

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION SUB COMMITTEE – 5 SEPTEMBER 2000

Secondary School Catering – Pilot Scheme Update

Report by the Director of Educational and Social Services

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To advise members of the Sub Committee of progress made in relation to the ongoing Pilot Scheme on Secondary School Catering.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Education Sub Committee at its meetings of 20th January, item 1 page 652, approved a Secondary School Catering Pilot Scheme, which would trial a modernised style of service for catering in secondary schools. The Sub committee also approved that opportunities for supplier partnerships be developed.
- 2.2 Secondary school catering has reduced in popularity by around 15% in recent years and operates in an increasingly competitive market.
- 2.3 The Pilot project targets a number of areas where it is believed that the service does not meet the expectations of students, and where we can, with a cost effective investment, improve the overall acceptability of the service and consequently its future viability.
- 2.4 The areas, which have been targeted for improvement, include unattractive food service counters and systems, unacceptable queues, the environment associated with traditional school meals, and the need to create a marketing image or brand that is in tune with an increasingly sophisticated and aware student population.

3 CURRENT POSITION

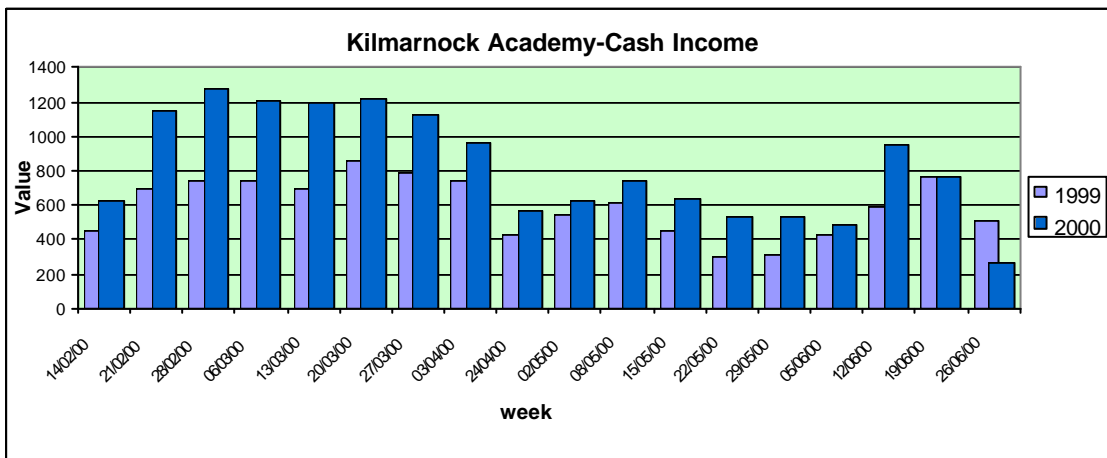
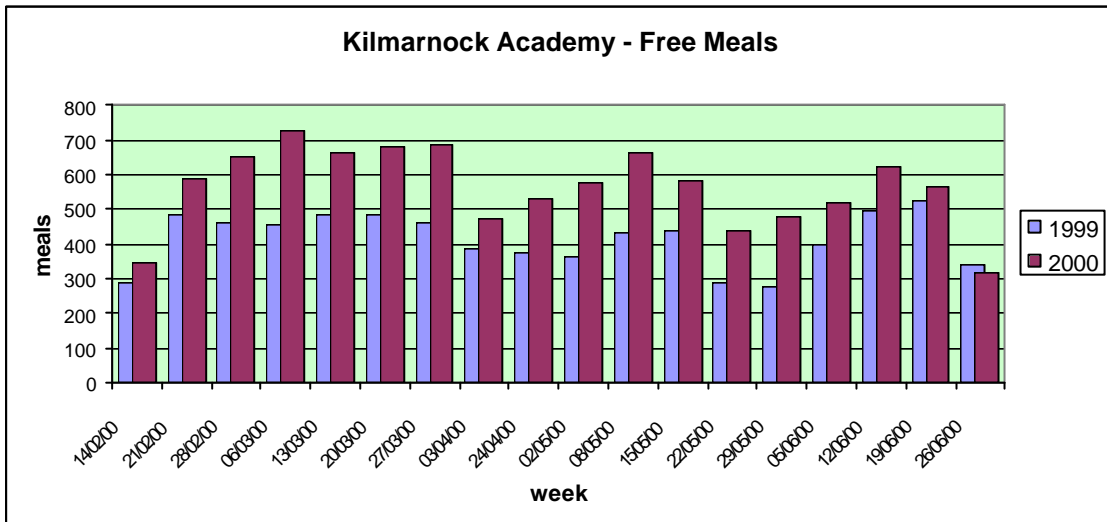
3.1 The Metro Restaurant

The Metro concept developed by **onsite** services has been successfully trialled at Kilmarnock Academy since February and is being extended to Cumnock Academy from the start of this session. The menu range and service provided continues to be developed, for example, a conventional main meal service with support from Sharwoods is being developed, in order to increase the uptake of main meals.

3.2 The concept of the Metro is to provide a more flexible and quicker service, with a more appropriate choice, branding and presentation of menu items, as well as the Metro image for students.

There was an initial investment from both **onsite** services business unit and suppliers who worked in partnership with **onsite** to create a new servery area that offered a more pleasant, credible and “trendy” environment.

3.3 The table below compares the uptake in meals after the introduction of the Metro with the same period last year, showing a dramatic increase in customer numbers and cash income. Cash income has increased by 39%, and, importantly in support of a range of Council policies, the uptake of free meals has increased by 35%. Comparing this period to the same time last year, the increase in the uptake of Free Meals averages at 150 pupils and cash income increases by an average of £235 per week.



4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Metro Pilot projects at Cumnock and Kilmarnock Academies have been funded within existing resources of the **onsite** business unit allied to some sponsorship which has been; in kind, by input of development time or supply of equipment, from Muller, Coke, McCains, Milk Marketing Board, Jamieson & Moody and Sharwoods who have been pleased to be associated with this initiative.
- 4.2 The menu range, marketing and promotional aspects of the Metro Brand will continue to change and develop until we find the optimum blend for students and teachers.
- 4.3 In addition to significantly improved customer satisfaction gains these developments have the potential to improve the viability of Services.

5 LEGAL/ POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Developing this initiative which significantly promotes the uptake of free meals and improves the overall value for money of this service will enhance a range of Social and Best Value Council Polices.

6 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that;

- 6.1 The Sub Committee continues to support the development of the Metro concept, with a view to extending the Metro Brand to Secondary Schools, as funding allows, and future development proposals are found acceptable to Schools.

John Mulgrew

Director of Educational and Social Services

17 August 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1. Cumnock and Kilmarnock Pilot Menus
- 2. Onsite EFQM customer results report.

Members wishing further information should contact,

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AGENDA