

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 9 January 2024

Plant-Based Treaty Action Plan

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Policy & Sustainability Committee:
 - 1.1.1 Agree the proposed action plan developed to support the City of Edinburgh Council's endorsement of the Plant-Based Treaty.

Dr. Deborah Smart

Executive Director of Corporate Services

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Report

Plant-Based Treaty Action Plan

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Policy & Sustainability Committee agreed to endorse the call for a [Plant-Based Treaty](#) on behalf of the city [in January 2023](#). Edinburgh has since become the first European capital to support this global initiative, which calls for the development of a Plant-Based Treaty by national governments as a companion to the UN Paris Agreement on climate. While endorsing the Plant Based treaty initiative is non-binding and carries no legal risk, it does represent a public acknowledgment that food systems are a key driver of the climate crisis.

3. Background

- 3.1 This action plan has been developed in response to a [motion agreed at the same committee](#), which requested “an action plan and timescale for implementing possible changes to Council activities following the endorsement of the [Plant-based] treaty to be presented to Committee for decision within three cycles”.
- 3.2 This action plan has been developed through engagement with partners and coincides with the national Veganuary challenge, which encourages people to follow a vegan lifestyle during January. In 2023, more than 700,000 people worldwide signed up to take part in Veganuary.
- 3.3 This action plan does not seek to eliminate meat and dairy served by the Council or in the city. Instead, it aims to continue the focus on high quality, sustainable food and increase reliance on locally sourced products where possible.
- 3.4 This plan needs to be viewed in the context of the Council’s wider food agenda which includes tackling food poverty, ensuring living wage suppliers in the food industry, promoting food careers, reducing unnecessary plastic packaging and promoting food redistribution to avoid food waste. These aspects will be covered in the Council’s food growing strategy progress report, as well as in the Edinburgh Partnership Food Poverty strategy progress report. These reports will be brought to Policy & Sustainability Committee in March 2024.
- 3.5 This plan is a city-wide action plan that includes actions led by the Council as well as by other partner organisations and key stakeholders in the city to encourage wider strategic change.

4. Main report

- 4.1 This plan includes actions led by Council teams (catering, libraries, communications, sustainability, and culture). It also includes actions from external organisations, namely Edinburgh Community Food, Food for Life Scotland, Edinburgh International Conference Centre, the Chamber of Commerce, the University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, and Creative Carbon Scotland.
- 4.2 Actions are broken down into four key themes:
 - 4.2.1 Awareness raising and capacity building;
 - 4.2.2 Food waste reduction;
 - 4.2.3 Increased provision of plant-based food; and,
 - 4.2.4 Influence and leadership.
- 4.3 Achieving a 20-50% reduction in all meat and dairy consumption by 2050 as recommended by the UK Climate Change Committee¹, will require a significant degree of behaviour change. As such, awareness raising activities should help people to make informed decisions, while providing more plant-based options will facilitate sustainable food choices.
- 4.4 This action plan seeks to build on the work already underway in Edinburgh as a “Sustainable Food City”. In 2022, Edinburgh was awarded silver accreditation status by the Sustainable Food Places Network, thanks to initiatives including the distribution of fresh meals to those most in need, the launch of a Sustainable Food Directory, and community food growing projects. Edible Edinburgh, the city’s sustainable food partnership, has a role to play in driving this work.
- 4.5 The Council’s catering team is also committed to sustainability and a number of exemplar initiatives have already been implemented:
 - 4.5.1 Across all primary school sites, there is one meat-free day per week, with secondary schools providing 100% meat-free main meals one day per week. This is delivered as part of the Council’s commitment to create menus which promote a balanced diet.
 - 4.5.2 A vegetarian or vegan option is also available every day and red and processed meats have been reduced in line with the Scottish Government’s legislation on school meals. This means the Council can focus on high quality ingredients, such as Red Tractor and Quality Meat Scotland meats, MSC Fish and free-range eggs. Local and seasonal vegetables are prioritised, and milk is 100% Scottish. Over the last 3 years the service has worked with suppliers to increase the spend on Scottish produce (66.8% of the fruit and vegetables, more than 80% of meat and 99.3% of dairy are Scottish).

