

Labour Group Amendment to Youth Council Motion - Holiday Activities and Food Programme

Moved by Cllr Shaid Mushtaq

Seconded by Cllr Lisa Navesey

~~Strikethrough~~ = delete

Underline = insert

As part of their election manifesto, the new UK government are planning to spend £315M to introduce free breakfast clubs in every primary school.

While Oldham Youth Council welcomes support for young people, we feel that ~~this money could be spent~~ extra help is needed to targeting those who need it most. We believe the threshold for free school meals needs to be increased to ensure the wellbeing of young people in poverty.

We would also like to see the continuation of the HAF (Holiday Activity and Food) program that has helped so many young people across Oldham. We do not feel there needs to be an increase in the money provided in this scheme, but we would like to see it used universally, allowing all young people access. This will reduce any stigma of attending sessions and hopefully encouraging more young people eligible for free school meals to take up the offer.

We also welcome the recent decision taken by the Government to extend the Household Support Fund which means Oldham Council can continue to give help to people including food vouchers, fuel vouchers and support with other essential items.

Council recognises that over the past few years the Oldham Youth Council have made the 'cost of living' a priority issue and have undertaken much work in this area to improve the experiences of Oldham's young people. This includes:

- Working with the Council to take unused stationary and distribute through schools to those students who need it most.
- 2022 motion to Council asking that the Chief Executive writes to the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Education and the Shadow Secretary of State for Education requesting to extend the offer of the Holiday Activities and Food programme to all young people not just those on free school meals.

Council notes:

- That according to several 2024 surveys commissioned by organisations, such as General Mills and Greggs Foundation, between 20-30% of young people do not eat breakfast before school.
- Just over two million children are eligible for free meals in England, according to the latest government figures.
- However, a 2024 Food Foundation survey found that there are 900,000 children living in poverty in England who are missing out on national eligibility for Free School Meals due to the strict threshold set by government.
- Scottish and Welsh Government is considering increasing free school meals across primary schools and London's Mayor has announced free meals will be provided in all primary schools across London for the 2024/2025 academic year.
- Since 2022, the HAF programme has provided 10.7 million HAF days to children and young people in this country. The expansion of the programme year-on-year has meant a total of 5.4 million HAF days provided between Christmas 2022, Easter and summer 2023.

We propose that Council therefore resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister, Secretary of state for Health and the Secretary of state for Education asking that, ~~rather than~~ as well as a blanket breakfast club for all primary schools, that they look at increasing the threshold for free school meals so more young people (both primary and secondary age) benefit;

that they continue the HAF (Holiday Activities and Food) program, making sure young people are fed during the school holidays while making this a universal service for all young people to reduce the stigma in attending and making it more cost efficient.

Amended motion to read:

As part of their election manifesto, the new UK government are planning to spend £315M to introduce free breakfast clubs in every primary school.

While Oldham Youth Council welcomes support for young people, we feel that extra help is needed to target those who need it most. We believe the threshold for free school meals needs to be increased to ensure the wellbeing of young people in poverty.

We would also like to see the continuation of the HAF (Holiday Activity and Food) program that has helped so many young people across Oldham. We do not feel there needs to be an increase in the money provided in this scheme, but we would like to see it used universally, allowing all young people access. This will reduce any stigma of attending sessions and hopefully encouraging more young people eligible for free school meals to take up the offer.

We also welcome the recent decision taken by the Government to extend the Household Support Fund which means Oldham Council can continue to give help to people including food vouchers, fuel vouchers and support with other essential items.

Council recognises that over the past few years the Oldham Youth Council have made the 'cost of living' a priority issue and have undertaken much work in this area to improve the experiences of Oldham's young people. This includes:

- Working with the Council to take unused stationary and distribute through schools to those students who need it most.
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- Since 2022, the HAF programme has provided 10.7 million HAF days to children and young people in this country. The expansion of the programme year-on-year has meant a total of 5.4 million HAF days provided between Christmas 2022, Easter and summer 2023.

We propose that Council therefore resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister, Secretary of state for Health and the Secretary of state for Education asking that, as well as a blanket breakfast club for all primary schools, that they look at increasing the threshold for free school meals so more young people (both primary and secondary age) benefit; that they continue the HAF (Holiday Activities and Food) program, making sure young people are fed during

the school holidays while making this a universal service for all young people to reduce the stigma in attending and making it more cost efficient.