

Notice of a Meeting

Strategy & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee Tuesday, 8 November 2011 at 10.00 am County Hall

Membership

Chairman - Councillor Nick Carter
Deputy Chairman - Councillor A.M. Lovatt

Councillors:

Jean Fooks	Tim Hallchurch MBE	Dr Peter Skolar
Norman Bolster	Hilary Hibbert-Biles	David Wilmshurst
Liz Brighouse OBE	Chip Sherwood	

Notes:

Date of next meeting: 24 November 2011

What does this Committee review or scrutinise?

- Corporate and community leadership; corporate strategies; regional issues
- Local strategic partnerships and District Council liaison
- Social inclusion & equality; services for members
- Finance; procurement; property
- Culture change and customer focus; human resources; communications strategy; information and communications technology
- The elections and appointments functions of the Democracy & Organisation Committee
- The functions of the Pension Fund Committee

How can I have my say?

We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am on the working day before the date of the meeting.**

For more information about this Committee please contact:

Chairman	- Councillor Nick Carter E.Mail: nick.carter@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Committee Officer	- <i>Claire Phillips</i> , Tel: (01865) 323967 claire.phillips@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Peter G. Clark
County Solicitor

October 2011

About the County Council

The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 74 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 630,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 9 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

About Scrutiny

Scrutiny is about:

- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:

- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

What does this Committee do?

The Committee meets up to 6 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting

A hearing loop is available at County Hall.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**
2. **Declarations of Interest - see guidance note on the back page**
3. **Speaking to or petitioning the Committee**
4. **Call in of Cabinet Decision - Property & Facilities Procurement - Scope of Contract - Food with Thought/Quest Cleaning Service Strategy Paper (Pages 1 - 4)**

A request has been received to call in the Cabinet decision for scrutiny. The following Councillors have requested the decision be called in for scrutiny:

Cllr Zoe Patrick
Cllr Janet Godden
Cllr David Turner
Cllr Jean Fooks
Cllr Larry Sanders
Cllr Alan Armitage
Cllr Roz Smith
Cllr Anne Purse
Cllr Goddard
Cllr Altaf-Khan

The Cabinet decision was:

"RESOLVED: to include the current catering and cleaning services provided by Food with Thought and Quest Cleaning Services within the scope of the Property & Facilities Contract.

The reasons given in the call-in request are:

The Liberal Democrat Group would like to call in the above decision made by Cabinet on 18 October 2011 on the following grounds:

1. Not proved in the report that having a bigger contract will reduce risk to the County Council or save money.
2. It is not demonstrated that including the school meal service will improve meal take-up or even maintain the current high quality service given by FwT.

3. It is not demonstrated that environmental performance will reduce use of chemicals, waste water and achieve recycling targets.

A copy of the report to Cabinet is attached (**CA11**). A copy of the draft minute will be circulated separately.

The Committee is asked to consider and determine the Call-In

Declarations of Interest

This note briefly summarises the position on interests which you must declare at the meeting. Please refer to the Members' Code of Conduct in Part 9.1 of the Constitution for a fuller description.

The duty to declare ...

You must always declare any "personal interest" in a matter under consideration, i.e. where the matter affects (either positively or negatively):

- (i) any of the financial and other interests which you are required to notify for inclusion in the statutory Register of Members' Interests; or
- (ii) your own well-being or financial position or that of any member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association more than it would affect other people in the County.

Whose interests are included ...

"Member of your family" in (ii) above includes spouses and partners and other relatives' spouses and partners, and extends to the employment and investment interests of relatives and friends and their involvement in other bodies of various descriptions. For a full list of what "relative" covers, please see the Code of Conduct.

When and what to declare ...

The best time to make any declaration is under the agenda item "Declarations of Interest". Under the Code you must declare not later than at the start of the item concerned or (if different) as soon as the interest "becomes apparent".

In making a declaration you must state the nature of the interest.

Taking part if you have an interest ...

Having made a declaration you may still take part in the debate and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a "prejudicial" interest.

"Prejudicial" interests ...

A prejudicial interest is one which a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would think so significant as to be likely to affect your judgment of the public interest.

What to do if your interest is prejudicial ...

If you have a prejudicial interest in any matter under consideration, you may remain in the room but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter under consideration, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

Exceptions ...

There are a few circumstances where you may regard yourself as not having a prejudicial interest or may participate even though you may have one. These, together with other rules about participation in the case of a prejudicial interest, are set out in paragraphs 10 – 12 of the Code.

Seeking Advice ...

It is your responsibility to decide whether any of these provisions apply to you in particular circumstances, but you may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.

