



Plant-based diet action plan: 2026 annual review and recommendations

Environment and Place Overview and
Scrutiny Committee
9 September 2026

Scope of plan

This action plan has the defined scope of improving the plant-based diet offering by and of BCP Council. It aims to:

- Position BCP Council as a civic leader by encouraging plant-based diets amongst its operations and services through the use of quantified minimum thresholds.
- Advocate for and promote plant-based diets through an internally consistent set of promotional and educational campaigns.
- Strive for continual improvement and facilitate potential later enhancements in scope by baselining current plant-based diet offerings, monitoring progress and improvements, and seeking to steadily increase ambition through annual reviews of planned actions and interventions.

Other notable factors relevant to food purchasing, provision and consumption have not been directly included in scope, although some of these factors have inevitably been considered in ensuring that proposed actions are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART). Factors not in scope include, but are not limited to:

- whether the food is organic or fairly traded.
- the provenance of food and whether it is locally, nationally or internationally sourced.
- the health benefits and/or impacts of food consumed.
- other dietary preferences and/or allergens.
- food affordability and food poverty mitigation.
- food availability and food security.
- food waste, food packaging and disposal.
- economic and commercial feasibility.
- a detailed analysis of the environmental and climate change impacts of food procured and provided.

BCP Council will rely on the [Government Buying Standard \(GBS\) for food and catering services](#) and the adoption of GBS mandatory standards and GBS best practice standards for the inclusion of many of the above-mentioned factors. Of note, other councils such as Birmingham City Council have developed a [Food System Strategy](#), whereby both environmental impact and dietary nutrition have been considered.

The advertising and promotion of food stuffs has been excluded from this first annual plan. Banning certain vendors or food types from promotion would have immediate financial implications and could be subject to legal challenges without well-evidenced, fair and

transparent policy guiding assessment as to the acceptability of unacceptability of certain food types.

Placemaking under the Council's influence has generally been excluded. The focus has been instead, at least initially, on promoting and encouraging plant-based diets within the Council's direct areas of responsibility. Avenues of placemaking discussed but discounted include:

- to financially incentivise private food vendors including licensed and leased long-term concessions to improve their plant-based food offering.
- to support local plant-based food grower markets in council-run public spaces.
- to support and enable community fruit and vegetable growing.
- to provide tasting and sampling opportunities of plant-based meals.
- to educate citizens on how to prepare plant-based meals and the benefits of an enhanced plant-based diet.

A number of more complex and advanced solutions have also been excluded, due to a lack of data and resource to implement these effectively. These include indicating the climate change impacts of different foodstuffs on menus and introducing a loyalty scheme whereby plant-based food purchases result in discounts to food, drinks or council services e.g. free swim lessons.

Current SMART actions and recommendations for review

Action 1: Meetings on Council premises to provide at least one plant-based option for all food and drink types	
Description (specific):	All food and drink provided at meetings on Council premises to have at least one plant-based option of each food and drink type e.g. non-dairy milk and plant-based sandwiches, provided. To provide training and guidance to persons purchasing these items on which food items meet these criteria.
Measurement:	To check and confirm that ordered food and drink for internal meetings meet the above criteria.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Democratic Services have confirmed that it is practically feasible.
Implementing service/directorate:	Democratic Services
Time period to implementation:	By 28 February 2026.

Action 1: Status and recommendations

Status:	Implemented.
Recommendation(s):	To put in place a requirement that at least 50% of all food items for meetings within Council premises to be plant-based. This requirement should also be extended to all externally catered and funded meetings held on Council premises, which should be communicated as an internal news item, be inserted into relevant policy and be communicated to internal food suppliers. The requirement that at least one plant-based options for each food and drink type to be provided should remain.
Other options for consideration:	None given.

Action 2: To promote a plant-based diet day within BCP Council and schools within the BCP area

Description (specific):	To develop and promote a 'plant-based diet day' to potentially be extended to one-week within BCP Council and schools within the BCP area in either November or January (to coincide with established and internationally recognised plant-based diet days or months). An accessible plant-based recipe will be sourced and promoted for this day, or a set of seven recipes if extended to one week.
Measurement:	Record of promotion and communication of a 'plant-based diet day' within BCP Council and schools within the BCP area. Feedback will be requested from schools as to whether any related activities occurred.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Children's Services have confirmed that this is achievable.
Implementing service/directorate:	Marketing, Communications & Policy Directorate and Children's Services
Time period to implementation:	First occurrence either in January or November 2026.

