



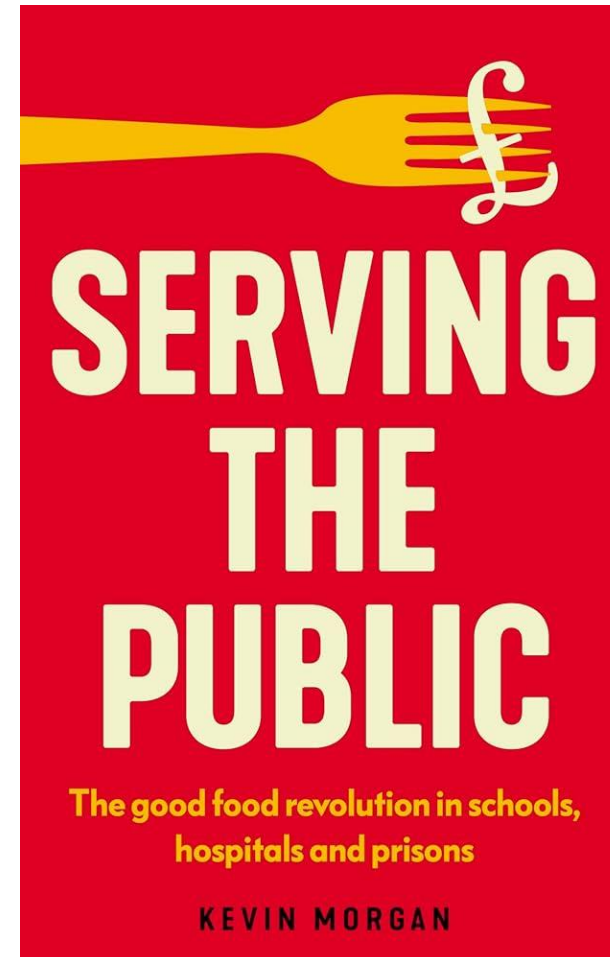
Serving the public: the good food revolution

**Hospital Caterers Association
Leadership + Development Forum
Hilton Birmingham Metropole
1+2 April 2025**

Kevin Morgan
School of Geography & Planning
Cardiff University

Origins

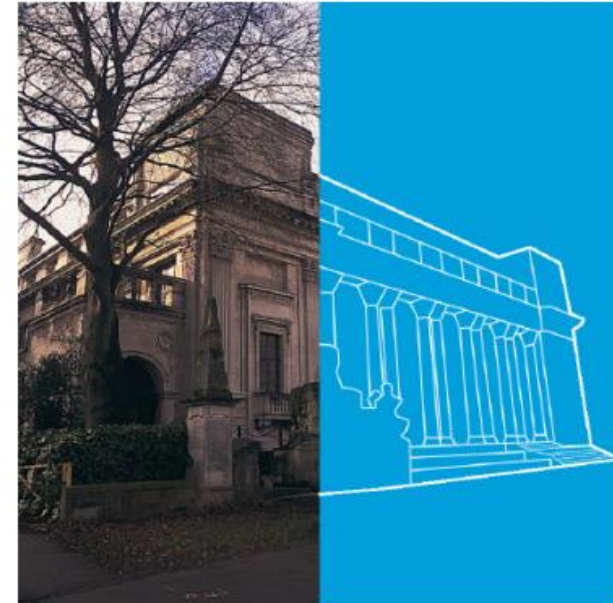
- The book draws on 20+ years of research into public food systems in and beyond the UK
- Began as a labour of love with the Powys Food Links (PFL) project to get local food into a local hospital
- The project was a total failure
- But failure can be instructive if we care to learn the lessons



Learning the lessons...

