

DRAFT

SHORT VERSION
**BIRMINGHAM
FOOD
SYSTEM
STRATEGY**



**CREATING A BOLDER,
HEALTHIER AND
MORE SUSTAINABLE
FOOD CITY**
2022 – 2030



Vision

Create a bold, fair, sustainable and prosperous food system and economy, where food choices are nutritious, affordable and desirable so all citizens can achieve their potential for a happy, healthy life.

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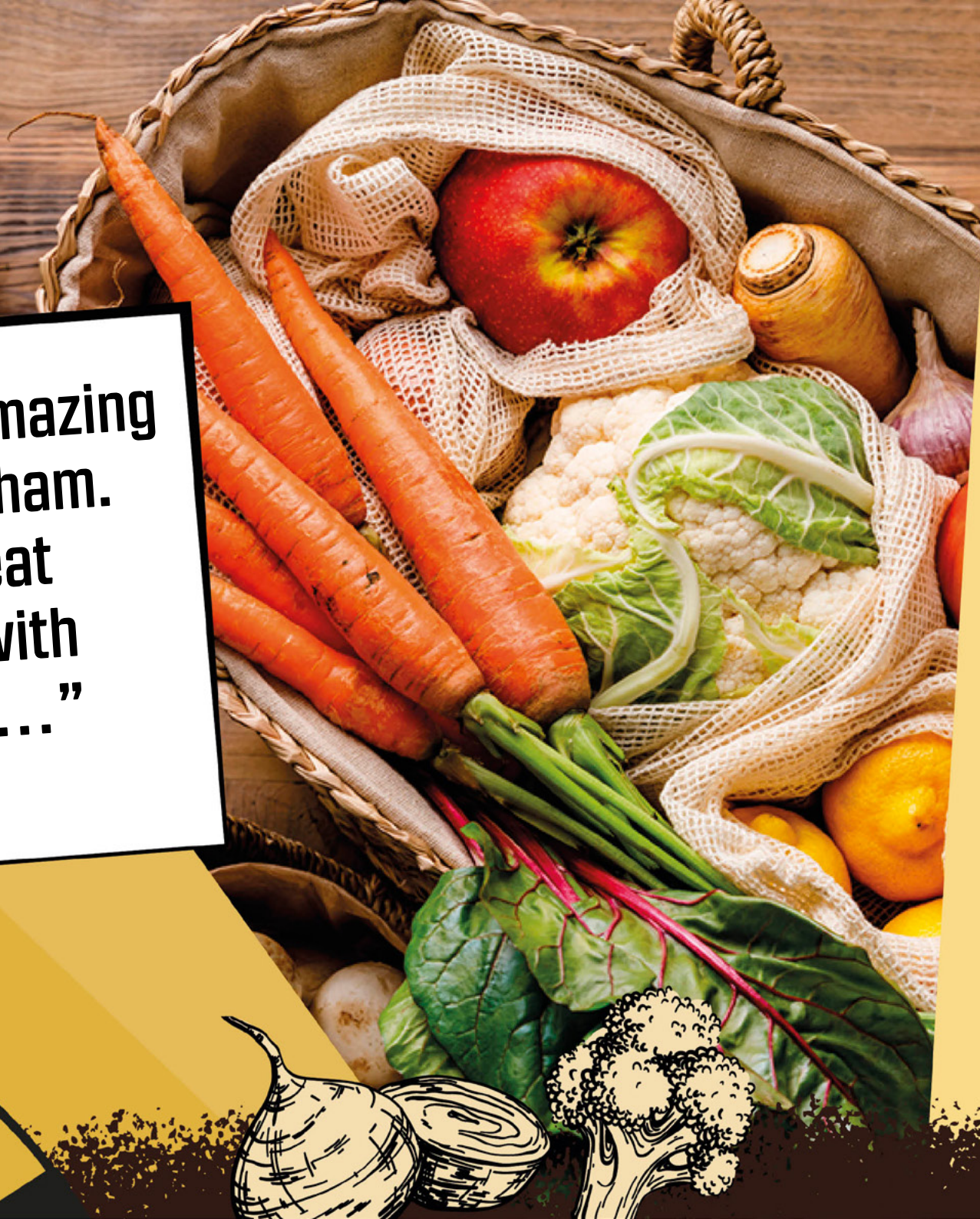
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Introduction

“I think we’ve got an amazing food culture in Birmingham. We’re blessed with great cultures and blessed with great chefs in the city...”

