



University  
of Glasgow

# Good Food for All in Glasgow:

AN INTERIM ASSESSMENT OF  
THE GLASGOW CITY FOOD PLAN

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# Executive Summary



The Glasgow City Food Plan (GCFP) is a 10-year strategy for a fair, resilient, and ecologically sustainable food system in Glasgow.

This report is an evaluation of the plan, to analyse progress and challenges in the two-year period since the plan's launch. Through a document review, stakeholder interviews and desk-based research, the Adam Smith Business School have uncovered successes and barriers to actioning the plan and produced a set of recommendations for implementation.

In its first two years, the GCFP has made significant strides against its short-term actions. Moreover, a community of practice has been built around the food plan. There are clear lines of communication and relatively stable groups of participants in most of the subgroups who were willing and able to engage in, and benefitted from, information sharing and collaboration.

There is evidence of a shared vision of good food and continued contributions across key institutions, however, despite effective information sharing, the food plan needs more leadership at the working group level to action the desired change. Clarity and specificity in action plans, capacity constraints and levels of stakeholder buy-in require attention.

The report makes fifteen recommendations, divided into three areas of application: for the GCFP and GFPP, for working groups, and for anchor institutions. Recommendations include: refining action plans to make goals SMART, intensifying collaboration and securing broader stakeholder commitments both at a granular community stakeholder level and within the broader anchor institutions involved in the plan, and emphasising a need for adaptability and strategic partnerships.

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## Authors' note:

This evaluation work builds on the long-standing collaboration between academics in the Adam Smith Business School and the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership. Professors Deirdre Shaw, Andrew Cumbers and Robert McMaster have been involved in collaborative work with the GFPP, with Deirdre Shaw chairing the initial iteration of the partnership in 2014. Later joined by Drs Stephanie Anderson and Helen Traill, the team have attended GFPP meetings and working groups of the city food plan, both during the development and implementation stages of the plan. In this respect, we come to the project not simply as external evaluators, but as critical friends engaged in the process of building good food for all.

The project has largely been carried out by Grace Brown, guided by the wider academic team, which gives a degree of critical distance to the project, drawing on her skills as a researcher and years of experience in think tanks and the non-profit sector more generally.

This evaluation was conducted with the following partners, who all were generous with their time and reflections. Thanks to the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Community Food Network, Glasgow Social Enterprise Network, Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School, Scotland Excel, Soil Association, University of Glasgow, and Zero Waste Scotland. We would also like to thank Drs Rebecca Sandover (University of Exeter) and Tanya Zerbian (Spanish National Research Council) for their time and reflections on food systems transformation and for our critical friends in third sector organisations who were willing to be sounding boards for findings.



# Introduction

The Glasgow City Food Plan (GCFP) is a 10-year framework to guide partners in Glasgow in working together towards a food system that is fairer, more resilient and environmentally sustainable. The collective aim is for a food system that makes it easier for everyone in Glasgow to eat healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate, good food no matter where they live, their income or personal circumstances.

The plan has six core themes, each addressed by its own multi-agency working group overseen by a core project team led by the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership (GFPP) and supported by a communications team:



Two newer thematic groups exist, which fall outside of the remit of this evaluation. These are **Urban Agriculture** and **Food Education**.

## Purpose of evaluation

The Adam Smith Business School has been invited to conduct an evaluation of the GCFP as it reaches its two-year mark. A number of contextual and policy changes have occurred since the launch of the GCFP and, as such, this evaluation comes at a critical juncture. The evaluation will have practical implications for the design and delivery of the GCFP, serving as a baseline for discussions with the collaborative partners in the plan as they continue to work towards building fair food for all. The evaluation seeks to understand present and future priorities of key stakeholders, and in doing so aims to build a shared understanding of success for the next eight years of the plan.