- Our very first food report in 2002 sought to understand why it failed and the reasons were the following:
 - perceived EU procurement regulations
 - tendering procedures that were too complex for local suppliers
 - public catering preferences that favoured large suppliers
 - NHS audit conventions that were unable to account for the health gains of nutritious food

The Regeneration Institute, Cardiff University



RELOCALISING THE FOOD CHAIN:

The Role of Creative Public Procurement

Kevin Morgan & Adrian Morley

*In association with
Powys Food Links
The Soil Association
Sustain*

Themes and arguments

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Introduction

Part I: Food in the public sphere

1 Reclaiming the public plate

Part II: Schools, hospitals and prisons

2 Food for life: the whole school approach

3 Catering for health: the quest for good food

4 Doing time: food behind bars

Part III: Foodscapes of hope

5 The good food movement

6 Prospects for change

Part I examines food in the public sphere, where I explore the **Agrifood Polycrisis** – the interlinked crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and diet-related diseases.

Reclaiming the public plate means using the power of purchase to fashion a fairer, healthier and more sustainable food system by substituting values-based procurement for a neoliberal approach which allows low cost to masquerade as best value.

Themes and arguments

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Part II presents a deep dive into 3 public food systems, all of which have been compromised by 40 years of neoliberal policies towards food and the public sector:

- In **schools** I examine the Whole School Approach and the twin challenges of universal free school meal and plant-based menus
- In **healthcare** I examine the Sisyphean task of providing clinical solutions to the societal problem of ultra-processed foods
- In **prisons** I examine the defects of the carceral diet and use The Clink to show how good food offers hope and dignity to help prisoners rehabilitate themselves

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Part III assesses the prospects for change and identifies some of the agents of change in the form of the **Good Food Movement** – Civil Society Organizations working with governments and public bodies committed to a fairer, healthier and more sustainable food system.

Two key CSOs are the Soil Association and Sustain and they have helped to change the way the public sector views and values food, creating what I call foodscapes of hope

Foodscapes of hope



Good Food for All Londoners

2022

Tracking council action on food



Good food for all
The impact of the Food for Life Partnership



SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON



Catering for health

Independent Investigation of the National Health Service in England

The Rt Hon. Professor the Lord Darzi of Denham OM KBE FRS FMedSci HonFREng

September 2024

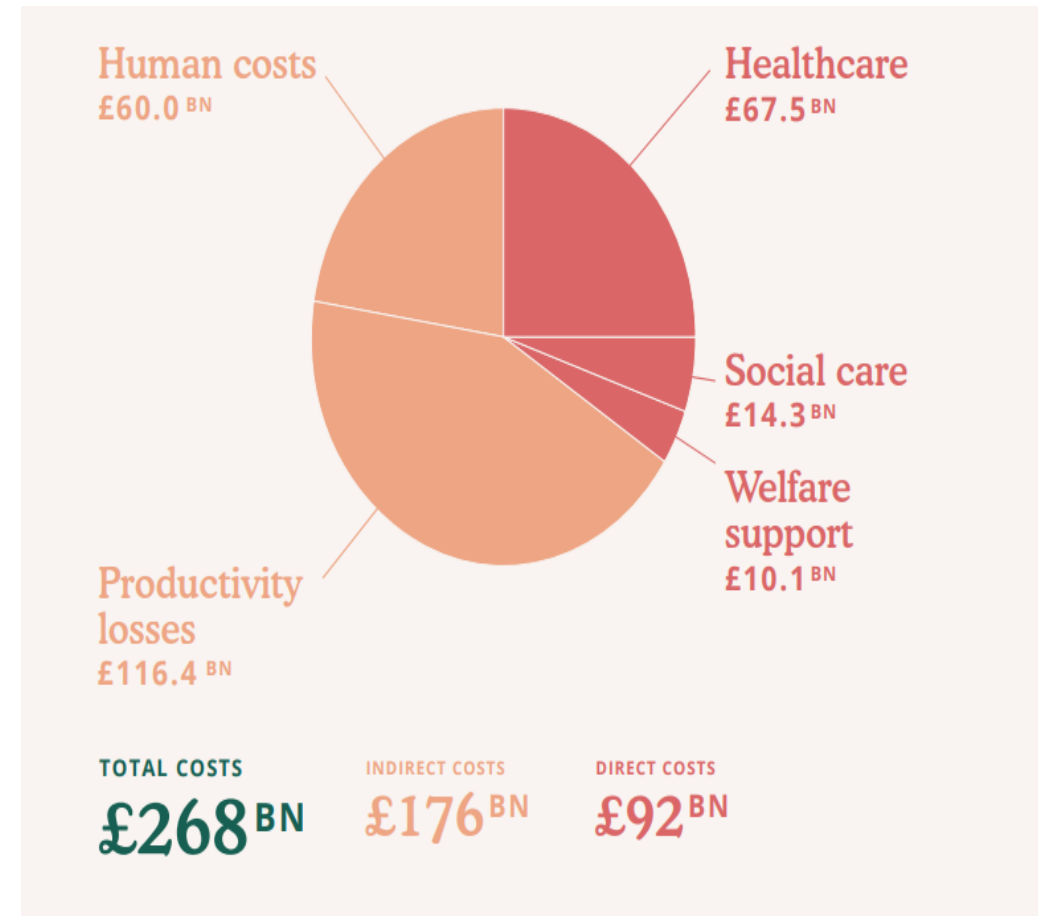
“Healthy and nutritious food is comparatively expensive; cheap food is associated with higher obesity levels, which has many different health impacts. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported that between 18 October 2023 and 1 January 2024, 20 per cent of households in the most deprived quintile reported eating less fruit and fewer vegetables because of cost-of-living increases, compared to 8 per cent of the least deprived quintile. **Almost half of primary care providers are running foodbanks”**

