



# FOOD PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURES

## Stories from Sustainable Food Cities

November 2017



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# 1 Introduction

Nearly 50 cross sector food partnerships have been set up throughout the UK as part of the Sustainable Food Cities Network movement. A key component of the SFC approach is the establishment of a cross sector body which owns and drives forward the agenda. These typically include representation from the public, private, voluntary and community sector. In some places these are newly formed partnerships coming together specifically to meet the criteria to become a SFC Network member; in other areas these partnerships have been in existence for a decade or more.

## 1.1 The types of SFC food partnership

The journey from initial discussions and informal gatherings of interested stakeholders through to planning, consulting, drafting and publishing a food strategy or action plan along with formalising as a partnership can be a lengthy one requiring substantial resource (mainly person time) to achieve. There comes a point fairly early on in most food partnerships when they need to decide how to administer this resource. The answer usually falls into one of three categories:

The food partnership is:

**Housed by a public sector organisation** (e.g. public health, environment or economic development department of the local authority). These are funded or staffed by government employees.

**Housed by a third sector organisation** (e.g. an environmental or community development organisation or charity). Funds are secured by the third sector organisation to support set up, running costs and staff.

**Fully independent** These are likely to have minimal resources and be staffed entirely by volunteers initially, but over time develop into fully fledged organisations, secure their own funds and employ their own staff to administer the partnership.

There are inevitably grey areas between these categories; partnerships housed by third sector organisations may be commissioned by the public sector; partnerships that are fully independent with their own legal structure may still be based within the office of another third sector organisation. Partnerships will also cross over between categories over their lifetime; those that start out being housed by the third sector or public sector for example may later transition into fully independent partnerships. For the purpose of this report partnerships have been classified according to their current best fit, whilst accepting that this may not tell the whole story.

## 1.2 Report structure

This report explores how SFC Food Partnerships are structured in each of the three categories outlined above. It will look at their governance arrangements; why the structure was chosen; how it has evolved over time; the benefits and challenges of different models; and what lessons have been learnt. The report is structured as a series of stories told by the food partnerships themselves based on telephone interviews carried out in July 2017. Following on from this, the section 'Writing Your Own Story: Deciding on Governance and Structure' outlines some of the basic steps for food partnerships covering: Steering Groups; Terms of Reference; Wider Stakeholder Groups; Deciding Where to House your Food Partnership and Choosing Legal Structures. An overview of the current structures of SFC Food Partnerships is included in Appendix 1.

## 2 Food partnerships housed within the public sector

These food partnerships are funded or staffed by government employees. They were typically initiated by the public sector and often have a public sector chair. They are linked into strategic partnership reporting structures. From the 35 responses gathered from SFC members on governance a total of 12 were classified as being 'housed within the public sector'. It should be noted that some of these were fairly loose associations or networks of partners so the degree to which they are embedded in the public sector is questionable.

### 2.1 Our Story: Bath and North East Somerset Local Food Partnership

#### 2012 Getting food on the agenda

BANES Local Food Partnership came about when a number of factors collided. Firstly, the community sector groups Transition Bath and Saltford Environment Group were calling for Bath and North East Somerset Council to take a strategic leadership approach to sustainable food. They lobbied the Council, galvanised the community and submitted consultation documents requesting a more coordinated approach. At the same time, Public Health had just moved into the local authority and conversations were being held between the Corporate Sustainability Team and the new Public Health Team. The Corporate Sustainability Team identified that there was a gap and that links needed to be explored between health, economy, sustainability and the wider community in relation to the food system. The Corporate Sustainability Team then put in a request to the Environment Sustainability Partnership Board for a strategic approach to food to become one of its key work areas. There followed a series of stakeholder events focusing on different topics which led to the drafting of the strategy.

#### 2013 - Local food partnership established

The Food Partnership is chaired by the Council's Sustainability Manager and the Sustainable Food City Coordinator sits within the Sustainability Team at the Council. The Partnership is steered by a multi-stakeholder group consisting of Council reps from a range of departments, Bath District Farmers, Bath Tourism, Transition Bath and Virgin Care (Health Service Providers). The wider 'Stakeholder Partnership' holds one event per annum aimed at organisations. There is no formal membership structure. The focus of the steering group tends to be on what the Council and wider partners can do and its influence on other public sector organisations. There are strong links into strategic partnerships e.g. Health and Wellbeing Board, Environment Sustainability Partnership, Climate Change Plan. Since 2013 the Partnership has been funded by Public Health.

#### Lessons learnt

##### *Invest time engaging people*

It was worthwhile putting in lots of work at the outset to engage particular members of the steering group. Local authority staff visited farmers on their farms and invested time to build strong relationships with them. This has proved very worthwhile in the long term.

##### *Get the right people on the steering group*

In Bath we started off with quite a small steering group as it took a while to really work out who should be on it. If we had had everyone representing every aspect of food it would have become unmanageable. Internally it also took time to engage specific officers from within the Council. It was quite a while before some felt instrumental to the work of the partnership.

#### *The value of stakeholder events*

Stakeholder events have been the most important aspect of the food partnership structure, as these have been great for engaging widely with partners. The times when stakeholders have felt most engaged have been when the vision or action plan are being renewed / refreshed. It has been helpful to have a focus for meetings such as guest speakers, as that really draws people in.

#### *Small working groups*

Don't have too many general meetings, as it's hard to keep everyone on board. It has worked better when there has been smaller focused groups e.g. Sugar Smart or Food in Schools.

#### *Place Importance on a strong coordinating function*

The coordinating role of the local authority has been helpful in terms of setting meeting structures, agendas etc.

## 2.2 Our story: Food Cardiff

### **2012 Food Cardiff beginnings**

Food Cardiff was initiated when a pro-active Public Health Principal came together with a member of the Sustainability Team at Cardiff Council to develop and submit a bid to be one of the initial 6 pilot cities for the Sustainable Food Cities programme. The bid was reflective of strong joint working on food which had been taking place in Cardiff for many years with the voluntary and community sector. The focus on food was framed as part of the broader remit around [One Planet City](#). In 2012 stakeholders from across Cardiff came together to write the Food Charter which was launched at a Sustainable Food City conference and endorsed by key public sector bodies.

### **2013 – 2017**

It was always intended that the SFC coordinator would be housed within the public sector. The post is jointly hosted between Cardiff Council and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board local public health team and overseen by a small steering group of funding organisations. We set up Cardiff Food Council which reported to the Healthy Lifestyles Programme Board and the Cardiff Partnership Board (Environment Work Programme). Being part of the Board structure enabled us to access senior decision makers.

In the beginning we decided to adopt a very open and inclusive approach, so we had four open meetings a year that anyone could come to. For around 18 months we carried on like this with 20-30 people coming to each meeting. After a while we thought the meetings were becoming a bit unwieldy so we decided to set up a core group to focus on the business of making things happen and then a networking session for the wider Cardiff food community. However, they quickly blended back into one!

In 2017, we have again decided that meetings need to be restructured. We've recently decided to divide it up into 5 different meetings on 5 different work streams (community, procurement, waste, poverty and economy) as we work towards refreshing our Action Plan. For now we have left marketing/communication initiatives to one side as this comes into all the different topics. This seems to be working really well.

## **Changing context**

Since Food Cardiff was set up there has been a lot of change; National legislation has changed leading to new reporting structures. We now have the 'Wellbeing and Future Generations Act' in Wales and as a result of this, the way public bodies report and what they monitor has changed. Public sector bodies have recently carried out Well-being Assessments to inform the process of developing Wellbeing Plans. Delivery of these plans will be overseen by Public Service Boards which are made up of the chief executives of public sector organisations. Food Cardiff's work will feed into the Corporate Plan for the Council and the Public Health plan, both of which will feed into the Wellbeing Plan. New reporting structures to facilitate that process are currently in development.

## **The experience of being housed in the public sector**

The advantage of being housed within the public sector is that I have access to Cardiff Council and NHS officers and can arrange meetings as required. We are also quite close to the political system here in Wales and engagement with Assembly Members is often possible. In Wales we are still very public sector dominated, so most of our schools are still within local authority control. Working across public sector bodies has meant that we have been able to add considerable value. We have excellent relationships with the Welsh Government Food Division and Prosperity and Diversity Divisions. This would be much more challenging without being hosted in the public sector. The public sector is a really good springboard from which to start out. Funding from the Welsh Government for the School Holiday Enrichment Programme would not have happened without these close networks.

The Sustainable Fish City campaign illustrates the benefits of being within the Public Sector. My Director of Public Health was keen to see Cardiff and Vale Health Board sign the Sustainable Fish City pledge. To achieve this I needed to approach NHS Wales Shared Services and managed to persuade them that it was something that should be done for all of Wales. Following on from this we had a commitment from the National Procurement service for Wales.

One of the barriers of being within the public sector is the limited capacity for fund raising. To overcome this we have set up a Charitable Fund 'Food Sense Wales' which will be housed within Cardiff and Vale Health Charity (a separate legal entity that houses 200+ funds). This will in effect act as a mechanism to enable us to bid for money that we otherwise couldn't access. This move can be seen as an evolutionary step towards potentially becoming more independent in the future. A representative from Cardiff and Vale Health Charity now sits on our revised steering group for Food Cardiff/Food Sense Wales.

## **Lessons learnt**

### *The importance of networking*

You need to find the right people! They are not necessarily the ones at the top of the organisation. The Partnership is about so much more than meetings and so much networking needs to happen



outside of the meeting room. It's more about how you are engaging people. Spend the first year networking, don't even try to achieve anything else; just focus on making the connections. Developing links with food industry has taken a little longer, but now that we have had success e.g. school holiday 'Food and Fun' programme, it has given us credibility and business wants to listen to us more.

### *Get lots of involvement in the early stages*

At the start we had lots of open meetings where anyone could come along. We didn't want to limit this to people who had signed a Food Charter. Especially for businesses, we didn't expect them to sign a Food Charter before they came to sit round the table. Relationships that were built up in the early stages have proved invaluable as we've moved forward. We wanted everyone to be generally moving towards a goal without having to pin them down to specifics. We wanted people to be able to dip in and out. If the agenda item is not relevant to what you are doing we wouldn't be offended if they didn't come.

### *Don't try to establish your structure without knowing your partners first*

It's important to know the people that you are going to be working with and build a relationship with them before trying to establish what type of structure you need. Focus on developing trust and relationship building first.

### *Work with where the energy is, be flexible and nimble*

It is really challenging for people to take responsibility for pieces of work. There is no point trying to pursue your own agenda if there isn't the appetite for it in the room. You need to focus on where the energy is. In Cardiff we have never been rigid with our action plan; it's always been about taking advantage of opportunities as they come along. We've always sought to keep it fairly open and not to pin ourselves down. The speed of change in Wales means that we regularly have had to reframe what we do. We need to have the structure and networks that are nimble enough to react to the latest policy changes.

### *Engagement is more than just meetings*

Picking the phone up, email updates, social media, newsletters and most importantly "coffee" – are all really valuable tools. Understanding that different people respond best to different methods of communication is really useful – not everyone is comfortable sharing ideas in a room full of people.

### *Have a tight steering group*

Having a well-structured tight steering group is helpful.

## **2.3 Our Story: Sustainable Food City Bournemouth and Poole**

### **2012 Early partnership development**

I was working as an independent freelance worker and was preparing to submit an application to South West Food and Drink (funded by the then Regional Development Agency) for an action research project looking into obstacles to the growth of the local food sector. The proposal focused on the significant hospitality sector in Bournemouth and Poole and its relationship with the surrounding producer base in Dorset and the New Forest. In parallel to this, an officer from



Bournemouth Borough Council was also preparing a bid to the same fund. We decided to collaborate and were successful in our bid. This was the first time that anyone had looked at food in an urban setting in Bournemouth.