¹ [UK Climate Change Committee – The Sixth Carbon Budget – The UK Path to Net Zero \(cf Table 1.1\)](#)

- 4.5.3 Vegan diets are treated as a special dietary requirement. Therefore, when a pupil indicates a vegan menu as part of the special diet process, a vegan meal will be produced daily through that route.
- 4.5.4 To promote healthier choices and encourage pupils to increase their consumption of fruit, vegetables and salad items, freshly prepared fruit pots/ fruit platters are now on offer. Many schools have a salad bar where pupils can help themselves. These have been very popular with pupils, showing a significant increase in the amount of salad and vegetables being consumed.
- 4.5.5 Menus are reviewed annually to continue to ensure sustainable options are available. As part of the new menu (launched in April 2023) the catering service implemented several positive developments including a decrease in processed meats, an increase in plant based and vegetarian products, a focus on cooking recipes from fresh ingredients, including sauces with hidden vegetables, and an increase in seasonal vegetable side dishes.
- 4.5.6 The catering team started a [cooking school](#) for catering staff last year, which includes a cookery session focussing on vegetarian and vegan dishes, as well as sessions on ingredient provenance.
- 4.5.7 Kitchen staff only cook based on the number of pre-ordered meals to minimise food waste, and waste generated during the cooking is monitored by the kitchen supervisor.
- 4.5.8 The Council is also working with the [Guardians of Grub](#) who offer educational resources on food waste reduction and actively promotes the Veg Power campaign².
- 4.5.9 The Council Catering manager is the current chair of ASSIST FM, a non-profit association for caterers in Scotland. An initiative led by ASSIST FM was to pull together a national recipe book for school dishes to be used across all local authorities. A piece of research has then been commissioned to analyse the carbon impact of a dozen of key dishes in the recipe book, helping to inform menu design and identify simple swaps that can reduce the environmental impact of the meals.
- 4.6 The Plant-Based treaty is also calling for more local food growing initiatives. Edinburgh Growing Together is a project delivered by [Edible Estates](#) and funded by the Council and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which aims at increasing the number of community growing projects on Council housing land, and improve existing ones. A lot of this work is conducted by Growing Youth, a social enterprise that educates young people in horticulture and construction.
- 4.7 Since Edinburgh publicly signed up to the Plant-Based treaty campaign in January 2023, active efforts were made to communicate around it to amplify the Council impact:

² The catering service have become the first authority in Scotland to partner with VegPower! an initiative to promote the consumption of more vegetables in primary school age pupils (15% increase in veg purchasing over this period).

- 4.7.1 In January, the Council leader wrote to Scottish Ministers to encourage the Scottish Government to endorse the call for a Plant-based treaty.
 - 4.7.2 In March, the Council leader participated in the [Eurocities Food Cities campaign](#), encouraging all European cities to follow Edinburgh's example and endorse the call for a Plant-based Treaty.
 - 4.7.3 In April, the Communications team has promoted a webinar co-organised by the Plant-Based Treaty team on its internal communication channel, Newsbeat. The webinar was titled "What if Edinburgh and Stockholm went vegan?"³, presented by Dr Joseph Poore, Researcher at the University of Oxford and IPCC contributing author. Over 1,000 people from 30 different countries registered for the event, including Councillors from 46 UK Councils.
 - 4.7.4 In August, Edinburgh Libraries organised 'Family fun days' across the city, at Sighthill Library one of the participating stalls focussed on the Plant-based treaty campaign.
 - 4.7.5 In October, the Central library hosted an in-person open session with "[Plant Based Treaty – A sustainable tomorrow](#)".
 - 4.7.6 Later in October, Kirkliston library delivered workshops on what libraries have to offer to two groups of 50 local teachers from the five cluster primary schools and the secondary school at a Learning Festival (in-service day) and has promoted the libraries borrowable vegan collection as part of this presentation – highlighting links to healthy eating and environmental issues.
 - 4.7.7 In November, at least seven libraries hosted a promotional book display celebrating World Vegan Day, and others promoted it via their social media channels. The vegan collection of e-books and e-magazines was also promoted on the homepage of [Libby](#), Edinburgh's digital library. [An article](#) was posted on Tales of One City, the libraries blog, to mark the day, and shared by the Council social media channels.
- 4.8 The Council has sought advice from the Food Standards Agency for Scotland and will continue to take expert advice to develop adequate messaging that is inclusive and takes into account poverty issues and Scottish dietary challenges. The Council has also engaged with the Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group and recognises that further work needs to be done to engage with the wider farming and business sector to ensure Scottish farmers are supported and public awareness is raised on the benefits of buying and supporting local producers when meat is consumed.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 In line with the Good Food Nation Act, local authorities will be expected to publish a Good Food Nation plan by 2025. The Council will continue to engage with the Good Food Nation team in the Scottish Government to ensure alignment of messaging. An update on wider food-related work will be brought to Policy & Sustainability

³ Slides and recording are available online at the following link: <https://plantbasedtreaty.org/edinburgh-and-stockholm/>

Committee in March 2024. This will set out how the sustainable food work in the city will be taken forward in line with new Good Food Nation duties.