The labour of Sisyphus



- The NHS is a modern Sisyphus
- Condemned to provide a clinical solution to a societal problem
- It is being set up to fail unless societal solutions can be found for the epidemic of diet-related diseases

The real food bill



Catering for health

Report of the Independent Review of NHS Hospital Food

Chair: Philip Shelley

HOUSE OF LORDS

Food, Diet and Obesity Committee

Report of Session 2024–25

Recipe for health: a plan to fix our broken food system

Ordered to be printed 15 October 2024 and published 24 October 2024

Published by the Authority of the House of Lords

HL Paper 19

Values-based procurement

Values for money



Values for Money: public sector food procurement in Wales

A Report prepared for the Welsh Government's Foundational Economy team

Framing procurement



Procurement - 2020-21 was unprecedented in terms of the challenges placed on our national and local procurement teams as a result of the pandemic. Although our planned savings work was affected, the team is still on track to achieve savings of £12M for 2020-21.

Our savings strategy for 2021-22 is targeting local and national savings of approximately £26M; in line with national category strategies. This work will also be underpinned by the development and implementation of our National Operating Model.

Source: NWSSP Annual Plan for 2021-22


Procuring for health

A **plant-based by default** approach could **save** the **NHS** **£74 million annually**



PIPER PIPE HEALTHCARE

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE



REPORT

The food service playbook for promoting sustainable food choices

Daniele Pollicino, Stacy Blondin, and Sophie Attwood

Spreading good practice

St Bernard's Hospital awarded 'exemplar site catering' status by NHS England

[Home](#) > [News](#) > [Latest news](#) > [St Bernard's Hospital awarded 'exemplar site catering' status by NHS England](#)

📅 25 July 2024



We are pleased to announce the Trust Facilities Team in partnership with catering supplier OCS, have been awarded the 'Exemplar site' status by NHS England for their catering service at St Bernard's Hospital. The recognition is part of an NHS England initiative to enhance hospital food standards nationwide and set benchmarks for Hospital Trusts.

West London Trust is only the ninth NHS Trust in the country to receive this accolade.

Good practice: a bad traveller?



A fresh approach
to hospital food

The Cornwall Food Programme,
pioneering tasty, healthier and
environmentally friendly hospital meals

King's Fund	Research SUMMARY	Authors KAREN JOCHELSON SALLY NORWOOD SABINA HUSSAIN BALJINDER HEER	Key topics PUBLIC HEALTH	Date NOVEMBER 2005
Orders				
King's Fund Publications 020 7307 2591 or download at www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications				

SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND THE NHS

LEAD CONTACT

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Karen Jochelson is acting Policy Lead in Public Health at the King's Fund. She is interested in the relationship between health and the physical and social environment, and she writes about sustainable development, health and the NHS. Her most recent work includes *Good corporate citizenship and the NHS: A regional mapping* (HDA 2004) and she was a lead author for the King's Fund publication *Claiming the Health Dividend: Unlocking the Benefits of NHS Spending* (2002). She is now developing a new programme of work examining individual responsibility, motivation and health.