South Asian Adult (Birmingham Food Conversations)



Birmingham Food System Strategy

Creating a Bolder, Healthier & More Sustainable Food City

Vision

Create a bold, fair, sustainable and prosperous food system and economy, where food choices are nutritious, affordable and desirable so all citizens can achieve their potential for a happy, healthy life.

Key Principles

Three principles are key to the development of this strategy and action plan:

Collaborate

Strengthen partnerships and build on existing good practice.

Empower

Remove barriers and facilitate solutions.

Equalise

Focus actions where they are needed most to reduce inequalities.

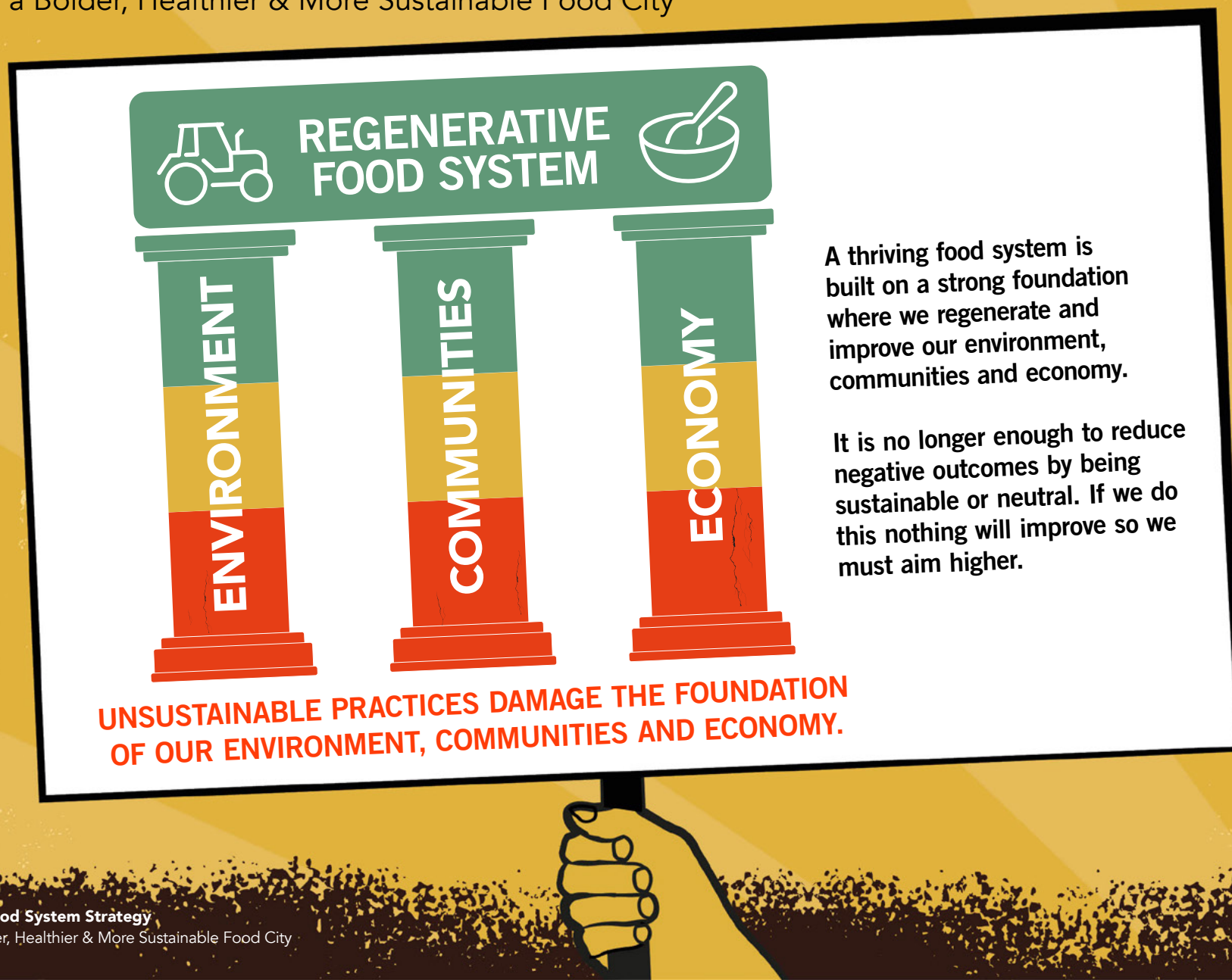
The new Health & Wellbeing (HWB) Strategy establishes a clear vision for the health and wellbeing of Birmingham: **Creating a Bolder, Healthier City.**