## Methodology

The evaluation was designed to build an understanding of successes and challenges in the implementation of the GCFP. This involves identifying effective activity already happening, any barriers and challenges, and exploring new opportunities. There were two key stages to the evaluation. First, a desk-based document review was conducted to understand the key visions held by stakeholders, as well as identifying any clear successes or challenges. The documents reviewed include:

- GFPP meeting minutes from January 2021 – April 2023
- GCFP Project Team meeting minutes from May 2020 – February 2023
- The GCFP consultation review from 2021
- Terms of Reference for the Children and Young People, Food Economy, and Environment working groups
- Minutes from the six working groups, beginning in December 2021 – April 2023
- Action plan updates from the six working groups up to April 2023

Second, fifteen semi-structured interviews took place between June and August 2023. Each of the six working groups were represented, as well as members of the GCFP Project Team. Interviews included a range of local and national public sector and third sector organisations, who are mentioned in alphabetical order in the acknowledgements of the report. Throughout the report, participants are referred to in numerical order to maintain anonymity. This report presents the findings from this process, alongside recommendations and best practice examples drawn from desk-based research.

## Context

The GCFP emerged from years of collaboration around the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership. This has been supported by UK Sustainable Food Places (previously Sustainable Food Cities) and the broader international movement of food policy innovation that aims to address problems of inequity, environmental damage, and ill health within the food system at the level of food policy, exemplified in common actions like signing the **Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration** during COP26. This wider context includes the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP), with speakers from Milan in attendance at the first Glasgow Food Summit in 2019, when Glasgow also became a member of the MUFPP. As such, while Glasgow is a Scottish front-runner, as the first urban food plan in Scotland, it is part of a broader food policy movement from which it draws inspiration and courage, from the leading UK policy plans of Bristol and Brighton and Hove to the networks of food policy actors both nationally and internationally.

The GCFP also exists within a potentially productive policy context at the Scottish level, with various pieces of legislation which could work to the benefit of the plan. These include:

- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, which mandates that all local authorities have to prepare food growing strategies, to enable more allotments and community gardens.
- The Good Food Nation Act (2022)
- Cash First: Towards Ending the Need for Food Banks in Scotland (2023)
- Free school meals for all Primary 6 and 7 pupils in receipt of the Scottish Child Payment (2023)

And future legislation coming through the Scottish Parliament, including:

- Community Wealth Building Act
- Scottish Agriculture Bill, replacing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)



At the local level, the People Make Glasgow Communities initiative of Glasgow City Council is enabling local communities to take ownership of local venues, buildings and facilities<sup>1</sup> (*Interview 10*). This initiative aims to build stronger, more resilient, fairer and healthier communities to meet social, climate and economic equity needs.

While further information and guidance around the Good Food Nation Act will come later this year, it could potentially provide funding for the GCFP (*Interview 01*). Even without funding, Glasgow being ahead of the curve relating to this legislation could bring positive energy and buy-in from anchor institutions<sup>2</sup>, such as the city council and the NHS.

Ensuring that food is understood as a key aspect of the Scottish Government's wellbeing economy agenda<sup>3</sup> should be a goal of the plan going forward. Good food can be a useful lens through which to deliver a variety of economic and ecological goals and ensuring that it gets included in the variety of non-food related progressive agendas will be vital to the GCFP's success.

However, there are obvious contextual challenges that the GCFP must navigate. The 'Three-C's' of covid, conflict and cost of living (*Interview 13*) has made the operating context around food very difficult. This is felt by all partners, who are operating in a context of austerity and budget cuts. The impact of this adverse context cannot be understated, with the transformational change that the GCFP is aiming for made incredibly difficult. All organisations are over-stretched, under-funded and dealing with increasing demand.

*“There are macroeconomic factors which are pushing us away from [being on track for success]. There’s austerity and a lot of pressures over either the council doing its bit or third sector organisations doing their bit. There’s increasing levels of deprivation and poverty. And we’ve got the cost-of-living crisis and all the changes to the benefit system, which are all acting against that. So yeah, people are trying to do the right thing. But it is kind of pushing a boulder uphill, I would say just now.” – INTERVIEW 09*

<sup>1</sup> One example mentioned by participants is the **Molendinar Community Centre**, which is now being managed by **St Paul's Youth Forum**. The community centre will focus on 4 main areas that have been identified through community consultation and research: Education, Eating, Exercise and Empowerment.

