

SOUTHWARK COUNCIL

COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

(ORDINARY MEETING)

WEDNESDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2024

PUBLIC QUESTION WITH RESPONSE

1. QUESTION FROM LALEH MOHABBAT TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Considering the climate crises caused by meat and dairy industries, councils including Lambeth, Edinburgh, have already taken steps to adopt sustainable plant based food system. Will Southwark commit to endorse the plant based treaty alongside its sustainable food strategy 2023-2026 to promote a healthier, more resilient future for its residents?

RESPONSE

Southwark Council is committed to creating a sustainable food system in Southwark to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents, to reduce inequalities and to protect the planet. We are supportive of the aims of the treaty and are working towards many of the goals in the treaty.

The council's sustainable food strategy sets out the actions we will take to actively promote and provide plant-based diets. We will achieve this by encouraging food businesses to promote plant-based menu choices, new curriculum resources will be shared with all schools to inspire pupils to embrace a healthy plant-powered diet, and schools will be supported to better procure plant-based food.

Alongside this, the theme 'R' in the council's climate action plan also covers actions to support more sustainable diets which recognises that this will largely involve moving away from animal products. This includes actions to:

- Expand networks facilitating the donation of edible surplus food in Southwark.
- Deliver public campaigns to encourage people to adopt a more climate friendly diet.
- Deliver a campaign to encourage commercial caterers, including those in workplaces, to provide less meat and dairy catering.
- Deliver a food waste campaign, including through education in schools.

Southwark Council's Climate Action Schools Network connects schools in the borough who are taking action to tackle the climate emergency. Most recently, in collaboration with schools and students, the council has produced a guide to help schools take climate action.