



Procurement Policy Note – the Plan for Public Procurement of Food and Catering Services

Action Note 10/14 10 November 2014

Issue

1. The Plan for Public Procurement of Food and Catering Services has been introduced to make it easier for procurers to take a more consistent approach to buying food and catering services. The approach aims to give a clearer message to suppliers and opens up the supply chain to a wider range of companies, including SMEs and new entrants.

Dissemination and Scope

2. The contents of this Procurement Policy Note (PPN) apply to all Central Government Departments, their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies (“in-scope organisations”).
3. Other Contracting Authorities (e.g. in local government and the wider public sector) are strongly recommended to apply the measures set out in this PPN.
4. Please circulate this PPN within your organisation and to all in-scope organisations for which you are responsible, drawing it to the attention of those with a purchasing role.

Timing

5. Immediate.

Action

6. Using the toolkit provided, in-scope organisations should:
 - a) commit to food procurement using the balanced scorecard methodology and revised Government Buying Standards (GBS). They will find suppliers that can help them achieve this via the procurement portal; and
 - b) be proactive in contract management, and work with their suppliers to ensure that they are sourcing responsibly and in a way which is compliant with the balanced scorecard approach.



7. The toolkit comprises (see links):

- a) revisions to the mandatory Government Buying Standards for food and catering: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-procurement-the-gbs-for-food-and-catering-services>.
- b) a “balanced scorecard” to help public sector buyers and their suppliers understand and apply the Government Buying Standards: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-plan-for-public-procurement-food-and-catering-the-balanced-scorecard>.
- c) an on-line procurement portal to help put public sector buyers and potential food and catering suppliers in touch with each other. Opportunities advertised on the replacement Contracts Finder system will also be fed into the food portal, making them visible to suppliers who may want to tender for them. The portal will also help buyers to find small and local suppliers: <https://sid4gov.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/gbfood>.
- d) case studies to demonstrate how buyers and food suppliers can work together to procure food efficiently and sustainably: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/food-buying-standards-for-the-public-sector-the-plan-toolkit>.
- e) access to centralised contracts consistent with the principles of the plan, which is being put in place via the Crown Commercial Service’s framework contracts for facilities management. <https://ccs.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/>.

8. Support for procurers is available through the Food Procurement Information Service which may be accessed at food.procurement@defra.gsi.gov.uk or via the Defra Helpline on 03459 33 55 77. Further information on the tools is available on the website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/food-buying-standards-for-the-public-sector-the-plan-toolkit>.

9. Procurers can contact Defra about their progress with the balanced scorecard and toolkit, and can participate in the dedicated Public Procurers’ Working Group, by emailing gbs@defra.gsi.gov.uk.

Contact

10. Enquiries about this Action Note should be directed to the Crown Commercial Service Helpdesk (telephone 0345 410 2222, e-mail info@ccs.gsi.gov.uk).

Background

11. In December 2013, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs asked Dr Peter Bonfield to chair the initiative, *A Plan for Public Procurement: Food and Catering Services*, and to report in the summer of 2014. The initiative set out ‘to ensure that public sector procurement of food and catering services maximises the health outcomes of those people affected by it, in a way that boosts support for a vibrant and competitive UK food and farming sector, and which delivers the best value per pound spent’.

12. Consultation and collaboration took place with a wide range of officials, private sector businesses, industry bodies and assurance organisations. The initiative had the strong support of the Prime Minister and the Minister for the Cabinet Office and on 21 July 2014 Dr Bonfield’s report was



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published and the toolkit was launched. The report can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-plan-for-public-procurement-food-and-catering>.