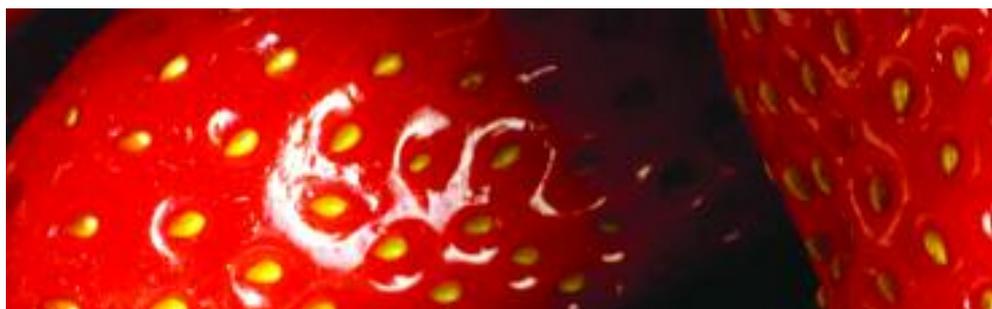


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manchester

a food strategy for Manchester **2007**



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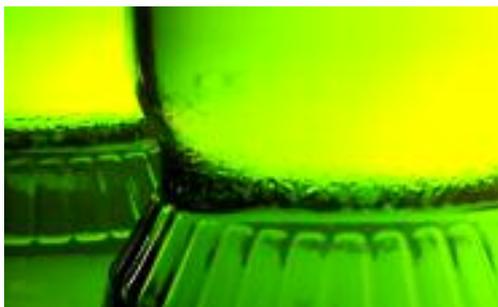
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foreword



The need for healthy and nutritious food is one of the few things that unites all people in all cultures. Our current food system, however, often falls short of providing this.

While there is some wonderful food to be found here, there are huge inequalities in access to it. Too much of what we eat in this city is unhealthy, produced in ways that damage the environment, and eaten not for pleasure, but just as fuel.

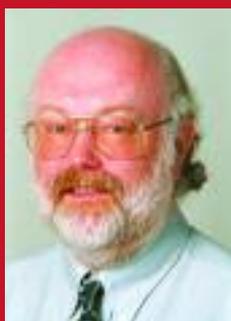
The food system is complex and impacts on health, the environment, regeneration, social cohesion and the local economy. As a city we have a great opportunity not only to improve the food eaten here but in doing so to contribute to many other priorities for the city and so improve the health and quality of life of our residents.

This strategy sets out our city's partnership approach to achieving this goal.

We would like to offer our thanks to everyone who has contributed to the development of this strategy and look forward to working together to achieve our vision.

Councillor Bernard Priest

Chair of the Food Futures Board
From May 2007



Councillor Sue Murphy

Member and Outgoing Chair
of the Food Futures Board



introduction

Food is essential to life and a major influence on health and general well-being. A balanced, nutritious and safe diet is vital for both physical and mental well-being, and protects against the onset of many diseases throughout life.

Conversely, an unbalanced and nutrient-poor diet is associated with many serious illnesses, and is likely to be responsible for an increasing proportion of ill health. Food is also a key marker of social inclusion, playing a central part in much of our social interaction: many of our celebrations rotate around a meal, and eating punctuates our daily life.

Food is important to our ability to participate in society, and an inability to buy, cook or share the same sort of food as our peers is socially isolating.

The need for healthy and nutritious food is one of the few things that unites all people in all cultures, yet there are huge inequalities in access to it within society. These inequalities can be seen starkly in Manchester, and they help to explain the city's poor health statistics.

Food is also a huge industry, employing many people throughout the food chain - the whole food system, "from farm to fork". It has an impact on agricultural communities, on the environment, on world trade, on industry, and on caterers and the retail environment. At each stage of the food chain, there are impacts on the economy, on people working within the system, and on public health.

This strategy will improve the physical, mental and social well-being of Manchester's residents through concerted action by a wide range of agencies to make local food better, healthier, more accessible, and more enjoyable for all.

why the food strategy is important

The introduction to this strategy gave a flavour of why food is an important issue both nationally and locally. The following sections expand briefly on some of the key impacts of food on our physical, mental and social well-being.

Food and health

The link between diet and health is undisputed. It has been estimated that dietary factors account for up to a third of deaths from coronary heart disease and a quarter of cancer deaths¹. This equates to approximately 900 deaths in Manchester every year that could be attributable to diet-related cancer and coronary heart disease. Dietary changes could prevent up to a third of all cancers from occurring in the first place.

Within the city, only 16% of adults are eating the recommended minimum of 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day². Obesity is an increasing problem and recent statistics show approximately 15% of school children in Manchester are obese. Poor diet is also a risk factor for diabetes.

Poor diet does not only put people at increased risk of death from serious illness: it can seriously undermine general physical and mental health and well-being. Poor nutrition among pregnant women can lead to low birth weight babies being born; this in turn is a risk factor for poor health later in life.

In Manchester low birth weight babies account for 9.4% of all births - this rises to 13% in some parts of Manchester.

Depression and other mental health problems are more common amongst those with a diet low in nutritional value. There are also currently around 37,000 residents in Manchester claiming incapacity benefit. Even within an otherwise healthy diet, food safety is an important issue. While levels of food poisoning appear to have levelled off in recent years, they are still unacceptably high.

However, the impacts of food on health go beyond the direct influence of diet. Many of the environmental impacts discussed below have health consequences, and the economics of food production and provision impact (sometimes positively, sometimes negatively) on employment and income. Of course, the wider food chain also has an impact on diet. European policy shapes the food that is produced: one consequence of this has been a huge increase in production of meat and high fat dairy produce, at the expense of fruit and vegetables.

Herbie Case Study

Herbie is a mobile greengrocer run by Manchester Environmental Resource Initiative (MERCi), an environmental charity. Herbie provides affordable, fresh fruit and vegetables to residents living in areas of North and East Manchester with poor accessibility to fresh foods. MERCi works closely with local schools, sheltered housing, churches, health clinics and resident groups to ensure that Herbie reaches as many people in the local community as possible.

Herbie strives to be a friendly, reliable, community-led service, and is committed to promote healthy eating whilst remaining environmentally responsible by maintaining a zero waste policy.





The local and regional economy

Food is big business: agriculture, processing and food retail account for 12.5% of UK employment and 8% of the UK economy³. While there are very few Manchester residents currently employed in agriculture, (approximately 500 according to the 2001 Census), Greater Manchester includes some large food manufacturers, and many Manchester residents are likely to be employed by such companies.

Food retail is probably the most important part of the food chain to the Manchester economy. It provides employment opportunities for local people, and where the retailer is a local company, money spent on food is returned to the local economy. This is particularly relevant to the catering trade, a hugely important part of Manchester's economy.

The quality and location of shops plays a significant role in people's diets and access to healthy food - particularly for those without access to a car. Food mapping has already begun in parts of North Manchester. This has revealed food deserts where access to fresh food has dried up. The local economy also suffers when residents are forced to go outside their local area for better quality and choice.

As the largest city in the North West, Manchester has a key role in helping to develop the regional economy. Food can play a hugely important part here, as there is a considerable agricultural sector in the North West. Keeping food supply chains short would help stimulate regional agriculture, boosting employment and incomes in the rural areas that surround Manchester, with knock-on benefits for the city itself.

In addition to this impact of food on the economy, there is a clear impact of the economy on the food that is consumed. Low income is possibly the most significant economic factor in access to a good diet, and the current levels of benefit provide limited resources for food.

Often food spending is the only aspect of a limited income that people have control over and consequently can be the first thing that gets reduced where there are competing financial pressures.

