



# **The Sheffield Food Strategy 2014 -2017**

DRAFT

## Foreword

“Food affects everyone ... its affordability, availability, preparation, consumption and the waste it can generate. For this reason many people are passionate about food. A food strategy can help harness this passion and interest and can help us deliver improvements across a range of areas such as improved health, the creation of work and, if we are thoughtful, in ways that do not harm the environment.

Sheffield has many things to celebrate. The numbers attending Sheffield Food Festival grow year on year. We have leading academic institutions offering expertise, education and skills relating to food and nutrition including the new National Centre of Excellence in Food Engineering at Sheffield Hallam University. We have the new Moor Market with a large proportion of food sellers. The proportion of overweight and obese children aged 4-5 years is below the national average. We have a vast array of voluntary and community sector groups and organisations working to help local communities access and enjoy food.

However, alongside the many positives there are still huge challenges for us as a city. It is estimated that over 30,000 people in Sheffield are malnourished and that approximately 40,000 people in Sheffield are currently experiencing food poverty. The number of food banks is growing, which is simply not acceptable. A large proportion of our population is overweight or obese and we see growing inequalities between richer and poorer parts of the city.

This is the second Food Strategy for the city. The original Sheffield Food Plan successfully raised the profile of food in the city and helped partnerships to form. However, since its publication in 2011 circumstances have changed for our communities and for local statutory bodies. Cuts in social security have contributed to the emergence of food poverty in many communities. Sheffield City Council and other public sector bodies have fewer resources to fund this work and so will need to work differently, acting as an enabler, developing networks and changing policy.

The new strategy will focus on a few key areas and will set out what we as a city will do over the next two to three years to address three core outcomes – environmental sustainability, improved health and wellbeing and a strong economy where food business plays a major role.”

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# 1. Executive Summary

Food is the only product we buy and create that becomes part of us. We need it to stay alive. It is vitally important to the local population, the health and wellbeing of local people, the local economy and the local environment. Food gives us pleasure, allows us to share and celebrate and connects us to our land, different cultures and our friends and family. The current UK food system faces three major challenges which are all underpinned by the need for social justice and fairness:

- 1. Ensuring food security**, when all people at all times, have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food
- 2. Ensuring production and consumption of food is environmentally sustainable**
- 3. Ensuring food policies promote public health**

These issues have particular resonance for Sheffield where the number of food banks is growing and where 60% of the adult population are overweight or obese<sup>1</sup>. In part some of these issues could be improved if we had a more effective food system linked more closely to our local communities.

There are 3 outcomes that will be addressed through all of the priorities proposed in this new strategy. These reflect the key challenges facing our food system.

- **Environmental sustainability**
- **Improved health and wellbeing by increasing healthy life expectancy and reducing health inequalities**
- **Contributing where we can to a strong food economy**

## **VISION: Overarching aims for the Sheffield Food Strategy**

### **We want Sheffield to be a city where:**

- The local community are food literate. By this we mean that there is widespread understanding of where our food comes from and what it contains; of how important food is for health; and of how to prepare food that is tasty, affordable and nutritious
- *Everyone* can access food that is safe, affordable, nutritious and that benefits their health and wellbeing
- Food plays a key role in strengthening our local economy and our cafes, restaurants, and food outlets, draw people to our city
- Our local food system is sustainable and ethical and the environmental impact of our food production, processing, retail and consumption is minimised

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<sup>1</sup> Public Health England, 2014 <http://www.noo.org.uk/visualisation>

## **To achieve this we will aim, over the next three years:**

### **A. To tackle food poverty in Sheffield**

- *Challenge policy at a national level and to understand and challenge at a local level where our own systems exacerbate the problem*
- *Raise awareness of the impact of food poverty in Sheffield including working with and supporting food banks in the short term and supporting food bank recipients to get out of food poverty*
- *Increase the number of children and young people taking up their Free School Meal entitlement*

### **B. To help make takeaway food on offer in Sheffield healthier**

- *Support takeaway businesses to offer healthier choices*
- *Explore the use of planning measures and regulation to address the proliferation of hot food takeaway outlets in Sheffield*
- *Work with schools to encourage children and young people to 'stay on site' during break times*

### **C. To support local communities to eat well**

- *Work with local community initiatives that support food skills and healthy eating in order to add value and maximise impact*
- *Ensure that early years settings, schools and colleges follow an holistic settings based approach to nutrition, food and physical activity*
- *Support schools to implement their legal duty to provide universal free school meals at Key Stage 1, which includes implementing the legal changes to the food standards*
- *Redesign Early Years Prevention services to support parents of young children to establish healthy behaviours that can prevent the development of childhood obesity*
- *Challenge policy at a national level*

### **D. To encourage more people to learn about and get involved in growing their own food**

- *Bring neighbourhoods together around food*
- *Promote local food growing in schools and communities*
- *Further develop local food systems by encouraging the links between local food growing, eating and local businesses*
- *Influence local policy to maximise opportunities for urban growing*

### **E. To boost the role of food in the local economy**

- *Make links with local businesses and explore where we may have shared agendas for mutual benefit*
- *Maximise the opportunities presented by the new Moor Market*
- *Identify, develop and promote Sheffield's food assets and support local festivals and markets*
- *For public sector bodies to lead by example, by buying locally where possible and by including provision of training and volunteering opportunities in food and catering contracts*

**F. To explore the value of an independent Sheffield Food Trust that will:**

- *Support the implementation of the Sheffield Food Strategy*
- *Raise the profile of food in Sheffield*
- *Secure outside investment enabling growth of an independent food industry in Sheffield*
- *Tackle food insecurity and food poverty in Sheffield*

## **2. Introduction**

Food is the only product we buy and create that becomes part of us. We need it to stay alive. It is vitally important to the local population, the health and wellbeing of local people, the local economy and the local environment. Food gives us pleasure, allows us to share and celebrate and connects us to our land, different cultures and our friends and family.

This strategy is aimed at policy makers, professionals and stakeholders who can play a role in supporting our vision through improving environmental sustainability, improving health and reducing health inequalities and by contributing to a strong food economy.

The current UK food system faces three major challenges<sup>2</sup> which are all underpinned by the need for social justice and fairness:

### **Ensuring food security, domestically and globally**

Despite a global increase in food production, more than 1 billion people experience hunger across the world. Whilst the majority of these people live in poor countries, food poverty is also a serious problem in the UK and locally, in Sheffield. Although food is generally readily available in the UK many people simply cannot afford to eat sufficient, healthy food.

