

# Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	13 July 2011	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2277
TITLE:	The Price of Primary School Meals	
WARD:	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> Report to Schools Forum 17 May 2011		

## 1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The proposal is to set the price of primary school meals from 1 September 2011.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet agrees that the price of a school meal for a pupil in the Council's primary schools will not increase from 1 September 2011 and will stay at £2.00 per meal.

## 3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are inflationary pressures on the costs of production of school meals. The Schools Forum's proposal to increase prices by 5 pence per meal might have produced additional income of £31,000 in a full financial year. If the price is not to be increased then the loss of potential income needs to be met from the Revenue Budget Contingency.

## 4 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The provision of school meals in all of the Council's primary and secondary schools is subject to national minimum standards of nutrition. A national performance indicator NI52 measures the % take-up of school meals. In B&NES primary schools with a school meals service the take-up is currently running at 38.9% (September 2010 to March 2011). Healthy eating by young people enhances their life chances.

## 5 THE REPORT

5.1 Primary school meal prices in Bath and North East Somerset were increased in September 2010 to £2.00 per meal. Since then, the costs of food and transport, as well as other costs, have risen. The full cost of a meal including business and Council overheads is estimated at £2.49 for the coming year.

5.2 In recent years there has been a steady growth in the number of school meals eaten in B&NES primary schools. There is a strong connection with the Healthy Schools Initiative and the Soil Association’s Food For Life Partnership, which has led to an improved food culture in schools and a loyal customer base.

5.3 Current prices in neighbouring council areas are: South Gloucestershire £1.65, North Somerset £1.95, Bristol £2.20 and Somerset £2.15 - £2.30.

**6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

6.1 The report author and Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

**7 EQUALITIES**

7.1 School meals are available to every child in 61 out of 62 B&NES primary schools. An increase in price would affect those who currently buy meals (30% of all pupils).

**8 RATIONALE**

8.1 Although a price increase would help to offset increases in the cost of providing school meals, there is a continuing increase in the cost of living that affects all families in our communities and the Council may wish to support families, particularly those on low incomes who wish to buy school meals.

**9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

9.1 A range of options was considered, from no increase in price to an increase of 10 pence per meal.

**10 CONSULTATION**

10.1 Cabinet member; Children’s Services, Section 151 Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer

10.2 Circulation of this report.

**11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION**

*11.1 Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Young People.*

**12 ADVICE SOUGHT**

The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

<b>Contact person</b>	Ian Crook 01225 477392
<b>Sponsoring Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Nathan Hartley

<b>Background papers</b>	None
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	