The research project that followed was well received and one of the outcomes was that the hospitality businesses were keen on establishing an informal network around local food. During the research we also came across the Big Dig network and started engaging with community food growing groups across Bournemouth and Poole. These too were interested in staying connected and forming a network of some sort.

Having established these two informal networks, we then held a review meeting to discuss next steps. We realised there was huge potential to build a great many links more broadly across the food system. At an initial meeting everyone was asked to bring 3 more people that they thought might be relevant and we ended up with a significant interest group. At the same time we received a phone call from Food Matters informing us of the opportunity to apply for the Sustainable Food Cities programme. We submitted a successful application and I became employed as the first coordinator.

The Sustainability Team in the Council were keen to house the SFC worker and together we were able to leverage in the necessary match funding for the post. The possibility of the partnership being housed in the third sector or being set up independently did not really arise. There was clear interest from the Council to accommodate the worker and so that's the route that was taken. After about a year the Sustainability Team merged with the Economic Development Team and so the Partnership moved into Economic Development.

### **2013 Partnership structure**

The Partnership was structured with 3 tiers of membership to reflect the different levels of engagement and interest that different organisations would want.

'Members' – open to anyone who signed up to the overall mission and agreed to work towards that goal, over and above their own organisational objectives.

'Project Partners' – partners who want to support the partnership with delivery, it includes businesses, organisations and community groups.

'Partnership Board' - elected by other members on a one member one vote basis. The Board oversees the SFC Coordinator, guides delivery of the action plan and oversees budget management.

Some partners would only really be interested in one aspect of the agenda e.g. food poverty; and this structure allowed partners to just engage with their particular interest if they wanted to. The different tiers of membership have also enabled us to create messaging tailored to that particular group.

The role of SFC Bournemouth and Poole was about facilitation and enablement and bringing people together.

### **2017 Becoming independent**

By 2017 it has become clear that we are not near the top of the list for local authority funding. Our links with Public Health are very strong and our Assistant Director of Public Health very supportive

so we are well positioned to deliver work for them in the future, but we are unlikely to get any further core funding from the local authority.

We have been discussing the possibility of becoming independent for a really long time. We have taken advice from different experts (Voluntary and Community Services; social enterprise support organisations). We have been looking at where we are likely to be getting funding from in the future and which structures are likely to support that. About 4 months ago we decided to apply for charitable status. Then we heard that other food partnerships were being turned down by the Charity Commission. The advice we have had is conflicting. Some say that it is ok to work with businesses so long as you are working with them 'for the public good' and you are not doing it to promote the businesses per se. So we are going to continue with our application. We will be a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Charity. As we have been good at attracting business sponsorship – we can build on this more effectively as a charity due to the tax breaks offered to companies. If this fails however, we will become a Community Interest Company as this will give us a good degree of flexibility and has a more entrepreneurial flavour.

The decision to transition has been made and led by the Partnership Board. The people we are delivering activity with see it as a positive step as we will be able to access additional funds and will be truly independent. The wider partnership has not been consulted on the change as all the strategic decisions about the Partnership are made at Board level, as long as the Board are confident that the decisions they make support the Partnership to deliver on its values, vision, mission statement and aims. These guidelines were developed and agreed by the broader Partnership and are used to guide all the Board decisions. When we have so many members it can be really difficult to enable strategic decision making to happen in a sensible and time efficient way; so as with all decisions of this nature we are just informing them that it is happening. Not all of the Board will transition. Anyone who is a member can be nominated onto the Board, however we don't currently have the right mix of the skills and knowledge to take an organisation forward so we will need to recruit for specific skills e.g. finance.

### **The challenge of transition**

We currently have enough money to sustain ourselves for another year. However, it will involve me as Coordinator delivering projects rather than being able to continue to work at a strategic level. So there is a risk that the Partnership becomes focused on a few areas of project delivery rather than the strategic knitting together of the food system agenda. There is also a big cultural shift involved with working in an independent organisation as opposed to the local authority. I have previous experience of freelance work and working in different sectors and so am able to make this adjustment. However, this transition would be far more difficult for people with a long public sector history.

### **The experience of being housed by the public sector**

If we had been set up independently at the start we would not have got as far as we have. We have created more traction and had better awareness of who we are and what we are doing because we are in the Council. Being in the Council means I can talk to officers at all levels and be much more effective. Being able to turn up at someone's desk and introduce myself has been really helpful. Now we are well established we are ready to go independent.

It helped that I had strong experience to bring to this role. If you are in a council setting you have to be strong and feisty. Otherwise there is a danger that you will get sucked in! If you can manage it,

you can take the benefits of being hosted and the logistical support whilst still staying true to your role of delivering an external partnership. The local authority has been very good at recognising the role that the partnership plays in choosing priorities for my work.

## 2.4 Summary of benefits and challenges identified by food partnerships housed in the public sector

Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Partnerships can become very well embedded at a strategic level and gain cross party support.</li> <li>• Coordinators benefit from strong personal relationships with officers, timely opportunities to influence policy and knowledge of ‘the system’.</li> <li>• Coordinators are able to access support from specialist departments e.g. finance, legal, HR, communications, payroll etc.</li> <li>• Partnerships benefit from the status, credibility and traction of being a local authority initiative.</li> <li>• Possibility of accessing some public sector funding that would not otherwise be available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even though the Partnership is well embedded with cross party support, it is still vulnerable to public sector changes and the withdrawal of fixed term funding.</li> <li>• Other stakeholders may perceive the Partnership to be a public sector initiative. The Partnership will need to work harder to achieve an independent governance structure.</li> <li>• If you start off in the public sector it can be hard to move out of it due to changes in: work culture; terms and conditions e.g. pensions, salaries; back office support; governance.</li> <li>• As local authorities roles change they are able to support Food Partnerships less and less.</li> <li>• Being ‘sucked in’ to time consuming bureaucracy</li> <li>• Partnership may tend to focus more on public sector leadership and action as a priority rather than third sector or private sector</li> <li>• Can’t engage in lobbying</li> <li>• Restrictive recruitment policies / control over salary scales.</li> <li>• Limited opportunities to apply for external funding.</li> </ul>

## 3 Food partnerships housed by third sector organisations

These food partnerships are often initiated by third sector organisations. They may be commissioned by or have core funding from public health or other local authority sources, but are independent of them. Coordinators are employed by the third sector. They may or may not link into a public sector reporting framework. They typically have a third sector chair. In our current survey of SFC members 13 food partnerships were classified in this way.

### 3.1 Our story: Middlesbrough Food Partnership

Middlesbrough's current Food Partnership was formed in 2013, as part of the town's [One Planet Living](#) initiative with food as one of its themes. At this time Public Health had moved back into the local authority and Middlesbrough Environment City Trust (an environmental charity) had succeeded in securing funding from the Big Lottery to run a 5 year programme which included a focus on food. These three factors led to the establishment of the Middlesbrough Food Partnership, led by Middlesbrough Environment City Trust (MEC).

#### A partnership 'housed by the third sector'

Having initiated it, it was always assumed that we (MEC) would be the host organisation. A staff member from MEC already led the food theme for One Planet Living and so it seemed to naturally fit with our organisation. We also felt that a third sector organisation was well positioned to engage broadly across the community, voluntary and public sector and that aligning ourselves too closely with the local authority would have made this more challenging. Basing the Partnership in the voluntary sector meant that it would also be quick to get off the ground and had flexibility. Had the strategy been led by the local authority it would have had to go through scrutiny committees and have taken longer to establish. We did not want to set up a new organisation as this would have sucked resources and competed with existing voluntary sector organisations in the town.

Middlesbrough Environment City Trust is a company limited by guarantee, registered as a charity and has its own board of trustees. The organisation has a broad environmental focus based around the concept of One Planet Living. We employ approximately 30 staff and have a turnover of approximately £1 million. MEC receives funds from the public health budget at Middlesbrough Council to provide administrative support and the function of chair for the Middlesbrough Food Partnership. The Food Partnership (which itself is not constituted) benefits from MEC's well established links and partners across the town. In this respect the Food Partnership links into the Financial Inclusion Group; One Planet Living Group and Fairtrade Group amongst others.

The Partnership has strong links with the local authority and in particular with 'Public Health', 'Economic Development' and 'Supporting Communities'. It has been difficult to get certain businesses on board (The Food Partnership mainly tends to engage with smaller businesses) and to engage certain sectors e.g. hospitals, and planning.

#### What has helped make it work?

One thing that has helped make the Partnership a success is the fact that it covers quite a small geographical area. We haven't tried to take on too much. In our area there is only one university, and three further education colleges; so it's easy to know who the right people are to engage. There is also a long history of environmental sustainability in the town. It was one of the first

authorities to have a Climate Change Action Plan and there is strong political support for this agenda. We also put our success down to being flexible on what our priorities are and making sure that we are prioritising things that are important in Middlesbrough such as food poverty and health. This makes it clear for people to see the links between the work of the Food Partnership and local needs.

Having public health core funding to support the coordination role has been extremely valuable as it has freed us up from the need to be constantly searching for funds to keep it going.

### **What has been challenging?**

One of the challenges of leading the Partnership has been on the one hand the desire to achieve a coordinated approach and keep the Partnership together, whilst also having some organisations bypassing the Partnership and doing their own thing. In some instances partners are also competitors for resources and it can be difficult to maintain trust.

### **Lessons learnt**

#### *Fair leadership role*

If you are going to lead a partnership as a voluntary sector organisation you have to be acutely aware of how the actions of your organisation could impact on the partnership, and ensure that you don't take unfair advantage. For example, if MEC were to use the Food Partnership as a way of securing funds for ourselves, trust would be lost and it would pull the Partnership apart.

## **3.2 Our story: Good Food in Greenwich**

Greenwich Cooperative Development Agency (GCDA) is an Industrial and Provident Society for the Benefit of the Community. It has been working on food issues for many years. Public Health (previously Greenwich Primary Care Trust) and GCDA have been working together to tackle food poverty and other food related issues since 2004.

### **2013 – 2014 early partnership development**

Greenwich became a member of the Sustainable Food Cities Network in 2013 to help formalise this work and in 2014 Public Health, working with GCDA, brought together a partnership around food to formulate a bid into the Greater London Authority's '[Food Flagship](#)' programme. Although we were unsuccessful in the bid, it demonstrated the strength of the interest in working together to tackle the food system in the borough. Public Health, understanding the importance of this work, committed to commission GCDA to take forward the [Good Food in Greenwich](#) initiative.

It was always assumed that GCDA would lead the food partnership. Having the partnership housed within the third sector means it can be more responsive, speedy and flexible in its approach. The Public Health team agree that this is the best place for the partnership to be housed. We at GCDA have good access to councillors and are not too bureaucratic. In addition, our experience in enterprise means that we are able to see things from a different angle and take a broader outlook. GCDA has really strong links into waste, environmental health and economic development as well as public health. The Council are able to use us as a way of making things happen. For example, the Economic Development team were recently contacted by a group of traders from Blackheath Standard. They asked GCDA to meet with them and support them to set up a market which we are now doing.



