



SUSTAINABILITY SUB COMMITTEE – 25 MAY 2016

SUSTAINABLE FOOD CITIES

1 Recommendation

- 1.1 The Sustainability Sub Committee is recommended to discuss and support the principle of Aberdeenshire Council becoming a founding member of a strategic, cross sector steering group which would support a co-ordinated approach to transforming food culture and food systems in Aberdeenshire by working towards Sustainable Food Region status.**

2. Background/Discussion

- 2.1 Soil Association Scotland, through its Food for Life Scotland programme, works with the Sustainable Food Cities Network as part of its Sustainable Places activities – one of three key areas of work in the programme supporting Scotland on its journey towards becoming a *Good Food Nation* by seeking to transform food systems and food culture at a strategic level.
- 2.2 Sustainable Food Cities Network is a partnership led by Food Matters (a not-for-profit national food policy and advocacy organisation), the Soil Association and Sustain (the alliance for better food and farming). It is a rapidly growing UK movement (currently 44 members) of cities, boroughs and counties who share a belief in the power of food as a vehicle for driving positive change in environmental, social and economic problems.
- 2.3 In Scotland, Food for Life Scotland has been working with Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling to realise their ambitions to become Sustainable Food Cities. There is an opportunity for Aberdeenshire to become one of the first rural areas in Scotland to work with the Food for Life Scotland team and engage with the initiative.
- 2.4 The Sustainable Food Cities approach involves developing a cross-sector partnership of local public agencies, businesses, academics and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) committed to working together to make healthy and sustainable food a defining characteristic of where they live. The UK wide Network helps people and places to share challenges, explore practical solutions and develop best practice in all aspects of sustainable food.
- 2.5 Taking a systems, place-based and partnership approach to address a range of complex but inter-related food issues (e.g. obesity, diet related ill health, food poverty, waste, climate change and biodiversity loss) can make better use of resources in tough times and can benefit all community members.

- 2.6 Food for Life Scotland, a flagship programme of Soil Association Scotland (and funded by Scottish Government), works with regions and cities across Scotland to promote and support places to use the Sustainable Food City model. The Sustainable Food Cities approach is a tried and tested model for driving positive change which involves:
- Establishing a cross-sector food partnership
 - Developing and delivering a food strategy and action plan
 - Embedding healthy and sustainable food policy
- 2.7 There are six suggested key areas that make up the framework for change:
1. Promoting healthy and sustainable food to the public
 2. Tackling food poverty, diet-related ill health and access to healthy food
 3. Building community food knowledge, skills, resources and projects
 4. Promoting a vibrant and diverse sustainable food economy
 5. Transforming catering and food procurement
 6. Reducing waste and the ecological footprint of the food system
- 2.8 The Sustainable Food Cities approach builds upon the existing good work on school meal procurement and provision within Aberdeenshire through the Council achieving the Food for Life Catering Mark.
- 2.9 The strategic cross sector partnership would be made up of members from the regions' public, private and third sector organisations and local communities, working together to create a shared vision; achieving Sustainable Food City status and ultimately delivering many benefits for Aberdeenshire and its residents and businesses.
- 2.10 Any observations from Monitoring officers have been included in the report.

3. Financial, Equalities and Staffing Implications

- 3.1 At this time there are no financial implications arising from this report.
- 3.2 There are no current staffing implications relating to this report.
- 3.3 No Equality Impact Assessment is required at this time as the report relates only to a proposal. Any development from this point which would see the creation of a steering group would generate the need for its activities to be subject to an EIA.

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