

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Food Poverty Steering Group

Terms of Reference

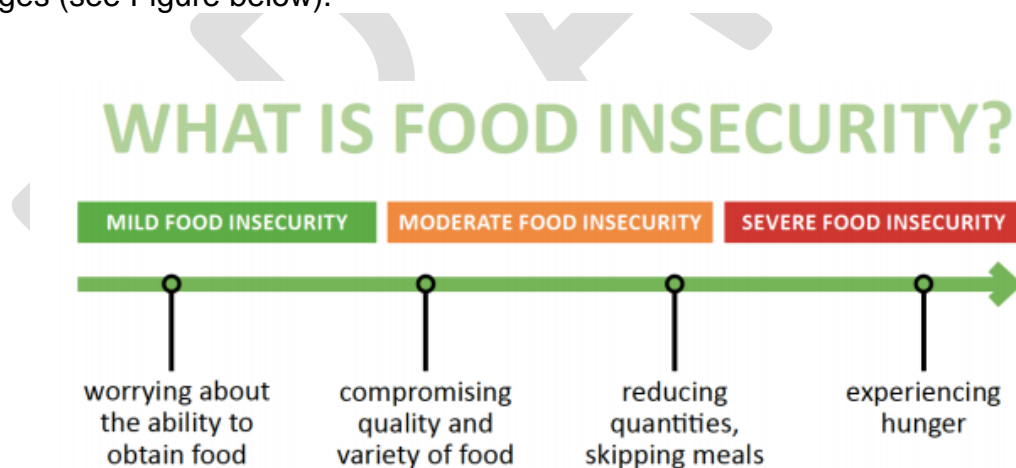
1. Background

The UK pledged in 2015 to end hunger by 2030 as part of its commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals which includes a goal *‘to enable access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round’*.¹

Food poverty is defined by the Department of Health and Social Care as ‘the inability to afford, or have reasonable access to, food that makes up a healthy diet.’

Food insecurity is defined as ‘Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (e.g. without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing or other coping strategies)’.²

Food insecurity has various degrees of severity. Early stages involve worry about whether there will be enough food, followed by compromising quality, variety and quantity of food. Going without food and experiencing hunger are most severe stages (see Figure below).



B&NES Council passed a motion on Food Poverty on 11th July 2019 requesting:

- the Children, Health & Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel to work with local organisations and develop recommendations for a Food Poverty Action Plan for Bath and North East Somerset; and

¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg2>

² While there is not an official government definition of food insecurity used in the UK, this definition is drawn from guidance on measuring food insecurity in the USA and was used for the UK's Low Income Diet and Nutrition Survey, 2007
Taken from Food Foundation Report May 2016 Food Insecurity Briefing

- that the Cabinet investigate refreshing the Local Food Strategy for Bath and North East Somerset.

The process for taking forward the development of a Food Poverty Action Plan was agreed with Children, Adult, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 28th January 2020. This included the formation of a local steering group to drive the work and support implementation.

2. Principles

The Right to Food

The Right to Food is about ensuring that all people regardless of their gender, race, immigration status or age are able to access food in a dignified way. The United Nations Convention on Human Rights, to which the UK government is a signatory, declares that it is the State that has an obligation to fulfil the right to food.³

The Right to Food is defined by former United Nations Special Rapporteur Jean Ziegler as: “The right to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensure a physical and mental, individual and collective, fulfilling and dignified life free of fear.”

The UK has ratified a number of international treaties that refer to the Right to Food and broader socioeconomic rights. These include the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, the convention on the rights of the child and the convention on the rights of people with disabilities.⁴

By adopting this principle, the steering group is looking to raise awareness of the universal right to access food, with the aim of specifically empowering those with lived experience.

Addressing health inequalities

Food poverty disproportionately impacts on women and children and those with long term conditions and disabilities. By developing a food poverty action plan in partnership with a wide range of local stakeholders and partners, we will strengthen collective action to support residents experiencing food poverty and through a focus on preventative action contribute towards addressing health inequalities longer term. It must also be acknowledged that the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic will affect a wider proportion of the population and broaden the profile of those experiencing food poverty in the short to medium term.

Social perspective of poverty

³ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/food/pages/foodindex.aspx>

⁴ https://www.sustainweb.org/resources/files/reports/Why_we_need_the_right_to_food.pdf

Food poverty is driven by a combination of structural issues relating to the security and cost of housing, quality of employment, adequacy of welfare provision and the cost of living generally.

A social perspective of poverty is concerned with the structures and organisation of society and how it relates to social problems and individual lives, looking at the issue of poverty through the lens of how society is organised rather than a focus on individuals' behaviour and choices.

Involving those with life experience

This work will be guided by the meaningful involvement of people with life experience of food insecurity. Those with lived experience will be actively involved at all levels to identify and develop local solutions as well as advocating for longer term sustainable action both locally and nationally.

Community engagement

Engagement with local residents and communities is essential to understanding need and developing sustainable solutions to food insecurity. This work will reflect the principles in the Council's Community Engagement Charter (insert ref).

Safeguarding

This principle relates to our moral duty of care to provide a healthy food system for all.