## 2014 - Good Food in Greenwich Network

In October 2014 Good Food in Greenwich Network was established which is open to anyone with an interest in the agenda. The Network has quarterly network meetings and comes together annually for a public event. A steering group was formed which meets quarterly, represents the network and is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the action plan. The Chair of Good Food in Greenwich steering group is the Chair of GCDA. The steering group reports to the board of GCDA as well as to the Health and Wellbeing Partnership. Steering group membership requires that members work for the broader good of the partnership rather than just their own organisational goals. There is also a 'Coordinating Group' which acts as the secretariat and actually works to move things on. Subgroups were set up to reflect different themes e.g. food poverty, waste and sustainability, food procurement, food in schools etc. In addition, businesses, third sector organisations and the general public have been encouraged to sign up to the Food Charter.

## 2017 - Reflection and an evolving structure

Over time we have found that the steering group has become a bit more of a networking meeting, where there are lots of ideas being shared but work is not really being progressed effectively. Similarly we are questioning whether the subgroups are really achieving anything over and beyond the meetings themselves. Initially they were useful for linking people up e.g. linking a bakery with FareShare or a school with a food waste initiative. But now after about two years of sub group meetings we feel the links have been made. Apart from the food poverty subgroup, which is being supported by resources from public health and will continue to run, we feel that the subgroups are not necessarily the right format anymore. The work was not being progressed and it was difficult to make them relevant to everyone present. In addition, the people who were attending did not necessarily have the capacity or authority to make the change needed.

So now we are proposing to change the existing steering group into more of a networking meeting. People are really benefiting from meeting up and it's usually well attended. So now we will embrace it as a networking space and invite presentations on work happening locally e.g. Breast Feeding Friendly Initiative. We are then going to change the invite list for the steering group to those people who have capacity within their roles to really input in a meaningful way. Members will mostly come from public health and GCDA. We are going to look again at the subgroups and pick out the people that we really need to engage e.g. Head of Planning, Head of Procurement. We will then work in a more focused way to target these key individuals and will use our steering group contacts e.g. Director of Public Health to open doors.

## Lessons learnt

*Create a reason for people to attend*

The first few meetings of the Food Partnership are relatively easy. It gets harder as you progress down the line. Two or three years into it, it gets harder to keep the agenda relevant. One idea that has worked well for us is to have presentations and follow that with small group workshops that focus on applying the learning from the presentation; how to take the learning back into your workplace.

## 3.3 Our story: Food Durham

### 2005 – 2011 Early partnership development

The roots of Food Durham can be traced back to 2005 when a PhD student decided to adopt a very practical approach to producing a policy link to their work, and set about developing a food policy and partnership for County Durham. Their decision to do so was influenced by the work that was already happening in Brighton and their contact with f3 (sustainable food consultants). Originally working part time for Durham County Council, from 2006 the PhD student was seconded to work for Durham Rural Community Council (now Durham Community Action) where they developed a proposal for a food partnership and local food strategy. It then proved very difficult to get the work funded. From 2008 – 2011 several unsuccessful funding bids were submitted. Many public sector departments were also approached, and although the idea was enthusiastically received, it didn't sit easily within their existing criteria for funding. However challenging this period was, the focus remained on preventing the strategy from being 'pigeon holed' and retaining its cross sector approach. Funding was eventually secured from a Charitable Trust Fund held by the Primary Care Trust. It took two and a half years to develop the Local Sustainable Food Strategy and Food Partnership as it was developed using a very participative methodology, including many workshops and meetings. By doing it this way however, it meant that a strong partnership had emerged by the time the 'Sustainable Local Food Strategy' was launched in 2014.

### 2011 – 2017 Project housed by third sector

As a funded programme of work it was a 'project' of Durham Community Action (a charity and Company Limited by Guarantee). Following the launch in 2014 there were discussions about whether it should be set up as a separate organisation for the next phase, but it was felt that doing so would lead to a loss of momentum and put it in a weaker position in terms of securing funds. A Memorandum of Understanding was drawn up between Food Durham and DCA detailing the nature of the relationship and responsibilities. Food Durham staff are employed by DCA, and DCA holds funds for Food Durham and supports it in terms of HR and Finance officer time. Food Durham operates as a network with a general membership, a Board and sub-groups. Membership of Food Durham is open to any organisations and individuals interested in supporting its aims. There are currently no plans to hive off to form a separate organisation.

### 2017 Food Durham Trading Ltd

From 2014 two main themes from the Strategy were chosen to implement: supporting more people to grow some of their own food (Growing Durham) and exploring a model for a more efficient supply chain for local products. This latter theme has led to the setting up of the virtual Food Hub. There was substantial support from Durham University during the feasibility stage. This is a brokerage service between suppliers and producers of local food and those looking to source it. The Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust funded a feasibility study (2015) and then three years funding for implementation. There is now a food hub manager in place and the business is growing.

This initiative is a bit different to the main work of Durham Community Action. As a charity this activity is classified as 'non-primary purpose trading'. If they were to earn more than £50k per year from this then it would affect their status as a charity. DCA also needs to manage potential risks to their reputation along with contractual risks.



DCA took legal advice and considered the following options for the future 1) remain as they are, 2) establish a Wholly Owned Trading Subsidiary or 3) establish a Special Purpose Vehicle. Of these the Wholly Owned Trading Subsidiary seemed to best suit their needs. This is now being set up as a limited company with share capital which is wholly owned by Durham Community Action. If Food Durham wants to separate out at some point in the future then DCA can sell its share in the company and relinquish control of it. The new company will have 5 Directors; 2 from DCA and 3 that are independent. The income that it generates will be Gift Aided back to DCA. The arrangement allows for DCA to continue being the employer of staff working for the new trading company. It has taken 3-4 months to work through the process of establishing it. The Food Hub currently receives grant funding that is tapering off year on year so its first challenge will be to try to sustain the running costs of the operation itself. Anything that is made beyond this will be gift aided to DCA. It is hoped that this mechanism will secure the core funding for Food Durham in the future.

### **Challenges of being housed by third sector**

One of the challenges of setting up the partnership through the voluntary sector has been the amount of time it has taken to gain the respect of the public sector and for them to recognise that Food Durham is professional in its approach. After many years of relationship building they do now feel that they are getting well embedded and have strong links with public health, procurement, sustainability and strategic waste management within the County Council. A member of staff from Food Durham now chairs the Environment in Your Community sub-group of the Environment Board and so their work is reported on at a strategic level.

### **Lessons learnt**

#### *Building relationships is key*

The ability to build good relationships is absolutely key to getting the right people round the table. Finding the right person who gets excited and makes it work has been almost more important than the position that they hold. Some of the funding Food Durham has accessed has also been due to knowing the right person at an opportune moment.

#### *Look for open doors*

Go with what is likely to work in your area. Food Durham has built on local assets and this has enabled us to progress quickly.

### 3.4 Summary of benefits and challenges identified by food partnerships housed in the third sector.

Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enables a good deal of flexibility for the Food Partnership</li> <li>• Food Partnership can make use of existing networks and strategic influence of the host organisation.</li> <li>• Makes use of an existing organisation rather than setting up a new one which could compete for funds</li> <li>• Shared cost of overheads and office space</li> <li>• Support with finance, payroll, administration, legal etc. and access to office equipment.</li> <li>• Reduces sense of isolation for the Coordinator.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There could be issues of trust - e.g. partners round the table have to trust the lead organisation not to take unfair benefit from their position.</li> <li>• Fear of voluntary and community sector becoming delivery agent and that this justifies the public sector in taking a step back from the agenda.</li> <li>• It can take a long time to establish credibility and gain respect from the public sector.</li> <li>• Requires strong public support</li> <li>• Links into strategic partnerships and reporting frameworks are not automatic.</li> </ul>

## 4. Fully independent food partnerships

Fully independent food partnerships are often supported or administered by new organisations explicitly set up for this purpose. These new organisations may operate purely at a strategic level, pushing forward the partnerships agenda, but most also take on various aspects of project delivery. Depending on what they have been set up to do, these new organisations will take a variety of legal forms (e.g. Community Interest Company, Company Limited by Guarantee, Charitable Incorporated Organisation) or they may be an Unincorporated Association. At present 11 food partnerships fall within this category.

### 4.1 Our story: Brighton and Hove Food Partnership

#### 2003 – 2006 Early partnership development

Brighton and Hove Food Partnership started life back in December 2002, when the Sustainability Commission of Brighton and Hove City Council, together with the Primary Care Trust, called together representatives from a range of sectors with an interest in food to explore the idea of creating a Food Partnership across the City.

There were several underlying factors which led to this action. The Health Promotion

Department at the Primary Care Trust had a history of taking a broad approach to working on food and health issues, and particularly those faced by low income communities. The Sustainability Team at the City Council was keen to encourage the development of a Food Partnership to encourage a more sustainable food system throughout the City and to demonstrate its commitment to working in partnership across the City to establish more joined up public policy.

Alongside this the ending of the Community Action for Food and the Environment project led to a vacuum in which food, health and sustainability were no longer being addressed by a single agency or organisation in the City. A Food Partnership would fill that gap.

A report was commissioned to 'map' the food system in order to gain knowledge and understanding of activity across various sectors involved in food related work. The FoodShed report provided a baseline of knowledge which informed the development of the Food Partnership and the first food strategy action plan for the City.

Early Food Partnership meetings were facilitated by [Food Matters](#) and focused on creating links across sectors and communicating the benefit of a food systems approach and partnership working. The group devised a Terms of Reference, organised a food conference and worked on developing the Spade to Spoon Food Strategy and Action Plan which was launched in 2006 and stated support for the establishment of a new organisation ([Brighton and Hove Food Partnership](#)) to provide leadership and coordination of the strategy.

#### 2006 – 2008 Unincorporated association housed by Food Matters

The initial group became more formalised, with an 'Organising Committee' and elected Board Members. The Organising Committee included representatives from key statutory organisations, an elected councillor and spaces for food projects / businesses. At this stage the group was still an Unincorporated Association, but it gave it an independent identity, opened a bank account so it could receive grants and was a simple and flexible structure. As an Unincorporated Association

however, it couldn't employ people, so the first part time member of staff was employed by Food Matters. The advantages of this was that it was cheap to run, simple and flexible, didn't have to submit accounts to an external body, and that it allowed the food partnership access to funding otherwise not accessible to it. The disadvantages of being unincorporated included not being able to enter into any contracts e.g. rent a premises; inability to borrow money; and some funders like to see more formal structures – especially for larger amounts of money. Individual members of the Organising Committee are responsible for the group's obligations and debts and are liable e.g. can be sued. Becoming Constituted can be very simple – draw up a constitution based on existing terms of reference.

### **2008 – 2017 Company limited by guarantee (not for profit)**

Brighton and Hove Food Partnership has been operating as a Company Ltd by Guarantee for nearly 10 years. We deliver services including weight management; food growing projects with vulnerable adults; cookery classes and work with schools. We currently employ 20 staff and secure funds from a wide variety of sources. We also generate income by selling training and consultancy. Our work includes campaigning and influencing at a local, regional and national level. We provide leadership and coordination for the food strategy and facilitate partnership working.

In 2008 we registered as a Company Ltd by Guarantee and applied for charitable status. We were turned down for charitable status because we were deemed to promote certain businesses and to work with private enterprises (E.g. healthy choice award). We decided that these activities were too important to abandon.

Since then the structure has been a Company Ltd by Guarantee but our Memorandum and Articles set out our not for profit approach. Any profit is reinvested into community food work in the city usually via our Good Food Grants. We are subject to Corporation Tax and can't claim Gift Aid. Some funders accept our 'not for profit' status, others don't. We have considered becoming a Community Interest Company but found that our membership structure made this difficult. As a Company Ltd by Guarantee we have chosen to operate very transparently and with democratic principles. We publish our annual accounts; hold AGMs to elect the Board and present reports on progress. These are not requirements by Company's House, but reflect the ethics of our organisation.

