**Food Strategy Review**

**11th September 2019**

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**1. Background**

This review, to inform the Community of Practice on *Sustainable Food Systems*, fulfils a commitment made by CCRI at the Helsinki partnership meeting in May 2019. At that meeting, it was agreed that CCRI would carry out a short review of scholarship in sub-national and municipal food strategies in light of ROBUST's main concerns.

The review starts with a brief examination of municipal *urban* food policy making, an area of emerging and dynamic scholarship, with a view to making a connection to ROBUST's thematic and spatial concerns. Secondly, a brief overview of some municipal food strategies is presented, which are summarised in a table. It is not the intention for this review to be anything other than indicative and partial. Colleagues are encouraged to add to the list with exemplars of their own, which they think reveal ROBUST's objectives in terms of innovative forms of governance and rural-urban synergies. This paper can therefore inform the CoP Food webinar planned for October 2019. In reviewing the food strategies, attention is paid to ROBUST's interests in:

- Rural-urban synergies
- Smart regional development
- Multi-level governance.

**2. Introduction**

A starting point for this review is Roberta Sonnino's argument that, essentially, municipal food strategies are linked by a common concern for food security (Sonnino, 2014). Sonnino outlined this idea in an article linked to a qualitative assessment of 15 urban municipal food strategies from North America and the UK. Food security is broadly interpreted as, firstly, people's financial access to nutritious food (i.e. food poverty) and, secondly, concerns about the security of food supply in the light of economic volatility, ecological crises and/or political uncertainty (i.e. food chain resilience). One major challenge to the food security of cities in both interpretations is rural-to-urban migration, resulting in agriculturally unproductive city populations unable to feed themselves while urban expansion further swallows up peri-urban agricultural land (Halliday & Barling, 2018).

Consumers are increasingly prominent in urban policy discourses about the outcomes of the food systems, shifting the balance from agriculture towards public health (Lusk & McCluskey, 2018) and social justice (Dowler & Lambie-Mumford, 2015). This shift has broadened the social and economic emphasis of sustainability in the study of food systems, although Sonnino (2017) points out that the

integration of food into health and municipal policies remains marginal and uneven. This is linked in many cases to the absence of coherent national-level food policy, with some notable exceptions including Denmark and the Netherlands (Neff, Merrigan, & Wallinga, 2015) where national food policies have helped to frame and co-ordinate municipal approaches. Lang and Barling (2013) identify problems in fragmented disciplinary engagements with the environmental and nutritional outcomes of food systems at national and international policy levels, arguing that life sciences, social and environmental sciences need to be integrated. Coulson and Sonnino agree that, especially at the municipal-level, (Coulson & Sonnino, 2019) local authorities face multiple eco-social challenges compared to national and international food policy approaches, which tend to focus on silos, especially agricultural production, or diet-related public health.

Some non-governmental arrangements promote mutual support between pioneering cities, including the Rockefeller Resilient Cities Initiative, the ICLEI-RUAF CITYFOOD network, the Milan Food Policy Pact. The UN Sustainable Development Goals represent another international mechanism that is galvanising interest in urban food, in particular SDG 11 which seeks to make cities 'inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable[1]. In the UK the Sustainable Food Cities network is an interesting example of sustainability governance, providing a forum for best practice exchange between the most innovative cities, and a template for planning and attaining sustainability progress around food issues. It is notable that these networks operate outside and/or beyond national policy hierarchies.

A report emerging from *Eurocities[2]*, a partnership of Europe's 140 largest cities, emphasizes the important role that local authorities have in the development of sustainable food systems and characterises six types of innovation associated with food strategies being developed by cities, as summarised below (De Cunto, Tegoni, Sonnino, & Michel, 2017):

1. Emphasis on community buy-in
2. Enhancing [civil society] participation in the governance system
3. Local empowerment [of food system actors] as a policy goal
4. Shortening supply chains
5. Systemic thinking
6. Translocalism [i.e. horizontal knowledge exchange]

These characteristics are essentially all social, and concerned with governance of innovation which is essentially what the food strategies represent, according to the report. Managing the governance of innovation in social systems (in this case around territorial food provisioning) demands co-ordination across actor networks, institutions and technical knowledge arenas, and is familiar within ROBUST via the quadruple helix concept, outlined on p11 of the WP3 guidance.

