far as you are concerned, the micro level is that people might not be able to afford food and so they are insecure on that basis and, on the macro level, is that there may not be any food. Is that right?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** The second part, yes, that is an interpretation.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Unforeseen events.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Yes. I cannot remember who alluded to it, but supermarkets are extremely efficient. Supermarket supply chains mean that today or tomorrow or on any given day there is only three days' food supply in London right now.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Is that right?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** There was that volcanic ash cloud from Iceland. If that had affected us more directly, then what implication would that have had on our food supplies? I do not know the answer to that, but one can see that there are a number of things that could happen at any given time if we have only three days. How do we --

**Tony Arbour AM:** Is that figure mentioned anywhere in the Strategy?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** The three days figure? Yes.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I have it in front of me and I missed it. That is very exciting.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** That is predicated on extremely sufficient -- I would not say it is exciting but I applaud your optimism.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Again, I suppose at a macro level, the Strategy does refer to Brexit. It says:

*"... food businesses in London are facing challenges, not least in the context of Brexit negotiations which could threaten our supply chains ..."*

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Yes.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Why do you say it could "threaten our supply chains"? Surely another way of writing this sentence could have been, "Brexit gives Londoners the opportunity to have access to food without paying extremely high tariffs".

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Again, I note that interpretation.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Yes. It is an interpretation.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Brexit, clearly, some people would argue, offers opportunities in some ways, yes, but we know that just over 30% of our food currently comes from the European Union (EU). If any part of that chain were to be interrupted or made more complicated, that is a potential problem. We know that 35% of people who work in the food industry - and I am not talking about in the UK, which has a different level of fruit-pickers and so on, but in London - are from the EU. They work not just in the Pret A Manger around the corner but in the processing and manufacturing. If Brexit were to exacerbate our already existing skills challenges in London, by the way, in the hospitality sector and if that were to get worse because of Brexit, then that is a different kind of challenge as well.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Let us just talk about supply chains. I do take your point about the effect, but of course all those arguments were used when they abolished the Corn Laws.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** I was not in this office at that time, no, but --

**Tony Arbour AM:** It is easy to be flippant --

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Sorry.

**Tony Arbour AM:** -- but, in fact, the parallel is absolutely exact. There were people who said that when you have got rid of the Corn Laws, agriculture in this country will collapse, the people will starve and it will be absolutely appalling. In fact, the exact opposite happened. The price of bread fell, the health of the nation improved considerably, and that led to a great economic renaissance. To suggest that somehow or another there are not opportunities in relation to Brexit in a way suggests that the Strategy is rather partisan and it really ought not to be. I will not pursue that, Madam Chair. The point is easily understood.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** I would apologise for my unintended flippancy, but, yes, we know that the current situation is the kind of metrics that I just described. We know that Brexit may offer opportunities. We are trying all the time to improve the workforce and improve the supply of food into London. If Brexit develops and gives us opportunities to make things better, then we will certainly capitalise upon that.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I do hope you do. I am also tasked to ask you: what is the potential for London's own food growth to contribute to London's food security? Maybe this one is not for you. Maybe this one is perhaps for your allotmenters.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** At Sustain, we are faced with the situation of Brexit and we are - exactly that - looking at it as an opportunity. What are the opportunities in there? There is opportunity to grow more food within the border of London, definitely, and the changes that are afoot around the price that people will pay for food will change that opportunity.

At the moment, it is very difficult for people to make a living out of growing food and that is because we can get cheaper food imported. That is the challenge that we face. If that playing field changes, then of course there is much more opportunity to grow food in London. The difficulty then is if the price of food rises. All the things we were talking about before about household insecurity need to be addressed at the same time. We need to put up everybody's income so that everybody can afford to pay a little bit more for food so that people can afford to be farmers in London. That is the reality. At the moment, the people who are running the large-scale farming projects are doing it as a labour of love. They are doing it because they are passionate about it and because they believe in changing --

**Tony Arbour AM:** Are there large-scale farming projects in London?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** Yes. I would happily take you to one, if you like.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I have a rural constituency. I represent that part of Kingston which stretches out into Mole Valley and I have loads of farms; well, not loads, but probably as many farms as anyone else. It is not large scale.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** OK, yes, but if you are a horticultural producer, then you can produce at scale.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Yes, I take that; market crops.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** It is not arable and it is not field crops but market crops, yes. There are some field crops there as well. There is much more potential. We know that there is a Green Belt around London and that largely it is left to its own devices. Maybe horses are grazing on it or they are growing food for horses and food that is not for human consumption. We know there are lots of opportunities there, but London will never dream of being self-sufficient in food and so it is more about how we build those markets and the supply chains to the farms that are connected to London and what we call the 'rural hinterland' and how we can build that.

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** It is a really important set of issues and, of course, at the heart of it will be the agriculture policy that the Government finally agrees on. Once it comes to Parliament, I gather Michael Gove [Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs] said a couple of days ago, it is likely to be the end of July [2018] now. It is about how we think about subsidies for the smallest growers who, to date, have been left out of the Common Agricultural Policy and the benefits that that has brought to farmers in the UK and is a really genuine opportunity for us to rethink how we use the funding that comes for farming to support some of the smaller growers who are often having a much wider set of social values, whether it is because they are trying more agroecological growing methods or whether it is because they have a direct link to the community that they are serving and helping people to experience a greater connection with their food, which has a knock-on impact on the extent to which they waste it or the extent to which they value healthier products and so forth. There is real opportunity, but that policy at the moment rests at the national level rather than at the city level.

