

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services

Educational Services Committee: 5 March 2014

Subject: Tender and award for the provision of catering service at Loch Lomond Outdoor Centre

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report seeks Committee authority to tender and award for the provision of a catering service for pupils attending courses at the Council's Loch Lomond Outdoor Centre based at Ardlui.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Committee is asked to approve the tendering exercise and delegate the approval of the contract to the Executive Director of Educational Services for the provision of a catering service in line with the requirements of best value and efficient governance and to award the contract on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender.

3. Background

- 3.1** The Council provides outdoor education facilities at the Loch Lomond Outdoor Centre (LLOC) for the use of school children from West Dunbartonshire. This centre is also used by pupils from a number of other local authorities. In providing this service the Council currently engages with a third party provider for the provision of 'catering' services.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** The end of year cost for catering for the centre in the financial year 2012/13 was £82,546. The expenditure for 2013/14 is projected to be approx £80,000. The approximate budget figure for 2014/15 is £85,000. The current provider's rates have remained static for the past 3 years. However, the absence of any formal agreement to regulate the provision of the catering exposes the Council to unexpected price increases and provides no formally agreed basis for reviewing the standard of catering against The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007.
- 4.2** The establishment of a contract, following the tendering process, would also address continuity of supply issues and would mitigate any risks associated with this. The current provider has informed the Council that increased catering charges, per capita, will be implemented in June 2014 although the company have yet to provide more detail on the level of increase.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** There are no people implications as the current service is bought-in from an external supplier.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1** A tender for this catering service would allow the Council to explore all cost-competitive options and allow best value to be achieved. The contract period should be for 1 year with an option of two 12 month periods to a maximum of 3 years for single supplier contract. This will allow the contractor to establish capacity to set up for a contract and develop service improvements through the life of the contract and be extended if service is to the satisfaction of the council.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** The following risks would be mitigated through the award of a contract following the tendering process –
- The provision of catering at the centre would comply with Council protocols for bought-in services
 - Compliance with the Council's healthy living policy would be closely monitored for the benefit of all groups
 - The prospective supplier's quality of food would be monitored to ensure a consistently high quality was provided throughout the period of the contract
 - Continuity of supply issues would be reduced with clear responsibilities on the role of the supplier

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out for this change and has found that the use of a legal contract to manage catering arrangements will ensure that the future delivery of this service will better meet the wellbeing requirements of pupils who have special dietary requirements.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** It is recognised that the proposal is in line with the council's strategic priority to improve life chances for children and young people. It is widely acknowledged and supported by Scottish Government that outdoor education and in particular residential opportunities facilitate the objectives for outdoor learning within a curriculum for excellence.

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Equalities Impact Assessment

Background Papers:

Wards Affected: All