

Purpose

These guidelines are intended to assist both procurers and operational managers in the procurement and delivery of catering and catering related supplies and services.

1.0 Background

The Best City Ambition focuses on improving outcomes across the 3 pillars of health and wellbeing, inclusive growth, and zero carbon. From obesity and diet-related ill-health, climate change, waste, poverty, tourism and public safety, food is recognised as a cross cutting priority for Leeds City Council.

When procuring or delivering services, specifications must reflect the nature of the requirement, and recognise the difference between commercial and contract catering.

1.1 Commercial Catering

This is catering provided directly to the public, either through commercial outlets or functions. Contracts need to be able to offer what clients require in to encourage and support repeat business. Examples include immediate reaction to changing market trends and tastes, quick change/flexible approach, maximising commercial advantage, etc.

1.2 Contract Catering

This is catering provided to establishments on a regular basis with a 'fixed' client base. Typically, these will include schools, early years and Adult Social Care. Examples include, known requirements, supplying established services – school dinners, etc.

2.0 Statutory requirements and guidelines

All relevant consents and certifications required by legislation, guidance or good industry practice must be specified, and then obtained and maintained throughout the contract. Elements to be included in procurement documents can be found in appendix 2

3.0 Health Promotion/Government Buying Standards

The Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services (GBSF) were introduced in 2011 as a means of meeting the Greening Government Commitments when buying and providing food and catering services. The nutrition standards within the GBSF aim to ensure healthier food and drink options are available across the public sector and includes vending. The standards include both mandatory and best practice nutrition standards.

4.0 Climate Change

Full Council declared a climate emergency in March 2019, with the stated ambition of working towards a net zero carbon city by 2030. The council has accepted that very urgent action is required to make our contribution to containing global temperature rises within 1.5C. Beyond this limit, there is a strong scientific consensus that there will be catastrophic consequences for both humanity and the natural world. Since the declaration the council has adopted a new way of working, changing its own structures and governance processes to incorporate the new climate emergency priority.

5.0 Academic Research

Research from various studies has suggested that changing food service practice will in turn increase health and improve climate conditions resulting from food production. In particular, research carried out by the American Society for Nutrition supports this.

6.0 Fair Trade

The Fairtrade mark and similar schemes aim to guarantee that farmers and workers in the developing world receive a fair price for their product or crop.

Leeds is a Fairtrade City and the Council continues to support Fairtrade.

7.0 LCC Initiatives

7.1 Healthy Weight Declaration

Healthy Weight Declaration (HWD) which seeks to demonstrate commitment and responsibility to develop and implement policies which promote healthy weight. The HWD includes a commitment to review the food and drink provision in public buildings and facilities to make healthy foods and drinks more available.

7.2 Food Waste Management

Waste from food, including all packaging must be reduced to a minimum through changing practice and encouraging suppliers to change systems and processes.

7.3 Single Use Plastic

Single use plastic should be replaced by other 'less damaging' products within the food environment. This must be encouraged across all LCC outlets and of all suppliers LCC contract with and buy from.

7.4 Prohibited Items

Some items need to be prohibited as part of the food chain process and where these are identified they must be communicated and managed out of the supply. A list and guide can be found in appendix 7.

7.5 Localism and Carbon Footprint

The council has committed to:

1. Buy local, serve local - Increasingly source more of food served from producers based in Yorkshire and surrounding counties, to support local businesses and cut food miles.
2. Ban air-freighted imports - Where ingredients that can't be produced locally, reduce the impact of transport by using boat, road or rail.
3. Halve the carbon footprint of meals served by 2030 - Review and update all meals served to cut their environmental impact, without sacrificing flavour, variety, or nutrients.

Contacts

Contacts in relation to these guidelines, for further information are as follows;

- Lizzie Greenwood, Advanced Health Improvement Specialist, Elizabeth.Greenwood@leeds.gov.uk
- Ian Coxon, Contracts Manager, Ian.Coxon@leeds.gov.uk
- Derek Prest, Procurement Category Manager, Derek.Prest@leeds.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Background

The Council seeks to ensure that the public are provided with sufficient access to healthy, sustainable food through its procurement process. Food is recognised as the single strongest lever to improve health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability. The guidelines below should be considered as part of the procurement process. It is acknowledged that in some cases there is a rationale to purchase food and drinks which are required to meet specific nutritional needs, for example when high calorie dense foods are required.

