

# Food Security Action Plan: Equality analysis May 2019

**Section 1: Equality analysis details**

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<b>Proposed policy/decision/business plan to which this equality analysis relates</b>	Food Security Action Plan. 2019.		
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<b>Department</b>	Place and Wellbeing	<b>Division</b>	Public Health
<b>Period analysis undertaken</b>	May 2019		

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**Section 2:** Brief description of policy/decision/business plan

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<b>1.1 Brief description of policy/decision/business plan</b>
<p>This equalities analysis relates to actions proposed in the Food Security Action Plan which will be going to Cabinet in June 2019.</p> <p>The decision maker is the cabinet member for Community Safety and Public Health.</p>

### Section 3: Overview of service users and key stakeholders consulted

2. Service users and stakeholders	
<b>Key users of the department or service</b>	<p>The following key groups have been identified in the Southwark Council Household Food Insecurity JSNA (to be published in 2019) of being at higher risk of food insecurity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals and families on low incomes including people reliant on benefits, people with NRPF, and low income workers (e.g. part,time workers, those on zero-hours contracts and seasonal workers).</li> <li>• People living in areas where there is a lack of affordable, healthy food options within easy walking distance.</li> <li>• People with health conditions and disabilities that impact their ability to shop and prepare meals.</li> </ul>
<b>Key stakeholders who were/ are involved in this policy/ decision/ business plan</b>	<p>The Action Plan takes a wide look at creating food security, noting that although food aid is essential to have as a safety net for people in crisis, it is also important to be preventive. This includes using policy to address issues that lead to food insecurity and increasing resilience at personal, community and systems levels. Due to this systems approach, a wide range of partners across the borough have been involved in this work throughout the last year:</p> <p>This includes (but is not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Southwark Food Action Alliance – which is an umbrella for 60 statutory, voluntary sector, national and grassroots organisations working on food security in Southwark</li> <li>• A range of departments within the Council</li> <li>• Those with lived experience of food insecurity.</li> </ul> <p>In September 2018, approximately 50 representatives from local organisations attended a stakeholder workshop held at Tooley Street. The event explored five areas of the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to promote wellbeing</li> <li>• How to create greater resilience</li> <li>• How to improve access to resources and services</li> <li>• How to work in a more joined-up way</li> <li>• How to address the upstream ‘bigger picture’ issues that contribute to food insecurity.</li> </ul>

## Section 4: Pre-implementation equality analysis

**Age** - Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

### Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

The JSNA on Household Food Insecurity showed that there are various points across the life course when residents may be more vulnerable to food insecurity. The impacts of successful delivery of the action plan for these groups are set out below:

- **PREGNANCY AND EARLY YEARS:** More joined-up working will help low-income pregnant women and families access support around breastfeeding and healthy eating. This includes access to free vouchers for fruit and vegetables for pregnant women and children under 4 leading to:
  - Mothers being more likely to persevere with breastfeeding.
  - Improved mother-infant bonding and reduced risk of post natal-depression.
  - Improved growth and development for the infant.
  
- **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:** Actions such as supporting low-income families during school holidays (when there is no longer the dependability of a free, healthy meal at lunch time) will lead to:
  - Improved physical health including healthy weight, better dental health and reduced illness associated with poor diet.
  - Mental and cognitive wellbeing will be improved as educational attainment and mental wellbeing are supported by good nutrition.
  - Improved social wellbeing as the children's families are more able to participate in social activities that require food (e.g. birthday party / outings / having friends over).
  
- **THE MIDDLE-AGE AND PRE-RETIREMENT YEARS: 50-65:** Positive impacts are expected through improved access to food aid, skills development and benefit maximisation:
  - Improving diet can reduce the risk of a wide range of illnesses including mental ill-health, cancer, type 2 diabetes and heart disease.
  - The positive impact, in terms of improved nutrition, is also likely to extend to their dependents and those they have caring responsibilities towards (e.g. grandchildren, children, an ill partner or elderly parents).
  
- **OLDER ADULTS:** Supporting food insecure older people to improve their nutrition through access to an affordable offer from local shops, cooking support and social meals will have the following positive benefits:
  - Improved strength, reduced frailty and greater ability to recover from illness.
  - It is less costly for local health services to treat an adequately nourished older person than a malnourished one.

