



All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food

Minutes of meeting of the School Food APPG

Tuesday 15 January 2019, 14.00pm – 16.00pm,

Grimond Room, Portcullis House

Present

Sharon Hodgson MP (SH) – Chair

Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods (RBW) - Vice Chair

Kate	Anstey	KA	Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)
Nigel	Argyle	NA	Elygra
Olukemi	Atijosan	OA	Eagle Solutions
Alys	Bannister	AB	Adopt a School, RACA
Arianna	Bastianini	ABa	School Food Matters
Simon	Bishop	SB	City Serve, Birmingham County Council
Clare	Colquhoun	CC	Minor Weir and Willis
Joy	Cowley	JC	Transforming Lives for Good (TLG)
Linda	Cregan	LC	ISS
Mark	Driver	MD	Minor Weir and Willis
Patricia	Fellows	PF	Consultant
Judith	Gregory	JG	Cardiff Council
Simon	Grey	SG	Food Teachers Centre
Michael	Hales	MH	Lead Association for Catering in Education (LACA)
Helena	Houghton	HH	Adopt a School, RACA
Sue	Leuty	SL	Elygra
Meg	Longworth	ML	Chartwells
Graham	Macey	GM	Bidfood
Carmel	McConnell	CMcC	Magic Breakfast
Ian	McGrady	IMcG	Edsential
Frances	Meek	FM	British Nutrition Foundation
Rosemary	Molinin	RM	Sodexo
Caroline	Morgan	CM	Local Food Links
Lai	Ogunsola	LO	Greater London Authority
Jason	O'Rourke	JOR	Washingborough Academy
Jeanette	Orrey	JO	For For Life
Rob	Percival	RP	Soil association
Alex	Reeves	AR	Oak Hill
Yasmin	Regan	YR	Eagle Solutions
Cheryl	Rudge	CR	City Serve, Birmingham County Council

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Keren	Scammel	KS	Sodexo
Claire	Theobald	CT	British Nutrition Foundation
Wendy	Wills	WW	University of Hertsfordshire
Stephanie	Wood	SW	School Food Matters
Katie	Woods	KW	Derbyshire County Council
Liz	Wright	LW	Hyperactive Childrens Support Group (HACSG)

1. Chair's Introduction

SH welcomed attendees to the meeting.

2. State of the Nation report – Rob Percival, Head of Policy, Soil Association

RP presented an outline of the report and highlighted the following key points: -

- The report stated that the UK consumed a significantly higher percentage of processed foods when compared with France and Italy.
- A review of the progress that had been made over the past twelve months in combating childhood obesity was outlined and it was confirmed that there were some areas of good progress such as the introduction of part two of the Childhood Obesity Plan.
- Interviews undertaken with school caterers had highlighted that there were a range of pressures impacting on school catering which included increasing ingredient costs; increasing wage costs; the apprenticeship levy and reduced school and local authority budgets.
- Caterers were reporting that the service was reaching a tipping point as they had explored and put in place changes to mitigate the impact. However, it was becoming increasingly difficult to identify new measure that would not have a bearing on the quality of the service.
- There was very little oversight on how the £2.30 per meal funding for Universal Infant Free School Meals was being spent.
- Local authority central establishment charges were reported as an issue for caterers.
- The impact of Brexit had not flowed through to the service in its entirety and grave concern was being expressed that the additional challenges that could be brought about by Brexit could lead to a reduction in the quality of meals and result in more caterers moving to cold lunchtime meals.
- The report also looked at the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme and highlighted that 84% of the food tested contained harmful pesticides and the quality had been reported as being very poor which was resulting in children opting not to eat the food provided.

RP concluded by summarising some of the key recommendations set out in the report which included calling on government to: -

- Introduce the Healthy Schools Rating Scheme.
- Ringfence the UIFSM funding.
- Remove no deal Brexit from the negotiations.
- Re-specification of the requirements for the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme.

A question and answer session ensued and the key comments and questions were noted as follows: -

MD commented that the company he worked for supplied produce for the Fruit and Vegetable Scheme to 16,500 schools. He concurred that improvement was required but they provided fruit and vegetables that were good value for money and due to the nature of growing conditions in the UK it was not always possible to provide local produce within the budget for the scheme. However, when sourcing food from outside the UK, suppliers with schemes in place such as water schemes were used.