<sup>2</sup> Anchor institutions are organisations such as local authorities, NHS trusts, universities, trade unions, large local businesses, the combined activities of the community and voluntary sector, and housing associations. Anchors can play a defining role in local economies, as they are often large employers, with significant procurement spend, and large areas of land in their control.

<sup>3</sup> **Wellbeing Economy Governments**

# Successes

Glasgow is a pioneer. It was one of the first Sustainable Food Places in Scotland and has the GCFP in place ahead of the requirements of the Good Food Nation Act. At the two-year mark, all working groups had successful actions to report. There is significant progress being made against 23 actions, with some progress being made against a further 20<sup>4</sup> (see Box 1 for examples). Given the context of the years since the GCFP's launch – not least that it was launched during the Covid pandemic – this success is something that should be widely celebrated.

Beyond the tangible progress against actions that has been made, the two years since the launch of the food plan have been well spent developing a strong foundation from which to continue to build over the next eight years. Multiple participants felt that good relationships had been built through involvement with the GCFP, with all working groups felt to be a useful space for networking and information sharing. While there is some disparity between groups, overall, participants were very positive about how the GCFP has been a helpful tool for the city.

Given the amount of food work occurring across Glasgow, the GCFP does not need to reinvent the wheel in terms of entirely new work. The strength of the plan lies in its ability to provide the strategic direction on which effective and impactful food related action can be hung, influencing the broader context in the city and in facilitating a space for collaboration to occur.

*“Independent of whether the plan was there or not, I guess [some things] were going to happen. But it happens that now it fits into it and it feeds into it, and it can be discussed with others. So there is more communication and there is more awareness of what other people are doing and that helps a lot because then you can link with you know, whatever.”* – INTERVIEW 11

<sup>4</sup> There were a total of 76 actions in the original GCFP. Of the remaining actions, some are delayed due to national issues and a few have been deleted as they are no longer considered appropriate.

## Box 1

### Some key early successes include:

- The introduction of Rose Vouchers, supported by Glasgow City Council and the Alexandra Rose Foundation, to provide fresh fruit and vegetables to families in areas where food poverty and child poverty are at their highest levels in Glasgow. The scheme has brought health and wellbeing benefits through increased nutrition and has enabled improved access to fresh food from a local source.
- City of Glasgow College (CoGC) piloted a new accredited module on sustainability and food waste for the hospitality students (SQA level 5) in March 2022 and will be running short courses with micro credentials for 2022/23 on these topics.
- Glasgow City Council Catering and Facilities team worked with the Soil Association Scotland to achieve the Bronze Food for Life Served Here award across all 137 primary and ASN schools in 2021. Since then, this has evolved into a Food for Life Scotland Public Sector Expansion Pilot, with BaxterStorey, the hospitality provider for Scottish Government workplaces and the Scottish Courts & Tribunal Service, receiving the Bronze award in July 2023.
- Partners on the GCFP are turning an underused community space – Whiteinch Market developments – into an affordable fresh fruit and vegetable market, with planned exploration of expansion in terms of growing spaces, cooking classes and community meals. This will be expanded to other areas across Glasgow in coming years.



## Vision

### Box 2

#### Glasgow City Food Plan Mission

Glasgow City Food Plan is a framework to achieve: “a food system in Glasgow that is fair, resilient and environmentally sustainable and enables everyone in Glasgow to eat healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate Good Food irrespective of where they live, their income or personal circumstances.”

The GCFP’s mission statement (see Box 2) was echoed by all participants when they articulated their vision and understanding of the GCFP’s purpose. Similarly, the need for collaborative, strategic partnership working across all sectors to achieve this vision was held across the majority of partners, who understood the plan as a *“strategic tool for creating systems change in a place-based approach”* (Interview 01).

