

Middlesex London Initial Food Policy Council

Terms of Reference

May 24, 2017

Vision

The Middlesex London community sustains a healthy, safe, equitable and ecologically responsible local food system, that nourishes all residents and is economically viable.

Mission

The Middlesex London Food Policy Council will:

- Be a forum for discussing local food issues.
- Empower citizens to be involved in food system decisions.
- Foster coordination between sectors in the food system.
- Create, evaluate and influence policy.
- Support programs and services that address local needs.

Goal

To facilitate and support a safe, healthy and accessible local food system that is socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable.

Activities

Advocate – Identify policy changes which support goals and advocate for their implementation.

Communicate – Engage with the community on relevant and timely issues through the sharing of information and involvement in action groups.

Coordinate – Identify and prioritize emerging issues, opportunities and needs in the Middlesex London food system and support the creation and implementation of initiatives.

Educate – Provide evidence-based research and the most current knowledge on local food systems issues.

Evaluate – Establish benchmarks and targets for achievement of mission/goals and monitor and report on progress of implementation.

Leverage – Align and seek community resources to support the mission and goals of the Food Policy Council.

Research - To facilitate, or conduct research on emerging local food system priorities where information gaps exist.

Network – Build new partnerships and facilitate networking between existing and emerging food system stakeholders in Middlesex London.

Values

Members of the Middlesex London Food Policy Council are committed to achieving the following in our community:

- *Accountability*- Accountable to citizens of Middlesex London.
- *Community and Partnership* – Inclusivity, sharing responsibility, and working together will improve the food system and benefit all.
- *Diversity* – Our communities celebrate the culture and diversity of food
- *Equity* – All people have equitable access to healthy, local and culturally appropriate food.
- *Health and Well Being* - All citizens have opportunities for optimal physical and mental health.
- *Respect* – The perspectives and contributions of everyone in the food system - including those farming, processing, distributing, cooking, and eating food are respected and valued.
- *Sustainability* – There is a reliable, secure, economically viable, ecologically and socially responsible food system and a sustained commitment to a local Food Policy Council.
- *Transparency* – People have a right to know what's in their food, where and how it is produced and what is being discussed within the Food Policy Council.

Membership

The Middlesex London Food Policy Council has a maximum of 20 members who represent both the county, city and partnering Indigenous Nations. Members must live or work in London or Middlesex County. Membership reflects diverse interests from across the entire food system, ideally with representation from each of the following sectors:

- Agriculture (2 positions- urban, rural; small and large farm)
- City of London Council*
- City of London Municipal Staff (e.g., Planning, Social Services)*
- Economic Development/Community Futures
- Education

- Food Distribution and Logistics
- Food Processing
- Food Retail
- Food Security
- Food Service/Institutional Food/Food Procurement
- General Community Member (2) one county, one city); (Priority given to populations not represented by other member positions e.g., older adults, youth, newcomers)
- Indigenous Communities
- Middlesex County Council*
- Middlesex County Municipal Staff (e.g., Planning, Social Services)*
- Middlesex-London Board of Health*
- OMAFRA (Provincial Agricultural Group)*
- Research
- Energy, Environment, Water and Waste

*Member to be appointed by representative organization

The Council's membership should reflect Middlesex London's diverse population, including, but not limited to, race, rural/urban residency, gender, and socioeconomic status.

Members must endorse the mission, goals, and values of the Council and have skills or experience in at least one area of food system issues. Members are expected to participate in a least one Action Group.

Governance Model

The Middlesex London Food Policy Council will operate using the model below, incorporating three levels of involvement.

Level 1: Food Policy Council Member

- Includes key community decision-makers

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Set direction on food system change,
- Take positions on food issues and advocate for change,
- Develop strategies for bringing about food system change,
- Writing and advising on policy,
- Provide leadership (i.e. attending events, speaking on behalf of the Council, etc.),
- Discuss food issues,
- Leverage relationships,

- Determine the process for the formation of the action groups and topics utilizing the results of the Community Food Assessment as a starting point,
- Oversees governance and structure overall (planning, Terms of Reference, accountability, adherence to regulations, etc.),
- Determine where to apply for funding as needed.

