

## London Food Strategy – GLA response

The Committee discussed the Mayor's draft Food Strategy on 14 June 2018 and submitted comments on 12 July.

The GLA's response to the consultation submission was sent on 14 November 2018 and the final strategy and action plan published on 11 December.

The response was overall positive. The GLA agreed with many of the points made and said that the final strategy and action plan would cover many of the recommendations. The GLA thanked the Assembly for the comprehensive consultation response. It made specific responses to most of the recommendations. These are summarised in the table below, with updates of how the points are taken forward in the final strategy.

Committee's recommendation	GLA response	Update on final strategy or other comment
Much more detail on actions, particularly measurable objectives, milestones and targets. Targets should be specified, with milestones for progress assessment on the way to final outcomes.	An Implementation Plan will be published alongside the final LFS which will contain more detail on the actions that will be taken to deliver the LFS, along with metrics where appropriate.	The implementation plan contains some more detail on these areas, but not always as much as sought. It had been said that the implementation plan would come ahead of the final strategy to enable further feedback.
Priority target on childhood obesity, by decreasing the promotion and accessibility of unhealthy food and promoting physical activity.	The LFS now contains a target for tackling child obesity, as set out in chapter 4.	There is material on improving the food environment, reducing the promotion and availability of unhealthy food. There are new support actions on water-only primary schools, free school meals, school food standards and reducing salt, sugar and fat levels in food. Healthy Schools, which includes physical activity, is referenced in the strategy.
Clear statement and quantification of benefits of food work to support a case for more dedicated resources and/or resources for food work from other parts of the GLA Group.	To maximise [the GLA's limited Food Strategy] budget, it has largely been used to leverage further resources from partners, and this will continue in the coming years. Additional activity has been integrated across the full range of Mayoral strategies, officers working on the Food Programme have collaborated with other teams in the GLA	The response re-states the existing approach to dealing with limited resources. The Mayor did not agree to additional actions to quantify the benefits to secure more resources.

	and other parts of the GLA group, particularly TfL, in the production of the LFS. Several actions in the London Food Strategy complement those in other strategies, and officers will work together across policy areas to maximise opportunities for good food outcomes.	
Avoid the same document attempting to serve policy experts and public. Separate public-facing document with Ten Tips or similar, engaging parents at home on childhood obesity, and professional-facing document to guide action and enable accountability.	To make the LFS as accessible as possible and encourage a wide audience, the final LFS now includes a series of infographics. These will also be published separately on London.gov.uk along with an EasyRead version of the LFS. In addition, we will explore the suggestion to produce a standalone 'Top Tips' document.	The EasyRead version is available alongside the full strategy on london.gov.uk.
More detail on GLA's role in promoting healthy food procurement and provision in other public institutions such as hospitals.	Further references have been included in the LFS, particularly in chapter 3.	New material in Chapter 3 includes phasing out single-use plastics. New material on partner roles includes mention of prisons, care homes. Some details in the Implementation Plan, but just a page on all Chapter 3 actions.
<b>Food growing, security and resilience</b>		
Work on food security and resilience under climate change should inform work under Environment Strategy and Economic Development Strategy.	Further wording has been added to the narrative of the LFS regarding the resilience and security of London's food system.	Some material added on Brexit and climate change. Actions for Mayor and external partners to measure resilience merged into one in the mayoral support section.  Delivery of this recommendation will be in implementation of the three strategies, and can be kept under review.

<p>Seek opportunities to support London’s food growers, including more emphasis on Green Belt farmers and other commercial producers.</p>	<p>References to food production in London’s Green Belt have also now been included. The team and I look forward to your in-depth review of food growing in London’s Green Belt and urban fringe.</p>	<p>References were added but not new actions. Response to Green Belt Farming report forthcoming.</p>
<p>Understand and capitalise on environmental as well as community value of urban food growing spaces.</p>		<p>There are additional mentions of the environmental value that food growing spaces have, but little new action to capitalise on it.</p>
<p>Do not stop looking for opportunities to establish more food growing spaces.</p>	<p>The Food Programme will continue to support food growing across the capital. Chapter 5 of the LFS has been strengthened with additional actions on food growing.</p>	<p>The final strategy says it is important to get food growing in new developments, green spaces and the public realm. And that the Mayor has a role in supporting bids to the Good growth Fund, and supporting local food with City Hall and GLA Group procurement.</p>
<p>Make links with health sector to tap into social prescribing as a source of users for food growing spaces.</p>	<p>The LFS now commits the Mayor to producing a Vision for Social Prescribing and for this to <i>‘explore the potential for health care professionals to increase the number of social prescriptions for fruit and vegetables and referrals to community food growing schemes, using food to improve Londoners’ physical and mental well-being.’</i></p>	<p>This was already in the Health Inequalities Strategy: mention in the Food Strategy will help to make the inter-sector links.</p> <p>The Vision has now been produced and does reference food growing activities.</p>
<p>Also make links to social housing sector. Encourage community groups and allotments to hold lessons on food growing and cooking.</p>		<p>The social housing sector is not mentioned specifically in relation to food growing, but there are points about directing people to food growing and to food growing areas in new developments and protecting existing allotments and community gardens.</p>

