

<b>BUSINESS CASE</b>	
<b>Appendix 9 - Child Poverty – School Meal Provision</b>	
<b>Senior Accountable Officer</b>	Mark Armstrong, Depute Chief Executive
<b>Project Lead</b>	Shelly Hague, Interim Service Leader
<b>PID Status</b>	
<b>Background</b>	<p>Addressing child poverty is a priority for both Angus Council and the Angus Community Planning Partnership. The economic impact of the Covid pandemic has increased the level of child poverty within Angus. Over many years the numbers of school pupils who are taking a school meal has been in decline, a trend that has worsened following the return to school after recent Covid restrictions. This under utilisation of school meal uptake includes those who are eligible for free school meals and is particularly noticeable in Secondary schools. This results in pupils, including those living in low income households, potentially missing out on a nutritious meal with the resulting detrimental impact on their health and ability to learn.</p> <p>The percentage uptake of meals in all Council areas of Tayside show that there is significant scope for improvement. Recent developments regarding the expansion of universal free school meals (UFSM) to all primary school pupils give great cause for optimism. Tayside Contracts and the constituent Councils aim to identify and implement other measures which can achieve a sustained uptake in school meal uptake across Tayside.</p> <p>Reports on Child Poverty have been considered by Angus Council and specific reports on the uptake of school meals have been consider by the Tayside Contracts Joint Committee. This project will progress the actions agreed through these reports.</p>
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>The purpose of this project is to deliver a sustainable increase in the proportion of school age children and young people who are taking a school meal.</p> <p>The project will particularly target those individuals who are eligible for free school meals and who are at present not taking up this offer. Increasing uptake within this group could reduce their family's expenditure, thereby helping to address child poverty across Angus.</p> <p>An overall improvement in school meal uptake will increase the health, educational and economic benefits that can be achieved through the school meal system.</p>
<b>Strategic Objectives (including SOAP)</b>	<p>The project will contribute to the following SOAP objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate children living in poverty through work with partners &amp; business to intervene early, create economic opportunity, while also reducing costs and increasing income for people.</li> <li>• Eliminate barriers to accessing the right services at the right time, ensuring the availability of early support for individuals, families and businesses.</li> <li>• Eliminate inefficiencies within activities, making the best use of resources and technologies, leading to a higher level of consistency and productivity.</li> <li>• Reduce the impact of climate change by being a major contributor to achieving Scotland's national climate change goals, as leaders in clean growth, environmental stewardship and sustainability.</li> <li>• Create equity by focusing services on those who need them most.</li> <li>• Create stronger partnerships through collaboration in the planning and delivery of services which benefit the people of Angus.</li> </ul> <p>Achievement of the above objectives will be measured through the following indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall school meal uptake at an individual school and year group level.</li> <li>• Proportion of those eligible for free school meals who take up this offer.</li> <li>• Improved customer satisfaction in the school meal offer.</li> <li>• Reduction in the unutilised production capacity in Tayside Contracts' Central Production Unit (CPU).</li> <li>• Adoption of service changes and improvements across the three Tayside council areas.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of local food producers and suppliers in the production of Tayside Contracts school meals with associated local economic and carbon reduction benefits.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Scope</b>	<p>The school meal system as delivered across Angus Council early years, primary and secondary settings. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the processes to access, pay for and receive school meals.</li> <li>• the application process to receive free school meals.</li> <li>• customer feedback on why our children and young people and their parents are or are not choosing a school meal as their preferred option.</li> <li>• other stakeholder (e.g. school leadership) involvement that could increase the uptake of school meals in Angus.</li> <li>• consideration of how to increase the use of local food producers and suppliers in the school meal supply chain.</li> <li>• the contribution that school meals can play in the delivery of health, educational and economic benefits</li> </ul>
<b>Project Deliverables</b>	<p>Using a service design approach, the project will deliver the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A deeper and richer understanding of why our children and young people and their parents are not choosing a school meal as their preferred option. March 2022</li> <li>• An investigation into other barriers to accessing support and services targeted at vulnerable families. March 2022</li> <li>• An understanding of the school meal system, including meal quality and nutritional value; food and other waste produced; procurement; local supply chain and the carbon impact of the school meal system. March 2022</li> <li>• Recommendations to maximise the health, educational and economic benefits that can be achieved through increasing school meal uptake through the Tayside Contracts CPU and UFSM systems. June 2022</li> <li>• A redesigned school meal system across Angus and Tayside. September 2022</li> <li>• An overall increase in uptake amongst all those children and young people who are living in low income households. June 2023</li> <li>• Recommendations on other actions that would remove barriers to access and increase the uptake of services and support to families.</li> </ul>
<b>Constraints and Dependencies</b>	<p>The pro-active and open engagement of key stakeholders including, school pupils, their parents, Tayside Contracts and local food producers and suppliers. Service design support and expertise through Ignite. Resource input from council services to support project delivery e.g. ELL Directorate, school leadership representatives, finance and procurement. Support for any service change recommendations from Dundee and Perth &amp; Kinross Councils as joint partners in Tayside Contracts. Any future closure of schools in response to the Covid pandemic would adversely affect the project schedule. This risk is however considered to be very low.</p>
<b>Benefits</b>	See section Strategic Benefits above.
<b>Disbenefits</b>	There is a risk that recommendations for change to the new CPU system would require financial investment and increase overall annual revenue costs at a time when all additional costs should be avoided wherever possible.
<b>Options Appraisal</b>	<p>Statue Quo – rejected as the current system is not achieving the level of outcomes and outputs that are sought. Cease to deliver school meals but provide cash payments to parents instead – rejected as this is contrary to current legislative requirements to provide a meal.</p>

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	Changes and improvements to the current system – this is the option that will be delivered through this project.
<b>Organisational Requirements</b>	Potential access to buildings, particularly schools, to enable face-to-face service design work with school age children and young people. This project will form part of a wider Community Planning Partnership and Council training programme on service design and how it can be used to improve outcomes,
<b>Costs</b>	The project forms part of the Demand Management tests of change that are being progressed through the Angus Community Planning Partnership. Council and partner staff resources to lead and deliver the project are being provide through existing service budgets. Angus Council's Demand Management budget, approved as part of the 2020/21 budget, is funding the development of staff training and development resources to build and sustain internal capacity and capabilities in the service design approach. Ignite consultancy support to deliver the project and develop recommendations and resulting actions through service design is required. <b>This totals £40,000.</b>
<b>Project Plan</b>	Project scoping and establishment of project team – November 2021 User/customer research with children and young people, their parents/carers and school leaders – December 21 – January 22 Recommendations on improvements to increase school meal uptake – March 2022 Recommendations to increase the use of local food producers and suppliers in the school meal supply chain – June 2022 Co-design of service changes – September 2022 Implementation of service changes – to June 2023
<b>Procurement/Tendering Requirements</b>	The project will review current procurement requirements for the school meal supply chain to determine how to increase the use of local food producers.
<b>Legislative Requirements</b>	Any recommendations for change will take account of relevant legislative requirements e.g. 'The Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020'
<b>Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)</b>	All user/customer research will be undertaken in accordance with data protection and child protection requirements.
<b>Stakeholders</b>	The Service Design approach includes careful analysis of relevant stakeholders and how best to engage and involve them in the project based on their level of interest and influence in delivering successful outcomes. Key stakeholders include school age children and young people, their parents and carers, Tayside Contracts, School management and local food producers and suppliers. Service design will co-design and co-produce solutions with the key stakeholders.