### **2008 - 2017 Governance**

The Board of Brighton and Hove Food Partnership was responsible for both the governance of the organisation (and the legal responsibilities that go with it) and for leading the partnership on the development and delivery of the food strategy. The Board comprised of 9 people elected from the membership (anyone who lives or works in the city and promotes our aims); 1 elected councillor (lead administration nominates); 1 council officer, 1 health rep, 1 place for Food Matters as founding organisation and link to national policy. One third of Board Members stepped down each year and new members are recruited based on background and skills. If there are more candidates than places then an election is held at the AGM. All of the elected Board members are the Company Directors and are responsible for £1 liability if the company winds up. We worked to encourage people from different sectors to apply (e.g. retail, farming, and community food) as well as seeking people with skills in communications, fundraising and finance.

## What next?

Looking forward we want to separate the governance of the food strategy from the governance of the organisation and are using the refresh of the city's food strategy action plan which is taking place in 2017 to do this. There will be overlap between the two and the Food Partnership's role in leading and co-ordinating work on the food strategy will continue to be at the heart of our work. The decision has been taken because as the work has evolved the functions of organisational governance and strategic partnership work need more time and a broader range of skills than one Board can give them.

Additionally we have found that as the organisation gets bigger and the funding and policy environment more complex, it requires a different governance arrangement. Following a governance review, the 2017 AGM agreed a new approach to recruiting Board members. The overall size of the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership Board will remain the same (12 people) with representatives from key stakeholder organisations (Council Officer, Councillor, statutory health organisation and national food policy organisation), there will be 3 places recruited for specific skills in finance, business and HR and 3 places recruited from supporters, service users and community food projects.

The AGM also agreed that the organisation should re-apply for charitable status using the new criteria of sustainable development as a charitable objective to cover some of the areas that were previously objected to.

## Lessons learnt

### *Start simple*

Don't spend too long trying to decide your structure in the early days. Whilst it is important, it isn't worth delaying action for months or years whilst you try and fathom out the exact perfect structure. Remember that structure evolves and emerges over time and will need to change to suit circumstances as the partnership matures.

### *Time well spent*

It might take longer and be higher risk to start off independently but it could be a stronger position in the long term. Spending time achieving shared vision and goals across partners is time well spent.

### *Plan for lean times*

Having a large amount of money to recruit paid staff can leave the partnership very vulnerable when it comes to an end all at once. There are many examples of where food partnerships have virtually 'fallen off a cliff' so to speak when funding ends and paid workers leave. It has only been the extreme dedication of volunteers that have seen them through. In many cases we suspect food partnerships have ended at this point, but these stories are hard to find! Use funded time to plan ahead for leaner times when funding will not be around. Have this in mind at the outset; don't wait till the last few months of your funding!

### *Democratic systems of accountability are powerful*

Having a clear membership structure that enable individuals as well as organisations to sign up can create a real momentum to a food movement in a city. Having democratic systems of

accountability were found to be valuable in building trust and participation from a wide range of people. Operating in a transparent way can be built into your governing document, even if it is not a requirement of your legal form.

### *Keep evolving*

As you change and grow so can your governance and organisational structure. Check in every couple of years with the Board to make sure that these meet the needs of the organisation and consider if any new structures (such as the emergence of CICs) would be a better fit.

### *Ask for help*

Your local CVS or national networks will be able to help you decide and can often provide template structures to use.

### *Plan for sustainability from the outset*

In the early days organisations need to be brave and take risks. Don't just focus on what you said you would deliver in a grant bid. Otherwise, when the money runs out you are finished. You need to be networking and embedding yourself as a priority from the outset.

### *Get the right Chair*

The Chair really does have a lot of influence. The right person can position the organisation strategically.

## 4.2 Our story: Food Plymouth

### **2010 - Food Plymouth Partnership Network - unincorporated association**

Food Plymouth began life back in 2010. It emerged when a member of Soil Association staff was tasked with writing a Changing Spaces Lottery Bid for the city. In parallel with the Lottery bid another bid to South West Food and Drink (Regional Development Agency funds) was prepared focusing on sustainable procurement. The multi-sector Food Plymouth Partnership Network and steering group came together as part of the bid writing process with a core group of about 20 people. The Lottery bid didn't come off, but by then there was already good momentum and stakeholder engagement, so the Steering Group went on to develop a Local Food Charter. In some ways the failure of the Lottery bid ended up being a good thing, as it led to better engagement and commitment of resources from local partners e.g. Plymouth City Council, NHS and Plymouth University.

The Food Plymouth Coordinator, employed by the Soil Association, worked in the city for a total of 5 years. Their main focus was on raising the profile of Food Plymouth; keeping the steering group together; consulting with partnership members and facilitating Partnership Network meetings; developing the strategy, Local Food Charter and action plan; and putting in funding bids, including a successful Interreg bid (European Funds) on sustainable supply chains. The action plan reflected the 6 SFC topic areas, and theme leads were appointed to take forward different strands. At this point the Partnership Network was fully independent operating as an Unincorporated Association. There was good engagement from the local authority including match funding for the Interreg bid and strong political support.



## 2013 – 2015 Transition strategy

With 15 months of funding still in place, they began preparing for the point when the [Soil Association](#) funding would run out. They prepared a 'Transition Strategy' outlining how they were going to sustain themselves. At the time Plymouth was designated a 'Social Enterprise City' and they were able to access support from Plymouth Social Enterprise Network. Income generation seemed to be the way the sector was going so it was decided to set up as a Community Interest Company. By the time the Soil Association funds came to an end they had established Food Plymouth Community Interest Company (CIC).

## 2016 - Food Plymouth CIC

Food Plymouth CIC facilitates the activities of the Partnership Network. It employs a part-time coordinator (0.2 FTE); communicates with and on behalf of the Partnership Network via a fortnightly e-bulletin and Facebook (1014 likes) and Twitter (3010 followers); represents and reports back to the Partnership Network at various local, regional and national forums; brings partners together; informs and supports partners' work; adds value; innovates and fills gaps. It also develops and delivers social enterprise activities; for example, it has recently taken over the running of the 'Always Apples Festival' which it is hoped will become an income stream for Food Plymouth. The CIC has a board of 3 Directors that are appointed internally with a mixture of business, public sector and third sector backgrounds. There is no formal membership structure, but members of the Partnership Network are encouraged to make pledges to support and further Food Plymouth's vision and mission.

## Food Plymouth Partnership Network

The Partnership Network continues to operate. There is a core group of about 8-10 organisations who regularly attend quarterly network meetings and then a wider distribution list of approximately 1000 partners, supporters and stakeholders. There are no formal membership criteria and the Partnership does not report into any local authority strategic structures. There is a Memorandum of Understanding between partners and a code of conduct. The Partnership Network developed and now delivers Plymouth's SFC Bronze to Silver Action Plan across the six SFC themes plus Fairtrade and is facilitated by theme leads. Partners deliver the projects either alone or in collaboration e.g. as in Sugar Smart. The meetings are chaired by a Director of Food Plymouth CIC.

## Key challenges

### *Transitioning from grant funding to an enterprise model*

Even though they had the CIC in place by the time their core funding ended, the transition from having a paid coordinator to having people give their time voluntarily as Directors of the CIC was still very challenging. There was a lot for Directors to learn and much extra work and it was a very rocky transition.

*"Everything that had been set up to do with the Sustainable Food Cities programme until then had been based on partners delivering grant funded work with theme leads coordinating them. The whole thing was always designed to spend money but no thought had gone into how it would make money. Ideally you need to start a business opportunity and then develop services and products alongside it. In this instance though we have had*



*to try and retrofit a business model back into something that was never designed to be a revenue generating business". Ian Smith, Food Plymouth CIC*

A key challenge was that people didn't really understand what a social enterprise was; there were conflicting work cultures and a lack of the necessary skills to run an enterprise. Some directors found it useful to attend the 6 day 'Transitions to Trading Programme' at the School for Social Entrepreneurs in London. This prepared them for the move towards a more enterprising approach. For some however, the transition was a step too far and a major parting of the ways occurred. They went from 7 directors down to 3. The transition has only been possible because some Directors have committed substantial volunteer time and have been willing to incur personal expenses.

At the same time, public health was moving into Plymouth City Council and there was no Director of Public Health (DPH) which meant a corresponding lack of engagement from public health. Now this post is filled and the new DPH has food poverty within their brief, this situation is rapidly improving.

#### *Over reliance on a few individuals*

The development of Food Plymouth has largely been driven forwards by a small group of people from the third sector. Trying to get new people on board has sometimes been challenging. This has particularly been the case given the uncertainties and pressures of recent times. Food Plymouth has struggled when key personalities have left and there has been a tendency for it to become too dependent on certain individuals, which they are now trying to balance out.

#### *Engagement of all sectors*

Historically Plymouth has been a military city, and has therefore been shaped more by a utilitarian culture rather than by the presence of a strong creative, arts and mercantile tradition. This has meant the involvement of the local authority has ebbed and flowed. There is currently a perceived bias towards activity on food poverty and health in the city and the Network has found it difficult to gain representation from the food economy sector in particular. But the city is now reinventing itself. It has significant tourism potential and food and drink is a large element of this, so this could open up opportunities. In addition Brexit may offer new opportunities for new conversations – because it's so big it can help diminish barriers between different players, so there are possibilities for new ideas to be introduced and old ideas re-visited.

In this vein, Food Plymouth has recently been strengthened by attracting a Michelin starred chef and long-standing supporter of its cause to its vacant Vibrant Local Food Economy theme lead role. Food Plymouth is also engaging energetically in Brexit discussions, locally, regionally and nationally. Furthermore, Food Plymouth is also involved in with several initiatives by the RSA (the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce), including the RSA's Inclusive Growth agenda and the RSA Food, Farming and Countryside Commission.

#### *Consistency and continuity*

Moving from having a 0.4 FTE paid coordinator backed up by the Soil Association's resources and infrastructure to a situation with no coordinator and then a 0.2 FTE paid coordinator in which most people are doing it voluntarily on top of their day job has been difficult. It is even hard just to find a

time when they can all come together to meet. This makes it hard to achieve consistency and continuity.

## **Lessons learnt**

### *Build strong relationships with academia and research*

Urban food networks are multi-faceted and offer good potential for research. Food Plymouth has developed strong relationships with academics and has benefited from project evaluation, increased credibility, and enhanced profile as a result. Food Plymouth has also run short term work consultancy projects, placements and internships for undergraduate students to undertake useful pieces of work which they wouldn't otherwise have the capacity for.

### *Spend time getting the right people round the table – and get the right 'fit' between people and roles.*

Sometimes you're lucky and the 'right' people come together and create a really good energy, but in other situations it doesn't happen. You need to take time to make sure you've got the right people at the start. In Food Plymouth's case the 'right' people to serve effectively in the multi-sector Partnership Network and as theme leads were not necessarily 'right' for the social enterprise orientated CIC and vice-versa. The former is particularly suited to people with a co-operative, collaborative and reflective orientation, whereas the latter requires this collaborative ethos and also demands a more entrepreneurial and driven start-up small and medium sized enterprise (SME) mind-set and skill-set.

### *Spend time on good quality promotional material*

Promotional material is valuable and gives you an identity. As the SFC agenda is complex, Food Plymouth has focused on explaining it in as simple a way as possible. They originally used a food charter booklet which laid out the main themes and corresponding actions. This was something that enabled professionals, business people and the general public to understand easily. This has now been replaced by an SFC themes flyer, which serves the same ends. Promoting the Food Plymouth 'brand' is starting to pay dividends.