**Equality information on which above analysis is based**

Southwark Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on Household Food Insecurity (draft)  
Feedback from stakeholders  
Food Poverty and Health - Faculty of Public Health - 2005  
Office for National Statistics population data mid-year - 2017  
British Association For Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition Nutrition Screening Survey  
Hidden Hunger And Malnutrition In The Elderly – APPG on Hunger – 2018  
AGE UK Agenda For Later Life Survey

**Mitigating actions to be taken**

n/a

**Disability** - A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan**

14% of people living in inner London have a disability, equating to 43,988 people in Southwark. A national study (n.413) showed that 50% of households using foodbanks had a disabled member and 33% had a member with a mental health condition. A 2018 report found that 33% of families with disabled children had taken out a loan to buy food, (compared to only 4% a decade ago).

The action plan aims to impact positively on those who have disabilities. The positive impacts that are expected are:

- Supporting disabled people to access affordable healthy food can reduce the risk of unhealthy weight, prevent a wide range of illnesses, promote recovery from infection and improve mental wellbeing.
- Through the wraparound services connected with food projects people may also be able to access support to maximise their benefits and income, develop cooking skills and gain from other resilience building projects in the community, such as helping at a community garden or participating in community meals.

Ensuring that food projects are accessible to disabled people will be an ongoing principle for key partners.

**Equality information on which above analysis is based**

<p>Southwark Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on Household Food Insecurity (draft)  Feedback from stakeholders  DWP Family Resources Survey, 2016-2017  Financial insecurity, food insecurity and disability – Loopstra and Lalor 2017  Counting The Costs UK Report – Contact (For Families With Disabled Children) 2018</p>
<p><b>Mitigating actions to be taken</b></p>
<p>The Southwark Wellbeing Hub and Disability Hub will be key partners to work with to ensure that in developing and testing the food security pathway that food support services are accessible to people with different types of disability (e.g. mobility impaired/ learning disabilities). The plan also proposes to refine foodbank monitoring to better understand the use of at-risk groups.</p>

<p><b>Gender reassignment</b> - The process of transitioning from one gender to another.</p>
<p><b>Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan</b></p>
<p>No specific impacts have been identified or raised in relation to this characteristic which is not monitored. Information about service users would only be available where there is self-disclosure.</p>
<p><b>Equality information on which above analysis is based.</b></p>
<p>No monitoring data is collected on gender reassignment currently in the food support services we are aware of, and engagement so far has identified no particular impacts for this community</p>
<p><b>Mitigating actions to be taken</b></p>
<p>n/a</p>

<p><b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples and must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters. <b>(Only to be considered in respect to the need to eliminate discrimination).</b></p>
<p><b>Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan</b></p>

Although single people make up 60% of food bank referrals and 59% of those receiving food grants from the Southwark Emergency Support Scheme, couples of any kind are expected to be able to access the offer equally. Elsewhere in the proposed food support pathway there is little monitoring of marital/civil partnership status.

People in abusive relationships are at risk of food insecurity as their income for food may be withheld by a controlling partner. The plan may help to mitigate the impact of Universal Credit payments on some individuals where benefits are paid per household rather than to each individual.

**Equality information on which above analysis is based**

Monitoring data is not collected relating to marital status or civil partnership.  
 Feedback from stakeholders.  
 Southwark Foodbank monitoring data 2017-18 showed that single people made up 60% of their referrals (n 2,495 referrals)  
 Southwark Emergency Support Scheme monitoring data 2017-18 showed that single people made up 59% of those receiving food grants (n 1,295).

**Mitigating actions to be taken**

n/a

**Pregnancy and maternity** - Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

**Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan**

The action plan is supportive of breastfeeding and maternal nutrition. It encourages joined-up working between Children’s Centres, the Council, health professionals and other early years staff in the borough to signpost pregnant women to useful support services. Promoting Alexandra Rose vouchers and Healthy Start vouchers to low-income pregnant women and young families is also part of the plan. These vouchers entitle the recipient to £3.10 per week of free fruit, vegetables, milk and formula. For those aged under 1, the voucher value increases to £6.20 per child.

