

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

**Lifelong Learning Committee
29 October 2014**

**EXTENSION TO THE ENTITLEMENT OF FREE SCHOOL MEALS - JANUARY
2015**

Report by Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

On 7 January 2014, the Scottish Government announced all P1-P3 pupils will be eligible to receive free school meals (FSM) from January 2015. This is one of the changes introduced by The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. This report outlines the provision being put in place to support this initiative across Perth & Kinross schools.

1. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 Families and young people across Scotland will benefit from the introduction of free school meals to all P1-P3 children from January 2015. The introduction will support improving health and wellbeing and could provide families with an annual saving of up to £375 per child.
- 1.2 Following the announcement by the Scottish Government, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) has been representing Local Authority interests with regards to the funding requirements to support the implementation of this duty.
- 1.3 The Scottish Government in their calculations, assumed that the rate of take-up of FSM would be 75% of eligible pupils. This assumption is based on the results of a pilot undertaken in 2007/08. Education and Children's Services (ECS) project a minimum of 83% uptake based on current free school meal provision.
- 1.4 ECS in partnership with Tayside Contracts have therefore estimated 1800 additional meals will be required daily over and above the current provision of approximately 8500 meals daily.
- 1.5 With increased meal numbers some schools, approximately half, will experience longer serving times for meals. To support schools, additional staff hours will be necessary to help ensure that schools continue to deliver a positive dining experience.
- 1.6 Revenue funding of £486,000 (part year 2014/15) and £1,591,000 (2015/16) has since been confirmed for Perth & Kinross. The funding awarded will meet the anticipated requirement to deliver this duty.
- 1.7 Capital investment is also required to enable school kitchens to increase production capacity to meet the anticipated new demand. Preparations have

been undertaken to identify key production sites to assess suitability of kitchens for upgrade including the preparation of technical drawings to support infrastructure and equipment installation. Delivery and installation plans and staff training requirements were identified and will all be in place or undertaken before the end of the calendar year.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 To take forward the requirements for revised kitchen and production arrangements as identified from the suitability assessments mentioned above.
- 2.2 The extended free school meal service requires increased staffing provision to ensure that meals are provided and support schools in maintaining a positive dining experience. Assessments have been undertaken and proposals have been agreed on the distribution of hours required to maintain a positive dining experience.
- 2.3 ECS and Tayside Contracts will identify an efficient model for both the management of pupil free school meal status and for collecting free school meal data in order for this to be reported as appropriate.
- 2.4 Free school meal application forms are currently available through the Perth and Kinross web pages, or alternatively by asking for an application form at schools or via e-mail. Procedures and communications will be updated to advise parents on when/when not to apply for free school meals.
- 2.5 Headteachers have been involved in discussions regarding the new arrangements. An informative promotional flyer will be distributed to families via schools in November 2014. Schools will continue to promote this provision through their normal parent/carer communications.
- 2.6 Established Quality Assurance procedures for the school meals service will focus on the extended provision to ensure that arrangements are adequate. There will be an ongoing assessment of uptake against budget performance.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Lifelong Learning Committee
 - (i) notes the content of this report and
 - (ii) instructs the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) to take forward the proposals as indicated in the successful delivery of this duty.

Author

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Approved

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John Fyffe	Executive Director	20 October 2014

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	No
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	No
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	No
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	No
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This section should set out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

This report relates to Objectives No (i) and (iv).

Corporate Plan

1.2 This section should set out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives.

The Perth and Kinross Community Plan 2013-2023 and Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2013/2018 set out five strategic objectives:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;

- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objectives No (i) and (iv).

1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Policy Framework in respect of the following key policy area:

- Inclusion and Equality

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1.1 The costs will be funded by an increase in the Council's financial settlement from the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government announced on 17 July revenue funding of £486,000 for Perth & Kinross in 2014-15 and £1,591,000 in 2015-16. The funding will meet our anticipated requirement to deliver this initiative.

2.1.2 The level of capital funding from the Scottish Government to support the kitchen production capacity changes has yet to be confirmed.

Workforce

2.2 Human Resources has been consulted in the preparation of this report and will assist with a programme of employee engagement as the proposals continue to be developed and rolled out. The relevant Trade Unions have been advised of the proposals.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 N/A

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

This section should reflect that the proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA

All work within this area seeks to address inequalities both in terms of provision of resources and impact on outcomes for children and their families. There are no negative impacts arising from this work.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.
No further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.

These matters would be considered as part of the planning, design development and implementation of any future individual project involved in the development of the school estate.

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted in the preparation of this report.
- 3.5 In 2008, the Scottish Government passed enabling legislation to allow local authorities to provide free school meals to all pupils in P1-P3. There is provision within the The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 for every P1-P3 child to have the option of a free school lunch from January 2015.

Risk

Risk has been considered and actions taken as appropriate.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 Education and Children's Services Senior Management Team, the Head of Education Services' (Early Years and Primary) Management Team, Business and Resources Management Team, Human Resources and Primary Headteachers have all been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

- 4.2 Tayside Contracts, Dundee City Council and Angus Council catering teams have been consulted.

5. Communication

- 5.1 A communications plan will ensure sufficient information is provided to all key stakeholders – this has included school circulars and Headteacher meetings, with school newsletters, parental information flyer, radio advertising and press release to follow.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

7. APPENDICES

None.