- 5.2 Subject to approval by the Policy & Sustainability Committee, actions listed in the plan will be implemented and progress will be reported as part of future sustainable food progress reports.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 Action A8 on the use of a carbon labelling tool for food served in Heriot-Watt University venues will be part-funded (50%) from existing corporate sustainability budget resources. This amounts to £2.5k for a one-year licence. All other actions in this plan will be implemented using existing resources.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment was undertaken and can be found on the [online IIA directory](#). Some of the key considerations are summarized below.
- 7.2 Ethical veganism is a protected belief under the Equalities Act 2010, and is afforded the same legal protection as age, disability, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. As such, efforts to make venues vegan-friendly are in line with diversity and inclusion objectives. A plant-rich diet is also generally more inclusive in terms of cultural and religious preferences, and a coalition of interfaith leaders had called for a Plant-Based Treaty ahead of COP26 in 2021⁴.
- 7.3 Oxford University research published in the Lancet Planetary Health⁵ has revealed that in countries like the UK, adopting a vegan, vegetarian, or flexitarian diet could slash food bill by up to one-third.
- 7.4 Cooking with fresh ingredients from scratch (cf. Actions A1) and reducing food waste (cf. actions FW1, FW2, FW3 and FW4) further reduces food bills.
- 7.5 Research from The Food Foundation⁶ also found that more healthy foods are in average over twice as expensive per calorie as less healthy foods, in particular fruit and vegetables. The report also states that plant-based alternatives to chicken are approximately 27% more expensive than chicken breast. However, “canned chickpeas, a less processed plant-based alternative to meat, not only came out as the cheapest of all options but also scored well across a range of different health indicators with comparable greenhouse gas emissions to the plant-based chicken alternatives.” Therefore, careful attention should be brought to ensure that messages better promote pulses as an affordable, healthy, and sustainable alternative to meat.
- 7.6 Eating lots of red meat (such as beef, lamb and pork) and processed meats (meat products such as sausages and ham) increases the risk of bowel cancer. According to Food Standards Scotland, adults should eat no more than 70g a day, which is the

⁴ <https://plantbasedtreaty.org/interfaith-letter/>

⁵ Marco Springmann, Michel Clark, Mike Rayner, Peter Scarborough. 2021. “[The global and regional costs of healthy and sustainable dietary patterns: a modelling study](#)”

⁶ Source: [The Broken Plate 2023, The Food Foundation](#)

same as around 2 slices of roast meat⁷. As such, a balanced diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables, in line with the [Eatwell Guide](#), is beneficial to health.

- 7.7 Most of the crops we grow goes straight to farmed animals, not humans⁸. Any increase in plant-rich diets means more food directly available and therefore less food insecurity and world hunger globally.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 Food systems are a key driver of the climate and nature crisis (see more background in report listed at 10.1), and therefore taking action on food is essential to contribute to achieve Edinburgh's sustainability objectives. Sustainable food systems are central to achieving the three key priorities of the Council Business Plan: end poverty, work to deliver a net zero city by 2030, and create good places to live and work.
- 8.2 A [detailed analysis of UK diets](#) involving 55,000 participants led by Oxford University and published in Nature food in July 2023 found that, in average, plant-based diets resulted in 75% less greenhouse gas emissions and land use than diets in which more than 100g of meat a day was eaten. Plant-based diets also cut the destruction of wildlife by an average of 66% and water use by 54%. The article concludes that "dietary shifts away from animal-based foods can make a substantial contribution to reduction of the UK environmental footprint. Uncertainty due to region of origin and methods of food production do not obscure these differences between diet groups and should not be a barrier to policy action aimed at reducing animal-based food consumption."
- 8.3 Diets rich in plants and pulses not only have a low carbon footprint, but they also have co-benefits for public health, and can help restore nature and biodiversity⁹. According to the [Food for the Planet toolkit](#), 0.5 kgCO_{2e} could be saved per meal switched to reflect a more sustainable diet¹⁰.
- 8.4 According to Dr. Joseph Poore's research², the same amount of emissions as those generated by 532,000 cars would be avoided if the entire population of Edinburgh went vegan. Furthermore, an area the size of the Lake District National Park could be rewilded.
- 8.5 Reducing food waste has been identified by the [Project Drawdown](#) research project as the 3rd most effective solution (out of 80) in tackling climate change. A third of the food raised is wasted and the food we waste contributes to roughly 8% of total anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. Plant-rich diets rank 4th.

⁷ Source: Food Standards Scotland. <https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/consumers/healthy-eating/health-wellbeing/managing-health-issues>

⁸ Livestock consume [77% of all soy](#), and [a fifth](#) of all water consumed globally. Livestock takes up nearly [80% of global agricultural land](#).