A city-wide partnership of stakeholders from across the food system are building upon this foundation to establish the **Birmingham Food System Strategy: Creating a Bolder, Healthier and More Sustainable Food City.**



Birmingham Food System Strategy

Creating a Bolder, Healthier & More Sustainable Food City

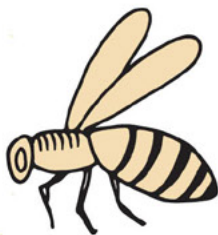


Ambition

A regenerative food system where our environment, communities and economy thrive

Our city-wide partnership's ambition is to develop a regenerative food system, which continuously evolves and improves our environment, communities and economy.

It is no longer enough to reduce negative outcomes from unsustainable practices, and our eight year strategy aims higher, and will seek out regenerative practices wherever possible. We will tackle the biggest barriers we face to achieving regeneration, and partners across the city will collaborate to overcome them, and develop a thriving city.



Regenerate our Environment

A future where our response to the climate emergency is visible through our collective urgent action to mitigate the impact our urban food system has on the environment. Seasonal and local produce is in high demand, and the carbon footprint and negative environmental impact from food miles, processing and unsustainable packaging is minimised. There is a strong culture of reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle, and regenerative farming and food production practices are supported.

Regenerate our Communities

A future where every citizen, no matter their circumstances, can eat an affordable, healthy, and sustainable diet. Communities are resilient and empowered, and people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds develop meaningful connections when they come together and share food. Citizens live in communities

where life has a fulfilling purpose and people are valued, and those who need it most are supported.

Regenerate our Economy

A future where our city has a circular economy and we attract innovation and investment. Our culturally diverse food offer is celebrated and our city is a food destination. SMEs and independent businesses are celebrated and supported and they thrive and grow. A nutritious, ethical and sustainable food offer is an economically sustainable business choice. Employment opportunities are plentiful, and workers are treated well, receive a fair salary, are upskilled and have opportunities for development.



A Co-Produced Strategy

The Birmingham Food System Strategy is the city's ambitious eight-year approach to creating a bold, sustainable, healthy and thriving food system. This strategy is the outcome of three years of collaboration with partners and citizens; with the key aim of creating a whole-system strategy that demonstrates what we need to enable radical change locally, and shape a food system for all.

The Birmingham Food System Strategy marks the beginning of our Bold Birmingham Food Revolution. The strategy is owned by the city and is driven by every citizen, organisation, and business in Birmingham collectively leveraging change, innovation, and development to create a future food system that every citizen is proud to be part of.

Partners who have contributed include:

- Citizens and community groups
- Creating a Healthy City Food Forum with stakeholders from across the city
- Food Poverty Core Group
- Food Justice Network
- Third sector organisations
- Community groups
- Schools and nurseries
- Public sector services
- Training providers
- Universities and academics
- Food system innovation projects
- Food producers and distributors
- Caterers
- Food businesses
- Business Improvement Districts
- Dietitians
- Primary care organisations including hospitals
- Technology and innovation experts

"We now need to create and discover a process to enable those on the ground to feed back into the system and system change."