### *Passion power!*

The reason Food Plymouth is still going is because people believe that something in the food system has got to change. The people involved are passionate about the cause and are willing to put in a lot of voluntary time. Food Plymouth suffered a lull in the first twelve months after 'going it alone' but they are strengthening rapidly again now.

### *Increase your sphere of influence*

Food Plymouth has collated evidence and contributed it to national policy forums e.g. All Party Parliamentary Group on 'Feeding Britain – Food Poverty in the UK'. Food Plymouth also engages with various Brexit forums and the RSA at local, regional and national level. This raises Food Plymouth's profile regionally and nationally. Food Plymouth has also been networking with Food Exeter to build a critical mass to the SFC presence in the region. This is delivering synergies and is also helping Food Plymouth to overcome its relative geographic isolation.

Food Plymouth Story is based on interviews with Traci Lewis, Clare Pettinger, Richard Price and Ian Smith.

## 4.3 Our Story: Bristol Food Network and Bristol Food Policy Council

### 2008 – 2011 Bristol Food Network - unincorporated association

Bristol Food Network (BFN) was formed in 2008 as a follow on from 'Food Links', a project comprising local government, health sector and grassroots activists. Food Links ran out of money and the agenda was then taken up by an individual freelance worker funded by the Sustainable Cities Team at Bristol City Council. Together with a network of food activists she wrote an ambitious Sustainable Food Strategy for Bristol and Bristol Food Network (2009). This was intended to form the basis for a funding bid which, due to a change in funding policy at the Lottery, was never developed further. A smaller steering group remained active and focused on a reduced scaled down bid "Dig Bristol", which focused on supporting and developing community growing projects. This too was unsuccessful. Despite these setbacks a core group of committed volunteers carried on and managed to secure small pots of money to deliver various elements of the Dig Bristol bid. In the early days the main activities of the network included hosting events, maintaining a website and producing a high quality 'Local Food Update' electronic newsletter sent to its many hundreds of members (individuals, campaign groups, food projects and businesses). In 2010, 'Feeding Bristol in the Future' was hosted in City Hall with the aim of connecting, inspiring and informing and was attended by 200 people and included the adoption of the Good Food Charter. One workshop focused on the 'Who Feeds Bristol' project.

### 2011 Bristol Food Policy Council established

BFN helped create Bristol's Food Policy Council (BFPC) which came into being in 2011 with Professor Kevin Morgan as its first chair. It came about because the Who Feeds Bristol report (commissioned by NHS Bristol and Bristol City Council) identified the need to drive forwards a whole systems approach to food. A survey of all BFN members, a review of worldwide literature on Food Policy Councils and political advice from the then Leader of Bristol City Council all confirmed the need to establish the Food Policy Council as a small group of committed individuals with expertise from different parts of the food system who could get food onto the agenda for the City and keep it there. At the time the 'Bristol Partnership' (Local Strategic Partnership) was dissolving and the Local Enterprise Partnership was only an idea, making it difficult to devise formal accountability or reporting arrangements. Membership of the Food Policy Council includes individuals from different element of the food system including health, business, grassroots, non-governmental organisations, education and local government. Full meetings usually involve a learning visit and take place 4 times per year. Members of the Food Policy Council sit on the Local Enterprise Partnership (Rural and Food Economy Subgroup); Bristol Food Network; Bristol Green Capital Board (elected position). The BFPC had strong officer support from Bristol City Council and a small budget. It is an un-constituted body and appoints its own chair from within its membership.

The work of the BFPC has included creation of a definition of good food (tasty, healthy, affordable, good for nature, good for workers, good for animal welfare and good for local businesses), convening numerous events, producing the Good Food Plan for Bristol, Bristol Good Food Charter, the Good Food Action Plan, a report on Food Poverty, a Baseline Report on indicators for the city, and it has prepared and submitted (together with Bristol City Council) the evidence submission for the Sustainable Food Cities Silver Award on behalf of the City. Mostly the FPC has hosted events

with others. For lobbying on policy and planning issues then the sole identity of the FPC has been used.

### **2014 Bristol Food Network community interest company**

Towards the end of 2013 Bristol Food Network was looking to formalise its structure to both enable it to receive and hold more grant funding and to protect the liabilities of the steering group. At the same time Bristol Food Connections Festival was looking for a home. BFN took advice from a social enterprise business development service and a small business lawyer in the city and decided that the structure of a Community Interest Company best fitted its purpose and would enable it to offer a home to the Food Connections Festival. It was hoped that the coming together of the Food Connections Festival with Bristol Food Network would provide an income source for the Network. This did not prove to be the case and the Festival has since established its own legal structure and became a CIC in its own right. BFN now employs the SFC Coordinator.

### **Bristol Green Capital Partnership**

The foundations of the Bristol Green Capital Partnership date back to 2007 when organisations from a wide range of sectors across Bristol pledged their support to make Bristol 'a low carbon city with a high quality of life'. In August 2007 the European Commission launched the 'European Green Capital Award' which gave Bristol a way of assessing its progress against other European cities. The partnership has supported and funded many sustainability initiatives in the city. This included supporting the 'Who Feeds Bristol' baseline study and, in 2015, co-hosting an event to gather evidence for the SFC Silver award submission.

In 2014, the Partnership formalised into a CIC to further enable it to deliver its aims and it played a pivotal role in Bristol's successful application to become European Green Capital in 2015. The Partnership has been invaluable at connecting up varied initiatives across the city and enhancing collaboration and now has 800 members. It has a focus on five themes: Energy, Food, Nature, Resources and Transport, thus enabling the work on food in Bristol to become more strategically connected with other sustainability themes.

### **What next?**

In Bristol there are many organisations that relate to food and farming that play a role, including Bristol Food Policy Council, Bristol Food Network, Bristol Green Capital, Bristol Food Producers, Incredible Edible Bristol, Bristol Food Connections Festival, 91 Ways, the 5K partnership, Bristol Health Partners, the Health and Wellbeing Board and many more. Making sure it all adds up to a strong movement is a challenge they constantly face. Regular contact, communication, reviews and evolution is necessary to ensure synergy, no overlaps and no glaring gaps.

Bristol Food Network Directors, Bristol Food Policy Council and the Bristol Green Capital Partnership held a workshop in May 2017 to look at how to clarify and strengthen their partnership working. It was agreed that a unified single identity would be beneficial to strengthen the capacity of the Good Food movement in Bristol. Work is now underway for the creation of the Bristol Good Food Alliance which will bring together organisations working in support of the Bristol Good Food Charter and the Good Food Plan.

## Lessons learnt

### *Keep your Board or steering group true to purpose*

Beware the oversized dominant project and the impact it can have on your food partnership. Meetings can get side tracked for months leaving little energy to pursue the core agenda. Similarly, one large funding organisation on the board can dominate proceedings. Having a clear terms of reference and clear criteria for the make-up of your board or steering group could help prevent this 'takeover' by significant players e.g. funders or representatives from substantial projects / businesses. Be clear about what you are aiming for and don't rush into new alliances that fit uneasily with your core purpose, even if they seem opportunistic at the time.

### *Build relationship with key individuals*

There is significant value in seeking out and building relationships with key individuals in the city who understand and are motivated by the sustainable food agenda. These people really can shift resources in your direction. Recruiting Directors who are known and with whom people can work effectively has worked well. Open recruitment less so.

### *Accepting complexity*

In Bristol there are numerous organisations working towards the Sustainable Food Cities goals. We have aimed to accept this diverse complex picture rather than attempted to control it. Our aim is to provide a framework which allows this complexity to flourish. The formation of the Bristol Good Food Alliance is the next step in this process.

Note: For a more in-depth look at the history of the food movement in Bristol see:

['The Bristol Method – how to become a more sustainable food city'](#) Carey, J 2015.

[Food Systems Governance: The Cases study from around the world.](#) (Chapter on Bristol by Keech, D and Reed, M.)

## 4.4 Our Story: Good Food Oxford

### 2013 -14 Early partnership development

In the early days there were a lot of different food organisations across different sectors in Oxford that weren't particularly well connected. This included a very active food bank that had established a food surplus network, with lots of community groups working on waste. Cultivate (a local food cooperative) had started to join up work on supporting local food, but this agenda wasn't yet coming together with health and equity.

Low Carbon Oxford (an Oxford City Council initiative) did a food printing exercise which looked at the environmental impact of the food consumed in Oxford. Following this, a community interest company - Low Carbon Hub, whose main focus was on renewable energy, seconded a project coordinator as part of their 'community benefit' offer to Low Carbon Oxford to follow up this research with a strategy for Oxford, for 1 day per week. As part of this work, the project coordinator came across the Sustainable Food Cities movement and wrote up a proposal for SFC in Oxford. Assisted by Community Action Groups Oxford (a network for community groups) and Cultivate they organised a meeting in December 2013 that brought together stakeholders from



across Oxford's food system, including producers, retailer, community groups, local authority and researchers. Tom Andrews from Sustainable Food Cities was invited to address the meeting.

### **2014 Good Food Oxford launch**

After that initial meeting about 10 people came forward to form a steering group. In early 2014 the group started monthly meetings and put together a constitution. They spent the next 6 months drafting their Charter and signed up a few pioneering members to their pledge. Good Food Oxford launched during Low Carbon Oxford Week and focused on trying to get people to sign up to pledge to take action. They didn't focus much on strategy to start with; they mainly concentrated on public engagement (e.g. pumpkin festival, research collaboration events with the University) and persuading organisations to join up and increasing their membership. They are now a network of 130 organisations working together for healthy, fair and sustainable food systems. They set up an Advisory Board as a mechanism for accessing the expertise and guidance of a range of specialists who would not have capacity to turn up to regular meetings. They decided to channel their efforts towards engaging businesses and influencing policy and have branded themselves as a professional public facing organisation rather than as a community organisation.

### **2015 Further grant funding**

In 2015, Good Food Oxford received 2 years of grant funding, which enabled the project coordinator to increase capacity and to take on a manager.

They looked at what they could effectively achieve with limited resources and took the decision to become a 'backbone organisation' that focuses on support, strategy, evaluation and policy and aims to increase capacity and impact of existing organisations. They also deliver projects and research directly where the need is not already being met.

You can see an Annual Report from the first year of funding [here](#).

### **2017 Becoming fully independent**

Good Food Oxford is currently still housed by Resource Futures (a sustainable resource management B-corp), who channel their funding and do their HR, but they are in the process of becoming independent. Being independent will allow them to be flexible to pursue various funding opportunities and to not be tied into the more bureaucratic requirements of a bigger organisation.

They would have liked to become a charity but the Charity Commission was not happy with their work supporting local food businesses. They have been considering whether they should change their Charter or change their structure. Many of their members are businesses, but they also do lots of work on food poverty and equity. So they are now thinking of two separate structures; a company limited by guarantee with charitable objectives for their business focused work and a separate charity for their food poverty and equity work. They have been discussing this for about a year and are now at the point where they are about to register with Companies House. Setting up a separate charity will be some way down the line.

### **Lessons learnt**

#### *Breaking through stereotypes*

The public sector and corporate sector have preconceptions about environmental work in general. It has taken time to gain their respect. Having a strong brand and identity has been massively

important for Good Food Oxford. They have benefited from working with a non-profit design agency to brand and present themselves in a very professional way. This opens doors for them especially in the business and public sectors.

