

**To:** Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board

**On:** 23 November 2023

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**Report by:** Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure

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**Heading:** Universal Free School Meal (UFSM) expansion (Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils)

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 Since 2014, Renfrewshire Council has undertaken the expansion of Universal Free School Meals across Primary 1 to Primary 5 the same as other Scottish Local authorities. This has been done in conjunction and collaboration with the Scottish Government and has included both on-going revenue costs and capital costs to upgrade school kitchens and this work remains on-going.
  - 1.2 Renfrewshire Council has been strongly represented at the national group (Assist FM) to feed into and understand the funding allocation and requirements of the Scottish Government.
  - 1.3 The expansion of UFSM has led to more kitchens being made into cooking kitchens rather than solely relying on being import kitchens from other schools which has led to a better experience for pupils with food being prepared and served on site. In 2021, 12 Primary Schools produced all meals for all Primary Schools and early years establishments, however, using initial capital and revenue funding from the Scottish Government this was expanded to 25 operational production kitchens as of September 2023.
  - 1.4 As requested at the last Finance, Resources and Customer Services Board, this report outlines the work undertaken to date and the increased revenue and capital cost for the expansion of free schools meals as well as the challenges in implementing this fully across the current school estate.
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## **2. Recommendations**

It is recommended that members of the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board:

- 2.1 Notes the content of this report.
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## **3. Renfrewshire Current Infrastructure UFSM position**

- 3.1 In 2021, 12 Primary Schools produced all meals for all Primary Schools and early years establishments. Using initial capital and revenue funding from the Scottish Government in 2021/22 and 2022/23, this was expanded to 25 operational production kitchens as of September 2023, with sustained support from some Secondary School and Assisted Support Needs (ASN) schools.
- 3.2 As previously noted to this Policy Board, by December 2023, three additional schools, Bushes Primary School in Glenburn, Barsail Primary School in Erskine, and Mossvale /St James Primary School in Paisley, will have undergone a complete refurbishment and will be operational by January 2024 at the latest.
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## **4. Future Plans for UFSM provision**

- 4.1 It is noted across Renfrewshire's Primary Schools there are currently 987 primary 6 children and 955 primary 7 pupils (1942 in total).
- 4.2 By the end of 2023/early 2024, it is projected that 936 Primary 6 and 7 pupils will be eligible for a UFSM based on their eligibility for the Scottish Child payment (SCP).
- 4.3 The submission to Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) indicates the prioritisation of 5 full kitchen refurbishments within current import kitchens detailed below:
- Heriot Primary School, Foxbar
  - Howwood Primary School, Howwood
  - Kilbarchan Primary School, Kilbarchan
  - Our Lady of Peace Primary School, Linwood
  - St Margaret's Primary School, Johnstone
- 4.4 The extent of work required to renovate each kitchen costs approximately £295k plus fees (based on previous tender award for June 2023). The one-off costs include provision of outdoor seating areas in some locations and provision of new modern type table which maximises seating capacity without intruding in floor space within small premises.
- 4.5 There is currently no facility to submit additional resource requirements for Single Child Payment for P6/P7.

- 4.6 At a previous Policy Board, a question was raised about the on-going revenue costs for the expansion of Universal Free Schools Meals and these are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Estimated Catering/Kitchen on-going resource costs	Estimated Dining Space on-going resource costs (Children's Services)	Total Estimated on-going resource costs.
£1,342,581.36	£368,677.40	£1,711,258.76

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – Any financial elements with regards to Universal Free Schools Meals are detailed within this report.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None
3. **Community/Council Planning** –  
*Renfrewshire Council is Fair – nurturing bright, happy and healthy futures for all.* The Universal Free School meal programme delivers meals for pupils.
4. **Legal** – None
5. **Property/Assets** – School estate kitchens are being improved and upgraded as part of this programme.
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – All improvements are managed and maintained to comply with Health and Safety legislation with guidance given by Corporate Health and Safety.
9. **Procurement** – As noted within the report.
10. **Risk** – Without appropriate funding, there is a risk that Renfrewshire Council cannot expand the Universal Free School Meal programme adequately to primary 6 and primary 7 pupils.

- 11. **Privacy Impact** – None
- 12. **COSLA Policy Position** – None
- 13. **Climate Change** – None

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**List of Background Papers** – None

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