This coupled with poor local access to fresh food and limited cooking skills can lead to 'food poverty' and real deficiencies in diet.

³ The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2002: London

There is great potential for individual, quality retailers and niche shops to prosper in these circumstances and create a very distinct sense of place.

Food and regeneration

Good health, and therefore good food, is fundamental to regeneration. Healthy people live longer, have more productive lives and provide good role models for future generations thereby contributing to the sustainability of communities. Making healthy choices is far more difficult if the pillars that support a healthy lifestyle have been eroded and this has been the case in many areas of Manchester. Access to healthy foods for people without a car or those on low incomes is difficult with the decline of local high streets.

The food on offer plays an important part in determining the overall quality of life in an area, and a range of shops and a market offering a variety of good food can promote diversity and individuality of neighbourhoods and establish them as neighbourhoods of choice.

Food can be a major driver for regeneration in an area. Borough Market in South East London has been a significant catalyst in the wider regeneration of the surrounding area as well as providing a range of quality food for the local and wider community.

A recent study by the New Economic Foundation⁴ highlights the role Queens Market in Newham plays in providing access to high-quality affordable food in an area designated as a food desert, and quantifies the positive impact on the local economy.

Regeneration in Manchester focuses on a 'clustering strategy', which seeks to create a hierarchy of community service clusters containing retail and other facilities. These include primary clusters, which are likely to contain a supermarket and/or food market, other shops, and services such as a health or leisure centre, district library or education facilities and are likely to be on or close to major public transport links.

Secondary clusters are likely to contain smaller retail outlets and neighbourhood services to meet the day to day needs of a much more local clientele. These are more fragile and over provision coupled with low demand have resulted in high levels of vacant premises plus low quality. There is great potential for individual, quality retailers and niche shops to prosper in these circumstances and create a very distinct sense of place.

Regeneration plans can strengthen these areas by promoting community safety, providing business support, improving the environment and promoting mixed-use environments. There is a need to work strategically to ensure that there are easily accessible, quality food outlets for all neighbourhoods in the city.

Land values in brownfield areas can create difficulties with furthering the production of food locally as growing spaces become more attractive to developers. Regeneration needs to balance the need to provide good quality housing and repopulate deprived areas in the city with providing opportunities for community based food growing and consumption through initiatives such as community orchards, market gardens and allotments.

It is vital therefore, that regeneration frameworks protect areas for growing where possible and consider allocating additional areas for allotments and community growing where there is a demand.



Food as a cultural force

Food, and the social skills learned through communal eating, is central to cultural identity and to many of the celebrations and special events that are important to people. As a multi-cultural city, Manchester has access to a huge range of restaurants, foods from all parts of the world, and substantial expertise in many cooking styles.

This diversity offers considerable opportunities for broadening food horizons in the city, as well as to use food as a way of encouraging increased cross-cultural understanding and community cohesion and so contribute to one of the priorities for the city.

Manchester Food and Drink Festival Case Study

The Manchester Food and Drink Festival, which began in 1997, is now the largest and most high profile festival of its kind in the UK. The 10 day programme is packed with events in favourite restaurants and bars, competitions, cook offs, farmers' markets, exciting outdoor events, celebrity guests and of course the hotly anticipated MFDF Awards. The Manchester Food and Drink Festival has steadily grown in size, stature and quality and is now a firm favourite on the regional calendar.

The festival has also developed a series of themes over that time including healthy eating and promoting local produce. For the first time the 2006 festival had a 'grow your own' theme and held an urban harvest festival in partnership with Food Futures and the Association of Manchester Allotment Societies.

The social impact of food

Food plays a central part in much of our social interaction: many of our celebrations rotate around a meal, and eating punctuates our daily life. Food is important to our ability to participate in society, and the ability to access good food, the development of cooking skills and opportunities to eat with others are important components of reducing social isolation.

Even the simple act of buying food, and the way in which we do this, is important. Local shops can provide opportunities for social interaction with neighbours and reduce dependence on the car. This has the knock-on benefit of improving rates of physical activity. Conversely, a pattern of purchasing that sees people driving to supermarkets once a week to do virtually all of their food shopping reduces the likelihood of meeting neighbours and building social networks.



The brain, like the body needs,
the right nutrients to function properly.

Links to crime and anti social behaviour

There may even be a role for food in reducing crime and disorder. Recent research offers evidence that people whose diet is low in essential nutrients are more likely to behave in ways that would be categorised as antisocial, and in particular that levels of aggression are increased⁵. While the research in this area is still at an early stage, the evidence so far shows a small but statistically significant effect.

Diet has been implicated as a factor in anti-social behaviour. Researchers have reported a significant reduction in anti-social behaviour in young offenders in prisons whose diets were supplemented with vitamins, minerals and fatty acids. Reductions in incidents ranged from minor disobedience to more severe violent acts.

Other research indicates that the presence of a garden is a powerful factor in cutting crime and vandalism on problem housing estates⁶. Food production could also be used as part of the rehabilitation of offenders.

Reducing crime and disorder also has implications for food: the impact of retail crime on small local retailers can be devastating and is another contributory factor in the proliferation of food deserts. As well as being victims of crime, businesses suffer from reducing trade if residents do not feel safe using them.

Food and the environment

The impact of food production and distribution on the environment is vast. While it may be less visible an issue within a city such as Manchester, where there is a low proportion of agricultural land, the city's ecological footprint is extensive. Feeding a city takes a large amount of land, and the way in which that land is managed is a key influence on the local and global environment. Intensive industrial farming methods can contribute to soil degradation, pollution run-off, and reduced biodiversity.

The globalisation of agriculture, which sees produce transported to Manchester from all parts of the world, contributes to pollution and global warming. And the economics of agriculture are pushing us towards an increasing focus on meat production, which takes considerably more land and energy input than does the growing of crops⁷. Food supply could also be dramatically affected by 'peak oil' - the time at which world oil supplies begin to run down⁸.

This will necessitate the relocalisation of food supplies as global food transportation becomes more expensive.

From an environmental perspective, there is an imperative to move towards food production that is low in the use of herbicides and pesticides, balanced more in favour of crops than meat production, manages the land in a sustainable way, and that supplies a local market.

⁵ Gesch, CB; Hammond, SM; Hampson, SE; Eves, A; & Crowder, MJ (2002): Influence of Supplementary Vitamins, Minerals and Essential Fatty Acids on the Antisocial Behaviour of Young Adult Prisoners. Randomised, Placebo-controlled Trial. British Journal of Psychiatry vol 181, pg 22-28.



Yummy Mummies Case Study

A chance meeting led to a brand new service for Manchester mums. In 2005, antenatal teacher Alison Lloyd was nearing the end of her National Childbirth Trust (NCT) diploma training so she approached her local hospital to observe some NHS antenatal classes.

The leading midwife, Sue, said that she was keen to run a course that would include nutrition, antenatal education and postnatal support, to meet the public health agenda. Alison had experience as a teacher of food technology, and so the idea for Yummy Mummies was born.

Yummy Mummies, based in Children's Centres in Manchester, helps parents learn about cooking and nutrition. The sessions start with a cuppa and an informal chat about a nutrition topic such as fibre in pregnancy, weaning, or eating on a budget.

After the chat, mums go into the Children's Centre's fabulous kitchens and cook lunch.

A crèche is provided so the mums can relax. Mums are split into groups and one group cooks a main course while the other makes a pudding.

Throughout the cooking, questions are raised, tips are exchanged, and everything is related back to the topics discussed earlier. Finally, everyone sits down, eats, and talks about what they have achieved that session and what they want to do the following week. Yummy Mummies started in January 2006, but it took a lot of time to plan and get going.

