

School dinners for councillors today after their meeting

Later this morning the 63 councillors will convene for their monthly meeting at the City Chambers.

Usually such a day includes lunch for all – and usually it's curry. Or so I understand.

But today it will be home-made vegetable soup, locally sourced pork sausages, mashed patties and Scottish peas. The councillors will also be offered pitta with falafel, cucumber salad and sweet chilli sauce all followed by fresh fruit.

School catering staff will serve up the fare to all elected members in the City Chambers today.



This move has come about after discussions at the Education Children and Families committee last month. The council

provides 18,500 hot meals every weekday to over 90 schools in the city provided by 54 production kitchen and over 500 staff. School meals have changed in the last two decades with more school meals provided to more pupils.

The school meal service says it is committed to sourcing food from local suppliers for meat, vegetables and milk. All fish comes from sustainable sources, eggs are free range and meat from QMS or Red Tractor accredited farms.

The City of Edinburgh Council was first in Scotland to achieve the Bronze Catering Mark Award in all its primary secondary and special school. Currie Community High School and Buckstone Primary achieved the Silver Catering Mark Award.

Lord Provost Frank Ross said: "It's been almost 40 years since I last sat down for a school dinner so I'm looking forward to sampling Jackie's homemade meals. It's a chance for all Councillors to appreciate how far school cooking has come and get to know exactly what ingredients go into the 18,500 hot meals our Council serves to Edinburgh's youngest residents every day. It's certainly a far healthier and tastier looking menu than the one I remember!"

Jackie Neilson, the Unit Supervisor in Portobello, is one of the team cooking for Councillors on Thursday and has been with the council for over 23 years.

She said: "I'm extremely proud to work in the school meals service and have the opportunity to provide pupils with a freshly cooked lunch – watching children flourish throughout their time at school is the best part of the job. I am looking forward to giving the councillors a taste of the meals we serve every day to our pupils!"