Brighton & Hove Food Poverty Action Plan: Lessons learned
3 March 2016
Why?

• Food poverty an issue for our city – High housing costs/ low wage economy
• Needs a collective response – too big for any one organisation.
• Food poverty is complex – can be overwhelming
A year of development
Nov 2014 - Nov 2015

- City council commitment in November 2014
- Brought in intelligence from our food banks network, food poverty awareness training
- Also desk research – local and national
- Our own research – e.g. into ‘shared meals’ report
- Funding from Esmée Fairbairn
Engagement at different levels

• ‘high level’ - round table event

• Also consultation events – e.g. with community & voluntary sector, advice service network (began earlier with 2012 event)

• Individual conversations!
  • NB time consuming!
Senior decision makers

• Ensure that food at the centre of policy making, not an ‘add on’

• embedded in city policy and practice - Not ‘sit on a shelf’
Outcomes

• 10 principles – guides future work not just this plan

• Raising awareness – process & conversations have stimulated activity

• Shifting the discussion – ‘preventative approach’
Food poverty: A preventative approach

Crisis food poverty
Food banks and hunger are just the tip of the iceberg.

Long term food poverty
Our approach focuses on the much larger group of people struggling long term to eat a healthy diet, and aims to prevent them reaching crisis point.

What prevents food poverty?

- Cooking equipment
- Employment
- Access to low cost healthy ingredients
- Cooking skills
- Benefits and pensions
- Financial inclusion (e.g. savings, money advice)
- Affordable housing, fuel, transport
- Healthy food in health/social care services
- Community networks
- Shared meals & eating together
- Crisis support for when prevention doesn’t work
Outcomes – practical projects - quick wins –

e.g. March 2016

Pilot a holiday lunch club on a school premises (ideally in Portslade or Hangleton) via existing Chomp model and/or in partnership with school meals service.
Part of a positive vision: “the city that cooks and eats together”

“It’s such a treat to get food like this ... if you’re living on a tight pensioner’s budget there just isn’t anything left to spend on good food”

– Hove Methodist Church lunch club attendee
Lack of data – plan addresses: “Commit to measuring levels of food poverty so we know if we are being effective”

Also...
please include our food poverty questions!
External environment

• There is no money!!!
• Services are being cut as demand increases
  ➢ be realistic – recognise stakeholder’s reality
  ➢ Look for cost savings/ “spend to save”
  ➢ Think about a series of small actions
  ➢ Make sure plan has leads, resources, timescales
Over 50 partners – crucial!!!
Case study coming soon.....