Action 2: Status and recommendations

Status:	One promotion completed in January (aligned with world vegetarian day). One scheduled for November.
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Recommendation(s):	Continue annually as is.
Other options for consideration:	None given.
Action 3: BCP Council operated food outlets to have at least a 20% plant-based offering across all of its outlets, aiming to raise this to 25%	
Description (specific):	All BCP Council operated (both public-facing and internal) food outlets to have on average at least 20% of their food and drink options to be plant-based and to have available for sale at least one plant-based option for each of the food types offered e.g. non-dairy milk, plant-based ice cream, plant-based sandwiches, plant-based pasties etc. ¹² This will be aimed to be raised to 25% if this is commercially viable.
Measurement:	Manually checking menus and offerings meet the quantified requirement.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Confirmation from Commercial Operations that options can be reinforced through menus. Subject to annual review of supply and demand to assess commercial viability.
Implementing service/directorate:	Commercial Operations
Time period to implementation:	By 30 April 2026.
Action 3: Status and recommendations	
Status:	In place. Most outlets compliant. All exceeding minimum 20% target. Most exceeding 25% target. A few exceptions in some outlets not providing one plant-based option per category. This had been in place but was removed due to low demand.
Recommendation(s):	Bi-annual reviews of both menu provision and sales of plant-based products (as most outlets have a summer and winter menu). Percentage targets should remain unchanged for now. Adjust percentage target based on product sales volume and commercial viability. Request that outlets retrial one item per

¹ This will not apply to food outlets under lease or licence by concession, operated by third parties.

² Percentage to be annually reviewed based upon assessed commercial viability by Commercial Operations.

	category where this was removed from sale due to lack of sales.
Other options for consideration:	If there is a strong desire to increase the target, a recommendation could be to include locally sourced, organic or regeneratively farmed meat as part of a raised target to provide vendors with greater flexibility in food provision, whilst maintaining a plant-based target. Extend the target to concessions. However, potential issues include overextension of acceptable powers and influence from the grantors of the concession (the Council), commercial viability, and monitoring and control.
Action 4: All newly tendered major licensed events to include at least 10% plant-based options within the overall menu offer (when the event includes a catering provision)	
Description (specific):	Tenders for all major licensed events to include at least 10% plant-based options as a proportion of all food offerings. This would exclude major events with a primary focus on meat or dairy food and/or drink products. ³
Measurement:	Review of the contracts and catering plans of major events.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Confirmation from Commercial Operations. Subject to annual review.
Implementing service/directorate:	Commercial Operations
Time period to implementation:	By 30 April 2026. ⁴
Action 4: Status and recommendations	
Status:	In place.
Recommendation(s):	Annually review to confirm implementation. Review success every two years to see whether increases can be made.
Other options for consideration:	None given.

³ Any thresholds, restrictions or requirements would not apply to any existing contracts, only to future contracts.

⁴ Not applicable to any tenders already published or awarded prior to this date.

Action 5: Re-tendered food contracts to include plant-based options

Description (specific):	All re-tendered food contracts relating to food procured by BCP Council must ensure plant-based options are available for each food type, with the exception of meat-only contracts. ⁵
Measurement:	Verifying that the requirement is embedded within food tendering documents and contract terms.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Confirmed by Procurement.
Implementing service/directorate:	Procurement
Time period to implementation:	By 28 February 2026.

Action 5: Status and recommendations

Status:	In place.
Recommendation(s):	No further action recommended.
Other options for consideration:	None given.

Action 6: Promotional and retail guidance on plant-based diets developed and shared

Description (specific):	Develop and share promotional and retail guidance for Council-operated food outlets relating to plant-based options.
Measurement:	Record of guidance distributed to all Council-operated food outlets.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Confirmed as achievable by Climate and Sustainability Service.
Implementing service/directorate:	Climate and Sustainability Service
Time period to implementation:	By 28 February 2026.

Action 6: Status and recommendations

Status:	Delayed due to lack of capacity in poster design team. Will look to introduce over the coming year.
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⁵ Any thresholds, restrictions or requirements would not apply to any existing contracts, only to future contracts.

Recommendation(s):	Once designed and distributed, will be on file as stock. Annual review as to whether additions to poster stock are needed.
Other options for consideration:	None given.

Action 7: Undertake a scoping and baselining exercise of plant-based offerings

Description (specific):	Undertake a scoping exercise to establish a baseline for plant-based diet offerings within the BCP area. To include: • The number of BCP managed food outlets offering plant-based diet options and the number and proportion of plant-based diet options offered by these outlets. • The number and proportion of plant-based only private and public cafes and restaurants within the BCP area. • The number and proportion of licenses or leases given to concessions offering plant-based food.
Measurement:	Production of a scoping report.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Agreed to have sufficient time to complete the research in the given time period.
Implementing service/directorate:	Climate and Sustainability Service
Time period to implementation:	By 30 April 2026.

