

## **Weston-super-Mare**

### **Sustainable food clubs**

#### **Outline brief for Project Development**

##### **Background**

North Somerset Together, led by North Somerset Council, has supported a coalition of local community responses to COVID to develop in geographic specific areas. Weston Town Council, The For All Healthy Living Company, ROC Churches and Big Worle have recently come together to investigate and develop the setting up of 3 linked and independent 'food clubs'. Funding for initial investigation will come thorough North Somerset Council to Weston Town Council to enable the development of community-based responses.

Both food banks and food clubs share the same commitment – eradication of food poverty. However, the method to achieving this is markedly different. They are not mutually exclusive and can exist alongside each other.

Food banks treat acute situations of food poverty - urgent or emergency needs.

Food clubs can invert this paradigm by:

- ) Taking an active part in reducing food waste and protecting the environment
- ) Creating new and alternative supply chains
- ) Building assets which we all want to use
- ) Enabling members to take more control of their family budgets

Most food clubs are based on a membership model. When someone joins a food club, they become part of something and share an increased sense of belonging. People are no longer just passive recipients of services and instead can become active in developing new ways of feeding themselves, their families and their communities.

The food that is being distributed is surplus food and so it is inexpensive. The membership model will be developed around this.

##### **Rationale**

It is anticipated that there will be at least 3 local schemes to begin with and each will build on the skills, strengths and passions of the areas and the people which they serve.

The following apply to each area and will have different local interpretations:

- ) There are relatively low household income levels.
- ) Food poverty places other stresses on households.
- ) Local control of food supply can bring a sustainable alternative to supermarket low quality and convenience food

- ) There is growing evidence and experience of an Asset Based approach, building on the strengths and ownership of local people, creates longer term solutions and fosters capabilities in the local communities.
- ) Initial desktop research provides other successful examples and templates around the country.

### **Purpose of the Development Project**

We are seeking a consultant with community development skills and experience to help the coalition to develop 3 food clubs which have some shared principles and operational approaches and yet have the potential to develop in different ways in response to local need, skills and desires. The medium-term intention (18 months from start up) is for the clubs to be self-sustaining, locally owned enterprises who link to share resources and experiences where possible.

### **The consultant will need to :**

- ) Research other food club models around the country and locally
- ) Work with each local area to build on and develop local membership
- ) Develop viable business plans for each club
- ) Research and identify possible locations
- ) Set up recruitment process if and where necessary
- ) Establish a shared and agreed set of base line protocols
- ) Encourage continuous co-operation and collaboration between the projects
- ) Be led by community priorities

### **Project Outcomes**

The following are **some** of the outcomes the food club could provide for local people as a result of a successful set up.

- Clubs aim to:
  - reduce food shopping bills
  - provide access to advice and support
  - develop skills and bring communities together
  - have a sustainable business model
- Member-run:
 

Clubs are run very much along cooperative lines, by and for their members, with many of the volunteers who run the Club also being members.
- Open to all:

Membership is open to anyone within the local neighbourhood and priority will be offered to people who satisfy a basic 'low income' criterion, with no requirement to be referred by a professional or other third party.

- **Choice:**

Members are entitled to choose what food they want, using a colour-coded system to ensure that this includes a balance of fresh, packaged and 'high-value' goods.

- **Quality:**

Central to the Local Club model is the provision of good quality food, including fresh fruit and veg, frozen and chilled food (including meat and dairy products) as well as the usual supplies of tins and packets.

- **No time limits:**

Local Club membership is not time-limited; members can choose to come every week (or not) for as long as they want.

**Experience and skills required:**

- ) Community development experience
- ) Project management skills
- ) Commitment to and understanding of Asset Based Community Development
- ) Evidence of bringing a project to fruition
- ) A commitment to creating social change
- ) Understanding of impact of food poverty
- ) Ability to communicate effectively in different media with a wide range of people

**Length of contract**

6 months to bring clubs to 'start-up' position

**Fee available**

£900 per week for 6 months with at least 3 days a week.

Contract and project to be initially 'incubated' by The for All Healthy Living Company CIC

For further details please contact Mark Graham, Chief Exec. For All Healthy Living Company.

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