A picture thus emerges of urban municipalities at the forefront of strategic innovations which contribute to sustainable food systems, the governance of which is participatory, often democratic and partnership-based, and reflecting the multiple social and environmental responsibilities (or public services) which urban municipalities encounter. Figure 1, below, translates some of these responsibilities into themed, food-related actions by municipalities and their partners. The actions, in turn, reflect the social and ecological functions that food innovation engenders and the ambition to cover, in this case, local food from a multi-dimensional perspective. The emphasis on local food is noteworthy here; on one hand a local focus can be inclusive within a bounded area, but on the other

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[1] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg11
[2] http://wsdomino.eurocities.eu/eurocities/home

hand local food considerations (and especially local supply chains) may not be the right scale for partners or policies with an extended, non-local focus.

*Figure 1 – The benefits of local food strategies (Source: Lincoln City Council 2016)*
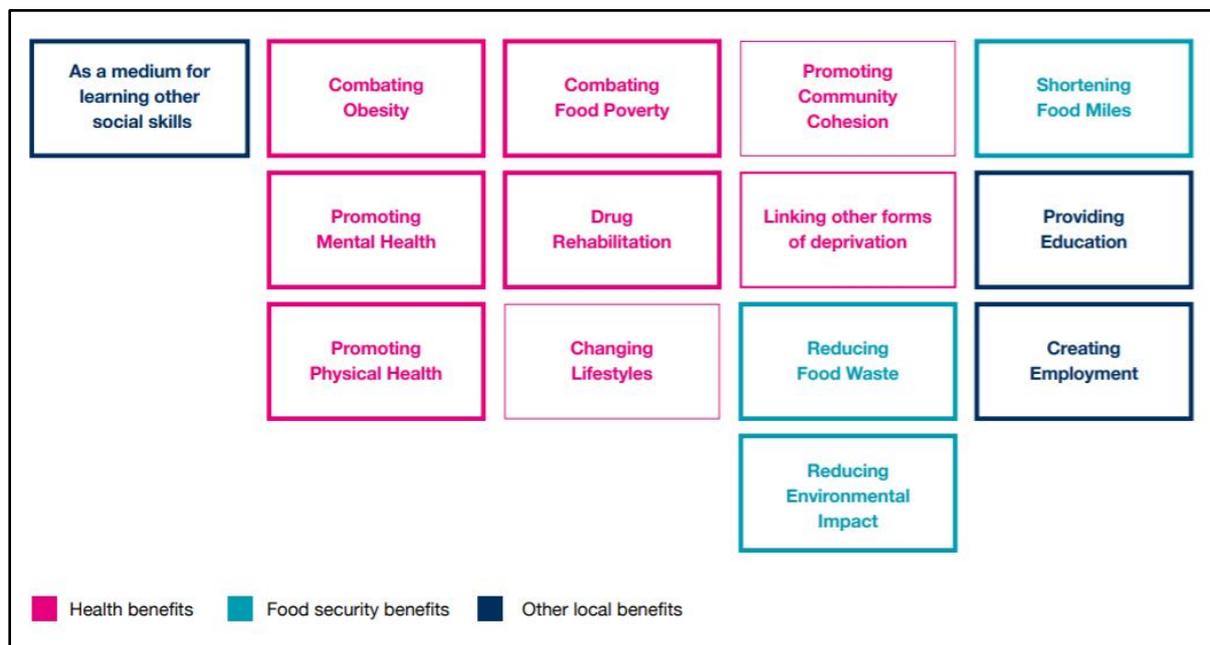


Municipalities are clearly responsible for a range of overlapping community-level functions and services linked to food, including trading standards, waste management, the spatial regulation of retailing and street markets, public health and social care including feeding many citizens such as school children and elders in institutional care. Complications in integrating food system thinking across these municipal functions emerge when municipalities divide policy-making across different tiers of local government. For example, it is usual that cities are run as unitary authorities, in other words, the city council is fully and solely responsible and accountable for the planning and delivery of public services. In a two-tier, hierarchical system more often associated with rural municipalities, functions such as planning, waste collection or housing may be delegated to district councils.

In summary, the multitude of food-related challenges ahead will rely on the close integration of food sustainability into everyday lived experiences, requiring a complex range of actors. No one agency or technical solution is likely to succeed in converting nutrition, environmental protection and the organisation of food markets into a sustainable and fair system of provisioning (Coulson & Sonnino, 2019; Willett & al., 2019). A multi-stakeholder approach is needed, including a range of natural and social scientists working across disciplinary boundaries, civil society networks, business and enterprise, and state institutions working at different scales according to their functions. This type of integrated local, multi-scalar, and multi-actor horizontal operation is central to the Living Labs / Communities of Practice methodology of ROBUST. But such an ambition is much harder to realise in practice, especially when the spatial focus shifts from the discreetly urban to the relational rural-urban.

