

Bath & North East Somerset Council

DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Watt Cabinet Member for Children's Services	
DECISION DATE:	On or after 3 rd July 2010	PAPER NUMBER 1
TITLE:	The Price of Primary School Meals	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE: E 2149
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Report to Schools Forum 18 May 2010		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The proposal is to set the price of primary school meals from 1 September 2010.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet member is asked to agree that:

2.1 The price of a school meal for a pupil in the Council's primary schools is set at £2.00 from 1 September 2010.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The price increase will result in additional income of £42,000 in 2009-10 and £62,000 in subsequent years, provided that demand does not reduce; this will reduce the pressure on the Dedicated Schools Grant as the additional income will support the subsidy the DSG pays towards the cost of meals. There was no noticeable fall in demand after the last price increase, in September 2009. In fact, demand for paid meals showed a small increase, while the demand for free school meals rose noticeably.

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 37.4%. 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 2009 to £1.90 per meal. Since then, the costs of food and staffing, as well as other costs, have risen. The full cost of a meal including business and Council overheads is estimated at £2.50 for the coming year.
- 5.2 Current prices in neighbouring council areas are: South Gloucestershire £1.60, North Somerset £1.95, Bristol £2.10 and Somerset £2.15.
- 5.3 The Schools Forum has recommended that the price is increased to £2.00 with effect from 1 September 2010.

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. There is a risk, especially in the current economic climate, that a price increase will cause a reduction in demand that counteracts some of the anticipated additional income.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 School meals are available to every child in 62 out of 64 B&NES primary schools. An increase in price will affect those who currently buy meals (32.5% of all pupils). The price increase will not affect children who are eligible for free school meals.

8 RATIONALE

- 8.1 The Schools Forum recommended a price increase that they felt balanced the pressures of increases in costs with sensitivity to the current economic climate and potential reductions in demand.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 A range of options was considered, from no increase in price to an increase of 15 pence per meal.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 Cabinet members; Children's Services, Section 151 Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Schools Forum.

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

12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Council Solicitor) and Section 151 Officer (Strategic Director - Support Services) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

Contact person	Ian Crook 01225 477392
Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	