Future proofing

This means taking into account how local responses to food poverty can be resilient to local, national and global change including the planned transition of residents to Universal Credit, the impact of COVID 19, Brexit and climate change for example.

3. Outcome

The overall aim of this work is to eliminate food poverty and to reduce the numbers of people living in food insecure households in B&NES.

4. Specific aims

Promote dignified access to nutritious and healthy food for all

Ensure the local welfare safety net is clearly defined, promoted, accessible and flexible to varied need and provides sufficient support to those in hardship

Ensure children in B&NES have access to nutritious healthy food 365 days a year (term time/weekends/school holidays)

Increase knowledge, skills and confidence to recognise the key drivers of food insecurity, to enable timely access to self-help, early help and preventative services.

Champion the living wage across contractors and local employers including social care, retail and hospitality to contribute to ensuring people can earn a fair income and

Maximise the use of local authority powers and other local levers in tackling food poverty - e.g. boosting welfare support, increasing uptake of free school meals and healthy start vouchers

Align with other key agenda such as climate and nature emergency to ensure food insecurity is central to developing local strategy on food, transport, housing and planning thereby mainstreaming the reduction of food insecurity across a range of strategies and plans

To embed systematic ongoing data collection, reporting and monitoring of food insecurity to maintain the profile of the issue and to measure progress in addressing it locally

Empower local communities to develop local solutions where need is identified

Secure adequate/additional resource and capacity to enable a long-term sustainable approach to this issue locally.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Functions

- To carry out a needs assessment to better understand the scale of the issue locally, who is affected and where there may be gaps in services and/or support
- Assess the impact of current local policy and initiatives on food poverty in B&NES
- To work collaboratively with local stakeholders and communities to identify and embed local sustainable solutions to address food poverty and household food insecurity
- To develop a food poverty action plan for B&NES with a focus on preventative activity
- Involve people with life experience of food insecurity in the strategic work of the group and development of local solutions
- To oversee implementation of the action plan through local partnerships (new or existing)
- To encourage advocacy via community organisations -targeting national policy change by lobbying national government for change.

6. Membership

Membership of the group will comprise the following organisations/agencies and representatives from Council departments

Becky Reynolds (Chair)	Consultant in Public Health	Public Health B&NES Council
Angela White (Notes)	Business Support Officer	Public Health B&NES
Cllr Liz Hardman	Paulton	Children, Adult Health and Wellbeing PDS Panel
Cllr Ruth Malloy	Weston	Children, Adult Health and Wellbeing PDS Panel
James Carlin	Director	3SG
Peter Heywood	Chair	Bath Christian Network/Genesis
Grainne Moyer	Bath Food Bank	Genesis
Sam Gillet	Head of Delivery and Impact	St John's
John Thornfield	Charity Funding programme manager	St John's
Les Redwood	CEO	Citizens Advice
Sarah Rogers	Manager	Curo
Nichola Valls	Universal Credit Advisor	Curo
Jane Middleton	Researcher	Bath University
Janet Dabbs	CEO	Age UK
Julian Mines	CEO	FareShare SW
Susannah Salino	Business Development lead	FareShare SW
Susannah Jewell	Volunteer/Marketing lead	Sustainable Food Partnership
Allison Todd	Co-founder	Mercy in Action
Claire Middlehurst	Future Bright Manager	Economic Development B&NES Council
Simon Graham	Future Bright Coach	B&NES Council
Mike Chedzoy	Manager	Housing Options & Homelessness team B&NES Council
Tracy Pullen	Snr Housing Practitioner	Housing Options & Homelessness team B&NES Council
Chris Mordaunt	Manager	Housing Standards and Improvement B&NES Council
Paula Bromley	Service Manager	Connecting Families B&NES Council
Tracey Bidgood	Connecting Families	Team Leader B&NES Council
Heidi Limbert	Manager	Children's Centre Services B&NES Council
Joseph Prince	Insight Manager	Public Health B&NES Council
Adrian Carr	Partnership Manager	DWP
Milly Carmichael	Health Improvement Officer – Food Poverty	Public Health B&NES Council
Cathy McMahon	Development and commissioning manager	Public Health B&NES Council

Damien Peake	Welfare Support Manager	B&NES Council
Claire Parfitt	Head Teacher	St Martin Gardens School
Immi Corry	Volunteer	Sustainable Food Partnership
Lucy Hanney	Food and Health Lead	Virgin Care
Dave Dixon/Sara Dixon	Community Engagement	B&NES Council

Receiving minutes only

Jane Wildblood/Micaela Bashford Corporate Sustainability Team

7. Meeting Arrangements

Meetings will be held 4-6 weekly for the first 4 meetings and quarterly from that point.

Meetings will be chaired by Becky Reynolds, Consultant in Public Health, B&NES Council.

Secretariat function will be provided by B&NES Council (resource allowing)

8. Agenda

Agendas shall be developed:

- By discussion amongst the members of the Group
- By requests from individual members of the Group

Accountability

- Update Cabinet Member to Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel after each meeting
- Report 6 monthly to PDS Panel, Children and Adults Health and Well Being
- Report annually to B&NES Council

Date agreed: 4th May 2020

Review date: 3rd May 2021