

London Waste and Recycling Board Response to the Draft London Food Strategy

1. The London Waste and Recycling Board (LWARB) is a statutory Board established by the GLA Act 2007 to help reduce waste and improve its management in London. The Board is chaired by the Mayor of London (or his representative). The Board also includes four councillors and two independents appointed by London's councils and one independent member appointed by the Mayor of London.
2. LWARB delivers three key programmes:
 - Resource London is a programme of support for London Local Waste Authorities jointly funded by LWARB and WRAP.
 - Advance London is an investment programme to support SMEs to capitalise on the benefits of the circular economy.
 - Circular London is a programme that aims to create the right conditions for a circular economy to flourish in London
3. Within this document LWARB provides a review of the draft London Food Strategy with several recommendations for additional information that could be added in order to strengthen the Mayor's desire to move London towards becoming a zero waste city and achieving a low carbon circular economy.
4. We agree that public bodies and other organisations have an important role to play in our food economy through their procurement of food. We suggest the Executive Summary on page 10 recognises that this can also influence the amount of food waste being produced.
5. We are pleased the draft strategy recognises the importance of food's impact on the environment. However it is not clear from the Executive Summary that food waste and food packaging has a huge impact on our environment and is an issue London needs to tackle. We are also pleased that the TRiFOCAL project is mentioned here. However, it should be noted that TRiFOCAL is a EU Life project not an organisation. The project will finish in August 2019, at which point we will disseminate the learning across London and look to deliver legacy opportunities.
6. We suggest that on page 13 it may be useful to make the link between food poverty and wasted edible food. As the London Environment Strategy states – around 1/3 of food brought is thrown away and wasted food costs households an average £50 per month.
7. We suggest that the following bullet points are added to the "Good food at home - what you can do" section on page 14
 - Use menu planning tools (such as apps) to avoid wasting edible food
 - Use food sharing platforms to either give or receive surplus food that would otherwise have been thrown away
8. We suggest the following is added to the "What the Mayor will do to support change" section on page 15

- Promote tools such as “Love food hate waste” which help Londoners to avoid edible food waste through menu planning and using leftovers
9. We suggest the following is added to the “Priorities to be led by external partners point 2 (see wording in bold text)
“Businesses should donate more surplus food to food redistribution charities **and through food sharing apps** or provide financial donations or sponsorship to school holiday hunger programmes such as Kitchen Social.”
 10. We are happy to see Advance London is included in text on page 20. We suggest that an explanation of Advance London as a foot note is included for readers that are unfamiliar with the programme. We suggest the following text could be used “Advance London is a programme of investment and free business support for London SMEs that have a circular economy business model or that want to transition to a circular economy business model.”
 11. As mentioned in paragraph 4, we suggest that the importance of procurement to reduce food waste is emphasised in the text for chapter 3. We would like to see the inclusion of the need for organisations to include the food waste hierarchy when procuring as part of this chapter.
 12. We are pleased to see the inclusion of the Mayor’s plans to provide funding to support a water refill scheme across London in chapter 3, as we believe this scheme will help to reduce the huge amount of plastic water bottles currently disposed of in London.
 13. We are pleased that chapter 5 recognises that “The importance of food growing in community gardens, allotments, urban farms and other spaces in London cannot be overstated.” However a key issue which is overlooked in this chapter is the fact that people have now lost their connection with food. Food had an inherent value because there was a greater understanding of where it came from, how it was grown, and how to cook it. This issue is not explicitly addressed within this strategy. Actions which could make this link include encouraging restaurants and retailers to communicate to customers more information about where food has come from, and how it has been grown.
 14. We support the inclusion of bullet points to encourage Londoners to participate in food growing within chapter 5. We suggest that the following bullet point is added to the “How you can improve food growing section”
 - Create your own compost at home or get involved in a community composting scheme
 15. We suggest that within the “What the Mayor will do to deliver change” section that point 5 has the following wording added (see wording in bold)
“Use the Growth Fund to invest in green infrastructure **and innovations for food growth and use of food waste** for the emerging urban farming sector to help London become a leader in urban agriculture and green circular economy jobs”.

16. We are pleased the Mayor will encourage better use of urban space for food growing as part of his role to support change in London. We suggest that to encourage a better food system within London the Mayor should also be supporting the closing of the food loop in London through the use of food waste for nutrients in London food growing.
17. We support the inclusion of statistics on page 35 which help to demonstrate the importance of food in contributing to the UK's green house gas emissions. GLA also publishes data on green house gas emissions from consumption in London (including food) so it may be useful to also include this statistic.
18. We are pleased to see the inclusion within page 35 that recognises that the entire supply chain is responsible for the environmental impacts of the food system including transport, packaging and food waste. We suggest this paragraph provides more detail to illustrate the size of the impact food waste has. For example the London Environment Strategy states that London produces 1.5 – 1.75 million tonnes of food waste with a value of £2.55 billion a year.
19. We would like to see the inclusion of the following text on page 35 (see text in bold) “As Londoners, we can help reduce the impact of food by making changes to what we eat, **and how we deal with food waste. We can all reduce the amount of food we throw away, and help to ensure edible food is not wasted.**”
20. We support the recognition of food as a key component of London's emerging low carbon circular economy.
21. We are happy to see the inclusion of TRiFOCAL on page 35, however it should be noted that the GLA are not participating in TRiFOCAL. We suggest the Advance London programme is also mentioned in this paragraph, as helping pioneering food businesses is a key part of this programmes work.
22. We are pleased that the draft strategy includes a commitment to work with C40 Cities to promote healthier and sustainable food, however we would question why this only includes work on pilot projects.
23. We suggest that the Following bullet point is added to the “Good food and the environment – what you can do”
 - Choose locally produce, seasonal and sustainably sourced food.
24. We support the Mayor's aim to promote the Courtauld 2025 commitment, however the targets mentioned are a WRAP target not an LWARB target. We also suggest that the Mayor's commitment to cut food waste in London by 20% per person by 2025, and 50% by 2030 as stated in the London Environment Strategy is referenced here. Also there is no reference to the requirement for separate food waste collections for all households by 2025 which appears within the London Environment Strategy, we suggest this strategy could be strengthened by referencing this target.

25. We suggest the following bullet points are added to the “What the Mayor will do to deliver change” section on page 36
- Produce food procurement guidance for the GLA group which includes information on food waste reduction, and the use of the food waste hierarchy in GLA group venues and at events, reducing single use food packaging. Share this guidance with London Local authorities and other public bodies.
 - Provide support for businesses to reduce food waste, identify and deliver new innovations and business opportunities from food growing and waste, and increase use of the food hierarchy.
 - Support delivery of the circular economy within the food sector through support for the Food chapter of the London Circular Economy Route Map
26. We suggest that bullet point 3 of the section “What the Mayor will do to support change” on page 36 is changed to align with the wording within the London Environment Strategy as referenced in paragraph 23 of this document. We also suggest the following additional bullet point is included:
- The Mayor will promote the “Your Business is Food;Don’t throw it away” online resource from WRAP to help food businesses reduce food waste (<http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/your-business-food-don%E2%80%99t-throw-it-away-0>)
27. We are pleased that the “Priorities to be led by external partners” on page 37 includes the bullet point “Local authorities and businesses should work with the London Waste and Recycling Board , Resource London, waste authorities and others to support programmes including Love food hate waste, and TRiFOCAL”. It should be noted that Resource London is a jointly funded programme by LWARB and WRAP and part of LWARB and also as mentioned in paragraph 5, the TRiFOCAL project finishes in 2019.
28. We support bullet point three, page 37 which recognises the importance of food in the circular economy.