## 3. Municipal Food strategies - exemplars

In this section, short descriptions of a selection of urban food strategies are set out. It is intended that CoP colleagues will add to this list. The intention of presenting these examples is to extract messages

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and learning in terms of governance mechanisms and the challenge of developing partnership governance for urban and rural food systems at a regional scale. We have started with some UK examplars, and followed these with descriptions from other countries.

*Bath and North East Somerset* (BANES) (pop. 188,000, of which 90,000 in the City of Bath) – In 2015, BANES launched its Local Food Strategy which triangulated three areas of policy attention: improving the sustainability of the city's food footprint; supporting the economic performance of the district's agriculture; and improving food related public health (BANES, 2014). Commissioned by the public health department, with funding for an associated officer to deliver the strategy, a benefit was to integrate food into a variety of policy areas and clarify accountability for the implementation of projects. These included work with the city's cafes and restaurants to reduce salt, fat and sugar in some meals; substantially increasing the support for local producers to bid for public food supply contracts (see also Bristol, below); and to encourage the involvement of community networks (such as Transition Bath) to grow food and become active partners in the revision of food-related policies, such as the allotments strategy. BANES is a unitary (single tier) authority albeit with a mixed rural and urban profile. BANES is situated within a sub-region including Bristol and two other unitary peri-urban authorities which, until the 1990s, formed a single county, and there is still a convention of informal collaboration between these authorities that periodically persists, for example through shared food procurement practices.

*Bristol* (pop. 435,000) – Bristol is well-known in the UK, and beyond, for its vibrant food scene, linked substantially to the long-standing support for and energies of an active grass-roots network in the city (Carey, 2013). In 2011 the National Health Service in Bristol and the city council funded research on how the city provisions itself, called *Who Feeds Bristol? (Carey, 2011)* which mapped the regional food shed of the city and outlined ideas for growing more food in the city limits. This in turn led to the establishment of a multi-actor Food Policy Council to advise city authorities and to develop its strategy – *A Good Food Plan* (Bristol City Council, 2013), concerned with making the city's food system more 'resilient' and sustainable. Achieving the accolade of European Green Capital in 2015 stimulated the development of a £360,000 fund to support cultural and productive food initiatives in the city (Reed & Keech, 2018), which both reflected and further stimulated innovation in the food (social) enterprise sector. Finally, Bristol was the first UK city to attain the Sustainable Food City 'Silver' standard and is now working towards 'Gold'. Key features of the strategy in Bristol were deepening support for civil society networks, improving the sustainability performance of public food procurement and tackling poverty and public health. The food policy council, while holding only advisory functions, was effective in highlighting and integrating food issues in the Good Food Plan across multiple public departments, including culture and waste.

*Gloucestershire (pop. 605,000)* – Gloucestershire's emerging food strategy 'Let's Grow' is distinctive from the other examples reviewed because of its rural focus. Interestingly, the strategy is also not championed by a local council or health authority, but by a Local Enterprise Partnership – these local organisations distribute national government funding to implement economic development policies. These bodies translate national economic and industrial policy into local action and distribute government funds to do so. Funded by central government, the LEPs more or less overlap the English counties, and operate through a series of business sector sub-groups, for example rural, banking and finance and construction. Membership of the groups is multi-actor and includes public, commercial and business network organisations. 'Let's Grow' emerged from arguments made by and through the

Gloucestershire-based Royal Agricultural University that, although the food and drink economy in the county constitutes a substantial contribution to rural employment and economic output, its productivity is poor and declining. This was reviewed via qualitative research on the food and drink sector in 2018-19, leading to the commitment to the development of a strategy to improve the sector's productivity performance and encourage hi-tech innovation. This framing for the food strategy – clearly distinct from the routes taken by BANES, Lincoln or Malmö – is partly linked to the location of three universities in the county (two with agricultural specialisms) and a cluster of nationally important cybertechnology organisations. Priorities emerging from 'Let's Grow' will be funded through a local stream of central government investment linked to the implementation of the Industrial Strategy.

*Lincoln* (pop. 100,000) – Lincoln's food strategy resulted from research undertaken for the County Council of Lincolnshire (of which Lincoln is the administrative capital) in relation to the nature and structure of the food system in the county, as a preliminary step towards developing policies to tackle obesity. Based on research by the University of Lincoln, the resulting Lincoln Food Strategy outlines three priorities, namely: (i) health concerns (especially obesity) in relation to material deprivation; (ii) food waste and its economic costs; and (iii) food production, noting that the county of Lincolnshire contains 10% of England's agricultural output, and that the city contains some 22 hectares of allotment gardens. Following the development of the Lincoln Food Strategy in 2016, a steering group for its implementation was established called the Lincoln Food Partnership (LFP), with 10 representatives drawn from local businesses, schools, civil society and public authorities. The LFP's establishment was funded through a grant by the Sustainable Food Cities programme (linked to the UK organic agriculture NGO, The Soil Association) and monitoring of the LFP's performance is assessed solely through LFP's progress on delivering the functions agreed in the grant.

