

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
20th January 2016**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Arwel Jones, Portfolio Holder for Education

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor David Meredith

In view of the significance that the uptake of Free School Meals has on the Family of Schools in which a School is situated. What action is the Authority taking along with ERW in order to provide better promotional material for schools to send out to parents in order to encourage them to apply? Furthermore when is the Authority likely to introduce a Cashless System which will avoid any embarrassment for those pupils receiving Free School Meals?

The authority has previously provided schools with letters to send to parents around the benefits to the Child, Parent, School and Local Authority of receiving free school meals. The award of free school meal entitlement is now undertaken by the council's income and awards team who undertake the assessment for other benefits such as Housing Benefit and Council Tax reduction etc. The service also undertakes a full check of entitled families in the first 2 – 3 weeks of January to ensure that all entitled children are given the Free School Meal entitlement in readiness for the PLASC return.

The roll out of the cashless system is expected to commence in February.