

Task and Finish Group Proforma

<p>Proposed title <i>This should be written as a question. What is the main question that you are looking to answer? Ideally use “how” I.e. “How can we improve.....XXX?”</i></p>	<p>How can Community Gardening and current Allotments practice be expanded & adapted to increase community participation and offer more opportunities for local interactions with schools, food banks, housing associations, the voluntary sector & social prescribing services?</p>
<p>Overview <i>Provide 2-3 sentences explaining the proposed investigation in more detail including the key areas that you are proposing to look at.</i></p>	<p>The TFG will consider current allotment and food growing practice in Lewisham and opportunities for expansion/adaptation to increase community participation, taking into account good practice and the role of other linked organisations and schemes, eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allotment associations, community growing & Mental Health projects, community gardens, housing associations, schools, available/ under-used land on the Asset Register, and projects in other urban areas/ parks/ London Boroughs and cities.
<p>Reason for proposal <i>Why do you think that a task and finish group is the most appropriate way to address this issue / answer this question? Where has the suggestion come from? (I.e. through resident engagement, casework, external inspection, performance information.)</i></p>	<p>Lewisham is developing its Food Strategy and a Food Justice Network in the face of the Cost of Living Crisis, which includes acknowledging the wider structural causes of food poverty, ‘requiring the input of multiple stakeholders, decision & policy makers’. Considerable cross-cutting research and engagement of policies, resources and all stakeholders by a TFG will support this work, building on some informal investigations & interviewing of stakeholders & council assets in 21/22.</p> <p>Community growing groups - from external inspection/ site visits and recent dialogue - feel that the allotment allocation system could be more open to collective growing & community participation, to the benefit of all, and that better co-ordination between sectors & all stakeholders is possible both across Lewisham and in all local neighbourhoods.</p>
<p>Policy Context <i>How does the proposal support delivery of the Lewisham Corporate Strategy; national/regional policies, initiatives; legislation etc.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manifesto/ draft Corporate Strategy: “Work in partnership with local food banks, food growing groups, schools & communities, through our joint Lewisham Food Action Plan. This will develop an effective ‘circular economy’ using local supply chains through our procurement & catering contracts.” - The Council’s Climate Emergency declaration & ongoing actions from this. - Parks & Open Spaces Strategy 2020-25 - Social Prescribing strategies - <u>Lewisham Poverty Commission report 2017</u>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steps towards the Circular economy - Council's 2014 Community Gardening brochure
<p>Criteria for the investigation (Essential)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the proposed investigation timely? Why? • Is it a strategic and significant issue? How? • Is it of concern to one or more sections of the population? Who? <p>(Desirable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the issue of concern to partners or stakeholders? How? • Will the investigation add value in terms of improving the council's or partner's performance or service delivery? How? • Will the investigation be duplicating any other work? What? • What control or influence does the Council have in this area? 	<p>Current and previous work on the Cost of Living Crisis, Covid-19 and the Climate Emergency have highlighted the positive potential of local outdoor spaces for mental health, social cohesion and food growing right across the Borough. This TFG is therefore timely, but will only be considering the food-growing & associated networking aspects of the Borough's responses to both food poverty and Climate Emergency, helping to deliver local perspectives.</p> <p>The role of Lewisham financed greening projects and the potential for equitable access to all appropriate funding sources for all stakeholders are also significant lines of investigation.</p> <p>The oncoming and escalating Cost of Living Crisis and Climate Emergency affects those in poverty the worst, but the wider mental health benefits of community growing & green social prescribing are available to all.</p> <p>Community growing is a vehicle for social cohesion and practical expressions of cultural diversity and can therefore help to drive inclusion and tackle inequalities.</p> <p>The TFG's findings will feed into the strategic 'wider determinants' questions of the Council's Food Justice Network, and will provide recommendations, eg improvements to the Council's Allotments Policy, to fit with the current times.</p>
<p>Sources of evidence <i>Do you have any thoughts/ideas on where you might gather evidence from? e.g. research or site visits. (Officers will be able to recommend suggestions and help with this.)</i></p>	<p>Community Growing & Gardening Groups, Lewisham Self-Managed Allotment Association, Lewisham Local, Housing Associations, Lewisham schools, the Council's Asset Register, community sector groups working in this sector (eg AFRIL – Action for Refugees in Lewisham), Southwark, Acton, Hackney, Preston. LBL Allotments Policy & practice.</p>
<p>Co-optees / Technical advisors? <i>Would the task and finish group benefit from having expert input such as an academic or local expert?</i></p>	<p>Julia Edmondson & Duncan Cameron from University of Sheffield Institute of Sustainable Food Technology published a ground-breaking study in 2020 of the potential impact of maximising available urban spaces for food growing for 'Smart Food Cities'...</p> <p>https://news.mongabay.com/2020/03/study-finds-huge-potential-for-urban-gardens-to-feed-city-dwellers/</p>

<p>Suggested timeframe <i>Do you estimate / suggest that the investigation take 3, 6, 9 or 12 months? Outline your suggested timetable for evidence gathering.</i></p>	<p>6 months</p>
<p>Equalities Impact <i>Identify any equalities issues that might be applicable.</i></p>	<p>Cultural Diversity needs to be seen in both collective and other forms of growing, including expanding the incidence of culturally specific crops. How much does the individualised approach of current allotment applications facilitate any of this? Collective growing spaces need to be inclusive and to have strong equality/diversity/social policies. The TFG will work with groups already leading on examining inclusion and access to allotments, community gardens, food hubs and community kitchens to ensure access for all.</p>
<p>Councillor(s) submitting the proposal <i>Please list the names of the submitting councillor(s)</i></p>	<p>Cllr Laura Cunningham, Cllr Coral Howard, Cllr Sian Eiles, Cllr Will Cooper, Cllr Natasha Burgess</p>