The rural county of Lincolnshire operates as a 2-tier local government system within which the City of Lincoln is a 2nd tier, effectively a district level municipality. This means that its resources and focus are directed solely at functions in the city. In order that on-going staff support and budgets are not required from the City administration, service level agreements (i.e. contracts) are agreed between the City Council and a range of local voluntary sector community organisations, to deliver the predominantly social objectives within the food strategy.

*London* (pop. 8.8 million) – In 1986, the outgoing Mayor of the Greater London Council drafted a food strategy for the UK capital called *Food for a Great City* (ref), which recognised the importance of the food sector to the economy of the city and highlighted concerns about food poverty and access. After a period when municipal government was dispersed to 33 local councils, the Greater London Authority (GLA) was (re-)formed in 1999. By 2004 a multi-stakeholder Food Board was established with a membership covering food business, civil society, academics and health experts. This followed the publication the mayor Food Strategy, the subtitle of which was *Healthy and Sustainable Food for London*. The Food Board's early focus on public health, the environment, the food economy, food security and food culture has largely been retained. Core funding for the Food Board comes from the GLA budget.

The Food Board has no inherent powers, rather it acts as a Mayoral advisory body, making recommendations for policy development and project funding for partner organisations. Halliday and Barling (2018) describe how the Food Board benefitted from direct Mayoral influence in terms of

integrating food issues into wider city policy agendas (such as including food growing within local planning policy), while the independent members of the Food Board benefit from being able to promote the objectives of the Board within their own organisations and funding streams.

An annual publication of the Food Board is *Good Food London[3]*, which assesses the performance of the capital's 33 boroughs against 11 sustainability criteria – including fair trade, living wages, school food and animal welfare. A revised food strategy, with the same title as its 2004 predecessor, was published in December 2018[4]. This attempts to realise a range of objectives, including better nutrition and eating habits, tackling domestic food insecurity, reducing food-related GHG emissions, supporting jobs in the food catering and retail sectors and ensuring Brexit doesn't disrupt the supply of food into the capital.

*Ghent* (pop. 250,000) – Ghent launched its food strategy in 2013 under the name 'Gent en gard'. Its five objectives are primarily social and environmental, namely to strive for:

- A shorter, more visible food chain
- More sustainable food production and consumption
- The creation of more social added value for food initiatives
- Reduce food waste
- Optimum reuse of food waste as raw materials

The mechanism for creating and developing *Gent en Gard* was inspired by and is similar actions to Toronto and Bristol, including to establish a food policy council (FPC). In Ghent, this multi-stakeholder network established a core team, led by two organisations specialising in sustainable food and community participation, to operationalise the food strategy vision and invite third parties to come up with proposals for activities, which were then put to the FPC (Gent Food Policy Council, 2013). To encourage a high degree of citizen engagement, community networks as well as food enterprises or NGOs were entitled to make proposals.

*Malmö* (pop. 317,000) – Malmö, Sweden's third largest city, has established ambitious environmental targets around public (especially school) food that were established by the city council in 2010. These include ensuring that 100% of public food is organic by 2020 and that the GHG emissions associated with public procurement are reduced by 40% compared to 2002 levels. The strategy also hopes to increase healthy eating and set an example in terms of food safety. A key driver for the Malmö approach has been the 'eat SMART model' which seeks to improve health and environmental performance of public food without increasing costs. The model was devised by the Institute of Public Health of Stockholm Region and combines Swedish nutritional recommendations with environmental standards. SMART signifies: **S**maller amount of meat; **M**inimise intake of junk food/empty calories; **A**n increase in organic; **R**ight sort of meat and vegetables; **T**ransport efficient. The latter sets out an implicit commitment to locally sourced food and the strategy document foresees a protection of regional agricultural landscapes and rural livelihoods as part of its framing of sustainable economic development.

