

Local Food Growing Scrutiny Task Group – Executive response to recommendations

	Recommendation	Response (delete as appropriate)	Comments in response to recommendation
1.	<p>Better use of space - To welcome the initiative of offering a more diverse range of allotment plots/community garden spaces and encourage the further development of this approach to help address waiting lists.</p>	Accept	<p>We welcome PDS support for additional growing space and innovation in our current offering, which is helpful to inform our thinking around a future Food Strategy.</p> <p>We are currently working on the Local Plan and Green Infrastructure Framework which provide an opportunity to consider how we can address these challenges.</p> <p>B&NES keep the allotment waiting list under close supervision and look for opportunities to let more space on those sites where there are long waits.</p>
2.	<p>Better use of space - To invite allotment holders and the Allotment Association to contribute to a refresh of B&NES Council's allotment rules and guidance</p> <p>To include consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of starter plots, introductory lessons, a buddy system to help new tenants. 	Accept	<p>B&NES are working with the Allotment Association to explore the potential for making better use of space on existing allotments. This includes the testing of split plots/ micro plots.</p> <p>In addition to working with the Allotment Association, a new Green Infrastructure (GI) Framework for Bath and North East Somerset is currently under development. The Framework will include GI standards including the current allotment standard; 0.3ha of allotment available per 1000 population, within a 20 minute walk. This is included in the Green Space Strategy that was reviewed in 2023.</p>

	- Varying the size of plots to allow sharing and to consider groups to be tenants rather than just individuals		The GI Framework will 'frame' specific topic strategies and plans including those proposed for food and green space that will provide further evidence and assessment of the need and thus inform standards.
3.	Preserving growing space – to invite the cabinet member with responsibility for planning to ensure the developing Local Plan and its supporting guidance complements the aims of the developing Local Food Growing Strategy, whilst also recognising the environmental and economic value of local Grade 1 agricultural land.	Accept	<p>The Local Plan will support local growing and will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Infrastructure Policy referring to GI Standards, including food growing space. • Discouraging development on existing allotments or land last used as allotments. • Spatial strategy seeking to avoid allocating development on Grade 1 land and/or other high quality land that evidence shows is valuable for farming/local food production. • Strengthening GI policy that requires developers to provide a GI Plan with future management and maintenance requirements. The Plans would be expected to combine other environmental policy requirements including those for allotments, green space, nature etc.
4.	Creating new space - To encourage the cabinet member with responsibility for planning to explore through Supplementary Planning Documents the potential of putting more responsibility on developers, particularly through larger developments to ensure local food growing opportunities	Accept	<p>We are revising the Green Infrastructure planning policy to refer to the new GI Framework. The Framework includes GI Standards, including the requirement for GI Plans for major developments that will be expected to include space for food growing.</p> <p>There is a requirement in the Local Plan to build in allotment provision as far as is viable for strategic development sites.</p>

	are incorporated into submitted plans.		Additionally, we will consider providing further guidance on provision of local food growing opportunities on strategic sites through design guidance/design codes (rather than a separate Supplementary Planning Document specifically on local food growing).
5.	The council to identify an officer lead for coordinating and leading implementation of the developing Local Food Strategy.	Partially accept	We will explore options for a coordinating and leading role, recognising existing competing resource pressures.
6.	The Task Group welcomes and encourages the proposal to create a new Food Partnership – council led- which brings together community partners to implement the new Local Food Strategy.	Accept	We welcome the recommendation to create a new Food Partnership and we will consider this as we take forward work on the Local Food Strategy.
7.	The council through its community forums to initiate a ‘big food conversation’, inviting our communities to input into delivery of the Local Food Strategy, ensuring collective ownership.	Accept	We welcome the recommendation to initiate conversations about food to enable communities to input to our Local Food Strategy. We will be organising a series of community conversations on climate and nature and will consider whether it is possible and appropriate for food to be covered at these meetings.
8.	The council through its Parish Liaison or Community Area Forums to facilitate support and the sharing of good practice for town and parish councils requesting support with the management of their allotments.	Accept	We consider Parish Liaison meetings to be the most appropriate opportunity to facilitate support and sharing good practice between town and parish councils. We will explore the potential to invite the Allotment Association to a future Parish Liaison meeting to support this activity.