



All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food

Minutes of meeting

Tuesday 16th July 2013, 10.30 – 12.30pm

Committee Room 8, House of Commons

Present

Sharon Hodgson MP (SH), Roberta Blackman-Woods MP (RBW), Amber Rudd MP (AR), Diane Johnson MP (DJ) Liz Truss MP (LT)

Sharon	Alldred	Cheshire East Council
Rob	Bailey	Association for Public Service Excellence (RB)
Joel	Baker	Assistant to Sharon Hodgson
Roy	Ballam	British Nutrition Foundation
Leah	Barrett	Sheffield Council
Rupert	Bazeley-White	Hampshire Council
Carrieanne Marie	Bishop	Local Authority Caterers Association
Louise	Bizley	Bath & NE Somerset Council
John	Blackledge	Blackpool Council
Tim	Blowers	Derbyshire County Council
Zoe	Brewster	City University
Helen	Buckley	Department for Education
Anne	Bull	Local Authority Caterers Association
Jane	Burr	Enfield Council
Juliane	Caillouette Noble	Jamie Oliver Foundation
Mike	Carden	Food for thought Liverpool
Liz	Carruthers	Staffordshire County Council (Entrust)
Debbie	Clarke	Wigan Council
Linda	Cregan	Children's Food trust
Angela	Critten	Greenwich Council
Alex	Cunningham	Magic Breakfast
Greta	Defeyter	Northumbria University
Henry	Dimbleby	Leon (HD)
Julia	Dowsett	Enfield Council
Kate	Evans	Manchester Council
Olayinka	Ewuola	Eagle Solutions Services
Stephen	Foster	Chartwells
Lindsay	Graham	Lindsay Graham Ltd
David	Grant	Greenwich Council
Libby	Grundy	Food For Life Partnership
Michael	Hales	Tower Hamlets Council

Letterhead designed by pupils at Harehills Primary School, Leeds



Secretariat - APSE

John	Hawkin	Blackpool Council
Lorna	Hegenbarth	National Farmers Union
Helen	Johnston	Local Government Association
Fay	Jones	National Farmers Union
Susanne	Kent	Kensington & Chelsea Council
John	Kerr-Brown Cllr	Warrington Council
Michael	Lamb	Gateshead Council
Tom	Lambeth	Food for thought Liverpool
Christine	Lewis	Unison
Neil	Lovell	Jamie Oliver Foundation
Carmell	McConnell	Magic Breakfast
Linda	Mitchell	P100
Rosemary	Molinari	Compass Group
Paul	O'Brien	Association for Public Service Excellence
Ogechi	Okoli	Save the Children
Karen	Oliver	Hartlepool Council
Barbara	Patterson	North Tyneside Council
Liz	Prosser	Greater London Authority
John	Puckison	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
Michael	Purves	Department for Education
Gary	Richardson	Countryside Learning
Lynne	Richardson	Hammersmith & Fulham Council
Dale	Robson	Gateshead Council
Laura	Rodrigues	Childrens Society
Gurmel	Singh-Kandola	Greenwich Council
Jane	Sixsmith	Focus on Food
Michelle	Smith	
Rebecca	Spencer	London Borough of Bexley Council
Kate	Sumner	Telford & Wrekin Council
Diane	Symes	Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board
Wendy	Togher	Enfield Council
John	Vincent	Leon (JV)
Sheila	Walker	Birmingham City Council
Nicola	Wilde	Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board
Mark	Winnington Cllr	Staffordshire Council
Stephanie	Wood	School Food Matters
Liz	Wright	Hyperative Children's Support Group
Allison	Yeomans	Westminster Council

1. Chair's Welcome

SH opened the meeting and welcomed all those attending. Pleased to see so many had made the effort to attend on this occasion.

RB announced the list of apologies as follows:

Mitch	Blair	Imperial
Sir Bob Russell MP		
Fiona	Twycross	London Assembly member
Gary Streeter MP		
Caroline Lucas MP		

Sir Alan Beith MP		
Tessa Munt MP		
Mary Glidon MP		
Baroness Linklater		
Alex Cunningham MP		
Damian Hinds MP		
Lord Bowness		
Baroness Lister		
Baroness Stedman-Scott		
Lady Cumberlege		
Baroness Hamwee		
Louis	Levy Dr	
Jo	Smith	Wolverhampton Council
Jeanette	Orrey	Food for Life Partnership
Debbie Abrahams MP		
Myles	Bremner	Garden Organic
Alison Young		Durham Council

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be an accurate record.

SH updated the meeting on the actions taken forward since the last meeting:

- Blackpool have confirmed they will provide a speaker for the October meeting
- Dr Levy Public Health England 'Link between food and attainment' to be revisited

3. Liz Truss MP Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Education)

LT introduced the Government's expectations for the School Food plan and stated the debt we owed to Jamie Oliver for bringing the issue to prominence. The plan is designed to boost uptake and at both breakfast and lunchtime.

