

## MOTION ON NOTICE

City Council 22 June 2020



### Free School Meals

Plymouth City Council notes that the Government has rejected calls for the free schools meals scheme to be maintained over this year's summer holidays. By withdrawing free school meal vouchers over this period, the government is removing access to a scheme which has been an important lifeline for families suffering additional hardship as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Previously we have seen the Government recognise the impact of the crisis on families with children eligible for free school meals and in response provide vouchers over the Easter and the May half-term period. This has been a welcome decision and one that has eased hardship in our communities in a city which ranks 64th most deprived and situated within the 20% most deprived local authority districts in England.

But children do not stop being hungry because it's the summer holidays. Many of our families who are most in need are likely to face further challenges as they attempt to return to, or secure, employment over the summer period and a gap of six weeks without access to healthy and affordable food will be a further disadvantage to pupils who are already disadvantaged by the lockdown and school closures.

Plymouth City Council therefore calls on the government to immediately reinstate the free schools meals scheme throughout this year's summer holiday to ensure that no child in Plymouth has to go without food over the summer period.

**Proposed:** Councillor Jon Taylor

**Signature** "By email"

**Seconded:** Councillor Jemima Laing

**Signature** "By email"