⁹ Agriculture is the leading cause of river pollution in England and the waste from intensive livestock operations has a profound impact on river health. As such, shrinking intensive livestock operations is an important part of wildlife recovery in the UK. Source: <https://www.foodfortheplanet.org.uk/>

¹⁰ This calculation is based on the current UK average plate and compared with a climate-friendly meal defined for these purposes as 25% less meat, and two portions of UK fruit and veg per meal. Source: <https://www.foodfortheplanet.org.uk/toolkit/>

8.6 According to the [Food for the Planet toolkit](#), 34 tonnes of CO_{2e} could be saved per year per hectare used for community food growing.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

9.1 There are reputational risks when taking action around diets as this often seen as a threat to the 'freedom to eat'. Therefore, careful attention should be brought to ensure that messages are evidence-based, promote health benefits, do not push people into food poverty, and do not promote unhealthy vegan substitutes.

10. Background reading/external references

10.1 [Endorsement of Plant-based treaty – Response to Motion by Councillor Burgess - 17 January 2023](#)

10.2 [Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration](#)

10.3 [Growing Locally, Edinburgh's Food Growing Strategy 2021-2026](#)

10.4 [Edible Edinburgh website](#)

10.5 [Food Standards Scotland - Eatwell Guide](#)

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Plant-Based treaty action plan

Appendix 2 – Integrated Impact Assessment

Appendix 1 – Plant-Based Treaty Action Plan

Action	Topic	Action	Lead organisation	Timescale
A1	Awareness raising and capacity building	Organise a cooking lesson focussing on cooking with plant-based food.	Edinburgh Community Food	By Q4 2024
A2	Awareness raising and capacity building	Continue to actively promote the Veg Power campaign.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering, Food & Health), Edinburgh Community Food	On-going
A3	Awareness raising and capacity building	Deliver interventions in schools to raise awareness around the environmental impact of food.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering, Food & Health)	2023-24
A4	Awareness raising and capacity building	Ensure staff involved in the preparation and service of meals are suitably trained on cultural and medical diets, including training to highlight the wide variety of vegan and vegetarian recipes already on the Council's menus.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering)	On-going
A5	Awareness raising and capacity building	Meet with the Better Food Foundation to explore ways to increase uptake of plant-based and vegetarian options.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering), The University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh International Conference Centre, Better Food Foundation	Q1 2024
A6	Awareness raising and capacity building	Celebrate World Vegan Day and ensure city wide library participation.	City of Edinburgh Council (Libraries)	Annually (1/11)
A7	Awareness raising and capacity building	Develop a leaflet on low carbon, sustainable food, as well as information on healthy diets.	City of Edinburgh Council, Edible Edinburgh	Q4 2024
A8	Awareness raising and capacity building	Pilot a carbon labelling tool for food for Heriot-Watt University venues and consider rolling out to further Council venues based on lessons learned, subject to future budget.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering, Food & Health)	Q2 2024
A9	Awareness raising and capacity building	Mark Veganuary in the Council office buildings by promoting a vegan dish of the week throughout January.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering, Communications)	Q1 2024 and annually
A10	Awareness raising and capacity building	Raise awareness on the environmental impacts of food and benefits of plant-based diets by promoting events and organising talks, online webinars and/or lunch and learn sessions.	City of Edinburgh Council (Libraries, Communications)	On-going

Action	Topic	Action	Lead organisation	Timescale
A11	Awareness raising and capacity building	Share resources on reducing the environmental impact of food to partners (menu ideas, reports, case studies, training resources etc).	City of Edinburgh Council (Policy & Insight)	Q3 2023
A12	Awareness raising and capacity building	Organise a session for the new Assembly Rooms' Catering Panel to: - Share best practice and resources on ways caterers can reduce food-related emissions - Promote Edinburgh's endorsement of the Plant-Based Treaty and encourage caterers to increase availability of plant-based options	City of Edinburgh Council (Policy & Insight, Culture & Wellbeing)	Q1 2024
A13	Awareness raising and capacity building	Add carbon emissions to printed menus for outlets / events at the University of Edinburgh, with guidance on how these relate to a person's average daily emissions.	University of Edinburgh	2023-24 (Completed for 4 key outlets, more to follow in 2024)
A14	Awareness raising and capacity building	Ensure plant-based food options are available at Creative Carbon Scotland events/conferences as set out in their policy.	Creative Carbon Scotland	On-going
A15	Awareness raising and capacity building	Share relevant resources about plant-based and sustainable food practices in Creative Carbon Scotland communications and work with the organisations they support.	Creative Carbon Scotland	On-going
A16	Awareness raising and capacity building	Engage with the Edinburgh International Conference Centre to learn from sustainability practices implemented.	City of Edinburgh Council, Edinburgh International Conference Centre	Q1-Q3 2024
A17	Awareness raising and capacity building	Organise catering staff training with the Food for Life Scotland team about seasonality, provenance, and the Food for Life Served Here award held by the Council.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering), Food for Life Scotland	On-going
FW1	Food waste reduction	Promote education around food waste in schools (e.g. based on Zero Waste Scotland, Guardians of Globe's resources etc.).	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering, Food & Health)	On-going
FW2	Food waste reduction	Work with venues to offer locally sourced food and reduce food waste at events organised by the Chamber of Commerce, in line with the new Sustainable Events Policy.	Chamber of Commerce	On-going
FW3	Food waste reduction	Explore options to allow pupils to take any fresh (uncooked) left-overs from the counter back home at the end of the day to reduce food waste.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering, Food & Health)	On-going
FW4	Food waste reduction	Share and implement best practice around food waste where appropriate.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering, Food & Health)	On-going

