

**NOTICE OF MOTION****CONSERVATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT****SUPPORT FREE SCHOOL MEALS  
FOR ALL CHILDREN IN POVERTY**

*To delete the wording as struck through in paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5 and bullet points 1 and 2 and to insert the wording as shown in bold italics in paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5 and bullet points 1 and 2 and include a further bullet point 3..*

“For many pupils, the free school meal is the only hot meal they will eat all day. Without a proper breakfast, a hot lunch at school aids pupil concentration, boosts energy levels and increases ability to learn.

***In England*** Nationally fewer than half of children in low income households receive a free school meal. ***700,000*** ~~4.2 million~~ children classified as living in poverty are not eligible for one, ***whilst 500,000 are entitled to a free school meal but do not claim one.***

~~Over~~ ***Around*** six thousand children in poverty in Brighton and Hove are missing out on a free school meal, ***many of whom are eligible but do not claim it;*** 1,400 in Brighton Pavilion Constituency, 1,600 in Hove and Portslade and 3,100 in Brighton Kemptown.

***This Council notes that*** under the rules as they stand, any household working more than 16 hours per week loses all entitlement to free school meals ***as the previous Government intended Working Tax Credit to substitute this entitlement. The Coalition Government in its response to the Passported Benefits Review stated that it is sympathetic to the arguments for extending eligibility to free school meals, but to extend eligibility to all recipients of Universal Credit will treble the cost.*** ~~and the Government has indicated that a similar situation to will exist after the introduction of Universal Credit.~~

As well as the obvious nutritional and educational benefits, free school meals are an important household budget consideration for low income families, especially at a time of high food and fuel costs and changes to welfare. Facing the loss of these meals, ***due to the eligibility rules brought in by the previous Government, has created*** ~~creates~~ further barriers for families seeking to move into work or take on more hours. The current situation runs counter to the government’s stated intention of Universal Credit making work pay.

Therefore this council:

- **Notes** ~~Pledges its support for the Children's Society Campaign: 'Fair and Square' that calls on the government to ensure that all children in families receiving Universal Credit are eligible for free school meals.~~
- Requests that the Chief Executive writes to the Work and Pensions Minister calling on him to ~~make free school meals available to the children of families in receipt of Universal Credit as plans for its introduction are finalized~~ **respond constructively to the 'Fair and Square' Campaign, to make free school meals as widely available as possible, but to ensure a new scheme does not result in the current disincentive for parents and carers to take up work or additional hours as plans for the introduction of Universal Credit are finalised** and as part of the government's expected review of free school meals.
- **Requests that officers continue their work with schools and parents/carers to maximise the take up of free school meals by those who are eligible.**

Proposed by: Cllr Wealls

Seconded by: Cllr Brown

Supported by: Cllrs G. Theobald, Peltzer Dunn, Cobb, A Norman, Janio, Cox, K. Norman, Simson, Mears, Hyde, Smith, C. Theobald, Barnett, Wells, Pidgeon and Bennett.