



Haringey Council

Report for:	Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel 26 September 2013	Item Number:	
Title:	Commissioning of High Quality Services to Education		
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Lead Officer:	Jon Abbey – Assistant Director School Standards		
Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Key Decision		

1. Describe the issue under consideration

This paper sets out the purpose and suggested approach reported to Cabinet in July 2013 on the commissioning of high quality education services to schools. The report to Cabinet set out the proposed programme of work for the next 12 months that will enable the Council to implement Recommendation 4 - in the Independent Education Commission report, 'Outstanding for All' (OfA). <http://www.outstandingforall.org.uk/>

2. Cabinet Member introduction

I am very pleased to report that this work is now well underway. Initial consultation with Headteachers and School Governors took place in May and June 2013. A monthly Project Board, chaired by the Deputy Director of Children's Commissioning, a dedicated project manager and all associated project documentation have been *completed to ensure* progress is made on the market scoping and market testing work. This work will be completed by March/April 2014 as it usually takes a minimum of nine months to complete this process.



3. Alternative options considered

3.1 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 Haringey’s internal services;
- withdrawing underperforming In-house services and replace them with suitable alternative arrangements; and
- considering entering a potential joint venture with external providers to provide and procure services to schools, where quality is not judged as effective.

4. Background information

4.1 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. This recommendation focuses on the need to provide high quality services to schools which demonstrate good value for money. The work on school meals has been completed and an options paper will be presented to Cabinet in October 2013.

The Proposed Approach

4.2 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 Headteachers 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.

4.3 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 • School attendance, welfare and cleanliness • Statutory assessment of SEN • Challenge underperforming schools / Using intervention powers • Early Years attainment and provision • 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"> • School Meals Service • Health and safety • CPD • Governor services • Speech and language • School Improvement • Human Resources (HR) • Property services • Music • Communications • Pendarren • Legal • NQT/Appropriate body • School Library Service • Finance

4.4 In terms of alternatively delivering these services and functions, or aspects of them, we need to consider:



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- 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;
- the development of a quality framework.

Initial Consultation June 2013

- 4.5 Initial consultation in June 2013 was undertaken with Headteachers, Governors and Service Leads about which services they felt should be delivered by the Local Authority, and which services could be traded or externally sourced. The consultation also sought feedback regarding quality and value for money. This initial consultation is informing and assisting 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 that a quality framework informs decision making and the final recommendations to Cabinet.
- 4.6 The initial analysis from the questionnaire and meetings in June 2013 with Headteachers (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.
- 4.7 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 mediocrity amongst the services rather than good ratings.
- 4.8 **Timeline**
- June 2013 – Initial consultation with schools;
 - 09.07.2013 – Cabinet for agreement to direction of travel;
 - Report to Cabinet in October 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 / Lead Member: Cllr Waters;
 - April 2014 work completed; and
 - April/May 2014 –report to Cabinet.



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The Approach and progress to date

4.9 The appointed Project Manager is designing the approach to scoping and testing the market. The methodology includes an analysis of each service which is captured on a service profile which will then be measured against a quality framework. This quality framework needs to be constructed and developed with schools which will then inform a scorecard for each service area.

4.10A Project Board has been set up, and meets monthly. There will be Headteacher representation on the Board and nominations will be sought as soon as schools return from the summer break.

4.11 Initial interviews with Service Managers are almost complete and are forming the basis of the development of draft Service Profiles evaluation that will include the use of a quality framework, with an evaluation of their performance, self-evaluation and capacity to trade. The terms of reference are implemented, and the draft and project plan will be subject to consultation with schools and key stakeholders.

4.12 The Project Board provides challenge and support and has clarified the project brief to ultimately inform Cabinet with recommendations in Spring 2014.

5. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

There are risks involved with the timescale 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 need to take account of the timing and costs associated with the options identified and the need to progress action swiftly.

6. 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.

7. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

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.



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8. Head of Procurement Comments

The Head of Procurement is supportive of the recommendations.

9. Policy Implication

It should also be read in conjunction with the Children and Young People's Service Plan.

10. Reasons for Decision

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.

11. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 –Services to Schools Questionnaire

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

12. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- *Outstanding for All*: report of independent Education Commission
- *Report to Cabinet, June 2013*: Commissioning of High Quality Services to Education



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.