It was hoped that the estimated £1 billion currently spent on lunchboxes could be diverted back into school dinners. In 1980 obesity levels were 6%, they now stand at 27%. Cooking skills and the social benefits of traditional meal times have diminished.

£6.1 million allocated to fund school food plan and £11.8 million to increase take-up
Food standards are under debate

There is no plan to ban packed lunches. The idea of universal Free School Meals has been accepted by the DfE, however funding remains an issue. Schools can offer more affordable meals to children

There will be cookery on the curriculum, emphasis on where food comes from and savoury dishes. It is estimated that 99% of secondaries and 77% of primaries have the facilities now to undertake this.

BDH emphasised the link between cooking and nutrition

Mike Carden (Food for Thought, Liverpool) - wants more money from Government

Tim Blowers (Derbyshire Council) - asked about the assistance for small schools

LT stated that Lord Nash is looking at a new grant where £50k is available to small schools, like many in Norfolk, sharing a head teacher. The DfE is investigating at £9 million fund.

Cllr Winnington (Staffordshire County Council) emphasised local produce and the local economy

Christine Lewis (Unison) suggested that primary school funding is an investment and more public funds should be made available.

Karen Oliver (Hartlepool Council) asked how the funding would work between suppliers

John Vincent wants suppliers and organisations to commit to a joint approach to assisting small schools

LT stated that there has to be a cost / benefit analysis on funding. Schools now had devolved budgets and some caterers cross subsidise. Agrees on local produce and important that children know where their food comes from and eat healthily and seasonally. Farming remains the largest manufacturing industry.

John Pukrin (ATL) highlighted the move to design and technology had seen a decrease in cooking skills. Concern at the new Academies.

Laura Rodrigues (Children's Society) welcomed the report, but had concerns with the link to universal credit.

John Blackledge (Blackpool Council) liked the link between deprivation and free school meals and highlighted the emphasis in Blackpool on school breakfast.

DJ asked why there were pilots when the evidence already existed linking school meals to health benefits

RBW highlighted the Durham pilot

LT – There would be an emphasis on cookery skills within the new curriculum. A commitment to talk to David Laws to reflect the training aspect. New Academies will be included, however don't want to rewrite the contracts of existing Academies although many are clearly signing up and most will want to. Universal credit is being looked at with LT looking at school food and David Laws at free school meals.

4. John Vincent & Henry Dimbleby, LEON & authors of the School Food

HD thanked everyone for their assistance in constructing the plan

20% of those leaving primary school are obese. We need to focus on the needs of the child and adopt a whole school approach. Feltham school has made the canteen as important as the classroom, teachers eat with the children and the cooks treated the same as teachers. Critically the Head Teacher is taking the lead.

JV suggested that many poor children have no eligibility and many were missing out. Those parents on the borderline were struggling to fund school lunches so chose the packed lunch option.

HD – Urswick in Hackney had decided to go it alone and fund universal free school meals by the school

JV – plans are rarely perfect, but we are ahead of where we were a year ago. There was a need to get everyone around the table and commit to change.

RBW praised the plan and with the recommendation for universal free school meals had overcome her initial doubts. Asked what can be done to get the government to act?

JV –Michael Gove is in principle supportive of universal free school meals, but the Treasury remains to be convinced. Need to lobby MPs, there will be a Sunday Times campaign and then want to come back with a plan focussed on universal free school meals.

Paul O'Brien (APSE) suggested that we seek a manifesto commitment from all Parties

Malcolm Carr (Childrens Food Campaign) asked about the 3000 Academies and the status of the Expert board.

Time Blowers (Derbyshire County Council) asked about cafeteria systems

HD noted that 2000 Academies are not legally obliged to fulfil the nutritional standards and each holds a funding agreement/contract with the 'state' relinquishing control. He has spoken to 10% of Academies who were desperate to be involved. If Academies do resist then it will be revisited. It is not yet known how many schools are to be tested on adherence to the new standards.

The Expert panel is no-longer bound, membership is not closed and it will still meet. Myles Bremner (Garden Organic) is being funded by Leon to deliver the panel as a full time role. Boris Johnson and Rosie Boycott will lead on the flagship London Boroughs.

Henry is shocked by the existing snack food options available in some schools but can't change things by state decree. Backs a mid-morning break.

Lindsay Graham asked about the role of Ofsted?

HD - Michael Wilshaw has committed to the plan and will look at the canteen and behaviour. Training is unknown. An Ofsted inspector was on the panel in the guise of the head of Shotton Hall Academy.

SH – Please can you persuade Michael Wilshaw to attend the APPG

JV – Whilst the emphasis had been on Academies, the whole school approach was now to be reintroduced.

Roy Ballam (British Nutrition Foundation) – cooking key stages?