Level 2: Action Group Participant

- Includes individuals from the FPC and those identified by the members of the FPC as participants.
- Participants in Action Groups are those who want to “do” and “implement” food projects, Community Food Assessment priorities, grass root initiatives (community participation)

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Education
- Action
- Quick wins
- Facilitation
- Document & Report to Council

Level 3: General Public

- Includes individuals who want to stay informed

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Help to inform direction
- Attend public events and meetings

Executive Committee*

The executive committee will be composed of a Chair, Vice chair, Treasurer and Secretary and is responsible for presenting Governance recommendations to Council which will be voted upon prior to adoption.

Meetings will be scheduled as warranted and may be held in person, conference call or using electronic communication methods adopting the approved Decision Making standards.

*Refer to Appendix A for Executive Committee Role Descriptions.

Action Groups:

Topic specific Action Groups will be composed of participants and at least one Council member. Each Action Group will have one Food Policy Council member to liaise with the Council and report on progress the Action Group is making in key areas. Action Groups will correspond to identified priority areas of the Food Policy Council and will be struck as needed by the Council to implement planned activities in key areas.

Term

Members will be appointed for two-year terms, and the possibility of one term of renewal, with half of the members' term expiring in odd-numbered years, and the other half expiring in even-numbered years, to ensure consistency.

Executive Committee will be voted upon by Council members annually. Executive willing to stand for additional year may be considered.

Attendance

Missing two meetings a year without prior discussion with Chair is deemed equivalent to a resignation. The Executive will appoint new interim members during the term as needed.

Decision Making

Consensus is the preferred method of decision-making. When consensus is not reached, a vote will be taken, as long as quorum is met (50% + 1).

Quorum is defined as 50% of the current membership and 50+1 is required for day-to-day decisions.

Two /thirds agreement of Council members are required for major* decisions.

Major decisions may be deemed to be treated as such if motion receives 50 + 1; and will subsequently require 2/3 agreement.

*Major defined as public policy or advocacy positions or decisions deemed by Council vote to be treated as such.

Meeting Frequency

The Food Policy Council will meet up to 8 times per year. Dates and times to be agreed upon by Council members. Meetings will alternate between City and County locations. The Annual Meeting will be open to the public.

Staff Resources

Coordinator

A Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) Registered Dietitian, knowledgeable in community food systems will provide coordination support to the Food Policy

Council. MLHU offers a 0.25 FTE for this position. The dietitian will attend all full Food Policy Council meetings, but will not have voting rights.

Coordinator responsibility includes:

- act as a consistent point of contact for MLFPC and Action groups to facilitate collaboration and dialogue with city and county staff, food system stakeholders and community members
- coordinate with Chair on meeting requirements and Annual Report
- provide evidence support for decisions upon Council request
- monitor emerging food system issues and the broad political and policy environment and how it impacts health
- share relevant information with MLFPC members and Action groups

Trustee

The London Food Bank, acting in the capacity of Trustee (e.g. financial manager) will also provide support to the Food Policy Council as an ex-officio member. They will attend and participate at meetings and assist in the administration of the council but will not have voting rights.

Resource allocation and responsibilities are to be re-visited within 1 year of FPC formation.

Review and Approval of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed at a minimum annually and approved by the Food Policy Council.

DEFINITIONS/GLOSSARY

Council refers to all Food Policy Council members.

The Food System is an interconnected network of practices, processes and places that cover all aspects of food. The six components of the food system are: Food Production, Food Processing, Food Distribution, Food Access, Food Consumption, Food Education and Waste Management (Food Policy Council, City of Vancouver).

A sustainable food system is one that provides healthy food to meet current food needs while maintaining healthy ecosystems that can also provide food for generations to come with minimal negative impact to the environment. A sustainable food system is economically viable and also encourages local production and distribution infrastructures that makes nutritious food available, accessible, and affordable to all. Further, it is humane and just, protecting farmers and other workers, consumers, and communities (American Public Health Association).

Local food economy is the economic activity surrounding the activities of the local food system. The local food system includes all people, activities and resources needed to feed the people in a given area. This includes everything needed to grow, process, package, distribute, consume and dispose of food (Middlesex-London Community Food Assessment).

Community Food Assessment is a participatory and collaborative process engaged in by members of a community who are interested in exploring their community's food system strengths and issues (Middlesex-London Community Food Assessment).