Local Authorities can use their procurement power to influence the provision of sustainable, healthier food and drinks offered in local outlets and the way that food waste and recycling are managed. The public sector in England spends over £2 billion on food and catering services annually, with just under half, £1 billion, being the cost of food and ingredients. It is essential that public food procurement is underpinned by evidence-based dietary recommendations and increases the ecological benefits of the food system, so that they can lead by example to ensure a healthy food environment for the public who live and work within the public sector.

Healthy food procurement is a process which encompasses not just how local authorities procure food, but also determines what food they buy and from who, how they prepare and serve food, disposal of waste food and monitoring costs. Guidelines can have the potential to increase demand for healthier products, drive reformulation by food manufacturers and increase availability of healthy food.

Action to increase the volume of healthier food and drinks available in local outlets provides a significant opportunity to encourage consumption of healthier options. Leeds City Council adopted the [Healthy Weight Declaration](#) which seeks to demonstrate commitment and responsibility to develop and implement policies which promote healthy weight. This includes the commitment to review provision in all our public buildings, facilities and 'via' providers to make healthy foods and drinks more available, convenient and affordable and limit access to high-calorie, low-nutrient foods and drinks.

Leeds City Council declared a Climate Change Emergency in March 2019, with the aim to become a net zero carbon city by 2030. As approximately 1/3 of greenhouse gases globally are from the food system Leeds City Council committed in September 2021 to buy more food locally, ban air freighted imports and half the carbon impact of meals served by 2030. This is something that has already started to be adopted at Catering Leeds who have opted for 2 meat free days on their school menus in order to reduce the carbon of meals served. A carbon footprint calculator, developed by the Consumer Data Research Centre at the University of Leeds, will progress this work further both across school meals and wider council food outlets. The Leeds Food Strategy includes a sustainability chapter that sets out 5 objectives for the city relating to carbon and food from now until 2030.

Leeds City Councils vision is to become the best city in the UK and a world leader in eliminating unnecessary waste and its environmental impact, and in maximising the value in our resources for the benefit of our local economy and communities. The huge environmental issue that food waste represents will be recognised in the city's new waste strategy, which will follow additional guidance at a national level of how mechanisms in the Environment Act 2021 will be utilised. Nationally research estimates that for every two tonnes of food we eat, one is thrown away and ten million tonnes of food that leaves farms each year is wasted, with a massive 70% of this being thrown away in homes. Up to 14% of a residents weekly shopping bill is spent on food that ends up in their bin. Much of this waste could be avoided through retailers or consumers changing their practices and reducing their

production would provide the most significant carbon savings relating to waste. The city of Leeds will be working together to deliver measurable reductions in food waste through a change in retailer and food outlet marketing practices and through influencing consumer behaviour.

Appendix 2 – Statutory requirements and guidelines

Any items supplied must comply with all current and future applicable regulations issued by either EU or UK government bodies.

The Contractor will ensure all items supplied meet the European Food Information to Consumers Regulation No 1169/2011 (FIC) and the Food Information Regulations 2014 (FIR) – Allergen Labelling.

The Contractor must communicate to the Council any Industry Alert & Warnings which would lead to an item recall, whereby a fault has been identified by the manufacturer or appropriate body.

Please note: above list is not exclusive and must be reviewed on a procurement by procurement basis.

Tender documents may include (where applicable);

- Deliveries – locations and times
- Orders – process and minimum values
- Rejection of goods and returns
- Warranty/guarantees
- Organic produce
- Animal welfare
- Product substitution
- Product recalls
- Labelling
- Shelf life
- Relevant Acts and Regulations

Appendix 3 – Government Buying Standards

All central Government departments and their agencies are required to comply with the GBSF, as well as prisons, the armed forces, and the NHS. Schools must follow the school

food standards legislation but may also choose to use the GBSF too. The wider public sector is encouraged to apply these standards, including to food and drink offered in vending machines.

