



Report for:	Cabinet – 9 July 2013	Item Number:	
Title:	Commissioning of High Quality Services to Education		
Report Authorised by:	Libby Blake – Director, Children and Young People’s Service		
Lead Officer:	Jon Abbey – Assistant Director School Standards		
Ward(s) affected: All		Report for Key Decisions:	

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 This paper sets out the purpose and suggested approach in a report to Cabinet in July 2013 on the commissioning of high quality education services to schools. The report to Cabinet will set out the proposed programme of work for the next twelve months that will enable the Council to implement Recommendation 4 - in the Independent Education Commission report, ‘*Outstanding for All*’ (OfA).

2. Cabinet Member introduction

- 2.1 High quality support services for Education is very important. This paper seeks approval that, following a period of initial consultation with schools and stakeholders in June 2013, a project manager is appointed who will undertake market scoping and market testing work for a range of services to schools. The market testing would advise on the specific functions and services, concluding by recommending the best high quality and value for money option.
- 2.2 Schools catering service have completed a piece of work which appraises the options for the future provision of school meals in Haringey. The summary of the options and recommendations will be presented to Cabinet in September 2013 for their consideration.



3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet approve a proposed model for the development of a commissioning approach.
- 3.2 Cabinet approve the programme of work for the next 12 months.
- 3.3 That Cabinet request that officers provide a further report in September 2013, outlining options for the commissioning of high quality services for Haringey.

4. Alternative options considered

- 4.1 The review of services to schools will enable a range of alternative options and models to be considered. Based on the current competitive market for schools options could include:
- maintaining the current range of quality and provision
 - re-launching In-House services
 - withdrawing underperforming In-house services and replace them with suitable alternative arrangements
 - considering entering a potential joint venture with external providers to provide and procure services to schools, where quality is not judged as effective

5. Background information

- 5.1 The independent Education Commission, Outstanding for All (OfA), was launched in April 2012; the final report of the Commission was published on 14th February 2013 and sets out high ambitions for children and young people in Haringey. One of the 12 recommendations made by the Commission was that:

'The Council's Education role must be re-defined, as set out in the October 2012 Cabinet report, to focus its resources on: giving a strategic lead; providing core statutory services effectively; and supporting schools in commissioning other high quality services from external sources, where Council services are unable to provide high quality and best value. This should be finalised by September 2013.'

- 5.2 The Cabinet report - October 2012 - set out the current statutory responsibilities of the Local Authority (LA) for school improvement, and the proposals for the development of the future relationship with schools. Some LAs have retained services that deal only with statutory responsibilities with all other functions simply traded with schools, others have outsourced all functions and others have set up companies and 'not for profit' improvement partnerships. The approach set out in this paper will reflect a number of months of discussions with Head teachers, governors and other stakeholders and the desire that Haringey retains a strong family of schools approach with robust challenge from the LA, but also the opportunity for continued collaborative working between schools supported by high quality and valued services.



- 5.3 The OfA final report indicated that there were criticisms consistently expressed about the quality of many Council services; the Commission was struck by the strength of feeling about this in Haringey, especially from Head teachers. Commissioners concluded that those schools should show more initiative if Council services are not meeting their needs and that Secondary Head teachers, in particular, were beginning to recognise this and take co-ordinated action. Schools complained about the inadequate understanding by Council officers of the needs and priorities of individual schools and about the impact frequent staff changes had on the quality of service. Some schools were satisfied with the support provided but these tended to reflect the contribution of individual officers rather than service-wide standards.
- 5.4 The OfA identified that there were many criticisms of specific services, limited confidence in the validity of data used to make place planning decisions, delayed decisions about pupils with special needs and a corresponding absence of early intervention. Some Head teachers regretted that there is no longer a regular, co-ordinated opportunity for schools to provide feedback on the services provided by the Council. However, the report stated that a common theme was the lack of self evaluation of services; there were only limited systems in place to evaluate how well the services were fulfilling their responsibilities and whether they were making a real difference.
- 5.5 Over the spring term 2013 both HR and the Catering Service have consulted with schools with reference to service specification, cost and delivery; the Catering Service has objectively appraised options for the future provision of school meals. The detailed information will be presented in a report for September 2013 Cabinet to make an informed decision about future service provision.

