Developing food poverty action plans

27 June 2018

@FoodPowerUK #FoodPowerConf
Chair and speakers

Simon Shaw, Food Power, Sustain

Charlie Spring, Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance

Emily Fay, Shropshire Food Poverty Alliance

Emily O’Brien, Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

Kath Dalmeny, Right to Food project, Sustain
Structure and process for developing an action plan

Charlie Spring
(Measuring & Monitoring sub-group, Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance)
Background

• Greater Manchester Poverty Action: coordinating action to fight poverty
  -Special interest groups led to focus on food
Themed sub-groups

1. Place-based access to food
2. Children in food poverty
3. Underlying causes of food poverty
4. Food banks and beyond
5. Measuring and monitoring food poverty
6. Skills and training

Diversity Scrutiny Group
Model/structure

• Co-production and involvement of experts by experience
• Adopting model of Manchester Homelessness Partnership

Driver Group
- provide strategic input and support to Alliance

Reference Group
- People of influence. Listen to feedback from groups and remove barriers, give additional support

Diversity Scrutiny Group
- Advise sub-groups to ensure Action Plan will address poverty for everyone

Themed sub-groups
- Develop a section of the Action Plan
Process/timeline

• Aim – By June 2019…2020…2022 we should have...
• Action – In order to make this happen we will need to... [What needs to be done, and by whom]

8th May 2018: launch event/workshop
July-Nov: sub-group meetings
End Nov: draft action plan
Feb 2019: launch action plan
Action Plan Research:
Mapping, Surveys, Interviews
and Workshops

Emily Fay

SHROPSHIRE
FOOD POVERTY ALLIANCE
The Action Plan Process

Jan 2018
- Establish a Shropshire Food Poverty Alliance to oversee the development of the plan
- Core team meet to review plan and agree roles

Jan - Apr
- Scoping of the current situation
  - Research on scale, causes and current solutions/ current provision

May - July
- Participatory research on solutions
  - 3 workshops with stakeholders and interviews with those experiencing food poverty

Sept - Nov
- Develop Action Plan
  - Based on research, consulting with stakeholders

Dec
- Dissemination
  - The plan will be disseminated as the basis for action and to secure resources.
Mapping
Surveys

- Designed using Survey Monkey
- Different surveys for organisations, schools and individuals
- Shared via email/social media
- Over 100 responses so far
Survey Questions

- Types and causes of food poverty
- Levels of food poverty
- Confidence in signposting
- Knowledge of places/initiatives which offer assistance
- What would make a difference?
Interviews

To identify causes to food poverty

To understand the issues for low income households accessing food

To understand the experience of accessing emergency food provision

To gather views of those who have experienced food poverty on how things could be improved within their communities
Based on the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

Physical
(Tenure, who they live with, access to a vehicle)

Public
(Access to support services, Food outlets)

Financial
(Income/Benefits, Budget for food)

Social
(Family and social networks)

Human
(Health issues, cooking & budgeting skills)
Three Workshops around the county

1. Understanding the context
2. Identifying solutions to food poverty in Shropshire
3. Creating more collaboration between organisations
Three discussion areas

How can we improve access to healthy affordable food?
How can we better support people in food crisis?
How can we improve people’s skills and confidence in nutrition, budgeting and cooking?
Why spend time doing participatory research?

- Local information
- Data informs Action Plan
- Reality rather than preconceived ideas
- Solutions are evidence based
Food Power Conference June 2018
Brighton & Hove Food Poverty Action Plan 2015-2018
What we learned - and what next?
Where from... and where to ????

- People eat healthier, more sustainable diets
- Improved **access to good food**
- A vibrant sustainable food economy
- Public procurement
- Local production and processing and the environment
- Reduced waste
- Celebration and culture
- Cross sector links, information – part of something bigger
Over 50 partners – 84 actions
What was in the plan?

• 10 principles – guides future work not just the 2015-2018 plan
• 5 Aims
• Actions under each aim – clear ownership + ‘lead partner’ commitment to reporting back
Crisis food poverty
Food banks and hunger are just the tip of the iceberg.

Long term food poverty
Our approach focuses on the much larger group of people struggling long term to eat a healthy diet, and aims to prevent them reaching crisis point.

