

# APSE National Education Catering Network

**Wednesday 14 January 2026 – 10.30am – 12.00pm**

The next meeting is to be held both Online via Teams and at APSE Offices, Trafford House, Chester Road, Manchester, M32 0RS.

Attendance at this meeting is open to elected members and officers from APSE member authorities and is **free** of charge.

**Low Income Family Tracker Software (LIFT); Mealtimes Matter; Group discussion – The school meal funding gap.**

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## Agenda

### 1. Welcome by the Chair

**Councillor Norma Stephenson, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

### 2. Low Income Family Tracker Software (LIFT)

- The policy context
- Identifying children who are eligible for Free School Meals who are not claiming them,
- The benefits and achievements of the programme

**Cllr Henry Batchelor, Lead Cabinet Member for Communities and Chris Riches, Anti-Poverty Development Officer, South Cambridgeshire District Council**

### 3. Mealtimes Matter

- An overview of the organisation
- Improving the physical, emotional, and mental health of children
- The How to Feed a Dragon Programme

**Jo Kellam, Director, Mealtimes Matter**

#### **4. Group discussion – The school meal funding gap.**

*The funding for school meals has not kept pace with the cost of providing a school meal and as such local authority caterers are finding it increasingly difficult to provide the service, with several authorities in England ceasing provision.*

*This group discussion will give delegates the opportunity to outline the issues that their service is facing and explore what is required to ensure that local authority catering services can deliver a quality service and remain viable in the future.*

**Facilitated by Vickie Hacking, Principal Advisor, APSE**

#### **APSE Update**

**Vickie Hacking, Principal Advisor, APSE**

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Kind Regards  
Vickie Hacking

On behalf of Cllr Norma Stephenson, Chair of the APSE Education Catering Network