The Proposed Approach

- 5.6 It is recognised that there is variability in the quality of education services on offer to Haringey schools; therefore a period of initial consultation with Head teachers and Governors was carried out in June 2013 to gather thoughts, views, ideas and direct experience of both core and non-core statutory functions which schools may feel could be better commissioned externally, to achieve best quality and value.
- 5.7 Table of Statutory services to schools and discretionary traded services:

Statutory services to schools	Discretionary Traded Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Place planning/ Fair access• Schools attendance, welfare and cleanliness• Statutory assessment of SEN• Challenge underperforming schools/ Using intervention powers• Early Years attainment and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Meals Service• Health and safety• CPD• Governor services• Speech and language• School Improvement• Human Resources (HR)• Property services



provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderating KS EY/1/2 tests • School transport • Sufficiency of school governors • Services to support safeguarding duties, SEN and LAC • Health and Safety Council responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Communications • Pendarren • Legal • NQT/Appropriate body • School Library Service
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5.8 There is a robust challenge in terms of the mileposts set by the Commission and that the background for services to schools should be finalised by September 2013. In terms of alternatively delivering these services and functions, or aspects of them, we need to consider:

- greater Value for Money (quality and cost);
- the quality of the local/pan-London/national market to provide them;
- models of good commissioning practice elsewhere;
- our rationale for externally providing a service or function.

Initial Consultation June 2013

5.9 Initial consultation in June 2013 was undertaken with Head teachers, governors and service leads about which services they feel should be delivered by the LA, which services could be traded or externally sourced. The consultation will also seek feedback around the quality and value for money. This initial consultation will inform and assist the the programme of work for the next year and the detailed market scoping and testing required for proposed services and functions, which may be considered suitable for commissioning elsewhere. A project management team, with the appropriate representation and input from schools will take this work forward from July 2013, which is vital to ensuring a high quality and the right value for money outcome for all school support services.

5.10 The raw first impressions from the questionnaire and meetings in June 2013 with Head teachers, (see appendix 1) indicate that there is service variation in terms of overall levels of satisfaction and a number of comments suggest that it is the quality of certain individuals, rather than overall quality of the service itself which performs.

5.11 When averaging out the initial returns in terms of ratings based on timeliness, professionalism, quality and resolving issues the summative judgements indicate that there is predominantly too much adequacy amongst the services rather than good ratings.

5.12 Upon analysis (see Appendix 2) and discussions with Head teachers in June 2013, they report that they already use a range of alternative providers in a mixed market place (other than the LA) including private HR consultants, Strictly



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Education (HR) and Cambridge Islington HR; Challenge partners and several different consultants for school improvement and CPD providers. From the quality and cost perspective, Head teachers do also state finance, welfare and attendance, music and Pendarren are effective; however on a number of returns the caveat was that too many services are dependent on the quality of an allocated person. SEN was reported as good in terms of the service to special schools, but not as consistent in their delivery of support to mainstream SEN needs.

Timeline

- June 2013 – Initial consultation with schools
- 09.07.2013 – Cabinet for agreement to direction of travel
- Report to Cabinet in September 2013 on the future of the Catering Service and a separate report to the same meeting on the progress of the project
- Monthly project meetings and three-monthly project updates to Director Children's Services/Cllr Waters
- April 2014 work completed
- April/May 2014 –Report to Cabinet

The Approach

5.13 The appointed Project Manager will design the approach to scoping and testing the market. The potential methodology could be designed to analyse each service objectively against criteria that reflect the Council's strategic priorities. The process and approach could potentially be aligned with the previously completed Public Realm Commissioning Strategy (July 2008) The process was developed in consultation with an extended project team consisting of representatives from CYPS, the Catering Service, Finance, Legal, Procurement and Human Resources, as well being subject to critical challenge by the Project Board (the Single Frontline Contract & Commissioning Board, chaired by the Assistant Director Single Frontline).

