

ANGUS COUNCIL

18 MARCH 2021

ANGUS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

REPORT BY VIVIEN SMITH – STRATEGIC POLICY, TRANSFORMATION & PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

ABSTRACT

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires every local authority to prepare a food growing strategy for its area to identify land that could be used to grow food and describe how provision for community growing, in particular in areas which experience socio-economic disadvantage, can be increased.

The Angus Food Growing Strategy meets the requirements set out in the Scottish Government guidance and reflects local priorities and ambition. The strategy supports the work of the Angus Community Planning Partnership and is part of an exciting movement encouraging a healthy relationship to local food which is accessible to all and which is good for both people, businesses and the environment.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) Approve the Strategy and appendices prepared in partnership across Angus
- (ii) Support the proposed implementation through the Angus Community Planning Partnership

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/COUNCIL PLAN

The themes of the Angus Food Growing Strategy are aligned with the Angus Community Plan 2017-2030.

3. BACKGROUND

Our vision 'Angus is a great place to live, work and visit' is very relevant to the topic of food growing and land use. Angus is predominantly a rural area with a rich agricultural landscape and environment. Food and Drink is one of our key sectors locally and regionally. Through delivering our Community Planning vision to make the area a great place to live, work and visit will be delivered in the statutory requirements outlined in the Food Growing legislation.

The Angus Food Growing Strategy sets out the overall vision of what we want to achieve in Angus through increased food growing, tackling food poverty and supporting local growers.

The initial engagement for this strategy was built on a working group exploring food poverty in Angus. In order to get a clear baseline of food provision, support and developments in Angus mapping was carried out. This mapping highlighted the wide variety of projects and activities happening in Angus to support people and improve health through fresh produce.

To further engage with local communities a virtual consultation was held throughout August and September 2020. The data and information gathered from this underpins the strategic direction of this strategy and action plan.

4. CURRENT POSITION

Here in Angus our Community Planning Partnership have committed to putting poverty and wellbeing at the heart of all of our strategic work. The Angus Food Growing Strategy 2020 – 2025 and action plan align to the work underway to support the priorities to – Reduce Child Poverty, Improve mental health and wellbeing and Improve accessibility and connectivity.

The Community Empowerment 2015 (Scotland) Act, Part 9, places a duty on every local authority to prepare a food growing strategy which must be published by 1st April 2020 (within two years of section 119 coming into force). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic Angus Community Planning Partners took the decision to delay the strategy to better understand the emerging environment to ensure that the strategy was fit for purpose and provided the actions needed for our local communities – this has included a greater emphasis on reducing food poverty and empowering local communities.

This is the main national influence on the Angus Food Growing Strategy as its associated guidance contains suggestions, recommendations and proposals on what such a strategy should contain. Going forward, as the Scottish Government continues to develop its national food and drink policy – “Becoming a Good Food Nation”, it is anticipated that there will be further impacts on local food growing strategies. This will complement the work undertaken to support food and drink as a key sector of the Angus economy and our work regionally with partners and the Tay Cities Deal and Mercury Programme.

5. PROPOSALS

This Strategy outlines how Angus Council and its partners will meet the requirements of section 119 of the Food Growing Act. This includes:

- identifying land in Angus that may be used as allotment sites (as defined by the Act),
- identifying other areas of land that could be used by a community for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers,
- describing how, we plan to take reasonable steps under section 112(1) of the Act, to increase the provision of allotments
- Exploring how we intend to increase the provision of land in areas which experience socio-economic disadvantage.

In order to deliver on these requirements, the Angus Food Growing Strategy is split into three themes - Food Poverty, Food Growing and Food Insecurity.

This model is aligned to the guidance received from Scottish Government and has allowed us to prioritise the actions within the mapping and action plan.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed actions will be delivered within existing budgets and with existing resources or through the securing of additional funding streams. If additional resources are required this will be the subject of a further report for approval.

7. CONSULTATION

Throughout the consultation process colleagues of the working group were consulted. This included colleagues from Economic Development, Housing, Communities, Parks and Estates.

REPORT AUTHOR: Shelley Hague
EMAIL DETAILS: HagueS@angus.gov.uk

List of Appendices:

- Angus Food Growing Strategy 2021 - 2025
- Angus Food Growing Strategy Action Plan