Food poverty: A preventative approach

What prevents food poverty?

- Cooking equipment
- Employment
- Access to low cost healthy ingredients
- Cooking skills
- Benefits and pensions
- Financial inclusion (e.g. savings, money advice)
- Affordable housing, fuel, transport
- Healthy food in health/social care services
- Community networks
- Crisis support for when prevention doesn’t work
- Shared meals & eating together
Aim 5: Commit to measuring levels of food poverty so we know if we are being effective

Groups were asked to include our food poverty questions!

e.g.
What has been hard?

- External climate –
  - Locally we knew there was no money – but then there was even less
- Partner staff turnover
- Nationally - austerity
- Reconfiguring local services– adult social care/ CCG – they move like a glacier
- Sheer breadth – ambitious plan – hard to track
What has worked well?

Overall there was progress on 78 out of 84 actions (93%)

- 49 actions had made good progress (58%)
- 29 had made some progress (34%)
- 6 had made minimal or no progress (7%)
What has worked well?

• Raising awareness – bringing up the agenda – (See the plan as an engagement tool – not just about the actual action!)
• Overall ‘outcomes’ - food insecurity ‘holding steady’ probably a success
What next?

• Building on engagement & momentum
• Mainstreaming into wider food strategy - using ‘food poverty goggles’
• tensions between ‘Healthy ‘Sustainable’ and ‘Fair’
How we did ours

CASE STUDY
http://bhfood.org.uk/case-studies

WEBINAR
http://sustainablefoodcities.org/webinars/tacklingfoodpovertyinyourcity
Achievements & Reassurance!


Thank you!

Emily O’Brien
emily@bhfood.org.uk
www.bhfood.org.uk
@btnhovefood
Working to incorporate our Right to Food into national legislation

imogen@sustainweb.org

@right2foodUK
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Devising the structure and process for developing a plan</td>
<td>Charlie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering evidence and consultation</td>
<td>Emily F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracking and reviewing plans</td>
<td>Emily O’B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using a Right to Food perspective</td>
<td>Imogen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion: Structure and process - challenges

Challenges:
• Working with limited resources, but wanting to avoid this defining the plan or level of ambition
• Lack of knowledge across stakeholders of the extent/ existence of food poverty and the right to food
• Combining different activities into a single alliance e.g. social supermarket, employment projects, community development
• Creating capacity within an alliance to create an action plan
• Operating without a city food partnership
• What to do when a major stakeholder doesn’t engage
• Avoid being a ‘talking shop’
Discussion: Structure and process - tips

Tips
• Adopt the right to food as a guiding principle
• Pick things you can do
• Avoid creating ‘them and us’ language and action barriers
• Community feats
• Join IFAN
• Move from planning to action/ delivery ASAP
• Avoid previous mistakes and duplication
• Include realistic deliverable actions
Discussion: Gathering evidence & consultation

**Indicators of food poverty:**

- Devon have looked at: obesity, food outlets, slow internet access, lack of a car, benefit claims, free school meals and median household income
- North Yorkshire have conducted interviews in food banks
- Food Power could provide some suggested questions for surveys and indicators
Discussion: Tracking and measurement

• Importance of knowing if you’ve succeeded
• Less important whether exact actions happened, more important that some action happens and you get feedback on it
• Hard to measure everything so choose most important indicators
• Softer/ qualitative feedback is important to show immediate impact, alongside longer term indicators
• Publishing progress helps encourage action
• Works best when it build on existing relationships
• Important to have a balance of public, community and business sectors
• Who’s the we? – people from local food partnership and/or food poverty alliance form a sub-group
• Workshops – starting with ‘knowns’ and ‘usual suspects’ and allies then unlikely allies. How involve the council and at what stage?
• Links to public health strategy (but not too prescriptive on ‘healthy eating’) – local authorities or health authorities will change and offer opportunities
• Involvement – experts by experience, powerful stories of issue and impact, harness anger
• Migrant communities – an important dimension, marginalised, characterised as a liability, major force in employment
• Global food poverty issues – we do not live in isolation! Food security and global solidarity
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