

Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee: Food (Wales) Bill

Katie Palmer, Food Sense Wales 21.12.22

1. The Bill brings forward a meaningful framework and accountability measures to enable a proactive approach, determining how we want our food system to work, rather than just dealing with the consequences. We view the Bill as essential **to bring about coherent and comprehensive policy** that will achieve the goal of delivering a food system fit for future generations.
2. As an organisation operating across the Food System - cutting across the third sector and public sector - Food Sense Wales is acutely aware that the absence of a holistic vision and targets for the food system in Wales is hampering the progress that Wales could be making in becoming one of the most sustainable and resilient food nations in the world. The food system could be delivering on population health, food security, net zero and biodiversity targets and fair work. In reality a lack of policy coherence actively prevents this from happening – and could even be making the situation worse. Bringing experts across the Food System together under the banner of a Food Commission, to develop and oversee strategy, would ensure all parts of the system are aiming for the same goal.
3. In particular I would like **to emphasize the opportunities through linking national vision and policy with local strategy and delivery**. At a local level Food Goals could be built into Wellbeing Objectives and delivered through local food plans overseen at a local level by cross sector **Food Partnerships** working in conjunction with Public Service Boards. Examples of where this practice is already developing can be seen through the emerging Network of 7 Sustainable Food Partnerships¹ and in particular Blaenau Gwent Food, Bwyd Sir Gar, Food Cardiff, Monmouthshire Food and Food Vale. Food Cardiff's Good Food Strategy for the city which sets out five food goals - a healthy Cardiff; an environmentally sustainable Cardiff; a thriving local economy; a fair and connected food system; and an empowering food movement. This strategy was co-produced by almost 2,500 individuals and organisations in Cardiff and the results from the Cardiff citizen survey. Cardiff Council and Cardiff & Vale UHB. Cardiff Council became one of the first UK local authorities to publish its own Food Strategy in 2019. Recognising the need to work across portfolios, Cardiff Council have appointed a dedicated Food Officer and host a cross-departmental Steering Group. The Move More, Eat Well Plan led by Cardiff & Vale University Health Board and approved by both PSBs includes a health communities' priority area, committing to the continued development of sustainable food partnerships. **Cardiff's draft Wellbeing Plan** includes "promote healthy, local, and low-carbon food and support Cardiff's bid to become the first Gold Sustainable Food Place in Wales"².

Providing adequate resourcing for training within public bodies and coordination of food partnerships would be key for successful implementation - work which could be progressed through the Community Food Strategy.

The committee may like to note that Welsh Government are in the process of investing £2.5m into the development of cross sector food partnerships through the Prosperous Futures Team.

4. As part of Food Policy Alliance Cymru we responded to the Food Bill Consultation where detailed responses to all aspects of the Bill were addressed

English - [Draft-Food-Wales-Bill-consultation-response_Eng.pdf \(foodsensewales.org.uk\)](#)

Welsh - [Ymateb_BilBwydCymru_Cymraeg.pdf \(foodsensewales.org.uk\)](#)

We are pleased to see that the Bill has been strengthened on the environmental and education aspects.

¹ [Sustainable Food Places - foodsensewales.org.uk](#)

² [Cardiff-PSBs-Draft-Local-Well-being-Plan-2023-2028_English.pdf \(cardiffpartnership.co.uk\)](#) pg 48