

Windsor-Essex Food Policy Council (WEFPC) Terms of Reference

Mission

The Windsor-Essex Food Policy Council (WEFPC) is a network of local food system representatives. We educate, promote, support and advocate for the improvement of the local food system and its users.

Vision

The Windsor-Essex County food system is healthy, sustainable and accessible for all.

Values

The WEFPC is committed to the following values:

- **Collaboration** – We work with community members and organizations to build upon the strengths and resources the community has to offer.
- **Diversity and Inclusion** – We celebrate the unique makeup of our community. The food system must reflect a diversity of needs, cultures and belief systems. All residents should have physical and economic access to healthy and culturally diverse local food.
- **Environmental Stewardship** - We recognize there are a variety of practices that can support a sustainable food system. We work towards promoting and advocating for those practices that are environmentally responsible.
- **Evidence Based Practice** – We make decisions using the most current evidence-informed data on local food system issues.
- **Innovation** – We creatively explore new ideas, methods, technologies, and policies to enhance our local food system.
- **Respect** - We recognize that every individual has value. We actively listen, are open to ideas, and seek to find common ground in spite of differences.
- **Social and Economic Sustainability** - We support a reliable, secure, economically viable, ecologically and socially responsible food system.
- **Transparency** – We operate with openness to each other and the public, and maintain consistency between our words and action.

Scope of Activities:

The scope of WEFPC will include activities such as:

- Assisting in identifying and prioritizing the needs of the local food system;
- Supporting and fostering collaborations and partnerships based on priorities and needs of the community;
- Identifying, guiding or promoting the development and/or adoption of policy regarding ongoing food-related issues;
- Promoting a greater knowledge of the community's work, successes, accomplishments and challenges within the food system;
- Advising community, municipal, provincial and federal governments as to matters or the state of the local food system.

Membership

Members must endorse the Vision, Mission, Goals, and Values of the WEFPC and have skills, knowledge, experience or a genuine interest in at least one area of the food system.

Up to a maximum of *14* people can be members at any one time, in addition to the chair/co-chair positions. Members must live or work in the City of Windsor or the County of Essex. Members may, but are not expected to, formally represent or speak for their organizations, but will be selected on the basis of their ability to speak to issues from the sector or key interest area they come from.

The WEFPC membership shall be representative of the key interests and sectors of the Windsor-Essex County food system.

Membership can include the following members:

- Appointed member of the Board of Health/City of Windsor Council member – 1
- Appointed County of Essex Council member – 1
- Agricultural (Rural) – 1
- Agriculture (Urban) – 1
- Food Processing – 1
- Food Distribution & Logistics – 1
- Food Service/Institutional Food/Food Procurement – 1
- General Community – 1
- Waste Management -1
- County or City Staff – 1
- Education – 1
- Community Food Program – 1
- Health Care Sector – 1
- Community Organization/Collaborative – 1

Any Council member can propose an additional Council member for recruitment by the WEFPC to fill an identified gap in membership/sector.

Applicants will complete the WEFPC Application Form. Decisions to accept a proposed new Council applicant will be made by the WEFPC Selection Committee.

The WEFPC Selection Committee will be comprised of five WEFPC members (the chair/co-chair roles, with an additional 3 members of the WEFPC, who will be self-nominated). The WEFPC Selection Committee will make decisions about accepting new members by consensus.

Community guests may be invited to attend Council meetings through the Co-Chairs (on behalf of the WEFPC) to provide information, and/or guidance in a specific area of expertise.

Term

WEFPC members are appointed for a minimal two-year term with the possibility of one term of renewal. Appointments will be staggered to ensure continuity between terms.

WEFPC Member Responsibilities

- To contribute to monthly meeting agendas
- To actively participate in monthly meetings; if unable to attend a meeting send regrets to Chair/Co-Chairs
- To share information and resources
- To volunteer to take on tasks identified by Chair/Co-Chairs during monthly meetings
- To participate on Subgroups as appropriate

Chair/Co-Chairs

Two co-chairs shall lead and facilitate the WEFPC. One Co-chair shall be elected to the WEFPC by a vote of members. This Co-chair will be elected for a two-year term with the possibility of an extension of up to two (2) years. The second co-chair will be a WECHU staff member(s) and will attend all full WEFPC meetings, but will not be counted as a WEFPC member, nor have voting rights.