The GBSF currently includes mandatory nutrition standards that reflect Government recommendations to reduce intakes of salt, sugar, and saturated fat and to increase consumption of fruit, vegetables, fish and fibre. It also includes voluntary best practice nutrition standards that cover the availability and/or portion size of soft drinks, confectionery, savoury snacks, calorie/allergen labelling and menu analysis.

The standards in appendix 2 should be considered as part of Leeds City Council Food and Drink procurement process (Recently updated August 2021).

Reducing Salt

- At least 75% of meat products, breads, soups, cooking sauces and ready meals procured by volume, and 75% of breakfast cereals and pre-packed sandwiches provided meet current core salt targets and any subsequent revisions to this target and all stock preparations shall be lower salt varieties (that is, below 0.6g/100mls reconstituted).
- Note: The 75% applies individually to each food category described in the above specification, and not only to the combined provision / volume. The requirement relates to meeting maximum targets or using an average target as a maximum where a maximum target is not set.
- Government will extend the period of compliance by 2 years, allowing a total implementation period of 3 years for the salt standard. At least 50% of meat and meat products, breads, breakfast cereals, soups and cooking sauces, ready meals and pre-packed sandwiches (procured by volume) meet Responsibility Deal salt targets and all stock preparations are lower salt varieties (i.e. below 0.6g/100mls).

Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption

- At least 50% of the volume of desserts available is based on fruit – which can be fresh, canned in fruit juice, dried or frozen.

Reducing saturated fat

- Meat and meat products, biscuits, cakes and pastries (procured by volume) are lower in saturated fat where available.

At least:

- 50% of hard yellow cheese shall have a maximum total fat content of 25g/100g;
- 75% of ready meals shall contain less than 6g saturated fat per portion;
- 75% of milk is reduced fat;
- 75% of oils and spreads are based on unsaturated fats.

Cereals

- At least 50% of breakfast cereals (procured by volume) are higher in fibre (i.e. more than 6g/100g) and do not exceed 22.5g/100g total sugars.

Increasing Fibre

- At least 50% of bread available contains at least 3g fibre per 100g (i.e. is a source of fibre), excluding pre-packed sandwiches.
- At least 75% of pre-packed sandwiches (and other savoury pre-packed meals (wraps, salads, pasta salads) available contains bread with at least 3g fibre per 100g.

Reducing sugar intake

- At least 75% of products available that are included in the following categories covered by the sugar reduction programme to not exceed the following:
 - Biscuits - 100kcal
 - Cakes - 220 kcal
 - Morning goods - 220 kcal
 - Puddings - 220 kcal
 - Yogurts - 120 kcal
 - Ice cream - 220 kcal

Breakfast Cereals

- At least 50% of breakfast cereals available are higher in fibre (i.e. at least 6g/100g) and shall not exceed 12.3g/100g total sugars (10g additional allowance for dried fruit in cereal).

Snacks

- Savoury snacks are only available in packet sizes of 30g or less.

Confectionery

- All confectionery and packet sweet snacks provided are in the smallest standard single serve portion size available within the market and do not exceed 200 kcal (maximum) for chocolate and 125 kcal (maximum) for sugar confectionery.

Biscuits/cakes

- Biscuits and cakes (including cereal bars and flapjacks) are in the smallest standards single portion size available within the market and not to exceed 250kcal