Sally Norwood and **Baljinder Heer** were research officers at the King's Fund.

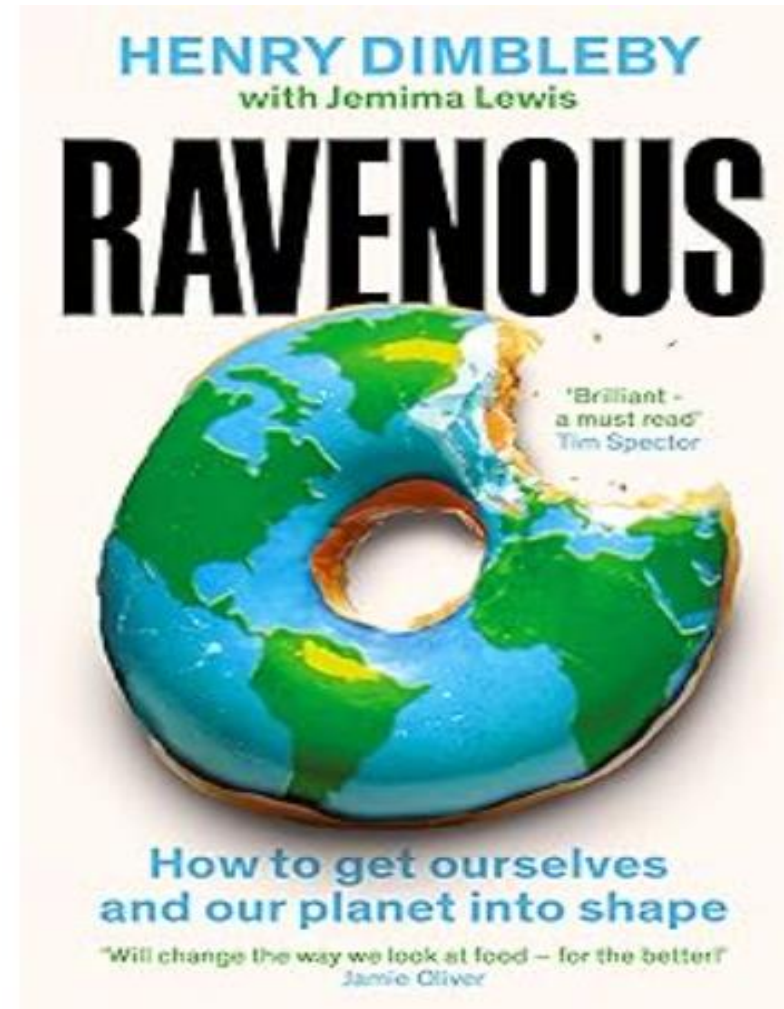
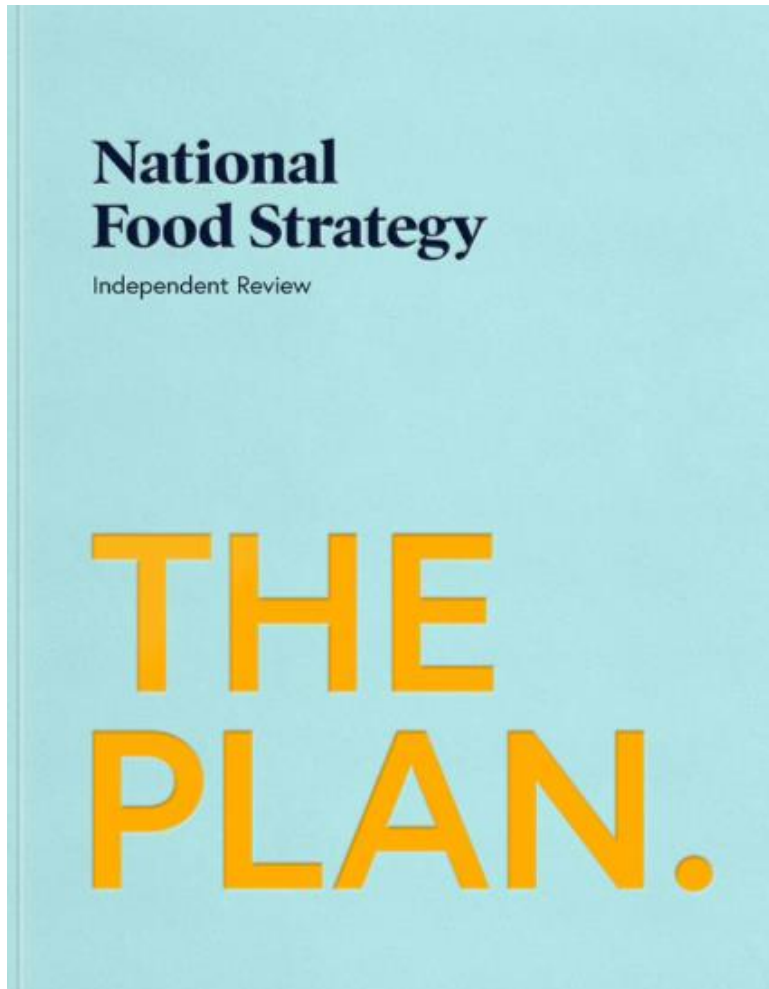
Sabina Hussain is specialist registrar on the South West Public Health training programme and undertook a rotation at the King's Fund.