Alison and Sue had to come up with a project plan, work out how much everything would cost, find a venue, find funding, and make all the practical arrangements. Food Futures is now funding the cook and eat drop-in sessions for a year. Health professionals give out invitations to women they think might be interested and posters have been put up to advertise the service.

Four mums came along the first week, and since then the numbers have steadily increased.

There have been people from many different backgrounds, including teenagers from supported housing for pregnant and teenage mums, homeless families, and ethnic minority groups.

Sue and Alison say that the job satisfaction is great. They really enjoy and look forward to Tuesdays, and feel they are making a difference not only to the people who attend, but also future generations and the wider community in an area that has had its reputation eroded over the years. It is amazing that a chance meeting all those months ago has led to the NCT and a local midwife working as such a supportive dynamic team.



⁶ Nicholson-Lord, D. (1995): Calling in the Country: Ecology, Parks and Urban Life. Working paper 4, Comedia/Demos.

⁷ See, for example, Tudge, C. (2003): So Shall We Reap. Allen Lane. ⁸ <http://www.soilassociation.org/>

There is also considerable evidence that children who have a healthy diet tend to have better levels of educational attainment than those who eat poor diets.

Diet, learning and behaviour

Current evidence undeniably demonstrates that poor nutrition is putting children's physical health at risk. It is however often overlooked that the brain, as part of the body, also relies upon the same food to meet its needs. There appears to be a lack of a definite focus on the importance of nutrition for children and young people in terms of behaviour and learning. The brain, like the body, needs the right nutrients to function properly.

Children's food

A small number of scientific studies do show a correlation between children's food and behaviour and learning. We also have lots of anecdotal evidence from experiences in Manchester schools that children and young people who have eaten well have better behaviour and are more willing to learn and concentrate. Small-scale action research into the benefits of breakfast clubs in Manchester schools mirrored that of national and international research as the children involved were calmer and had improved behaviour and concentration amongst other improvements.

Some positive results in behaviour and well being have already been seen in local Children's Units with improvements to diet.

There is also considerable evidence that children who have a healthy diet tend to have better levels of educational attainment than those who eat poor diets⁹.

There is a need to support activities and professionals in the school and community setting on these issues and food and behaviour and learning in general. There is a need to invest in the production of relevant resources specific to young people.

There is also a need to keep up to date with the evidence on food and behaviour and where there are gaps, to commission research.

Manchester children are also likely to be affected by the national trend towards childhood obesity, which can lead to early onset Type 2 diabetes and long-term problems with coronary heart disease and other health problems later in life.

The Government's recent drive for school food improvements is a great opportunity to ensure that children are able to access nutritious school meals as well as nutrition, cooking and budgeting skills to help make healthier food choices for life.

Initiatives include:

- Transforming School Food - New national standards for school food
- National Healthy School Standards - All schools must meet a set criteria for quality food and drink throughout the school day

There is also a need to address the provision of food and drink throughout the day for children and young people in other educational and care establishments in Manchester.

Training for appropriate adults such as parents/carers, educational staff, lunchtime organisers and those working with Looked After Children is key. It is important that they understand their role in improving the health of children and young people in Manchester. Similarly there is a need for partnership work for the key provider organisations across the city to ensure consistency and quality. Alongside this, early identification and referral pathways are paramount for food allergies, obesity and eating disorders. Food as a possible career pathway should also be acknowledged.

⁹ Alaimo, K; Olson, CM; & Frongillo, EA (2001): Food insufficiency and American school-aged children's cognitive, academic and psychosocial development. *Paediatrics* 108 (1), pg 144-154.



Abbey Hey Case Study

Pupils at Abbey Hey Primary School in Gorton have become market traders to ensure that they and their families eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. The idea for a school market arose after junior school pupils queried, through the school council, why they couldn't have free fruit at break times like the infant aged (under 7) children in school.

The pupils' fruity request was taken seriously by school staff and parents were canvassed to see if they would buy fresh produce from school. The overwhelming answer was yes, particularly as there is nowhere in Abbey Hey itself to buy fresh fruit and vegetables.

Headteacher Gaynor Moorhouse agrees: "The pupils are very enthusiastic about the market and the idea of selling healthy food to their mums and dads. Unfortunately there aren't really any local outlets in the immediate area for buying fresh fruit and veg.

Having the market on the school playground means that now parents don't have to make a special trip to the shops to stock up on their greens - they can do it at the same time as they pick up their children from school.

Each Friday, a market stall is set up on the school playground to sell fresh fruit and veg to mums and dads picking up their children from school, as well as the wider community.

The stall is staffed by children from the school's Eco Committee and two teaching assistants from the school.

The fruit and vegetables sold are bought in by the school from the local wholesale market. Parents are also given free recipes each week by the school to help them cook up tasty dishes packed with goodness for all the family using the produce they have bought at the market.

The market is held in the playground of Abbey Hey Primary School, Abbey Hey Lane, Gorton each Friday from 3pm to 4.15pm. It is open to parents of pupils in the school and to the wider local community.



Poor nutrition, obesity and malnutrition have all been shown to be associated with mental health problems.

Childhood diet

It is important that children are given the best possible start in life. The dietary needs of pregnant women and young children are therefore fundamental, with breast-feeding playing an important role in infancy. Weaning and early years are also an important opportunity to introduce healthy dietary choices.

Patterns of eating are largely set in childhood, so it is here that most long-term impact on food and diet can be made. The importance of a nutritionally balanced diet for children and young people is clear. It is important for their health and social development, and it is important for their cognitive development.

Manchester Fayre School Meals, helping to keep primary pupils fit for life Case Study

Manchester Fayre, the catering arm of Manchester City Council and school meals provider to 150 primary schools, has developed the Fit for Life brand. The brand was created to help primary school pupils understand the importance of eating a healthy, nutritionally balanced diet by presenting food groups in distinctively coloured zones.

Children are required to visit each zone and make a choice to ensure that they receive a balanced meal each day.



The orange zone represents proteins that are particularly important for growing children and are required for growth and repair. Pupils make one choice from this zone, which may include a dish with meat, fish, quorn, eggs or pulses. The green zone represents vitamins and minerals, contributing to your child's 5-a-day. At least two portions from this zone are served each day. Fruits and vegetables are included in this zone and pupils may make two choices.

The yellow zone represents carbohydrates that are vital for providing the body with energy. Pupils may choose a starch carbohydrate to accompany their main meal and also a dessert of their choice.

All meals are prepared each day by skilled catering staff using fresh ingredients and all menus are analysed by a nutrition team to ensure that they are healthy, nutritious, balanced and meet food and nutrient based standards.



Vulnerable groups

There is a need to address the dietary needs of marginalized groups such as disabled people, people with mental health problems, refugees and people coping with long-term unemployment.

Learning Disabilities

Poor diet, low physical activity and obesity are particularly common in people with learning disabilities. Also traditional methods of education and awareness raising about the importance of healthy and sustainable eating may not be effective. It is therefore vital that this group is offered appropriate support to access a nutritious diet.

Food and Mental Health

Research has shown that people with mental health problems have higher rates of physical illnesses such as coronary heart disease, diabetes, various infections and respiratory diseases. Poor nutrition, obesity and malnutrition have all been shown to be associated with mental health problems.

Poor diets high in fat and low in fresh fruit and vegetables, increased appetite and associated weight gain, insufficient and unbalanced diets or diets based on convenience foods or budgetary limits are all of relevance to people with mental health problems.

Many people are on medication which increases appetite and decreases activity.

