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Welcome to InTheNews - covering all the FM news you may have missed over the first week of 2023:

[Sodexo](#) food sales data released this week shows that the demand for vegan and vegetarian meals climbed year-on-year across its UK and Ireland sites from 8% of meals sold in 2021 to 10% in 2022.

The food sales data also revealed that the East Midlands, which accounted for an average of 21% of all meals sold by Sodexo from January to November 2022, was the region that sold the most vegetarian and vegan meals. The same period saw vegetarian and vegan meal sales of 15% in both the North West and Wales, 11% in London, 10% in Scotland, and 8% in Ireland.

Claire Atkins-Morris, Director of Corporate Responsibility at Sodexo, said: "Whether people are vegan, vegetarian, or just want to try something new, it's great to see that more and more customers are trying plant-based meals across our sites. This really demonstrates a shift in consumer awareness, a wider range of options and a marketplace responding."

"Councils may struggle to keep the lights on with inefficient buildings."

That's the message from major research of UK councils, which saw nearly half of councillors admit that unless work is done to retrofit and decarbonise their building stock, utility bills will become un-affordable.

Some 15% have even warned that their public buildings would become unusable. The polling*, on behalf of construction company [Willmott Dixon](#), also reveals that more than four in five (82%) councillors in England say their local authority has a plan in place for delivering on their net zero commitment.

Jo Mills, the company's Head of Decarbonisation, said: "This is a stark wake-up call of the enormous challenge facing the public sector across the country to decarbonise and meet net zero."

With the UK's uptake of district heating technology continuing to grow, [Rehau](#) has published [a new whitepaper](#) exploring key considerations around heat networks, titled *Trends in District Heating Pipework*.

The company's conversations with contractors, ESCOs and specifiers has identified misconceptions around the use of polymer systems, which have become more prominent in recent years. With questions often arising around topics from specialist welding, thermal expansion, mechanical fittings and the material's suitability to larger networks, through to heat loss, flow temperatures and leak detection capabilities, clarification was key, says Rehau Building Solutions UK head of marketing and technical Steve Richmond.

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