### **Ensuring production and consumption of food is environmentally sustainable**

Food production, processing and consumption all have a significant impact on the environment. If this impact is to be reduced, consumers need to change their behaviour. Some of the measures to address environmental impacts can, however, disproportionately affect low-income consumers. Taking account of the full environmental costs of food production is likely to lead to increased food prices.

### **Ensuring food policies promote public health**

Inequity of access to healthy food is responsible for the increased burden of diet related ill health, especially in low-income groups. A range of factors contribute to this inequity, including affordability, cultural and social factors. The food sector also employs large numbers of people in the UK and locally in

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<sup>2</sup> Food Ethics Council, 2010. *The Report of the Food and Fairness Enquiry*

Sheffield, many of which are amongst the lowest paid. Problematic working conditions, lack of job security and low pay can all be detrimental to health and wellbeing.

Sheffield has a long history of working to address food issues, with an archive of policy documents dating back to the early 1970s. Sheffield City Council remains committed to prioritising the food agenda and working collaboratively with a wide range of partners to address challenges to the food system and tackle the current food related issues facing the city. On this basis a decision was taken to review and update the current Sheffield Food Plan to ensure the city can respond to new and emerging issues, particularly the increasing burden of food poverty, within a rapidly changing local environment.

### **3. Why do we need to review our Sheffield Food Strategy?**

The current Sheffield Food Plan was published in July 2011. Its aim was to create a more profitable and diverse food economy, a healthy vibrant food culture and a sustainable food system in Sheffield. The plan was wide ranging and had seven objectives:

1. **Local Food** – To make sure that food eaten in Sheffield is sourced as locally as possible
2. **Cooking and Culture** – To make sure all Sheffield residents can plan and cook healthy meals
3. **Community Food Growing** – To make community food growing activities an important part of Sheffield's communities
4. **Access to Healthy Food** – To ensure Sheffield residents are able to conveniently access, buy and consume healthy food
5. **Public Sector Catering** – To make sure food bought and sold by the public sector is good for people's health, the environment and the economy
6. **Food Businesses** – To make sure Sheffield is a regional centre for food that is safe and of high quality and that it is home to profitable food retail and manufacturing
7. **Life Stages** – Sheffield people are enabled and supported to make informed choices about their health through improved food, diet and nutrition throughout their lives.

The plan was developed in partnership, with funding from the Sheffield Let's Change for Life Programme (to tackle childhood obesity) which has now ended. Progress to deliver the plan has been variable and whilst some initiatives within the plan have been successfully developed and delivered, progress on other elements of the plan has faltered.

A number of factors have affected the delivery of the current Sheffield Food Plan:

- The end of Sheffield Let's Change4Life Programme funding
- Expectations of what is possible in the current economic climate
- Sheffield City Council funding pressures

- Changes in priorities for example, the emergence of food poverty as an issue
- The wide ranging nature of the Food Plan
- Unclear and changing governance structures
- Public sector reorganisations

In addition to these factors, there have been significant policy developments in Sheffield and nationally, since the Sheffield Food Plan was published.

1. A Fairness Commission was held in 2012 and a report and recommendations were published in January 2013. A submission was made to the Fairness Commission on the subject of food poverty. Food poverty has become a priority in Sheffield over the past 18 months. As at December 2013 there were 16 Food Banks operating across Sheffield, supplying emergency food to people who cannot afford to feed themselves. Tackling food poverty is key to reducing health inequalities and addressing major diseases such as coronary heart disease, cancer and type 2 diabetes. Improving diets and reducing food poverty are also vital ways of ensuring that children have the best start in life and adults age healthily.

**Sheffield Fairness Commission<sup>3</sup> recommendations relevant to food are:**

- The NHS and SCC should use their available budgets to prevent health and wellbeing problems from occurring in the first place
- Government should be made aware of the impacts of its welfare reform programme on the city
- A living wage is paid to all employees in the city
- Preventative work to help people manage their money effectively should be supported
- The city should support food banks and other providers of emergency relief
- Establishing more schemes and sustainable projects run by local people for themselves, for example, co-operatives, grow, cook and eat projects.
- The city should establish a mechanism to redistribute decent, edible food which would otherwise be disposed of, to people who are in food poverty
- The city's Food Plan is updated to reflect the commission's recommendations

2. As part of the changes to the health system in England, from April 2013 Local Authorities were required to create multi-agency statutory Health and Wellbeing Boards. In turn, Health and Wellbeing Boards are required to develop Health and Wellbeing Strategies for their areas. The Sheffield Health and Wellbeing Strategy has a Food and Physical Activity work

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<sup>3</sup> Sheffield Fairness Commission, 2013 [www.sheffield.gov.uk/your-city-council/policy--performance/fairness-commission.html](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/your-city-council/policy--performance/fairness-commission.html)



programme that is being taken forward through the Food and Physical Activity Board.

Governance through the Food and Physical Activity Board Food Strategy will ensure that the Food Strategy and its ongoing implementation aligns closely with the 'Move More' Strategy for physical activity, as these agendas are highly interrelated, particularly in terms of tackling obesity.

3. The national School Food Plan was published in July 2013<sup>4</sup>. The purpose of the School Food Plan is to significantly increase the number of children eating good food in schools, and to determine the role of food, cooking and growing in schools. The plan aims to further increase the quality and take up of school meals; develop a whole-school food culture in every school; and excite children about good food and cooking so that they can lead healthy lives.

Proposed initiatives include cooking as part of the national curriculum, financial support to schools in the poorest areas to establish breakfast clubs, and universal free school meals for children in infant school. The Sheffield Food Strategy will need to incorporate the implementation of these recommendations at a local level.

In a time of diminishing resources, SCC has recognised that the current Sheffield Food Plan needs to be reviewed to take account of new and emerging priorities and to focus on a smaller number of key areas which can be delivered in partnership, within current economic constraints, to address the major food priorities in the city.

## **4. Progress to date**

Although the current Sheffield Food Plan has made variable progress, over the past three years food issues have continued to be addressed in the city, some contained within the Sheffield Food Plan, and others happening independently of it. Some notable recent food related initiatives and developments that have taken place in Sheffield include:

### **1. New Markets**

Sheffield has a new city centre market which replaces Castle Market and opened for business in November 2013. The new development houses up to 200 market stalls and is over 90% full (as at Feb 2014). A reinvigorated market will boost the local economy, improve the fresh food offer in the city and form a key element of the regeneration of Sheffield city centre. In addition there is a monthly farmers market in the city centre and a number of community led, neighbourhood markets.