Improved and increased services and resources are needed in regard to several areas of concern: information on how a better diet can improve health; integration of dietary enquiries into assessment and care planning; opportunities to access good nutrition and develop knowledge and skills; more intensive professional support for issues such as weight management; nutrition training for mental health support workers; support on making nutritional choices in hospital settings and access to healthy food options; and improved monitoring of standards of nutrition and choice available for people within residential care settings.

Carers of people with mental health problems also need to be supported.

Maximising uptake of benefits to improve income and ensuring good quality standards for nutrition in hospitals and residential care.

BME Communities

The many BME communities and cultures in the city present both great opportunities and challenges. The vast array of cuisines available contributes to the culinary diversity and enjoyment of good food across the city and it also acts as a means to encourage better cross-cultural understanding and community cohesion.

In contrast some BME communities have higher instances of food related health problems that need to be addressed.

Recent research carried out with refugee men in Salford¹⁰ has shown that the lack of access to fresh, familiar foods, limited opportunities to share meals and lack of cooking facilities and skills compounds feelings of isolation, and also weight loss.

Older People

There is much that can be done to improve the diet of older people. Adequate nutrition can prevent or reduce the development of diseases such as osteoporosis and heart disease, and helps to ensure a healthy and independent old age.

Specific issues that need to be addressed for this group include support for those with mobility problems, ensuring access to good quality information about nutrition, maximising uptake of benefits to improve income and ensuring good quality standards for nutrition in hospitals and residential care. Older people are also more susceptible to food poisoning and may have problems buying small quantities of fresh food regularly.

Older people may, however, have much to offer other generations by sharing cooking and budgeting skills.

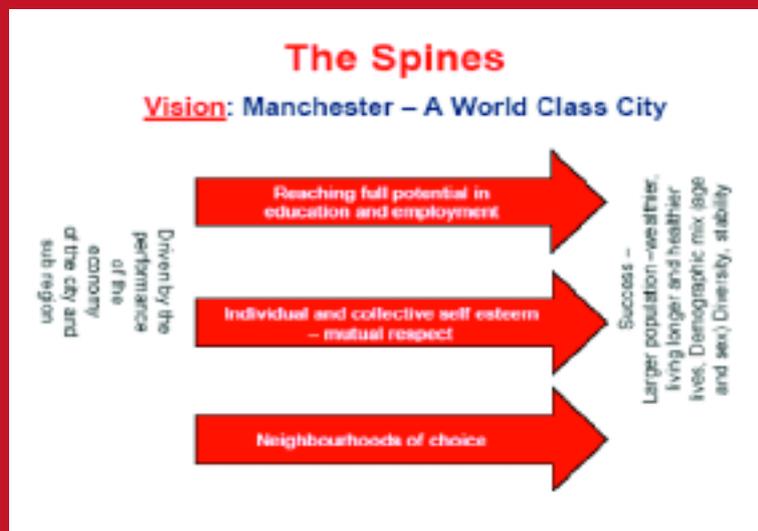
Transport links

With all that has already been said, the link between food and transport is also clear. A pattern of retailing that concentrates food shopping in centres away from residential areas leads to increased car use. More local shopping would reverse this.

This issue is particularly important for poorer sections of the population: those who don't own cars need to factor the cost of public transport into their shopping.

how can the food strategy help to deliver the priorities for the city?

Manchester's Community Strategy vision is that by 2015 Manchester people will be wealthier, live longer, be healthier and enjoy happier lives. To make this a reality, Manchester has signed up to a Local Area Agreement (LAA) with the Government. The LAA is focused around three key spines:



The Food Futures Strategy will contribute to these by:

Employment and Local Economy

Reducing unemployment and incapacity through social enterprise and healthy eating.

Health

Tackling the major killers - heart disease and cancer - with better diet.

Crime and Disorder Reduction

Reducing anti-social behaviour with improved diet and nutrition.

Children and Young People

Improving concentration and attainment levels and reducing sickness absence from school through improving children's diets.

Sustainable Neighbourhoods

Improving the environment by growing food locally and reducing 'food miles'. Increasing recycling and reducing packaging, using food retail to promote neighbourhoods of choice.

Culture and Community Cohesion

Promoting the city as a food destination for visitors. Using food to encourage better cross-cultural understanding and community cohesion.

Community Engagement

Increasing participation in community food projects and growing.

Transport

Reducing car journeys by promoting neighbourhood food shopping.

vision for the future

The local vision for the future of food in Manchester is grounded in the concept of food security and inspired by the national vision for sustainable farming and food, while also stressing the importance of food for the local economy and of enjoying food.

Food security

According to the World Food Summit (1996), food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The World Health Organisation notes that the concept encompasses the following principles:

- The ways and means by which food is produced and distributed respect the natural processes of the earth and are thus sustainable.
- Both the production and consumption of food are grounded in and governed by social values that are just and equitable as well as moral and ethical.
- The ability to acquire food is assured.
- The food itself is nutritionally adequate and personally and culturally acceptable.
- The food is obtained in a manner that upholds human dignity¹¹.

Many factors impact on food security: poverty, local availability of food, the nutritional value of the food consumed, the structure of the retail market and skill in food preparation, all play a part amongst other factors.

Sustainable farming and food

The national Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2002) sets as its overarching vision:

"A world in which climate change and environmental degradation are recognised and addressed by all nations and where low carbon emissions and efficient use of environmental resources are at the heart of our whole way of life; where, here in the UK, rural communities are diverse, economically and environmentally viable, and socially inclusive with high quality public services and real opportunities for all.

A country where the food, fishing and farming industries working closely together and with Government are not dependent on output-related subsidies to produce safe, nutritious food which contributes positively to consumer choice and the health of the whole nation.

A place where the land is managed in such a way as to recognise its many functions, from production through to recreation; where we seek to promote biodiversity on land and in our seas, and where the promotion of animal welfare and protection against animal disease is at the core of the way in which we farm and live. The pursuit of sustainable development, environmental, economic and social, is vital to achieving this vision."

It is important for the local vision to reflect these aspirations, and for the strategy to contribute to meeting them.



Unicorn - Wholefood co-operative supermarket Case Study

Unicorn began trading in September 1996 after two years of planning, preparation and site hunting. The founders set out to emulate the model pioneered by the Daily Bread Co-op in Northampton which aimed ethically and competitively to trade in wholesome foodstuffs.

This model includes buying as direct from source as possible, selling at supermarket prices, on-site processing and having control of the business in the hands of the participants. The market for wholesome food has always been substantial and has continued to grow stimulated by the extremes of modern production and increased awareness of the importance of healthy eating.



Their expectations were borne out and growth has continued steadily to current turnover of £3.5million. The regular customers come from the predicted four mile radius and they have above average pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Unicorn increasingly attempts to provide a one stop alternative to multiple supermarkets and their strategy of buying direct by the pallet has enabled them to remain price competitive. The basket spend has continued to grow although they carry only 2000 lines (unlike large supermarkets which can carry up to 25,000 food lines).

The original high nutritional standards have remained with a preponderance of organically certified lines, lots of fresh produce, lack of sugar and dairy by-products, wholegrain emphasis and enthusiasm for lines that taste good.

The original working group of five has also grown (50+) and their onsite packing and mixing has added value to the local economy through staff wages.

Staff turnover is low and by sector comparison very low, although much of grocery work is repetitive and of traditionally low status.

Working methods to boost motivation include owning the business as a worker co-op, regular group and individual training and development, and belief in the products that are sold.

In 2000 one member and partner began to produce salad and field crops nearby at Sale (Glebelands Market Garden) and they strive to offer produce from regional growers as available. They also import regularly from several European countries for crops either suited to their climate or not economically feasible to UK producers as yet. While primarily traders, Unicorn's social activities have included ongoing educational work with their customers as well as local schools.

