

PRESS INFORMATION



BEVERLEY BAKER RETURNS AS LACA CHAIR

Beverley Baker, a past Chairman of the **Local Authority Caterers Association (LACA)**, has returned to the position for a further one year period from July 2009 - 2010.

She replaces Neil Porter who has now completed his one year term in office from July 2008 – 2009. Beverley was officially re-appointed as the new incoming Chairman at the organisation's Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 8 July 2009.

Beverley Baker was a member of the Expert Panel set up by the DCSF (formerly the DfES) to make recommendations concerning new standards for school meals. Nutrient based Standards became law in Primary schools in 2008 and will come into force in Secondary schools in September 2009. She was a Board Member of the School Food Trust for three years from 2005 to 2008. Amongst her other roles, she is a Director of the Institute of Hospitality and is currently working with the Government Office of the South East as a member of a steering group considering opportunities for the development of local procurement in the public sector. Beverley has a degree in catering management from the University of Surrey.

She is currently Head of Commercial Services for Surrey County Council. A member of the senior management team of the authority, Beverley is responsible for a variety of services including the provision of 55,000 school meals everyday within 380 schools. She is a Board member of Surrey Food Links, a Council supported company, aiming to support local producers bring quality local produce to market.

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Looking ahead to her role and objectives for the coming year, Beverley Baker says:

“With the advent of the new Food based and Nutrient based Standards for school food provision, the last couple of years has been one of the most challenging periods in the history of school catering. Former Chair, Neil Porter will be a hard act to follow as he worked tirelessly to take forward some key issues raised at last year’s Conference. I will continue to progress these with as much vigour as Neil has done. These include Nutrient Standards in Secondary Schools, the School Meals Grant post 2011 and Free School Meals for All Pupils. As part of our aim to ensure that all children living in poverty can benefit from a free school meal, LACA wants to see the eligibility for these extended to every family on working tax credit”.

“It is absolutely vital that we increase our efforts to engage with Head Teachers and Governors in order for more schools to embrace a whole school food approach to healthy eating. As schools are integral to the Government’s public agenda for healthier eating and lifestyles, LACA will be working with the Department of Health to become a Change 4 Life Partner. LACA will also be lobbying Government for continued support and funding to create better dining and kitchen facilities to make it more achievable for schools and caterers to deliver the new Standards for school food and to provide the appropriate environment for children and young people to enjoy their lunchtime experience. There is still much to do to ensure that school catering remains a key part of social policy in the future and LACA will continue to maintain a strong presence and to be a representative voice for school meal providers”.

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