

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date of Decision:	20 January 2016
Decision Title:	School Meal Prices from April 2016
Decision Reference:	7175
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Graham Ferguson, Business Manager, Children's Services

Tel: 01962 846368

Email: graham.ferguson@hants.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the information required by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services to agree the price of school meals from April 2016.
- 1.2. This paper recommends a change to the current price of school meals and seeks the Executive Lead Member's views on the impact of the Living Wage and the best approach to introducing consequent price rises over the next five years.

2. Background information

- 2.1. Each year the Executive Lead Member is asked to review the price of free school meals (it does not need to be so but in Hampshire this has been taken as the price of a school meal) and consider if an increase should be applied.
- 2.2. Historically, Hampshire has applied the same price to paid meals in primary and secondary schools.
- 2.3. In Hampshire, the County Council does not subsidise the cost of school meals.
- 2.4. The school meals service provides healthy meals. Good nutrition plays a vital role in enabling pupils to perform well in school. The service also encourages the healthy eating habits which are essential to combat child obesity; the latest figures indicate that 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese by the time they leave primary school. All HC3S school dinners are served with vegetables or salad sourced from local south coast growers. By sourcing local ingredients wherever possible the service supports the local economic development agenda.

2.5. This emphasis on quality ensures that the meals provided by H3CS meet the new standards introduced by Department for Education on January 1st 2014, mandatory for local authority schools, which stipulate that meals include

- one or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day
- at least three different fruits and three different vegetables each week
- an emphasis on wholegrain foods in place of refined carbohydrates
- an emphasis on making water the drink of choice
- limiting fruit juice portions to quarter pints (150ml)
- restricting the amount of added sugars or honey in other drinks to 5%
- no more than two portions a week of food that has been deep-fried, batter-coated or breadcrumb-coated
- no more than two portions of food that include pastry each week
- a portion of milk (lower fat and lactose reduced) to be made available once a day
- one or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day
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2.6. **Quality** - The quality of the ingredients and of the meals provided by H3CS have been recognised by several national awards over a number of years:

- 2015 Lead Association for Catering in Education (LACA) Business of the Year Award
- 2014 and retained in 2015 Hyperactive Children's Support Group Award for reduced additives
- 2014 inaugural FreeFrom Eating Out Award in the Schools, Colleges and Universities section for the quality of the Primary Menu - the policy of providing all pupils with freshly made gluten free sausages and fishfingers so that every pupil can eat the same meal was particularly commented upon *'For taking the 'special' out of children's special diets by letting everyone eat 'freefrom'.*
- 2013 and retained since, "Good Pig" award from Compassion in World Farming for the use of pork and pork products that meet strict animal welfare criteria, using exclusively pigs that are reared in better living conditions so that they have a longer and healthier lifespan.
- 2011 and retained since, Good Chicken from Compassion in World Farming
- 2008 and retained since, Good Egg from Compassion in World Farming for the use of local free-range eggs.

3. Performance in 2014/15

- 3.1. Provision of secondary school meals is approximately 8600 per day. This is lower than last year because HC3S lost the contract for three schools over the summer. However, take-up in most of HC3S' schools is increasing.
- 3.2. It was anticipated that 10 million primary school meals would be delivered in Hampshire's primary schools during the academic year to August 2015. In fact over 11 million were provided, an increase of over 3 million during the year.
- 3.3. The early indications are that the number of meals provided in primary schools is still rising with 54081 provided daily in September 2015, 1888 more per day than September 2014, and 61834 provided daily in October 2015, 1861 per day higher than in October 2014.
- 3.4. The impact of academy programme has had little or no impact as the majority of meals are delivered to primary schools.

4. Future price of school meals

- 4.1. The increasing number of meals provided has been fuelled directly by the government's Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) policy. If the funding for UIFSM is withdrawn this will have a potentially major impact. The number of meals provided will fall, possibly considerably, which will require the meal price to be reviewed.
- 4.2. Looking further forward, and depending on the agreed HCC policy for its implementation, the Living Wage will have a significant impact on HC3S' costs, with current assumptions suggesting it will add £1.9m to salaries. Present thinking is that the meal price will need to rise to £2.30 by April 2020 to cover this and anticipated inflation on food prices. The HC3S preference is for the price to rise in three separate increments of £0.10 as detailed below. This would allow HC3S to continue providing high quality meals and generate income to reinvest in kitchens and equipment.

2015	£2.00
2016	£2.10
2017	£2.10
2018	£2.20
2019	£2.20
2020	£2.30

4.3. There are no direct financial implications for 2016/17 as this is a fully charged service and the service is able to absorb the inflation pressures.

5. Recommendations

5.1. That the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services agrees that the price of school meals increases by £0.10 to £2.10 from April 2016.

5.2. That the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services notes the pressure of implementing the Living Wage and approves in principle the pattern of school meals price increases detailed in Section 4.2.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	Yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	Yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	No
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

5. No impact

- **Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

4. No impact

- **Climate Change:**

4 How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

No impact

5 How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No impact