**Template key questions for candidates**

Whether you come across candidates in hustings or on your doorstep, here’s a handy list of questions for you to ask candidates to the 2022 local elections.

Q1: [food partnership] has produced a food strategy and food action plan bringing together key stakeholders in our area including the Council, academics, food businesses and voluntary sector organisations. How will you support this strategy and action plan if elected?

Q2: Households are living through an unprecedented cost of living crisis, including rising food prices, forcing families to make difficult choices between heating and eating. The number of people using food banks increased by [XX%]. What will you do as a councillor to ensure that everyone has access to good food with dignity along with a robust safety net and look beyond the food bank for solutions?

If you are in London, you can flag how your borough fared in the [Beyond the Food Bank report](https://www.sustainweb.org/good-food-for-all-londoners/) and ask, what will they do as a councillor to help the borough address food poverty.

Q3: [XX%] of reception children are overweight and obese and this increases to [XX%] by the time they leave primary school ([check the figures for your area in England this LGA website](https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/view/lga-research/latest-data-from-the-national-child-measurement-programme-ncmp?mod-area=E92000001&mod-group=AllRegions_England&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup); [data for Wales here](https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/child-measurement-programme/)). Unhealthy food environments including junk food advertising, proliferation of takeaways and food deserts – where there simply are no shops offering healthier food such as fresh fruit and vegetables – lead people to make the wrong food choices. What will you do as a councillor to ensure we live in a healthier place?

Q4: The food sector is a major employer. Many food businesses, from growers to restaurants, who provide vital jobs in our local economy, have been hit hard by Covid-19. What investment are you planning in the local good food economy to safeguard our SME’s?

Q5: [Relevant for higher tier authorities with control over catering and procurement] Catering and procurement across nurseries, schools and colleges through hospitals and care homes to workplace canteens is a powerful lever to create large-scale demand for healthy, sustainable and local food. How will you use catering and procurement to revitalise local and sustainable food supply chains and reduce the climate impact of the food bought by the council?

Q6: Almost one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions come from food and agriculture. [adapt according to council powers in your area] The council has a role in procuring food for schools and other services, manage waste and composting, local land use and has a significant role in shaping the diets of residents and the food available locally. What actions will you support to reduce food-related emissions in our area?

Q7: Last year, our area missed on £[XXX [check figures in our map]](https://www.sustainweb.org/foodpoverty/cash_shortfall_local_map/) worth of Healthy Start payments. What will do to ensure local families who are pregnant or have small children know about Healthy Start and claim their entitlement?