<b>Healthy food</b>		
<p>Reduce advertising for unhealthy food and drink (as proposed)</p>	<p>Following consultation on this proposal and the significant support for it demonstrated by both stakeholders and the public, the Mayor will be directing Transport for London to introduce restrictions on advertising that promotes less healthy food and/or less healthy non-alcoholic drink across the TfL advertising estate. The Mayor will go further by also using the TfL advertising estate to promote the consumption of healthier food and healthier non-alcoholic drink.</p>	<p>The junk food advertising ban is (at the time of agenda drafting) to come in from 25 Feb 2019. This was welcomed by the Health Committee on 23 November 2018.</p>
<p>Work with Government and others to enable free school meals to every child in London.</p>	<p>As well as the existing action in the draft LFS relating to Healthy Schools London, several additional actions relating to schools have been included in the LFS. These include an action to work in partnership with Public Health England to increase the number of water-only primary schools and an action to lobby Government to provide universal free school meals for all to help tackle child obesity and food insecurity and produce further guidance to support all schools to implement the School Food Standards.</p>	
<p>More detail on pilot projects to support affordable and healthy food to disadvantaged communities.</p>	<p>Further information on this pilot programme will be available in early 2019.</p>	<p>There is now a pilot programme with five boroughs to produce Good Food Retail Plans. Bids have been invited from BIDs and boroughs for £5,000 grants.</p>

<p>Review the inclusion of alcohol in the advertising ban</p>	<p>The scope of the proposed restrictions is specifically aimed at reducing child obesity. Wider public health issues associated with children’s awareness and consumption of alcohol are included in objective 5.3 of the Mayor’s Health Inequalities Strategy which commits to steps being taken to reduce the use of, and harms caused by, tobacco, illicit drugs, alcohol and gambling.</p>	<p>The argument that alcohol advertising does not affect child health was put forward in the draft strategy and at the Committee’s meeting, but was rejected by the Committee.</p> <p>The actions in the Health Inequalities Strategy are positive but do not address the specific recommendation.</p>
<p><b>Food poverty</b></p>		
<p>Food insecurity and food poverty a fundamental part of the final strategy. Zero Hunger goal.</p>	<p>‘London should be a Zero Hunger City’ has been included in the narrative to Chapter 1.</p>	
<p>Establish baseline, set targets for improving.</p>	<p>The Mayor has committed to measuring household food insecurity in London. The action relating to measuring household food insecurity in Chapter 1 of the draft LFS has been strengthened in the final LFS to reflect this commitment.</p>	<p>In the strategy, the action is to develop a measure, so the strategy does not contain a baseline or timed targets towards the overall Zero Hunger goal. Data collection on food insecurity is to be included in the GLA’s survey of Londoners in Spring 2019.</p>
<p>Clarify terminology around food poverty/insecurity and how London’s measures relate to national measures and policies, so language is clear and understandable to all.</p>	<p>To provide more clarity, a definition of food insecurity has been included in the narrative of chapter 1.</p>	<p>The definition (‘Food insecurity is when an individual or household has insufficient or insecure access to food due to resource constraints.’) could be improved in terms of language accessibility. It could also be specifically related to national policies.</p>
<p>Further action (beyond food banks) to tackle food insecurity fully</p>	<p>I welcome the Assembly’s support for the proposal for the Mayor to encourage stakeholders to donate surplus food to food banks. As noted surplus food donation is not the long-term solution to food insecurity, and this has been made clearer in the LFS.</p>	<p>There are several points in the Action Plan for the GLA and partners to tackle food insecurity, including to reduce reliance on food banks.</p>

<p>Support/encourage food banks and supermarkets to bring surplus perishable food to people.</p>	<p>There is an action in chapter 1 stating that businesses should donate more surplus food to food redistribution charities or provide financial donations or sponsorship to school holiday hunger programmes such as Kitchen Social. This incorporates supermarkets, which have a role to play, as highlighted by the Assembly’s consultation response.</p>	
<p>More detailed plans for supporting older people, including targets for local authorities in working together to support healthy eating for older people.</p>	<p>Further reference to older people has been included in the introductory narrative to chapter 1 and the action for the Mayor to <i>‘champion the importance of good food for older people by encouraging better coordination and collaboration between local authorities, to maximise the role of good food in relieving the burden of malnutrition and social isolation on the NHS’</i> remains in the final LFS. Further detail around this action will be developed in the coming months.</p>	<p>This seems to be a significant step towards the recommendation. The detail can be reviewed as it emerges.</p>
<p>Advise schools and teachers on how the school or LA can help students at risk of food poverty.</p>	<p>Further detail has been added to this action in chapter 1 of the LFS.</p>	<p>The action is to work with stakeholders to explore the role schools can play. This is an early step towards the recommendation.</p>