*“It’s about a whole system change, rather than just tinkering around the edges. You know small changes are great. But this is much more ambitious than that.”* – INTERVIEW 06

That all partners share in this common vision is demonstrative of the strength of the messaging that has been developed within the GCFP. Such a common vision and purpose will be foundational for future progress, and that this has become well embedded within a fairly short timeframe is a key early success of the plan. There was some disparity, however, between the varying thematic areas of the plan. While the food poverty, insecurity and health angles were well understood, the sustainability and ecological priorities seem more nebulously described and less tangibly understood.

Similarly, success was also related to the continuation of the GCFP itself. Multiple partners viewed success as being contingent upon *“as many organisations in the city as possible looking through the food plan to give them the strategic context for their work around food.”* (Interview 07) combined with *“solid targets being reached across the board across all sectors, at a city level”* (Interview 05). The need for the GCFP to be embedded in terms of organisational delivery and culture was stressed as vital, as well as for smaller community and voluntary organisations to be aware of the plan and onboard with understanding how their activity was helping to deliver it.

## Challenges

There were common challenges impacting all working groups. This section will outline these challenges and, in the section following, we provide responsive recommendations. The challenges can be broken into three overarching and interrelated themes of: actions, capacity and buy-in.

### Actions

Although the GCFP is its infancy, and many medium and long-term actions will take longer than 2 years to be completed, there has been difficulty across all working groups in progressing many actions. Multiple participants reported issues with how actions had been drafted, expressing the desire for actions to be re-drafted and made SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. At present they are seen as *‘woolly’* (Interview 01), *‘disparate’* (Interview 09) and imprecise, like essay questions that give people *‘license to write anything’* (Interview 12).

There has also been a shifting of priorities and changes to the overall context since the GCFP was launched, as such, some actions could be refreshed or dropped. Similarly, actions that were created that are not possible the context of existing legislation should be removed.

### Capacity

Capacity was an issue for almost every participant. Organisations are over-stretched and under-funded, and there are ever-increasing challenges around reduced budgets within a context of increased demand.

*“It’s all down to capacity, though, because you can’t always get somebody that’s going to take the lead, in a group such as this. So I suppose that something for all the working groups it can be quite hard to get someone assigned, especially when you’ve got staff movement and so on, and getting the person that’s best placed, and so on. So that can be a challenge.”* – INTERVIEW 03

Related to capacity is the issue of collaboration. Some participants reported there is limited collaboration outside of the working groups and in between quarterly meetings. Similarly, there was little collaboration between working groups reported, and little sense that members knew what other working groups were achieving. For many, capacity issues meant they were only focusing on specific areas of wider actions that they were taking forward. However, strengthening collaboration on actions could be a way to ease capacity issues while building on the strength of relationships that have been developed.

*“But it’s maybe after the working groups where, you know in between the meetings, I don’t see much collaboration. You’re kinda “Here’s your action, go away, work in a silo, and then come back and report to the team.” Yeah, that can work but the whole point is this needs to be a collaboration so there almost has to be splinter groups or whatever it is, I just don’t think that that’s been pushed enough.”*

– INTERVIEW 12

Also relating to capacity is the role of the working group coordinator. Two of the working groups do not have a coordinator and a further three are currently coordinated by the Sustainable Food Places Coordinator and the Glasgow Centre for Population Health. The leadership of these key stakeholders was very positively regarded and viewed as a key reason why some working groups work so well. However, other groups, such as Procurement and Catering, have struggled to maintain consistent leadership, with capacity issues cited as a key reason. The role of the working group coordinator requires commitment, time and a deep understanding of the purpose and functioning of the GCFP for it to work successfully, raising the question of how to maintain consistent leadership of working groups.



## Buy-in

There are varying degrees of buy-in from partners of the GCFP, with some participants classing issues of buy-in as *“the primary problem”* (Interview 01) facing the plan. This issue affects large anchor institutions as well as small community organisations. Indeed, bringing multiple partners into the GCFP is a central element to the city-wide systems change approach of the plan, with key anchor institutions, such as, the NHS, city council and various universities having as much of a role to play as smaller community organisations and the third sector.