Several positive impacts have been identified:

- Supporting access to affordable, healthy food can reduce risk of unhealthy weight for mother and baby, prevent a wide range of illnesses, promote recovery from infection and improve mental wellbeing.
- Through the wraparound services connected with food projects people may also be able to access support to maximise their benefits and income, develop cooking skills and participate in other resilience building projects in the community.

Emergency food aid providers and those promoting Healthy Start vouchers need to ensure that there is a clear message about support for breastfeeding in the borough and guidance on how to use infant formula milk safely for those who can not breastfeed or

have chosen not to.

**Equality information on which above analysis is based**

Southwark Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on Household Food Insecurity (draft)  
Feedback from stakeholders  
First Steps Nutrition trust

**Mitigating actions to be taken**

The Plan calls for those working with emergency food aid to be aware of the First Steps Nutrition guidance around formula milk and foodbanks.

**Race** - Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

**Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan**

The Action Plan builds on work in the JSNA on Household Food Insecurity which recognises that race can be a factor in increased risk of food insecurity. The plan expects to have a positive impact on BAME groups in the wider community as well as those using food support services.

The plan includes geographically targeted work in areas of deprivation. Given the higher rates of BAME residents in areas of deprivation this will provide a positive impact on improving access to healthy affordable food for the BAME as well as the wider community in those areas through:

- Access to healthier options available through fast food outlets;
- Access to an improved range of affordable, healthy products in local stores;
- Improved uptake of Healthy Start and Alexander Rose vouchers for fruit and vegetables

There is an over-representation of Black foodbank users in relation to the proportion of Black people in the general population. The plan aims to ensure food aid projects address the cultural appropriateness of the foods available in line with the local population, including people from West Africa as well as Eastern Europe, and Latin America.

The plan also supports improved access to food for low-income people who can't access statutory support (e.g. those with NRPF) during times of crisis. Many people with NRPF are from ethnic minority groups. In combined data from Southwark Foodbank and the Central Southwark Community Hub Foodbank (n. 3,204 referrals), the third highest reason for referral is having no recourse to public funds (n.498).

The plan will have positive impacts on NRPF families by supporting a more coordinated and networked approach to holiday hunger provision, and ultimately providing easier access to free, healthy meals for children through school holidays who are usually dependent on school lunches. NRPF families are one of the groups most likely to be at

risk during this time.

**Equality information on which above analysis is based**

Southwark Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on Household Food Insecurity (draft)  
Feedback from stakeholders  
Qualitative research with foodbank users in Southwark (2018)  
Monitoring data collected from Southwark Foodbank and the Central Southwark Community Hub

**Mitigating actions to be taken**

In order to support people whose first language is not English the plan calls for identifying where advocacy and support is required to help with form filling, payment methods, translation or accessing advice digitally.

**Religion and belief** - Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

**Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan**

This characteristic is largely not monitored by services involved in the action plan so it is difficult to predict the impact of the plan on people defined by their religious background.

However, the plan does call for food at community meals and food aid projects to be religiously appropriate.

The plan also recognises that faith groups are a vital partner in this work and are often a first port of call for those needing support. It is keen to work through different faith networks to signpost to resources such as Healthy Start vouchers and help with jobs and benefits. Faith groups may also be a huge source of support to those who cannot access statutory services, such as the NRPF population and asylum seekers.

We are aware that the largest foodbanks in the borough operate in church premises. Although not addressed in the action plan, there is a possibility that this could pose a barrier for those who are from another religion or who do not follow a religion.

**Equality information on which above analysis is based**

Feedback from stakeholders  
Faith and Health Network

<b>Mitigating actions to be taken</b>
Use the Faith and Health Network to extend information and support to people of all faiths and none.
Ensure that there is clear messaging from foodbanks (who operate out of faith settings) that access to their services is not dependent on religious beliefs.

**Sex - A man or a woman.**

**Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan**

There is no data collected in Southwark on the sex of those receiving referrals at foodbanks, so we do not know which sex may be more affected.

The gender pay gap means that women are likely to be on lower incomes than men. Women are also more likely to be the heads of single parent families. Both of these economic factors can increase a woman's risk of food insecurity. However, single men are the group most at risk of destitution in the UK, making this demographic vulnerable, too.