### **2. Sheffield Food Festival**

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<sup>4</sup> School Food Plan, 2013 [www.schoolfoodplan.com](http://www.schoolfoodplan.com)

The first Sheffield Food Festival was held in 2009 and the popularity of this annual event has made it the region's largest and busiest, attracting 244,362 visitors in 2013.

The Sheffield Food Festival unites people from across the city in celebration of the best food and drink Sheffield and the surrounding area has to offer. The festival is delivered in partnership by Sheffield Hallam University and Sheffield City Council.

In 2013, the festival had a theme of community and children to promote growing and cooking at home, and to encourage friends and neighbours to get together to share and enjoy food.

### **3. Action to increase uptake of school meals**

A range of activities and initiatives to encourage healthy eating have been undertaken in schools over the past four years, funded through the Sheffield Let's Change4Life programme and co-ordinated by NHS Sheffield and the School Food service. Examples include:

**Food Fitness and Fun:** A partnership between Taylor Shaw (school caterers), Sheffield International Venues and the School Food Service to increase uptake of school meals (both paid for and free). The initiative has been running since 2011 and has involved up to 17 schools and approximately 9,000 pupils on a rolling programme of activity.

**Stay on Site:** This initiative supports secondary schools to encourage pupils to stay on the school premises at lunchtimes, in an effort to ensure children have healthier lunchtimes. In total, 19 secondary schools have been targeted over the duration of the programme. Each school developed its own action plan to improve the whole lunchtime experience including improving the dining room environment, pupil input into school menus, improving the activities offered during lunchtime and emotional health and wellbeing initiatives. Participating schools have reported increased school meals uptake and improved attendance and concentration in afternoon classes.

**Healthy Houses:** A new initiative by the Council's partner Taylor Shaw to encourage all Primary children to make healthy eating choices, and contribute to their '5 a day' by increasing their consumption of fruit and vegetables. Tokens are awarded to pupils who first choose vegetables and then eat them so 2 tokens are awarded to their school 'house'. At the end of the term the school house with the most tokens is rewarded with a basket of fruit which can be used in school or given to the community. So far 9 schools are actively involved and Sheffield Hallam University have been asked to measure the success of the scheme.

### **4. Action by community groups and organisations**

A number of locally led initiatives are underway across the city supporting a range of outcomes such as appreciation of and skills in cooking and growing; employment, education and training opportunities; and awareness of food waste. One example is the creation of a network of over 20 local food growing school and community gardens in Sheffield and the surrounding areas by Heeley City Farm and partners. This includes the cultivation of about 10 acres of land, construction of over 100 raised beds, erection of 20 polytunnels and greenhouses and planting over 200 fruit trees and soft-fruit bushes.

#### **5. HENRY (Health Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young) Programme<sup>5</sup>**

HENRY is an evidence- based training programme to prevent and address obesity in the 0-5s. The training package was funded through the Sheffield Let's Change4Life programme and was rolled out in Sheffield from January 2013. Three HENRY trainers have been trained in Sheffield and, as at January 2014, 100 frontline staff (Health Visitors and Early Years Practitioners) have been through the training programme. The aim of HENRY is to support parents of young children to adopt healthy lifestyles and establish healthy behaviours from an early age to prevent the development of childhood obesity.

#### **6. Launch of the Sheffield Green Commission**

SCC is set to establish a Green Commission, similar to the Fairness Commission, to clarify the vision to tackle climate change in Sheffield and ensure action is taken. One purpose of the Commission will be to ensure and utilise the contribution to this agenda from civil society. Food production, distribution, consumption and waste are key considerations within this debate.

#### **7. Development of Food Banks in Sheffield**

Over the past 18 months 16 food banks have been set up across the city in response to the growing demand for emergency food. Changes to welfare and increased use of benefits sanctions have led to a rise in people seeking emergency food in Sheffield and a number of faith based organisations have responded by establishing food banks, either through franchise arrangements with the Trussell Trust, or independently.

### **5. Where are we now? - Sheffield at a glance**

#### **Food Economy:**

- Sheffield has 4951 registered food businesses. Of these 3669 are restaurants and caterers, 1136 are food retailers, 70 are food

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<sup>5</sup> [www.henry.org.uk](http://www.henry.org.uk)

manufacturers and packers, 49 are distributors/transporters, 26 are primary producers and 1 is involved with import/export<sup>6</sup>.

- In Sheffield in 2011 a total of 12,574 people were employed in food related industry.<sup>6</sup>
- 14,624 people were employed in Accommodation and Food Service Activities in Sheffield<sup>6</sup>
- Sheffield's colleges and universities offer training and qualifications in a number of food related areas including catering and hospitality, nutrition, food business skills and food engineering

#### **Health and Health Inequalities:**

- There are 588 takeaways and sandwich shops registered on the Food Hygiene rating site<sup>7</sup>
- Approximately 40,000 people in Sheffield are currently experiencing food poverty<sup>8</sup> and over 30,000 people in Sheffield are estimated to be malnourished (in terms of under nutrition)<sup>9</sup>
- Estimates show that only 24.7% of people in Sheffield aged 16+ eat a healthy diet.<sup>10</sup>
- If average fruit and vegetable consumption increased by just under 2 portions a day (1 portion = 80g) in Sheffield 420 premature deaths could be avoided annually<sup>11</sup>
- 60% of Sheffield's population aged 15+ (271,324 people) is estimated to be overweight or obese.<sup>1</sup>
- The direct cost of treating obesity and its consequences in Sheffield is approximately £11.5 million annually and the estimated annual cost of obesity related sickness absence in Sheffield in is £14.5 million<sup>12</sup>
- The total costs of obesity to Sheffield are estimated to reach £165 million per annum by 2015<sup>16</sup>

#### **Environmental sustainability:**

- Sheffield City Council currently manage approximately 3000 allotment plots across 70 sites<sup>13</sup>
- The average household in Sheffield wastes £50 of food per month which could otherwise be eaten or drunk. That's £600 per household per year and over £136 million of wasted household food per year in Sheffield<sup>14</sup>
- Sheffield has 401 agricultural holdings mainly utilised for dairy and grazing livestock<sup>15</sup>

## **6. What do we want to do? - Priorities for the next 3 years**

<sup>6</sup> Sheffield City Council as at March 2013

<sup>7</sup> Oct 2013 [www.ratings.food.gov.uk](http://www.ratings.food.gov.uk)

<sup>8</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000. *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain*

<sup>9</sup> British Association of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition [www.bapen.org.uk](http://www.bapen.org.uk)

<sup>10</sup> Health Survey for England, 2010

<sup>11</sup> Cabinet Office, 2008. *Food Matters: Towards a Strategy for the 21st Century*