Our vision is a city with a culture of good food

Values

This strategy is based on a set of core beliefs about food and its importance in society. These values are set out below.

1 Everyone in Manchester has a right to good food. No-one should have this right denied because of where they live, their income, or their background.

The choices that consumers make about food are influenced by a wide range of factors, including income, knowledge, skills, culture, social norms, peer pressure, availability and advertising, as well as simple personal preference. It is unjust that socioeconomic conditions make choosing good food more difficult for many people.

2 Good food is enjoyable, safe; nutritious; and environmentally sustainable

Good food is therefore characterised by local production where possible; variety, choice and food security; production methods that benefit the local economy and society; high standards of animal welfare; and production methods that have high environmental standards, with reduced energy consumption and low use of agrochemicals. This will help to increase biodiversity and reduce the impact of food on the local and global environment.

3 Food should be produced and traded ethically and fairly

Food production and trading should only use fair pricing and ethical employment for and by producers, in the UK or overseas.

4 The shorter the food chain between farm and fork the better for food producers, consumers and the environment.

The structure of the food market is crucial to the local and regional economy and to the environment. It can have a direct impact on health through its effect on food safety.

5 Food is important to our ability to participate in society.

The ability to access and enjoy good food, the development of cooking skills and opportunities to eat with others are important components of increasing social inclusion and developing social skills.

6 People have a right to information and opportunities to develop the skills, understanding and knowledge they need to choose good food.

As well as needing to know what constitutes a healthy and nutritious diet, people should be able to know where their food has come from, how it is produced and what is in it. They also need the skills to shop and prepare food appropriately.



The Manchester Vision

Taking all these factors into account, we have identified the following vision for the future of food in Manchester.

Our vision

Our vision is a city with a culture of good food. Access to affordable fresh food will be at the heart of local communities. Local food production and distribution will be common place, supporting the local environment, health and improving neighbourliness and participation in the community. The public sector, private sector, and communities will work in partnership to improve diet and nutrition in the city, and to reduce the environmental impact of the food consumed here.

Manchester will be a place where people choose a healthy and well balanced diet; where people can enjoy a wide variety of food at its best, whether at home or eating out; and where food preparation is safe and hygienic wherever and whenever people eat.

Strategic aims

The food strategy has five overarching aims:

- 1** To improve the health of the people of Manchester
- 2** To protect the local and global environment
- 3** To strengthen the local economy
- 4** To build stronger and more sustainable communities
- 5** To promote culinary diversity and the enjoyment of good food across the city

These aims parallel many of the themes of the Manchester Community Strategy, and consequently relate to several of the thematic partnerships that make up the Manchester Partnership. A broad partnership between the public sector, private sector, community groups and individuals is required to develop a culture of good food in the city.

Implementation

The following section of the strategy sets out an analysis of how this vision and the strategic aims might best be achieved. It concludes with an identification of some key objectives and priorities.

In order to maintain a high level of priority for this work, ensure that it is carried out and to enable the strategy to be kept up to date, a Food Futures Board has been established.

This group, comprising senior representatives from a wide range of local organisations, will report to the Manchester Partnership and be responsible for identifying resources to support implementation of the strategy. It will establish sub-groups as appropriate, to take forward specific areas of work, and will monitor progress towards achieving the vision.

strategic analysis

This section of the strategy analyses how the various components of the Food Futures vision interact, and the extent to which there is local capacity to influence the various factors that impact on the food system.

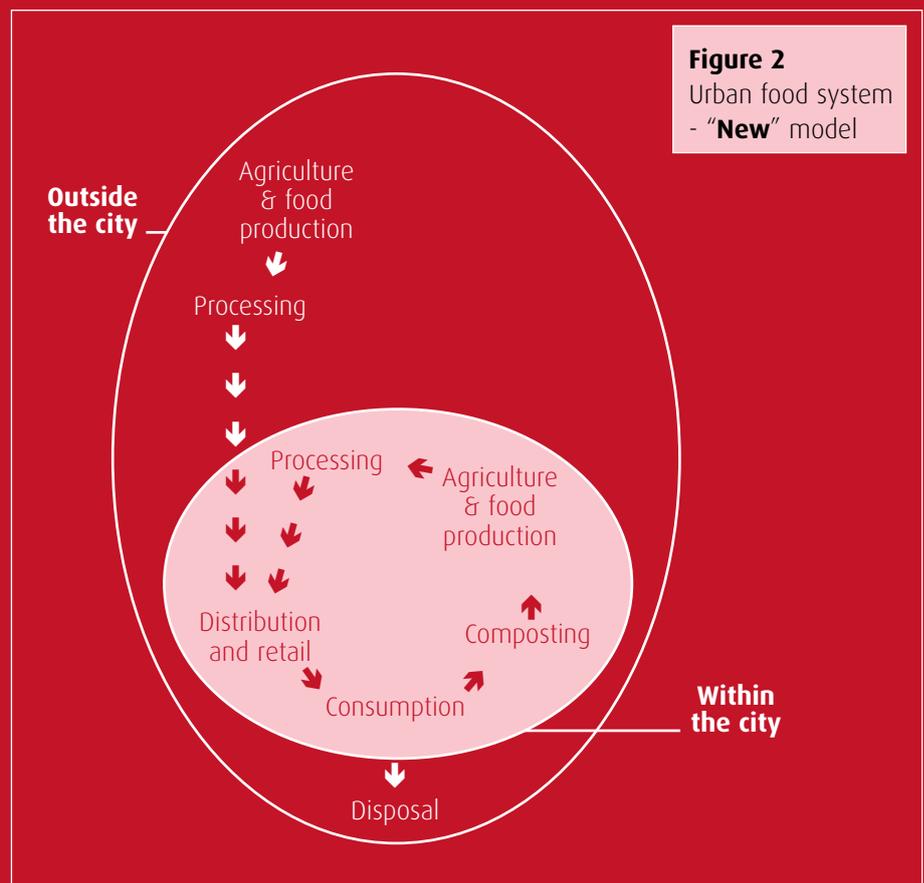
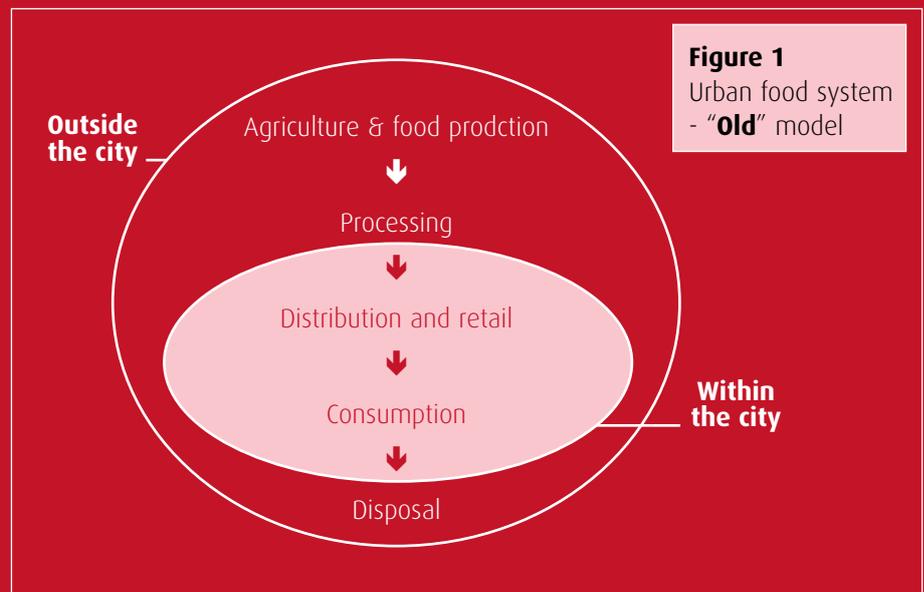
These analyses, together with consultations with the local Food Reference Group, then help to establish a series of objectives and priorities over the short, medium and long term.