*Develop areas of expertise*

It has been useful for them to have areas of expertise or to know where to find it in their network. They have become prominent for their strengths in food poverty and equity work. They also have pioneers in food waste in their network. They felt that they needed something of value before getting other people to join them. Their strong research links with Oxford University have also helped them go to meetings well prepared with relevant information.

*Using local skill base*

Good Food Oxford has benefited from a wealth of skills and resource from a very active community food sector. They have some very generous supporters who can see the long term strategy and have made use of paid internships through the University too.

*Concentrate on areas of greatest impact*

Good Food Oxford concentrates its efforts on the food policy and business side. There is already a well-supported community food sector in the city so they don't make that their priority. Strategic influence is important and it takes time and as a small organisation they feel that is where they can have the most impact.

## 4.5 Summary of the benefits and challenges identified by fully independent food partnerships.

Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can apply for wide range of funding - including funds that local authorities can't apply for</li> <li>• Potential to get more people involved through individual membership structure</li> <li>• Used to being a lean organisation</li> <li>• Political neutrality</li> <li>• Can pick your own commitments</li> <li>• Speed and flexibility</li> <li>• Can trade</li> <li>• Business / enterprise mind-set and skills can push the boundaries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having to govern yourself!</li> <li>• Being a very small organisation</li> <li>• Being responsible for all back office tasks e.g. payroll, finance, legal, communications, human resources etc.</li> <li>• Takes time to build reputation and trust especially with public sector and commercial sector.</li> <li>• Public sector / traditional voluntary and community sector partners do not always 'get' enterprise.</li> <li>• Potential isolation of Coordinator</li> </ul>



## 4.6 Additional themes from the interviews

As well as the specific lessons learnt captured within each 'Story', the following themes were touched upon by several interviewees.

### **Instability caused by large funding pots coming to an end**

Having a large funding pot that then suddenly ends can destabilise local food partnerships and either lead to their complete closure or to the continuation of limited individual projects rather than the integrated strategic agenda that should be their very essence. Looking back at the history of food partnerships in a particular place, some interviewees mentioned that previous incarnations have come and gone. Staff employed to deliver on Partnerships that are well funded inevitably tend to need that financial stability and so are forced to leave to find that stability elsewhere when funding tapers off. It is a difficult transition from a Partnership with a single substantial funding pot to a Partnership generating its own income. This transition has rarely been possible unless it is a planned outcome from the start of the funded work. This situation has meant a sustained drain of skills and knowledge from the Sustainable Food Cities Network.

### **The practicalities of really trying to make it cross sectoral are challenging**

Many interviewees referred to the difficulty of achieving cross sectoral working when councils still tended to work in silos:

*"It's been a real struggle with the rest of the Council (apart from public health)..... Everyone feels we just snip at a bit of what they do"*

Some Partnerships were principally focusing on their relationship with Public Health and had limited engagement with other local authority departments. The agenda around food poverty was particularly strong.

### **The challenge of sustaining engagement over time**

Levels of engagement tend to wax and wane over time. At the outset there is excitement and eagerness of new partners to engage and take part in discussions that have perhaps never been held about a town or city's food system. As the quick wins are achieved and the focus shifts to particular themes and perhaps longer term issues, SFC Members have found it difficult to keep the agenda relevant for the original wide range of partners. To overcome this some Food Partnerships have established different tiers of membership to reflect the differing levels of engagement and working groups to reflect the interests of the different sectors. There is more to be learnt from network members on methods of engagement and participation.

### **The ideal of the independent organisation may not be justified**

To date Sustainable Food Cities has recommended that Food Partnerships either set up as, or work towards establishing an independent organisation with its own identity and structure. Being independent means the Food Partnership is able to: work towards a common agenda rather than the interests of a particular sector; secure funds more easily; be accessible to the widest range of stakeholders and be less likely to fall victim to the changing agenda or situation of a 'host' organisation. However, discussions with Food Partnerships have suggested that for some, becoming an independent organisation too soon would have been problematic:

*“If I had to keep tab on all of finances and payments, legal and comms... If it was an independent organisation the admin of it would have sucked up so much of my time it would have been hellish.”*

Or that they feel they have benefited substantially from the secure start offered by being part of something bigger:

*“We created more traction and had better awareness of who we are and what we are doing because we were in the Council.”*

*“If we were independent at the start we would not have got as far as we have. Now that we are established we are ready to go independent.”*

*“I think being in the public sector has been a really good springboard”*

*“We decided to be hosted, because otherwise we would have lost momentum, it would have been difficult to get funds in and we would not have any back office support”.*

Whilst the value of establishing an independent partnership is still recognised, interviews carried out for this report suggest that establishing an independent organisation should not necessarily be an early goal of food partnerships.

### **The value of the process**

Many interviewees talked about how valuable it had been to put time in at the start to get to know and build trust with stakeholders from across the food system. Time invested doing this paid dividends in later years. Food partnerships that went through a strong process of engagement (workshops, consultations, farm visits, coffee!) felt that by the time they had written their action plan, they had already developed a strong food partnership.

### **The varied and personal history of food partnerships**

Interviewees often told very personal stories about how their Food Partnership had evolved. It had come about: because they had decided to adopt a practical applied approach to a PhD; because they were carrying out a particular research project; because they had set out to map how their food system worked or through a chance meeting with another organisation. The experience and skills of the person driving it forward were central to the story and in many ways determined the structure and governance arrangements and ethos of the Partnership. The journey from initial idea to established partnership was unique to each place. These differences reflect the diverse motivations of people wanting to engage in achieving sustainable food systems and the breadth of the agenda. The Sustainable Food Cities framework is there as a guide, but there is a need to accept and celebrate these differences across the Network.

### **Overreliance on the individual**

Given the personal stories behind many local food partnerships it is perhaps not a surprise that some get too focused on the particular agenda of an individual. In addition, the lack of funding means that food partnerships are often being sustained by additional voluntary work of one or two individuals who are putting in time and sometimes money to make it work. This approach can also alienate others and leave the partnership liable to collapse if they leave.

## 5 Writing your own story: Deciding on governance and structure

There is no one size fits all model for how to structure a food partnership. The stories detailed in this document demonstrate the very different routes in and trajectories of the SFC members not just between the broad categories of 'fully independent', 'housed in third sector' and 'housed in public sector'; but also within these categories. Some food partnerships are initiated by the statutory sector, some by the third sector and others by enthusiastic individuals. Despite these differences there are however, some common processes.

### 5.1 Starting a food partnership: The steering group

The early days of building a Food Partnership usually take the form of informal gatherings of stakeholders. Early meetings typically focus on getting people involved; establishing who the key stakeholders are from the local authority, health sector, community food, business sector etc. The next step for many Food Partnerships is to nominate a smaller group of people who are going to actively work to take the idea of the Partnership forward. This group could be called the steering group, steering committee or management committee for example.

#### Role of the steering group

In most instances the steering group leads on the development of the Food Partnership; the Action Plan and the Food Strategy.

Possible tasks of the steering group could include:

- Acting as a focal point
- Providing a forum for discussion and debate
- Motivating wider stakeholders to engage with Action Planning and Strategy
- Raising the profile of the Partnership and Action Plan
- Setting up and receiving reports from subgroups on particular themes e.g. food poverty, waste, procurement
- Helping develop more effective ways of getting things done
- Maintaining energy and enthusiasm

#### Who Should Be On It?

Steering groups are generally made up of representatives from different sectors (Local Authority, University, NHS, Community Food, Food Businesses, Third / Voluntary Sector etc.). The simplest approach is to create a list of stakeholder organisations you want represented on your steering group and then ask each organisation to nominate a representative. Many Food Partnerships, however, stress the importance of getting the right individuals onto the steering group and that this is often more important than what people's particular 'role' is. So it might be worthwhile investing time to really get to know your stakeholders and approach certain people within these organisations.

Alternatively you might want to establish a process for electing members onto your steering group – see the section on Membership and Democratic Accountability below.

### **Responsibilities and expectations**

It is helpful to be clear about what the responsibilities and expectations are of members of the steering group. This could be spelled out in your Terms of Reference for example and could include:

- Showing a real commitment to making the Partnership work
- Not working to their own agenda but to that of the group and declaring any interests they have
- Attending a minimum number of meetings in order to maintain their membership
- Having capacity to take an active role in the Steering Group and between meetings
- Using any specific knowledge or experience to help the group reach sound decisions
- Helping to engender action through their ability to influence actions within their own organisations

### **Appointing a Chair**

SFC Members identified 'Having a strong Chair' as a key factor contributing to their success. The Chair should be an ambassador and influencer; provide effective leadership for the steering group; ensure actions from the steering group are taken forward; and ensure links with other strategic agendas. In most Food Partnerships the Chair is elected by the rest of the Steering Group. A rotating chair has been used by a few, but this has been when the role of chair has been viewed more as chairing the meeting rather than acting as a figurehead for the Partnership.

### **Steering group top tips**

- It is important for partners to sign up to the partnership with the interests of the partnership in mind, rather than their own organisational interests.
- Spend time at the outset getting to know stakeholders to really work out who would be best on the steering group.
- Whatever the make-up of the steering group it is a good idea to enable the steering group to co-opt additional members to fill gaps in expertise should the need arise.
- A successful steering group meeting should question, provide ideas and offer fresh perspectives.

## **5.2 Wider stakeholder group**

As well as a steering group, most Food Partnerships have a wider network of interested stakeholders. These might include representatives from local businesses, community groups, experts, public sector partners, voluntary and charitable organisations as well as individuals. This wider group of organisations is engaged in developing and implementing the food strategy and

action plan. Activities used to engage wider stakeholders include: stakeholder consultations, food summits, workshops and events; newsletters; social media.

## Membership

For many SFC Food Partnerships membership is defined by ‘anyone who signs up in support of the food charter’, or ‘anyone who supports our mission’. However, some Food Partnerships have decided to have a more formalized membership structure. This has enabled them to recognize the different levels of engagement that different types of organization / individual are likely to want. It has also enabled

led them to tailor their communications in a more targeted way. In Bournemouth and Poole for example, there are three tiers of membership:

### SFC Bournemouth and Poole membership structure

Members	Open to anyone who signed up to the overall mission and agreed to work towards that goal, over and above their own organizational objectives
Project Partners	Partners who want to support the partnership with delivery, it includes businesses, organisations and community groups
Partnership Board	Elected by other members on a one member one vote basis. The Board oversees the SFC Coordinator, guides delivery of the action plan and oversees budget management.

## Democratic accountability

Where there is a well-defined membership structure, some Food Partnerships have also built democratic accountability into their Steering Group or Board Structure. In the Bournemouth example above, the Partnership Board (Steering Group) are elected by and therefore accountable to the Membership. So too in Brighton, the Directors of Brighton and Hove Food Partnership include members and service user representatives elected from within its membership. Having a voting membership has been found to be a very effective way at galvanizing support from stakeholders and gaining momentum with the local community, as members feel actively engaged in determining the direction of the organisation.

### Structure of Brighton and Hove Food Partnership board

Chair	Can be recruited from the board or externally if required
Recruited for Specific Skills (4 spaces)	4 spaces recruited by the Board. E.g. Treasurer, HR, Business Skills
Recruited from stakeholder organisations (4 spaces)	1 place for Councillor (nominated by lead administration); 1 place for a health organisation (E.g. CCG, public health team within local authority); 1 place for a national food policy organisation.
Members and Service User Representatives (4 spaces)	Elected at the AGM, e.g. community food partnerships and members who have benefited from Food Partnership services.