<sup>12</sup> National Obesity Observatory, 2010. *The Economic Burden of Obesity*

<sup>13</sup> Sheffield City Council, 2014. [www.sheffield.gov.uk/allotments](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/allotments)

<sup>14</sup> [www.veoliaenvironmentalservices.co.uk/Sheffield/Reducing-your-waste/Love-Food-Hate-Waste](http://www.veoliaenvironmentalservices.co.uk/Sheffield/Reducing-your-waste/Love-Food-Hate-Waste)

<sup>15</sup> ONS, 2012. Business Register and Employment Survey [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

There are 3 outcomes that will be addressed through all of the priorities proposed in this new strategy. They reflect the key challenges facing the UK food system set out in the introduction. Overall we want to ensure:

- **Environmental sustainability**
- **Improved health and wellbeing by increasing healthy life expectancy and reducing health inequalities**
- **Contributing where we can to a strong food economy**

### **VISION: Overarching aims for the Sheffield Food Strategy**

#### **We want Sheffield to be a city where:**

- The local community are food literate. By this we mean that there is widespread understanding of where our food comes from and what it contains; of how important food is for health; and of how to prepare food that is tasty, affordable and nutritious
- *Everyone* can access food that is safe, affordable, nutritious and that benefits their health and wellbeing
- Food plays a key role in strengthening our local economy and our cafes, restaurants, and food outlets, draw people to our city
- Our local food system is sustainable and ethical and the environmental impact of our food production, processing, retail and consumption is minimised

These statements set out a long term **vision** for the role food can play in Sheffield.

**IMPACT:** An evaluation framework will accompany this strategy and allow us to measure the extent to which the outcomes are being achieved. Many of the desired changes are complex and long term and so it is important to be realistic about what can be impact on in the shorter term. However, in the next 3 years there are some changes that the strategy can contribute to such as:

- Increased school meal uptake and more schools actively engaged in growing and healthy eating activities
- Improving on a number of indicators within the Public Health Outcomes Framework:
  - % Children in Y6 (age 10-11) overweight and obese
  - % Children in YR (age 4-5) overweight and obese
  - Diet (% of the population meeting the recommended '5-A-Day' on a "usual day"; average number of portions of fruit consumed; average number of vegetables consumed)
  - Excess weight in adults (% overweight and obese)
- Successful markets, a successful Food Festival and thriving local, independent food businesses
- Reduced demand on food banks

- Reduced household food waste
- Public sector food procurement practice that supports the aims of the Food Strategy

**Wider policy linkages:** The wide ranging nature of the Food Strategy means that there will be a cross over with many strategies and programmes of work. The role of the Food Strategy is to provide a focus for all work related to the food agenda in Sheffield and to influence existing and future activity and policy decisions to ensure they support, or at the very least do not contradict, the vision and outcomes set out in this document.

By taking steps towards realising our vision, the Sheffield Food Strategy will also address the Fairness Commission recommendations and make a significant contribution towards the following Sheffield City Council Strategic Outcomes:

- **Great Place to Live**
- **Better Health and Wellbeing**
- **Successful Children and Young People**
- **Tackling Poverty and Increasing Social Justice**
- **Competitive City**

Strong links will also need to be made to the Green Commission when this has been established. Other related plans and strategies include the Waste Strategy; Markets Strategy; Children's Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board work programmes; the Move More strategy for physical activity; and the Child Poverty strategy. This list is not exhaustive.

Rather than wait for a desired solution, or create aspirational, but ultimately unattainable goals it may be more effective for local partners from all sectors and communities to work together to take lots of small steps to tackle what is ultimately a complex agenda. It is likely to be more effective to do 1% better on 100 different things than to seek a single 'giant leap'. In that regard, Sheffield City Council has a role as a co-ordinator and 'enabler' to make it as easy as possible for local businesses, organisations, groups and individuals to undertake activities which contribute towards our long-term ambitions for Food in Sheffield. However, as well as working with others in partnership to take lots of small steps towards achieving our ambitions, there are also a small number of areas which SCC will prioritise and focus its efforts on over the next three years. Six priority areas for action have been selected and will make a key contribution towards realising our ambitions for Food in Sheffield.

## A. Tackle Food Poverty in Sheffield

The Department of Health has defined food poverty as ‘the inability to afford or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet’. It is important to recognise at the outset that food affordability and food poverty are closely linked to employment, welfare and housing. Actions to tackle food poverty will include broader measures to tackle poverty as a whole. A recent report of food banks in Sheffield concluded that although access to food is important, the main driver is lack of income and poor performance by the benefits system.<sup>16</sup>

In the UK, it is estimated that approximately 4 million people are currently living in food poverty<sup>12</sup>. This equates to approximately 40,000 people in Sheffield.

Food prices have risen 12% in real terms over the last 5 years<sup>17</sup>. As the relative cost of food has risen, low income households have been disproportionately affected. Food is often the most flexible item in the budget for people on low incomes and, with rising food and energy costs, many have had to trade down or skip meals to cope. Also, there is a strong temptation for people to eat unhealthily but very cheaply, particularly in the context of discount food retailing and special offers such as 40 frozen sausages for £1.

In the past 18 months, increasing numbers of people in Sheffield have had to seek food aid, often from food banks. There are currently 16 Food Banks in Sheffield, and a number of other projects and charities which feed, or distribute food to those in need. One possible consequence of food poverty is malnutrition. It encompasses both over nutrition/obesity and under nutrition. Malnutrition is both a cause and a consequence of disease. Malnourished people visit their GP more often, are admitted to hospital more frequently, stay on the wards for longer, succumb to infections more easily and can even end up being admitted to long-term care and dying unnecessarily.

Sheffield City Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group (NHS) and a range of other agencies refer people to food banks on a regular basis. There are practical ways in which Sheffield City Council and partners can support food banks in the short term. However, we must take care that this emergency provision does not become the solution to food poverty. Longer term action should focus on tackling poverty and eliminating the need for food banks.

Free school meals (FSM) can also have a direct impact on reducing poverty as they are worth on average nearly £10 per school week<sup>18</sup>. They also mean that children in poverty are able to eat at least one nutritious meal per day. However, many children who are entitled to FSM do not eat them every day, often because of teasing and fear of stigma<sup>19</sup>. In Sheffield 78% of Primary and 58% of Secondary school pupils take up their free school meal

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<sup>16</sup> Rapid Review: Food Banks in Sheffield, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> DEFRA, 2012. *Food Statistics Pocketbook*

<sup>18</sup> Children's Society, 2013. *Fair and Square: Free School Meals for Children in Poverty*.  
[www.childrenssociety.org.uk/fairandsquare](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/fairandsquare)

entitlement. Ways to increase this include working to increase school meal uptake in general, encouraging schools to adopt parent-friendly administrative systems and by removing stigma for example through “cashless” payment systems.