Both co-chairs shall have knowledge of the food system in Windsor and Essex County and have good communication skills.

- If it is not possible to recruit two Co-chairs, one Chair will facilitate the group until a Co-Chair is recruited.

Responsibilities of Chair/Co-Chairs

- Facilitating WEFPC meetings
- Proposing meeting agendas and inviting guests as required

- Facilitating communication among WEFPC members between meetings
- Acting as the spokesperson for the WEFPC at events, meetings, and for the media, as required
- Ensure that responses are provided to requests for information by working with appropriate members

WECHU Staff role includes:

- Acting as a consistent point of contact for WEFPC and action groups to facilitate collaboration and dialogue with city and county staff, food system stakeholders, and community members
- Facilitating WEFPC meetings
- Monitoring and sharing emerging food system issues and the broad political and policy environment and how it impacts health
- Sharing other relevant information with WEFPC members and action groups
- Acting as the recorder for WEFPC meetings as required
- Disseminating agendas, minutes and other relevant information and materials.
- Maintain current list of WEFPC Subgroups including lead and purpose

Corresponding members

Corresponding members are members of the community who would like to stay informed of the WEFPC's work. These members do not attend WEFPC meetings, nor do they have voting rights. These members will be notified of the WEFPC group via our monthly newsletter.

Meetings

The WEFPC shall meet a minimum of six times per year, at dates and times to be agreed upon by Council members. Meeting location will rotate between the City of Windsor and the County of Essex; or held virtually as needed. Minutes of all meetings shall, upon WEFPC approval, be available to the public on the WEFPC's website.

Quorum for conducting regular business at a meeting will be 50% of the current Council membership.

WEFPC members will cease to be a member if they:

- Resign from the committee
- Fail to attend 3 consecutive meetings without providing the Chair/Co-Chair with written or verbal regrets
- Resign from their position with the agency, organization, coalition, or business they represent as a member on the WEFPC; or
- Breach confidentiality

Sub-Committees and Working Groups

The WEFPC may form ad hoc sub-committees or workgroups to undertake tasks that require in-depth work on behalf of the WEFPC.

Each sub-committee and workgroup will be chaired by a member of the WEFPC. That WEFPC member will be responsible for bringing forward issues and requests from the sub-committee or workgroup and will provide regular updates to the WEFPC.

Sub-committees and workgroups are encouraged to include participants who are not members of the WEFPC.

Decision Making

All WEFPC decisions will be made by a vote of fifty percent of the current WEFPC membership + 1. Voting may be conducted by proxy or by email.

All members are eligible voting members except WECHU staff support. If a vote is tied, the issue will go back to the WEFPC for further discussion before voting again.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is a situation in which a person or organization is involved in multiple interests, financial or otherwise, and serving one interest could involve working against another. Members of the WEFPC represent a variety of professional, and community based organizations. They may also be small business owners or have vested interest in a variety of food system related business.

All conflict of interest must be declared. Members who declare a conflict of interest will forfeit their right to vote on that topic.

Conflict of interest will be declared and recorded in the minutes.

Dissolution of the Windsor-Essex Food Policy Council

The WEFPC can be dissolved at the discretion of the WEFPC or the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health.

Review and Approval of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed every 2 years, at the first meeting of the new year and approved by the WEFPC.

Date approved: January 27, 2022

Revision date: January 2022

Valid until: January 2024

Glossary:

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).

<http://www.vancouverfoodpolicycouncil.ca/about/terms-of-reference/>

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 also encourages local production and distribution infrastructures and makes nutrition 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). <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2014/07/29/12/34/toward-a-healthy-sustainable-food-system>

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). <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/health-wellness-care/health-programs-advice/toronto-food-strategy/toronto-food-policy-council/>