

Right to Food (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Bill to incorporate the right to food into Scots law.

The consultation runs from 25 November 2021 to 16 February 2022.

All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer.

All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response.

Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded.

Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here:

[Consultation Document](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice which explains how my personal data will be used.

On the previous page we asked you if you are UNDER 12 YEARS old, and you responded Yes to this question.

If this is the case, we will have to contact your parent or guardian for consent.

If you are under 12 years of age, please put your contact details into the textbox. This can be your email address or phone number. We will then contact you and your parents to receive consent.

Otherwise please confirm that you are or are not under 12 years old.

No Response

About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation:

I am a Coordinator of a Food Pantry as well as being a Chef/tutor

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your Full Name or the name of your organisation. (Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

Pamela Louise Hepburn

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number.

We will not publish these details.

Aim and Approach - Note: All answers to the questions in this section may be published (unless your response is "not for publication").

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal to incorporate the right to food into Scots law?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I fully support the right for everyone to be able to access food and this should be in Scots law to protect the vulnerable. The Scottish government should be made accountable for making sure that the Scottish Government prioritises wellbeing of people & environment in decisions on the food system.

Q2. Do you think legislation is required, or are there other ways in which the proposed Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

Legislation is necessary to protect the right to food whatever party is in power and keep government focused and held to account if not delivering on this right to food.

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view on an independent statutory body being given responsibility for overseeing and reporting on progress towards realising the right to food?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

This is very important to make sure that the government is held to account in its obligations relating to this bill. Having an independent statutory body means that there is no conflict of interest and the main focus will be on making sure that they provide impartial and professional advice as well as recognising that a systems wide approach is paramount to protecting everyones right to food and making sure that the government meets its promises.

Q4. Should an independent body be given responsibility for overseeing and reporting on the right to food, do you think it should be:

A newly created body

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The whole food system has systemic failings and is not fit for purpose as it stands. A new body could start from scratch, looking at the whole food system and use this to create a body that will have the rights of food at its core. Working with other sectors and local government in order to make it work for all communities.

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view of enshrining a right to food into Scots law as a priority in advance of, and in a manner which is compatible with, any further Scottish Government legislation on wider human rights?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

It is very important that this right to food does not get lost or held up if bundled in with other rights. The right to food must be a priority for the Government and show its committed to protecting both its people and the planet and takes this obligation seriously for future generations.

Q6. Which of the following best expresses your view of placing responsibility for guaranteeing the right to food on the Scottish Government?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

This will mean that ultimately the Government has to address the growing levels of food insecurity. For too long now charities, food banks etc have had to take up the position of helping people in need, this has to be addressed in a modern society as no one should be without access to feed themselves or their family. It will also mean that the Government has to address the poor wages and job security for the catering industry, animal welfare and the environment. If we want to improve the overall standards, then the Government must be accountable for the health, wellbeing and environmental impact for Scotland.

Covid-19 Pandemic

Q7. What impact do you consider the effects of, and response to, the Covid-19 pandemic has had on the need for a right to food to be incorporated into Scots law?

Increased the need for the Bill

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Covid has highlighted the already existing challenges of the food system, but also the vulnerability of global supply. It should not just be charities and foodbanks that have to carry the responsibility for dealing with these issues, the Government has to look at the whole food system, how its failing and how we should be moving forward as a caring and responsible country, and take pride in how we address this issue for the people of Scotland, animal welfare, workers rights and the environment. Covid has brought to light the inequalities and health problems, including mental health, which if not properly addressed will only get worse. Benefits and wages need to be fairer and realistic so that people have a choice and ability to eat well and have access to food with dignity.

Financial Implications

Q8. Taking into account all those likely to be affected (including public sector bodies, businesses and individuals etc), is the proposed Bill likely to lead to:

a significant increase in costs

Please indicate where you would expect the impact identified to fall (including public sector bodies, businesses and individuals etc). You may also wish to suggest ways in which the aims of the Bill could be delivered more cost-effectively.

There will be costs involved in the Government and the public sector making changes, including the cost of setting up an independent body. Improving peoples health will save money for the NHS but this will have to be addressed by paying people better wages and job security or realistic benefits, giving access to better and healthier food options and education.

Although business will have higher costs incurred by this change, they should have more motivated and happier staff. It should be looked upon as a long term investment in the people, animals and environment of Scotland, not just a quick fix.

Equalities

Q9. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Positive

Please explain the reasons for your response. Where any negative impacts are identified, you may also wish to suggest ways in which these could be minimised or avoided.

There are certain groups in society that are vulnerable. They are more likely to work in lower wage professions, have health related issues, be reliant on unrealistic benefit systems and need the support of access to Foodbanks or other supportive organisations. Realistic ways of addressing these issues is paramount, looking at the long term view of improving the food system from the roots up. Having conversations with people at local level to understand the needs within the community.

Sustainability

Q10. In terms of assessing the proposed Bill's potential impact on sustainable development, you may wish to consider how it relates to the following principles:

- living within environmental limits
- ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- achieving a sustainable economy
- promoting effective, participative systems of governance
- ensuring policy is developed on the basis of strong scientific evidence.

With these principles in mind, do you consider that the Bill can be delivered sustainably?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response.

We have needed to address the impact of farming, fishing waste and pollution for a long time. This Bill, and the setting up of an Independent body, would actually mean that a serious consultation could be used to have a positive environmental impact, looking at innovative ideas for change and progression.

People having access to better wages and benefits, animal welfare, good farming and fishery practices and environmental awareness, will allow people to access better and healthier food, which in the long term make Scotland a healthier, happier and more sustainable country, and the initial costs will be an investment worth making.

Investing time and money in developing a policy fit for purpose will have strong scientific evidence to back it up, which will show that we are taking the whole food system failings seriously and not just trying to say the right things and tick the right boxes. Scotland has a chance here to show that it is a progressive and proactive society, seeing the benefits of focussing on its peoples health and happiness for the future generations.

General

Q11. Do you have any other additional comments or suggestions on the proposed Bill (which have not already been covered in any of your responses to earlier questions)?

I have two jobs within the Carrick Centre, Maybole, I am Food Pantry Coordinator and Chef/Tutor. Both of these roles highlight the need for the food system to be given a complete overhaul. Maybole is a socially deprived area and the Food Pantry was set up on an initial 6 month pilot scheme. Due to the nature of community work, the Pantry took a couple of months to set up, eating into our 6 month funding. The local community has been very positive about the Pantry and our membership is increasing every day. Due to bills increasing and job insecurity in the area, people are saying how appreciative they are for having access to this facility and how it has made a big difference to their lives. Unfortunately funding finishes at the end of March, just as we are getting going. We asked for an extension but that was turned down. The Carrick Centre Board are now trying to come up with funds to keep us going as they can see the benefits to the local population. With the talk of moving away from Foodbanks, some of the community are worried about how they are going to survive, especially with rising living costs. The Government needs to see this from the people using these organisations, they need to see the impact that worrying about food has not only on physical health but mental health too.

Teaching classes within the community also highlights the need for education relating to the purchasing, preparing, producing food as well as the reasons for eating a more sustainable diet. There is a great need for making access to healthy options but also giving access to non judgemental and realistic ways to feed yourself or family. Maybole has a huge farming community and there is a chance to open up discussions with the local population on cooking, farming, environmental improvements and I feel that if the Scottish Government shows its commitment to this Bill, it will open up a positive and creative way of making Scotland look at changing the whole food system which will not only improve its populations health and happiness, but also be responsible for safeguarding the human and animal rights of a caring country and the environmental impact on the planet as a whole.