Sugar Sweetened beverages

- All sugar sweetened beverages to be in no more than 330ml portion size and no more than 10% of beverages (procured by volume) may be sugar sweetened. No less than 90% of beverages (procured by volume) must be low calorie/no added sugar beverages (including fruit juice and water) Sugar-Sweetened Beverage any drink, hot or cold, carbonated or non-carbonated, including milk based drinks and milk substitute drinks such as soya, almond, hemp, oat, hazelnut or rice, which contains more than 20kcal/100ml energy (i.e. is not 'low energy (calorie)') and also has had any sugar added to it as an ingredient (i.e. is not 'no added sugar'). Products sweetened with a combination of artificial/natural sweeteners and sugars would, if they contain more than 20kcal/100ml energy (i.e. are not 'low energy (calorie)'), fall within this definition. For the purposes of this definition, added sugars:
 - (i) include sugars added to pre-packaged drinks or added to made-to-order drinks (including without limitation sugar syrup, hot chocolate powder, sweetened milk alternatives and whipped cream);
 - (ii) do not include sugars naturally occurring in fruit juices, vegetable juices and smoothies.
 - (iii) do not include sugars naturally occurring in milk.
 - (iv) do not include sugar added by the customer after the point of sale

Appendix 4 – Climate Change

To support the city's Climate Emergency Leeds City Council have committed to buy more food locally, ban air freighted food and, by 2030, half the carbon footprint of meals served by using lower carbon ingredients.

The amount and type of food people choose to eat is a matter of personal choice. Government, local and national, together with industry, can however better inform people of the impact of those choices. There is also a role in making more sustainable choices easily available and attractive, as seen increasingly in restaurants with the broadening range of vegetarian and vegan options. Leeds City Council plans to lead the way in this area by adapting menus to be lower carbon and to give those eating meals served information about the carbon impact of their food. This has started in school meal catering and will be expanded to other council food outlets.

Eating food grown and produced in the local area not only reduces food miles but it also boosts the local economy through supporting local farmers and growers, and contributes to the city's food security.

Not all foods can be produced in the region or the UK, e.g., bananas, however as long as these items are shipped in as opposed to air freighted, they remain relatively low carbon. Not procuring any air freighted products is a simple and clear way to cut the council's food carbon footprint.

In order for the council's food commitments to be achieved, it is vital that when procuring food we receive transparent data relating to the ingredients/products purchased to allow us to accurately track their carbon emissions. We should always request:

- Product/ingredient origin – country level
- Typical weight of product/ingredient

Wherever possible we should also request:

- Product/ingredient origin – region/county level
- Method of transportation
- Method of production, e.g., grown in green house or externally

All of the above data ultimately leads to us being able to calculate the carbon footprint of a product/ingredient. As carbon labelling becomes more prevalent we will be able to ask suppliers to provide the carbon footprint of products directly.

Leeds City Council plans to set up a wider public sector procurement group in Leeds to encourage other organisations to adopt similar commitments relating to food and carbon. Working with other big organisations in the city should create more impactful outcomes as the group's buying power has the ability to shift suppliers to provide more local, sustainable products.

The council will also work with others to provide better opportunities to share and reuse goods. The emphasis on reduction and re-use will be at the heart of the new Council Waste Strategy, which will need to prioritise the prevention of waste arising as well as its effective management.

The government's waste and resources strategy (published in Dec 2018) has been delayed in its implementation due to other priorities at a National Level. The expectation is for more clarity at the back end of 2022 on what changes to services will be expected and how they will be delivered by local Councils. The changes are expected to be challenging to allow for progress.

In the meantime, some key asks from Leeds that we would like to see implemented are:

- Tighter legislation on producer responsibility so retailers/ manufacturers bear the costs of dealing with their packaging and take accountability for the reliability of their products with increased warranty periods
- Funding to support the roll out of food collections
- Support for the introduction of deposit return schemes on plastic bottles

Appendix 5 – Academic research

See the following link <https://academic.oup.com/advances/article/3/3/337/4644769>

Appendix 6 – Fair Trade

The money they receive covers the cost of production, a stable wage and in some cases pays an extra amount or 'social premium' that producer organisations can invest in business development and social or environmental schemes that will benefit the wider community. In November 2003, it was resolved unanimously, by leaders, that "...the council noted the need to improve the economic and social conditions of 3rd world workers and farmers working for poverty wages in incredibly poor conditions." Leeds has since become a Fairtrade City and the council continues to support Fairtrade.

Across all Food and Drink procurements the council requires the provision of at least one Fairtrade, or equivalent option.