



**Zack Polanski AM**

**Chair of the Environment Committee**

Sadiq Khan

Mayor of London

(Sent by email)

Cc Mete Coban MBE

Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy

## **Re: Funding and support for food growing**

7 November 2024

Dear Sadiq,

The Environment Committee has looked at issues relating to food growing in London several times in recent months.<sup>1</sup> The Environment Committee plans to publish a report following this investigation, which will explore the wider issues and opportunities for strengthening this sector. We wanted to also write to you now, as important decisions are currently being made around budgets for next year, and the delivery plans for mandates and missions are being agreed.

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<sup>1</sup> The Environment Committee held a meeting exploring food security in London in February 2024, and subsequently in this Assembly year the Committee visited Organdea's Hawkwood site in Chingford in July 2024 and held a roundtable discussion with stakeholders as part of its Local Food Growing investigation. The Committee have also undertaken a Call for Evidence from stakeholders, and most recently, held a Committee meeting with a range of local food growing experts on 16 October 2024.

Capital Growth has played an important role for more than a decade in championing food growing in London and is mentioned in the London Plan in relation to Policy G8 on food growing.<sup>2</sup> Southwark Council informed the Committee that “It is really important to have Sustain and Capital Growth holding this together, bringing people together and being able to signpost different councils to each other”.<sup>3</sup>

During the investigation it has become clear that funding for the Capital Growth network has not yet been confirmed for 2025. During our recent meeting with local food growing experts, we heard from Sarah Williams, Director of Programmes at Capital Growth, that “At the moment Capital Growth does not have any funding” and is currently running on reserve money until it hears the outcomes of future funding decisions.<sup>4</sup>

In your recent reply to a letter on this topic, you did not confirm future funding, but rather said:

“Capital Growth has received funding of £35,000 from the Mayor’s Healthy Place, Healthy Weight mission. [...] Future support for the Capital Growth work will be considered alongside other work to support child health and child healthy weight, as well as in discussions with other GLA teams, some of which have recently become involved with some elements of Capital Growth work [...]”.<sup>5</sup>

The Committee is concerned about the future of funding for Capital Growth, particularly at a time when there is a major overhaul of Greater London Authority governance to deliver more joined up policies and priorities, and there is a risk that existing, successful cross-cutting areas such as food growing may get missed.

The Committee urges you to continue to champion the benefits of local food growing. We reiterate the recommendations from the Committee’s March 2024 letter, which requested that funding for Capital Growth, and support for food growing across the GLA, are not only maintained but increased in 2025-26.<sup>6</sup>

I would be grateful if you could respond to the Committee in writing by 18 December 2024.

Yours,



**Zack Polanski AM**  
**Chair of the Environment Committee**

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<sup>2</sup> GLA, [London Plan 2021](#), para 8.8.5. p331

<sup>3</sup> Environment Committee, [Local Food Growing meeting](#), 16 October 2024

<sup>4</sup> Environment Committee, [Local Food Growing meeting](#), 16 October 2024

<sup>5</sup> Letter from the Mayor to the Chair of the Environment Committee, 17 October 2024

<sup>6</sup> Environment Committee, [Food Security and Sustainability Letter](#), 18 March 2024