

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee
Tuesday, 2 September 2025
21st Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

Proposed National Good Food Nation Plan - Note by the Clerk

Background

1. At today's meeting, the Committee will be holding an evidence session with various stakeholders as well as the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, Mairi Gougeon MSP to scrutinise the [Proposed National Good Food Nation Plan](#).
2. The Rural Affairs and Islands (RAI) Committee was the lead Committee for scrutiny of the [Good Food Nation Bill](#), a [framework bill](#) introduced by the Scottish Government with the aim of creating a coordinated approach to Scotland's food. As part of its scrutiny of the Bill, the RAI Committee [sought the views of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee](#), along with [other subject committees](#) in light of the cross-cutting nature of the Bill.
3. The Good Food Nation Bill received Royal Assent, becoming the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022, on 26 July 2022.
4. Section 1 of the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022 specifically requires Scottish Ministers to prepare a national plan.
5. The deadline for the Scottish Government to have laid the proposed national plan is "not later than the end of the period of 12 months beginning with the day on which" the relevant section of the Act comes into force. This means the Scottish Government is required to lay the proposed national plan in the Scottish Parliament by 30 June 2025.
6. According to the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022, the Scottish Government is required to lay the proposed national plan "before the Scottish Parliament for a period of 60 days, of which no fewer than 30 days must be days on which the Parliament is neither dissolved nor in recess".
7. During this period, before finalising the GFN national plan, Scottish Ministers are required to have regard to:
 - “(i) any representations about the proposed plan that are made to them,
 - (ii) any resolution relating to the proposed plan passed by the Parliament,
 - and

(iii) any report relating to the draft plan published by any committee of the Parliament for the time being appointed by virtue of the standing orders”

8. Accordingly, the Proposed National Good Food Nation Plan was published by the Scottish Government along with a number of supplementary documents on 27 June 2025. A [Scottish Parliament call for views was subsequently issued](#), which ran until 15 August 2025, in collaboration with the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee. The call for views received [65 responses](#).
9. Once the final plan has been published, before 31 December 2025, it must be reviewed every five years and have regard to recommendations made by the [Scottish Food Commission](#).

Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022

10. The [Stage 1 Report](#) on the Good Food Nation Bill by the RAI Committee highlights the changes sought by GFN policy through the Bill. In relation to public health specifically – which covers more than half of the aims – these changes aimed to ensure:
 - 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;

The Proposed National Good Food Nation Plan (the Plan)

11. The Proposed National Good Food Nation Plan (the Plan) is 85 pages in length and is made up of four main sections, with the vision being defined in Part One as “a Good Food Nation, 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”.
12. The Plan also describes how a Good Food Nation may look in practice in relation to childhood, adult life, out of home eating and retail, and food production and processing.
13. The Plan outlines six outcomes setting out the ‘subject areas and principles set out in the Act’. These are intended to ‘guide aspirations for everyone in Scotland’
14. Part Two of the Plan covers implementation, with a focus on the Scottish Government’s organisation, its role and duties, and the need for changed

perspectives within government. It also sets out how overarching policies are to be covered, including Climate Change, Wellbeing Economy, Child Poverty, Food Safety, standards and Nutrition, Population Health Framework.

15. Part Three of the Plan covers measuring progress, including various targets and indicators.
16. Part Four requires that the Plan sets out the food related policies that the Scottish Ministers intend to pursue in order to secure the achievement of the Outcomes set out in Part One. This first plan establishes a base line in terms of policies that should make a contribution to realising the GFN ambitions.
17. These policies are set out under four subheadings –
 - People and Communities
 - Providers and Places
 - Farmers, Food Producers and Processors
 - Strategic and Overarching Policies.

Today's meeting

18. The focus of today's session will be those elements of the Proposed National Good Food National Plan that are linked with public health, and areas of interest to the Committee such as food production, procurement, marketing and diet in ensuring prevention of ill-health, and improving population and public health and wellbeing.
19. At today's meeting, Members will hear from two panels. The first panel is made up of stakeholders representing the following organisations –
 - Good Food Nation Lab, University of Edinburgh
 - Food, Farming and Countryside Commission
 - The Scottish Food Coalition
 - Public Health Scotland.
20. Members will then take evidence from a second panel comprising Mairi Gougeon MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands and supporting Scottish Government officials.

Clerks to the Committee
29 August 2025