## 5.3 Writing your terms of reference

Once you are clear on your Food Partnerships function you can start discussing terms of reference. There are plenty of examples of [Food Partnership Terms of Reference](#) on the SFC website. Have a good look through before you start.

### What to include

Terms of Reference typically include information on the following:

- Name of Food Partnership
- Aims / Purpose of the Food Partnership
- Membership
- Steering Group Structure (E.g. maximum number; representatives from different sectors, what is expected or Steering Group Members)
- Decision Making
- Conflict Resolution
- Appointment of Chair
- Meeting Arrangements

### Terms of reference top tips

- It might be useful to include a section in your Terms of Reference detailing the values and principles of your Food Partnership. Wells Food Network for example lists its values as: Passionate; Inclusive; Collaborative; Inspirational; Solutions oriented; Challenging the Status Quo; Celebratory and Fun. It's principles are: For the public benefit; Independent; Accountable; Transparent; Ethical; Focused on addressing priority needs; Aiming for lasting beneficial impact.
- If you wish to operate in an open and transparent way you can give details of this in your Terms of Reference. For example, you may decide that you will publish your annual accounts; hold Annual General Meetings; have a percentage of your steering committee or board elected from within the membership. Use your Terms of reference to outline the type of organisation you are.

## 5.4 Deciding where to house the food partnership

The interviews revealed that for many Food Partnerships there was little in the way of a thought through process to decide where to house the partnership. In some instances an offer from the local authority was taken up; in others the person who initiated it was working in the third sector so it was always assumed to be housed there; in others the independent nature of the Partnership was the driving force. The benefits and disadvantages of being 'Housed by the third sector', 'Housed by the public sector' or 'Fully Independent' have already been highlighted at the end of each section above.

### Key considerations



Whilst there is no set model to follow, there are a number of factors to take into account when deciding the best approach to take:

- What is already happening in your area?
- Where will it have the most security?
- What are the existing and potential levels of funding and support?
- What are the existing levels of support for the agenda?
- Is there an appropriate host organisation?
- Are there any friendly supportive third sector organisations that might be willing to host the partnership?
- Is the Local Authority keen to offer support / desk space / employ the coordinator?
- What are the pros and cons of being inside or outside the statutory sector?
- How do you intend to engage people in the partnership and strategy?
- What type of organisation do you want to be?
- What is your end goal? Is it to become an independent org?
- How valuable is being independent?

## 5.5 Choosing a legal structure

Some Food Partnerships are set up as independent organisations themselves delivering on the action plan. Alternatively, you may be looking to set up a separate delivery organisation to both administer the Food Partnership and run food projects and activities as part of the action plan.

Whatever your situation, the first thing to say is 'Don't Get Bugged Down!' Getting absorbed in worrying about legal structures can slow you down and may not be necessary, at least in the short term. Many Food Partnerships change their legal structure as they develop so there is no need to get bogged down in legal documents before you have even got off the ground! Accepting uncertainty of the structure is required in the early days. It might be better to start networking and building support for the idea before deciding on structure if possible. That said, it is worth giving it some thought to ensure that the structure meets the needs of the Partnership.

The priority when deciding on a legal structure must be on developing a structure that allows the organisation to achieve its aims and objectives. So make sure you have a clear idea of what the organisations mission and aims are before you start. Form follows function!

### Factors to consider

Once you are clear on your mission and aims then knowing the answers to at least some of the following questions will help you to narrow your choice of legal form:

- Do you want to be free to conduct lobbying activity?
- Do you want to be able to make a profit?



- Do you want to protect the liabilities of Board Members?
- Do you want to be able to rent premises?
- Do you want to be able to take out a loan?
- Are you happy with paying corporation tax?
- Do you want to trade?
- Is it important to have a membership?
- What do you want the membership to do?
- Do you want the members to have a say over decision making?

### **Gain an overview of legal structures**

Research some of the main options for legal structures; get an idea of when they are used and their pros and cons. This [overview of legal structures](#) should help. Each legal form has distinct characteristics relating to corporate status, the governing document, the governing body, management structure, membership, assets and the use of profit. Explore what legal structures other Food Partnerships have taken, a full list is provided in Appendix 1.

For further information consult specific websites:

- [Charity Commission](#) The Charity Commission for England and Wales is established by law as the regulator and registrar of charities in England and Wales. Its website provides links to a range of publications and guidance on all matters relating to charities.
- [Companies House](#) The main functions of Companies House are to: • incorporate and dissolve limited companies • examine and store company information delivered under the Companies Act and related legislation • make this information available to the public.
- [Co-operativesUK](#) Co-operatives UK is a centre of excellence in the provision of advice, information and support services to the social economy in the area of legal structures, organisational types, charitable status, registrations, etc.

### **Seek advice and support**

There are a number of sources of advice on choosing legal structures:

- Umbrella bodies such as Co-op UK, NCVO
- Councils for Voluntary Service – (see NAVCA directory to find your local CVS)
- Pro-bono lawyers, if you can find one!
- Registration companies – but be careful...some will charge you just to use model documents, which are available for free, or do not really understand charities or social enterprises
- Pay for legal advice – but agree a price first if you can

- Sustainable Food Cities team – running a governance workshop; example Terms of Reference and constitutions; overview of SFC Members governance arrangements.

### **Food partnership applications for charity status**

Several SFC Members have applied for Charity status from the Charity Commission and been rejected.

Although much of the work of Food Partnerships was considered to be charitable the Charity Commission does not consider the promotion of a 'local food system and promotion of independent food businesses' to be charitable.

Some Food Partnerships are still deciding to pursue charitable status by aligning their work with Objects designed by the Charity Commission for charities working in sustainable development. Promoting a 'sustainable food system' is expected to be more acceptable than promotion of a 'local food system'.

Objects from Charity Commission for Charities working in Sustainable Development:

- 1) To promote sustainable development for the benefit of the public within '*named place*' by:
  - (a) the preservation, conservation and the protection of the environment and the prudent use of resources;
  - (b) the relief of poverty and the improvement of the conditions of life in socially and economically disadvantaged communities;
  - (c) the promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic growth and regeneration.
- 2) To advance the education of the public within '*named place*', in subjects relating to sustainable development and the protection, enhancement and rehabilitation of the environment and to promote study and research in such subjects provided that the useful results of such study are disseminated to the public at large.

In this instance it is being argued that working with businesses falls within category 1c. However, it is yet to be discovered whether this will be accepted by the Charity Commission.

Brighton and Hove Food Partnership has also amended its Objects in its Memorandum and Articles of Association at its latest AGM to be in line with the Charity Commission Objects and intends applying to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. We wait to hear on their progress.

Even though the Charity Commission may rule out becoming a charity it is still possible to clearly set out your 'not for profit' status within your Memorandum and Articles of Association making you eligible for the majority of funding.

## 6 Appendix: 1

Place	Food Partnership	Model	Legal Form	Established	Governance
Aberdeen	Sustainable Food Partnership Aberdeen	Housed by Third Sector	None	2017	Cross Sector strategic group which aims to both influence policy and effect on-the-ground change. Terms of reference for the group lay out purpose, aims, operation of the group. SFCPA has representation from wide range of sectors. Group elected local Councillor as chair person. SFCPA Coordinator employed by Community Food Initiatives NE, offering administrative and facilitative support. Meetings held 4 times p.a. minimum and are hosted by CFINE. Subgroups based on 6 SFC priority areas, some Subgroups already established prior to SFC approach, others to be developed.'
Bath and North East Somerset	BANES Local Food Partnership	Housed in Public Sector	None	2014	B&NES Environmental Sustainability Partnership Board, oversee delivery of the multiagency food strategy. Worker housed within Local Authority, Sustainability Team, but funded by Public Health. Multi-stakeholder steering group chaired by Council Sustainability Manager, 1 Stakeholder event p.a. No membership structure. Organisations rather than individuals are involved.
Belfast	Belfast Food Network	Housed by Third Sector	None	2014	Belfast Food Network is a project of Sustainable Northern Ireland. Advisory Group of between 12 – 20 members covering all angles on local food system oversees the development and implementation of the Action Plan. Advisory Group elect independent chair (from a non-commissioning body, and vice chair. These will be ratified by Sustainable Northern Ireland Board which has overall governance

Place	Food Partnership	Model	Legal Form	Established	Governance
					responsibility for Belfast Food Network project and employs the coordinator. Memorandum of Understanding between Sustainable NI and SFC (Sustain, SA, FM)
Bournemouth and Poole	Sustainable Food City Bournemouth and Poole	Housed in Public Sector	None	2012	Housed within Economic Development Team within City Council. Wide reaching membership of SFC Partnership - all members sign up to the overall mission and agree to work towards that goal, over and above their own organisational objectives. 3 Tiers of membership 1) Partnership Board - elected by other members on one member, one vote basis. They oversee SFC Coordinator, guide delivery of action plan, oversee budget management, 2) Project Partners - those partners who want to support the partnership with delivery (includes businesses, organisations and community groups) and 3) Members - anyone who signs up to supporting the mission.
Brighton & Hove	Brighton and Hove Food Partnership	Fully Independent	Company Ltd Guarantee not for profit.	2003 (2008 as independent company)	Set up on cooperative principles with membership voting in the Board. Board is responsible for governance of the organisation and leading partnership delivering on the food strategy. Now evolved into quite a substantial delivery organisation employing 20 people, £1 mill turnover. Recently restructured the Board: Chair; 4 members recruited for specific skills e.g. HR, Treasurer, Business Skills; 4 members recruited from stakeholder organisations (1 place for Councillor, 1 place for health sector, 1 place to local authority, 1 place for national food policy org); 4 spaces for members and service user representatives - elected at the AGM. (Note 2003 - 2008 unincorporated org)

Place	Food Partnership	Model	Legal Form	Established	Governance
Bristol	Bristol Food Policy Council (BFPC) and Bristol Food Network (BFN)	BFPC is Embedded in Public Sector. BFN is fully independent	BFPC - None / Bristol Food Network is a Community Interest Company	2011 (BFPC) 2009 BFN established then became CIC in 2014	Bristol Food Policy Council brings together local authority officers and representatives from business, voluntary, academic, NHS, Local Enterprise Partnership. It meets quarterly. Bristol Food Network coordinates activity across the city on SFC topic areas. Bristol Food Network is a Community Interest Company. Board of Directors appointed internally. No membership structure for either Food Policy Council or Bristol Food Network
Cambridge	Cambridge Sustainable Food	Fully Independent	Unincorporated Association	2013	Independent network of public, private and community organisations and individuals. Committee and wider membership. Started off being hosted by Cambridge Carbon Footprint - now its own organisation (currently unincorporated association, but needs to change soon so considering options). Acts as an umbrella organisation to bring together wide range of activity already taking place as well as running own projects. Early organisational development work for CSF been undertaken by volunteers. Now have funds for a Food Partnership Coordinator.
Cardiff	Food Cardiff Council	Housed in Public Sector	None	2012	The Sustainable Cities Coordinator is jointly hosted between City of Cardiff Council and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board Local Public Team. There is a small steering group that oversees the work comprising of Cardiff and Vale Health Charity, City of Cardiff Council, Cardiff and Vale Local Public Health Team, Sustainable Food Cities Network, Wrap Cymru (Chair). There are 5 different subgroups focusing on community, economy, procurement, waste/environment and poverty.' The Food Cardiff Action Plan feeds into Cardiff's

Place	Food Partnership	Model	Legal Form	Established	Governance
					Wellbeing Plan which is overseen by the Public Service Board for Cardiff.
Carlisle	Carlisle Food City	Housed in Public Sector	None	2012	Carlisle Partnership' is the Local Strategic Partnership and 'Carlisle Food City' is a subgroup of the Partnership. Carlisle Partnership has over 80 members from public, private, voluntary sector. Carlisle Food Partnership has 20 members from across private, public and third sectors.
Cork	Cork Food Policy Council	Fully Independent	None	2014	Cork Food Policy Council is a non-profit organisation. The strategic direction and key actions of the Cork Food Policy Council are determined by a Steering Committee made up of 18 representatives from the following sectors: health, community, education, environment, food retailing, farming, catering, local government [and others as appropriate]. The full steering committee meets every 2 to 3 months. Much of the work of the steering committee is undertaken by sub-committees and short-life working groups comprising members and other invited persons. The Steering Committee is committed to building networks and supporting the formation of community and interest groups motivated by the goals of the food policy council.