RBW queried how the scheme was managed and asked if there was a good practice guide in place.

RP confirmed that there were logistical issues with the scheme such staff time and storage of the produce. RM confirmed that when the scheme was first rolled out in 2003 there was guidance provided and commented that it would be appropriate to refresh and recirculate the guidance.

RBW stated that due to the change in Minister there was an opportunity to revisit the call for ringfencing the funding for UIFSM.

3. British Nutrition Foundation Healthy Eating Week 2019 – Frances Meek and Claire Theobald, British Nutrition Foundation

FM and CT presented an outline of Healthy Eating Week and highlighted the following key points:

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- The purpose of the week was to bring healthy eating into focus at the same time across all participating organisations.
- The week was established in 2013 for early years settings and schools and was extended to workplaces in 2016.
- There was no cost to register for the event.
- Organisations who have registered received promotional posters and materials to support the event.
- There are five challenges, one for each day of the week, the first four were the same as previous years and the fifth challenge was changed annually.
- Each challenge follows national guidelines and there are suggestions provided regarding how the challenge could be delivered.
- There were challenge trackers and certificates as an incentive to complete each challenge.
- During the week, there are cooking demonstrations which were streamed live so schools can cook along in real time or the schools can download the videos and participate at a later date.

FM and CT concluded by advising that the British Nutrition Foundation had conducted a survey following the last event and 90% of respondents reported that they would participate in the event again. It was advised that the week would be taking place between the 10 – 14 June 2019 and attendees at the Group were encouraged to register.

A question and answer session ensued and the key comments and questions were noted as follows: -

In response to a query from SH it was confirmed that approximately 4000 schools had taken part in the event.

SH advised that the link to the information could be circulated to attendees following the meeting.

JO asked if the event had attracted any sponsorship. It was reported that the week had attracted a variety of sponsors in previous years.

Following a question put by LC it was stated that to register an individual had to be associated with a school or workplace.

It was queried if promotional posters would be available for 2019 and it was confirmed that this would be the case if funds were available.

MD commented that catering providers could be used to distributed any promotional materials to schools that had registered to reduce costs.

4. Talking about the food choices of 'Generation Z' – Rosemary Molinari, Sodexo

RM presented an outline of the findings from research that Sodexo had undertaken in relation to the food choices of 'Generation Z' and the key points were noted as follows: -

- Young people turning 18 years old between 2013-2027 were classified as 'Generation Z' and will make up 23% of the world population
- They have an expectation that the things they purchase will be tailored to their requirements.
- Generation Z were conscientious, committed to the world and technology and have an 8 second concentration span.
- In a recent survey 72% of 7-15-year olds stated they want to try new foods, 33% read food labels and actively make healthy choices, and 93% state that they thought it was important to have a healthy diet.
- Sodexo had commissioned independent research which confirmed that pupils were brand savvy, they wanted something easy to eat; easy to purchase; affordable food; easy to enjoy and a relaxing environment to eat the food in.

RM advised that the findings from the research were used to create a refreshed catering service. In introducing the new service, the following were implemented: -

- New menus which contained customised meals
- Easy access food counters and serving points
- Food was served in boxes rather than on plates and trays
- Wooden cutlery was introduced
- Information posters and communication with schools and parents

RM concluded by reporting that there had be some resistance from parents in the early stages. However, good communication and an open approach had over come this. As a result of the changes the dinning rooms were cleared quicker, the materials were used to serve the meals were recycled and has reduced the overall waste.

A question and answer session ensued and the key comments and questions were noted as follows: -

JC queried if there had been a difference in responses from different demographics and it was confirmed that the methodology had been consistent for all demographics and there had been no clear difference in responses.

In response to questions from RBW, the Group were advised that the boxes and cutlery were recyclable and there was work being undertaken to make all products compostable. It was also reported that the overall waste had been reduced due to a greater number of children opting for a school meal which reduced the waste generated from packed lunches.

WW queried how children with low food horizons were encouraged to try the food and it was confirmed that taster food kits for parents and children were introduced and children within the schools were recruited as agents of change.

JOR commented that food education was key to providing children with a broad knowledge of food.

