

Policy Brief: “I’ll Have What S/He’s Having”

Restoring Dignity — Eating Like Royalty

Rationale: Why Food Poverty Affects Dignity

Food poverty in the UK is more than a lack of calories; it strips individuals and families of their dignity. Parents face heartbreaking choices between feeding themselves or their children, often resorting to poor-quality or insufficient meals. The shame and stigma around “cheap” food contribute to social exclusion and undermine wellbeing.

This policy seeks to restore pride and normalcy in affordable eating by creating a shared civic ritual — where nutritious, affordable meals are not only available but publicly embraced by all levels of society, including national leaders.

Policy Overview

“I’ll Have What S/He’s Having” is a national initiative mandating major supermarkets to offer affordable meal kits priced at £5, designed to be nutritious, tasty, and easy to prepare. These meals will be publicly shared monthly by the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, a representative of King Charles III, and a rotating civic guest. The initiative fosters dignity, unity, and visibility around affordable food.

Key Components

1. Participation

- The “Big 5” supermarkets (Tesco, Sainsbury’s, Aldi, ASDA, Lidl) are required participants. Other supermarkets may opt in voluntarily.
- Each participating store must prepare at least 7 different “5-for-5” meal kits.
- Each kit must include at least 3 essential food items from a nationally defined list.
- Meal kits must be nutritious, minimally processed, and packaged in paper bags.

2. Availability

- All 7 meal options must be available for purchase on at least 75% of the store’s open days.
- At any time, at least one meal kit must be in stock.
- If all meal kits are sold out, customers have recourse as detailed below.

3. Customer Reporting & Enforcement

- If a customer finds all meal kits sold out, they may take a selfie with the empty shelf and receive a £5 voucher from the store reception desk.
- If the supermarket fails to respond, the customer can submit the store reference number and selfie to the Ombudsman.
- The supermarket then has 7 days to respond:
 - If the claim is upheld, the customer receives a £10 voucher.
 - Failure to respond or reimburse triggers an unannounced inspection (e.g., food hygiene, labor conditions, environmental compliance).

4. Abuse Prevention

- Reporting is limited to one submission per person every 30 minutes.
- Sold-out 5-for-5 kits may be reported once per store every 30 minutes.
- These limits allow stores reasonable time to restock and prevent misuse of the reward system.

5. The Shared Table: Public Civic Meals

- Once a month, the featured £5 meal will be publicly shared by:
 - The Prime Minister
 - The Leader of the Opposition
 - A representative of King Charles III (KC3), who will also share reflections on his official webpage
 - A rotating civic guest (e.g., nurse, teacher, supermarket worker, parent, chef)
- Meals will be shared in settings including the House of Commons canteen, school or workplace canteens, and other public venues to foster community and visibility.
- Royal participation is encouraged but flexible.

6. Competition and Recognition

- Supermarkets compete monthly by submitting “5-for-5” meal recipes and kits, judged by a celebrity chef (e.g., Jamie Oliver).
- The winning meal will be available for 4 weeks at the House of Commons canteen.
- The supermarket with the most wins annually receives:

- The title “Food Champion Supermarket of the Year”
 - An official royal visit
 - A £250,000 prize fund distributed among the store’s lowest-paid workers.
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Why Supermarkets Can Afford This

- Most large supermarkets already produce own-brand essentials at low cost.
 - The main profit margins come from other product categories, particularly alcohol.
 - By linking participation to alcohol sales licenses (no 5-for-5, no license), the policy balances social good with commercial sustainability.
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Impact on Dignity

This policy:

- Provides families struggling with food poverty a chance to enjoy nutritious, affordable meals without shame.
- Makes affordable food visible and celebrated nationally.
- Restores the right to say to your children:
“Tonight, we’re eating like the Prime Minister, the King, and a nurse.”