



All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food

Minutes of meeting of the School Food APPG

Tuesday 17 July 2018, 2-4pm, Committee Room 6

Present

Sharon Hodgson MP (SH),

Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods (RBW) - Vice Chair

Ashley	Adamson (AA)	Newcastle University
Nigel	Argyle (NA)	Elgra Marketing Services
Alys	Bannister (AB)	Adopt a School
Natalie	Beckett (NB)	Magic Breakfast
Ardva	Boyes- Brever (ABB)	Food in School Holidays (FISH)
Joy	Cowley (JC)	TLG Make Lunch
Barbara	Crowther (BC)	Childrens Food Campaign
Louise	Davies (LD)	Food Teachers Centre
Sophia	Dettmer (SD)	Magic Breakfast
Tom	Embury (TE)	British Dietetic Association
Jessica	Faulkner (JF)	Office of Sharon Hodgeson MP
Stephen	Foster (SF)	Chartwells, Compass Group
Tam	Fry (TF)	National Obesity Forum
Olivia	Gordon (OG)	Oakhill/ LACA
Kyle	Graham (KG)	Independent
Judith	Gregory (JG)	LACA Wales Regional Chair/ Cardiff Council
Richard	Griffiths (RG)	British Poultry Council
Laurence	Guinness (LG)	The Childhood Trust
Vickie	Hacking (VH)	Association of Public Service Excellence (Secretariat)
Jane	Hicken (JH)	Derbyshire County Council
Helena	Houghton (HH)	Adopt a School
Debbie	Johns (DJ)	Association of Public Service Excellence
Sue	Leuty (SL)	Elygra Marketing Services / SFPA Admin
Meg	Longworth (ML)	Chartwells, Compass Group
Joe	Mann (JM)	Food Teachers Centre
Andrew	Marshall (AM)	British Sugar
Frances	Meek (FM)	British Nutrition Foundation
Rosemary	Molinari (RM)	Sodexo
Samantha	Murray (SM)	University of Hertfordshire

Annie	Oliver (AO)	Feeding Britain
Jason	O'Rourke (JOR)	Washingborough Academy
Jeanette	Orrey (JO)	Food for Life
Brad	Pearce (BP)	CATERed Ltd
Dale	Wild (DW)	Birmingham City Council
Wendy	Wills (WW)	University of Hertfordshire
Stephanie	Wood (SW)	School Food Matters
Liz	Wright (LW)	Hyperactive Children's Support Group

1. Chair's Welcome

SH welcomed attendees to the Group and thanked the speakers for attending the meeting.

2. School Meals Debt – Judith Gregory (LACA Wales Regional Chair)

JD presented details regarding school meals debt, provided an overview of the situation in Wales and reported the following: -

- (i) Local authority providers invoiced the school for the cost of the meals provided. Other contract caterers collected the money directly from parents.
- (ii) A cashless system was in place in many schools. However, where a school operated a manual system it was more difficult to monitor the level of debt.
- (iii) There were a variety of approaches adopted by schools in the event that the child did not have the money to pay for a meal. These included contacting the parent, asking that the child to bring a packed lunch or go home for lunch until the account was brought up to date, lend the child a meal, give the child a full meal or a basic sandwich and a glass of water.
- (iv) The approach taken to debt differed, some schools allowed debt to accumulate, and others had adopted a zero-tolerance approach.
- (v) Universal Infant Free School Meals were not available in Wales; therefore, this further exacerbates the dinner money debt situation.
- (vi) Schools in Scotland had discretion regarding providing a free school meal to the children in need.

A discussion ensued, the key points and questions raised were noted as follows: -

- (i) RBW expressed concern regarding the approach that had been adopted to deal with dinner money debt and the impact this was having on the children. She commented that research needed to be undertaken to gain an understanding of the issues surrounding dinner money debt.
- (ii) SH commented that some of the dinner money debt was as a result of the lifestyle choices of the parent, but it was clear that this was not true in all cases.
- (iii) JO advised that the issue would increase due to the roll out of Universal Credit.

SH concluded the discussion by advising that the issue would be revisited by the APPG at a future meeting.