**Tony Arbour AM:** It is a fact, of course, that during the war they tried to maximise food security for London. Every patch of ground was dug up and they had allotments in Hyde Park and all that sort of stuff. In fact, it made very little impact, did it not? In truth, it was a propaganda thing because the huge demand in London for food was only barely met but it made people feel good. I do wonder whether or not people having allotments and things like that, rather than having any kind of commercial potentiality, just makes them feel good. I am sure you know more about that than I do, Chair, in relation to that.

The final question I am asking is one for you, Mark. What about the GLA's procurement policy to assist in food security and increase food production in London.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** I alluded to it earlier. We have a responsible procurement policy, which includes a responsible food procurement commitment, which was written around the London 2012 Olympic Games and which we are revisiting now because the whole of that broader policy is being updated. That will be worked upon. The next iteration of it is in September [2018], I heard. For the 7 million meals that the GLA serves across Transport for London (TfL), the police, this building and elsewhere, all the contracts will commit the suppliers to higher-welfare seasonal food, fewer sugary drinks, more water and more healthy food in general so that we can take that agenda forward that way across what is a large estate and a lot of meals.

**Tony Arbour AM:** That is an annual figure, is it, the 7 million meals?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** There are 7 million meals a year across each constituent part of the GLA Group.



**Tony Arbour AM:** Yes, I understand.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** I am going to bring in Assembly Member Sahota now to talk about health. Just so that you know, Onkar is Chair of the Health Committee as well as being a member of the Environment Committee.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Yes. Thank you, Chair. I also come from a background of medicine. Of course, healthy food is a very important part. As we know, babies born today are within the reach of living 100 years. A 100-year life is within our reach, but a very important part of that is a healthy diet. The first question is: how do we define a healthy diet and who does that definition for us?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** We use the Department of Health guidelines on a healthy diet. Typically, when we teach it or we talk about it, we use the Eatwell Plate as the guidance for what our food should look like for a day's consumption. That is what we say to businesses. That is what we say in terms of teaching people about the food that they should eat. It has been based on the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition guidance for the last 40 years. It is really interesting because I have been saying that it is the same for 40 years, except that it changed a few months ago, the Eatwell Plate, but it has more or less been the same. That is what we base it on. We use the Department of Health guidelines around salt and oil.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** That is one definition. There are other definitions of a healthy diet and there is controversy about if that is even right. However, apart from that, given that we know what a healthy diet is, what is stopping people buying it? What is stopping that mother who is in the supermarket? The cost of an apple is less than the cost of a bar of chocolate, yet that mother is buying a bar of chocolate rather than an apple. Why is that happening?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** It is something that I have a lot of experience of. In my day job, I work in food access projects and food programmes. My job started 16 years ago by starting a fruit and vegetable market stall in the middle of the Ferrier Estate in Kidbrooke. The Ferrier Estate now does not exist. All the shops were closed. The nearest street market was Lewisham. It was two bus rides away. The nearest supermarket was Woolwich or Lee Green and so --

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** In the question I asked, the supermarket is open and the mother is in the supermarket. She has a choice between buying a bar of chocolate, which costs more than the apple does, but yet she still chooses to buy the bar of chocolate for that child. It has nothing to do with opening hours.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** The industry, as in the manufacturers, spend billions and billions of pounds to make people think that they will feel good when they eat that stuff or they tie it in with cartoon characters. We are constantly complaining to the Advertising Standards Agency about this. They would not spend billions of pounds if that advertising did not work. We know that there is an element of 'pester power' and that children want to eat that stuff.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** We did some insight work when we did the first-ever whole-environment approach to tackling childhood obesity. We did a year of insight work and we interviewed parents and we interviewed children. There was a child who said, "A pint-and-a-half glass of full-cream milk is really good for me". They are quoting adverts.

I remember coming to a conference here about how much money we spend on marketing fruit and vegetables in Britain and how much is spent on the food industry, and they obviously spend it because they know it

works. I have to say that I do have a lot of experience with people who genuinely are trying to change the food that they are buying, but you have the huge power of industry and advertising and marketing, and it has to be really effective, but you do have barriers.

Yes, you were saying that someone is in the supermarket and maybe it is 'pester power' or confidence around parenting. If you think that we have companies that are marketing products like powdered milk and baby food to parents from a very young age saying, "This is better for you", then we are undermining the confidence of parents from very early on. If you put that against a child and a busy person walking through a supermarket, it is going to be so much easier. We are undermining parents with marketing and how we promote things. They are dealing with a child; they are likely to be busy and harassed; they are just doing sometimes the only thing they can do that is making life easier.

In my experience - we teach about 1,000 people a year in cookery clubs - people genuinely want to make a change. They genuinely want to do the best thing that they can for their families and themselves. They just need confidence. They need nudging. They need continual support. They need follow-up. They need to be encouraged. It takes a lot of confidence.

I live with my partner and I have two children, and I am still making arguments, "But it is a treat", "You are so mean". That is what I get. I do not have them in the house. I will not buy them and I am a 'mean mother' for not letting her have sweets. When I come home, her packed lunch is there and all the five fruit and veg that I put in has not been eaten. I sit down and say, "You have to eat all of that". I have a partner saying, "You should go easy on her". That is what you are faced with. Sometimes it is like, "Give her more sweets", or I am the 'mean mother' all the time.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** The point I am coming from is that there is no lack of information and people know what is good for them. I do not think that we have not educated them enough. I have done this for the last 25 years in my surgery and see all these campaigns. People know what is good and bad. For example, we knew that smoking was bad for you, but it was not until we legislated that you cannot smoke in a public place that we got a change in behaviour. For how many years did we know that wearing a seatbelt was good for your safety? Something had to be done to make them make the right choice. There is something about human behaviour. It is that dialogue between push and shove. That we need to get right and I am not entirely sure that this Strategy gets that.