Lack of buy-in is seen in several ways. For some, the critical issue is that some sectors are not represented in the plan, especially industry but for others, it is a question of turnover and a lack of commitment. If people miss a meeting but don’t send a replacement, for example, it can give a sense that for some individuals commitment only means passing on information to people higher up in the organisation.

*“It was just the consistency, and I guess the commitment to really actioning stuff between meetings and not just seeing it as, “Oh, I’ll tell my boss, I’m represented on this group kind of thing.”* – INTERVIEW 01

*“But I think the challenge is keeping people engaged in a way where they realise how important a framework it is, and, you know, reminding people of the benefits. I suppose that’s quite difficult when you’re just meeting up, you know, four times in one year. And people maybe miss a meeting, and they don’t send a backup.”* – INTERVIEW 05

As a long-term plan, staff turnover and missing meetings will happen. Attention needs to be paid to how the plan is embedded in organisations (especially the anchor organisations) and connected to action at a granular, community level. Turnover does not have to be a bad thing – as people leave organisations, they join others, and this revolving door could increase the reach and scope of the partnership working of the plan if people take their commitment to good food for all with them. The key challenge, however, is in ensuring that commitment goes beyond the individual to be embedded in organisational culture across the different scales of organisation involved. The plan needs to also communicate with grassroots community organisations, social enterprises and other small and social businesses. Perhaps these organisations will not have the capacity to attend the working group meetings, but finding out if there is a way that they could engage with the actions of the plan could be useful and could be another way to generate buy-in from the grassroots as well as from larger anchor institutions.

# Recommendations

Below are 15 recommendations to build on the successes and address some of the challenges outlined in this report. While addressing some of these issues is outwith the scope and remit of this evaluation and the GCFP itself, there are some things that could be done to try and ease these challenges. Some of these recommendations will likely need further funding, or require capacity, which are two major and persistent challenges. However, they are included here in case such funding becomes available.

The recommendations are broken down into recommendations for the GCFP and GFPP; for working groups; and for other anchor institutions. While the challenges are similar across all six of the working groups covered by this evaluation, there are two working groups which are facing particular challenges. These are Procurement and Catering, and Food and the Environment, as such there are two recommendations which directly address these groups.

## Glasgow City Food Plan and Glasgow Food Policy Partnership Recommendations

### Recommendation 1: Celebrate Success

Successes should be better publicised across and beyond the working groups. In interviews, some participants did not seem aware of the successes of plan, especially in working groups they were not involved in. Regularly celebrating wins or announcing good progress and news on emails or other forms of communication could keep momentum up and potentially help keep buy-in strong.

### Recommendation 2: Communication and Outreach

Building from celebrating success, communication and outreach beyond the plan and partners should be enhanced. Multiple participants said that the plan was not as well-known as it should be, and other participants felt that for the plan to be successful, it should be known about in communities throughout the city. As Box 3 demonstrates, there are examples from other places that could provide models for celebrating Glasgow's good food culture.

### Box 3 A Celebration of Food in Bristol

Bristol have been awarded the Sustainable Food Places Gold Award due to the strength and success of its Bristol Good Food approach and Food Network.

A key part of Bristol's approach is using celebration and connection to make good food part of the city's culture. By aligning with national awards and events, such as the BCC Food and Farming Awards, Bristol are able to engage with hundreds of thousands of people. Since 2014, Bristol has run a nine-day immersive educational citywide food festival with a focus on sustainability and health – the Food Connections Festival. Beyond this, family-friendly events happen several times a year, and night markets have become widespread.

Also related to communication and outreach is the issue of reaching out to community organisations and the third sector. Some participants highlighted the need for granular input from communities and the importance of increasing the accessibility of the GCFP to these organisations. Many smaller organisations do not see themselves reflected in the plan, and some people from the third sector found engaging quite process-heavy. Participants reflected that there was a need to “[drive] it downwards, in the bigger organisations and [drive it] outwards into the smaller organisations” (Interview 07).

