



## All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food

### Minutes of meeting

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2013, 10.30 – 13.00pm

Committee Room 11, House of Commons

### Present

Sharon Hodgson MP (SH), Stephen Mosley MP, Luciana Berger MP

Nigel	Argyle	Elygra Marketing
Martin	Ashton	Wigan Council
Rob	Bailey	Association for Public Service Excellence (RB)
John	Blackledge	Blackpool Council
Myles	Bremner	School Food Plan
Chris	Brockhurst	Department for Education
Anne	Bull	Lead Authority for Catering in Education
Donald	Bundy	World Bank
Malcolm	Clarke	Sustain
Debbie	Clarke	Wigan Council
Anne	Connolly	City University
Cllr Van	Coulter	Oxford City Council
Linda	Cregan	Children's Food Trust
Greta	Defeyter	Northumbria University
Lesley	Drake	Partnership for Child Development
Olayinka	Ewuola	Eagle Solutions Services
Cathy	Finnegan	Citizen's Advice
Stephen	Foster	Chartwells
Deborah	Gihawi	Norfolk County Council
Tony	Goodyer	AHDB/BPOX
Lindsay	Graham	Lindsay Graham Ltd
Libby	Grundy	Food For Life Partnership
John	Hawkin	Blackpool Council
Christine	Lewis	Unison
Carmell	McConnell	Magic Breakfast
Victoria	McGowan	Durham University
Brie	McMahon	Imperial College
Linda	Mitchell	PS100
Rosemary	Molinari	Chartwells
Brad	Pearce	Plymouth Council
Francis	Peel	Imperial College
Annabel	Pryke	Assistant to Sharon Hodgson MP

*Letterhead designed by pupils at Harehills Primary School, Leeds*



Secretariat - APSE

John	Puckrin	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
Joel	Roberts	Tetra Strategy
Leah	Schabas	School Food Plan
Daniel	Tye	Assistant to Sharon Hodgson MP
Alexandra	Webster	Royal Academy of Culinary Arts
Nicola	Wilde	Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board
Stephanie	Wood	School Food Matters
Alison	Young	Durham Council

- **Chair's Welcome**

SH opened the meeting and welcomed all those attending. It was noted that Amber Rudd MP had been made a Government Whip and had stood down as Vice-chair. Subject to the acceptance of the AGM, Stephen Mosley, MP for Chester, who hosted the National School's Meals Week event in the House of Commons had offered to replace her.

RB announced the list of apologies as follows:

Roberta	Blackman-Woods	MP
Zac	Goldsmith	MP
Julianne	Caillouette	Jamie Oliver Foundation
Neil	Lovell	Jamie Oliver Foundation
Mike	Carden	Food for thought Liverpool
Lorna	Hegenbarth	National Farmers Union
Gary	Richardson	Countryside Learning

- **Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed with the following amendment:

Lindsay Graham had asked a question of Liz Truss in regard to training of Ofsted inspectors.

Action: Childhood hunger added to the terms of reference of the APPG

- **Nigel Argyll (on behalf of LACA)**

Nigel outlined the progress on National School Meals week, now in its 20<sup>th</sup> year. Used to promote all that is great in a school meals service and encourage caterers to provide all children with a free school meal

The campaign has included the House of Commons event, articles in the House magazine, LACA conference, a tour of the regions and radio interviews including Donalda Williams, Head of Catering at Cheshire West and Chester Council

The website [www.nsmw.org.uk](http://www.nsmw.org.uk) had recorded 21,000 hits and contained a mass on information on how to become involved. 3,100 people have signed up as ambassadors, 1,200 downloads have occurred and English and Welsh resource pages are available. After NSMW will be the Great School Lunch project

SH mentioned that Gateshead do a National School's Meals Week long event early during the first week of term and if this is something LACA could consider in the future and if there was a reason LACA choose November rather than September?

Anne Bull (LACA) responded that it was likely to be for historic reasons around operational delivery

Olayinka Ewuola, (Eagle Solutions) asked how parents could get involved and was informed that resources were available on the website.