Let me push this a bit further. We did talk about advertising and the Mayor is very keen on doing this, making sure that we do not advertise on TfL, about making a healthy diet important, and also making sure that planning applications mean that we do not put fast-food near schools. What is the evidence to support that this sort of thing will work?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** On the evidence, around the 400-metre exclusion zone, there are a number of boroughs that have had to produce evidence to get this into the Supplementary Planning Guidance. Lewisham and Waltham Forest have produced quite a lot of evidence around the positioning of fast-food outlets and the behaviour of children. They have been able to evidence it enough to get Supplementary Planning Guidance. The evidence is definitely there around the 400-metre exclusion zone.

However, with advertising, for the boroughs, there is the Local Declaration on Healthy Food that the boroughs are signing up to, and there has been quite a lot of evidence done by a number of different academics and universities. There is work that has been done in Amsterdam about the impact of advertising. Even if you take away --

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** There is a strong evidence base, then?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** There is quite a lot. There is a strong evidence base.

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** I completely agree. It has all been very recently presented to the Health Select Committee, as you probably know, in Parliament, that body of evidence. It is particularly linked to exposure of children to repeated [advertising] and those associations with obesity outcomes and, also, particularly children who are watching television for long periods of time and their food consumption habits while they are watching not necessarily television but screens of various sorts. There is definitely a good evidence base on which to base this policy. It is ground-breaking policy.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Mark, given this is effective, why is alcohol not part of the Strategy? Why are we still advertising alcohol along with other healthy foods?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Alcohol is not marketed or advertised to children. It is not targeted to them, whereas we know that the fast-food industry predicated a lot of its profit base upon --

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Do you think a child walking around on London transport can say, "This ad is targeted at me and this ad is targeted at my mum and dad"? Do you think a child can differentiate between those?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Yes. If you meet with marketing and branding companies, they absolutely know how to target children. I was working --

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Let me ask Mark. The fact that alcohol is not being exempt, what sort of message is that giving to young children?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Alcohol is going to be exempt.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Fine. Exactly. There will be advertising about alcohol.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** What message does that give to children?

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Yes.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Alcohol is not marketed at young children or, indeed, at children of any age.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** When they see adverts about alcohol and beer in TfL stations, you think it is all right for them to buy that?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** That is not marketed at them, whereas there is evidence that children associate fast food and the bright lights and the satisfaction of the food and the toys that come with it, and the things that are around that whole fast-food environment are aimed at children. Alcohol is exempt from this proposal --

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Do you think there is a problem of alcoholism in children in this country? Are underage children drinking alcohol in London?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** I do not know.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** Alcohol consumption is actually reducing among younger people in London.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Do children drink alcohol? That is the question.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** I would imagine that some children drink alcohol illegally, yes.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Most liver failure in this country now is among adolescent children because of the alcohol.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** I was going to say that the thing about the ban is that it is a controversial policy. In terms of revenue generation from the advertising, there has been nervousness to look at that, and so this is a first step to see what the impact is of reducing advertising for the higher fat, salt or sugar products and what impact that has. Maybe there are opportunities to then take that further.

Starting with the things that are focused on children is a really good approach, because we know that those specific adverts are marketed at small children and we know we have a problem with childhood obesity. We are making that link and taking that step first. I appreciate that it is a debate about what you do next, but the idea is that, in itself, it is a very bold step and one that the people that count the numbers are going to want to look at.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** In that context, for clarification, during the eight-week consultation on the whole of the Strategy, there is clearly a consultation on the advertising thing, which is being led by our colleagues at TfL, who have the estate to start with and who have the commercial relationships with the advertisers and with the food and drinks brands. Those discussions are underway and ongoing and so we wait to see what they provide.

In terms of whether there would be a loss of money, I do not know. There would be an element of displacement and so could those businesses advertise some of their healthy options? That is one of the proposals. Also, I am interested to explore and we are starting this conversation: could we use some of the TfL advertising estate to advertise fruit and veg, to put it simply, to advertise different kinds of healthy --

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Mark, I also want to pick up this comment you made about 'democracy of approach', which was highly commended when you were at the Stockholm conference. What do you mean by 'democracy of approach'?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** In the context in which I used that phrase, it was put to me by Toronto and New York City yesterday, applauding - they have read our Strategy - the ways in which we are engaging with Londoners. We have, "Here is what you can do". We have the interactive Talk London platform run by GLA Intelligence, which has not been overrun but has been inundated with comments on this Strategy, more than most --

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** In the context of healthy food, how is this being carried out around this 'democracy of approach'? Does the public know what healthy food is? Is that what you mean: that they will be defining it for you?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Thank you for clarifying the question. One of the reasons that we thought of this idea and this potential intervention, which is clearly still a proposal, is because with health colleagues a couple of years ago we did The Great Weight Debate, which was a large-scale survey of Londoners. To simplify, we said to them, "What do you think the Mayor should do in this arena?" They came back with an overwhelming response, "Everywhere we go, we are bombarded by marketing and promotion of unhealthy food", what we would call an obesogenic environment. They just say, "There is fast food everywhere. Can the Mayor do something to take that away from our streets because of 'pester power' and because of everything?" Therefore, that was us literally and explicitly listening to the democratic feedback at that stage and designing this potential intervention.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Is there anyone else who wants to say who has not had a chance to say something about health that you were hoping to say in particular? Great.

I am now going to bring in Assembly Member Arnold, who is going to be picking up on food poverty in more detail.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Yes. Thank you. Can I just have a quick answer to this, Claire? You said you were on the previous Board from 2009. Now that you are Chair, why do you not accept a goal of zero hunger? What is wrong about carrying forward something like a zero-hunger goal from the last Strategy to this? You were there.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Sorry, saying that we should take the zero-hunger from the 2005 Strategy and embed it within this Strategy?

