



## All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food

### Minutes of meeting of the School Food APPG

**Tuesday 8 September, 2-4pm – held online.**

#### Present

Sharon Hodgson MP (SH) - Chair

Christian Wakeford MP (CW) - Vice Chair

Sabrina	Ahmed	SB	The Vegan Society
Oluyemisi A.	Aladele	OA	Hackney Migrant Centre
Nigel	Argyle	NA	Elygra
Natasha	Ashton	NAS	Aspens-Services
Nathan	Atkinson	NAT	Rethink Food
Sarah	Atkinson	SA	Surrey County Council
George	Ayliffe	GA	Dolce Limited
Charlie	Baker	CB	ProVeg UK
Deborah	Barnett	DB	TLG
Jake	Barwood	JB	Chefs in schools
Kristin	Bash	KB	Faculty of Public Health
Kevin	Bernbaum	KBE	Educo
Jacque	Blake	JB	Nottingham Catering
David	Bradley	DB	CPAG
Myles	Bremner	MB	Bremner Consulting
Holly	Burton	HB	HC3S
Hannah	Cameron McKenna	HCM	None
Nigel	Carter	NC	Oral Health Foundation
Nadia	Chalabi	NCH	Hackney Migrant Centre
Laura	Chan	LC	Soil Association
Kerry	Church	KC	Public Health England
Jessica	Clasby-Monk	JCM	City Catering Southampton
Pedro	Costa	PC	ProVeg UK
Louise	Davies	LD	Food Teachers Centre Community
Greta	Defeyter	GD	Northumbria University
Lisa	Didier	LD	Food for Life
Henry	Dimbleby	HD	National Food Strategy
Mark	Driver	MD	Minor Weir and Willis Ltd
Naomi	Duncan	ND	Chefs in Schools

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



Secretariat - APSE

Oliver	Dye	OD	National Food Strategy
Charlotte	Evans	CE	MRC GENIUS project
Kate	Evans	KE	Derbyshire County Council
Mike	Farley	MF	Bridge Church Lincoln (FISH)
Jessica	Faulkner	JF	House of Commons
Patricia	Fellows	PF	Consultant
John	Figgins	JF	West Sussex County Council
Stephen	Forster	SF	LACA Ltd
Nicola	Freeman	NF	Pabulum Ltd
Amy	Glass	AG	FDF
Andrew	Gooding	AGO	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Olivia	Gordon	OG	Oakhill Communications
Lindsay	Graham	LG	Poverty and Inequality Commission Scotland
Simon	Gray	SG	Fun Kitchen
Emma	Green	EG	British Sugar
Judith	Gregory	JG	LACA
Richard	Griffiths	RG	British Poultry Council
Vickie	Hacking	VH	APSE
Rachel	Hall	RH	City Catering Southampton
Laura	Hamilton	LH	University of Hertfordshire
Zoe	Hanson	ZH	City Catering
Doreen	Harris	DH	WLP Consultancy Services
Angus	Holford	AH	ISER, University of Essex
Victoria	Howe	VHO	The Farm Kitchen
Isabel	Hughes	IH	Food Foundation
Rhys	James	RJ	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Emma	Jeffcock	EJ	Public Health England
Diana	Johnson	DJ	MP
Andy	Jolley	AJ	
Jayne	Jones	JJ	Assist FM
Andrew	Kyle	AK	ASKJAK Consultancy
Gurpinder	Lalli	GL	University of Wolverhampton
Thomas	Lambeth	TL	FFT
Tom	Laskey	TLA	Sodexo
Andrew	Lipscomb	AL	Norse Group
Philip	Mansbridge	PM	Local Hero Consultancy
Maria	Mansfield	MM	University of Leeds
Molly	Maybury	MMA	ISS UK
Christine	McDowell	CMc	National Farmers Union
Ian	Mcgrady	IMc	Edsential Community Interest Company
Peter	McGrath	PMc	Meals & More
Frances	Meek	FM	British Nutrition Foundation
Michael	Meek	MM	All Man Hall
Lynda	Mitchell	LM	LACA
Caroline	Morgan	CM	Local Food Links
Gregory	Newcombe	GM	Bidfood
Nicola	Noble	NN	Surrey Square Primary School
Miguel	Nunes	MN	Bidfood