Those of both genders will benefit from having a food security plan in the borough. Women will benefit specifically from interventions aimed at pregnancy and maternity. While food support projects will promote access to support, such as training in cooking and employment skills, it may be that the hours of operation favours one gender over another for example due to predominant working patterns or childcare.

**Equality information on which above analysis is based**

Southwark Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on Household Food Insecurity (draft)  
 Feedback from stakeholders  
 Destitution In The UK 2018 – Joseph Rowntree Foundation – 2018

**Mitigating actions to be taken**

It is important that solutions are accessible for those who have childcare responsibilities and that local organisations are aware that single parents and single men are groups at high-risk of being food insecure and can tailor their interventions accordingly. This will mean looking at the hours of operation for some activities.

**Sexual orientation - Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes**

**Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan**

There is no monitoring of sexual orientation of service beneficiaries at the borough's two largest foodbank networks.

Evidence suggests that those in the LGBTQ population, in particular gay men, are more likely to experience poverty than their heterosexual counterparts. People identifying as LGBTQ are also at higher risk than the heterosexual population of experiencing poor mental health due to factors such as discrimination and isolation (mental health conditions can put people at higher risk of food insecurity).

The Action Plan acknowledges that further work is required to understand the specific needs of this population and will progress this as part of a commitment to involving a wide range of partners in the food security agenda.

The impact of the plan will be to improve LGBTQ groups' engagement in the food security agenda.

#### **Equality information on which above analysis is based**

<http://www.poverty.ac.uk/editorial/poverty-and-sexual-orientation>

#### **Mitigating actions to be taken**

Reaching out to LGBTQ organisations in the borough to make them aware of the Action Plan and related food insecurity resources.

#### **Human Rights**

There are 16 rights in the Human Rights Act. Each one is called an Article. They are all taken from the European Convention on Human Rights. The Articles are The right to life, Freedom from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, Freedom from forced labour, Right to Liberty, Fair trial, Retrospective penalties, Privacy, Freedom of conscience, Freedom of expression, Freedom of assembly, Marriage and family, Freedom from discrimination and the First Protocol

#### **Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan**

Although not included in the Human Rights Act, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights encompasses the Right To Food. "Everyone has the right to a standard of living **adequate for the health and wellbeing of himself and his family, including food**, clothing, housing and medical care." South Africa and India both have the 'Right To Food' embedded as a right in their constitutions.

Having a Food Security Action Plan is a step in this direction.

#### **Information on which above analysis is based**

The Human Rights Act (1988)  
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

**Mitigating actions to be taken**

The Action Plan calls for food support initiatives to offer wraparound services, based on the needs of the population being served. This could include access to services such as legal advice, benefit advice, housing advice and immigration advice which residents could access if they felt they were being denied their rights.

## Section 5: Further actions and objectives

5. Further actions			
Based on the initial analysis above, please detail the key mitigating actions or the areas identified as requiring more detailed analysis.			
Number	Description of issue	Action	Timeframe
1	Lack of monitoring of the protected characteristics among community organisations providing food aid and support across the borough.	Encourage those who provide food aid and run community food initiatives to use more robust monitoring to build a stronger picture of how at-risk groups are using services.	Ongoing
2	Have a targeted approach which will acknowledge and address the barriers faced by certain vulnerable and harder to reach groups.	Work with community partners who already have a relationship with these groups (e.g elderly/ those with NRPF) and can advise on how to best target these groups and make them aware of resources available.	Ongoing
3	A need for further research on the needs of specific groups around food security: Eastern European, West African, Latin American , LGBTQ communities and those with disabilities.	Work with partner organisations to make links with these communities and make them aware of resources available, as well as mapping food projects that these groups may have established themselves.	Autumn/Winter 2019
4	A need for out-of-hours provision for those who work or may have a crisis at a weekend.	Compile information on what is available. If there appears to be a gap, explore with the Council and partners how this could be addressed.	Autumn/Winter 2019

5. Equality objectives (for business plans)				
Based on the initial analysis above, please detail any equality objectives that you will set for your division/department/service. Under the objective and measure column please state whether this objective is an existing objective or a suggested addition to the Council Plan.				
Objective and measure	Lead officer	Current performance (baseline)	Targets	
			2019/20	2020/21