NHS trusts spend about £500 million on food and catering, serving several hundred million meals to patients, staff and visitors every year. As part of its sustainable development strategy, the government has suggested that public sector food procurement might help to promote healthy eating and sustainable development. This overlaps with recent policies to improve the diet of the general population and a growing interest in the NHS's role as a good corporate citizen.

However, the structure of the NHS and its performance management framework is changing. In future, the government will not be able to enforce strategies that encourage corporate citizenship or the procurement of sustainable food within the NHS. The onus will be on trusts to interpret how their food and procurement policies can support minimum core standards and public health and sustainable development aims, and to identify how doing things differently might bring health and financial benefits.

In 2004 the Better Hospital Food Programme (BHFP) commissioned the King's Fund to identify opportunities for managing food procurement sustainably and promoting healthy eating in acute hospitals. The project developed a framework for organisations to assess their procurement and catering practices and offered recommendations for policies, menu designs and contract specifications.

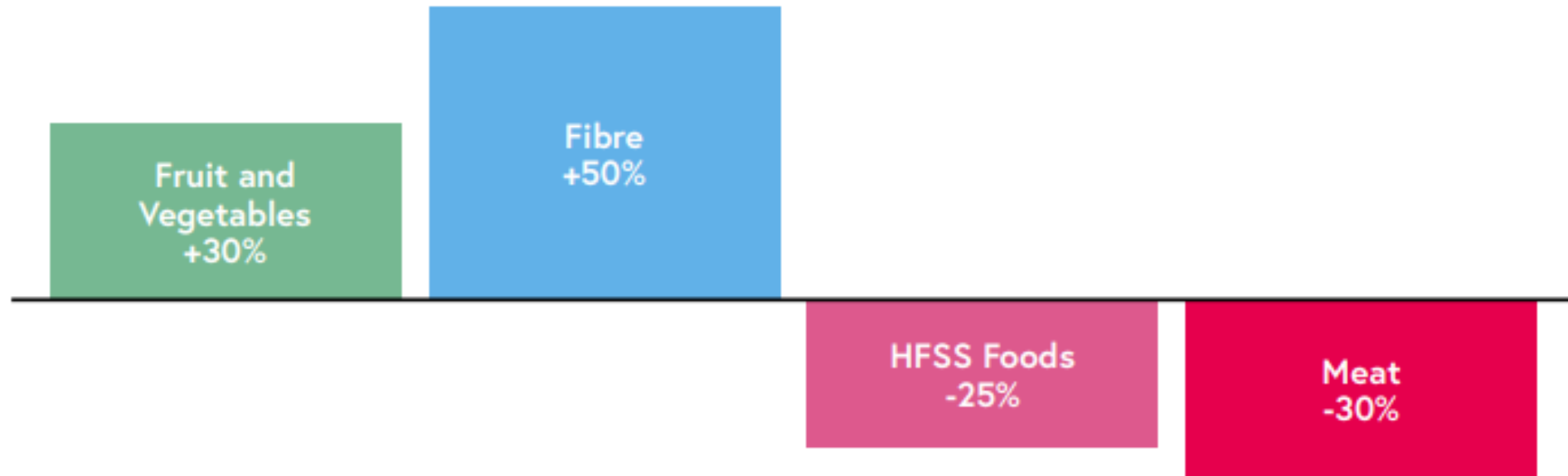
Prospects for change



Prospects for change

Figure 16.1

Changes needed to the national diet by 2032 (compared to 2019) to meet health, climate and nature commitments†



England: the future of school meals



Report to CABINET (Part A)

Catering Review Implementation

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Arooj Shah, Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham

Cllr Mohon Ali, Cabinet Member for Education

Officer Contact: Paul Clifford, Director of Economy

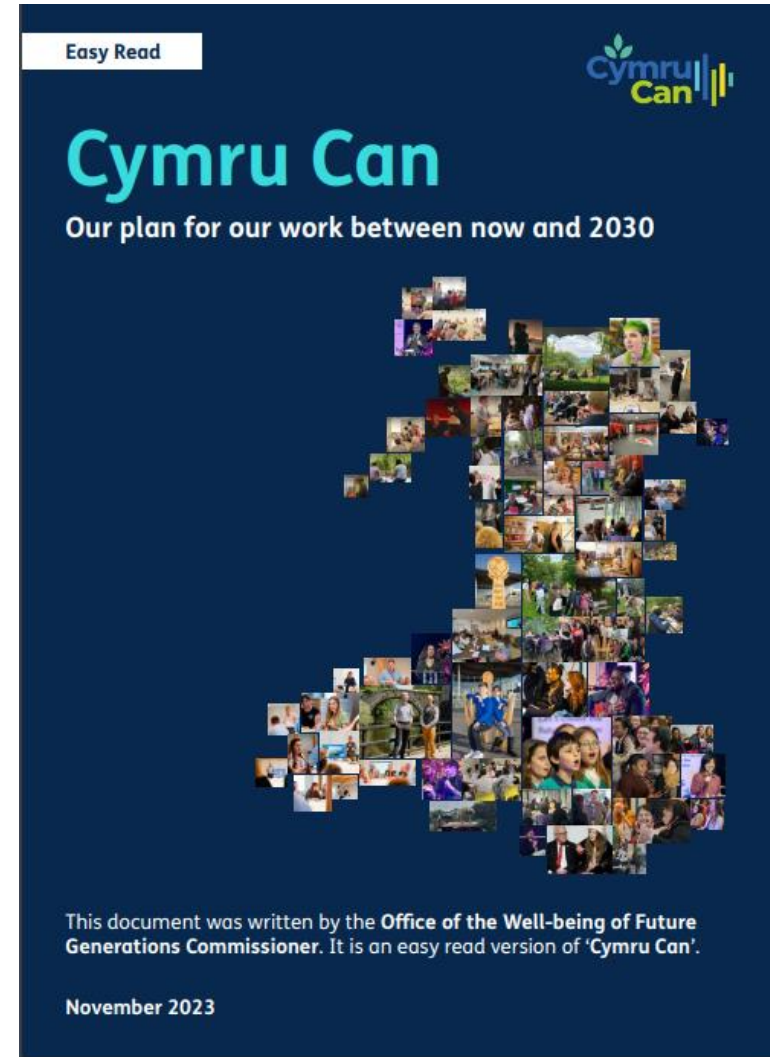
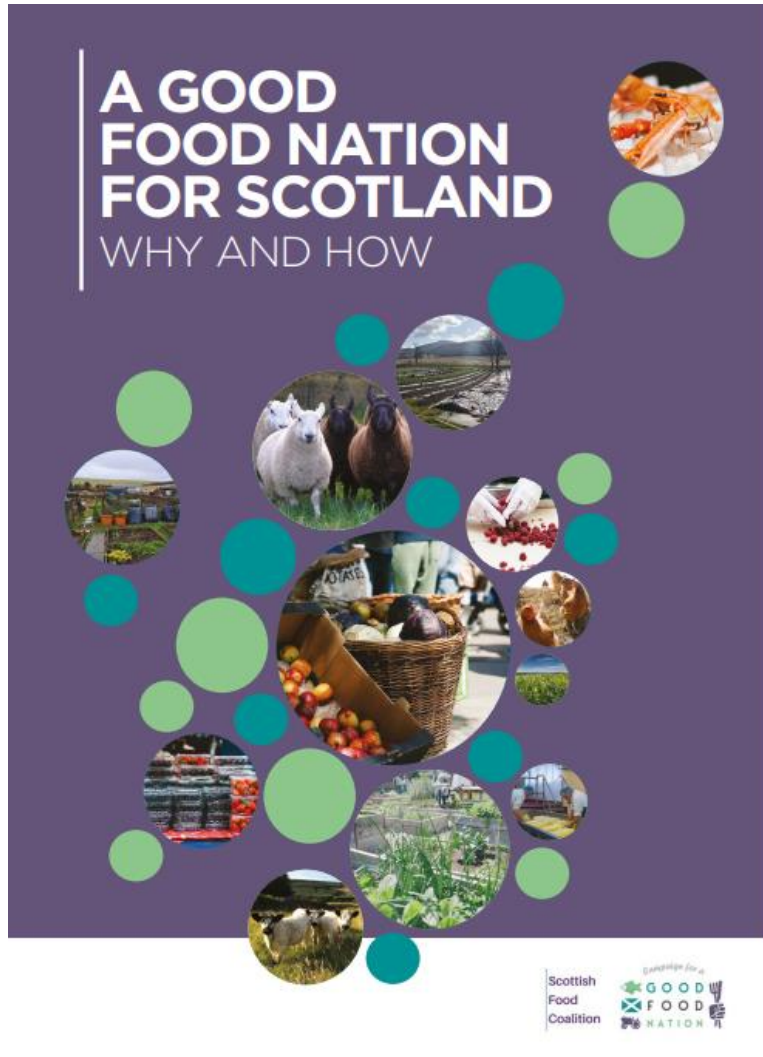
Report Author: Chris Lewis, AD Creating a Better Place