**Possible areas for action:**

- *Challenge policy at a national level and to understand and challenge at a local level where our own systems exacerbate the problem*
- *Raise awareness of the impact of food poverty in Sheffield including working with and supporting food banks in the short term and supporting food bank recipients to get out of food poverty*
- *Increase the number of children and young people taking up their Free School Meal entitlement*

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## B. Help make takeaway food on offer in Sheffield healthier

An increasing proportion of food is eaten outside the home in the UK. Total expenditure on food and drink eaten out (excluding alcohol) has increased by 7.7% since 2008. In Yorkshire and Humber, 26% of all food and drink are now consumed outside the home<sup>19</sup>. Men consume, on average, around a quarter of their calories when eating out, and women around a fifth.

The number of fast food outlets is increasing and takeaways now provide just over a quarter of the food in the eating out market. Studies show that this increase is concentrated in cities and along arterial routes<sup>20</sup>. Takeaways are often concentrated in areas of socioeconomic deprivation and close to schools. Takeaway food often has high levels of salt, sugar and saturated fat and can lack dietary fibre and fruit and vegetables. This is characteristic of a poor diet.

Poor diet is a major health risk. It contributes to:

- Almost 50% of coronary heart disease deaths
- 33% of all cancer deaths
- Increased falls and fractures in older people
- Low birth weight and increased childhood morbidity and mortality
- Increased dental caries in children

(Faculty of Public Health, 2006)

Diets high in fat, sugar and salt can also lead to overweight and obesity. Obesity is a growing problem and is more prevalent in lower socioeconomic groups. Based on national modelling, it is estimated that around 24% of people in Sheffield aged 15+ are obese and a further 34% are overweight (BMI > 25). Consequences of obesity for health include increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and associated health problems.

The 2007 UK government Foresight report 'Tackling obesities: future choices'<sup>21</sup>, states that one important action to tackle obesity is to help make the healthy choice the easy choice by modifying the environment, for example so that it does not provide easy access to energy-dense food. Proliferation of takeaways can also be associated with increased litter and anti-social behaviour and can have an undesirable effect on the street scene in local areas.

### **Possible areas for action:**

- *Support takeaway businesses to offer healthier choices*
- *Explore the use of planning measures and regulation to address the proliferation of hot food takeaway outlets in Sheffield*
- *Work with schools to encourage children and young people to 'stay on site' during break times*

<sup>19</sup> DEFRA, 2013. *Family Food 2012*.

<sup>20</sup> Greater London Authority, 2012. *Takeaways Toolkit*

<sup>21</sup> Foresight, 2007. *Tackling Obesities: Future Choices*.

## C. Support communities to eat well

It is estimated that 60% of the adult population of Sheffield is either overweight or obese<sup>1</sup>. Most cases of obesity are caused by eating too much and moving too little. Obesity can therefore be addressed by encouraging people to develop healthy eating habits and to be more physically active.

In addition to the problem of obesity there will be a sizeable number of people in Sheffield eating a poor quality diet and /or eating alone whilst not wishing to do so. The Health Survey for England 2010<sup>13</sup> estimates that less than 25% of people aged 16+ living in Sheffield eat a healthy diet. It is also estimated that poor diet is related to 30% of all years lost to early death and disability. Sometimes eating a poor quality diet may be due to low income but it may also be due to lack of cooking skills and/or equipment or due to social isolation.

Infancy and childhood are of critical importance in the development of healthy bodies and habits<sup>22</sup>. For this reason additional emphasis should be placed upon supporting nutrition pre-conception and throughout pregnancy and on infant nutrition including breastfeeding and weaning.

In addition to direct benefits to physical health eating well is also about where and how we eat, taking time, socialising and eating in pleasant surroundings which in turn may contribute to improved emotional health and well-being.

There are a growing number of programmes in the city, mostly run by the voluntary sector that can encourage people to eat well. These projects offer opportunities for people to cook and eat together, cook on a budget and cook healthy meals. They offer the opportunity for people to come together in local neighbourhoods, learn new skills and a growing number of these are also taking the opportunity to link with local food growers.

A great deal of work has been done within local schools over the last few years through work with the Healthy Schools Programme and the School Food Service to improve uptake of school meals and within the curriculum to raise awareness of where our food comes from and to develop cooking skills. The national School Food Plan<sup>4</sup> pledges to develop this further and states that Local Authorities should encourage schools, in particular Head Teachers and Governing Bodies, to respond to the healthy eating agenda.

### **Possible areas for action:**

- *Work with local community initiatives that support food skills and healthy eating in order to add value and maximise impact*
- *Ensure that early years settings, schools and colleges follow an holistic settings based approach to nutrition, food and physical activity*

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<sup>22</sup> Dame Claire Tickell, 2011. *The Early Years: Foundations for life, health and learning*

- *Support schools to implement their legal duty to provide universal free school meals at Key Stage 1, which includes implementing the legal changes to the food standards*
- *Redesign Early Years Prevention services to support parents of young children to establish healthy behaviours that can prevent the development of childhood obesity*
- *Challenge policy at a national level*

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## **D. To encourage more people to learn about and get involved in growing their own food**

Growing food to eat and eating together with friends and family is valued by many people. Health benefits can include the benefits of eating a diet rich in fruit and vegetables, benefits through the exercise undertaken in working a plot of land or a garden and evidence that this also improves mental wellbeing<sup>23</sup>. In addition there may be opportunities to supplement incomes.

Practical food growing with children and young people through school gardens or window boxes can reinforce teaching about healthy diet, introducing children to new types of fruit and vegetables, and encouraging outdoor activity and environmental awareness<sup>24</sup>. In 2005, a survey by the British Heart Foundation found that 37% of children aged 8-14 did not know that cheese was made from milk and that 36% could not identify the main ingredient in chips<sup>25</sup>.

Food grown in your garden, on an allotment or local area of land has reduced food miles and comes without packaging, supporting the Food Strategy's aim to improve sustainability. This may also require the City Council and partners to raise awareness of local alternatives to imported food, such as thinking about soft fruit instead of orange juice as source of vitamin C.

Sheffield City Council supports approximately 3000 allotments but there is the opportunity to do more. In some parts of the city it is difficult to let plots and in other parts of the city there are waiting lists. In addition Sheffield City Council has access to other parcels of land, around housing and schools or within parks that offer the potential for growing food and/or orchards.