Action	Topic	Action	Lead organisation	Timescale
P1	Increased provision of plant-based food	Ensure all food & drink provided at meetings and events hosted by the Council include plant-based options, and where possible, sourcing sustainable local ingredients.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering)	On-going
P2	Increased provision of plant-based food	Ensure Council offices' restaurants and cafes always include plant-based options including plant-based milk.	City of Edinburgh Council (Catering)	On-going
P3	Increased provision of plant-based food	Pilot healthy plant-based snacks when delivering activities with young people in libraries in line with procurement guidance.	City of Edinburgh Council (Libraries)	Q2 2024
P4	Increased provision of plant-based food	Engage with public and private sector food providers and retailers to provide more plant-based options in their catering and instore provision to support healthy, sustainable diets.	Edible Edinburgh University and College Sector, NHS Lothian, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce	By Q4 2024
P5	Increased provision of plant-based food	When re-tendering for food concession contracts under Culture, specify that plant-based options are available.	City of Edinburgh Council (Culture & Wellbeing)	When new contracts come up
P6	Increased provision of plant-based food	Ensure the sustainability section of the tender specifications for the Assembly Rooms Catering Panel includes plant-based options, and where possible, provided by a caterer paying the Real Living Wage and sourcing sustainable local ingredients.	City of Edinburgh Council (Culture & Wellbeing)	Next contract
I1	Influence and leadership	Write a letter to all of the City of Edinburgh Council's sister and twin cities (where appropriate), as well as to metro mayors to encourage them to endorse the Plant-Based treaty.	City of Edinburgh Council (Council Leader and Lord Provost)	Q1 2024
I2	Influence and leadership	Write a letter to the First Minister to encourage the Scottish Government to support the Plant-Based Treaty.	City of Edinburgh Council (Council Leader)	Q1 2023 (complete)
I3	Influence and leadership	Write a case study in collaboration with one of the Green Arts Initiative members on their efforts to promote more sustainable food.	Creative Carbon Scotland	Q2 2024
I4	Influence and leadership	Engage with the further and higher education sector in Edinburgh on endorsing the Plant-Based Treaty (in full/sections/themes) and increasing the range and scope of plant-based food on offer in their catering provision.	City of Edinburgh Council (Policy & Insight)	On-going
I5	Influence and leadership	Engage with the food industry directly to encourage sign-up to the Edinburgh Climate Compact and to the Plant-Based treaty.	Edible Edinburgh, Climate Forum, Chamber of Commerce	On-going

Action	Topic	Action	Lead organisation	Timescale
16	Influence and leadership	Develop customised sustainability checklists for Council cultural venues' clients, promoters, and artists.	City of Edinburgh Council (Policy & Insight, Culture & Wellbeing)	Q2 2024
17	Influence and leadership	Explore how Forever Edinburgh can enhance the city's reputation as a leading 'sustainable food' destination.	City of Edinburgh Council (Business Growth and Inclusion)	On-going
18	Influence and leadership	Celebrate, promote and continue to achieve the Food for Life Served Here Bronze award for Edinburgh's school meals, an independently assessed award which recognises Edinburgh's commitment to healthy and sustainable diets through freshly prepared meals made with seasonal ingredients and promotion of local suppliers and food provenance.	City of Edinburgh Council (catering)	On-going

Appendix 2 – Integrated Impact Assessment – Summary Report final

Each of the numbered sections below must be completed
Please state if the IIA is interim or final

1. Title of proposal

Plant Based Treaty Action Plan

2. What will change as a result of this proposal?

- Increased awareness of plant-based diets and their environmental impact
- Increased availability of plant-based food
- Increased awareness about what the Council already does across our services.

3. Briefly describe public involvement in this proposal to date and planned

The Plant-based treaty action plan reflects many actions that are already ongoing, as well as action to raise awareness of plant-based diets. As a result, engagement to date has focused on external partners and Council services, establishing the engagement has focused on what's already being done within the city and what else is needed.

