

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i'r ymgynghoriad ar y [Bil Bwyd \(Cymru\) Drafft](#)

This response was submitted to the consultation on the [Draft Food \(Wales\) Bill](#)

OSFB012

Ymateb gan: | Response from: Partneriaeth Bwyd Blaenau Gwent | Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership

Overarching principles

Question 1: Do you agree with the overarching principles that the Bill seeks to achieve?

Yes

See General Views section for full response to the Bill.

Question 2: Do you think there is a need for this legislation? Can you provide reasons for your answer.

Yes

General Views

Please provide any additional information relevant to the draft Bill.

Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership is a county wide cross sector partnership of individuals and organisations, representing the population of Blaenau Gwent. It acts as a hub for connecting the people and projects working to promote healthy, environmentally sustainable and ethical food across Blaenau Gwent; it acts as a voice for wider change and an ally to those advocating for positive change. We feel that the inequalities within our food system are most keenly felt in many Blaenau Gwent communities and as a result we experience poorer outcomes than our more affluent neighbouring local authorities.

Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership believes that the food we eat has a huge impact on life in Blaenau Gwent – not just on people's health, but on communities and businesses, farmers and food producers, and the environment too. Good food creates strong, healthy, resilient communities.

Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership was established in 2021 as one of the founding Sustainable Food Places in the UK. Comprised of key anchor institutions; Tai Calon Community Housing (host partner), Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations and Natural Resources Wales.

Since forming, the food partnership has worked tirelessly to build capacity amongst community food organisations and supported the development of a good food movement connecting the dots between third, private and public sector organisations.

Overall, we agree with the proposal for a Food (Wales) Bill, which will bring together different Government Departments, with a focus on a local and sustainable food system. There is a need for legislation in this remit to ensure governance and accountability. This Food (Wales) Bill is the necessary step to address the cross-cutting role food plays within the Well-being of Future

Generations (Wales) Act We agree with the subsequent need for a Food Commission and local Food Plans.

The primary food goal lays out a firm strategic aim for the draft Food (Wales) Bill. We are pleased to see that the primary and secondary food goals recognise the systemic nature of the food system. If set in legislation, we look forward to the further outline of the targets to be set by Welsh Ministers to measure the success or otherwise of the legislation.

Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership supports the inclusion and framing of 'Food Goals' as set out in the draft bill. Our own consultation work produced a 'Food Charter' a defining set of principles that lay out the ambition, motivation and goals of people of Blaenau Gwent. The top priority was better access to good, affordable food. Beyond that were concerns of food literacy skills at every age group, reduction in food waste and single use plastics from the food industry and a prosperous food culture, including a diverse economy.

We feel the goal of the Environment could be strengthened or further supported by the inclusion of a goal which truly references the urgent need to address the climate and nature emergency within the food system. Other goals which could be included could be the inclusion of cultural appropriate foods, food sovereignty and food justice as a means to reduce the inequalities seen in our communities.

In response to the challenge of making good food more accessible, Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership has led a focus on maximising food benefits. This has resulted in a Healthy Start awareness project involving social services, midwifery and health visitor teams to look at ways to improve use of the Healthy Start card. We now have consistent messaging across public bodies and a local voucher scheme with a independent greengrocers helping families include more fruit and vegetables in their diet.

Overall we believe that the Food (Wales) Bill would significantly strengthen the work which is happening on a local level to create a better Welsh food system. It would ensure that local initiatives are aligned with national commitments and vice versa, avoid duplication and increase efficiency.

If the draft Food (Wales) Bill does become legislation, further funding would be vital for local organisations such as Local Authorities and Health Boards to be compliant with the primary and secondary food goals. Local food partnerships could play a key role in this case, local food partnerships have the skills and relationships to connect and coordinate food goals and local food plans with the support of local anchor institutions.