There are a growing number of projects and enthusiasts in the city engaged in growing food locally and who share both their passion and skills with others. However, many such projects are reliant on external and often short-term funding which may impact on activity levels in the near future. The city council's objectives in relation to this will be to actively seek to develop programmes in a sustainable way that add value and maximise both health and other outcomes.

### ***Possible areas for action:***

- *Bring neighbourhoods together around food*
- *Promote local food growing in schools and communities*
- *Further develop local food systems by encouraging the links between local food growing, eating and local businesses*
- *Influence local policy to maximise opportunities for urban growing*

<sup>23</sup> Mind (2013). *Feel better outside, feel better inside: Ecotherapy for mental wellbeing, resilience and recovery.* [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

<sup>24</sup> Porritt, J. (2009). *Growing up green.* Sustainable Development UK

<sup>25</sup> Blythman, J. (2006). *Bad Food Britain. How a nation ruined its appetite*

## **E. Boost the role food plays in the local economy**

Food plays an important role in the local economy. There are currently 4951 registered food businesses in Sheffield and over 400 agricultural holdings<sup>7</sup>. These businesses provide many jobs for local people and contribute significantly to the local economy. Food draws visitors to Sheffield too, for example the Sheffield Food Festival was visited by 244,362 people in 2013.

Sheffield is also a destination of choice for students wishing to go onto a career in the food industry. Sheffield College runs successful catering and cookery courses and the Universities offer various degree courses in nutrition and food business skills. Sheffield Hallam University also has the new National Centre of Excellence in Food Engineering presenting opportunities to offer expertise and skills development to Sheffield's food businesses which will in turn to enhance the city's food offer.

Over the past 5 years, there has been an increase in small independent food businesses in Sheffield. The Eat Sheffield awards champion local food businesses as does the creation of a 'Made in Sheffield' brand. This area is one which has the potential to grow further. Whilst the food offer in Sheffield is diverse and changing, there is much that could be done to support the growth of local food businesses in Sheffield and raise the profile of Sheffield as a 'food destination'.

The proposed actions here are intended to act as building blocks towards increasing the contribution of the food system in Sheffield to the local economy. However, it is important to note that all steps to boost the local economy must do so in the context of supporting the wider themes of improving health and wellbeing and achieving environmental sustainability.

### **Possible areas for action:**

- *Make links with local businesses and explore where we may have shared agendas for mutual benefit*
- *Maximise the opportunities presented by the new Moor Market*
- *Identify, develop and promote Sheffield's food assets and support local festivals and markets*
- *For public sector bodies to lead by example, by buying locally where possible and by including provision of training and volunteering opportunities in food and catering contracts*

## **F. Explore the value of an independent Sheffield Food Trust**

The profile of food in Sheffield has been raised in recent years thanks to, among other things, the publication of the original Sheffield Food Plan and the development of the Sheffield Food Festival.

However, when compared to the physical activity agenda, it is clear that much more needs to be done to raise the profile of, and champion, food in Sheffield both within the city and beyond its borders.

An independent Sheffield Food Trust would seek to raise the profile of food in Sheffield, provide an independent voice on food issues in the city and would access resources and funding that statutory bodies cannot.

The new Trust would draw on expertise from within the city region and beyond. It is not intended to replace or displace any existing organisations working within the food system in Sheffield, but rather it is intended to strengthen, add value to and support existing organisations, to advocate for fairness and social justice in the food system and to provide a single, unified voice on food issues in Sheffield.

### **Possible areas for action:**

*Establish an independent food trust that will:*

- *Support the implementation of the Sheffield Food Strategy*
- *Raise the profile of food in Sheffield*
- *Secure outside investment enabling growth of independent food industry in Sheffield*
- *Tackle food insecurity and food poverty in Sheffield.*

### **Implementation**

The work in each of these priority areas will prioritise activities which impact on key populations and vulnerable groups and will incorporate the cross-cutting themes of environmental sustainability, improved health and wellbeing and a strong economy. Importantly, initially the actions will predominantly be those which are within Sheffield City Council's control or sphere of influence.

Ongoing dialogue with stakeholders will inform what we should prioritise, how each stakeholder can contribute towards the outcomes and ways in which we can work together to maximise opportunities. An implementation plan will be developed and could include existing activity or suggested future initiatives to be delivered by individual stakeholders or in partnership with SCC and/or others. The implementation plan is intended to be developmental and responsive to changing and emerging priorities.

## 7. Ways of Working

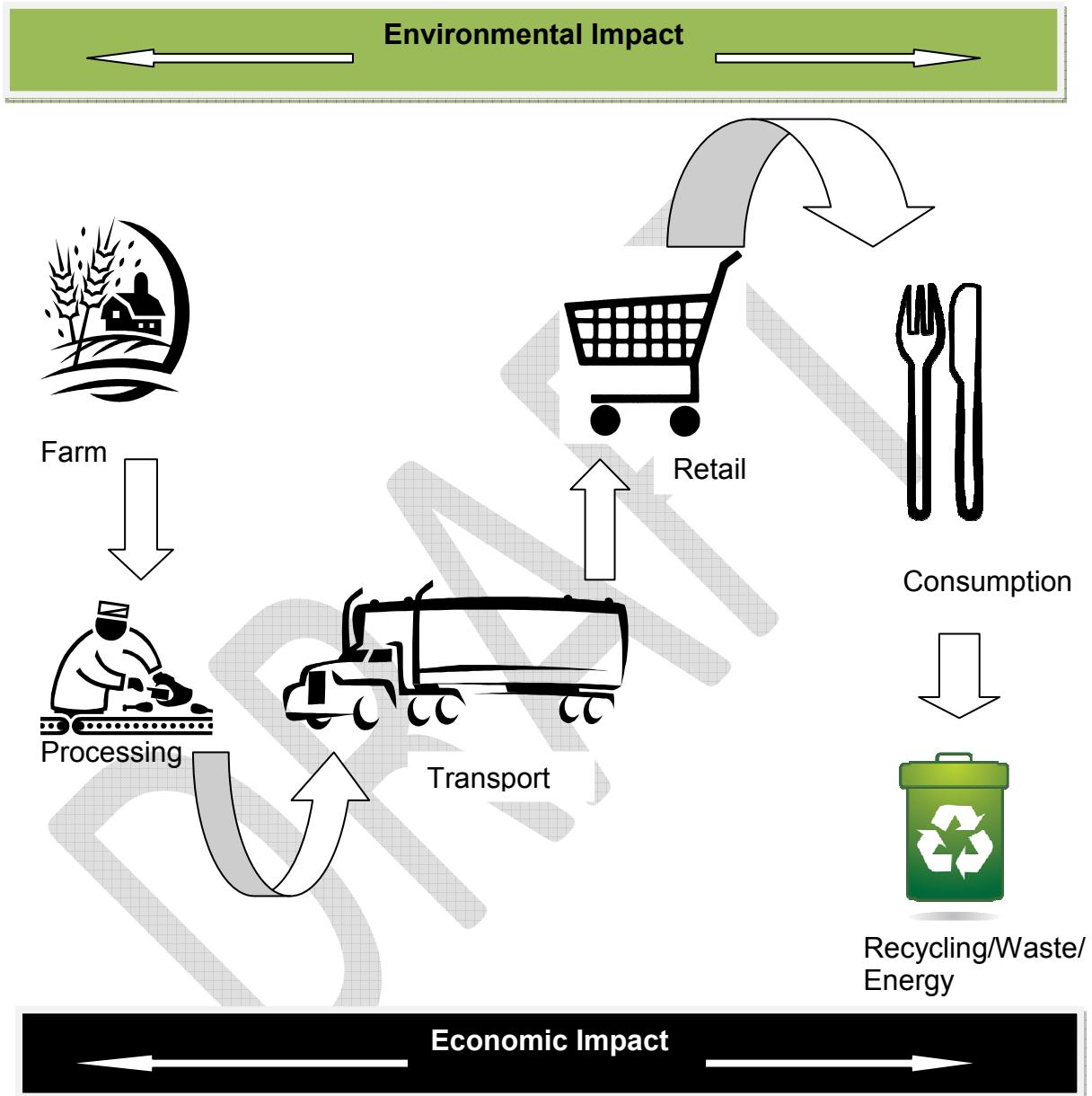
The following principles describe the way in which SCC will take forward the Sheffield Food Strategy;