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[3] https://www.sustainweb.org/resources/files/reports/GoodFoodForLondon2018.pdf
[4] https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/final_london_food_strategy.pdf

An analysis of the Malmö exemplar has been published by Moragues-Faus and Morgan (2015), assessing the importance of bottom-up civil society inclusion in the development and execution of the strategy, its winners and losers. Interestingly, the article contrasts Malmö's approach with that taken the establishment of the Food Policy Council in Bristol (see above), which is regarded as innovative and inclusive but under-resourced and powerless.

*Toronto* (pop. 2.8 million) – civil society efforts to tackle food social justice issues are long established in Toronto and helped to inspire the approaches taken in both London and Bristol. The strategic approach in Toronto should be seen as a long-term and iterative process of development which was institutionalised in 1991 with the establishment of a Food Policy Council, as a sub-committee of the Board of Health and in 2001 the City Council developed is Food Charter[5] in 2001, a commitment that outlined a range of (mainly social) objectives such as citizen's rights to healthy, safe and culturally appropriate foods, greener public food sourcing, identifying urban land for food growing and establishing multi-actor mechanisms for achieving these diverse ambitions. While the underlying interest was explicitly food security, the city council linked the Charter to economic, health and environmental gains including the reduction of traffic pollution, the development of local jobs and healthcare savings links to diet, exercise and social well-being. In 2010, following public consultation, Toronto published its strategy for a health and sustainable food system – *Cultivating Food Connections (Health, 2010)* – underscoring in it the central role of a 'health-based food system' based on 'collaborative infrastructure'. Toronto's approach also shows an on-going commitment to rural and urban integration (Blay-Palmer, 2009), for example through support for the development of a regional food strategy. The culmination of these activities is the *Toronto Food Strategy* (Health, 2018), which illustrates the aobjective of a new, ideal food system paradigm, as shown in Figure 2, below.

*Figure 2: The 'ideal healthy sustainable food system' envisaged in the 2018 Toronto Food Strategy.*



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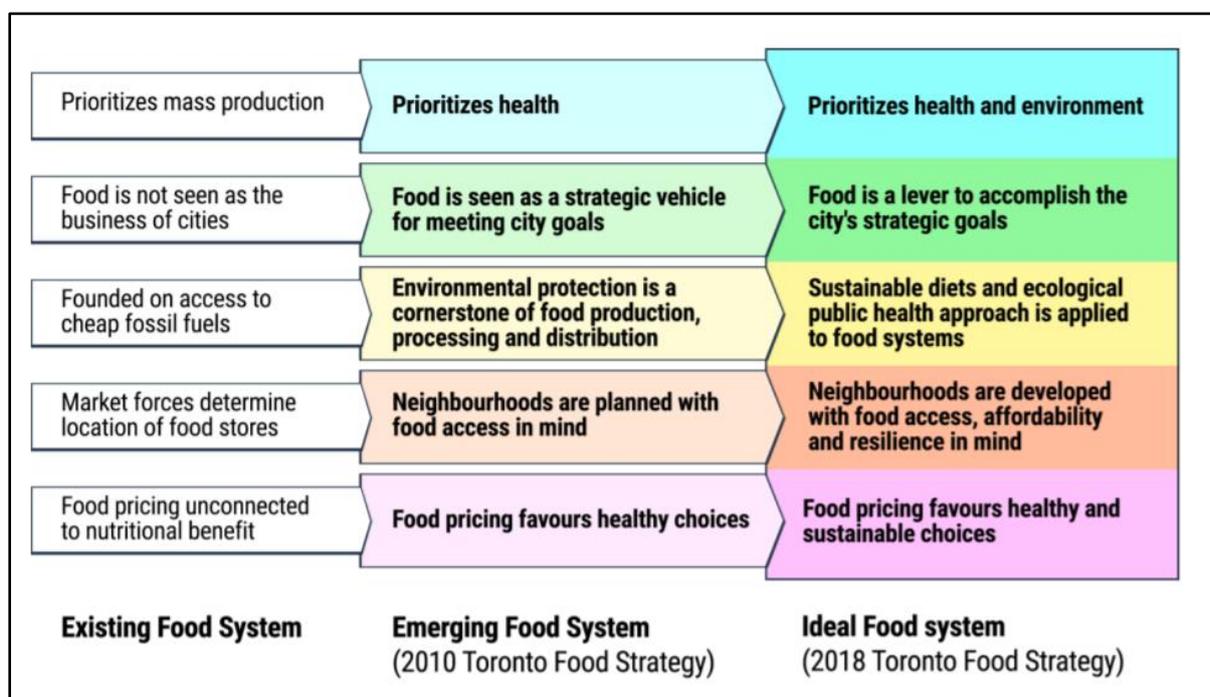
[5] http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/presentations/Toroto_Food_Charter.pdf

## 4. Discussion

In this section, the food strategy exemplars are reviewed in relation to the three themes set out in section 1, namely rural-urban synergies, smart development, and multi-level governance. These themes are elaborated in the WP1 conceptual framework in some detail, but we re-examine them in brief here.