Food Policy Councils connect diverse people from the food, farming and community sector to develop innovative policies and projects that support a health-focused food system. Food Policy Councils are a forum for action across the food system and serve as a coordinated approach to food policy issues (Food Policy Council, City of Toronto).

***Food Sovereignty** is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems (International Forum for Food Sovereignty, Declaration of the Forum for Food Sovereignty).

Approved by Middlesex-London Food Policy Council on the ____ day of _____, 2017.

X

Paul van der Werf, Chair
Middlesex-London Food Policy Council

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Silke Nebel, Vice Chair
Middlesex-London Food Policy Council

APPENDIX A - Middlesex London Food Policy Council

Committee Responsibilities

Executive

Chair

The Chair is a member of the Middlesex-London Food Policy Council (MLFPC) who has been elected by MLFPC by a vote of the members on the Council. The Chair has an in-depth knowledge of the Middlesex County and City of London food system, its related policies and has the communication skills to speak on behalf of MLFPC.

The duties of the Chair include:

- Attend and chair Executive meeting
- Attend and chair Nomination sub committee
- Preview and Review meeting agendas
- Liaise with MLFPC support staff and delegate responsibilities
- Guide goal setting and program planning amongst MLFPC members
- Facilitate communications among MLFPC members
- Act as the spokesperson for MLFPC

Vice Chair

MLFPC will elect the Vice Chair by a vote of the members on the Council. The Vice Chair will have an in-depth knowledge of the food system and related policy in Middlesex County and the City of London and have the communication skills to speak on behalf of the Council when necessary.

The duties of the Vice Chair include:

- Perform the duties of the Chair or Secretary in their absence
- Attend and chair Governance sub committee
- Assist the Chair or Secretary in their MLFPC duties whenever possible
- Act as spokesperson for MLFPC as required

Treasurer

The Treasurer will be elected to MLFPC by a vote of members on the Council. The Treasurer will have knowledge of the food system in Middlesex County and the City of London and will have skills and competencies in accounting and financial management.

The duties of the Treasurer include:

- Keep updated records on the accounts payable and receivable
- Present summary report on finances to the MLFPC at each meeting
- Regularly identify all financial risks
- Attend and chair Finance sub committee

Secretary

The Secretary will be elected to MLFPC by a vote of the members on the Council. The Secretary will have knowledge of the food system in Middlesex County and the City of London and will have administrative support skills and capacities.

The duties of the Secretary include:

- Taking meeting minutes and distributing these minutes to approved members of MLFPC in a timely fashion
- Attend and chair Communications sub committee
- Corresponding with MLFPC members
- Invite and liaise with guests and speakers as directed by MLFPC
- Assisting with general coordination and communications on behalf of MLFPC
- Providing support to both MLFPC and the executive committee as required

Sub Committees

The Executive Committee may request Council members participate on Communication, Governance, Finance and Nomination committees as warranted.

Council members will fill positions, with external parties only engaged through approval by Council. Meetings will be scheduled as warranted and may be held in person, conference call or using electronic communication methods adopting the approved Decision Making standards.

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APPENDIX B - Middlesex London Food Policy Council

Operating Principles

Action Groups

- Standard reporting template(s) implemented to provide consistent documentation used for annual reporting
- Project Lead responsible for own meeting management and documentation of project charter via standard template
- Copies of reports to be shared with Staff Resource Coordinator for retention, communication and transparency purposes
- Group member(s) will provide updates at Council meetings
- Members of the community will be invited to participate

Annual Report

- will be presented to public at the Annual General Meeting and should include at a minimum:
 - summary of policy changes impacted by the MLFPC
 - summary of all Action Group results
 - nomination report
 - financial report (including funding resources)
 - communications/outreach to community report

Membership

- Those seeking membership on the council will be vetted by the Executive Committee to ensure membership continues to reflect Middlesex London's diverse population, skills or experience as identified in the Membership section of the Terms of Reference
- Annual Appointments to Food Policy Council will be voted upon by current Council members prior to the Annual Meeting
- Members deemed to have resigned during the term will be appointed as new interim members as needed by the Executive Committee

Solicitation

- As a point of clarification, this will be referenced as people/organizations that are "soliciting" time/involvement on the MLFPC council or seeking time on meeting agendas
- All inquiries will be directed to Staff Resource Coordinator as first point of contact
- Executive Committee will review all requests and respond as deemed appropriate

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