6 Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

- 6.1 This report reflects the changing landscape within state education, including changing statutory responsibilities and school funding reform which impact on services for schools.
- 6.2 The financial framework for services to schools has been evolving as increasing numbers of schools have converted to Academy status. All schools, whether maintained or Academies, receive a delegated budget funded from the ring-fenced dedicated schools grant. Delegated school funding of c£200m means that schools are now significant commissioners of services.
- 6.3 There are risks involved with the time-scale of the proposed review as there will be unnecessary costs to the Council if an unviable service continues pending its outcome. Officers will need to be mindful of the needs to control costs and may need to take action ahead of the project's conclusion. All reviews of services will



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need to take account of the timing and costs associated with the options identified and the need to progress action swiftly. In particular, decisions on the Catering Service will be required in September if changes to the service offer are to be implemented by September 2014.

- 6.4 Where a school converts to Academy status, a number of responsibilities and services previously provided by the local authority are taken on by the Academy. Clearly, the local authority must manage services in such a way that they are no longer provided, or provided at a charge.
- 6.5 From 1 April 2013, a new Education Services Grant has been implemented. The grant recognises that a limited number of statutory services must be delivered for all schools, whether maintained or Academies. The bulk of this grant, however, is distributed based on responsibility, either directly to Academies or to the local authority for maintained schools. As schools convert to Academy status, the grant available to the local authority reduces.
- 6.6 Funding for a project officer to undertake this work has been identified if Cabinet agree to the proposed programme.

7 Head of Legal Services and legal implications

The Head of Legal Services notes the contents of this report and advises that there are no specific legal comments at this stage. If recommendations flowed then we would need to consider specific issues arising, for example procurement of project manager in compliance with EU Competition requirements on procurement, etc.

8 Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

- 8.1 In its Equality Opportunities Policy, the Council is committed to using, whenever possible, its procurement and commissioning functions as strategic tools to further the aims of its public sector equality duty and ensure that it extends opportunity and access to Council contract and that those who win contracts provide services in a way that responds to the needs of all those the contracts are intended to serve.
- 8.2 Where any gaps are identified, officers may need to review the service specification with the provider to ensure an action plan is developed that may include targeting specific groups.

9 Head of Procurement Comments

- 9.1 The Head of Procurement is supportive of the recommendations.
- 9.2 Central Procurement and will be represented on the Project team in line with the proposed approach.

10 Policy Implication

- 10.1 It should also be read in conjunction with the Children and Young People's Service Plan.
- 10.2 In addition this report should be cross referenced with the Haringey Commission Report: Outstanding for All.



11 Reasons for Decision

11.1 To enable a robust piece of work to be undertaken over the next 12 months so that future commissioning of services can be informed by:

- high quality and Value for Money outcomes;
- knowledge of the local/pan-London/national market to provide alternative options;
- models of good commissioning practice elsewhere; and
- rationale for externally providing a service or function.

12 Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 –Services to Schools Questionnaire

Appendix 2 - Initial Feedback from June Consultation on Services for Schools

13 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985



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Services to Schools-Questionnaire

As part of **Outstanding for All**, (OfA), one recommendation from the commissioners was that the Council's education role must be re-defined to focus its resources on giving a strategic lead, providing core statutory services effectively and supporting schools in procuring high quality, value for money services from external sources.

In order for the council to make informed decisions about the future delivery model for education services, there is a need to undertake consultation with key stakeholders as well as detailed market scoping and testing exercise in order to implement the recommendations of the OfA report. So, we would very much like to hear your views.

1. How would you rate the following services based on customer service standards and service impact measures? 1= Good / 2= Adequate / 3= Poor

Service Area	Timeliness	Professionalism	Quality	Resolving problems	Overall level of satisfaction
Admissions					
School Attendance and welfare					
School Improvement					
Governor Services					
SEN					
Health and Safety					
CPD					
Speech and Language					
Human Resources					
Finance					
Property Services					
Music					
Communications					
Pendarren					
Legal					
School Library Service					

Timeliness: How quickly do we respond to emails and letters or respond to telephone messages and deal with your enquiry accurately and to your satisfaction?