Models of urban food systems

Achieving the vision will require a shift towards a new model of the urban food system. At present (and simplifying somewhat) the model is a chain in which food is produced outside the city, brought in, sold, consumed and the waste and packaging disposed of, generally outside the city again, as shown in Figure 1 (top). In short, cities - and Manchester is no exception to this - are disconnected from food production.

A new model of urban food would have to recognise that much of this existing model will remain, as cities will always be net importers of food.

However, there is considerable scope for bringing some of the production within the city boundary and for creating a closed loop system, as illustrated in Figure 2 (bottom). Such a system would attempt to reconnect the city to the food it consumes and reduce the environmental impact of food consumption.





Some of the key features of these two models are outlined in more detail in the table below.

	Old Model	New Model
Production	Largely irrelevant to Manchester. Food grown outside the city, mainly using industrial farming methods. Results: environmental degradation, food safety scares, economic decline in rural areas, standardisation of food and reduction in variety.	More food grown within the city, using community supported agriculture and intensive horticulture. Benefits: a new strand to the local economy, jobs, environmental improvement, community engagement, social inclusion, opportunities for physical activity.
Processing	Some food processing industries have bases in or around the city, bringing jobs. Less beneficial results: nutritionally deficient foods, high in fat, salt and sugar; excess packaging; pollution and energy consumption; waste generated as less aesthetically pleasing foods are dumped.	Much of the local food grown would not be processed at all. Benefits: fresh food higher in micronutrients; reduced waste and energy consumption.
Transport, Storage and Distribution	Food transported long distances to and from distribution centres, burning fossil fuels and contributing to traffic problems. Fruit and vegetables stored for long periods of time before being sold, possibly reducing their nutritional value.	More use of local produce and local retail chains to reduce the time between farm and fork. Benefits: reduction in fossil fuel consumption, fresher food.
Retail	Pattern of food distribution largely dominated by supermarkets, with some independent stores. Out-of-town stores encourage low-frequency shopping by car, creating food deserts in some areas - places where access to food has dried up. Some jobs are created, but they tend to be low status, unskilled and insecure and created at the expense of local shopkeepers. Profits tend to leave the local economy.	Increased emphasis on a mixed retail economy; bringing the food to the shopper, rather than the shopper to the food via local markets, delivery schemes and support for local shops. Benefits: boosts local economy, more employment, keeps money circulating within the local economy; less need to drive to shop, reducing pollution and promoting physical activity; removes food deserts, making food more accessible throughout the city.

¹¹ See, for example, Tudge, C (2003): So Shall We Reap. Allen Lane.

Old Model

New Model

Purchasing

Dominated by processed foods, a increasing trend towards overbuying leading to waste.

More local produce purchased. Increased purchase of fresh fruit and vegetables from neighbourhood shops.

Preparation and cooking

A move away from preparation and cooking of fresh food at home. More reliance on convenience food. Often results in a diet high in salt, fat and sugar.

Increased emphasis on cooking food using more fresh fruit and vegetables. People more skilled at preparing food themselves.

Consumption

At home, dominated by processed foods requiring little or no preparation; diet low in fresh fruit and vegetables. Increasing consumption of food out of home, both in high quality restaurants and from fast food takeaways (usually highly processed, high fat, high salt, high sugar products). Social polarisation of consumption.

More freshly prepared food consumed. Eating out still common, with even greater choice available across the whole cost spectrum and in all areas of the city. Benefits the local economy and health.

Disposal

Increasingly, glass, paper and metal packaging is recycled; the rest goes to landfill, which is wasteful and environmentally damaging.

Less packaging waste to be recycled. Less food thrown away, more recycling of organic waste both from the home and in large institutions such as schools and hospitals. Development of local composting schemes that would feed back into local agriculture, improving the soil, boosting productivity and reducing land fill waste.



Identification of broad areas for action

The five strategic aims interact with the eight stages of the food process to suggest several possible broad areas for action, as illustrated in the table below.

Eight stages of the food process

Strategic Aims	Production	Processing	Distribution	Retail	Purchasing	Cooking	Consumption	Disposal
Improve the health of Manchester residents	Grow food locally; change animal welfare standards to minimise the risk of future food health scares; get community members active in the process, promoting physical activity	Process as little as possible; ensure adequate hygiene at all times; encourage food preparation businesses to develop healthy options; reduce added salt and sugar in processed foods	Reduce pollution and congestion through shorter journeys to distribute food	Ensure food retail is safe and hygienic, work with large retailers re advertising, labelling and provision of healthy sustainable food. Promote independent local retail, raising employment rate; reduce number of fast food takeaways	Educate about healthy eating on a budget; promote local shopping to encourage people to walk to shops rather than driving	Increase cooking skills and food hygiene skills	Encourage more consumption of fruit and veg; cut down on fat, salt and sugar; eat a varied diet. Education about what constitutes a healthy diet and support to achieve one where necessary (e.g. cooking skills). Observe food safety rules	Ensure that waste disposal is hygienic
Protect the local and global environment	Grow food locally and organically; reduce use of and dependence on agrochemicals; establish market structure that rewards good practice rather than cheap practice	Reduce packaging and energy consumption in food processing; reduce pollution	Reduce food miles, ensure methods of food transport minimises environmental impact	Support retailers to use local produce, promote retail patterns that reduce car journeys	Encourage people to only buy what they need, buy local, organic and fair trade where possible	Encourage efficient use of energy when cooking	Ensure that any meat consumed is high quality, produced to high animal welfare standards; eat a balanced diet	Increase the recycling of glass, paper, metal and plastic packaging; compost organic waste. Reduce over buying
Strengthen the local economy	Grow food locally; employ local people in the process; establish local agriculture businesses	Encourage small local businesses engaged in food preparation, increase skills of local residents	Develop local distribution schemes	Support social enterprise; encourage the growth of markets	Purchase foods from local retailers and producers	Develop cooking and food hygiene skills to increase employability	Encourage growth of a diverse range of restaurant / café etc outlets in all areas of the city. Develop the food tourism sector	Develop local composting schemes

Eight stages of the food process

Strategic Aims	Production	Processing	Distribution	Retail	Purchasing	Cooking	Consumption	Disposal
Build stronger and more stable communities	Grow food locally; get community members active in the process; establish local agricultural social enterprises	Encourage small local businesses engaged in food preparation	Develop local distribution schemes	Reduce retail crime; use planning to influence retail patterns and support local food retail	Purchase food from local retailers and producers; use shopping as a way of increasing social networks	Develop cooking and food hygiene skills to increase employability	Develop opportunities for more communal eating, improvements in diet linked to reduction in anti social behaviour	Develop local composting schemes and link them to local growing initiatives
Promote culinary diversity and enjoyment of good food	Grow a wide variety of crops; rear livestock to high quality standards	Encourage food preparation businesses to diversify their range; reduce unnecessary additives in food	Encourage local distribution of a wide variety of healthy and sustainable foods	Promote weight-loss through healthy eating and exercise not 'fad dieting'	Offer a range of good quality, affordable food to purchase; offer advice on use of ingredients	Encourage cooking clubs; increase use of a wide variety of ingredients through cooking skills training	Encourage growth of a diverse range of restaurant / café outlets in all areas of the city; share cultural food experience; raise awareness of the enjoyment of varied foods	N/A

Levers of control and influence

The table below sets out some of the factors that have an impact on each stage of the food system, and the extent of local control or influence over these.