1. **Learning from what works:** We will ensure our delivery of the Sheffield Food Plan is informed by Sheffield skills, drawing on the academic expertise of our two Universities, voluntary sector know how and commercial acumen.
2. **Enabling:** We want to become an 'enabler' to make it as easy as possible for local businesses, organisations, groups and individuals to undertake activities which contribute towards our long-term ambitions for Food in Sheffield.
3. **Fairness:** We will work with those who are most disadvantaged or excluded to ensure they have a strong voice in the development of this plan and that we 'include' and meet the needs of all people in its delivery.
4. **Collaboration:** We recognise that the food agenda is complex and involves many stakeholders across all sectors. We will make every effort to collaborate with individuals, groups and organisations across all sectors to work together towards achieving our ambitions for Sheffield
5. **Flexible:** We know that priorities can change, new issues can emerge and circumstances can shift. This plan is intended to be developmental and, while we are committed to delivering its content we will also remain flexible to ensure we can respond quickly to maximise new opportunities and respond to changing circumstances and priorities.
6. **Strategic:** We will identify the most effective levers for change. This may include good communication, changing a policy and in particular using the powers we have through the commissioning process.
7. **Leading by Example:** Looking for opportunities within the public sector where we can demonstrate good practice.
8. **Fun!** We want to contribute towards the creation of a healthy, prosperous Sheffield that is founded on the local population enjoying healthy, prosperous lives we will therefore have a strong focus on positive messages and celebration of success.

## 8. Opportunities for intervention

The food system is complex. Figure 3 below illustrates the different stages of the food system. There are potential opportunities to intervene at all stages.

Figure 1: The Food System



The Sheffield Food Strategy will consider the whole food system both within and beyond the city when designing interventions and undertaking activities for Sheffield. Opportunities for intervention where maximum impact can be achieved will be identified.

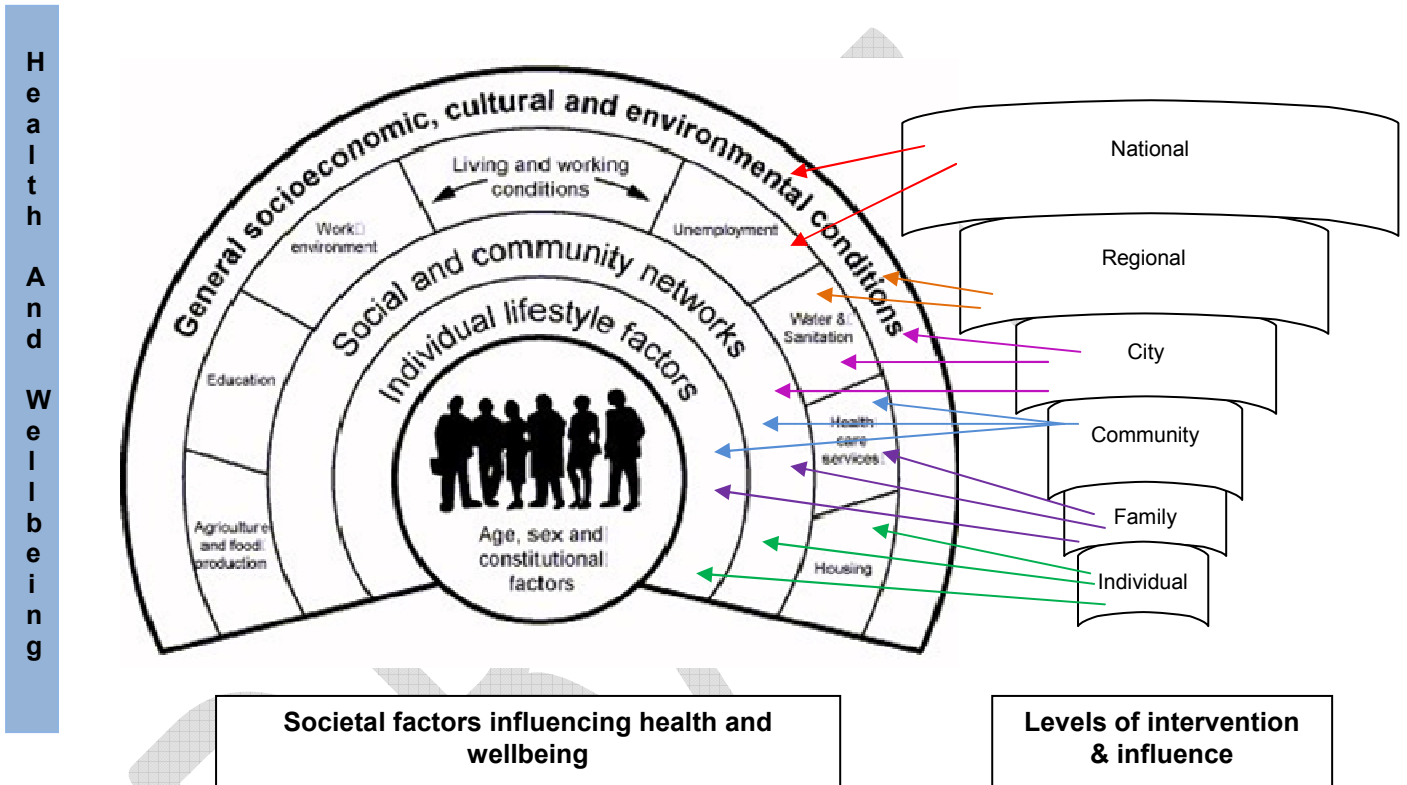
The food system plays a key role in Sheffield's local economy at all stages, providing jobs and income for the city. There is also a significant environmental impact, (waste, carbon footprint, for example) at all stages. Economy and environment are cross-cutting themes which will run through all activities within this plan.