Letterhead designed by pupils at Harehills Primary School, Leeds



Rebecca	O'Connell	RoC	Tomad Coram Research Unit, UCL
Jason	O'Rourke	JoR	Washingborough Academy
Jeanette	Orrey MBE	JO	Co-Founder Food for Life
Brad	Pearce	BP	CATERed Limited
Rob	Percival	RP	Soil Association
Neil	Porter	NP	LACA
Leigh	Powell	LP	UNISON
Kate	Prince	KP	Kellogg's
Charlotte	Quick	CQ	ISS Education
Alysa	Remtulla	AR	Magic Breakfast
Jane	Renton	JR	H2o Publishing (Contract Caterer Magazine)
Jack	Reynolds-Ryan	JRR	School Food Matters
Gemma	Rodgers	GR	GLA
Cheryl	Rudge	CR	Cityserve Birmingham City Council
Karen	Scammel	KS	Sodexo
David	Simmonds	DS	House of Commons
Stephanie	Slater	SS	School Food Matters
Hannah	Small	HS	Children's Society
Dianna	Smith	DS	University of Southampton
Juliet	Snow	JS	Royal Academy of Culinary Arts Adopt a School
Anne-Marie	Sowden	AMS	CATERed Limited
Suzanne	Spence	SS	Newcastle University
Gavin	Squires	GS	Bidfood
Sara Jayne	Stanes	SJS	Royal Academy of Culinary Arts Adopt a School Trust
Mark	Stein	MS	Salford University, Manchester
Rob	Stevens	RS	Ventrus Multi Academy Trust
Joseph	Stratton	JS	ProVeg C.I.C
Rebecca	Sunter	RS	Guy's & St. Thomas' Charity
Anna	Taylor	AT	Food Foundation
Rachael	Venditti	RV	All Man Hall
Mary	Watkins	MW	House of Lords
Jamie	Wickett	JW	Aspens Services LTD
Amy	Williams	AW	Cardiff Council
Liz	Wright	LW	Hyperactive Children Support Group

## 1. Chair's Welcome

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

## 2. Introduction by the new Vice-Chair of the APPG

CW introduced himself to the group and the key points he raised were noted as: -

- There should be a holistic approach for holiday provision and not just a focus on food.

- Prior to being elected as an MP, he had been involved in the work of a food poverty group.
- Since being elected CW advised that he had worked with Magic Breakfast and was looking at options of how the breakfast provision could be expanded.
- Plans needed to be put in place for the provision of school food in the event of a second lockdown or extensive school closures.
- There should be holistic support provided for families and not just a focus on a Free School Meal or Universal Credit.
- There needs to be a focus on how we tackle holiday hunger and how the attainment gap can be bridged.

In response to CW's introduction to the group the following questions and comments were raised: -

- In response to a question from SS, CW confirmed that he would support the auto-enrolment of children eligible for Free School Meals.
- GD queried which model of holiday provision was most effective for mitigating attainment lost. CW advised that he would need to review the evidence gained from the 10 pilot holiday provisions that the Department for Education had been funding before reaching a conclusion.
- It was commented by the group that it would be good for the pilot data to be shared and that if a statutory requirement was placed on local authorities to provide holiday provision, funding would need to be provided to support their delivery.

### **3. National Food Strategy – Part One – Henry Dimbleby (HD)**

HD introduced the Strategy and in so doing the key points were noted as follows: -

- The pandemic had brought into sharp focus the disparity in standards of living and this had informed aspects of Part One of the Strategy.
- Part One was an immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted the impact for the future economy and the impact that this would have on children, including the longer-term health implications.

A range of recommendations had been set out in the report which included: -

- Extending the eligibility for Free School Meals

- Extending the holiday food programme for children eligible for Free School Meals and that this provision should include an element of activity.
- The value of the Healthy Food Start Vouchers should be increased to £4.25 and eligibility for the scheme should be extended.
- The Government should continue to monitor and map areas where food poverty is?
- HD advised that government need to prioritise poverty and the measures outlined in the recommendations have been proven to work.
- The interventions are very targeted and Part Two of the strategy will look at broader issues such as health and climate change and it is anticipated this would be published in spring 2020.

In responses to the presentation, the key comments and questions raised were noted as follows: -

- It was commented that there were a significant number of people with no recourse to public funds which had been severely impacted by the pandemic, however, there had been no mention of this sector of the community in the strategy. HD advised that due to the timescales involved in producing Part One of the Strategy and decision was made to have very focused recommendations. When looking at the area of no recourse to public funds, there were complexities that could not be fully understood and translated into a recommendation within the timescale.
- In response to a question, HD commented that further negotiation was required with the supermarket but he believed that they were receptive to proposals to reduce the high sugar produce they sold and additional regulation.
- SH queried how the recommendations could be pushed with the government. HD advised that as we were in the led up to the Comprehensive Spending Review many organisations were writing to the government to state their positions. Therefore, the best route for ensuring the National Food Strategy recommendations reached the decision-makers was via MPs who represent seats in areas of high deprivation.

