

## **Cork Food Policy Council Second Submission to the LECP Process**

### **Foreword**

The Cork Food Policy Council is pleased to see reference to the Council in the Stakeholders' List and in the document (p21 SCOT Analysis).

We wish to highlight again the rationale for the setting up of the Cork Food Policy Council.

**The Cork Food Policy Council was formed to work towards the achievement of a fairer, healthier, more secure and sustainable food system within the City and throughout the region.**

Key values and aims promoted by Cork Food Policy Council:

**Health and wellbeing for all**

**A thriving local economy**

**Resilient food friendly communities**

**Lifelong learning and skills**

**A reduced environmental footprint**

### **The Footprint of the City**

Cities in general are set to grow considerably in the next 30 years with Cork also planning on growth in population. The ecological footprint of the city is considerable.

Whilst cities take up just 2% of land area they are responsible for 75% of the consumption of resources, including food. Cities also contribute approximately 70% to GHG emissions.

Therefore it is essential that food is part of the planning process and is included in the Land Use strategy for the City. Incorporating food into the plan requires inclusion of the following;

- Encouraging local food production in the city
- Safeguarding land for the production of food
- Developing skills e.g. growing, cooking, business
- Reducing food waste and enhancing the circular economy performance

### **Food production**

Food production is vital for human nutrition, health and well-being. It is also an important economic activity. Whilst County Cork possesses some of the richest farmland in the country, and produces much of the dairy and meat consumed there are opportunities for the city to produce a lot more of its food, especially vegetables, herbs and fruit.

More food production in the city, with support by the City Council for access to land and other associated activities can result in:

- More affordable and accessible healthy food
- Transformation of food in institutions e.g. hospitals, schools, companies
- More locally diverse choice and range of food
- Safeguard land and contribute to other sustainability goals such as biodiversity, reduced transport = reduced emissions.
- Strengthening links between producers and consumers
- Improved dietary and health outcomes

All nations and cities have a crucial role to play in the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals, the transformational change required by Developed Countries like Ireland ranked as third the Goal to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

### **A Food strategy or Food Policy for Cork City**

While Ireland does not have a Food Policy or a Food Strategy, Cork as a city could follow in the footsteps of many European and US cities, and lead the way in Ireland by developing a specific Food Strategy for Cork city. The goal of a Food Strategy would be to set out a roadmap for a healthy and sustainable food system in Cork city. This would be a critical addition to the honeycomb of strategies featured on page 17, not least because of the synergies offered in relation to the climate change policy, the healthy city strategy and so on. Taking into account that our diets are number one risk factor for Ireland's total burden of disease ahead of cigarette smoking and alcohol, and that one in eight people are classified as experiencing food poverty, a food specific strategy for Cork city would be a very welcomed initiative and would complement the vision of the LECF.