

Title of meeting: Schools Forum

Date of meeting: 23 October 2013

Subject: Proposed Changes to Management of School Kitchens

Report by: Owen Buckwell, Head of Housing and Property Services

Report written by: John Bean, Head of Building Maintenance

Wards affected: All Wards

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to inform Schools Forum of the proposed changes of kitchen/servery management.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Schools Forum note that liaison will be taken with school Governing Bodies to amend the terms of the existing 2013/14 Service Level Agreement (SLA), such that :-

(a) The responsibility for the management of kitchen/servery fabric (walls, floor and ceilings) and services (lighting, power, heating and ventilation) is transferred from schools to Housing and Property Services (HPS) and managed within the existing catering SLA budget from January 2014.

(b) The responsibility for the repair and replacement of dining tables (hot meals) is transferred from the existing catering SLA budget managed by HPS to schools from January 2014.

3. Background

3.1 Management of the schools catering SLA budget transferred from Education and Children Services in 2012/13 to HPS.

3.2 The existing service has been reviewed and the following ambiguities identified:

(a) Within kitchens/serveries HPS are responsible for the repair and maintenance of catering equipment (ovens, dishwashers etc.) but

schools retain responsibility for the kitchen/serveries internal fabric (walls, ceilings and floors) and services (lighting, power, heating and ventilation).

- (b) School meals are prepared by the Council's catering contractor ISS who are also responsible for hygiene standards within the kitchen. Recent inspections by Environmental Health have highlighted concerns due to the condition of surfaces, such as flaking paint and loose floor coverings.
- (c) To ensure clarity of responsibility and management of the ISS contract it is considered that it would be beneficial if the whole of the kitchen fabric and services were managed under the catering SLA budget to improve hygienic standards.
- (d) The catering SLA includes budget to assist schools repair and replace dining tables for hot meals only, not packed lunches or general usage. This is difficult to allocate to schools due to the wide variety of dining arrangements and standards of tables.
- (e) It is considered that as schools usually purchase all school furniture from their budgets it would be appropriate for schools to also have responsibility for dining tables.

3.3 The existing catering SLA would be due for review in December 2013 and changes implemented from April 2014. However following the change of SLAs to a Trading Services format schools have requested that the period of operation be changed from the financial year (April) to the school year (September).

The proposed changes have been discussed with numerous Head Teachers at Asset Management Meetings during the summer term and welcomed as a sensible resolution.

This report seeks to resolve the identified ambiguities in catering management from January 2014 rather than allowing them to continue until September 2014.

4. Options

4.1 The recommended option is to exchange responsibilities between HPS and schools with kitchens with no financial budget adjustments.

- schools transferring fabric and service responsibility to HPS.

- HPS transferring dining table responsibility to schools.

4.2 An alternative option would be for schools to transfer the responsibility for kitchen fabric and services to HPS with a financial adjustment (increase in SLA).

5. Reasons for recommendations

Exchanging responsibilities for kitchen fabric/services and dining furniture will resolve existing ambiguities, enable the contract with ISS to be clearly managed and improve hygiene standards within the kitchens.

6. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

This report does not require an EIA as the proposals do not have any impact upon a particular equalities group.

6. Legal Implications

There are no significant legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report in so far as they relate to the SLA with maintained schools.

7. Finance Comments

The proposals contained within this paper seek to amend the services provided within the SLA with Housing and Property Services. It is anticipated that the proposed changes will not have an adverse effect on the schools budgets, however any decision to amend SLAs rest with the Governing Bodies of the affected schools. The proposed amendments will be reflected in 2014/15 SLAs where already agreed.

.....
Signed by:

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:



Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/
rejected by on

.....
Signed by: