

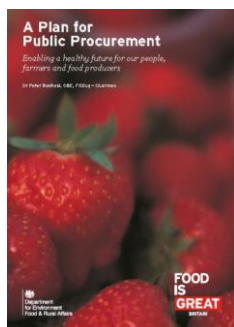
PLAN FOR PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND YOUR CATERING MARK - KEY MESSAGES



The Catering Mark is recognised as a tool to achieve Government's Plan for Public Procurement

'The Food for Life Catering Mark is a well-established scheme for caterers that shares common objectives with the Great Food Plan and covers similar issues to the Balanced Scorecard. Membership of the scheme provides caterers with independently verified evidence of their achievements ... and will generally guarantee good or excellent performance by caterers against the award criteria in the balanced scorecard.'

Balanced Scorecard



What is the Plan for Public Procurement?

The Plan for Public Procurement, launched Monday 21 July 2014, aims to realise the potential of public procurement to improve the nation's health, promote sustainable food production, and support UK farmers.

From 2017, all of central government will commit to use this new buying standard. The wider public sector (schools and hospitals) will be 'encouraged and expected' to use this standard.

The Plan introduces a Balanced Scorecard tool, to help procurers look at wider aspects of quality when evaluating contracts and to include ethical, environmental and social considerations into decision making.

The Balanced Scorecard refers to the Catering Mark as a well-established scheme which can provide a valued verification that the Scorecard criteria are being met.

Catering Mark holders are recognised as being well-placed to score 'good' or 'excellent' against the scorecard's recommendations for food, and can therefore be ahead of the game when bidding for public sector contracts.

Public sector procurers look out for how caterers can meet the Balanced Scorecard criteria. This is good news for Catering Mark holders who can claim to:

- ✓ generally score **good or excellent** against food-based criteria in the Plan's Balanced Scorecard
- ✓ be independently audited: **uniquely** able to verify compliance against these criteria
- ✓ be a part of the **only best-practice scheme** which covers provenance, sustainability, quality, nutrition, welfare and staff training – a clear choice for procurers who are evaluating different bids
- ✓ have proven to deliver **multiple wider benefits** which are in line with public authority priorities
- ✓ be able to work with the Soil Association to monitor and promote success widely
- ✓ receive marketing support to help you position your award as the **symbol of trust** that procurers are looking for

What can you say?

These are the key messages you can say about your award and the Scorecard

'As a Food for Life Catering Mark holder we will automatically qualify against the vast majority of food-based award criteria in the Scorecard, scoring good or excellent in most cases. The likelihood of Catering Mark holders performing strongly has been cited within the Balanced Scorecard.'

'As a Food for Life Catering Mark holder we can reassure procurers that we've been independently audited against high standards that cover traceability, transparency,

sustainability, nutrition and quality. Procurers can use this verification to make unique claims about their adherence to the Plan's criteria.'

'Amidst a number of schemes and initiatives, the Catering Mark is unique in its scope; covering many of the issues in the Balanced Scorecard – from welfare to nutrition. Our award can provide procurers with a 'one-stop-shop' that will help them to meet most of the related criteria in one go. The Balanced Scorecard recognises this, stating that the Catering Mark *"shares common objectives with the Plan and covers similar issues to the balanced scorecard."*

'Our Food for Life Catering Mark can help public sector procurers to compare and evaluate different bids against one another, helping them to make their decisions in complete confidence, knowing that we have been inspected by the Soil Association against rigorous standards.'

'As a Catering Mark holder, we already have evidence to demonstrate compliance with most of these criteria – as required for our annual inspection. We are therefore well-placed to help procurers save time and compile evidence efficiently.'

'As well as meeting the Balanced Scorecard criteria, there is a body of evidence that Catering Mark menus deliver on a number of wider public sector priorities, meaning our award can help procurers to make claims about the positive impact of their sourcing:

- *Provide local economic SROI (social return on investment) – of £3 for every £1 spent on the local economy. This is in line with the Public Services Social Value Act, which encourages public authorities to improve the way money is spent on local public services.*
- *Proven to positively impact attainment, eating habits, local business and SME's.*
- *Standards are in line with public health priorities on obesity reduction, health and wellbeing.*
- *Are in line with industry recommendations for nutrition (incorporating the relevant sector standards, such as the School Food Standards, or the Government Buying Standards)."*

'The Catering Mark has been recognised by NHS England and the Department of Education as a tool to improve food in hospitals and schools. NHS England has included the Catering Mark as a tool for improvement within the new Hospital Food CQUIN, and the Department of Education's School Food Plan has given the Catering Mark a key national role in maintaining quality and driving meal take up.'

'Our award can help procurers join the dots of these developments, helping local authorities to ensure they are meeting the recommendations set out by these initiatives.'

How we can help:

The Catering Mark team can offer bespoke marketing support to Catering Mark holders, to help you explain clearly to procurers exactly which boxes you are ticking by meeting Catering Mark standards.

We also offer marketing support to help highlight your ability as a Catering Mark holder to meet the new School Food Standards, the School Food Plan aims, NHS England recommendations, and other sector relevant nutrition standards. Contact Lucy Gatward by email (lgatward@soilassociation.org), or phone (0117 314 5130).

A Plan for Public Procurement:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332756/food-plan-july-2014.pdf

Balanced scorecard:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332424/public-food-procurement-balance-scorecard.pdf