Action 7: Status and recommendations

Status:	Completed and available.
Recommendation(s):	Recommendation to cease and discontinue action, due to lack of data and utility.
Other options for consideration:	If undertaking a full food system strategy review all public menus of vendors listed on the food hygiene list (approximately 5,000 outlets) could be reviewed as to whether they are marked plant-based/vegan, gluten-free, organic and so on, for a comprehensive understanding on plant-based provision across BCP.

Action 8: Survey and adapt non-dairy milk provision in BCP Council offices

Description (specific):	To undertake a survey within Council-owned buildings that offer hot drink facilities to staff, to ascertain the proportion of staff that would prefer non-dairy options, and seek to adapt the non-dairy milk provision by demand and locality dependent on the results of the survey, if commercially viable to do so.
Measurement:	Survey is planned, undertaken and completed in coordination with corporate communications. Results assessed and communication with Facilities Management for possible implementation.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Facilities Management will confirm that non-dairy milk would be financially feasible and not result in excessive waste following the results of the survey. There is confirmed sufficient time to undertake a survey to determine demand.
Implementing service/directorate:	Climate and Sustainability Service
Time period to implementation:	By 30 April 2026.
Action 8: Status and recommendations	
Status:	Survey completed and results analysed. Funding shortfall of £800 - £1,600 per year not able to be sourced to make changes to current provision.
Recommendation(s):	Locate funding to support initiative. Provision should automatically tailor to demand as consumed milk is replenished and restocked based upon demand.
Other options for consideration:	Resurvey every four years to assess whether demand has changed.
Action 9: Appoint 'plant-based diet champions' to deploy plant-based initiatives	
Description (specific):	To recruit and appoint at least three voluntary plant-based diet champions within BCP Council to pioneer, organise and promote new internal plant-based diet initiatives, such as a 'bring your plant-based cake to work day'. To grow this into a wider network of members within BCP Council.
Measurement:	Three plant-based diet champions have been recruited and appointed. A set of initiatives planned, including plans to enlarge the network.

Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Not a significant amount of time required to organise. 'Champions' follows existing models of internal advocacy.
Implementing service/directorate:	Climate and Sustainability Service & Marketing, Communications & Policy Directorate
Time period to implementation:	By 30 April 2026.
Action 9: Status and recommendations	
Status:	Rebranded to 'sustainability champions'. Launched, and uptake far exceeded the three-person target. Plant-based cake day planned by each champion.
Recommendation(s):	Expand the group to aim to have at least one champion representative from each directorate.
Other options for consideration:	None given.
Action 10: Publish online text to promote the benefits of plant-based diets	
Description (specific):	To publish online text with tips for various age groups on how to prepare healthier plant-based options alongside the benefits of doing so.
Measurement:	An area of the Council website or other online page updated with new information on plant-based diets.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	IT to confirm that text developed is acceptable for a website update.
Implementing service/directorate:	Climate and Sustainability Service
Time period to implementation:	By 28 February 2026.
Action 10: Status and recommendations	
Status:	Published on Council website.
Recommendation(s):	Add plant-based diet material onto the new bcpsustainabilityhub external website due to be launched shortly.
Other options for consideration:	None given.
Action 11: Annual review and adjustment of the plant-based diet action plan	

Description (specific):	Annually review the plant-based diet action plan, adding or amending actions and adjusting the proportion of required plant-based options as assessed to be appropriate.
Measurement:	The scheduling of meetings in the summer of 2026 to review plant-based diet actions and whether any revisions or enhancements are justified.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Annual discussions to occur with key implementing services/directorates to confirm that the actions are practically and financially feasible. The Environment & Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee to confirm the regularity of resubmissions of plans.
Implementing service/directorate:	Climate and Sustainability Service
Time period to implementation:	By 31 August 2026.
Action 11: Status and recommendations	
Status:	In progress.
Recommendation(s):	Continue with the annual review, report and recommendations.
Other options for consideration:	None given.
Suggested additional Action 12: Internal Council informative blog on plant-based diets	
Description (specific):	To publish an internal Council blog on the reasons behind the initiative to encourage and promote plant-based diets, including the impacts and benefits of doing so.
Measurement:	Record of blog published.
Confirmation that it is realistic/achievable:	Confirmed by Internal Communications team.
Implementing service/directorate:	Climate and Sustainability Service (blog authors) and Internal Communications (blog publishers)
Time period to implementation:	By 31 March 2027.