18th November 2024

Reason for Decision

The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the current financial and operating position of Oldham Education Catering Service (OECS) which provides catering for 46 schools in Oldham. There are a number of issues of concern for the delivery of the service including increasing costs of quality local food supplies, increasing costs for staff and a continued decline in the number of schools contracting with the Council. With the continued roll out of academisation, it is anticipated that the number of schools contracting with the Council will continue to reduce over the coming years.

Scotland and Wales



Public catering politics



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon Mark Spencer MP
Minister for Food, Farming and Fisheries

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pscalliance@dewberryredpoint.co.uk

Our ref: PO2024/03751/PB

8 March 2024

Dear Matthew,

Thank you for your joint letter of 13 February to myself and Tim Smith regarding your expression of interest to join the Food and Drink Sector Council (FDSC) as a substantive member to represent the public sector catering industry, and your concern regarding the foodservice sector not being represented.

Public sector catering is currently represented at FDSC with Robin Mills as a member, who is the CEO of Compass Group UK & Ireland. We took careful consideration of your application to become a member of the council last year and continue to appreciate your engagement. The membership of the council is set up to provide a balance of individuals from across different types of businesses and regions across the supply chain to bring a variety of perspectives to the FDSC, including within the foodservice sector.

Alliances for change



PUBLICSECTOR **CATERING** **ALLIANCE** **FORUM**

The first-ever Public Sector Catering Alliance Forum is taking place on 19th November 2024, promising to bring together industry leaders from different parts of the sector to discuss common issues, share best practice and collaborate to improve the catering provision in the public sector.