Region: North East and Scotland   
Date: 10th Jan 2024

**Happy New Year**

Good Morning and Happy New Year,

It seems a bit late now saying Happy New Year, and I have waited a week before sending out this news update to the region, knowing the pressure on everyone in the first week of term, whether you are opening up your schools or resuming supply chain support.

I hope the first week has gone well and that you are all settled back into all that this term brings, let’s hope the weather stays clear and we have no snow days closing schools and causing chaos for our staff and suppliers, not to mention the children we serve who will go without their excellent school lunches.

The New Year seems to be the right time to relaunch our LACA Activity Calendar for the region too, and I’m hoping to do this in the first instance by appealing for new volunteers for our Regional Committee.   
  
Following the pandemic and then with a number of retirements and job changes in the past year our committee membership has become a little thin on the ground, so we could really do with some new volunteers to revive the region and support our former Regional Chair Anita Brown during her term as National Chair this year.

Could anyone interested in joining the regional committee please contact either myself or Vivianne Fleet our regional secretary for more information, and also join us in a relaunch meeting at:

St Andrew’s Church Hall, Front Street, Chilton Moor, Houghton le spring, DH4 6LU

on Tuesday 13th February from 2.00pm – 4.00pm.   
  
We will need to formally elect you to the committee at our Regional AGM, the date for which we will arrange at the relaunch meeting on 13th February.

We have some tentative arrangements in place for a Summer Ball replacing our Regional Awards Evening which we would normally hold around the Winter half term/Easter break. Please come to the meeting on 30th to help make this a great event and bring us new ideas for celebrating all that your school catering teams do for children in the schools in the North East and Scotland.

Please remember that the 2024 School Chef of the Year is still open for entry – you have 3 weeks left to get your best chefs to enter the competition and showcase your service and our fantastic regional food to the world so get on with it, don’t be left behind.

Finally thank you for continuing to respond to the LACA Survey Requests, your responses are so important in helping us to represent the sector in our monthly meetings with DfE and the Government to bring increased funding and security for all that you do for all children in schools across the region. I look forward to seeing at least 20 of you at our meeting on 30th January.

Best regards

Stephen Forster

Regional Chair and Board Member LACA Ltd