### 4.1 Rural-urban synergies

Vieira, Serrao-Neumann, Howes, and Mackey (2018:319) in a review of urban food systems (UFS) argue that '*UFS are currently characterised by the scarcity of urban-rural linkages, resulting in more dependence on industrialised food supply chains that have global sources and are based on mass production'*. These authors partly cite consolidation in food retailing which leads to a concentration of power and growth in supply chain scales. This structural arrangement is reinforced by, and reinforces, the functional separation of urban and rural areas in multifunctional socio-cultural and eco-productive spaces respectively, and rural food strategies are effectively rural development strategies linked to the agricultural economy (an example is the Food Strategy for Wales (Welsh Assembly Government, 2010)). Vieira et al., however, also find that the most obvious rural-urban food relationship, namely the transfer of food from the countryside into the city, creates little benefit for rural communities and that better social as well as beneficial infrastructural relations between rural-urban areas should be developed, including improved opportunities to provision the city from surrounding peri-urban areas. Similarly, while most of the exemplars set out here envisage an increase in food production from within the city by innovative and often social enterprises to achieve e.g. waste/GHG emissions reduction and social well-being, this can have the effect of reinforcing the separate character and geography of city-grown food. Analyses of Malmö (Moragues-Faus & Morgan, 2015) and Ghent (M. Koopmans, Mettepenningen, E., Huylenbroeck, G., 2013) emphasise the contrast between the democratic, small-scale, 'green' contexts of urban food production and the industrial nature of the agricultural rural hinterland.

In most exemplars described above, city councils, which have a specified role in improving public health, have made policy and functional connections between food consumption and health, as well as between social activities involving the production, preparation and consumption of food with wider economic and environmental well-being, including the development of commitments to identify and secure space for urban food cultivation, although this has its limits within the hierarchy of other competing environmental priorities, including transport (M. Koopmans, Mettepenningen, Kunda, Keech, & Tisenkops, 2017; Reed & Keech, 2018). Moreover, food production in cities is usually pursued on small parcels of land, which are excluded from production subsidies (Curry, Reed, Keech, Maye, & Kirwan, 2014 ).

Networks which seek to support sustainable food systems in cities are effective in supporting horizontal learning and mutual technical and political encouragement. This might include actions to reduce consumer-related post-production food waste (70% of the all municipal food waste processed (DEFRA, 2018)), which represents a substantial proportion of municipal food waste. But the urban focus may not address food losses associated with agricultural production (Schmied, 2018:227), dealt with by rural municipalities (or ploughed back into the ground).

Some of the strategies featured, such as Bristol, Bath, Toronto and Malmö, place themselves within a wider food territory which crosses rural and urban boundaries, and where localised food supply into the city is regarded as an integral objective of a sustainable urban food system. Reciprocity, namely the return of waste nutrients to the countryside in the form of fertiliser is not yet evident, although

this is increasingly routine in cities in the global south (Drechsel, Keraita, Coife, & Nikiema, 2015). These strategies also envisage the territory as an ideal (i.e. local) productive backdrop to the city and its growing consumers, rather than as one place in a globally dispersed and complex provisioning system.

### 4.2 Smart regional development

This term, in the WP1 conceptual framework, examines how the region or locality studied is constructed as an economic unit in terms of its connectedness, embeddedness and contribution to smart specialisation. This may involve making the most of local resources, knowledge and assets to realise innovations and growth potentials via better rural-urban links. In terms of strategy development, smart regional development (as distinct from 'SMART cities' – technologically enhanced sustainable practices) could be a framework for linking local strategies to unique local resources in order to valorise them.

An area of common concern for many urban food strategies is the improvement of public procurement, both in terms of making the market more accessible to local producers and improving the quality and take-up of meals. The BANES strategy served as a good platform to begin market engagement and support workshops by the municipality to help local suppliers become contract-ready. This currently involves smart ordering arrangements called a Dynamic Procurement System (DPS). Via an internet ordering platform, contract-ready suppliers can have their products listed and delisted depending on seasonal availability, thereby enabling (e.g.) school cooks to order a range of seasonally varying foods and saving money through more efficiently organised deliveries than direct ordering and supplier direct delivery. Logistical efficiency also reduces transport-related $CO_2$ emissions. Through its membership of the West of England procurement partnership, these advancements can be shared with other municipalities.