Olayinka Ewuola (Eagle Solution Services) – pupil premium? Not ring-fenced and schools not interested in spending it on food

Liz Prosser (Healthy Schools London) – emphasised the backing in London for 300 healthy schools

JV – If someone can cook 5 dishes then that requires a range of skills. Head teacher training needs to be broader and a linkage to the pupil premium made. The existing standards are confusing.

Linda Mitchell (P100) – who is to measure success and the 2013 baseline?

Gary Richardson (Countryside Learning) – need to engage with the ‘growing schools programme’ and also with parents

Greta Defeyter (Northumbria University) highlighted the need for summer feeding and the evidence of behavioural change from nutrition.

Barbara Patterson (North Tyneside) – most analysis American but demonstrates a link between food and health and attainment

Mike Carden (Food for Thought Liverpool) – evidence already exists for universal free school meals.

Libby Grundy (Food for Life Partnership) – endorses and celebrates the report

Rob Bailey (APSE) – where will the pilots be and who will teach the cooking skills.

Karen Oliver (Hartlepool Council) – sustainability of new school meal plan?

JV – strategy relatively easily agreed but the key is implementation and the determination of the team. It’s 100 times more difficult to get training on the curriculum rather than making a recommendation. The focus on the head teacher is the big thing.

Pilots yes, parents getting involved yes and schools should consider vouchers to parents to test the lunches. Jeremy Hunt and the Government have shown willing. DfE to commission work on measurement.

In regard to teaching JV has seem good cooks teaching and also home economics teachers. Not prescriptive and all approaches can and should be considered

BDH – Thanks to JV and HD

Dale Robson (Gateshead Council) – Jamie did a lot of damaged and halved take-up in 2005. Why re-invent the wheel when APSE has been benchmarking schools catering for over 10 years?

Debbie Clarke (Wigan Council) – devolved funding was leading to fragmentation of delivery and making cross subsidy problematic

Rosemary Molinari (Compass) - would the head teacher 10 point check list be used to inform the revised Ofsted inspection criteria. e.g. evidence of an agreed school food improvement, observations on dining room atmosphere, evidence of a meaningful packed lunch policy?

HD – Vending, please give examples. There will be no mass return to vending. Conscious of the need to support small schools and maintain standards.

JV – It's been an intense year which has restored faith in human nature. Much has been done to knock down some of the existing barriers.

Loves the idea of data from schools and APSE data is brilliant. There is a need to stagger and manage capacity at lunchtime. There was a drop following Jamie Oliver's intervention and parent perception remains a problem. There has been a massive change looking at the Children's Food trust analysis compared to 2005. The good idea regarding the 10 point check would be proposed to Ofsted

Anne Bull (LACA) Thanks to JV and HD from the panel

Lindsay Graham – please don't demonise vending and well done on the report

JV - Sharon Hodgson has been brilliant! Considerable consensus achieved across all political parties

5. Cllr David Simmons, Local Government Association

Cllr Simmonds welcomed the report and suggested that very little was settled within the HofC. Several aspects of education were currently below aspiration

Councils retain some direct responsibility and influence, especially at primary level. The transfer of public health back to local authorities presents a new opportunity.

Often food meets the standard, but the bin at the end is then full of broccoli. The current standard is based on the taking of food, not the eating of it. We are moving to a position where we chose to eat rather than being fed. In France lunch might consist of a croissant with chocolate spread. At the Harefield Academy, the chef was allowed to spend £10k on a slush puppy machine and used 90% real fruit juice. Local Authorities have a good track record.

The new breakfast clubs and cooking will place the focus on the needs of the child. The nutritional standard is too broad, we need a new flexibility and choice. A family that eats together, sticks together

Councils will be pleased to work to implement the plan and innovate away from processed food.

SH noted that there exists a language barrier to eligibility in some circumstances

Cllr Mark Winnington (Staffordshire Council) – LGA needs to pressurise the treasury and divert the health budget to school meals

Libby Grundy (Food for Life Partnership) - Would there be a local indicator on uptake. Please can the paper on Health & Wellbeing boards be recirculated?

Laura Rodrigues (Childrens Society) - highlighted the need to support asylum seekers as the current system for school meals is flawed.

Cllr Simmons – the Government is interested in a move towards non ring-fenced funding. An outcomes framework for health was unhelpful but Health & Wellbeing boards present a big opportunity

Letterhead designed by pupils at Harehills Primary School, Leeds



6. AOB

Child hunger to be added to the terms of reference for the APPG

Anne Bull, National School Meals Week – launch very successful. 60 MPs attended and Cheshire West and Chester have already signed up for free school meals during the NSMW week – November 4th to 8th November.

SH – good if all children were given a free school meal for the week.

7. Date of next meeting –

APPG – October 15th 10.30 -12.30

Blackpool - Breakfasts

Magic Breakfast

Lindsay Graham – Child hunger

Meeting closed at 12.30pm.