
Report To:	Planning, Leisure & Environment Committee	Date:	04 September 2023
Contact Officer:	Paula Harrison		
Subject:	Community Pantry		

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Planning, Leisure & Environment Committee with information to consider for the creation of a Community Pantry.

2. DETAIL

- 2.1 Community pantries offer the opportunity to redistribute surplus food to local residents. The main source of surplus food is through Fareshare which redistributes supermarket goods. The Parish Council has registered with Fareshare as a distributor however, they are currently oversubscribed. The Parish Council has also approached Aldi.

Key principles:

- Food with a 'Best Before' date can legally be sold or redistributed, and consumed after this date. Redistribution organisations, like individual consumers, are able to make a reasonable judgment on whether or not the food can be sold, donated & made available to be eaten.
 - The 'Use By' date relates to food safety. Food cannot be sold, redistributed or consumed after this date. The only exception to this is if the food has gone through a safe freezing or cooking process, before the 'Use By' date has passed, and has been appropriately re-labelled
- 2.2 Guidance on food handling supported by the Food Standards Agency and DEFRA is available and is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.3 Guidance is also available regarding checking, storing and distributing food and is attached as Appendix B.
- 2.4 The Parish Council has not yet established a route for the collection of surplus food but has supported the community allotment at Blagrove to distribute surplus fresh food.

3. OPTIONS

- 3.1 Feedback from West Swindon Parish Council's Insurers – Zurich has indicated that in order to minimise liabilities, there would be a preference for a scheme that did not handle unpackaged and/or perishable goods. There would also be preference for a scheme that had supervised access.

Option One

- 3.2 The Working Party is meeting with West Swindon Library to consider the creation of a community pantry within West Swindon Library.

- 3.3 The Parish Council team would make a pantry which would be accessible during staffed opening hours. Parish team members and/or volunteers would assist with the stocking of the pantry at a frequency dependent on food distribution. West Swindon Library staff would open it and check on it during the working day.

Option Two

- 3.4 Once the distribution outlet is established, the Parish Council could consider the creation of a mobile food distribution unit. This could be in the form of a trailer or wheeled unit that could be stationed at various busy points in West Swindon on a rotating basis.

Option Three

- 3.5 Parish Councillors could host a question time/drop in surgery with access to surplus food as part of the offer

Option Four

- 3.6 The Parish Council could seek another partner to host a supervised fixed pantry. Freshbrook Community Church have partnered with the community allotment at Blagrove to take surplus fruit and vegetables for an open access community pantry. The Parish Council team have agreed to make the pantry housing to get the project underway.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 The Parish Council has not yet secured a consistent supply for the redistribution of food but could ensure that there is a pathway for distribution when that is secured.
- 4.2 Option One and Option Four are the most viable options at the current time.

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Appendices: A & B