
Report To:	Education and Lifelong Learning Committee	Date:	19 January 2010
Report By:	Corporate Director Regeneration and Resources	Report No:	R136/09/JL/JL
Contact Officer:	Joe Lynch	Tel No:	01475 712456
Subject:	Property Resources & Facilities Management Education Catering		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the demand for Education Catering, identify issues pursuant to the demand and approve establishment of a Short Life Working Group (SLWG) to consider the issues and promotion of Education Catering to increase meal uptake and that the SLWG Reports back to the Regeneration Committee (6 May 2010) with appropriate recommendations.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1** This report advises Committee regarding the 'uptake' of free and paid school meals.
- 2.2** It is apparent that despite initiatives and progress to date, there is scope to improve the uptake of school meals but there are also factors mitigating such improvement.
- 2.3** This report makes recommendations pursuant to improving the promotion of Education Catering and increasing the uptake of school meals.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:-

- 3.1** Committee consider the information contained in this report.
- 3.2** Committee approves the establishment of a Short Life Working Group to consider the promotion of school meals as detailed in Section 5.
- 3.3** Committee nominates up to 2 Members to serve on the Short Life Working Group as detailed in Section 5.

Joe Lynch
Head of Property Resources and Facilities Management

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Association for Public Sector Excellence (APSE) publishes Education Catering data which is used to benchmark our performance nationally and against a 'family group' of similar Councils.

The data for 2008/09 identifies:-

2008/09 Full Year data	Service	Service APSE Actual	Service APSE Average %
	Target	%	
Free Meal Uptake - Primary	78.00	79.90	81.05
Free Meal Uptake - Secondary	50.00	51.75	58.56
Free Meal Uptake - Special	70.00	100.00	77.64
Paid Meal Uptake - Primary	47.00	40.93	40.03
Paid Meal Uptake - Secondary	40.00	33.32	36.12
Paid Meal Uptake - Special	75.00	46.73	54.68

4.2 In partnership with Education & Social Care, Property Resources and Facilities Management (PRFM) have undertaken a number of initiatives in recent years to promote school meals and maximise uptake. The APSE performance data illustrates that, in common with other providers, there remains scope to improve the service and the level of free and paid meal uptake.

4.3 In terms of government 'Nutritional Standards', PRFM achieved the nutritional standards in all Primary Schools ahead of the national deadline of December 2004. The secondary sector has proved more difficult as the customers in this sector have the choice of using PRFM catering or using nearby private sector outlets. Such outlets do not have to adhere to the strict standards which determine Energy, Protein, Fat, Carbohydrates, Sugar, Fibre and other content within meals and are therefore able to provide a wide range of items that PRFM catering are prohibited in providing. Nonetheless, PRFM have achieved partial and full implementation of the Standards in accordance with the national deadlines of 2007 and 2009 respectively.

4.4 PRFM continues to offer a cash cafeteria service including deli bars. The removal of chips from the menu every day and snack items such as sausage rolls etc. has had a negative impact on the meal uptake.

4.5 Consultation with Users has led to improvements including the 'Funky 5' menu which is a cartoon character based menu designed to appeal to Primary school children and to get across the message of eating a balanced and healthy diet. This success requires to be developed further to increase meal uptake.

4.6 PRFM are currently nominated, with 5 other Authorities, for the National award of Most Improved Performer in the Education Catering Sector.

4.7 PRFM are now meeting with other local authorities, on a quarterly basis, to consider current issues and share best practice ideas.

5.0 PROPOSALS

5.1 It is proposed to establish a Short Life Working Group to consider the promotion and uptake of school meals and that the SLWG will report back to Regeneration Committee (6 May 2010) with appropriate recommendations.

5.2 It is proposed the membership of the SLWG includes:-

- PRFM - Facilities Management Service Manager (Chair)
- PRFM - Facilities Cluster Officer.
- Education Development Officer; Sport /Health/Outdoor Learning.
- 1 Head Teacher/Senior Teacher representative from a High School
- 1 Pupil representative from a High School Pupil Council
- Up to 2 Members nominated by Regeneration Committee

5.3 It is proposed the remit of the group is to consider and make recommendation with regard to the following:-

- Promote Education Catering and increase meal uptake -
 - What has been done to date to promote school meal uptake
 - What has worked to date and build on success
 - Consultation with users
 - Benchmarking, consider good practice elsewhere.
 - Nutritional restrictions
 - Licensing restrictions
 - Reward Systems
 - Free School Meals (extension of provision)
 - Relevant issues identified by the SLWG

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial Implications – One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

6.2 Financial Implications – Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Head of Schools is in agreement with the proposals.