

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 24 FEBRUARY 2022**

**EXPANSION OF FREE SCHOOL MEAL SUPPORT**

**KELLY MCINTOSH, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the committee with an update on the expansion of universal free school meals to all children in primaries 4 - 7. The report will outline steps taken to date and outline plans for the next phase of the roll out.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Children and Learning Committee:

- (i) Notes the completion of the first three phases of the expansion, which has extended universal free school meal provision to all children in primary 5.
- (ii) Notes the delay to the rollout of phase four of the expansion, which will extend provision to all children in primary 6 and 7.
- (iii) Agrees that the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning will bring a further report once further information is available regarding the rollout of phase four and any associated financial implications.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO CORPORATE PLANS**

This report contributes to the following outcomes in the:

**Angus Local Community Plan, 2017-30:**

- Reducing child poverty
- The best start in life for children

**Angus Council Plan, 2019-24:**

- We want to maximise inclusion and reduce inequalities

**Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families, 2021-23**

- Our children and young people growing up healthy, confident and resilient with improving physical and mental health and strengthened emotional wellbeing
- Our children, young people and families at risk, who face significant inequalities and disadvantage, having improved life chances

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Reference is made to [Report 301/21](#) considered by the Children and Learning Committee on 21 September 2021. The report provided members of the committee with an update on the planned expansion of free school meals to all children in P4-7 by August 2022.
- 3.2 Free school meals were extended to P4s in August 2021 and to P5s in January 2022. Section 4 below sets out the actions taken to date and the latest update regarding phase 4.

## 4. CURRENT POSITION

### Phase Three

- 4.1 All children in primary 5 now have the option of a free school meal. The Education Support Services Team has worked closely with colleagues in other council services and Tayside Contracts to ensure a smooth transition to these arrangements.
- 4.2 Information regarding the expanded provision has been shared using our social media channels and websites. This phase of the expansion has required limited changes to our existing school meal infrastructure. The recently opened Tayside Central Production Unit for school meals has sufficient capacity to meet the demands of Universal Free School Meal (UFSM) expansion to primary 5s.
- 4.3 The following table details universal free school meal uptake levels over three years. Due to the way school meal data is recorded it is not possible to show uptake for individual year groups.

Year	Week									Notes
	23	24	25	26	27	30	31	32	33	
2019-20	68%	68%	69%	67%	53%	68%	68%	68%	68%	P1-3
2020-21	35%	34%	35%	34%	36%	49%	57%	56%	59%	P1-3
2021-22	56%	59%	56%	56%	57%	60%	59%	60%	56%	P1-4 / P1-5

Year	Week								Notes
	34	35	36	37	38	39	42	43	
2019-20	68%	68%	69%	68%	67%	Hols	66%	66%	P1-3
2020-21	54%	59%	57%	61%	58%	48%	9%*	9%*	P1-3
2021-22	58%	58%	53%	60%	62%	57%	58%**	58%**	P1-4 / P1 - 5

\*Limited meals due to school closures – COVID

\*\* P1-5 January 2022

### Phase Four

- 4.4 In Report 301/21 members of the committee were advised that UFSM would be extended to primary 6 and primary 7 in August 2022. In December 2021 local authorities were advised that the Scottish Government is reviewing the timescale for delivery of phase four due to operational difficulties. At the time of writing a revised timetable is not available.
- 4.5 Further work on the expansion in Angus will be paused while the Support Services Team await further information from the Scottish Government.

## 5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is proposed that Children and Learning Committee notes the completion of the first three phases of the expansion, which has extended universal free school meal provision to all children in primary 5.
- 5.2 It is proposed that the Children and Learning Committee notes the delay to the rollout of phase four of the UFSM expansion.
- 5.3 It is proposed that the Children and Learning Committee agrees that the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning will bring a further report for consideration once a revised timetable for delivery is agreed.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Scottish Government revenue funding for 2022-23 has been confirmed to meet the costs of UFSM provision for primary 1 to 5.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached.

## **8. CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The Director of Finance has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

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

**REPORT AUTHOR: Stuart Gray, Team Leader – School Operations**

**EMAIL DETAILS: [childrenandlearning@angus.gov.uk](mailto:childrenandlearning@angus.gov.uk)**