- **Myles Bremner (MB), Director of the School Food Plan**

Myles congratulated all those who had been successful in the Educating Awards and commented that there was much excitement around Universal Free School Meals for infants. He has recently met with the Minister responsible for the roll out, David Laws MP, along with John Vincent, Henry Dimbleby and Chris Brockhurst from the DfE.

Principles of the way forward include the following key points

- Schools need to lead in the rollout
- Recognition of fragmentation of service delivery
- Pilots were likely to have had more engagement and willingness to participate than the National roll-out
- Share the 'what works well' principle
- Funding mechanisms must reflect the underlying economics
- Real possibility to rise to 65% in FSM uptake
- Likely to be disparities between larger and smaller schools and funding must reflect scale

The £600 million is based on £2.30 per meal. A mechanism around investment is needed. In the pilots Durham invested £27k per school on kitchen upgrades to prepare for the free school meals roll-out, whereas Newham cost £2,500 per school. They are to look at a combination of loan and grants and also interest free loans for energy

The roll-out will require consensus and positivity and there will be challenges but the sector has reacted well. Success must be defined in advance and tracked robustly a point reinforced by Public Health England

There is a monthly update on SFP website and diary. Work groups are underway including nutrition and small school taskforce. Workforce engagement group will meet shortly.

Chris Brockhurst (CB), (School Food Policy Lead, DfE). Said that he was delighted to date with progress, momentum and engagement. DfE looking at evidence and economics, lessons from the pilots, funding mechanisms and restrictions, barriers to delivery, measurement of success, communication strategy. Autumn statement will give details of the funding mechanism. Welcomes feedback on possible barriers

SH commented that she sometimes had to pinch herself by how far things had progressed from the aspirational objectives of only a few months previously.

Stephanie Wood (School Food Matters) – questioned the continued registration for FSM. CB said that DfE is working on this transition

MB suggested that all feedback should be directed to [myles@schoolfoodplan.com](mailto:myles@schoolfoodplan.com) and this will be forwarded to CB and the DfE.

Don Bundy (World Bank) said that they have been working on school meals globally and the main issue is cost. Benchmark analysis of costs was first conducted in 2009 and the range 5 – 15% of high income economies found, equating to an average of 11% on education investment

MB hopes to hold an international schools conference next year and Finland and Brazil had interesting schemes

Alison Young (Durham County Council) stated the £27k they had spent per school during the pilot was a conscious decision to invest in their schools.

RB suggested that although £600 million was based on a figure of £2.30 per meal, the average cost of production was £2.70 whilst the average cost to the child was £2.00. There is a potential funding gap, currently subsidised by the school or local authority and would this be addressed? CB suggested that whatever the final mechanism, there would be no additional funding and we would need to await the Autumn statement.

- **Lindsay Graham (LG), Child Hunger and Foodbanks**

LG outlined the current situation. Article 27 of the UN convention lists the rights of the child and highlights nutrition. She then outlined the national picture of food-banks, the fact that for 170 days per year there is no access to free school meals and how families were using food-banks during non-term time. There are currently 377 food-banks and 51 more under development with the Trussell Trust. This probably represents half of those in the UK.

LG has concerns especially that there is no register or guidance and no monitoring. The Trussell trust charge between £1,500 and £3,000 to register which can be a barrier to some. Most are volunteer run. In Bradford in 1907 the changes in children's weight were monitored over the school holidays and the same drop still occurs

SH suggested members read the debate on the private members bill from Fred Jowett MP in 1907. His thoughts still ring true.

LG highlighted two organisations [www.nokidhungry.org](http://www.nokidhungry.org) and [www.makelunch.org.uk](http://www.makelunch.org.uk)

LG requests:

- Volunteer working group on an APPG statement paper
- Raise parliamentary question
- National Register of food banks
- Good practice to be fed back to her

SH said that she has asked Parliamentary Questions although the Government does not currently see it as an area of their responsibility. The answers are publically

available. A question still remains as to the lack of regulation on who can set up a food bank and the integrity of what is then distributed

Cllr Van Coulter (Oxford City Council) asked about accessibility with his ward being 3 miles from the nearest food bank. LG suggested that there is no data on this point.