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Yes, bring it forward. Why did you not?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Can I start to answer the question? By "zero hunger", I think you are referring to the report that was led by Assembly Member Twycross, which came out - I am guessing - four or five years ago, from memory. Yes, Claire has been a member of the LFB since 2004. We are still trying to eradicate all food poverty and hunger in London. I cannot remember what verb you used, Jennette. We have not stopped using the zero-hunger city as a philosophy or a driver. We are aiming to eradicate in different ways.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** I think people understand that we are looking for a zero-hunger goal and that is where we want to go. It is something solid. It comes back to the work we did: we are going to stop smoking, not part smoking, not wishing people would stop. We are going to reach a position of zero hunger. That is totally different to hoping that all Londoners can eat well and they can enjoy food security.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** You are saying that you think that the Strategy should have included an implicit statement saying we would like to aim for zero hunger?

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** It would make sense. That is what I am trying to say.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Yes, and we can take that comment back because this is the consultation period. The thing that we wanted to do was about zero hunger, and what we also want to expand is that it is not just about food; it is about people accessing a healthy, appropriate diet. What we sometimes see --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Yes, that comes after. Let us just see if we could set a goal. What worries me is that, without saying that, are you not then saying then that there is a level of food poverty that is acceptable in the City?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Actually, I have read it as something different. I have read it as implicit that we absolutely have to eradicate any hunger because, if we are saying we want every single Londoner - which is our mission statement - to access a healthy, affordable diet, implicit in that is zero hunger. I misunderstood the question because I feel implicit in this Strategy is something that says very clearly zero hunger in the mission statement. If we want everyone to access a healthy, affordable diet, that is zero hunger.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** That is not how I see it. I disagree.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** There are comments coming back on the Strategy. To say we need something implicit because we do not think people are going to understand that is a valuable response to a draft Strategy.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** There seems to be fewer specific goals as well about reducing food poverty than the previous Strategy had under the previous Mayor. Can you tell us how you are going to ensure that all Londoners have enough to eat?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** With the original Strategy - and I was involved in that and that was a year of research to get to those targets - a lot of people felt that that Strategy was inaccessible. The feedback that we had over a really long period of time was that it was too detailed and it was inaccessible. Consequently, when people feel a Strategy is inaccessible, they do not use it.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** It had goals in it.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Yes, it had goals and it had targets. It had hundreds of them. I still remember some of them, like a street market in every town centre, which we have nearly achieved.

Once this draft Strategy is an agreed Strategy, there will be an Implementation Plan for the LFB. There is a work programme for GLA Food team, and there will be targets, goals and ways of measuring our impact --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Specifically about food poverty?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Food poverty and food insecurity is important to us. If we want every --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Is there a difference between 'food insecurity' and 'food poverty' so that you cannot answer my question about food poverty? We should focus on food poverty.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** I would say we would describe it as 'food insecurity' rather than 'food poverty'.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** We have new language now that we are to use?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** That is the language that people are using. I do not know whether they mean the same thing.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** Food insecurity, not --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** We are not talking about poverty anymore; we are talking about insecurity?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** No, we are talking about food poverty, Assembly Member Arnold. Food insecurity is almost a broader term to describe people who are - I am simplifying it slightly - at risk of falling into food poverty because of a precarious employment situation or whatever else affects their household.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** If you are not talking about food poverty, then you do not have to put up a measure for food poverty.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** No, we are.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Food poverty is implicit within food insecurity. If you look at the work of people like Elizabeth Dowler [Emeritus Professor of Food and Social Policy, University of Warwick], who is probably one of the best academics looking at this, they do not think --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** No, I do not want any more narrative. I just want to stay with some specific answers to my question.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** 'Food poverty' is not seen as a helpful term.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** How do you measure food poverty in this current document? Do you or not?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Yes. You measure food poverty as not having access to a healthy diet --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Can we hear from Anna?

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** Sure. There is a very robust way of measuring what we call 'food insecurity', which is really another term for 'food poverty'. It is the work --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Can you stay with the words 'food poverty' for me? I am a simple north Londoner.

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** Yes, of course. It is a 10-question scale, which starts with questions about whether you are worried about running out of money before you have to buy food, right through to the most extreme, "Have you have gone 24 hours without eating because of lack of money in the last six months?" It is a recommended measure, which is part of the tracking of the sustainable development goals internationally. Canada and the United States [of America] have it adopted within their national measurement strategies.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Everybody talks 'poverty' and, when you look nationally to look at how we could fit into what is happening, it is reasonable that we talk about 'food poverty'.

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** They all call it 'food insecurity', which is why we have adopted that term. It means the same thing in practice and, obviously, the primary reason for food insecurity is poverty. We are not trying to dodge the issue there. It is just a case of consistency of language.

The point is that we do not have a national measure in the UK and the work of the GLA, which Mark referred to, which is the Intelligence Unit is really important. What it will allow us to do is to have a baseline for London so that we can then track progress in the Strategy. When we develop the metrics and the action plan for the Strategy, we can have that baseline figure in there. I am looking to Mark for reassurance.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** That is true.

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** Yes. We will be able to then track progress against that baseline going forward.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** We may well in an Implementation Plan set targets to address that. I do the same piece of work in Greenwich and to develop a baseline on food poverty or food insecurity in Greenwich, we have to look at 15 indicators like breastfeeding rates because we do not have a baseline way to measure household insecurity. That is why we really welcome the Mayor doing it because we do not have a starting point. We do not know what it is; we do not know how to measure our impact. Starting with this gives us a way and we will have an Implementation Plan. Therefore, apologies about the language, but it is --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** In terms of what we are doing in London, how does that fit in with what the rest of the cities are doing? If you like, you could get a coalition of action that eventually then speaks to the Government and then you affect the Government. London on its own is not going to be able to do that.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** We run a programme called Food Power and that is a city-based approach to tackling the issues around food poverty and household food insecurity. There is a programme nationally that works within local areas and there are lots of London Food Power projects going on.