4. Is the proposal considered strategic under the Fairer Scotland Duty? No

5. Date of IIA 11th December 2023

6. Who was present at the IIA? Identify facilitator, lead officer, report writer and any employee representative present and main stakeholder (e.g. Council, NHS)

Name	Job Title	Date of IIA training
Sarah Feldman	Senior Officer – Climate Change and Sustainability	05/11/2020
Claire Marion	Lead change and delivery officer – carbon management	

Name	Job Title	Date of IIA training
Christine Downie	Strategy Manager – Climate and Sustainability	January 2023
Eleanor Cunningham	Lead Policy and Insight Officer	May 2019
Laura Nisbet	Development Officer - Food and Health	
Christopher Ross	Catering Operations Manager	

7. Evidence available at the time of the IIA

Evidence	Available – detail source	Comments: what does the evidence tell you with regard to different groups who may be affected and to the environmental impacts of your proposal
Data on populations in need		
Data on service uptake/access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) BBC Good Food Nation Survey 2) YouGov survey 3) Stewart, Cristina et al., 2021. Trends in UK meat consumption: analysis of data from years 1–11 of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey rolling programme. The Lancet Planetary health 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The BBC GFN Survey found 8% of children aged 5-16 are following a vegan diet, and of those who don't, 15% would like to. 13% of children are vegetarian and around one in five of children who are not currently vegetarian would like to be. 2) According to YouGov, 14% of Brits are flexitarian, 5% are vegetarian, 2% are vegan (July 2023). 3) Paper listed in 3) provides a lower estimate: 4.5% of the population as of 2018/19.
Data on socio-economic disadvantage e.g. low income, low wealth, material deprivation, area deprivation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Marco Springmann, Michel Clark, Mike Rayner, Peter Scarborough. 2021. “The global and regional costs of healthy and sustainable dietary patterns: a modelling study” 2) The Food Foundation – The Broken Plate 2023, 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This research revealed that in countries like the UK, adopting a vegan, vegetarian, or flexitarian diet could slash food bill by up to one-third. 2) This report states that “More sustainable plant-based alternatives to chicken are approximately 27% more expensive than chicken breast.” However, “canned chickpeas, a less processed plant-based alternative to meat, not only came out as the cheapest of all options but also scored well across a range of different health indicators with comparable

	The State of the Nation's Food System	GHGEs to the plant-based chicken alternatives. There is a real opportunity in the UK to champion and better promote pulses as an affordable, healthy and sustainable alternative to meat.”
Data on equality outcomes	Interfaith Leaders Urge UN's COP26 to Adopt the Plant Based Treaty to Avert Climate Catastrophe - Plant Based Treaty	Ethical veganism is a protected belief under the Equalities Act 2010. A plant-rich diet is also generally more inclusive in terms of cultural and religious preferences, and a coalition of interfaith leaders had called for a Plant-Based Treaty ahead of COP26 in 2021.
Research/literature evidence	Health: 1) Food Standards Scotland website 2) The Eatwell guide (NHS) The Vegan Diet (NHS) 3) Watling, C.Z., Schmidt, J.A., Dunneram, Y. et al. Risk of cancer in regular and low meat-eaters, fish-eaters, and vegetarians: a prospective analysis of UK Biobank participants. BMC Med 20, 73 (2022). 4) Here's a great way to teach kids about climate change: Start with the food they eat	1) Eating lots of red meat and processed meats increases the risk of bowel cancer. According to Food Standards Scotland, adults should eat no more than 70g a day, which is the same as around 2 slices of roast meat. 2) “The Eatwell Guide applies to most of us, whether we eat meat or are vegetarian.” “With good planning and an understanding of what makes up a healthy, balanced vegan diet, you can get all the nutrients your body needs. If you do not plan your diet properly, you could miss out on essential nutrients, such as calcium, iron, vitamin B12, iodine and selenium.” 3) Vegetarians have 14% lower cancer risk than meat-eaters 4) Article highlighting the potential for choices around food to be a way to empower young people, as it is an area in their lives that they can influence in relation to tackling the climate crisis.
Public/patient/client experience information	1) Can carbon labels encourage green food choices? Swen J. Kühne*† Ester Reijnen† Lea Laasner Vogt† Melanie Baumgartner Applied Cognitive Sciences, Psychological Institute, School of Applied Psychology, Zurich, Switzerland	1) The labeling conditions resulted in lower overall CO2e emissions, the purchase of more green food products and fewer red food products than in the control condition. (...) The carbon Traffic Light Label is therefore a promising intervention to help consumers to not only choose more environmentally friendly foods, but also make a significant contribution to the fight against climate change.