Carmell McConnell (Magic Breakfast) said her organisation along with Fairshare were mapping food banks in proximity to primary schools. Headteachers are increasingly referring parents and pupils to food banks

Cllr Deborah Gihawi, (Norwich City Council) stated that voucher only schemes operate in Norwich and are limited to 3 months as they want to avoid creating dependency. Food quality is appalling and consequently she is funding some from her own pocket

Linda Cregan, (Childrens Food Trust), shared the concerns over the quality of food distributed and has just launched 2 lottery funded projects around assistance for shopping and cooking

LG stated that schools are vital hubs to promote non statutory networks for summertime feeding.

LB commented that she had just been appointed as Shadow Minister for Public Health. The challenge is to make the Government aware of foodbanks. 60,000 people accessed foodbanks under Labour, now 500,000 and for the first time the Red Cross is distributing food aid. It is about lack of finance rather than the mismanagement of finances. She is interested in the Trussell Trust and other foodbanks monitoring postcodes to see where users originate from.

SM welcomed many of the points and said he would be happy to support and approach ministers with a report from the APPG.

Olayinka Ewuola, (Eagle Solutions) stated that we can learn a lot from other cultures and countries. Many church groups distribute food for similar aims

Professor Greta Defeyter (Northumbria University) stated that she had just started research on foodbanks and summer feeding measuring social stigma, dietary analysis, and the lack of balance. 7 to 9 years olds have arrested growth and take 2 months to regain weight after starting school

Libby Grundy (Food for Life Partnership) asked how many schools were already addressing this. LG replied that it depends on the local leadership and available monies including pupil premium. Please contact RB if anyone would like to volunteer to assist with the research.

- **John Blackledge (JB) and John Hawkin (JH) Blackpool Council. Breakfast Clubs**

JB outlined the background to Blackpool, its attraction of over 12 million visitors a year but with many social issues. In deprivation terms Blackpool is 6<sup>th</sup> poorest authority in the Country, 470 children in public care, 42 unborn babies who will go straight into care. Poor life expectancy for both sexes, school attainment is 10% behind the average. 3,000 Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

The priority is the vulnerable and the Leader, Simon Blackburn, has lead the initiative after being shocked to see teachers and lunchtime supervisors feeding some kids with their own money. Cllr Blackburn's pledge was 'No child in Blackpool would start the day hungry'.

Challenge to feed 12,000 primary school children. Huge dietary inequalities in Blackpool and this action can narrow that gap.

JH outlined the roll-out, including convincing head teachers. Registration period was mainly to be used with food distributed by the teaching and support staff from a trolley. Some schools started 10 minutes early.

Started 7<sup>th</sup> January and by Feb all schools were on board. Northumbria University supported in reviewing the outcomes and benefits. Attention and social interaction improved and the programme includes a physical activity element alongside using cyber coach.

Tried to avoid breakfast bars on the menu, looked at start times with a view to 8.15 or 8.30 am at home. There is the issue of over-eating for those who have already eaten breakfast. Teachers like it as there is no social stigma in being universal. Food is however being held back and spread across the day encouraging grazing which is not to be encouraged. Staff training is important. Currently the scheme is funded forward by the Council with 90% average uptake which can mean across 400 to 600 children per day in some schools.

SH asked that her thanks and that of the APPG be sent to the leader of Blackpool. She asked how much the scheme costs. JB stated that it had cost £1.3 million this year at around 53 pence per meal. £800k of this is through the Health and Wellbeing Board.(H&WB) No food is currently sourced 'free' via donations from supermarkets or other bodies etc.

John Puckrin (Association of Teachers and Lecturers) asked what evidence there was of improvement in punctuality and attendance

Cllr Van Coulter enquired about what the long term savings might be given prevention of obesity etc.

Greta Defeyter suggested that attendance was up and the 3 year Phd. project would determine the longer term effects.