One of the things is about this measurement stuff so that we know that we are going in the right direction. Another big element of that is also about experts by experience. How do we include people with lived experience of those challenges day-to-day and coming up with the solutions rather than people who have not experienced it sitting around a table and deciding what is best? That is definitely happening.

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** It is an important point about cities starting to do more measurement. For example, in Liverpool we have been working quite closely with Liverpool City Council because it is really concerned about food poverty in the City and wants to start measuring. The Scottish Government is now starting to measure at the national level within Scotland.

You are right that that momentum is needed to make sure that we have a decent national measure and that this is not just isolated examples but that we can get to the point where we have an agreed understanding of the scale of this challenge. At the moment, we do not and it allows us to dodge the issue, frankly, in policy terms.



**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** There is no narrative about that in the document or about working to bring about change nationally, not that I have seen, but maybe we can feed that through.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** That is something that we can increase. Near the start of the document, it says we are part of the Sustainable Food Cities Network, which is across the UK and Ireland. We do not explicitly --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** That is the same thing?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** It is an example. I agree with you that we should draw this out and make it more explicit.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** It is just that the problem I have is that this is so worthy, and we want something tangible that is going to bring about change because people are starving. Whoever put the words in the Mayor's mouth, "We should not accept food banks as a fact of life in London"? What are we doing? Are we ignoring the million-odd people who now totally depend on food banks? What action is there in this food poverty section that the Mayor can do and will do to reduce the level of dependence on food banks and the level of poverty that has now been experienced by so many Londoners? That is what I am asking. That is what people want to hear about.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** The Food Poverty Action Plans that the boroughs have been doing, which really link with Food Power, which is UK-wide, and the Sustainable Food Cities food poverty element, are helping the boroughs identify everything they can do to address food poverty.

It is a result of poverty. It is things like the London Living Wage and Living Wage-friendly funders. It is about maximising the uptake of Healthy Start benefits and all benefits. It is about decent housing. It is about a 365-days-a-year meal offer for children who normally get free school meals. It is about breastfeeding rates. It is about decent retail strategies. It is a wide range of things. It is about meals for vulnerable older people. Those are the causes of poverty. Poverty is the cause of food poverty, but there are loads of other things that we have and mechanisms we have in place that can help us mitigate some of the causes around those kinds of things.

We have also *Beyond the Food Bank*, which is a report that Sustain does based on the work that boroughs do to do as much as they can to mitigate against food poverty.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Thank you. We can make reference because we already know about the work of some boroughs. I represent Waltham Forest and so I know some of the leading stuff they are doing.

I have two other areas and I want to move away from young people and just spend a moment looking at elders. That report by the All Parliamentary Group on hunger highlighted a heightened risk of malnutrition among older people. I am sure general practitioners (GPs) will not be surprised at that. Anybody who is living a real life will not be surprised at that.

Again, I am just wondering. What are you planning to say the Mayor can do in terms of Londoners elders who are on the brink of or are experiencing malnutrition?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** We have talked about meals on wheels, but we need to talk more extensively about all meals for older people. It is not just meals for vulnerable older people at home; it is meals for older people, too, in community settings because we also need to address social isolation. Also, the other thing is about food access. If you are an older person and you have those access issues, then a good local retail strategy - hopefully, if it addresses access issues for certain population groups - will also help us address access issues for older people.

The other thing is around procurement, care homes, catering, MUSS testing. What are we doing when we are doing the meals on wheels? Is it an enhanced service where we are also looking at MUSS testing? Are we doing calorie enrichment with some of the meals when we identify someone is at risk of malnutrition? What are the quality standards in care home and supported housing? All of those --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** The Strategy will be asking further questions about that, but no tangible action is planned?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** No, there will be an action plan and we have already met with Fiona Twycross [AM] to talk about older people. We are hoping that we will do a piece of work to look at the picture now. We have some really brilliant models happening in certain boroughs and we have other boroughs where we have very little happening. Recently, Hackney just commissioned £1 million of lunch club services to older people, which is a fantastic thing. Other boroughs are doing different things. We have the Hertfordshire Independent Living Service model that we have been looking at. There has been a lot of work looking at this. We really need to understand where the work needs to be done, where we can intervene, who we can work with and where the partners are. It is across quite a number of settings.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** We have just been joined by the children from Manor Longbridge School from Barking and Dagenham. We are talking about food today and thinking about how we make sure that everyone in London is able to eat good food. We are questioning some people from the office of the Mayor of London and people who are helping the Mayor of London to make sure everyone can eat good food. Jennette?

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** I think some people are looking a little bit hungry. Do you, Chair?

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** They are, yes.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** A little bit, but I am afraid we have no food.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** We are just talking about it.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Who is planning to eat fruit today? Show us. You are just all so good. Well done.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Ask them who is going to eat chocolate.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** No.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** Who had strawberries for breakfast?

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Who had strawberries for breakfast? Nice. Excellent. There are loads of strawberries around. Thank you. I have just one question left. I have loads of other questions, but I am going to just stay with this one. I would like the actions. What is the GLA doing to tackle holiday hunger?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** We have the Mayor's Fund and we have Kitchen Social. Across London now, the Mayor is supporting the development of Kitchen Social, which are holiday meal providers. There is quite a lot of support and funding and a steering group and advisory group here. It is normally an existing community group or school and Kitchen Social provides them with support around resources, managing kitchens, food safety and volunteering. I cannot remember how many Kitchen Socials there will be this summer but I would advise going to see them. They are at --

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** The Mayor's Fund for London established that programme a couple of years back. What new is planned? The Mayor's Fund for London is associated with the GLA but is not of the GLA. What is the GLA doing?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** The GLA in terms of the LFB and the boroughs subgroup or in terms of the Secretariat? The LFB boroughs subgroup partners with Kitchen Social and they work really closely to support each other about best models and dissemination of those models. We have been working on that for quite a long time.