Place	Food Partnership	Model	Legal Form	Established	Governance
County Durham	Food Durham	Housed by Third Sector	None	2014	Food Durham is hosted by Durham Community Action (DCA), a Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee. There is a Memorandum of Understanding between Food Durham and DCA detailing the nature of the relationship and responsibilities. Food Durham operates as a network with a general membership, a Board, and sub-groups. Membership of Food Durham is open to organisations and individuals interested in supporting its aims; there are no criteria for membership. Food Durham staff are employed by DCA, and DCA holds funds for Food Durham and supports it in terms of HR and Finance officer time. DCA are in the final stages of setting up a trading arm (Food Durham Trading Ltd) to enable funds created by brokering supply chains to be reinvested in Food Durham.
Edinburgh	Edible Edinburgh	Fully Independent	None	2013	The Edible Edinburgh Initiative is delivered by a cross sector partnership of community, public and private sector organisations and stakeholders. Steering group consists of 10 knowledgeable advocates drawn from City of Edinburgh Council, NHS Lothian, University of Edinburgh, Community / 3rd Sector, Scotland Food and Drink, Zero Waste Scotland, Business Sector. They report to Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership.
Exeter	Exeter Food	Housed by Third Sector	None	2014	Exeter Food Steering Group exists by common consent of the Exeter Food Network to which it is answerable. Steering Group consists of max of 9 reps from voluntary, public and private sectors and meets quarterly. Rotating Chair. Subgroups reflect the SFC core topic areas. 27 member organisations are part of a wider Exeter food network.

Place	Food Partnership	Model	Legal Form	Established	Governance
Glasgow	Glasgow Food Policy Partnership	Housed by public sector	None	2014	Glasgow Food Policy Partnership operates at a strategic level and has representatives from the public sector (including the NHS and the local authority), higher education, local and national NGOs, community food and growing, national government and government bodies. The partnership seeks to engage with new partners and invites new members as appropriate. The partnership is not currently part of formal governance structures but seeks to influence policy in the city through its partners and bring more collaboration to existing work. The partnership relies on officer time of partners to take forward collective work agenda.'
Greenwich	Good Food in Greenwich	Housed by Third Sector	None	2013	Housed within Greenwich Cooperative Development Association (IPS Society for benefit of the community). Steering group meets quarterly and is responsible for overseeing delivery of action plan. Chair is the chair of GCDA. Steering group reports to board of GCDA and Health and Wellbeing Partnership. Steering group membership requires that members work for the broader good of the partnership rather than just their own organisational goals. Subgroups to reflect different themes. Business, organisations and general public encouraged to sign up to Food Charter. Good Food in Greenwich Network established and quarterly network meetings held.
Greater Manchester	Feeding Manchester	Housed by Third Sector	None	2009	Led by Kindling Trust. Series of over 20 Feeding Manchester events to engage broadly across all sectors. Latest Feeding Manchester event led to the co-production of a Sustainable Food Strategy for Greater Manchester, involved over a

Place	Food Partnership	Model	Legal Form	Established	Governance
					hundred community groups, charities, small businesses and public sector partners.
Hackney	Hackney Food Partnership	Housed by Third Sector		2014	Hackney Food Partnership operates as part of the Sustainable Hackney initiative. Core group has elected positions for Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Wider group of self-selecting, non-fee paying members - communicate through meetings and yahoo group. Additional list of supporters - mailchimp list. Organises public meetings. Individuals and organisations encouraged to sign up to Charter.
Hull	Hull Food Partnership	Housed by Third Sector	None	2016	Hull Food Partnership core working group was established by Food4Hull (Co Ltd by guarantee) in 2016. The new coordinator is hosted by Goodwin Development Trust.
Lambeth	Lambeth Food Partnership	Fully Independent	Co Ltd Guarantee (not for Profit)	2012	Membership is open to any individual or organisation that lives or works in Lambeth and supports the Companies Objects. Unlimited membership, Members elect Company Directors at AGM. Board of Directors consists of elected members and a number of non-voting representatives from partner organisations: 2 officer representatives from Lambeth Council (sustainability and health); 1 elected councillor and a representative from Incredible Edible Lambeth. Directors may co-opt additional directors to fill gaps in skills. Board appoints a Chair.
Leeds	Leeds Food Partnership	Fully Independent	None	2016	Leeds Food Partnership was created by Feed Leeds, Leeds City Council and many other food organisations across Leeds. Funding has just been obtained for a Coordinator. One of their first tasks will be to complete the journey for Leeds Food

Place	Food Partnership	Model	Legal Form	Established	Governance
					Partnership becoming a fully-fledged independent organisation.
Leicester	Leicester Food Plan Board	Housed in Public Sector	None	2013	Leicester Food Plan Board set up by City Council includes representatives from the public, private, voluntary and community sector. It is chaired by the Deputy Mayor. Food Plan project manager employed by council.
Lewisham	Good Food Lewisham	Housed by Third Sector	None		Lewisham Food Partnership is a partnership of community, voluntary and public sector members. Holds regular quarterly stakeholder meetings. Subgroup meetings on specific topics.
Liverpool	Liverpool Food People	Fully Independent	Co Ltd Guarantee (Not for profit)	2014	Described as a 'managed network' of food growers, buyers, composters, activists, cooks and eaters! Set up as a not for profit Company Ltd Guarantee. Led by a Board of Directors who meet regularly to direct the work of the Sustainable Food City Liverpool Coordinator
London	London Food Board	Housed by public sector	None	2004	The London Food Programme is supported by the London Food Board, a broad cross sector partnership of 19 individuals, chaired by Rosie Boycott. Members serve for 4 years. It advises the Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority on the development and delivery of the London Food Strategy; food issues across the capital; and the GLA's London Food Programme. It meets 4 times per year.
Manchester	Manchester Food Board	Housed in Public Sector	None	2005	Manchester Food Board meets 4 times a year, is chaired by a Manchester City Council elected member and supported and facilitated by Food Futures Manchester. The Board is supported by Manchester City Council and it reports into relevant governance and partnership structures e.g. Health and Wellbeing Board, council overview and scrutiny

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					committees. There are a maximum of 24 Board Members drawn from a wide range of sectors to reflect the Food Futures Strategy. In particular the following sectors should be represented: Food Production, Catering, Health Service, Training, Wholesale, Manchester City Council, retail, social enterprise, academia, and business development. Members of Manchester Food Board are also working towards the development and establishment of a joined up strategic body for sustainable food in Greater Manchester - the 'Good Food Greater Manchester Partnership'
Middlesbrough	Middlesbrough Food Partnership	Housed by Third Sector	None	2013	Middlesbrough Food Partnership is hosted by Middlesbrough Environment City Trust – an independent charity / company ltd guarantee with own board of directors. Has a broad focus on healthy and sustainable living. Food just a part of their agenda. Has strong links and partnerships. MEC provides Chair and administration for the Food Partnership, funds are provided by Middlesbrough Council - public health. The Partnership is an unconstituted group with a Terms of Reference. Wide and open membership includes, local authority, colleges, university. The partnership sits within wider structures e.g. One Planet Living, Financial Inclusion, Fair Trade.
Newcastle	Food Newcastle Partnership	Housed by Third Sector	None	2013	The Food Newcastle Partnership is a network of individuals and organisations committed to creating a healthier food culture for, and improving the lives of people who live and work in Newcastle. The initiative is hosted by Food Nation CIC and lead by the Food Newcastle Executive Group with representatives from

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					<p>across the sectors.</p> <p>Food Newcastle is co-ordinating the Newcastle Good Food Plan in close partnership with Newcastle City Council and facilitating the delivery of the plan's current priorities including: Reducing Food Poverty, developing a Strategic Food Waste Group, Increasing Food Skills and Knowledge, Reducing Sugar Consumption and establishing a Good Food Business Network.</p> <p>The Food Newcastle Partnership meets annually to review the Good Food Plan, reflect on the achievements within the priority areas of work, network, share learning and exchange ideas.</p>
Oldham	Oldham Food Network	Housed by public sector	None		<p>Oldham Food Network operates as an informal group bringing together groups (members) from across Oldham involved in food activity. Members nominate a chair, meets monthly, network has set itself 4 priorities to focus on e.g. to coordinate food activity and support local communities. The Network members aim to share ambitions, work together, communicate more, explore joint opportunities and share knowledge.</p>
Oxford	Good Food Oxford	Fully Independent	None	2014	<p>Started off with public meeting / steering group / incubator support from Low Carbon Oxford, Low Carbon Hub and Cultivate. Good Food Oxford is now a network of 130 organisations working together for healthy, fair, sustainable food system. Monthly steering group meetings representing cross sector stakeholders, also setting up an advisory Board. Operates as a Backbone Organisation.</p>



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Plymouth	Food Plymouth	Fully Independent	CIC	2013	Food Plymouth CIC is a social enterprise with a business focus. Directors are appointed internally, there is no membership structure. Food Plymouth CIC supports, informs and enables Food Plymouth Partnership Network which develops and delivers the SFC Action Plan. There is no formal membership structure for the network either.
Portsmouth	Food Portsmouth	Housed by Third Sector	None	2015	Food Portsmouth is a cross sector not for profit network of public, private, charity and community organisations and individuals. It operates as an 'umbrella' organisation linking together many of the food initiatives in the city. It is supported by the John Pounds Community Centre. It is governed by a steering group (currently 5), and wider membership (open to any organisation or individual that signs up to the vision) 4 subgroups.
Stockport	Feeding Stockport	Housed by Third Sector	None	2013	Feeding Stockport is a partnership of Stockport Council, Stockport Homes and voluntary and community groups focused on three areas of work: retail strategy for the town centre, Woodbank Park food growing hub and community engagement via skills sharing and networking.
Sutton	Sutton Food Forum	Housed by public sector	None	2014	Sutton Food Forum does not deliver action itself but provides a networking space for those that do. Meets quarterly to discuss projects and assess progress against One Planet Living targets. Food Action Plan is part of One Planet Living and forum partners are delivering on it.
Wells	Wells Food Network	Fully Independent	Charitable Unincorporated Association	2016	Set up with the aim of eventually registering as a charity. Members of the Wells Food Network elect the Board (plus few co-opted) aiming for democratic accountability. Based on 3 tier model 1) Membership (anyone) 2) Partnership (about 15

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					people from range of stakeholder groups – focus is on determining work programme 3) Board – formal accountability for WFN affairs.
Stoke on Trent	Good Food Stoke on Trent	Housed by Public Sector	None	2016	Partnership Board comprised of members nominated on key topics. Additional members can be co-opted to fill skills and knowledge gaps. Meets 4 x per annum to review progress on Action Plan. Board elects a Chair from within its membership. Sub groups report back to Board. Partnership resourced by public health.