Evidence of inclusive engagement of people who use the service and involvement findings	Engagement sessions held with catering and food and health staff to understand service delivery and existing experience for end users	Engagement held to understand food practices within schools, including menu selection options for children, including that a child can always select a vegan option as a special dietary option. Waste prevention practices are in place through enabling parents and children to take uncooked leftovers home at the end of the week.
Evidence of unmet need	1) BBC Good Food Nation Survey	See above – <i>data on uptake</i> and proportion of vegetarians and vegans in the population
Good practice guidelines	The Plant-Based Eatwell guide	This guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute individualised medical advice. This has been produced by Plant-Based Health Professionals UK and is not an official UK Government or NHS guideline.
Carbon emissions generated/reduced data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Our World in Data - Environmental impacts of food 2) Detailed analysis of UK diets, led by Oxford University and published in Nature food in July 2023 3) Dr Joseph Poore research – Director of the Oxford Martin Programme on Food Sustainability Analytics at Oxford University 4) Project Drawdown 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Graphs showing where greenhouse gas emissions occur across the supply chain. It shows that CO2 emissions from most plant-based products are as much as 10-50 times lower than most animal-based products. Factors such as transport distance, retail, packaging or specific farm methods are often small compared to importance of food type. 2) This study found that, in average, plant-based diets resulted in 75% less greenhouse gas emissions and land use than diets in which more than 100g of meat a day was eaten. Plant-based diets also cut the destruction of wildlife by an average of 66% and water use by 54%. The article concludes that “dietary shifts away from animal-based foods can make a substantial contribution to reduction of the UK environmental footprint. Uncertainty due to region of origin and methods of food production do not obscure these differences between diet groups and should not be a barrier to policy action aimed at reducing animal-based food consumption.” 3) The same amount of emissions as those generated by 532,000 cars would be avoided if the entire population of Edinburgh went vegan. Furthermore, an area the size of the Lake District National Park could be rewilded. 4) Reducing food waste has been identified by the Project Drawdown research

		project as the 3 rd most effective solution (out of 80) in tackling climate change. Plant-rich diets rank 4 th .
Environmental data	The EAT-Lancet report	Diets rich in plants and pulses not only have a low carbon footprint, but they also have co-benefits for public health, and can help restore nature and biodiversity ¹¹ . The EAT-Lancet report is the first full scientific review of what constitutes a healthy diet from a sustainable food system, and which actions can support food system transformation. The planetary health diet emphasizes a plant-forward diet where whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes comprise a greater proportion of foods consumed. Meat and dairy constitute important parts of the diet but in significantly smaller proportions than whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes. Reduction in food waste globally is a critical part of achieving a planetary healthy diet.
Risk from cumulative impacts		
Other (please specify)		
Additional evidence required		

8. In summary, what impacts were identified and which groups will they affect?

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>Positive A diet high in plant-based foods, which contain pulses, legumes and fresh fruit and vegetable can contribute positively to human health, through increased consumption of fibre and lowering of disease risk associated with red and processed meat consumption. Actions that increase the availability and awareness of healthy plant-based dietary options will support improvements in population health.</p>	All

¹¹ Agriculture is the leading cause of river pollution in England and the waste from intensive livestock operations has a profound impact on river health. As such, shrinking intensive livestock operations is an important part of wildlife recovery in the UK. Source:

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>Increasing a range of plant-based options at public events would increase the range of food options available to those from a variety of faith backgrounds who do consume certain types of meat. This has the potential benefit of increasing accessibility by having appropriate foods at events.</p> <p>Raising awareness of the environmental impact of different dietary options can be empowering for young people, as it is an area of their life where they have more ability to make their own choices to tackle the climate crisis and hence reduce eco-anxiety.</p> <p>Some of the actions within the plan which have positive impact are already taking place and therefore don't represent a material change in process, activity or service as a result of the Plant-based Action Plan. Examples of these actions include the cooking school for caterers, which is providing a training and upskilling opportunity for Council catering staff.</p> <p>Veganism is a protected characteristic. Vegans can be the target of discrimination and harassment. A large organisation like the City of Edinburgh Council expressing public support for plant-based diets can help normalise these diets and reduce sources of discrimination.</p>	<p>Faith-based communities</p> <p>All, especially young people</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>People following a vegan lifestyle</p>
<p>Negative Overall, as most actions in the plan are around raising awareness of dietary options or increasing the range of choices amongst available food options, minimal negative impacts on population groups were identified.</p> <p>Awareness raising materials on plant-based diets and food options need to be inclusive, recognising the higher costs of certain plant-based alternatives. Whilst plant-based alternatives such as chickpeas can be more affordable, producing fresh dishes from scratch may not be possible for those housed in temporary accommodation with limited facilities. Similarly, individuals may not have the necessary skills to produce meals from scratch.</p> <p>Awareness raising materials promoting a solely plant-based diet could result in people adopting diets that lack appropriate micro-nutrients if due regard isn't given to this</p>	<p>Individuals on low-income, those in temporary sheltered accommodation</p> <p>All populations, particular risk to elderly who are a population already at greater risk of malnutrition due to often lower intake of food with aging.</p>

