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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education and Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>07 March 2017</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EDUCOM/33/17/RB</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Ruth Binks</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712824</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Online School Payments Update</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Committee with an update on the progress of the pilot for Online School Payments as requested at the last meeting of the Committee.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 A Business Case for Online School Payments was written in response to the Modernisation Corporate Improvement Groups request to explore an alternative option to the continued roll out of the current cashless catering system. The 4 options outlined within the Business Case were presented to the Corporate Management Team on 24/03/16.
- 2.2 The Corporate Management Team approved option 2 of the Business Case, a pilot of Online School Payments in 2 Primary Schools and 2 Secondary Schools during the 2016/17 academic session. The Council currently has a cashless catering system implemented in all 6 secondary schools and in 3 primary schools. Plans to roll out the current cashless catering system to the remaining 17 primary schools are on hold pending the outcome of the pilot.
- 2.3 Findings and recommendations are planned to be presented to the Digital Access Group and thereafter the Corporate Management Team in June 2017.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of the report.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 At the request of the Modernisation CIG, a project team was formed with the remit to produce a Business Case recommending an approach regarding the implementation of an Online School Payments System and to consider any impact this may have on the potential future roll out of a cashless catering system.
- 4.2 The cashless catering system is limited to collecting school meal income. The introduction of an Online School Payments solution widens the scope of income collected from school meals to include school activities (e.g. educational trips).
- 4.3 The processes in place for managing school related payments, for school meals and school activities, consist of cash being brought into schools by pupils and handled by a combination of catering, admin, teaching and janitorial staff.
- 4.4 In the 6 Secondary Schools and 3 Primary Schools where there is a Cashless Catering solution, pupils can choose to pre-load their catering accounts with cash via revaluation (reval) machines located within the schools. Additionally this allows Primary School pupils to pre-order meals during morning registration using the interactive whiteboard. This process means that cash is still brought in to schools by pupils and then handled and banked by various combinations of, admin, catering and janitorial staff.
- 4.5 For Primary Schools without cashless catering, dinner tickets are manually distributed and managed by admin and catering staff. This process is resource intensive for both admin and catering staff. Using a dinner ticket process creates a challenge in maintaining the anonymity of pupils entitled to a free school meal.
- 4.6 A Business Case for Online School Payments was presented to the Corporate Management Team in March 2016. The CMT approved option 2 of the Business Case, a pilot of Online School Payments during the 2016/17 academic session. The pilot is currently being undertaken in 2 primary schools and 2 secondary schools (St Mary's Primary School, St Ninian's Primary School, Inverclyde Academy and Clydeview Academy).

## **5.0 CURRENT POSITION**

- 5.1 A Capability and Capacity Assessment was conducted in May 2016 to appoint a supplier from the Scotland Excel framework for Online School Payments. Following supplier demonstrations, ParentPay were awarded the contract.

As outlined in the Capability and Capacity Assessment, acceptance testing will be carried out in April 2017. The critical success factors for this project are as follows:

- Reduction in cash being handled by all parties
- Improve service to parents, guardians, carers
- Meal pre-ordering
- Reduction in food wastage
- Reduction in banking and travel budget
- Reduction in time spent going to the bank
- Improve management information
- Overall solution resulting in a saving or cost neutral to the Council

- 5.2 The population of pilot school sites was carried out during June - September 2016. Training was delivered towards the end of August 2016 to education admin, finance, catering and teaching staff. Following completion of training, initial payment items were added to school sites.

ParentPay was launched on the following dates:

St Mary's Primary School	31/10/2016
St Ninian's Primary School	14/11/2016

Inverclyde Academy 25/10/2016  
 Clydeview Academy 25/10/2016

5.3 School meal income from 31/10/2016 – 27/01/2017 has been collated to establish the percentage of payments that were made online:

St Mary's Primary School 81%  
 St Ninian's Primary School 94%  
 Inverclyde Academy 24%  
 Clydeview Academy 38%

Prior to the launch of ParentPay, communication plans were distributed to Head Teachers outlining the required promotion of the system with parents/carers. As of 27/01/2017, the following percentage of parents/carers activated a ParentPay account:

St Mary's Primary School 61%  
 St Ninian's Primary School 78%  
 Inverclyde Academy 12%  
 Clydeview Academy 40%

5.4 Anecdotal feedback suggests that ParentPay has been well received. To gather quantitative evidence of this, it is proposed to issue a survey in February 2017 to admin, catering, finance and teaching staff, as well as parents/carers. Thereafter findings will be formally collated for use during acceptance testing.

**EMERGING ISSUES**

5.5 There are 24 revaluation machines within the authority. Upgrades to all machines are planned for early 2017 to accept new £5 polymer notes and £1 coins. There is a £10,000 cost attached to this upgrade. Existing £1 coins and £5 notes will no longer be legal tender by Autumn 2017.

A further upgrade will be required later in 2017 to manage the introduction of the new polymer £10 note. Costing's for this upgrade have yet to be established.

The number of revaluation machines in the estate can be reduced by rolling out the online system and would reduce the associated maintenance and upgrade costs.

**6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

**Finance**

6.1 Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments

## **Legal**

6.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **Human Resources**

6.3 There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report.

## **Equalities**

6.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes See attached appendix

No

This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

## **Repopulation**

6.5 There are no direct repopulation implications arising from this report.

## **7.0 CONSULTATIONS**

### **7.1 Corporate Communications**

Internal Project Team – Education, Facilities, Finance, ICT, Procurement

Primary school and secondary school catering and admin staff

ParentPay

Other local authorities

Scotland Excel

Head Teachers

Education business support staff

Trade Union

Internal Audit

## **8.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 An update on the first phase of the implementation of the Online School Payments system was presented to the Corporate Management Team on 9 February 2017. It was agreed that a further report will be prepared for the CMT.

## **9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1 There are no background papers relevant to this report.