#### **4. Future Food Inquiry – Anna Taylor (AT)**

AT advised that the findings of the inquiry had been published just over a year ago and she presented an overview of the progress to date and plans. In doing so, the key points were noted as follows: -

- The evidence showed that the lockdown had impacted greater on households with three or more children.
- Over the last six months, the inquiry had been asking for people to report their experience of food insecurity during the lockdown.
- The decision had been made to go back to children and update the Charter to reflect their experience throughout lockdown.
- Ambassadors had been producing podcasts that outlined their experiences, the challenges, and the way that they were supporting each other.
- The National Food Strategy recommendations are being included in the food charter.
- A survey was going to be circulated to school children to gain an understanding of their food experiences now the new school term had commenced.
- A dashboard of food poverty was being drafted to improve advocacy and communication.

## **5. LACA Wales – Judith Gregory (JC)**

JC presented an overview of the experience of school caterers following the full re-opening of schools. She provided an outline of the policy differences regarding school meals in Wales and provided an overview of what has happened since March 2020. In doing so, the key points were noted as follows: -

- At the start of the new school term, schools operated a phased return and the Welsh Government provided funding for this period.
- Free school milk and breakfast provision had been re-instated
- It was proving challenging to plan for the future and provide business continuity due to partial or full school closures impacting on service delivery.
- There had been a 37% increase in pupils eligible for free school meals since January 2020.

In response to a question from MB, JG advised that it was too early to gain an accurate picture of the uptake of meals for the term due to the transitional funding still been in place. However, the measures put in such as social distancing were having an impact on the food that was being produced.

## **6. Update from the School Food Plan Alliance – Stephanie Slater (SS) and Myles Bremyer (MB)**

SS provided an update from the July meeting of the Alliance and in so doing the key points were noted as follows: -

- Prior to the pre-COVID lockdown, engagement meetings had been held with 12 MPs
- A representative from the University of Essex had presented details of research that they had been undertaking into the impact of the Universal Infant Free School Meal Policy.
- There was a presentation from the University of Newcastle on the GENIUS Network.
- The Chair of LACA presented details about the return back to school and the role of school caterers.

MB outlined details of a programme of work that a working group of the Alliance had been undertaking in response to COVID-19. In doing so the key points were noted as follows: -

- The group had looked at mapping school food and the differing policies.
- Details of the different interventions had been compiled.
- A review of the various funding streams and how this flowed to the child was being undertaken.

In concluding, MB advised that the working group was looking to bring together as many data sources as possible. He asked the group for their assistance in gaining data and if any organisations held data relating to school food, it would be much appreciated if this could be shared to enable as complete a picture as possible.

## **7. National School Meals Week – Nigel Argyle (NA)**

NA commenced the presentation by reporting that the Chair of LACA had been in conversation with the Minister over the summer. During these conversations it was outlined that school caterers had continued to provide a service throughout the lockdown period and they should be recognised for this work. He also confirmed that the following assurances had been given:-

- There would be a return to a food offering in schools rather than a continuation of the voucher scheme for children eligible for Free School Meals that had been in operation.
- Schools were expected to go back to mandatory attendance.

- School kitchens should be open to provide meals for the pupils in attendance and school caterers should be at the forefront of providing the service.

NA proceeded to provide an overview of the plans that were in place for National School Meals Weeks (NSMW). In so doing, the key points were noted as follows: -

- In advance of NSMW, LACA will be providing support, resources and key messaging regarding the importance of a hot nutritious school meal, and the wider support this can provide for farmers, local supply chains and the industry as a whole.
- From 1 October, the Hot'ober initiative would be launched. The Hot'ober campaign had been designed to promote conversations with schools, parents etc, to get hot meals back on the menu as soon as possible. 1 October had been chosen as the launch date as this was school census day.
- The House of Commons event undertaken in previous years would be postponed to 2021.
- NSMW would take place in the week of 9 to 13 November 2020.
- The week would have five simple themes that were going to be supported by a range of downloadable resources.
- The week will include: -
  - A Taste for Yourself campaign to encourage pupils and parents back to school meals
  - Championing and celebrating school caterers and showcasing the work they have done during the lockdown period.
  - National Roast Dinner Day was scheduled to take place on Wednesday of the week and was supported by Food for Life and the Soil Association.
  - Love British were supporting the promotion of British produce in school meals.
  - On Friday, there would be events taking place at schools where the local MP would be presenting a certificate of thanks to the catering team.

NA concluded by advising that there were lots of ways to get involved and schools could select the aspects of NSMW that worked for their individual circumstance and he asked the Group to take to social media and promote the week.

Prior to closing the meeting SH reported to the Group that she had raised a Pursuant 2 querying how the EdenRed School Voucher Scheme had been funded following the Minister advising that Government had only funded the face value of the vouchers provided under the scheme.

Meeting concluded at 16.00pm

