

# 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".)

Politician (MSP/MP/peer/MEP/Councillor)

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).

Councillor Richard McCready

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.**

The Human Right to Food already exists in International Human Rights Law but it is clearly not effective domestically as people are still going hungry in Scotland in 2022. The Second UN Sustainable

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

Development Goal 'zero hunger by 2030' applies in Scotland as much as anywhere else in the world and in order to deliver this we need action by the Scottish and UK Governments. Enshrining the Right to Food in Scots Law will put the onus on the governments to act.

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 required. The current situation does not prevent hunger, food insecurity or food poverty and therefore a different approach is needed. The pandemic has shown that access to food is not fairly distributed, as we say at the start of the pandemic some went hungry whilst others stockpiled 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.**

A statutory body would ensure a holistic approach to the food system. This would be an approach which would look at things like the food supply and distribution system including issues around food insecurity. As well as issues around low wages and poverty and also the links between poor health and lack of good nutrition.

A statutory body would provide scrutiny and promote joined up thinking across government and other public bodies about food policy.

Such a body would hold the Scottish Government and other public bodies to account and would at the very least encourage better thinking about the outcomes of policy decisions with regard to food poverty.

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.**

I think that there is a need for a new body which would have a very clear focus on the Right to Food. That clear focus would assist and would allow the new body to hold the Scottish Government and other public bodies to account.

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.**

As I have previously said the current situation clearly does not work, people are going hungry in Scotland in 2022 and Food Bank use is at record levels. Whilst the Scottish Government has suggested that it might legislate in this area there has been no clear timescale for legislation and in its absence this proposal by

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?

Rhoda Grant is important . Evidence makes clear that there needs to be a focus on the Right to Food and Food Poverty now not at some indeterminate time in the future.

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.**

The Scottish Government has many responsibilities which mean that it should be taking an interest in this area of policy. This is not to allow the UK Government to abdicate responsibility for its approach which has led to a disgraceful increase in food insecurity.

There has been a huge increase in charitable or third sector interventions but these deal with the symptoms of the problem not its causes. The Trussell Trust has seen a 74% increase in food parcels over the five years up to 2019-2020.

All levels of Government, UK, Scottish and local, have a role to play but it is clear to me that the Scottish Government should be the focus of this work.

This having been said I was pleased when Dundee City Council agreed to my proposal to support this Bill and the Right to Food in 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.**

The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the vulnerability of the UK's food system to shocks. The pandemic exposed a rise in food insecurity. The pandemic exposed the already appalling levels of food poverty in a relatively rich country like Scotland.

## 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:

no overall change 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**

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:

**the Bill could be delivered more cost-effectively.**

Overall, I think that the cost impact of this may well be neutral. There will possibly be increased in public spending to ensure the Right to Food in Scots Law. Those extra costs would be balanced by lower costs in other areas of the public sector, with for example, improved nutrition leading to lower spending by the NHS to deal with the consequences of poor nutrition.

## 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.**

Food poverty is a consequence of inequality. Poverty and income inequality are the main drivers for food poverty. Food poverty is more likely to impact on the BAME community. There is a link between food poverty and disability and between food bank use and disability. There are also issues around access to food for people with disabilities and people with mobility problems. There are also issues around access to food in rural areas.

## 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.**

Access to healthy, locally sourced and culturally appropriate food has the potential to lead to a sustainable food system. This could lead to a healthier population. A more joined up approach to food policy could improve the environment for example by reducing food waste and limiting the distance travelled by food.

## 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)?

First and foremost food is a human right. Supporting this Bill would make this clear.

It is disgraceful that people are still going hungry in Scotland in 2022. We often hear about the Sustainable Development Goals and sometimes think that this is only applicable in the developing world but Sustainable Development Goal 2 of 'Zero Hunger by 2030' applies in Scotland as much as elsewhere.

I am a member of the wider co-operative movement and recognise that this movement developed in the UK to make sure that people had access to good quality, unadulterated food. In the twenty-first century I support the co-operative movement's support for the Right to Food.

I am pleased to see that a recent poll showed that 81% of Scots support the Right to Food being enshrined in Scots Law.