

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	City Growth and Resources
DATE	26 September 2019
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	The Community Food-Growing Programme update and draft Granite City Growing Strategy
REPORT NUMBER	PLA/19/314
DIRECTOR	N/A
CHIEF OFFICER	Gale Beattie
REPORT AUTHOR	Sandy Gustar – Sustainable Development Officer
TERMS OF REFERENCE	Terms of Reference 2.2 The Committee will determine the Council's strategies for city growth and place planning except in relation to major infrastructural planning.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report seeks approval for the draft Food-Growing Strategy and associated Environmental Report to go to public consultation; it also provides an update to the community food-growing programme.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Approve the draft 'Granite City Growing: Aberdeen Growing Food Together' (Appendix A) and associated Environmental Report (Appendix B) for an 8 week public consultation.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The demand for food-growing opportunities is likely to increase as more people seek to improve their health and wellbeing, access fresh food, reduce their environmental impact and engage with their local community. In the 43rd City Voice survey in March 2019 for example 31.8% of panellists (277 people) who are not already growing their own fruit and vegetables would be prepared to in order to reduce their climate impacts. '*Granite City Growing: Aberdeen Growing Food Together*' sets out a city-wide vision for collaborative working to increase food-growing awareness, skills and opportunities and describes how land will be identified in priority areas from the Open Space Audit. It was developed with stakeholders and seeks to build on the many local food-growing actions and initiatives that are already delivering multiple benefits in the city. It is aligned to Aberdeen's ambition to be a Sustainable Food City.
- 3.2 In developing '*Granite City Growing: Aberdeen Growing Food Together*', the views and priorities of local organisations and community groups were gathered during stakeholder workshops facilitated by greenspace scotland. In addition, individuals were consulted through a Citizen's Space survey in February 2018 and in the 43rd City Voice survey in March 2019. A Food-growing Steering Group has guided the process consisting of representatives from Aberdeen City Council's Place, Operations and Customer clusters, the Hutton Institute, Community Councils, the Allotment Market Stall, Powis Residents Association, the Civic Forum and from the Community Food Initiative North East (CFINE). The eight-week consultation, if approved, will be open to the public and conducted through the consultation hub, Citizen's Space.
- 3.3 The programme was funded by £145,000 from the General Fund Capital Programme. All the capital funds have now been spent or allocated except for £5368 and it is anticipated that this will be allocated soon as new project proposals are being assessed.
- 3.4 The Capital Programme Committee instructed that the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning investigate external funding opportunities to extend the Community Food-growing Programme into a self-funded model. An important lesson from the Community Food Growing Programme has been that the most successful projects were those which supported a 'bottom-up' approach where funding was granted to a third party who then managed their own project with the support of Council officers. This approach supports community buy-in during the early stages and tended to achieve better sustainability as the projects progressed. In order to support partnership working and encourage longer term sustainability it is recommended that future projects are driven by demand at a community level.
- 3.5 In the long-term the demand for food-growing spaces may start to exceed the supply of spaces. The requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 mean that Aberdeen City Council has a statutory duty to provide allotment ground according to demand. Under section 112 of the Act,

Aberdeen City Council would be required to take 'reasonable steps' to increase the provision of growing spaces when the allotment waiting list exceeds 50% of the number of allotments; the January waiting list figures are 32% of the number of allotments. To assist with planning for future provision Granite City Growing will put in place measures to monitor supply and demand over the next five years. It also includes the ACC 'reasonable steps' statement. Waiting list figures are reported annually by Operations.

- 3.6 A business case will be brought forward by the Operations and Protective Services cluster and the Early Intervention and Community Empowerment cluster relating to supporting food-growing on 'Housing Revenue Account' (HRA) land. Granite City Growing has identified priority areas where the distribution of existing food-growing opportunities is least and the potential demand greatest. These priority areas tend to align with the distribution of HRA land which is managed by the Early Intervention and Community Empowerment cluster and maintained by the Operations and Protective Services cluster. The business case will seek to redirect HRA funding from maintenance costs to support food-growing projects on HRA land.
- 3.7 A report will be brought back to Committee on 6th February 2020 in relation to:
- (a) The findings of the public consultation; and
 - (b) A final draft of 'Granite City Growing: a food-growing strategy for Aberdeen' and associated Environmental Report for approval and publication.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.
- 4.2 There are many external funding pots available to community groups for well-defined projects. Community Engagement Officers have a role to play in helping groups come together to define food-growing projects and source external funding. Local community groups have applied for funding from Tesco Bags of Help, the Greggs Foundation, the Climate Challenge Fund, Investing in Communities Fund and the local Health Improvement Fund (run by the Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership) and the Fairer Aberdeen Fund for example.
- 4.3 Opportunities for Aberdeen City Council to support food-growing through existing budgets have been considered in the preparation of Granite City Growing. There is potential for participatory budgeting, developer obligations, the Common Good Fund, Pupil Equity Funding and existing grounds maintenance budgets to be useful in supporting further food-growing opportunities and this will be explored more fully as Granite City Growing progresses. Any application of these funding sources to the Food Growing programme would be captured within their existing governance processes.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires that all local authorities prepare a food-growing strategy for their area. Section 119 of the Community Empowerment Act requires the food-growing strategy to:
- Identify land in the area that could be used for allotment sites;
 - Identify other land in the local authority area which could be used by a community to grow vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers;
 - Describe how the authority intends to increase the provision of allotments or other land for community growing, should the authority be required to take reasonable steps under section 112(1); and
 - when detailing how the authority intends to increase the provision of allotment sites and community growing areas of land in its area as it is required to take reasonable steps under section 112(1), a description of whether and how this will apply to communities which experience socio-economic disadvantage.
- 5.2 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been completed as required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Assessment findings are used to populate an Environmental Report. The report and the draft strategy documents have to be available for comment, at the same time, for a set period that has to be agreed in advance with the Consultation Authorities and the Scottish Ministers. It is agreed in this case that the relevant documents be out for consultation for a period of 8 weeks.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk of not progressing Granite City Growing	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	Lack of external funding sources and the inability to fund the proposed programmes	H	Communication of Granite City Growing to Community Planning partners will build relevance of food-growing to LOIP outcomes and carve a place from existing funding streams.
Legal	ACC has a duty to prepare a food-growing strategy under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015	H	The draft Granite City Growing goes out for consultation and then returns to committee for approval by April 2020.
Employee	Health and wellbeing outcomes not realised.	M	Improvement Charter to increase workplace food growing opportunities is

