

This report is public.	
A Food Strategy Action Plan for Cherwell	
Committee	Executive
Date of Committee	4 March 2024
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities. Councillor Phil Chapman
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	9 January 2024
Report of	Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing, Nicola Riley

Purpose of report

Following the adoption of the Oxfordshire Food Strategy by Executive on June 6 2022 (minute 7 refers) there have been a series of meetings and consultations led by Good Food Oxfordshire, including community food network members and local food businesses to agree an action plan for Cherwell that is presented for approval.

1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To agree the Food Action Plan for the Cherwell area.
- 1.2 To delegate the approval of any grants to qualifying organisations to the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Good Food Oxfordshire (GFO) has been commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council to work countywide and develop a food strategy and place- based action plans.
- 2.2 Cherwell Executive agreed this strategy last year and approved officers working with partners from the Cherwell Food Network and food producers and businesses alongside GFO to create an action plan for the district.
- 2.3 Linked to the overarching strategy the action plan establishes a series of actions for a variety of partners to take to improve outcomes for residents and improve the relationships between ecosystems and consumers.
- 2.4 Each action in the plan, which is over three years, is led by one of the partners. There will be regular reviews of progress and measurement of impact. This will be reported through the Food Insecurity working group to the Overview and Scrutiny committee.

Cherwell District Council

2.5 The County Council has pledged £25,000 to each district authority to enable and support the actions of the plan. Cherwell District Council will be the responsible body for the grant monies and oversee spending across the partners to ensure appropriate delivery and compliance with the county council grant terms.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary			
Finance	There are no additional budget requirements arising from the actions outlined in this report that cannot be contained within the base budget and the grant. Kelly Wheeler Finance Business Partner			
Legal	As Cherwell District Council will be responsible for the distribution of grant monies, it will need to ensure grants are distributed in accordance with the grant scheme and any procurement implications are addressed. Shahin Ismail, Deputy Monitoring Officer			
Risk Management	There are no notable or significant risks involved in agreeing the action plan. Individual project and programme risks will be captured in the appropriate service risk register. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact	x			The delivery of the action plan should improve the availability of good and sustainable food sources across Cherwell. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	x			
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected		x		

characteristics, including employees and service users?				
Climate & Environmental Impact	x			Not applicable
ICT & Digital Impact		x		Not applicable
Data Impact		x		Not applicable
Procurement & subsidy		x		Not applicable
Council Priorities	Healthy, resilient, and engaged communities			
Human Resources	N/A			
Property	N/A			
Consultation & Engagement	<p>A series of 9 consultative workshops and connection to the Food Insecurity Working group has ensured that through debate of the issues the action plan developed has broad community support</p> <p>There will continue to be 6 monthly meetings of the wider food network group to monitor progress.</p>			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 The Oxfordshire Food Strategy sets out a vision where everyone in Oxfordshire can enjoy the healthy and sustainable food they need every day
- 3.2 The strategy has five priority areas for action:
- Tackle food poverty and diet-related ill-health.
 - Build vibrant food communities with the capacity and skills to enjoy food together.
 - Grow the local good food economy through enterprise, local jobs, local wealth generation. Strengthen short, transparent local food supply chains.
 - Improve the health and sustainability of institutional catering.
- 3.3 A critical part of implementing this strategy has been the development of local Food Action Plans for each district, to ensure that the Food Strategy reflects local priorities and reflects the unique nature of Oxford City and each of the Districts. These have been led by the Food Action Working Groups (FAWGs) which include representatives from across the food system.
- 3.4 The Cherwell Community Food Network, which consists of Food banks, Larders and Community Fridges, alongside food producers and voluntary support

organisations based in the district, were involved in the development of the action plan through a series of 9 interactive workshop style meetings. This has given the Food Insecurity Working group of the council the assurance that topics have been aired well and consensus achieved in presenting the action plan. Stakeholders believe this is deliverable.

- 3.5 The Councils Healthy place shaping team will coordinate the work involved as part of their workplan for 2024 onwards.

4. Details

- 4.1 The food action plan set out at Appendix One is a multi-stakeholder plan, with a range of organisations taking responsibility for action. Through this 'collective action' approach we can achieve more, working collaboratively towards a vision for a better food system for Cherwell.
- 4.2 The plan identifies initial actions spanning 2024 – 2027. The plan has been developed following a Theory of Change methodology to ensure that the actions will deliver the intended outcomes and impacts. Throughout this period, we will review progress against targets and metrics with other groups and organisations as we all contribute to the successful enactment of the plan. Over time there will be opportunities to refine the actions recognising that the issues we face are complex and happen within a context in which action owners do not always have control over externalities.
- 4.3 GFO, who lead the whole countywide process, intend to take an iterative learning approach both to actions and metrics and whilst maintaining the integrity of our ambitions, be pragmatic about the most effective way to achieve these.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To not endorse the action plan

This course of action has been rejected as there are no substantive reason why the council should not enter into a formalised action plan with regard to the vision of the Oxfordshire Food Strategy 'Where everyone in Oxfordshire can enjoy the healthy and sustainable food they need every day'.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 Endorsing the Food Action Plan for Cherwell, which is the result of community consultation and shared ambition, allows groups involved to be confident in their plans for development. Furthermore it allows Cherwell District Council to receive funding from Oxfordshire County Council to support the delivery of the identified actions.

Decision Information

Key Decision	No
Subject to Call in	Yes
If not, why not subject to call in	not applicable
Ward(s) Affected	All

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Cherwell Food Action Plan
Background Papers	N/A
Reference Papers	Oxfordshire Food Strategy
Report Author	Nicola Riley Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing
Report Author contact details	nicola.riley@cherwell-dc.gov.uk 01295 221724