## 9. Levels of Intervention

Influencing food issues can take place at a number of levels and in a number of different arenas. Local agencies and civic society have a key role to play in tackling issues at a local level, but it is also necessary to acknowledge that the food industry is global and some issues are beyond our control. Figure 2 below describes the levels at which this food plan can, and will, operate.

**Figure 2: Levels of intervention (Adapted from Dahlgren & Whitehead 1991)**



Health and wellbeing is the third cross-cutting theme that will run throughout this plan.

Examples of activity at different levels could include maximising opportunities from central government, lottery funded programmes such as 'Best Start Sheffield' and campaigns by Public Health England, lobbying for change, raising the profile of, and championing food in Sheffield, enabling and supporting local projects and activities, directly establishing local interventions and campaigns and co-ordinating and linking activities at all levels.

## 10. Governance

Food is a cross-cutting issue which is vitally important to the local population, the local economy and the local environment. Achievement of the vision for Sheffield set out in this document will require the Council to work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders from individuals and communities through to charities, businesses and other public sector bodies.

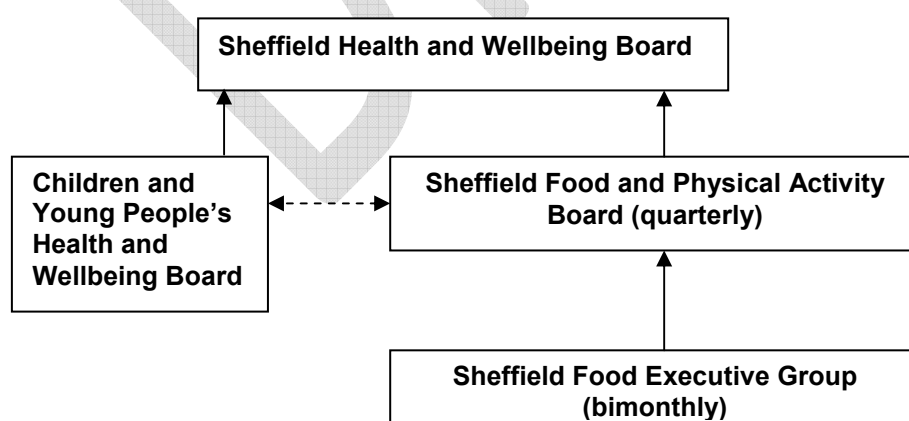
Also, as part of the changes to the Health System in England, from 1st April 2013 Local Authorities took on new responsibilities for public health in their areas. Delivery of the revised Sheffield Food Strategy presents an exciting opportunity for SCC to begin to deliver its vision to make the Council a 'Public Health Organisation'.

One recognised challenge with delivery of the original Sheffield Food Strategy was the lack of consistent governance and accountability to drive progress. This has been addressed for the delivery of the revised strategy.

The newly established Food and Physical Activity Board will be the accountable partnership board for delivery and future strategic direction of the Sheffield Food Strategy. This will also enable us to ensure a combined approach to tackling obesity for example through the synergy developed between the food and physical activity strategies. The Sheffield Food Executive Group will involve delivery partners and be responsible for operational delivery of the plan along with wider consideration of food issues in Sheffield.

Figure 3 below describes the new governance arrangements for the Sheffield Food Strategy. The Place Public Health team and Food Executive Group will develop an evaluation framework and an ongoing user involvement strategy to support the food strategy.

**Figure 3: Sheffield Food Strategy Governance Arrangements**



The Food Strategy is led and co-ordinated by the Place Public Health Team within Sheffield City Council. Progress, information and good practice is shared with a wider range of stakeholders through a virtual Sheffield Food Network.

## 11. What have people told us?

There have been relatively few attempts at a national level to involve the public in the development of policy relating to food. In Sheffield we are committed to listening to the local population.

### **Consultation and events which have informed this review so far include:**

Growing the Local Food Economy 2012  
Food Poverty Workshop 2013  
Fairness Commission submission 2012  
Sheffield Health and Wellbeing strategy consultation/s 2013  
Tackling Poverty and Social Justice Strategic Outcome Board  
Every Child Matters Consultation on the Best Start in Life Lottery bid 2013  
Discussion at the Food and Physical Activity Board 2013  
Sheffield Food Festival 2013  
Meetings with local councillors including with the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 2013 and the Sheffield Food Strategy Workshop on NOV 6<sup>th</sup> 2013  
An online survey during December 2013 was conducted

Very early on in our discussion with local people it became apparent that we had narrowed our priorities down too far. Growing food and eating well were of particular interest when we talked to people at the Food Festival and so they have found their way into higher prominence within the strategy. In particular people have been concerned about the lack of cooking skills within local communities. Food Poverty has continued to be at the forefront of people's minds. The importance of these areas was further reinforced by the online survey during December 2013.

Another issue that concerns people greatly is the growing number of takeaways within neighbourhoods. Concerns were these may offer unhealthy food but also about how too many outlets change the nature of neighbourhoods. But people also recognised the tensions here because some may provide a healthy offer and certainly provide much needed employment.

There have also been concerns expressed about the amount of food waste in the city and what more can be done to minimise this.

Finally people have spoken to us about changing the food culture within Sheffield and the importance of education around where our food comes from and what it contains. People are concerned that we have lost touch with the food system.

Consultation on this strategy is intended to be the start of an on-going dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders across Sheffield which will inform and shape the current and future food system in the city. The governance structure, with its connections to wider food networks will be vital in building and maintaining links between all interested parties.

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