Factors influencing each stage of the system	Extent to which, and ways in which, these factors can be locally Controlled	Extent to which, and ways in which, these factors can be locally Influenced
FOOD PRODUCTION Regulations and policy re-farming - e.g. CAP	None	Very little influence locally other than through lobbying. Possibly via NW networks such as North West Health Brussels Office.
Levels of skill in agriculture and horticulture	None	Manchester Wholesale Market Project is seeking to develop new skills and opportunities for rural producers. Could run adult education classes, either independently or as part of a broader food project, possibly subsidised to encourage take-up.
Available land	Council and NHS own some land in the city, and could conceivably purchase more. Perhaps some could be made available for growing food.	There are substantial regeneration schemes over which the Council has influence - identifying land for growing food within these could be part of the overall approach to regeneration in the city.
Market structure - e.g. demands from buyers, competition law.	None	Purchasing power, e.g. direct buying from local suppliers. Potentially significant regionally if all public procurement worked together, though there may be legal barriers.
PROCESSING Industry perceptions of consumer demand	None	Corporate consumers can make explicit demands about reducing processing and packaging and reducing salt, fat and sugar content. Challenging industry to acknowledge how it shapes demand, not simply responds to it.
Legislation - e.g. about hygiene and food preservation	None	Environmental health oversees enforcement of some aspects of legislation in food processing. Local authority also influences implementation of other legislation such as traceability requirements.
Profit motive	None for most companies, however, social enterprises could be established aimed at providing high quality produce without a profit motive.	Purchasing power, e.g. explicitly buying high quality, little-processed foods.

DISTRIBUTION AND RETAIL

Market structure

Manchester Markets runs the wholesale market at New Smithfield and oversees retail markets and farmers' markets, giving control over some aspects of distribution. For other large retailers there is no local control over the market structure.

Planning policy can have some influence on retail distribution. Use of section 106 agreements can encourage large developers to contribute to local food provision. Crime reduction initiatives which support small retailers can influence their ability to stay in business. Wholesale Market Project can influence uptake of local/regional food within retail.

Pattern of restaurant / café provision

Only through establishing new facilities.

Support for community cafes which increase access and diversity.

PURCHASE, COOKING AND CONSUMPTION Advertising

None over the majority of advertising; could develop local advertising campaigns.

Using our own sites, fleets, publications

Availability via retail

Only through establishing new facilities to make good food available where it currently isn't.

Regeneration schemes can work to ensure that there is access to good food built into their plans and that there is an emphasis on establishing a mixed retail economy.

Availability via direct outlets

Manchester Fayre runs the school meals service and other outlets.

Need to have influence over large scale catering facilities through education and training - universities, prisons, large employers canteens.

Affordability

Only via direct outlets.

Income maximisation work; possible subsidies on some foods. Education about healthy eating on a budget, cooking skills, improved levels of employment.

Consumer choice

None

Advertising and other promotional activity, education, healthy schools initiative.

Food preparation skills

Advisory training for commercial caterers, e.g. food hygiene.

Potential for education in schools; running community-based classes. Adult Education Service. Further education colleges MANCAT, City College.

DISPOSAL Legislation

None

Lobbying if required.

Access to recycling and composting

Council runs contracts for recycling; Fairfield Composting in the city; zero-waste strategy for wholesale market

Consumer behaviour

Only if legislative powers re waste separation were available.

Improving access to recycling and composting facilities: happening with kerbside collection of some recyclables, more work needed on organic waste; education and promotion about importance of recycling and the need to move it further up the food chain - reducing overbuying, storing food to keep fresh etc.

Commercial pressures

None

Purchasing power and lobbying, e.g. demanding reduced packaging, compostable packaging, etc

Establish a pattern of commercial food retailing which brings it back to the heart of local communities



Objectives and priorities

The following objectives are an outline of what can practically be done locally to implement the vision. They are based on the strategic analysis above, on consultation with the local Food Reference Group and on the findings from the Food Futures Conference in May 06.

Each objective includes some of the main priorities. As the Food Futures programme develops, new priorities may emerge.



Objective

Food security and access

To improve access to a wide range of high quality fresh food across the whole city, geographically and by social group.

Priorities

- Gain a better understanding of food geography in the city
- Establish community food enterprises / business support to food retailers in all known food deserts, including crime reduction initiatives
- Establish a pattern of commercial food retailing that brings it back to the heart of local communities

Food production

To establish local food growing as a valuable contributor to health, the environment and the local economy

- Develop links to planning to support access to land for agriculture
- Ensure improvements in community allotments
- Ensure that community food enterprises are financially sustainable in the long term

Increase local, organic and Fair Trade sourcing of food in the local food supply chain via the wholesale market

Objective

Children and young people

To establish a pattern of healthy eating from conception, breastfeeding, weaning and early years right through to early adulthood. To have a positive impact on social development, health and education.

Priorities

- Ensure all schools and Children's Centres have a whole school healthy eating and drinking policy
- Work with parents and carers to encourage healthier eating and drinking choices
- Ensure all children have the opportunity to cook in schools and Children's Centres

Vulnerable groups

To ensure that all groups who may find it more difficult to access and consume a healthy diet are given the support they need to do so.

- Gain a better understanding of the needs of vulnerable groups in the city
- Ensure food issues are built into assessment and care planning
- Ensure quality in the provision of food in residential settings



Objective

Education, awareness and campaigns

To ensure that people in Manchester are adequately informed about food, diet and nutrition

Priorities

- Develop and implement plans to raise awareness about healthy and sustainable eating
- Develop and implement plans to raise awareness and skills about shopping and cooking on a budget
- Develop an understanding and culture of good, healthy food within the city

Exerting a broader influence

To use the purchasing power of local agencies to promote local, healthy, organic and Fair Trade food

- Increase local, organic and Fair Trade sourcing of food within the local authority
- Increase local, organic and Fair Trade sourcing of food in the local food supply chain via the wholesale market
- All public sector organisations signed up to a strategy for local food sourcing

the roles of different agencies

If this strategy is to be successful, it will require the involvement of a large number of organisations. The contributions that can be made by each are outlined briefly below.

Central Policy

Particularly within the Local Authority and the Primary Care Trust, central policy teams have a role to play in lobbying Government to make or encourage the policy changes at a national and international level that would help shape agriculture and trade in a health promoting direction.

Community and voluntary organisations

Community food initiatives can make a substantial contribution to health, social and environmental goals. Community food enterprises and gardening for health, for example, address social exclusion, urban regeneration and green space protection; they help improve diet; and they retain money in the local economy. They also help build a culture that is supportive of healthy eating patterns. Voluntary organisations also play an essential role in supporting specific groups: for example, mobility projects can provide transport for people who are housebound.

Education and schools

Schools have a key role in promoting healthy food and drink choices for children and young people, and in tackling unhealthy snacking. They can educate children, young people and their families about healthy food and drink choices, provide healthy snacks, resist sweet and fizzy drink vending machines, provide healthy and nutritious school meals, introduce children to a wide range of foods, and teach children about how advertising manipulates them. Equally importantly, they can teach children basic cookery skills that will prepare them for later life. Adult education also has a role in developing cookery skills.

The role of water in schools is also important. Dehydration can lead to a number of problems, particularly for children, including:

- Headaches, poor concentration, lethargy and reduced mental performance;
- Reduced physical and sporting performance;
- Health problems including urine infections, constipation, wetting / soiling problems and halitosis.