(Birmingham Food Dialogues – public sector, third sector, citizenship and private sector)

31% of 387 Birmingham citizens said increasing the availability and affordability of locally grown food should be the number one priority as a food policy. In the Seldom Heard Food Voices focus groups, individuals had a desire to grow their own food but lacked access to allotments or growing spaces.

"I have never liked tomatoes but then one day we did a pasta dish with the tomatoes we grew and oh my goodness they were so lovely and now I love them."

Vulnerably housed adult
(Birmingham Food Conversations)

Case study: Fruit and Nut Village Project

This partnership focuses on tree-based edible landscapes. The first village is based in Stirchley and currently has around 21 sites in the area. The next village is planned for Druids Heath.





A Co-Produced Strategy

Citizens tell us they want:

- Food that is affordable.
- Culturally diverse food (and that messaging around food and initiatives that take place account for, and celebrate, the diversity of Birmingham).
- We need to improve the health of diets and the food offer available.

Community organisations have told us:

- Too many people struggle with getting enough food to feed themselves and their families, and this is getting worse as food and fuel prices continue to rise.
- Too many people lack the knowledge and skills to cook a healthy meal.

Businesses have told us:

- It is challenging to make environmentally sustainable and healthy food an economically sustainable business choice.
- They also recognise that there is too much food waste.
- Existing challenges across the food system, including labour, fuel and material shortages, have been exacerbated by Covid-19 and Brexit, leading to food shortages and increasing food prices.

In addition, the pandemic has revealed how fragile food security is, and it has exacerbated existing inequalities in many communities. Therefore, we are striving to create healthy food city where everyone can access and afford healthy, sustainable, safe and delicious food everyday.

Birmingham Food Conversations were undertaken to reflect upon and understand the lived experience of over 400 citizens from Birmingham's diverse communities captured through 33 facilitated focus groups hosted by 24 commissioned providers.


"You can be enticed - it's enticing – pasties, pies and sausage rolls and things like that. It's the salt, processed food and like sweet things with the sugar in them." Working age adult with a mental health condition.
(Birmingham Food Conversations)

"You can't go for a 15minute walk anywhere without seeing a fast food shop or advert."
Care Leaver (Seldom Heard Food Conversations)

"We used to call it Naulakha... get a big pot and chuck it all in, like a stew, a pot of leftovers. A Pakistani/South Asian tradition."
South Asian adult (Birmingham Food Conversations)

"As a producer, we want the population to be taught more on health and nutrition to make more informed buying habits."
(Producer, Summit Group)



A photograph of three people—two women and one man—standing in a warehouse. They are all wearing bright orange high-visibility safety vests over their casual clothing. They are smiling and have their right fists raised in a celebratory gesture. The background shows industrial shelving and stacks of blue cardboard boxes, some of which are labeled 'CAPEGOLD'.

FareShare Midlands turns an environmental problem into a social solution by supplying good quality surplus food to local communities who tackle hunger and poverty and the root causes of both.

Laura Spencer - Head of Development
Photo: Imogen Burns, Laura Spencer and Richard Farroll
volunteering at FareShare - West Midlands

Aims

8 year journey together 2022 – 2030

Aim 1: Grow the Birmingham Food Revolution

- A cultural shift is emerging across our city, and insight work shows that demand for environmentally sustainable, ethical, nutritious and local food is increasing. Birmingham is leading the way with innovative projects to build this cultural change further. Through this strategy and action plan we will shine a light on the amazing initiatives taking place in our city, and inspire others to join the Birmingham Food Revolution.
- Birmingham is known for our culturally diverse food offer, many small and independent businesses, and award winning food, and we will celebrate and support our local food economy and build our reputation as a food destination.

Aim 2: Build a sustainable, ethical and nutritious food system and a thriving local economy

- A thriving local food economy that is resilient and responsive to changes, and where sustainable, ethical and nutritious food choices are an economically sustainable business choice is our aim for the future.
- In addition, by developing our food system as a major employer, where businesses and citizens benefit from the high-quality food sector education and skills development opportunities on offer, our food system will be a core part of our city.