			currently being progressed by the Operations and Protective Services cluster and reported to the Sustainable City Group.
Customer	A long term risk of demand for allotments and other growing spaces exceed supply. Health and wellbeing benefits not realised. Widening inequalities.	M	The demand for food-growing spaces will be monitored. The strategy will be reviewed every 5 years in line with the legislation.
Environment	Biodiversity gains not realised. Best practice water and soil management advice for food-growing not communicated. A 'sustainable lifestyle' choice not optimised for the citizens of Aberdeen	M	Biodiversity implications are communicated in Granite City Growing and information created or signposted to encourage best practice.
Technology	n/a		
Reputational	Failure to meet legal duty. Failure to fully support Aberdeen's ambition to be a Sustainable Food City. Opportunities are missed to increase food-growing.	H	The draft Granite City Growing goes out for consultation and then returns to committee for approval by April 2020 and its vision is taken forward in action.

7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report

<p>Prosperous Economy</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 1 – 10% increase in employment across priority and volume growth sectors by 2026. Granite City Growing will in time increase the food-growing skills of residents. ‘Food and Drink’ has been identified as a growth sector so it could help to deliver the LOIP Improvement Project Aim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘to increase the number of people employed in growth sectors by 5% by 2021.
<p>Prosperous People</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 11 – Healthy life expectancy is five years longer by 2026. Food-growing could be a useful part of the aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of people in local communities promoting wellbeing and good health choices by 2021 • Increase uptake of a range of activities that enable people with long term conditions to manage their health and well-being by 2021 • Increase the number of community run green spaces that are organised and self-managed, particularly in priority localities where satisfaction and use is low. • Increase opportunities for people who are retired to continue and increase their contribution to communities by 10% by 2021 <p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 12 – Rate of harmful levels of alcohol consumption reduced by 4% and drug related deaths lower than Scotland by 2026. The therapeutic benefits of food-growing could contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of people undertaking recovery from drug and alcohol issues who are being supported to maintain drug / alcohol free lives in their community by 2021
<p>Prosperous Place</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 13 – No one in Aberdeen will go without food due to poverty by 2026. Granite City Growing will support community efforts in making our green space productive and resilient and oversee the delivery of the Improvement Aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase community food growing in schools, communities and workplaces by 2021 <p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 14 - Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen’s carbon emissions by 42.5% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate. Food-growing activities will support the delivery of the Improvement Project Aims to:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce Aberdeen’s carbon emissions by 30% by 2021. • Reduce the generation of waste in Aberdeen by 2021.
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Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Customer Service Design	Granite City Growing has been drafted to the customer design principles of prevention and early intervention, co-design, locality-based and collaboration.
Organisational Design	Granite City Growing has been drafted to the following organisational design principles: enabling and intelligence led.
Governance	Granite City Growing has been drafted with the inclusive governance principle in mind.
Workforce	Granite City Growing has been drafted with the workforce principle of being open and co-operative.
Process Design	Granite City Growing has been drafted to the following process design principles: understand what people need and make things open.
Technology	Granite City Growing has embraced the technological principle of being engaged
Partnerships and Alliances	Granite City Growing has been drafted to the partnership principle of complementarity of purpose and value added.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	An EHRIA was not required as confirmed by the nominated Equalities officer 19/6/2018.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required.
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	Applicable. Granite City Growing seeks to reduce inequalities in the existing supply of food-growing opportunities.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	Full SEA required and Environmental Report is included in Appendix B. This report seeks consultation with public and statutory consultees on the Environment Report for Granite City Growing completed as part of the SEA process.
Habitats Regulations Assessment	A Habitats Regulations Appraisal proforma has been concluded in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Granite City Growing – Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Scoping reports](#)

PLA/18/062 from the Capital Programme Committee
CMT Committee Paper 11/10/2018
Service Update 25 April 2019

10. APPENDICES

Appendix A: '*Granite City Growing; Aberdeen Growing Food Together*' draft for public consultation

Appendix B: Strategic Environmental Assessment - Environmental Report is available through the Council website: <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/media/11096>

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Sandy Gustar
Title	Sustainable Development Officer
Email Address	SGustar@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 522247