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Division(s):

CABINET – 18 OCTOBER 2011

FOOD WITH THOUGHT/QUEST CLEANING SERVICES STRATEGY PAPER

Report by Director for Environment and Economy

Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to inform the decision on the inclusion of the cleaning and catering services provided by Quest Cleaning Services (QCS) and Food with Thought (FwT) within the scope of the proposed integrated Property & Facilities external services contract. The contract will provide a Total Facilities Management service including the delivery of all hard and soft FM services, as well as professional and construction services.

Procurement Status

2. To help inform advice to the Cabinet, participants were asked to submit commercially confidential papers demonstrating the benefits of the inclusion of catering and cleaning services within the scope of the Property and Facilities contract. Their collective positions have informed the summary and recommendations contained within this paper to enable a policy decision to be made.

Summary Position

QCS

3. Cleaning is a fundamental component of an integrated Facilities Management (FM) contract, the inclusion of the services provided by QCS within the contract would bring the following benefits:
 - The ability to deliver the Property & Facilities service within the financial constraints of the Medium Term Financial Plan.
 - Risk transfer – providing a fixed price with cost certainty for the council
 - An improved performance management culture and reporting and contract management regime
 - Increased measurement of customer satisfaction and level of stakeholder engagement through a dedicated client contract management team.
 - Increased training, improved supervision, and more automation and standardisation of processes
 - A marketing strategy to grow the service within the Council and in the open market with a profit share with the Council.

- Provision of new equipment, replaced every two years, to minimise health and safety risk and raise consistency of the service.
 - A focus on environmental performance by reducing the use of chemicals, waste water and minimisation of waste to landfill with recycling targets
4. The exclusion of services provided by QCS from the Contract would fundamentally jeopardise the Council's ability to provide a truly integrated and cost effective Total Facilities Management service.

FwT

5. Inclusion of the service provided by FwT in the scope of contract is less critical for an integrated FM contract, although it complements the service through the potential for increased capacity by multi-skilling and combined management. The current operating model has delivered success for the council over the recent years, summarised as follows:
- Achieved its Council set business plan.
 - A significant market share in the provision of primary school meals in Oxfordshire
 - A strong brand and reputation within the schools
 - Achieved nutritional standards above minimum guidelines
 - A dedicated training facility that has trained 50% of supervisors
 - Investment in school kitchens to ensure they meet current health and safety standards
 - Improved meal take up
 - Meal price is currently £2.10, adjusted annually.

School Meals Feedback

6. In the preparation of this report a questionnaire was issued to schools. The response rate from the survey was low but consistent with other surveys taken. The findings of the survey show support for the current service and the food quality with positive comment on the potential length of the contract between FwT and schools should the service remain with FwT.
7. The inclusion of Food with Thought in the contract would bring the following benefits to the Council:-
- Future investment – A clear Council approved investment plan to enable improvement in the service.
 - Risk transfer – Participants would accept the risk for operating costs, kitchen maintenance, health and safety and a fixed price for free school meals, ensuring a more resilient service in the future.
 - Maintaining and Improving Service and Quality – Individual menus for each school. Skills training for front line staff. Healthy options. Engagement with head teachers, parents and pupils. A greater proportion of fresh ingredients. Improved point of sale marketing.

- Contract Growth – Target increased meal uptake from the current 33%.
- The Contract would include: -
 - Council approval of school meal price
 - Potential for meal price to be determined via benchmarking, fixed for 2 to 3 years.
 - Rigorous contract management including the application of operational performance indicators.
 - Guaranteed nutritional levels which at least meet the existing standards.

Links with Corporate Priorities

8. The Proposals in the report support the following corporate policies and priorities:

Value for money. The proposals will ensure that the service help to achieve the Councils value for money objectives.

Customer Focus. The proposals will ensure that customers are central to the way the service will be delivered and measured to ensure continuous improvement.

Efficient and effective. The proposal will ensure the service is delivered in the most efficient and effective manner, removing duplication and by ensuring smart systems and new technology are adopted.

Financial and Staff Implications

9. The financial and staff implications are being considered by the Project Team including Michael Salter, Property and Facilities Service Manager, Nina Warren HR and Rob Finlayson Finance, all reporting to a project board chaired by the Director of Environment and Economy.
10. If FwT/QCS were excluded from the contract it would impact on the financial structure of the offer and might adversely impact on the commercial appeal of the contract for the participants’.

Conclusion

11. Inclusion of FwT within the contract scope provides a sustainable solution for retaining quality school meal service at an affordable price, whilst reducing the financial risks that currently sit with the Council.
12. The exclusion of the services will restrict the ability to realise a truly integrated Total Facilities Management Service across the Property and Facilities Contract.

RECOMMENDATION

- 13. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to include the current catering and cleaning services provided by Food with Thought and QCS within the scope of the Property and Facilities Contract.**

HUW JONES

Director for Environment and Economy

Background papers:

Contact Officer: Michael Salter, Assistant Head of Property – Delivery; Tel: (01865) 815703

October 2011