

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.

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Other (e.g. clubs, local groups, groups of individuals, etc.)

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what the organisation does, its experience and expertise in the subject-matter of the consultation, and how the view expressed in the response was arrived at (e.g. whether it is the view of particular office-holders or has been approved by the membership as a whole).

Granite City Good Food is Aberdeen City's Sustainable Food Places Partnership. Including a wide variety of partners, and hosted by a local third sector organisation, Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE), Granite City Good Food creates systems change towards sustainable food, in accordance with, and supported by, the widely used Sustainable Food Places initiative and framework. For this response, a call for views was put out amongst partners, and this response is the collation of those views, alongside relevant insights to emphasise from previous government consultation responses by the partnership and partners.

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).

Granite City Good Food

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

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.

Fundamentally, legislation is an essential recognition of the food systems action taking place across Scotland and legislation on the right to food should be a commitment to furthering and bettering the sustainability of the food system, whilst ensuring a level of governmental/authoritative accountability for the delivery of the key goals and objectives around realising a right to food, creating a fairer food system, and creating sustainable food systems change.

Legislation should become a mechanism to enshrine the right to food fully and ensure that there is a consistent focus on progress wherever it comes to debate and action over the food system in general, and particularly food support with dignity, and cash-first approaches. Legislation is also one of the only mechanisms through which the right to food can be recognised as a priority, and through which it can be brought forward at the earliest possible opportunity, regardless of government or administration, and/or should there be any change to those in relevant positions as part of legislative implementation.

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.

In alignment with views submitted by partners towards various recent government consultations on food (and in direct alignment with the recommendations of the Scottish Food Coalition), Granite City Good Food is fully supportive of an independent statutory body to oversee the right to food, in the shape of an independent commission on food. This commission should have a remit which ensures the sufficient coverage of good food nation plans, as well as administering and ensuring a right to food, as well as tracking and overseeing the implementation of the right to food and holding relevant areas of government to account over it.

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

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Fundamentally, the responsibility of the implementation of the right to food should be sufficiently high level and ensure that reporting on the right to food is accurate and reflective, and one that ensures accountability is recognised, progress monitored, and that there is no recession of the ethos of the right to food

As indicated by the Scottish Food Coalition, the body created to have oversight of the right to food should be a new body; an independent commission on food ensuring alignment across the range of governmental action and policy pertaining to food- amongst which are the good food nation ambitions, ending the need for foodbanks etc.

Rather than expanding the competence of an existing body, a new body can take on the scale of requirements to address the worsening picture of food security across Scotland's communities. In 2020, CFINE (the host partner of Granite City Good Food in Aberdeen City) delivered over 67,000 food parcels- exemplifying the increase in scale of the fragility of food security. As one key pillar of the right to food,

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

ensuring the provision of a new, independent commission on food is something that can only be delivered by the scale of a new body.

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.

Where rights-based legislation is concerned, it is essential that the right to food is delivered at the earliest opportunity. Where this is compatible with other food-systems consultation outcomes (local food for everyone, ending the need for foodbanks, the good food nation etc.), then effort must be made to ensure neat alignment of the principles of each. However, as a rights-based piece of legislation, and one key element of longer-term governmental rights-based commitments, it is essential that this is prioritised. Furthermore, the ambition of the right to food must match that of the scale of similar rights-based legislation, such as which occurs in discussion around the UNCRC, through which consensus is evident and a transformative approach was committed to. Granite City Good Food acknowledges that food is at the heart of some of the deepest and most serious social, economic, and cultural issues in the food system, and believes that by placing food at the centre of ambition, the solutions can be, and are, identified and remedied.

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 right to food should become a flagship element of policy, which contributes to the overall picture of Scotland as a good food nation, should ensure a food system which guarantees dignity and access for all, and furthers the implementation of key approaches to ensuring social justice such as cash first. Across multiple competences and policy areas, the right to food relies on the responsibility of government to act in relevant areas, and government action is key to solving the key issues in the current food system. The public and third sector have long responded to local challenge in local food systems, and whilst this has been effective in our case, we recognise the risk of this becoming a "postcode lottery" (particularly as not all areas of Scotland are engaged in such a cross-cutting framework as Sustainable Food Places). Ensuring a joined-up and strategic approach is vital and also relies on the government leading by example. Furthermore, the approach taken should be, as previously mentioned, transformative and aspirational-ensuring a positive approach is taken and that the responsibility of implementation is fully funded, with consideration given to how this will impact various levels of practicality, local to national.