Although this would take capacity, mapping the small organisations that exist in the city, and reaching out directly to them so that they could engage on a more ad hoc basis rather than having to commit to multiple meetings a year, could see a spread into communities that the plan has so far not reached. Partners such as the GCFN could be well placed to do this mapping, but other partners with granular links into the community and voluntary sectors should be engaged in this work, to ensure the best reach.

*“Most social enterprises are small, they're place based, they're working in a specific community. And for some of them, they might think, “We're too small to be involved in this big food plan and strategy.” I think sometimes these things have a danger to err towards bureaucracy, and come across as like, kind of another council initiative. And so sometimes I think it's actually how you communicate what the food plan is about.” – INTERVIEW 06*

### Recommendation 3: Actions Reduced and Prioritised, and Measurability Considered

The first two years of the food plan can be understood as a time of experimentation. Glasgow have been a trailblazer in their work developing a food plan, and the nature of how the plan was created – in collaborative partnership focusing on organic and holistic, cross-cutting actions – necessarily meant that a lot of actions were developed. Now is the time to refine and reduce these actions. Activity to prioritise actions should be undertaken to see which ones remain relevant and worth keeping, which ones need to be re-drafted or refreshed, and which ones could be removed. Focusing on streamlining the GCFP through reducing and refining some actions could go some way to address multiple challenges at once. This can take place within working groups, and indeed should take place with partners' input, to ensure buy-in going forward. Reducing actions, creating a clear prioritisation and focusing on measurable indicators could be done through focusing on an exemplar project for each working group to focus on for the medium term. This could be aligned to a key long-term objective of the GCFP and should have short-term SMART actions attached to it.

Measuring food policy progress has been a concern from the early days of food policy activism, which means there are lots of resources from **Sustainable Food Places** and the **Milan Urban Food Policy Pact** that can be adapted to local areas. There are a lot of resources, so the key questions should be: what is important for us to measure; and what capacity do we have to measure it?





#### Recommendation 4: Environmental and Sustainability Objectives Across All Working Groups

Related to the reduction and prioritisation of actions is the issue of the environmental ambitions of the food plan. These should be spread through all working groups to ensure that ecological and sustainability outcomes do not get left behind in favour of the more presently pressing poverty and health issues. *Box 4* includes an example of best practice of linking environmental and food justice concerns.

#### Box 4

##### Covering agroecology and food poverty in Madrid.

Due to the urgency of both the climate change and food insecurity, action and activism around food can emphasise one to the detriment of others. In Madrid, the pandemic created an unusual opportunity for talking across the space between agroecological campaigners and food justice campaigners; leading to a reformulation of the city food plan away from a focus purely on agroecology and towards food justice. The overarching network for agroecology in Spain (Red de Municipios por la Agroecología) also now have a working group dedicated to the *Right to sustainable and healthy food* to keep this conversation going across both sustainable food production and food health and access concerns.

#### Recommendation 5: Community Benefits Wish List

City Regions and Local Authorities across Scotland are beginning to think about how community benefits<sup>5</sup> could be productively harnessed to address wider social and environmental challenges. There is scope for this work to be progressed by a reinvigorated Procurement and Catering working group within the GCFP. Partners are already beginning to do this, utilising community benefits to get donations to food banks and pantries and thinking about how suppliers might be able to facilitate getting good local food into deprived areas (*Interview 04*).

Some areas in Scotland, such as Dumfries and Galloway, Perth and Kinross and North Ayrshire, have created community benefit 'wish lists'. These enable community groups to request support and are designed to make it easier for businesses to see the current needs of charities and social enterprises. This type of activity could be progressed by the GCFP, with partners compiling a list of requests which could then be used by anchor institutions in their procurement contracts.

#### Recommendation 6: Sustainable Restaurant Standard

Engaging with industry has been difficult for a number of reasons, not least the challenges that restaurants and the hospitality sector have been facing since the pandemic. Tackling climate issues in food businesses can feel hard to address, due to issues around the cost, or feeling disempowered to drive change.