The Food Smart Cities Network for Development (FSC4D)[6] is an alliance of 12 urban municipalities led by Milan, working with international food, social justice and development organisations, which fosters and shares good practice in the contribution city councils. While it has little to say about smart regional development in the sense we use it in ROBUST, it is notable that smart in this context has been used as a shorthand for international integration of sustainable food strategy development. FSC4D emphasises the important role of municipalities in fostering sustainable food systems through decentralised, local co-operation, in contrast to the consolidating picture presented of the food industry (see above).

Other effective use of IT is evident in social media postings, blogs and vlogs which create a sense of local food culture vibrancy (Reed & Keech, 2017).

### 4.3 Multi-level governance

In a further review of British and North American municipal food strategies, Sonnino traces values and meaning captured in urban food policy-making, which she summarises under three broad themes:

> (i) *'A systematic approach to food, which is seem as a multi-functional public good;*
> (ii) *An emphasis on civil society participation in […] governance;*

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[6] http://www.comune.torino.it/cooperazioneinternazionale/pdf/FSC4D-Recommendation-and-good-practices.pdf

(iii)     *A flexible and inclusive approach to re-localisation;*
(iv)     *A new focus in trans-local scale.' Sonnino (2019:14)'*

The complexity of the food system is related to its multiple processes and outcomes, the diversity and number of participants who play a role in its operation and the dispersed spaces that are needed to produce and consume food. These functions, outcomes and spaces are all contested, as is the notion of and pathway towards transition to a sustainable food future. Recent research by the EAT-Lancet commission is clear that rapid transition towards a plant-based diet is essential to protect global natural resources (Willett & al., 2019), while Neff et al. (2015) have pointed out that vested interests in the US livestock industry oppose cuts in meat consumption to support improvements in dietary health. At the municipal level, Moragues-Faus and Morgan (2015) argue that cities have been at the forefront of devising new multi-level governance contexts or 'spaces of deliberation' to try and achieve some consensus and progress towards an sustainable food transition. Such deliberative, inclusive and multi-stakeholder approaches are evident in all of the strategies listed above. We have tried, here, to complicate this argument by adding the additional challenge of governance of food relationships and functions which extend beyond the city, which may cause conflicts or be represented in different (or multiple) types of policies and policy levels, from local to international.

A question remains about how far municipalities, especially where those subject to public sector budget austerity, can reach out beyond their democratic and administrative realms in order to influence sustainability on food production systems in their rural hinterland or in importing countries. In attempting to make headway, a number of cities have set up food policy councils, or similar networks. These have especially concentrated on influencing those parts of the food landscape over which they had some degree of control, including public sector procurement (especially school meals), public or temporary land management (for food growing), often partnership with civil society networks and supporting the emergence of a cultural economy which includes food.

In order to increase the reach of impacts and to replicate best practice, cities with effective multi-level food governance structures have made connections, especially through networks such as SFN (in the UK) which awards marques, ICLEI and Milan Pact.

As shown in the Toronto example, municipal food strategies may be linked to normative visions of future food systems, while rural and agri-sectoral strategies may concentrate on outlining more technical emphases, for example on increasing productivity (IS ref).

The table below provides an overview of how the exemplar food strategies relate to rural-urban links, smart development and multi-level governance. It is our intention to build on this list by asking CoP colleagues to add to it.

*Table 1: Summary of how exemplar food strategies relate to Robust's key themes.*

