



Briefing 19/14

March 2019

## **Consultation on Good Food Nation Proposals for Legislation**

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in Scotland

For information only to England, Northern Ireland and Wales

### **Key Issues**

The purpose of this briefing is to advise APSE members on the consultation which is currently under way with regards to Good Food Nation proposals for legislation. The consultation will run until 29 March 2019 and all responses should be completed using the online survey form which can be accessed by [clicking here](#)

**Link to the consultation paper** – [click here](#)

**Link to the full consultation paper and online survey** - <https://consult.gov.scot/food-and-drink/good-food-nation/>

### **1.0 Introduction**

Scottish Government's Programme for Government, sets out its ambitions for a fairer, healthier Scotland providing a plan to help to continue the process of making Scotland a better place and tackling the challenges it faces. As part of this Scottish Government is committed to Scotland becoming a Good Food Nation. In June 2014, Scottish Government published a discussion document "[Becoming a Good Food Nation](#)" which set out its journey and vision towards this by 2025.

In September 2018 it published its "[Good Food Nation Programme of Measures](#)" which highlights the various activities Scottish Government are currently undertaking and plan to undertake in order to further this vision. The document highlights some of the actions already being taken to "encourage more people to eat well and achieve a healthy weight; to

support the provenance and diversity of our food sector; to educate our children about food and ensure no child grows up without having access to good food; to reduce our food waste levels; to create more opportunities for local produce to feature on menus across Scotland and elsewhere; and to support the inclusive growth of our already successful food and drink sector". As well as outlining examples of new and/ or developing policies around five key areas identified by the Food Commission including Health, Social Justice, Knowledge, Environmental Sustainability and Prosperity.

## **2.0 Background to Good Food Nation Policy**

The discussion document in 2014, set out the vision of a Good Food Nation. This is "where people from every walk of life take pride and pleasure in, and benefit from, the food they produce, buy, cook, serve, and eat each day". The vision also recognised that change was required to achieve this, with the aim to ensure that:-

- It is the norm for Scots to take a keen interest in their food, knowing what constitutes good food, valuing it and seeking it out whenever they can.
- People who serve and sell food – from schools to hospitals, retailers, cafes and restaurants – are committed to serving and selling good food.
- Everyone in Scotland has ready access to the healthy, nutritious food they need.
- Dietary-related diseases are in decline, as is the environmental impact of our food consumption.
- Scottish producers ensure that what they produce is increasingly healthy and environmentally sound.
- Food companies are a thriving feature of the economy and places where people want to work.
- Other countries look to Scotland to learn how to become a Good Food Nation.

To help develop this, a Scottish Food Commission was established representing a wide cross-section from the world of food and drink in Scotland. The first meeting was held in March 2015, with the Food Commission reporting directly to the Cabinet Secretary in order to provide advice on existing and future challenges facing Scotland's food culture as well as ways in which these challenges may be addressed.

Since their establishment the Food Commission has continued, with a Good Food Nation Summit being held in September 2017. It had been recognised that legislation may be one way to achieve the changes required to become a Good Food Nation and therefore the outcomes from the Summit and extensive work of the Food Commission was used to develop recommendations for a Good Food Nation Bill.

## **3.0 Proposals for Legislation**

It has been agreed by the Scottish Food Commission and Scottish Ministers that framework legislation should be the basis of Good Food Nation legislation, placing responsibilities on Ministers and selected public bodies. Private food-related businesses were also considered for inclusion, but the conclusion reached was that this would place businesses in Scotland at an unfair disadvantage to their competitors.

The proposed statutory duties for Scottish Ministers would include:

- A requirement for Ministers to set out a statement of policy on food (which should include issues such as growing, harvesting, processing, marketing, sale, preparation and consumption of food, disposal of waste, access to food).
- Indicators or measures of success.
- The requirement to report on the implementation of the policy every 2 years and review the statement of policy every 5 years.
- A regard for international obligations and guidance when developing the statement of policy, exercising functions or reporting on their implementation.

For specified public authorities, duties would include:

- Similar requirements for authorities with food-related functions
- Specified public authorities would have to set out a statement of food policy

Both Scottish Ministers and specified public bodies would also be required to ensure a joined up approach in delivering a Good Food Nation in Scotland. The Scottish Government does not see value in establishing an independent statutory body for this purpose.

Scottish Ministers have also said that legislation for policy in relation to things such as health, diet or food waste that could contribute to the Good Food Nation ambition should be taken forward separately from the framework proposed in the consultation.

#### **4.0 Consultation Questions**

Please [click this link](#) or go to the [www.consult.gov.scot](http://www.consult.gov.scot) website to complete the consultation online. The questions asked are shown below:

1. To what extent do you agree with the framework proposals for Ministers and public authorities to prepare statements of policy, have regard to them in the exercise of relevant functions, and report on implementation, with regard to international obligations and guidance?
2. Whilst we do not plan to require all sectors to prepare statements of policy on food, they do all have a role to play in achieving our Good Food Nation ambition. To what extent do you agree that Government should encourage and enable businesses in particular to play their part?

3. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to accountability of Scottish Ministers and specified public authorities?
4. To what extent do you agree with the proposal for targeted legislation relevant to specific policy areas as an alternative to a single piece of legislation?

## **5.0 APSE Comment**

APSE welcomes the opportunity for Scottish local authorities to provide feedback on the Good Food Nation proposals outlined in this Scottish Government consultation. With their award-winning school meals services (and other Council provided food services), Councils are an excellent example of public organisations delivering quality, local food that fits well with Scotland's Good Food Nation ambitions. Their role requires expertise in the delivery, preparation, procurement, marketing and sale of food, as well as other connected processes such as dealing with food waste. This experience and knowledge make local authorities well placed to advise on the issues they face, the barriers that could be removed, the benefits they've witnessed first hand in schools and generally on their experiences of delivering quality food services that champion local provenance. APSE would encourage our membership to submit their consultation responses to ensure that the voice of local authorities is heard.

[APSE's Performance Networks service](#) has benchmarked catering performance of Scottish and UK wide local authorities for over two decades using bespoke indicators developed in conjunction with our membership. APSE is willing to share our expertise in this area and provide assistance in the development of quality indicators and measures of success for Good Food Nation legislation.

APSE Scotland also provides a regular [Soft FM advisory group](#) for local authority catering officers, managers and councillors to meet and discuss similar issues. These meetings are free to attend for APSE members. Please visit the APSE website at [www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk) for future meeting dates.

Louise Melville  
Principal Advisor

Garry Lee  
Research & Advisory Officer