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**FROM: EDWIN POOTS MLA**  
Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

**DATE: 21 OCTOBER 2020**

**TO: PETER WEIR MLA**  
Minister of Education

**DRAFT EXECUTIVE PAPER – FUNDING FREE SCHOOL MEALS FOLLOWING  
SCHOOL CLOSURE 19 TO 23 OCTOBER 2020**

Thank you for your letter and draft Executive paper of 19 October 2020, outlining the funding requirements for the provision of free school meals following the Executive's announcement that all schools will close for an extended period extended Halloween break.

I understand that the additional funding of up to £1.356m will be required to support payments in lieu of the free school meals entitlement for the period from 19 to 23 October 2020.

I also note that there is an expectation that those families experiencing food vulnerability during the Halloween holiday period 26 to 30 October 2020, will be supported by the Department for Communities and I welcome this necessary support for families who are experiencing food poverty and insecurity.

I am broadly supportive of the proposal for additional funding as it is important that vulnerable children, young people and other key groups of children continue to be supported over this period and to help ensure the safety, health and well-being of our children and young people.

This memo has been copied to Ministerial Colleagues, the Attorney General, the Office of the First Legislative Counsel and the Executive Secretariat.

Personal Data

**EDWIN POOTS MLA**  
Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

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