5. School food Plan Alliance Update – Stephanie Wood – Co-Chair.

SW provided an update to the Group and the key points were noted as follows: -

- Mark Davies from ISS had attended the meeting and outlined details of how they have developed the workforce standards framework for their organisation and SW advised that the Framework was available on the LACA website.
- Katie Shore from the Department for Education (DfE) had attended the meeting and reported that the Healthy Rating Scheme would be published in the coming months. However, there was not going to be a consultation on the scheme prior to implementation.
- School Food Standards were being progressed and Public Health England was undertaking user centre policy groups to gain and understanding of what they should include in the standards. JO advised that the proposed timeline for introducing the Standards were as follows: -
 - Meetings with stakeholders (user centre policy groups) in March
 - Re-draft of the Standards to incorporate changes required from the stakeholder meetings would take place in April and May.
 - Passing of the required Secondary Legislation in Autumn 2019.

JO also confirmed that there was no appetite from Ofsted to make the Standards mandatory.

- SFPA website was going to cease to be hosted by the DfE, therefore attendees at the Group were advised to download as much of the resource from the website as soon as possible. SW also commented that there would still be a page on the DfE website for the SFPA. However, this would not include all the resource and the detailed content that there was now.

A question and answer session ensued and the key comments and questions were noted as follows: -

CM commented that the School Breakfast Programme had 1775 schools signed up and continued to provide children with breakfast provision. However, the funding would cease in the near future and she called on the Group to campaign to assist in securing the funding for the future.

In response to a question from ML, it was confirmed that no information had been provided regarding extending School Food Standards to academies'.

Following on from the response LC queried if extending the Standards to academies could be raised as a question to the Minister at a Prime Ministers Questions. It was advised that this was something that SH would look into.

SH asked if the SFPA website would still be accessible when moved over to the DfE website. SW reported that the existing website would not be available after March. However, there would still be a presence on the DfE site. As a result of the discussion it was agreed that details would be circulated to the Group by email.

6. Holiday Lunch Club – Carolyn Harris MP

CH provided an outlined of the holiday lunch club provision that she had established in her constituency. The key points were noted as follows: -

- The club had been established as a reactive measure after a local food bank had made an appeal for additional food after running low on provisions. This was a direct result of families requiring addition food to feed their families in the school holidays.
- CH reported that she contacted big supermarkets and wholesalers in the area to ask them for donations to support the holiday club.
- A local community centre was used as a hub to collate the donations, prepare pack lunch meals and some hot meals.
- The pack lunches were delivered to two local leisure centres and targeted at the free swim sessions and play schemes held at these centres.
- The hot meal provided was served at the community centre.
- In the first year it was estimated that 6,500 children where provided with a meal.
- Following the success of the previous year and the positive media there were many organisations willing to support the 2018 holiday provision.
- The 2018 provision provided 10,500 children with food so built upon the successes of the previous year.

CH concluded by reporting the challenges that they had faced with the holiday provision and advised that the main challenge had been working with the local authority who had put numerous barriers in the way and been resistant to the work that was being undertaken.

A question and answer session ensued and the key comments and questions were noted as follows: -

JO commented that what had been achieved had to be commended.

RBW stated that she was interested to hear about the issues experienced with the local authority.

In response to a query, it was reported that there was an aim to provide healthier food in future. However, the food that was served was restricted by the donations that they received.

7. Update from LACA's National School Meals Week – Nigel Argyle

NA provided an overview of the activities that had taken place during National School Meals Week. The key points were noted as follows: -

- Throughout the year school chefs had been submitting photographs of their school food to #cookeditmyself and during the event a panel of independent people judged the photos and the winning entries were confirmed as:-
 - First place – ISS
 - Second place – CaterED
 - Third place – Grimes Dyke Primary School
- There had been an array of facts about school food published on social media throughout the year
- After a social media campaign asking people to vote for their favourite school meal, the winning main course was curry and the winning dessert was chocolate sponge with custard. Over 1.2 million portions of the meals had been served during the week.
- A cake had been baked and delivered to Prince Charles to mark his 70th birthday. The cake had been baked by previous school chef of the year winners and had received a bronze award in an international cake competition.
- There had been hundreds of roast dinners served on National Roast Dinner day.
- The LACA powered by roadshow had visited various locations across the UK and had proved a great success.

NA summarised by thanking SH and RBW for their support at the Parliamentary event, and advised that further details, photographs and videos of all the activities that had taken place over the week could be located on the LACA website.

Meeting concluded at 16.00pm

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Secretariat - APSE