Professionalism: How effective are we at carry out our work with integrity, courtesy and respect?

Quality: Do Local Authority services provide value for money, the quality of service your expect and a good/ outstanding level of service performance?

Resolving problems: Acknowledge complaints or problems and respond fully to them, taking appropriate action?



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2. From a quality and cost perspective, which service(s) are most effective and why?

3. Where could we improve or develop new services? For example, do you think some of these services would offer greater value for money (quality and cost) elsewhere in the independent sector?

4. Which alternative service providers do you use (other than the LA) and why?

5. Any further comments

Please Tick:

Head teacher ☐

Governor ☐

Thank you for completing the questionnaire-it is much appreciated.



Appendix 2: Initial Feedback from June Consultation on Services for Schools

Initial impressions from the questionnaire and meetings with Head teachers, (See appendix 1) indicate that there is service variation in terms of overall levels of satisfaction and a number of comments suggest that it is the quality of certain individuals, rather than overall quality of the service itself which performs.

When averaging out the initial returns in terms of ratings based on timeliness, professionalism, quality and resolving issues the summative judgements indicate that there is predominantly too much adequacy (a mean score of 2) amongst the services rather than good ratings.

Heads were asked to give a flavour of the current services:

- Admissions – has lacked clarity for some time poor or nonexistent communication. Issues are created by lack of clarity of inconsistency. Some things have improved this year. Not sure if they have the capacity.
- HR – a number of schools have left the service. People on the ground are good. Service does not meet the needs of the school – no client focus.
- Governor Services – waste of time, no guaranteed consistency of clerking, turnaround of minutes slow. Governor Handbook out of date. Current proposals look better.
- Finance – good.
- Health and safety – used to be good – now fallen apart.
- SEN – frustration – opaque service – not clear how it works. Need for a strategy and provision map. Is it adequately resourced? Different experience for Special Schools and post 16.
- Need to be clear about what is and isn't a traded service. Would also be helpful to be clear about what is the statutory provision.
- Heads would like a list of those external services being used.

Governors were asked to give a flavour of the current services:

- Governors reported that a number of services were already outsourced including the use of Strictly Education for HR and a range of providers for school meals
- The Local Authority are competing in the business world that have a commercial focus, unfortunately too many services do not understand the relationship between the provider and the client. LA services need to have a better attitude towards the client
- Market services with the commercial focus do not appear to have the same red tape that council services have.
- Admissions take too long to respond
- Governor services –content with the training quality but the clerking service is poor.
- SEN high handed and 'we know best attitude'.

Sample of comments from Questionnaires:

- Certain HR staff provide an excellent service
- Many (services) are dependent on the individual allocated to the school or delivering the service



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- As a Head I am held responsible for the quality of my staff. Haringey need to apply the same expectations to their services-please do not shift poor personnel around, lose them and employ the best.
- I think HR could be better-more consistency required; however the service should stay in-house.
- Property services and Health and safety need to be restructured and employ better staff
- HR and music services are efficient and I feel confident in their services, however with HR it is personnel dependent.
- I feel that there are some improvements in the services now on offer, which is good.
- I think an understanding , focusing on Heads as clients would help us in regards to Property and Admissions
- School Improvement has developed a great deal but still has a long way to go
- CPD is good but should reflect the broad enriching curriculum. I send my subject leaders to the Institute of Education
- Early days, but school improvement is looking more strategic and cohesive.
- When buying an SLA there is an expectation of both parties working within the agreement. This does not happen-it is very school led-Pay up andChase up!

Upon analysis and discussions with Head teachers they report that they already use a range of alternative providers in a mixed market place (other than the LA) including private HR consultants, Strictly Education (HR) and Cambridge Islington HR; Challenge partners and several different consultants for school improvement and CPD providers. From the quality and cost perspective, Head teachers do also state finance, welfare and attendance, music and Pendarren are effective; however on a number of returns the caveat was that too many services are dependent on the quality of an allocated person. SEN was reported as good in terms of the service to special schools, but not as consistent in their delivery of support to mainstream SEN needs.