One way to help support food businesses move towards environmental goals is to make it something they can use to market themselves. This could be a "Sustainable Glasgow" standard, building on the work to develop a Sustainable Food Directory, which restaurants and businesses in the hospitality industry could apply to. This could work in a similar way to the 'Real Living Wage' campaign or the Good Employment Charter (see *Box 5*), in which businesses can voluntarily pay a higher wage to their staff and publicise this through accreditation and window displays.

<sup>5</sup> Community benefits are requirements which deliver wider benefits in addition to the core purpose of a public sector procurement contract. They are mandatory across the majority of public sector procurement and can see additional social value be channelled to local communities and causes. Examples of community benefits include, apprenticeships, support for local charities or voluntary groups, improvements to green spaces.

#### Box 5

##### Good Employment Charter in Greater Manchester

The Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter is a voluntary membership and assessment scheme which all Greater Manchester organisations can sign up to. The aim of the Charter is to improve employment standards across seven areas including health and wellbeing, secure and flexible work, pay, recruitment, and engagement and voice.

The Charter recognises that good employment is a journey and seeks to support employers to develop and elevate their practices through a Supporters Network and training events and resources.

To date, over 500,00 employees are covered by the charter, either as Supporters or Members.

#### Recommendation 7: Food Plan to Remain Iterative and Responsive

If the first two years of the food plan can be understood as laying the foundation, then the next two to three years should be a time to build on this. The time is now to refine some actions and regroup as a collective and this process should happen at future points in the lifespan of the GCFP. Another evaluation should take place in two or three years, at the halfway point of the ten-year plan.

## Working Group Recommendations

#### Recommendation 8: Welcome Pack Created for Working Group Coordinators

The role of the coordinator of a working group is one which requires capacity and a deep level of understanding of the GCFP and its objectives. This was unmanageable for some coordinators and the knock-on effects of this turnover has had stymieing effects on the success of some working groups. As such, a welcome pack clearly outlining the roles and responsibilities of the coordinator should be created, which could provide guidance, information and advice. The coordinator of the education working group could be approached to progress this, as in taking on the role, they spoke to the other coordinators to gather a collective sense of what the role meant and, as such, is well placed to offer a consistent view of the role.

#### Recommendation 9: Procurement and Catering

There is ground-breaking work happening elsewhere in the UK around procurement spend, and learning from good practice elsewhere could be a way to address some of the issues facing the Procurement and Catering working group. North Ayrshire is the first 'Community Wealth Building Council' in Scotland, and further afield the so-called Preston Model saw anchor institutions' local spend increase from £38.3 million to £112.3 million between 2012/13 and 2016/17, with spend in the wider Lancashire economy increasing from £288.7million to £488.7 million<sup>6</sup>. Engaging with outside experts who have worked to deliver these policies and transformations could be a way to reinvigorate the group and break down some of the key barriers.

<sup>6</sup> North Ayrshire Council Community Wealth Building Strategy

### Recommendation 10: Create Collaborative Opportunities

Collaborative opportunities should be captured and built upon. Some participants mentioned potential collaborative opportunities which could be capitalised on, even if they do not relate fully to a specific action. Partnership work could increase the capacity of some organisations to engage with the plan.

Willingness to be a partner on a funding bid could be incredibly useful in supporting other organisations and could be used to develop a collaborative approach to addressing long-term goals of the plan. Given the initial intentions of the food plan, summarised by one interviewee as *“Here is a whole raft of actions and outcomes that speak to the city as a whole”* (Interview 13), this was seen as an opportunity for organisations involved not to have to reinvent the wheel and to be able to use it to demonstrate their role in a bigger process.

If an understanding of the GCFP as a working document which could be used by smaller organisations was better emphasised, the role of the plan as an unlocking facilitator of wider action across the city could be better achieved.