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

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?

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on food security, food access, and food sustainability, more generally. Food security has become increasingly fragile (67,000 emergency food parcels being delivered by CFINE, a marked increase year-on-year), the pandemic has emphasised the challenges facing food in the private sector, and emphasis on supply chain and food growing for livelihood has become an increasing focus of communities in context of the pandemic.

Further to this, organisations are finding an increased appetite for food skills, ensuring everyone has the basic transferring cooking skills essential to living healthily, and key strategic elements of food enjoyment have become more transparent, such as the emphasis on food growing as an opportunity.

The pandemic has also sharpened focus on the importance of food partnership as a delivery mechanism for driving positive change in the food system. By using partnership to increase the focus and centrality of food to so many other issues, there has been a sharp focus on the importance of food, and of the right to food consequently.

From a food business perspective, the pandemic has also impacted upon the ability to operate, and the sustainability of food business has become an increased priority, as has the emphasis on "shopping local", where this is accessible.

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:

some 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.

Where costs are concerned, this will inevitably lead to costs and budgetary commitments from government level. This may also result in additional costs to the wider public sector, businesses and third sector, however it is critical that this is not detrimental, and is enabled through government support. That said, and where the implementation of policy reflects that of rights-based legislation, this must be fully-funded and proper thought should be given to the practicality of funding implementation at all levels, where required. It is clear that the right to food must be relevantly high-level, and thus the highest cost implication should be on the government, as the key body for action.

On individuals, it is critical that this minimises the cost increase for the consumer. Ensuring that the right to food legislation does not result in costs passed onto the consumer must be also be prioritised in consideration of the ongoing cost of living crisis. Households are being significantly impacted upon by rising food costs, fuel costs, and rising inflation further worsened by the impact of changes to the welfare system and the continued affects of the pandemic on household budgets. It is critical that nutritional, healthy food should be accessible and affordable to all. Granite City Good Food's view is that healthy, tasty, affordable, and environmentally friendly food should be accessible to all, and hence it must be ensured that there is no increase in costs at the individual level, where this is a risk which can be minimised.

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.

Partners of Granite City Good Food regularly engage with those experiencing food insecurity, and multiple key projects exist around the increasing of food security. Granite City Good food is aware of the stigma and inequality around food access, and advocates for projects which take approaches ensuring dignity and increasing the emphasis on cash-first approaches. From these experiences, it is clear that food insecurity can affect anyone, but that this can be more acutely felt by communities of protected characteristics. The right to food should be system-wide and should improve the food system for all communities, at all levels.

The right to food can create significant positive change for these communities, beginning with the eradication of food support stigma. Food Poverty Action Aberdeen, who contribute to Granite City Good Food's overall aims, implemented a COVID Food Fund for food support at a community level during the pandemic. The £62,000 fund supported 14 groups, supporting groups whose main beneficiaries were protected characteristic communities, and who had began to access food support for the first time. The right to food could further improve the picture of food support, permanently, and could have significant positive impact to this end.

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.

Integral to the achievement of this must be the appropriate recognition, at governmental level, to the active support from various local authorities for initiatives delivered as part of food partnership, particularly those food partnerships operating as part of the Sustainable Food Places framework, as Granite City Good Food does. The sustainable food places framework advocates:

1. Taking a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action.
2. Building public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement.
3. Tackling food poverty and increasing access to affordable, healthy food.
4. Creating a vibrant, prosperous, and diverse sustainable food economy.
5. Transforming catering and procurement and revitalising local and sustainable food supply chains.
6. Tackling the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste.

As part of relevant food partnerships in Scotland, local authorities commonly engage and support activity to ensure action around these areas. It is essential that member partnerships of this framework are actively considered and included in any discourse on this topic.

Further, to this end, there are various initiatives which partner of Granite City Good Food lead that clearly display the clear alignment with food and sustainability- from community growing activity as supplementary food access, to food support with dignity through the pantry model, to the distribution of GLUT produce at market stalls throughout the city, and the cash first approaches such as Financial Inclusion Teams and CFINE's SAFE Team

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

A right to food must maximise the opportunity for food access but must also engage with communities to ensure holistic assurance of the right to 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)?

No Response