Children have been found to drink significantly less during a school day than on a weekend day¹² making them especially prone to the detrimental effects of dehydration when at school.

Environmental Health

The most widely known role of Environmental Health is in inspecting all food businesses, from food factories to the corner shop, to ensure compliance with food safety and hygiene requirements in order to ensure foods are safe to eat and are not going to cause food borne illness.

Food businesses are required to register with the Local Authority and there are currently just over 4,000 in the city of which 2,500 are inspected annually according to a national risk rating scheme. Environmental Health provides advice to consumers and business alike about a wide range of food issues and respond to over 600 complaints a year.

Safe handling of food is not just important for food businesses but also within the home. Environmental Health has produced a domestic hygiene handbook and advice on safe food in lunchboxes. They work with schools to link in with the national curriculum.



Environmental Health also operates a border inspection post at Manchester Airport that specifically looks at imported animal products entering from non European Union countries. Foods not of animal origin arrive through the airport and these too are inspected using a risk based system to ensure that they are not contaminated.

Food is truly a global product. The city's diverse community also adds to the rich variety of produce to be found on sale both in shops and restaurants in Manchester.

Work in Environmental Health on air quality issues also links across to the sustainable food agenda.

Food retailers

Food retailers are clearly one of the most important parts of the picture locally. They decide where to establish shops, what to stock, and how much it costs. Current retail policy has great benefits for providing a huge range of products, and can generate cheaper products in some cases.

However, it also creates food deserts. Changes to retail policy could have a substantial impact on the future of food in the city.

Trading Services

Manchester City Councils Trading Services has many contributions to make to the strategy. Manchester Fayre, as the school meal provider to 174 nursery, primary, special and secondary schools in Manchester, has access to a captive audience to reinforce healthy eating messages.

In addition to providing a meal that meets nutritional standards and legislation, Manchester Fayre is proactive in promoting healthy eating and works in partnership with head teachers, governors and parents to address current health concerns.

Manchester Fayre manages its own purchasing arrangements so is able to work closely with suppliers and clients on food and product development, for example to reduce the salt content of prepared foods.

Manchester Markets runs the wholesale market at New Smithfield as well as other local and farmers' markets, so has a substantial contribution to make in structuring the local food market in favour of food security and access.

The health and well being of older people is also a key issue for Trading Services who support the work of the Adult Social Care department through the provision of two key services - meals on wheels and luncheon club meal provision. Over 1,500 meals a day are delivered to meals on wheels and luncheon club users, which can play a vital role in promoting the social and physical well being of older people.

Clients requiring a special diet can also be catered for, including diabetics and those who need gluten free, low fat or modified texture meals.

Good food is fundamental to good health and good health is the basis of a productive workforce.

Hospital Trusts

Hospitals provide thousands of meals each year, which could be improved so that they provide a more healthy balance. They also have purchasing power which could be used to buy local produce where possible.

Leisure services and facilities

Good diet and high levels of physical activity are both important for health. Leisure services contribute towards the latter; they could also contribute towards the former through consideration of the snacks and drinks that are sold. Any work with children could also consider using healthy food rather than sweets as prizes.

Manufacturers

Food manufacturers play a key role in shaping consumer choice through product development and marketing. While this is more of an issue at a national than a local level, this sector has a substantial role in developing healthier products, in honest labelling and packaging, and through advertising to shape consumer demand.

Media

The role of the media in creating a local food culture is crucial. The media acts as an advertising medium, whether this is explicit (as in the case of paid advertisements) or unintentional (through storylines, backgrounds, etc). It is also a means of educating about what constitutes healthy eating.

Primary Care Trust

The PCT has the opportunity to influence diet through the Dietetics Service, which works in particular with those at the highest risk of ill health because of their diet, and through community development activity. The PCT Director of Public Health has a key role in developing local health improvement strategies which stress the importance of food and health as an underpinning factor in preventing problems such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

The Public Health Development Service runs the Healthy Schools Scheme, the Community Health Trainers Programme and co-ordinate activity on food and mental health.

Restaurant trade

Eating out is becoming ever more common, and adds considerably to the range of food people eat and the pleasure they get from it; however, it tends to be higher in fat than food eaten at home. The restaurant trade could be a major player in creating a culture of healthy eating through promoting healthy menus, including using healthier ingredients and having a greater emphasis on vegetarian options.

Local Employers

Local employers have an important role to play in encouraging healthy eating and in providing healthy choices in canteen facilities (where relevant). Good food is fundamental to good health and good health is the basis of a productive workforce.

Urban Planning / Regeneration

Last in this list, but certainly not in importance, is urban planning and regeneration. Both have key roles to play by developing planning policy which favours local retailers over the development of large supermarket sites, and which encourages the development of urban agriculture at a local level.

glossary



Agrochemicals

Chemicals used in agriculture to destroy insects, fungi, bacteria, pests, weeds (such as pesticides, herbicides, fungicides), and to regulate plant growth (such as fertilisers).

Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

BSF is the biggest single government investment in improving school buildings for over 50 years. The aim is to rebuild or renew every secondary school in England over a 10-15 year period.

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

European legislation set up against a backdrop of food shortages and rationing following the Second World War. The purpose was to increase farm productivity, stabilise markets, ensure a decent standard of living for farmers and guarantee supplies at a fair price for consumers.

Genetically modified crops

Food crops that have been altered through genetic engineering, usually to make them resistant to disease or pesticides.

Farm to fork

An expression used to define the whole food supply chain from production including growing food and raising animals to consumption.

Food Borne Illness

A foodborne illness is any illness resulting from the consumption of food. Although foodborne illness is commonly called food poisoning, true food poisoning occurs when a person ingests a contaminating chemical or a natural toxin, while foodborne illnesses are often food infection caused by a variety of foodborne bacteria, viruses, or parasites. Such contamination usually arises from improper handling, preparation, or food storage.

Food desert

An area where people experience geographical and financial problems in accessing healthy food.

Food miles

The distance food travels from where it is grown or raised to where it is ultimately purchased by consumers

Food poverty

Lack of money, inadequate shopping facilities, conflicting information about food and health, and poor transport mean that many people are denied healthy food choices. This has become known as food poverty.

Food Security

The reliable availability of a sufficient quantity and quality of nutritious food for a population.

Micronutrients

A substance, such as a vitamin or mineral, that is essential in minute amounts for the proper growth and metabolism of a living organism.

Peak oil

Peak oil refers to the point when the maximum amount of oil that can be extracted globally is reached. Thereafter, production will tail off as remaining reserves become more difficult and more expensive to harvest. One of the greatest impacts is expected to be on how and where our food is produced.

Section 106 agreements

Also known as planning gain, these can be set up by the Council with developers whereby the developer is required to do something in return for planning permission at no cost to the Council or make a donation for something to be done for the benefit of the community.

Sustainability

The ability to provide for the needs of the world's current population without damaging the ability of future generations to provide for themselves. When a process or project is sustainable, it can be carried out over and over without negative environmental effects or impossibly high costs to anyone involved.



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Food Futures Partnership

Manchester Joint Health Unit,
Room 4042, Town Hall Extension,
Manchester M60 2LA

Enquiries

Christine Raiswell

Food Futures Programme Manager
t 0161 234 4268
e c.raiswell@manchester.gov.uk

www.foodfutures.info

Manchester Food Futures is a partnership of the public sector, the private sector and communities working together to improve the city's food. We believe that everyone in Manchester has a right to good food: no-one should have this right denied because of where they live, their income, or their background. We believe that good food is enjoyable; it is safe; nutritious; environmentally sustainable; and produced ethically and fairly.