

## SFM PETITION UPDATE – JUNE 2009

Dear Supporters

Since my last update in March, support for the SFM petition has continued to grow and, with your help, we could reach the 500 mark by the end of term. Please continue to send the petition link (below) to any friend, relative or colleague living in Richmond up Thames - you don't have to be a parent with children at primary school to support this campaign.

### PROGRESS

In March I was happy to report that LBRuT Education Department, led by Cllr Eady, had agreed to work with SFM to set up a working party to look at Richmond's school meal service ahead of the next contract in 2011. At the end of March I was told that the working party would move forward without SFM involvement.

The reason cited was to 'safeguard the Council's political neutrality'. This is a reference to the fact that, back in June 2007, Zac Goldsmith helped to set up SFM. SFM has never hidden this fact and is proud of the support it has received all the major political parties. We are a politically neutral organisation, and this statement can be found on the SFM website:

*School Food Matters believes school food should never become a party political issue. For that reason, we are in the process of becoming an independently-funded charity. As a candidate for the Conservative Party, Zac Goldsmith will not become a Trustee, or have any ongoing role in the running of SFM. He will however remain a passionate supporter.*

Believing that a working party without SFM is better than no working party, I recently called for an update and the officer in charge stated: '*we haven't had time to progress this yet and I think it unlikely that we will be able to until the autumn at the earliest.*' Knowing the lead time required to prepare a tender for a public sector contract, I feel that we need to encourage the education department to prioritise school food.

### SUPPORT

You can help by sending an email to Cllr Eady and Matthew Paul, the officer in charge of school meals. Below is a template to cut and paste, but your own words, of course, would be far more potent.

**To Cllr Malcolm Eady**

[cllr.meady@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.meady@richmond.gov.uk)

cc

**Matthew Paul**

[m.paul@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:m.paul@richmond.gov.uk)

Dear Cllr Eady

**On 12 March you issued this statement: "*I am very glad to have met with Stephanie Wood and I and colleagues look forward to working further with her to realise our joint aspirations of raising the standards of school food, and of increasing pupil awareness about food production and sustainability.*" It was understood that a working party would be formed to look at school food ahead of the next contract in 2011.**

**Three months later, no progress has been made in this regard and I would urge you to remedy this and to make the future of school food in Richmond a priority. If Richmond wants to be '*an exemplar borough on sustainability*', it needs to consider school food as a sustainability issue and take steps towards a positive change.**

### FEEDBACK

I would welcome your comments on the campaign so far and any ideas about how to move it forward. It's particularly useful to hear if you have any response back to your emails to the LA. In the meantime, any updates will be posted on the SFM blog - the link is below.

Thank you for your continued support.