| Strategy | Rural-urban relations | Smart development | Multi-level governance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bath and North East Somerset | Emphasis on local sourcing within 30 miles, especially through public procurement. Food for Life (FFL) Bronze standard. Awareness of the environmental impact of agriculture. | Experimental public procurement (Dynamic Procurement System) uses internet ordering and logistic platform to enhances ability of local food suppliers to enter the public procurement market. | Relatively flat – managed through unitary local authority mechanisms but defunct since budget cuts. Some links with neighbouring authorities via the West of England Partnership (see Bristol). |
| Bristol | Commitment to developing leadership in regional public procurement through FFL Silver and Sustainable Food Cities Gold standards. | New emphasis on food waste reduction, including through hi-tech industrial processes to create renewable energy. | Bristol Food Policy Council now in abeyance pending SFC Gold Standard progress. BCC keen to influence Industrial Strategy processes. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Development of the city as a (multi-)cultural showcase for quality regional food. | | |
| Ghent | Commitment to local and organic sourcing. | Explicit link to university in development of knowledge around sustainable urban food systems and infrastructures. | Implementation dependent on links with and operations of a wide range of social and commercial enterprises. |
| Gloucestershire | Public food procurement. Cities as markets. | Hi-tech innovation to improve agri productivity and develop food safety/health advances. | Funded by the local allocation of national industrial strategy investments. Governance of implementation likely (but not certain) through Local Enterprise Partnership rural business sub-group. |
| Lincoln | Clear divide between city focus on consumer health and community level production, and the agri-productive rural setting around the city. | Not clear. | Implementation and accountability linked to SFC grant awarded to Local Food Partnership. Delivery of plan objectives through contracts between LFP and local civil society groups. |
| London | Emphasis on local and ethical sourcing and food chain waste reduction/circular economy. Links to good practice in other cities but little explicit rural-urban focus. Support for production in the city. | Multiple, including food chain/hub specialisation at wholesale markets; food manufacturing cluster. | Integration of plan into a range of other city strategies. Implementation by multi-actor Food Board which reports to the Mayor. |
| Malmö | Explicit support for regional food chains and landscape conservation via commitment to organic and local food sourcing. Support for production in the city. | Unclear. | Policy development linked to public-private-civil society interface, especially with urban food growing social enterprises and grass-roots networks. |
| Toronto | Commitment to developing a wider, regional food strategy. | Objectives linked to the development of new jobs in the healthy food sector. | Via multi-stakeholder and advisory Food Policy Council. |

The summary table immediately exposes themes related to:

1. Public procurement - Food chain localisation and organic food sourcing is regarded a route towards improved environmental performance of the food system, linked to transport efficiency and lower GHG emissions. The public sector food chain is an important catalyst and innovation arena to achieve this.
2. City-regionalism – Several cities recognise their position within a wider regional food supply and demand market which requires strategic and commercial links with private or social enterprise partners to create jobs. On the other hand, a second arena for reducing food waste, namely urban production, is separated from rural agri-industrial contexts.
3. Dependence on external partners – formal multiple stakeholder networks are depended upon to co-develop policy or to deliver it, or both.
4. Smart development – further analysis of this theme is needed. Waste processing/recycling, food chain clustering or tech development are emerging but it is not clear to what extent strategies are driving or following such developments. In terms of waste management and DPS ICT adoption municipalities have a clear leading and pioneering role.

**Conclusions**

This brief review of selected scholarship and seven municipal strategy documents represents the initiation of a discussion leading to CoP webinar. It is a snapshot to which partners are expected to

add. The review is largely of urban food strategies, because it is city councils that have been at the forefront of pioneering democratic approaches to policy development in favour of sustainable city food systems. As suggested by Sonnino, urban food strategies are frequently connected by a common concern for food security, meaning economic and physical access to food linked to household income and supply chain uncertainty linked to environmental factors. Sonnino's paper has been a useful starting point but it is clear that additional considerations come to the fore once the territorial governance of food spills over into the rural-urban relationships.

Building on this, the exemplars described have been contextualised in relation to three key ROBUST themes, namely rural-urban relations, smart development and multi-level governance. In addition to the four themes emerging from the analysis – public procurement, city-regionalism, external partner dependence, and an unclear picture in relation to smart development – three broader issues struck us, which might form the basis of further discussion and examination in the webinar.

Firstly, notwithstanding the limited range of strategies described, urban policies are spatial and multi-functional while rural ones tend to be sectoral.

Secondly, this should come as no surprise, given the wide range of public services for which city municipalities are responsible, many of which are linked to social concerns such as public health, education, housing and culture. We very much concur with Sonnino's suggestion that pioneering urban food strategies are impressive, if fragile. Inquiries in Bristol and Bath, which have two of the most celebrated food strategies in England, revealed that changes in the city administration and cuts in budgets have led to a stalling of some early advancements in the integration of food across city policy arenas. Cuts in particular may also affect not just the agency of the local state itself but also of the capacity of local community networks to support strategy implementation.

Thirdly, the structure of local government is relevant and may reflect the rurality if an area/region, rather than the size of a city. Larger cities such as London, Toronto and Malmö, which economically dominate their regions, will almost necessarily be unitary (i.e. provide the total range of public services), while rural areas may, more often, be governed through a two-tier system. A city's size is not always a clear signifier of governance type - BANES is unitary. This means that a city council within a mainly rural region may have some powers and functions delegated from the higher tier regional authority. This is the case in the city of Lincoln, which is a second-tier municipality within rural Lincolnshire, and Gloucestershire, which is a first-tier municipality within a mainly rural region. In other words, the structuration of local government affects its scope and innovate capacity (which is partly externally realised) in pursuing food policy development.

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