3. Soft Drinks Levy – Barbara Crowther (Coordinator of Children’s Food Campaign)

BC presented an overview of the introduction of the Soft Drinks Levy, the progress made to date and future plans. The key points raised in the presentation were noted as follows: -

- (i) The Levy was the first example of a hypothecated tax in England.
- (ii) Prior to the introduction of the Levy it was forecasted that £500 million would be raised. However, due to the progress that has been made by the industry to reduce the sugar content in soft drinks, a total of £240 million has been raised to date.
- (iii) Government would need to decide if the Levy was to be continued and if so, would it be extended to other high sugar products such as breakfast cereals.
- (iv) The guidelines regarding how the funds from the Levy could be used were not explicit and as a result the money had not been spent on projects that supported children’s health. The evidence was showing that the majority of projects that had received funding to date had been capital infrastructure related.
- (v) To date there had not been any review or evaluation of the projects that had been awarded funding.
- (vi) The Children’s Food Campaign were using the Sugar Smart campaign to promote the reduction of the sugar content in school meals provided by local authorities.
- (vii) Work had been undertaken to ascertain if other products could attract a levy such as breakfast cereals

A discussion ensued, the key points and questions raised were noted as follows:-

- (i) In response to a question in relation to whether the Levy was delivering, it was reported that a third of MP’s were in support of extending it to other high sugar products.
- (ii) SH queried if the Children’s Food Campaign were involved in the Government consultations. BC advised that the organisation was engaged with the consultations and reported that the Government were intending to publish seven consultations, with a twelve-week period for responses to be submitted. She also advised that the release of the consultation had been delayed. However, Government had given the commitment that they would undertake the consultations by the end of 2018.

- (iii) SH reported to the Group that she had met with the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) and they had indicated that they were not convinced that an approach that banned the advertising of all high fat products to children would be effective and they cited the example of olive oil being advertised on the History Channel. The ASA had also indicated that they were currently more in favour of a targeted approach.
- (iv) JOR commented that the money raised from the 'Levy' would be more effective if it was spent on food education.
- (v) In response to a question, it was commented that Government needed to be lobbied now as any changes in the tax regime would be announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review. She also advised that there was a need for more transparency and public awareness of how the money raised from the Levy was being spent.
- (vi) SH reported that she would liaise with RBW and BC to draft Parliamentary questions regarding the Levy.

4. Holiday Hunger – Jane Hicken (Service Manager Health Improvement, Derbyshire County Council)

JH presented an overview of the holiday provision that Derbyshire County Council provided. The key points raised in the presentation were noted as follows: -

- (i) Derbyshire County Council had established 19 projects in the areas of greatest deprivation in the County.
- (ii) In addition to the holiday hunger programme the Council also had an established breakfast provision in place.
- (iii) The areas of need were identified and the provision was rolled out which included activities.
- (iv) The food for the programme was provided by Fare Share which redistributes surplus food to charities that then turn the food into meals. Fare Share also supported the authority to ensure that the venues were suitable for food preparation.
- (v) A broad range of partners were engaged to ensure that the appropriate safeguarding measures were put in place.
- (vi) Funding for the programme was drawn from a variety of sources including, the Council, Public Health, Fare Share, sponsorship, The Childrens Food Trust and Feeding Britain.
- (vii) The evaluation of the 2017 programme highlighted that 31 projects had been run, 8326 meals had been served and wider community and family benefits had been achieved.

A discussion ensued, the key points and questions raised were noted as follows:-

- (i) In response to a query from JC, JH advised that for the second year of the programme, postcodes were collected and this confirmed that the provision had been targeted in the most deprived areas.
- (ii) It was commented that there were examples of great provision but there was not enough support provided by the local authority in some areas.
- (iii) SW queried if there had been any issues with using school settings. JH confirmed that some schools have embraced working with the Holiday Hunger programme. However, some schools were reluctant to host holiday provision at their setting.
- (iv) ABB reported that FISH (Food in School Holidays) aims to help local people be sustainable and the programme they had in place provided a voucher which could be exchanged for food.