<p>Eliminate holiday hunger— extend Kitchen Social</p>	<p>In addition to continuing to support Kitchen Social, officers working on the GLA’s Food Programme will coordinate a 2018 School Holiday Meals Provision workshop in partnership with the Mayor’s Fund for London and use an ongoing ‘Kitchen Social Learning Forum’ to convene providers delivering holiday provision projects across London, map existing provision and share best practice. This will help inform future targeted approaches for the areas of most need in London.</p>	<p>Continuing Kitchen Social and looking to learn from it is a step towards the recommendation, but this does not appear at this stage to represent a scaling-up to fully eliminate holiday hunger.</p>
<p>The strategy should address future food poverty risks and opportunities, such as exiting the EU</p>	<p>Exiting the EU without a deal could potentially have a considerable effect on food supply, standards and costs. To highlight this issue, the LFS contains several further references to the potential impacts of Brexit and the work of the London Resilience Forum in this area.</p>	
<p><b>Economy</b></p>		
<p>More modelling and encouragement of potential economic shifts (such as animal to plant, processed to home-made, etc.) to enable business and worker response.</p>	<p>Significant shifts in the market could result in significant shifts in business and employment opportunities. Officers working on the GLA’s Food Programme will continue to work with GLA Economics to monitor any such shifts and respond as appropriate to ensure opportunities are maximised.</p>	<p>Although acknowledging the issue and continuing existing readiness to respond to shifts, there does not seem to be a commitment to new action to address the recommendation.</p>

<p>Engage stakeholders          —businesses to label origin and nutrition of food          —businesses to ensure workers, including night shifts, have access to healthy food in staff canteens</p>	<p>I fully agree with the need to engage the full range of stakeholders, including businesses, for the final LFS to have the maximum benefit for Londoners and will continue to engage businesses. Work to engage businesses is already underway and examples include collaboration with the Consumer Goods Forum on their Collaboration for Healthier Lives initiative, businesses engaged with the Healthier Catering Commitment, and working with food businesses to improve access to apprenticeship levy funding.</p>	<p>The work with businesses is broadly in line with the recommendation.</p> <p>Some points on night and shift workers specifically addresses one of the Committee’s points. Food labelling may require further engagement with businesses.</p>
<p><b>Environmental impacts</b></p>		
<p>Include target to reduce food waste by 50 per cent by 2030</p>	<p>I welcome the Assembly’s support for the inclusion of environmental issues in the LFS, including the Mayor’s target of a 50 per cent reduction in food waste by 2030 in line with Sustainable Development Goal 12.3.</p>	<p>The strategy says the Mayor “has committed to become a Champion 12.342, dedicated to inspiring ambition and mobilising action toward achieving UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12.3, cutting by half global retail and consumer food waste, and reducing food losses along production and supply chains by 2030.”</p> <p>This is some way short of setting a 50 per cent food waste reduction target for London. The Mayor’s contribution to a global target is hard to quantify or test.</p>
<p>All unavoidable food waste to anaerobic digestion and/or composting</p>	<p>The Mayor is also committed to increasing recycling rates for inedible food waste. As highlighted in the final LFS, through his London Environment Strategy’s minimum level of service, local authorities are required to collect household food waste separately by 2020.</p>	<p>This re-states the original policy. While working in the same direction, it does not go as far as meeting the recommendation.</p>



<p>Set out clearer plans to work with partners such as WRAP and LWARB to tackle food waste</p>	<p>Further detail has been included in the LFS and accompanying Implementation Plan.</p>	<p>The material referred to (including 20 per cent food and drink waste reduction by 2025, work to reduce single-use packaging, TRiFOCAL and FoodSave projects, mandatory separate food waste collections, C40 Cities projects to be launched, London’s carbon footprint from food imports, work with restaurants) appears positive, but is outlined only briefly and so does not fully satisfy the recommendation for clearer plans.</p>
<p>Encourage protection and promotion of food growing spaces for biodiversity value. Use the food growing potential of parks and other public green spaces. Work with local authorities, Sustain. Specifically fruit and nut trees in Mayoral tree planting programmes and promote them with others.</p>	<p>Food growing spaces have great benefits for biodiversity and further references to biodiversity have been included in both chapters 5 and 6. As discussed above, chapter 5 has also been strengthened with additional actions on food growing.</p>	<p>The additions are positive, but at a general level. There are not specific references to using parks or to fruit/nut trees.</p>
<p><b>Animal welfare</b></p>		
<p>Work with RSPCA and government towards labelling of non-pre-stunned meat.</p>	<p>I welcome your support for the inclusion of animal welfare standards in the draft LFS’s definition of good food and in the actions set out in Chapter 3 and Annex 3 (Annex 2 in the final LFS). Officers working on the Food Programme recently met with RSPCA Assured after they requested a meeting to introduce their animal welfare standards scheme. Labelling for products containing meat that has not been pre-stunned before slaughter was not discussed, but officers will ask for an update on this and feed back to the Assembly.</p>	<p>Further information is awaited.</p>