



Food policy City of Melbourne

Overview

The *City of Melbourne food policy* aims to improve people's health and wellbeing by promoting a food system that is secure, healthy, sustainable, thriving and socially inclusive. The policy comprises five themes which were drawn from background research and community consultation. These themes are:

- a strong, food secure community
- healthy food choices for all
- a sustainable and resilient food system
- a thriving local food economy
- a city that celebrates food.

The City of Melbourne identifies its role in building and strengthening partnerships; advocacy and leadership; education and community development; regulation and infrastructure; and management and research.

The development of the policy was led by the health services branch within the community development division. The success of the Green Light, Eat Right (GLER) pilot program in improving access to affordable and nutritious food led to discussions about developing a broad, strategic approach to food within the City of Melbourne.

Putting plans into action

The following steps were important for developing and implementing the *Food policy*:

Project planning

1. Starting in August 2011, extensive project planning was undertaken that included development of a project brief, a community engagement and communications plan, and an activity timeline.

Community consultation – round one

2. A *Food policy* discussion paper was prepared by consultants with expertise in the field to provide information on the state of food – locally, nationally and globally – in non-technical language. This discussion paper was used to drive the first stage of consultations with the community. It was published online and circulated electronically to the community and key stakeholders with a request for submissions.
3. A 'What does food mean to you?' campaign was promoted to further engage the community. This included disseminating 10,000 postcard surveys across the municipality to community groups, the public and local businesses. The survey included two key questions: 'What does food mean to you?' and 'What are the most important food issues our community will face in the future?' Posters were also displayed in prominent places.

4. Three forums – one internal and two external – were undertaken with community members and stakeholders representing various and diverse food sectors.

Data analysis and drafting the policy

5. Data were analysed using thematic analysis. This involves coding recurring patterns in the data and then categorising these patterns into themes.
6. Consultants were engaged to draft the *Food policy*.

Community consultation – round two

7. The draft policy was submitted to council who endorsed its release for a four-week public notice period.
8. The draft policy was sent to stakeholders who were involved in the first round of consultations, a community open house event was held at the City Library and a feedback survey was developed and promoted on the corporate website.
9. Feedback was collated and incorporated into the final document and on 5 June 2012 the City of Melbourne *Food policy* was endorsed by the Future Melbourne Committee with full support from the councillors.

Governance

- A small internal Food Policy Steering Committee was formed to make key decisions on the *Food policy* project. This group met at key points throughout the development of the policy and included the Director of Community Development, Manager of Health Services and the Health Projects Team.
- An internal Food Policy Advisory Group was also formed to provide guidance, strategic advice and feedback throughout the development of the *Food policy*. This group met monthly and included representation, mostly at a senior management level, from key work areas across council including: Health Services, Recreation Services, Business and International, Sustainability, Community Services, Strategic Planning, City Design and Engineering Services.

Evaluation

- The *Food policy* was evaluated using a results based accountability (RBA) process that will enable the City of Melbourne to assess the impact of the *Food policy* on the community.

Action plan

- An action plan has been developed that outlines the organisation's activity for 2012–13.

Contact and further information

To find out more about the City of Melbourne *Food policy*, visit:

<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/communityservices/health/foodpolicy/Pages/FoodPolicy.aspx>

Email: foodpolicy@melbourne.vic.gov.au

The information in this case study has been compiled by key people involved in the development of the City of Melbourne *Food policy*. Information is correct as at October 2012.

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