Holiday Provision – Brad Pearce (Managing Director at CATERed)

BP presented an overview of programme of the holiday provision provided by CATERed. The key points raised in the presentation were noted as follows: -

- (i) In 2014 holiday provision was ran out of schools, following the evaluation of the programme it was calculated that it had cost £27 per head which was not sustainable or cost effective.
- (ii) The Big Summer Tour was introduced which took the food out to the community.
- (iii) The provision was provided through donations of staff time, food etc and has attracted a lot of media support.
- (iv) It was estimated that the 2018 Big Summer Tour would reach 10,000 – 12,000 children and the cost to CATERed was minimal due to the partnership working with suppliers.
- (v) There have been examples of families following the vehicle through the route and children queuing in the rain awaiting the arrival of the vehicle.

Following the presentation, the following questions were raised.

- (i) In response to a question from TB, BP advised that CATERed was looking to expand the provision to the Christmas holiday period, and were looking to bid for funding from the Department of Education (DfE) to support the extension of provision. In addition, he reported that as local producers were used to supply the programme there was a direct benefit on local companies in the area.
- (ii) AA sought clarity on how the programme worked with the suppliers and volunteers. BP commented that in the early days of the programme they worked with local suppliers who wanted to support the local community. As the programme has developed and attracted positive media attention many more businesses had come on board.

- (iii) In response to a question, it was confirmed that the food cost would be 82 pence for meals.
- (iv) Following a question, it was confirmed that there were other programmes that took place in the area that provided activities and the Big Summer Tour was just part of the holiday provision.
- (v) BC queried what days the provision was provided. BP reported that the food vehicle goes out to the community on a Tuesday and Thursday and a provision was provided in libraries on a Wednesday during the summer school holidays.

Performance Networks – Debbie Johns (Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE))

DJ presented an overview of APSE Performance Network Service. The key points raised in the presentation were noted as follows: -

- (i) APSE had been bench marking local authority data for 20 years.
- (ii) The data allowed trends in school meal to be tracked and DJ reported that the uptake in school meals for primary schools was 65% in England, 60% in Scotland. The data also showed that there has been an increase in secondary school meal take up which could be attributed to several factors such as improved menus.
- (iii) Productivity had also increased and was up by 7% across the UK and 14% in England only. Subsidises for meals had reduced by 10%, and despite the increased pressure from inflationary costs such as wages, the data demonstrated that costs have been reducing.
- (iv) A joint survey has been developed with LACA and APSE to gain an understanding of Universal Infant Free School Meals.
- (v) The survey would remain open for responses until 15 September and DJ encouraged attendees at the APPG to complete it and also encourage others in the sector to add their views.
- (vi) The findings from the research would be launched at Parliament in November. The research would be used to support future lobbying of Government.

School Food Plan Alliance Update

SW provided an overview of the work that had been undertaken by the Alliance and the key points raised were noted as follows:-

- (i) The Childhood Obesity Plan – Chapter two was discussed at the last meeting of the Alliance.
- (ii) The Department for Education (DfE) were currently working on the Healthy Rating Scheme monitoring and compliance. SW confirmed that there was no



indication that the scheme would be mandatory. In addition, the DfE had conducted a pilot of the Healthy Rating Scheme in a small number of schools.

- (iii) SW reported that a report from the OFSTED Thematic Review would be published on 18 July 2018.
- (iv) Family Action were currently recruiting schools for it's breakfast programme and SW encouraged the Group to communicate the details to the wider sector.
- (v) There was research being undertaken into the impact of Brexit and school meals, further details would be reported in due course.

AOB

The following was raised:-

- (i) A petition calling for the protection of UIFSM had been opened and JF would circulated the link to the Group.
- (ii) SH provided details of an APPG award – Excellence in School Food and confirmed that JF would provide further details to the Group following the meeting.
- (iii) There would be a Healthy Living Lab held on 3 August 2018 at Northumbria University
- (iv) TE reported that the new 'Lets Get Cooking' website was now live.
- (v) NA advised that the LACA National School Meals Week was celebrating its 25th anniversary and there was currently the opportunity to vote for your best school meal. Details of the 25 meals that could be voted for were available on the National School Meal Week website.

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 16 October 2018. The meeting would be followed by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on School Foods Annual General Meeting.

Meeting concluded at 16.00pm