



All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food

Minutes of meeting of the School Food APPG

Tuesday 24 October 2017, 14.00pm – 16.00pm

Committee Room 2, House of Commons

Present

Sharon Hodgson MP (SH) – Chair

Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods (RBW) - Vice Chair

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| Nigel | Argyle | Elygra Marketing |
| Louise | Davies | Food Teachers Centre |
| Liz | Davies | Sodexo UK & I |
| Sophia | Dettmer | Magic Breakfast |
| Patricia | Fellows | Pat Fellows Consultancy |
| Tam | Fry | Superbox London |
| Olivia | Gordon | Oakhill Communications (LACA) |
| Simon | Gray | Fun Kitchen |
| Vickie | Hacking | Association for Public Service Excellence |
| Michael | Hales | LACA |
| Laura | Hamilton (LH) | University of Hertfordshire |
| Elsa | Healey | Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board |
| Helena | Houghton | Royal Academy of Culinary Arts |
| Julie | Messenger | Food Teachers Centre |
| Vicky | Mogford | Bidfood |
| Rosemary | Molinori | Sodexo UK & I |
| Barbara | Monks | The Cookery Teacher |
| Caroline | Morgan | Local Food Links |
| Amanda | Nicholl | Superbox London |
| Jeanette | Orrey (JO) | Food for Life |
| Holly | Ramsay | Interel Consulting |
| Joel | Roberts | Oakhill Communications (LACA) |
| Gavin | Squires | Bidfood |
| Daniel | Tye | Office of Sharon Hodgson MP |
| Amelia | Walker (AW) | Ofsted |
| Dale | Wild (DW) | Birmingham City Council - City Serve |
| Stephanie | Wood (SW) | School Food Matters |
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1. Chair's Introduction

SH welcomed attendees to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting / Apologies

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and apologies were noted from the following: -

Zac Goldsmith MP
Lindsay Graham (LG)

3. Update from the School Food Plan Alliance

JO introduced SW as the new Co-Chair of the School Food Alliance. SW provided an update from the last meeting the Alliance and reported that: -

- (i) The British Dietetic Society and Action for Children had taken on aspects of work from the Children's Food Trust.
- (ii) Details of a recent report that had been published following a review of what is happening in schools post the introduction of cooking to the curriculum had been presented.

SW summarised by providing an update regarding the work that the Alliance had been undertaking and gave details of the meetings that had been held and were scheduled with MP's following the General Election.

In response to a question from SH, it was confirmed that there was no additional funding to carry forward the work of the Children's Food Trust. However, the two organisations that had taken on the work were keen to build on the existing relationships that had been forged with partners to carry the projects forward.

4. Child Hunger Update

SH reported that she had spoken at a recent event where she had expressed the view that due to the importance of the issue there should be a cross departmental Minister appointed that has responsibility for tackling the issue of child hunger and food security.

On 21 November 2017, the Food Insecurity Business Forum will be held to look at how the industry could assist with the issue of food insecurity.

SH provided the Group with the results of a mapping exercise that had been undertaken by LG and Northumberland University into the provisions available during school holidays to assist in tackling holiday hunger. The key points were noted as follows: -

- (i) There had been a 200% increase in provision this year compared with 2016.
- (ii) The greatest number of survey responses had been received from the North East of England, London and Scotland.
- (iii) It was reported that 2/3 of the provision did not charge for the holiday clubs.
- (iv) The majority of respondents reported that their provision included educational activities.
- (v) Voluntary, community and faith-based groups made up over half of providers of the holiday clubs.
- (vi) Holiday clubs focus their provision on primary school age children. However, provision was available for children of all ages.

The Group discussed the findings from the mapping project and the key points raised were noted as follows: -

- (i) SH commented that there was a need for Local Authorities and organisations to share best practice and provide details of successful initiatives.
- (ii) There were examples provided by attendees that highlighted the wider community benefits of holiday provision.
- (iii) RB-W raised concern in relation to the 30 percentage of clubs that charged for the provision which was in some cases up to £15 per session. This was prohibitive for low-income families and highlighted the need for funding to be made available.

SH concluded by reporting that the School Holiday, Meals and Activities Bill had its first reading on the 5 September 2017. The Bill was supported by 127 cross party MPs, the second reading was scheduled for the 19 January 2018. SH asked for attendees to continue to lobby their respective MP's to garner support for the Bill.

Any data, information and case studies in relation to holiday hunger that people were willing to share can be sent to Frank Field's MP office, to add supporting evidence to the Bill and the use of Twitter to highlight the issues is encouraged.

5. Open Discussion on the future of School Food following the closure of the Children's Food Trust

The Group discussed the future following the closure of the Children's Food Trust and the following key points were raised: -

- (i) SW felt that the closure of the Trust was a loss to the sector. However, there were still things in place, such as the Child Obesity Plan that could be used to hold the Government to account.

- (ii) It was commented that the Children's Food Trusts website was the go to place for impartial advice and it was queried what would happen with the website, would it be updated, how would it be kept impartial and representative.
- (iii) DW commented that school food was just a small part of the overall package. If funding was being made available as part of the health and wellbeing agenda, providers needed to look at emphasising the intrinsic link between school food and health.
- (iv) LH advised that research has shown that the culture and environment of how food was served was just as important as the food.

6. Child Poverty Action Group on Universal Credit and Poverty

SH advised that the Child Poverty Action Group had been invited to attend to provide the Group with further details regarding the issues surrounding Free School Meals and Universal Credit. However, the organisation had been unable to attend.

There was a discussion in relation to whether there would be a revised threshold for Free School Meal eligibility, what the impact of this threshold would be on Universal Infant Free School Meals and concern was expressed regarding the number of eligible families that currently took up the entitlement.

7. Presentation from Ofsted on their review into food.

AW was introduced to the Group and she presented details in relation to the review that was currently being undertaken into how the school curriculum could contribute to a reduction in obesity.

AW outlined the initial findings from the review and asked the Group to provide comment.

She confirmed that there had been 55 visits completed with a further 3 to complete and an Advisory Group had been established to provide advice and guidance for the visits and the information collated.

AW reported the outcomes of the review were as follows: -

- (i) 12 schools had been looked at in detail. It was made clear from the outset of the visit that it was not an inspection, but an information gathering exercise to ascertain the positive things that were happening, the impact and the barriers to progress being made in reducing the obesity.
- (ii) Where the obesity level had been consistently low over years, there was a direct correlation with a strategic approach across the school with

clear leadership and there was clear evidence that this was having an impact.

- (iii) There was not always the recognition from parents of the balanced menus due to items such as cakes being available.
- (iv) One area of weakness related to how schools could evidence that the processes could make a difference.

In response to a question from SW, it was confirmed that the visits were only taking place in primary schools due to the School Measuring Programme data only being available for this age group.

DW queried how Ofsted was going to ensure the behaviours of schools were focused on the right things, as there was evidence that not all schools have this culture.

AW summarised by advising that the findings from the project would feed into the inspection framework and will form part of the recommendations in the resulting report. In the event of any changes to the framework, there would be training provided for all inspectors.

She also reported that Ofsted were looking at how schools encourage children to take up school meals.

Meeting closed at 15.32pm.