

**TO: EXECUTIVE**  
**DATE: 22 OCTOBER 2019**

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**SCHOOL MEALS SERVICE  
PROCUREMENT PLAN  
(Executive Director, People)**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To approve the Procurement Plan for the re-tender of the school meals catering contract.

**2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Procurement Plan, attached at Appendix 1 of this report, is approved.

**3 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 It is a requirement of the Contract Standing orders that the Director and Full Executive approve any Procurement Plan with a value in excess of £400,000. This decision seeks approval for the procurement process.

**4 Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1 Schools re-tender its school meals service and finds another provider individually or collectively.
- 4.2 Schools take the service in-house and operates school meals themselves.

**5 Supporting Information**

- 5.1 The school meals service has a significant impact on outcomes for children and young people because a healthy meal choice has been shown to have positive effects on children's behaviour and improve classroom performance.
- 5.2 The school meals contract was last tendered in 2012 as part of a joint bid with West Berkshire and the contract was awarded to ISS Facility Services Education for an initial period of 5 years then further extended in July 2017 for 2 years and by a further year to end in July 2020.
- 5.3 When the contract began a total of 30 Primary, 1 Special and 1 Secondary school participated. In the past few years the number of schools choosing to make alternative arrangements has increased making the current contract increasingly unviable. From September 2019, only 20 Primary and 1 Special school will remain in the contract.
- 5.3 The reduction in numbers is due to a variety of reasons including academisation, taking the service in-house or through joining an external re-tendering exercise where schools have been part of the East Berkshire School Business Managers Group being advised by Minerva Consulting.

- 5.4 Schools were consulted in the 2019 summer term about which of the alternative options they wished to consider. A total of 10 schools indicated that they would be making alternative arrangements with 11 schools opting to join a council re-tendering exercise.
- 5.5 Although a future contract will be much reduced in size and value, we believe from the experience of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead who successfully re-tendered with just 16 schools with a roll number of 3400. Although the number of schools in a Bracknell contract will be lower, our combined roll number will be about the same at 3800 children. The current cost breakdown with roll numbers is shown at Appendix 2 of this report.
- 5.6 Should a re-tender exercise prove to be unsuccessful, the current contract has provision to extend by a further year to end in July 2021 subject to negotiation with ISS to give schools time to make alternative arrangements.
- 5.7 The contract opportunity will be advertised in OJEU and it is anticipated that 5-7 organisations will be invited to tender after the completion of the supplier questionnaire (SQ) stage.
- 5.8 The procurement will be structured to ensure that the income from selling the Service Level Agreement to schools covers all of the Council's costs in providing the contract.

## **6 Consultation and Other Considerations**

### Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

### Director of Finance

- 6.2 The cost of purchasing school meals and associated services will fall on relevant schools to finance and as such, no significant financial implications are anticipated from the council from this procurement. Schools also contribute to the ensuing contract management function that the council provides on their behalf, through a paid Service Level Agreement. Income earned amounted to £17,000 in 2018-19. Any reduction on this amount under the new arrangements will result in an equivalent financial pressure on the council. An increase in income would result in a financial gain.

### Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 Council Officers including the Head of Procurement, and Service Efficiency Group were consulted in the drafting of the Procurement Plan.

Engagement of key stakeholders will be undertaken during the procurement process with school representatives on the re-tendering panel.

## Equalities Impact Assessment

6.4 Equality Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 3 of this report.

## Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.5 Strategic risks are set out below:

ISSUE	RISK	COMMENT
Commercial Risk	MEDIUM	Despite being a smaller authority contract, the recent experience of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead suggests that this opportunity should attract enough bids to make this a viable tender.
School Management Risk	MEDIUM	Should the tender fail to attract enough bids then we could have the opportunity to extend the existing contract until July 2021 subject to negotiation with the existing provider.
FINANCIAL	LOW	Schools will be responsible for paying staff costs from end of summer term 2020 until the start of Autumn term 2020.

## Background Papers

Appendix 1 Confidential Procurement Plan  
Appendix 2 Current cost breakdown  
Appendix 3 Equalities Impact Assessment  
Appendix 4 Summary Data Impact Assessment

## Contacts for further information

Rachel Morgan      Assistant Director, Education & Learning  
01344 354037      [rachel.morgan@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.morgan@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

Chris Taylor      Head of School Property, Planning and Admissions  
01344 354062      [chris.taylor@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:chris.taylor@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

David Eagle      Education, Property & Contracts Officer  
01344 354004      [david.eagle@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:david.eagle@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)