Aim 3: Build stronger resilient communities that support those who most need it, and mitigate food insecurity

- Communities, third sector and voluntary organisations play a vital role in supporting citizens, mitigating the impacts of poverty on food security, and maximising the uptake of support programmes such as healthy start vouchers and free school meals.
- Our city-wide partnership will facilitate coordinated local action and this will be key to our success, and we will support and build on existing initiatives and community assets. The future will include strong communication, opportunities that are maximised, and responsive and tailored signposting to services and support.

Aim 4: Empower citizens to consume a sustainable, ethical, healthy and nutritious diet

- Reduce the systemic structural inequalities of food and nutrition by improving the availability, affordability and access to safe, nutritious foods across Birmingham in every community, for every citizen.
- Work across the life course to support people to make healthier and more sustainable food choices, from weaning to moving into independence in adulthood, and staying healthy in later life.
- Identify the barriers, facilitators and drivers of behaviour change across the food system, and utilise behavioural science and other evidence-based methods to shape action that will bring about immediate and long-term change.



Urban Food System



Additional drivers

- Marketing and communication
- Research and innovation
- Finance and investment
- Skills and education
- Employment and volunteering
- Energy and resources
- Waste processing and recovery
- Transport and logistics



It should be easy for us to eat healthily - it isn't ... As the Birmingham Youth Board of Bite Back 2030, we believe that every single young person has the right to live a healthy life. That's why we are campaigning to improve access to healthy food in the city we love and are proud to call home.

Photo: Birmingham Youth Board of Bite Back 2030

Framework for Action

Our future city:

Gives more to the environment
than it takes

Has healthy and resilient communities

Has a thriving food economy

Is the food system that the citizens
of Birmingham deserve and need

Head chef at primary school
leading an innovative approach

Photo: Matthew Knight -
Hillstone Primary School



Big Bold City Approach

The work streams and actions will be developed through a city-wide lens, with an understanding of how different elements of the food system interact.

In addition, the impact the food system has on different people and places, and the impact those people and places have on the food system will be considered, including capturing what drives the decision-making, food behaviours and choices...

- **Across people and communities** including different demographics, life circumstances and those with protected characteristics;
- **Across the life course** including early years, children, young people, adults, older adults;
- **Across the city** including areas of deprivation, access to supermarkets;
- **Across settings** the food system in Birmingham operates across a diverse range of settings. We will work to ensure a joined-up, city-wide approach by undertaking the actions for work streams across the following settings:

1. **Food businesses** e.g. catering, restaurants, cafés, canteens, takeaways, farm shops, food delivery services, markets, supermarkets, convenience stores and other food retailers
2. **Supply chain** e.g. food producers and growers, logistics, delivery
3. **Third sector and not-for-profits** e.g. charities, not-for-profit and voluntary organisations
4. **Community and faith settings** e.g. community centres, allotments, churches, mosques, temples, shared spaces
5. **Education settings** e.g. early years, nurseries, primary schools, secondary schools
6. **Further education settings** e.g. colleges and universities
7. **Birmingham City Council** e.g. Council services such as lifestyle services, education, regulation and enforcement and others
8. **Public services** e.g. medical settings, libraries, commissioned services
9. **Research and innovation** e.g. knowledge hubs, innovation companies
10. **Workplace and employers** e.g. onsite food offer, workplace policies and initiatives
11. **Industry networks** e.g. industry organisations and networks
12. **Home** e.g. the wide variety of living situations that reflect Birmingham citizens

The Food Action Decision-Making and Prioritisation (FADMaP) tool will ensure we prioritise actions including those that are citizen-first, celebrate diversity, and address poverty and inequalities.



Work Stream Objectives

Framework for Creating a Bolder, Healthier and More Sustainable Food City

Our Framework for Action is focused on delivery through nine themed work streams based on the international evidence-base and learning from networks such as Sustainable Food Places and Milan Urban Food Policy Pact. The nine themed work streams are:

Food Production

Empower citizens and local producers to grow and preserve food and connect to the city's food system.

Food Waste and Recycling

Maximise the repurposing and distribution of surplus food and minimise waste and unsustainable packaging.

Food Behaviour Change

Ensure the capability, opportunity and motivation for key behaviours that will enable long term change.

Food Sourcing

Increase sourcing of local, environmentally sustainable, ethical and nutritious foods across the food system.

Food Economy and Employment

Create a thriving local food economy for all and maximise training and employment opportunities.

Food Security & Resilience

Ensure all citizens in every community, at every age, have access to sufficient affordable, nutritious and safe food.

Food Transformation

Transform diets to contain more diverse and nutritious ingredients, and less fat, salt and sugar.

Food Skills and Knowledge

Empower citizens with knowledge and skills in relation to the food system from farm to fork.

Food Innovation, Partnerships & Research

Gather insights and facilitate innovation, collaboration, learning and research across the food system.



Prioritisation Tool

Ensuring we move effectively and efficiently by using the Food Action Decision-Making and Prioritisation (FADMaP) Tool.

Through the work streams, there are key considerations to compare proposed action to in order to aid decision-making and prioritisation, and to strengthen proposed plans. This tool will enable effective prioritisation of different actions to improve the food system. More detail is available about this tool in the appendix section.



How this will be achieved

The purpose of this document is to lay out the strategic approach required to regenerate our food system.

What this strategy is...

- A document that provides strategic direction that will guide the development of the Food System Strategy Action Plan which will be a living document.
- Developed by city-wide partners from a variety of backgrounds across the food system.
- Something that can be delivered by one organisation alone. It is essential that this strategy is delivered in partnership by stakeholders across the food system, as meaningful change can't be achieved by any one organisation alone.

What this strategy isn't...

- An action plan. This document does not define what actions will be taken over the next eight years, only guides them. This is the role of the Food System Strategy Action plan, which will expand each of the work streams.