SH reminded people that the APPG paper had highlighted the opportunities for funding from H&WBs. MB stated that during his recent meeting with Public Health England, the options for health funding were to be explored further.

JB stated that they have also included universal free school milk in Blackpool primaries.

RB asked if 'grazing' had an effect on lunchtime meals uptake and what evidence they had placed before their H&WB to hook the funding. JH suggested that there had been no effect on lunchtime uptake and the funding was part of a range of services that they had been commissioned to provide around healthier lifestyles.

Olayinka Ewuola asked about how quickly the breakfast club could be delivered given the time constraints in some schools. JH said that the decision is up to each school but typically 10 to 15 minutes

Cllr Gihawi asked about nursery school children including those at Surestart. JB said that they had discovered 612 nursery children already taking the breakfasts as part of existing schools and that might rise to 1700 if they included other providers of nursery provision. Funding would be the determining issue.

SH thanked SB and SH and asked that the admiration of the APPG be taken back to Blackpool with the hope that their further research provides equally positive.

- **Carmell McConnell CM (Magic Breakfast), Evidence base**

SH recalled that at an earlier meeting Louis Levy from Public Health England had stated that there was doubtful evidence of the link between nutrition and attainment. Carmel hoped to show otherwise.

CM stated that Public health England has to be cautious in accepting causal links, however studies have demonstrated a consistent improvement in grades.

Greta Defeyter said that much published information exists but is often on websites but not peer reviewed.

CM introduced a paper from PHN research which stated that 'for every 10% increase in total school lunch take up in a local authority, schools are two and a half times more likely to be in the upper half of the increase in 5+ A\*-C results, taking into account free meal entitlement, unauthorized absence and level of deprivation'. This is statistically significant and when peer reviewed will provide some of that data.

MB stated that at last week's Food for Life conference, Professor Kevin Fenton from PHE had said that 'sometimes you clearly understand what is the right thing to do. MB concluded that it is a whole school approach that delivers the benefit.

Vicky McGowan, Durham University, defended the PHE report. A systematic review had shown the methodology used often provided differing results. Past studies had not been robust enough and a whole school approach may mask what is happening with attainment improvements not necessarily food related.

SH stated that anecdotally we have the evidence, and hopefully we will shortly have that accepted data.

Don Bundy, World Bank stated that he was surprised as there is established literature around nutrition, diet and attainment. However it does not centre on school feeding. He co-wrote a paper with Harold Alderman a nutritional economist 'school feeding programmes and development – are we framing the question correctly?' 368 million children a day on a school food programme in a \$50 billion industry. Difficult to assess impact as this can be on education and health. The investment in human capital (long term benefit) is the most important

Greta Defeyter highlighted the difficulty of establishing a truly Randomised Control Trial with other interventions appearing. It is difficult to establish cause and effect.

Linda Mitchell (PS100) suggested that looking at the issue in a different way would be to ask what would be the effect of removing school food.

John Pukrin, part of the whole school approach is what kids are not consuming, including banning vending. It's not simply about standings in the league tables and included sociability

Lesley Drake (Partnership for Child Development) – highlighted the difficulty of establishing a baseline as it reacts to the particular programme

Carmel McConnell stated that 10,000 kids hospitalised with malnutrition in this country, and the school as a community food hub is critical. A top down, state approach will not work unless the social networks are in place. Magic Breakfast is to go global next year.

- **AOB**

SH announced that Mick Cladingbowl from Ofsted will speak at the next meeting. The Pupil Premium is likely to go up to £1,200 and the connection between that money and feeding, especially breakfast, should be explored. Headteachers are to be measured under Ofsted and we need to find out more.

MB said that guidance has now been published with wording similar to School Food Plan. Emphasis needs to be on training the inspectors.

Suggestion for future meetings:

- Scotland / Durham to feed back on their pilots schemes
- Don Bundy from World Bank agreed to speak at a future meeting
- Head-teacher to present e.g. Carol Shaw or primary head from Blackpool?

- **Date of next meeting**

APPG – January 21st 10.30 -12.30

Meeting closed at 13.00pm.