In September [2018] there is going to be a conference. The best models that we can find in London including Kitchen Social, the model in Greenwich and also people from outside London are coming to talk to the rest of the London boroughs and all community groups. There is going to be a conference to help disseminate best practice.

With Kitchen Social, everything that they have learned is disseminated in a practical guidance for anyone to be able to start holiday meal provision. It works very closely with the boroughs subgroup of the LFB.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Anyone with the capacity to start. That is not all Londoners, is it?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** It is community groups. The thing is that you do need a setting and what we found is most practical about holiday meal provision - I have been involved in two pilots - is that if you already have an existing holiday scheme, you can add food to it. The most expensive part of holiday meal provision is not the food and is not the volunteers serving the food; it is the venue. The cost of opening schools in the summer is proving to be prohibitive and schools also, being independent autonomous bodies, are not necessarily willing to do it. What you have is things like adventure playgrounds and youth groups. They are the people - church groups, community centres - who are open in the summer for children anyway. This is appearing to be the most pragmatic, affordable and accessible and is likely to be the best way we can get full provision at the moment until we get a lot more money invested.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** So many things come out of that. You would have thought that you would be asking the Mayor to use his powers of persuasion to deal with this issue of schools being closed during this period when they could be supporting those children in need.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** It is cost to schools. I would love to use the power of persuasion to ask schools to open but, having spoken to schools; it is whether or not a school has the money to open. I work very closely with a school in Charlton. They rent out their school premises to raise the money to open in the summer, but they happen to be very fortunate to have a separate building they can use as a

restaurant. A lot of schools have very small premises and it is how they generate the income to be able to afford to open in the summer. Unless they get a massive budget increase, are very lucky or have other revenue streams, we still need to ask who is going to pay for a school to open for six weeks. It is a huge cost.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** The very last question is to Mark. How much money was put aside in the Mayor's recent budget to fund actions arising from his Food Strategy?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** For the GLA Food Programme for the current financial year that has just started, our Mayoral Direction gives £144,000 for projects, in addition to us having two and three-quarter - let us call it three - staff members permanently in the Food team. To do our projects, we have £144,000.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** £144,000 is all that is allocated to this?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** That is in our recently signed Mayoral Direction.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Can I say ...

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Your face says it all. We are going to move on to look at food growing in London and I am going to bring Leonie in.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** We touched on this a bit earlier on when Sarah ran through a little list of where there is some food growing in outer London, mainly, you were saying, Enfield, Walthamstow and places. The draft Strategy does emphasise the great importance of food growing in London - and, obviously, you heard me on food miles earlier - and sets out some actions that are going to promote food growing.

How much more food growing do you think there is capacity for or how much food growing space? That was something that you alluded to. There is quite a lot of housing that gets in the way. Would that represent success? How would we measure success in this Strategy in terms of an increase in food growing?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** In the last Strategy, one of the big targets and one of the big successes was the Capital Growth campaign to create 2,012 new food growing spaces. I am pleased to say we made that target and we have continued to support and grow that network. That is something that I am quite involved in.

We are not at capacity. There is capacity for more food growing. We are really pleased to see stuff in the London Plan around putting food growing into new housing developments and looking at that creatively. We have schools that want to grow food and doing that if they have room within their grounds or, if not, they are partnering up with local places. We are not saturated and so there could be an element of growing that.

What is more important now is to solidify the network of growing spaces that we have, to look at how we start to protect those and see those as real assets of community value. We are now seeing, as development continues and housing continues, some of those spaces coming under threat. How do we want to protect them? How do we see those spaces as places that have biodiversity and wildlife value? We put in quite a

detailed response to the Environment Strategy to say that we think that food growing should have more prevalence in this. There is a lot of work to link up those two areas.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** Do we have a complete list of everywhere where food growing is going on? Do we have a baseline that we are starting from?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** Yes. We have a map. You can go online at [capitalgrowth.org](http://capitalgrowth.org) and you can see a map of all the food growing spaces in London. I cannot tell you that we have 100% of them because that would be fairly impossible. I cannot tell you that all of those ones are currently active because maintaining a database that is that size requires constant work because people move and people's email addresses change. However, yes, we have a really good baseline to start. We are aware of --

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** That does not include people having greenhouses and, as I just alluded to, I have all my strawberries now out in my garden and so I am a very happy person. I have some other things that I grow in my garden, but there was a project that was called Food Up Front that was encouraging to grow in their front gardens. Is that sort of network where it is slightly more organised included at all?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** People who grow at home can join our network. We have people listed who grow so that they get access to the same information, support, training and stuff that we do there. People join schemes like the Royal Horticultural Society and Garden Organics. There are lots of things for individuals who want support.

You could spend your whole life measuring what people are doing and who is doing what and we do a fair bit of that. We like baselines and we like to measure what is going on. We measure how much food they grow so that we can estimate the value of that. We do loads of work on that.

What we are really interested in is how we now link up food growing with other agendas. How can we use it as part of discussions around social prescribing so that people are signposted? How can we use it as part of skills development so that people can get training through growing food and then they can go to work in that sector or in another sector? How do we now develop some more of the commercially viable farming and what opportunities are there for that?