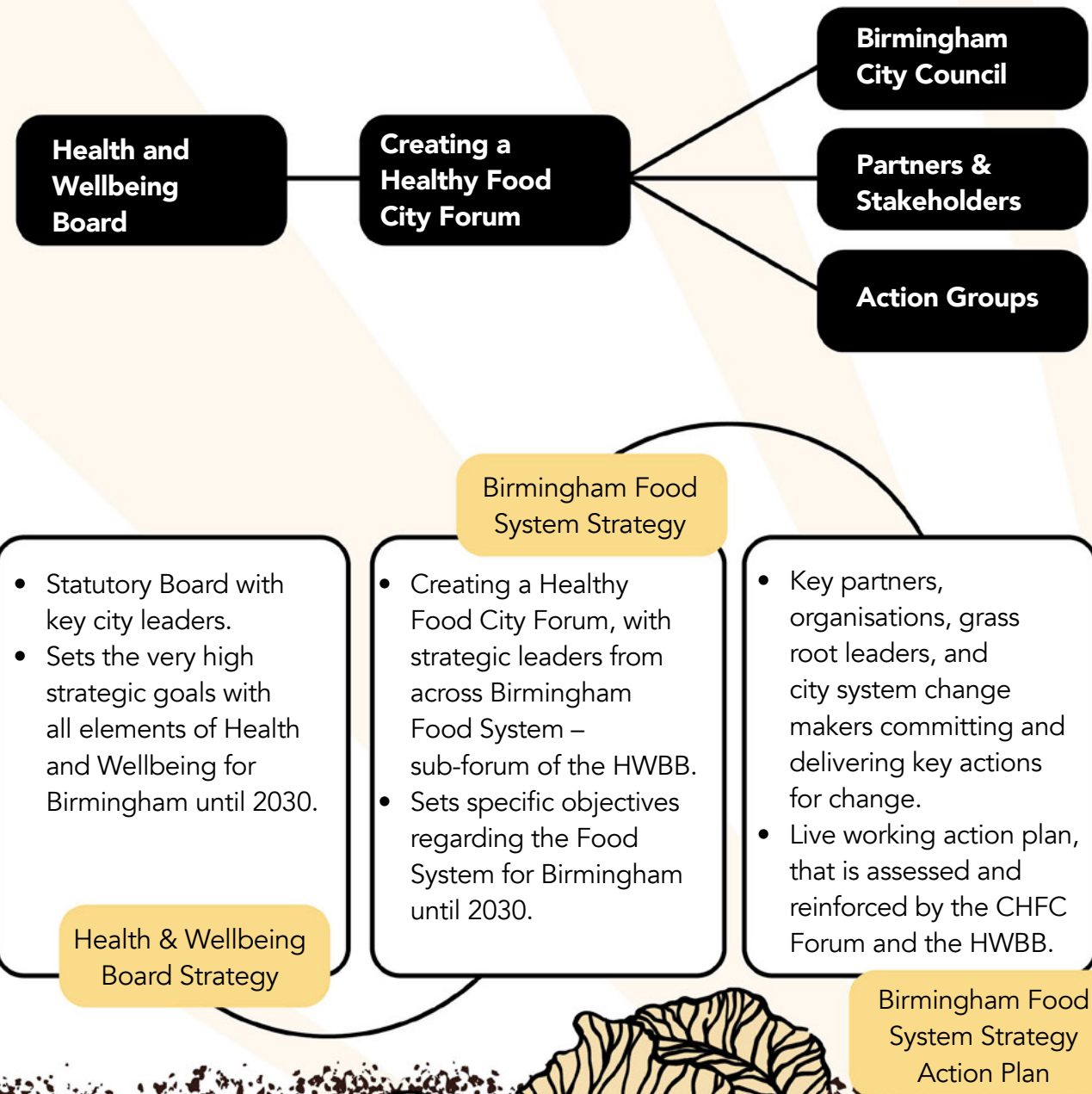
Strategic Oversight

The Food System Strategy will be overseen by the Health and Wellbeing Board, as a statutory committee of Cabinet.

The Framework will be driven by the Creating a Healthy Food City Forum and delivered in conjunction with partners and key players from across Birmingham. The Creating a Healthy Food City Forum reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board, under the leadership of the Cabinet Member for Adult Health and Social Care.

Delivery

The ambition of a Bolder, Healthier and More Sustainable Food City can only be achieved by setting a clear direction, establishing pivotal actions for all, and working across organisations and the system to lever long-term effective change. The Birmingham Food System Strategy will therefore be supported by the Birmingham Food System Strategy Action Plan, which will develop and evolve to deliver the objectives of the Birmingham Food System Strategy by 2030. This will be delivered through a broad, representative and dynamic local food partnership.



Next Steps

Citizens Leading the Birmingham Food Revolution

By consulting on the draft Birmingham Food System Strategy we are continuing the journey of co-production and collaboration with citizens and communities.

We want to hear your views and feedback on our ambition, our objectives and the workstreams for action.

In listening to your views we will refine and update the Birmingham Food System Strategy, continuing to build our city and citizen owned strategy.

All your contributions will also shape and influence the Birmingham Food System Action Plan, which will be a living document outlining how we as a city will achieve our aims for 2030.

The Birmingham Food System Action Plan will be taken forward through the Creating a Healthier Food City Forum, which is a sub-group of the statutory Health and Wellbeing Board, and other partners from across Birmingham.

The Birmingham Food System Strategy consultation is part of our Birmingham Food Revolution, which aims to grow the food conversations in Birmingham. The Birmingham Food Revolution mission is to celebrate our city food landscape, learn how to thrive collaboratively, and speak out about how we want our city's food system to work for us. This is why the Birmingham Food System Strategy consultation will be live for five months and include the Commonwealth Games.

We aim to complete the consultation on the Birmingham Food System Strategy by **19 August 2022** and to present the final strategy to the Health and Wellbeing Board in September/October 2022.



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Special thanks to the Birmingham Food Legends across our city for trailblazing this Food Revolution



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