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Require the Secretary of State to publish and implement a national strategy for eradicating food poverty; to require the setting of targets for the implementation of that strategy; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:— 5

1 Local food poverty eradication strategies

- (1) For the purposes of—
- (a) assisting the Secretary of State in discharging his functions under section 2 below; and 10
 - (b) assessing what measures are in its opinion needed to be taken in its area to eradicate food poverty,

it shall be the duty of every local food authority to prepare, within 12 months of the passing of this Act, a local food poverty eradication strategy (“local strategy”) and any such strategy may, if in the opinion of the authority it is desirable to do so, form part of a wider strategy being prepared by the authority. 15

- (2) A local strategy shall set out the local food authority’s assessment of—
- (a) the extent and nature of food poverty in the authority’s area; 20
 - (b) the measures that, in the opinion of the authority, would be needed to eradicate food poverty in its area; and
 - (c) the cost and environmental impact of such measures.

- (3) In preparing its local strategy a local food authority shall consult—
- (a) all other relevant statutory bodies in its area;
 - (b) persons in its area experiencing food poverty;
 - (c) organisations operating in its area which have experience in dealing with the issue of food poverty; and
 - (d) any other person it considers appropriate.
- (4) The Secretary of State may issue guidance to local food authorities in relation to their preparation of local strategies.
- (5) A local food authority shall send a copy of its local strategy to the Secretary of State.
- (6) It shall be the duty of a local food authority to take action to implement its local strategy.
- (7) A local food authority may arrange for the discharge of its functions by a joint committee (a “Partnership Committee”) consisting of representatives from the authority and from other local statutory bodies and from relevant local organisations and communities.

2 National food poverty eradication strategy

- (1) It shall be the duty of the Secretary of State to prepare and publish, within 2 years of the passing of this Act, a national food poverty eradication strategy (“national strategy”), which shall set out policies for ensuring that, as far as is reasonably practicable, food poverty is eradicated.
- (2) The national strategy must—
- (a) describe the categories of persons to which it applies;
 - (b) specify measures for ensuring easier access for such persons to food which will provide a healthy diet;
 - (c) specify interim objectives to be achieved and target dates for achieving them; and
 - (d) specify a target date, which shall be no later than 15 years after the publication of the national strategy, for the achievement of the objective of ensuring that, as far as reasonably practicable, food poverty is eradicated.
- (3) In preparing the national strategy, the Secretary of State shall—
- (a) take into account the local strategies submitted to him under section 1 above; and
 - (b) consult—
 - (i) persons experiencing food poverty;
 - (ii) persons or organisations with relevant expertise or experience in relation to food poverty; and
 - (iii) such other persons as he thinks fit.
- (4) The Secretary of State shall take such action as is necessary to implement the national strategy.

- (5) The Secretary of State shall from time to time assess the impact of action taken under subsection (4) above, and progress made in achieving the objectives and target dates of the national strategy, and shall—
- (a) make any revision of the national strategy which he considers appropriate in consequence of the assessment; and
 - (b) publish a report on the assessment.
- (6) If the Secretary of State revises the national strategy, he shall publish the strategy as revised.

3 Content of strategies

- (1) Any strategy or revision thereof prepared pursuant to this Act shall include policies or measures that will promote—
- (a) more equitable access to food which has been produced to high environmental and animal welfare standards;
 - (b) the improvement of the health of people in the area covered by the strategy or revision;
- and shall consider the development of local food economies in the area covered by the strategy or revision including but not confined to policies to reduce food miles.
- (2) Any strategy or revision thereof prepared pursuant to this Act shall clearly indicate the way in which it has taken into account the matters stated in subsection (1) above, and any such strategy may set targets in relation to those matters.

4 Interpretation

In this Act—

- “food miles” means the total distance travelled by produce from the place of growth or production to the place of retail;
- “food poverty” means the inability to afford, or have reasonable access to, food which provides a healthy diet;
- “local food authority” means a district, metropolitan borough, London borough or unitary council, or the Council of the Isles of Scilly;
- “local food economies” means the growing, raising, processing or marketing of food within a local area for consumption within that same area.

5 Financial provisions

There shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament—

- (a) any expenditure incurred by the Secretary of State in consequence of this Act;
- (b) a reasonable allowance for any expenditure required to be incurred by a local food authority in consequence of this Act; and
- (c) any increase attributable to this Act in the sums payable out of money so provided by virtue of any other Act.

6 Short title and extent

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Food Poverty Eradication Act 2002.
- (2) This Act extends to England and Wales only.