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** That comes on from the baseline and measuring how much to actually what people are growing. You mentioned social prescribing. Is there any guidance that has been given in this Strategy about the kind of food that we might be particularly seeking to encourage, which might make people healthier, or anything like that?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** If you are growing food and eating it unprocessed, it is not unhealthy. I would say that we --

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** I tried growing chocolate in my garden and it just did not work.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** The chocolate tree just does not work.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** Not in this country, anyway.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** We would encourage people to grow what they are going to enjoy growing and what works for them. We can tell you what people do tend to grow, and that is salads because they are high-value and so it saves you more money and because they are great fresh. When you are growing them, they do not go off. People love to grow tomatoes and strawberries. Yes, we have tracked some data on what people grow.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** More salad and fruit than vegetables? Is there any encouragement around vegetables?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** Yes, of course. There is a new campaign as part of Sustainable Food Cities called Veg Cities, and part that is looking at the work that Anna has been doing around getting people to eat more veg. Yes, it is quite an interesting approach. I would not say that we would dictate to people what they want to grow. If you want to grow, you know what you want to grow.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** Where we are coming from on this is the idea that we can be slightly more sustainable in terms of the food that we grow. This morning, it took me two minutes to go into my garden, pick the strawberries, wash them and then eat them. That involved no food miles, no plastic packaging, nothing at all, and it was completely delicious. However, when you look at trying to encourage people towards growing their own raspberries and strawberries, which grow very easily here, or maybe even having an apple tree, how much can we encourage people to want to do? There are constant adverts that we see telling us that blueberries are a superfood or we all have to eat an avocado every day. They are more difficult to grow. How can we counter that kind of messaging?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** The idea of social prescribing is really important for us because Sustain does an incredible job with 2,700 spaces and getting people to sign up and support. It has been unbelievable, and the master gardening. To have that baseline is incredible, but what we also need is the partners on the other side to say, "This is a really good thing for you. This is a really good thing to have in our social housing. This is a really good thing to do when we develop a new piece of housing". We need it in Supplementary Planning Guidance. We need local authorities and we need public health to say, "How do we do this around social prescribing? How does this work?" We need GPs to see the value of it. We need all of those partners to say, "This is possible and this is practical".

Also, then, when you have a balcony, we need the housing provider not having a problem with you covering it in food. I have seen great examples of Family Mosaic, which has now joined with Peabody, taking some land where there were not gardens and creating gardens for their residents. This is what we need. We have a great programme and we need measuring, but we need the partners to really support the practicalities around it so that the public can respond and we need the message to be there for the public. Every time someone is on an allotment waiting list, how about saying, "Did you know there is a community garden where you live? Did you know you can do this? How about doing this on your balcony?" We need practical, pragmatic support to enable people to do it and get the messages from both sides. That is definitely something we should be looking at in an action plan going forward.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** I can see Anna is also keen to come in on this as well.

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** Just on your point about how you get people excited about vegetables in particular. An initiative we are doing with lots of other people is around trying to create an advertising fund for veg because, as somebody said earlier, 1% of food and drink advertising goes on vegetables. We have just come to the end of a crowdfund and we have loads of the public involved. We have

now a proof-of-concept stage funded for the next year. We are working with some of the leading advertisers in the country. It is called Veg Power. If you google it, you will see lots of stuff on it. It is very much in that space. It is not specifically about growing but about trying to transform the image of veg in the eyes of kids and their parents, so that children are asking for veg and linking it to superheroes and all that kind of stuff. In fact, all that work began in this very room last October [2017] at the Veg Summit. That will all complement and is a nice antidote to the junk food advertising that this Strategy is trying to tackle as well.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** I hope you are all going to remember Veg Power. That is going to become a new superhero. We are going to be seeing a little cartoon and comics coming soon and that sort of thing? Or are we moving on from girl power and we are going to see some celebrities fronting it up?

**Anna Taylor OBE (Executive Director, Food Foundation):** There will be a mixture of all of that, yes.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** There is a lot of green infrastructure work that is going on in London, things like tree planting, sustainable drainage, promoting biodiversity. How much synergy is there between the food growing that is happening in London and those other environmental areas? How much are those programmes working together? Who wants to start?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** I am trying. I will happily share my response to the Environment Strategy with you. I read it. It was a very detailed Strategy and it looked at things like designations. In a way, food growing suffers because it does not have a specific designation. We are looking at how to create a designation for food growing, or where it fits into other designations, because the biodiversity within food growing areas is second to none. They are some of the most diverse green spaces that you are going to get. There is a lot of opportunity to build food growing more into green infrastructure and to look at things like how to grow food in parks and how all those things fit together.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Would growing food in parks be planting orchards or --

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** We are about to produce a document on this that shows about four different ways that you can grow. It tries to set a typology to help park managers to do that. There are lots of different ways that you can grow food in parks. That can be orchards, although they need to be looked after. It can be just edible planting within the planting system. It can be education and demonstration areas. It could be even productive areas, as we have seen in Dagenham. The growing community at Dagenham Farm is an area within a park, albeit closed off but it is still accessible to park users. Yes, we are really keen for food growing spaces to be recognised as part of green infrastructure.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** That is something you have fed into the Environment Strategy?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** Yes.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Have you had a response?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** I do not know if I have yet. I responded to so many, but I think an email might have come through about that. I should also say that the Food team is also helping us to go and meet with the Environment team to talk about this in a bit more detail because the Environment team is keen. The Food team used to be based within that department and has moved, but there are still strong contacts. We need to do some work to reinforce that again and to really see how we --

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** I do not know the answer to this, but anything that has not been able to be picked up through Sarah's existing feedback we will build as much of it as we can into this Strategy in this context.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Great. Just in general about encouraging more fruit tree and nut tree, for instance, growing, is there any programme to encourage Londoners to plant fruit trees in their gardens or on streets in boroughs?