### Recommendation 11: Emphasise Continuity

There is a need for continuity in working groups. Organisations should understand that committing to attend the meetings of the GCFP is not simply just attending four meetings a year, but joining a collaborative partnership to tackle whole systems change. While a degree of staff turnover and the need for people to sometimes miss a meeting and send a replacement is inevitable in a ten-year plan, generating as much continuity as possible will be important for progressing the medium- and long-term actions. Multiple participants emphasised the need for continuity, while acknowledging that they themselves had *“dropped in and out”* (Interview 12).

Similarly, there is the need for the right people to be around the table. These need to be people with strategic decision-making power and/or the ability to deliver actions on the ground in their organisations.

### Recommendation 12: Working Group Meetings

Multiple participants mentioned that they would prefer meetings to be in person to facilitate greater collaboration. However, given the capacity constraints facing many organisations, in person meetings may not always be feasible. When partners join the GCFP they are made aware that they will attend four meetings a year. To address the issue of in-person collaboration in a practical way, one of these meetings could be in person. This could ensure that working group partners meet face-to-face at times beyond the Food Summit and could see collaboration more firmly embedded. This could be a themed meeting, or even an away-day, as some working groups have experimented with.

### Recommendation 13: Communication Between Working Groups

All participants reported a lack of communication and interaction between working groups. Given that some actions cross-cut working groups, having an integrated channel of communication beyond the full GCFP meetings could be helpful. This should be streamlined, such as, sharing the minutes from all working groups. Another option could be the creation of a Slack or a Teams channel, so that queries or requests for support from various partners could be communicated on an ad-hoc basis without requiring too much administrative support from the GFPP and GCFPH. This could potentially help smaller community organisations participate in the plan without having to attend working group meetings.

## Anchor Institution Recommendations

### Recommendation 14: Sustainable Food Places Coordinator Funded

There is great work happening because of the GCFP and the GFPP, however, all of this relies on a very small team engaging in multiple roles. The work is vital and timely, and it needs to continue and grow. Simply put, this will not happen without the continuation of – and indeed additional capacity provided to – existing roles. The role of the Sustainable Food Places Coordinator, for example, is critical to the success of the plan, and yet is currently reliant upon precarious funding scenarios which change from year to year. An anchor organisation, or joint organisations, should step up and fund this role as part of their commitment to the success of the plan.

### Recommendation 15: Land Unlocked for Growing

Given the policy context surrounding the Community Empowerment Act and Community Wealth Building Act, anchor institutions should work proactively to unlock land for growing and other food-related projects. This is a direct action of the GCFP and could be a relatively easy medium-term win, if all anchor organisations commit to the plan and to working together on it.

#### Box 6

#### Stirling University and Clackmannanshire Council Living Lab

Stirling University and Clackmannanshire Council are working together to develop a community-led food growing project using renewable energy. The Living Lab will transform some derelict land, and see the installation of a modular building for mixed methods in growing produce, along with solar panels and a rainwater capture system.

The council were awarded £500,000 from the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Fund to develop the lab, with plans to eventually scale up the Lab to a total of 95 hectares of council-owned land.

## Further Readings and Resources

**Glasgow City Food Plan** <http://goodfoodforall.co.uk/home/glasgow-city-food-plan>

**Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration** <https://www.glasgowdeclaration.org>

**Sustainable Food Places** <https://www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org>

**Milan Urban Food Policy Pact** <https://www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org>

**The Principles of Community Wealth Building**  
<https://cles.org.uk/what-is-community-wealth-building/the-principles-of-community-wealth-building/>

**Progressive Procurement for a More Inclusive Scotland**  
<https://www.ceis.org.uk/community-wealth-building-progressive-procurement/>

**Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter** <https://www.gmgoodemploymentcharter.co.uk>

**Stirling University and Clackmannanshire Council Living Lab**  
<https://www.stir.ac.uk/news/2023/march-2023-news/food-growing-project-to-be-developed-by-university-and-council/>

**Bristol Food Policy Council** <https://bristolfoodpolicycouncil.org>