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
Certain plant-based products, such as meat alternatives, can be more expensive than the meat equivalent. Promotion of a plant-based diets could therefore add to stigma around food poverty.	Those on low incomes or receiving benefits

Environment and Sustainability including climate change emissions and impacts	Affected populations
<p>Positive The environmental benefits of consuming more plant-based products are set out clearly in the evidence table above, covering reduced levels of greenhouse gas emissions from food production and consumption, reduced water consumption, as well as reducing land use and therefore potentially associated negative biodiversity impacts.</p> <p>Reducing food waste is a key theme within the plan, which also has associated carbon and land-use savings. The key actions on sharing leftover, uncooked food from schools are building on what is already taking place.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p>
<p>Negative</p> <p>No negative environmental impacts of increasing availability of or awareness of plant-based dietary options were identified.</p>	N/A

Economic	Affected populations
<p>Positive</p> <p>Plant-based foods can be more affordable and raising awareness of plant-based meal planning or recipes could help people reduce food costs.</p> <p>The plan also contains actions to encourage purchasing a wide range of locally produced foods. Whilst locally produced meat does not have a notably lower carbon benefit than purchasing plant-based foods (see evidence tables and graphs), messaging and council procurement that supports use of all local ingredients provides local economic benefits to Scottish rural communities.</p>	<p>Those on low income/in receipt of benefits</p> <p>Rural communities</p>
<p>Negative</p>	

9. Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors and if so how will equality, human rights including children's rights, environmental and sustainability issues be addressed? No

10. Consider how you will communicate information about this policy/ service change to children and young people and those affected by sensory impairment, speech impairment, low level literacy or numeracy, learning difficulties or English as a second language? Please provide a summary of the communications plan.

Developing awareness raising communications is one of the key actions within this plan. When developing Council social media posts attention will be given to:

- making the language accessible to readers with low levels of literacy skills
- considering the accessibility of the material to visually impaired users by avoiding the use of complex graphics and providing alternative text for all images and graphics that are included

The ensure information is accessible to all, a leaflet will also be produced, so information is communicated in non-digital formats, as well as online.

11. Is the plan, programme, strategy or policy likely to result in significant environmental effects, either positive or negative? If yes, it is likely that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will be required and the impacts identified in the IIA should be included in this. See section 2.10 in the Guidance for further information. No SEA required.

12. Additional Information and Evidence Required

If further evidence is required, please note how it will be gathered. If appropriate, mark this report as interim and submit updated final report once further evidence has been gathered.

13. Specific to this IIA only, what recommended actions have been, or will be, undertaken and by when? (these should be drawn from 7 – 11 above) Please complete:

Specific actions (as a result of the IIA which may include financial implications, mitigating actions and risks of cumulative impacts)	Who will take them forward (name and job title)	Deadline for progressing	Review date
Ensure messaging shared with schools that is passed on to the wider school community about sharing leftover school food is framed around avoiding food waste. This will help to avoid creating any stigma for families around accessing free food.	Laura Nisbet, Development Officer - Food and Health and Chris Ross, Catering Operations Manager	Ongoing	Q4 2024
Maintain proposed approach of exploring use of carbon-labelling on food in a university setting. Reaffirmed agreed approach of not expanding this measure into settings such as care homes	Claire Marion, Lead change and delivery officer – carbon management	N/A	N/A
Promotion of plant-based meals or recipes to focus on ingredients and options that are affordable and accessible to all	Christine Downie, Strategy Manager – Climate and Sustainability and Sarah Feldman, Senior Officer- Climate Change and Sustainability, in liaison with Edible Edinburgh partners	Q4 2024	Q4 2024
Ensure messaging and materials promoting a plant-based diet include sufficient information about how to make meals that include appropriate micro and macro nutrients from plant-based sources	Sarah Feldman, Claire Marion and Laura Nisbet	Q1 2024	Annually

14. Are there any negative impacts in section 8 for which there are no identified mitigating actions? No

15. How will you monitor how this proposal affects different groups, including people with protected characteristics?

Given the nature of the awareness raising activities in the action plan, monitoring is not deemed proportionate or feasible.

16. Sign off by Head of Service

Name : Gillie Severin, Head of Strategic Change and Delivery

Date : 19/12/2023

17. Publication

Completed and signed IIAs should be sent to:

integratedimpactassessments@edinburgh.gov.uk to be published on the

Council website www.edinburgh.gov.uk/impactassessments

Edinburgh Integration Joint Board/Health and Social Care

sarah.bryson@edinburgh.gov.uk to be published at

www.edinburghhsc.scot/the-ijb/integrated-impact-assessments/