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** There is obviously the tree programme that is run here. It is not specifically about fruit and nut trees, but there are opportunities for people to apply for funding to plant trees. There is also a couple of organisations. One is called the Orchard Projects and the other is Trees for Cities. They both run programmes to help communities and schools to plant orchards.

In terms of getting people to plant them in their own places, yes, it would be a great campaign. People are very nervous about planting trees because of subsistence and stuff, but street trees are really important. Seeing how you can put edible trees within those streetscapes is part of the Incredible Edible approach, which is about normalising the fact that food does grow in places and you can forage it and you can eat it.

Yes, it would be great to talk more to the Environment team about how we can feed food more into some of their environmental programmes.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Great. Then the urban fringe has come up peppered through the meeting this morning. As well as the more inner-urban food growing spaces, Sarah, you mentioned five proper horticultural big-scale farms in London. Do you think that there could be more added to the Strategy to recognise the significance of farming in the Green Belt in terms of London's food supply?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** I totally agree with that. It is difficult for us. We will not pretend that, through doing that, we will highlight that. That will not massively solve or enable London to be much more self-sufficient, but they do perform an important role. Yes, we will go back and amplify the wording on that.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** I should just tell you that Forty Hall has been working with Enfield Council and very recently has just done an extraordinary piece of work with the help of Gourmet Goat. They have helped the Council change the food that is on offer in their council building. It was quite complex because of the procurement process of buying through local producers. Instead of having one person procure food, you need a council that is very committed to changing and making it more accessible for 15 suppliers instead of one. This is the complexity. Gourmet Goat has supported Enfield Council to do this and --

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** What is Gourmet Goat?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Gourmet Goat is a --

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** Social enterprise.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** -- very small food business based at Borough Market, but they live in Enfield and they have a passion. They have just achieved this piece of work. I am going to propose to the Chair of our boroughs subgroup that we invite the Leader of Enfield Council to come to talk to the other boroughs and do a piece of work to say why it was important to them. Although, as Mark says, it has a part to



play maybe with 15 million people or however many people eating in London, but there is something symbolic and there is something really valuable. It is that idea of addressing food waste by attaching more value to the food because it is raised locally, and you can go and see it. These things can have a bigger impact. There is some real value in modelling and sharing and talking about the values behind that piece of work that we have a part to play in.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** One of the things that is quite complicated, I suppose, for all the people behind all of the strategies, is how they all jigsaw together. We also commented on the London Plan and there was a reference to growing in the Green Belt but, again, we wanted to see that emphasised. It is difficult to know how putting it in the Strategy will make it happen because there are so many different factors for people to start a farm, but having it there as a vision is really important and inspirational for the people who want to have more urban growing. There are also opportunities around the Good Growth Fund and that is alluded to in here and about how that could help those farms to start and help to create the infrastructure they need. You do not just need ground; you need more than that. You need farm buildings. You need to get planning permission to do that. There are lots of bits to put in place, but this document can help to put some of those steps in.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Good growth for good growing.

**Sarah Williams (Programme Director, Sustain):** Yes, that is perfect.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** What about the people who actually do the farming? In putting the Strategy together, have people who farm in London been consulted?

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** We are encouraging them to do responses to this Strategy, definitely. Quite a few of us work with people who are involved in farming. In Greenwich I work with Keats [Community] Organics and we helped to set them up. We are encouraging those people, along with a lot of other people, to respond to this Strategy without a doubt, yes.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Thank you. Does anyone have anything else that they are burning to say or that they feel has been missed out? Jennette has a quick question.

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** Yes, I have a quick question to Mark. One of the difficulties I am having is, without the Implementation Plan, feeling that I can say anything positive. When is the Implementation Plan going to be produced?

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** We are working on it now. Do you want to --

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Obviously, we want a finalised Strategy, but part of the process that we are going through is that we have asked all the Board Members to respond against every area of action to say how they feel they have a role and who the partners are they identify through the Strategy. We will also be looking at things like the baseline, the things that we have talked about, where we are starting and the work that has been going on for 14 years. An Implementation Plan I hope we would have this autumn.

**Mark Ainsbury (Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority):** We are saying that we envisage that the Strategy itself will be published by the end of this year [2018], so the Implementation Plan will be in parallel and in advance of that timing.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** Can I just add to that? I understand where Assembly Member Arnold's question is coming from. We alluded to it at the beginning and have now come back to it at the end. It is easier for us to conduct our scrutiny of a proposed strategy if we also have the Implementation Plan to hand as well. It might have meant that some of our questions were not required because we could see that there were baselines and time-bound targets with some interim milestones and all the rest of it. I personally would have found that really handy. Perhaps we could mention that if we are writing and giving some feedback from this Committee. That would have been helpful for us, actually. Having it with the draft Strategy would have been a preference.

**Claire Pritchard (Chair, London Food Board):** Yes. Thank you.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** We have managed to conclude the meeting before the one minute's silence and so I am going to take us through to the end. Can I thank all our guests for their contributions? All of you, thank you. It has been really interesting.

Can I ask the Committee to note the report as a background to putting questions to invited guests on the Mayor's draft Food Strategy and note the subsequent discussion, and delegate authority to me as Chair in consultation with party group members to agree any output arising from the discussion?

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** With the caveat that we have just made.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** That we would like to see the Implementation Plan?

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM:** I cannot see how we can be for or against what we have in front of us when half of it is missing, and so that has to be a caveat.

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Within our response, thank you.

**Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair):** Would you like us to agree that?

**Caroline Russell AM (Chair):** Yes, let us agree that.

**All:** Agreed.