

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

OFFICER EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD (Non Key)

The following decision was taken on 18 June 2021 by the Executive Director, People Services.

Date notified to all members:

Officer Non-Key decisions are not subject to call-in.

1. **TITLE**

Award of the School Catering Contract - 1st August 2021 to 31st July 2025

2. **DECISION TAKEN**

That the Executive Director in the exercise of his delegated authority given in the Cabinet decision taken on 9 October 2019:

1. Acknowledges that the Existing School Catering Contract and it's extension will come to an end on 31 July 2021;
2. Authorise the Council to enter the New School Catering Contract with the successful bidder, Taylor Shaw Ltd, from 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2025 and do so in line with terms and conditions that include an option to extend for a period of 24 months, if agreed between the Council and Taylor Shaw Ltd.

3. **Reasons For Decision**

The majority of schools wanted the Council to procure a catering contract on their behalf. Schools pay for the services of a contractor, a client team and all procurement costs from their individual budgets. There is no specific council funding in the delivery of the contract.

The Council benefits by having public health initiatives built into the specification.

All risks associated with this large scale catering contract both in relation to the aspects of food and finance, are contained and managed by the contractor and the client team, using expertise from within the Council's Resources teams i.e., legal, commercial and financial.

Following the procurement process Taylor Shaw submitted the most economically advantageous tender which is why it is recommended that they should be awarded the contract.

4. **Alternatives Considered And Rejected**

An option would be to abandon the procurement and then consider the two following alternative options, however, neither is advantageous to the council nor to the schools and both carry significant risks:

Insource the service – for the Council to be able to manage the service directly there would need to be changes to the structure within the portfolio. This change will need to be agreed with the schools. Statutory responsibility for delivering school meals rests with the governing bodies and they may choose to put alternative arrangements in place. The service has been delivered via private sector education catering specialists for 20 years and the level of training and expertise to manage a city wide service would need to be acquired. As this is a school's contract and not all schools join it, it would be hard to see what benefits there would be to the Council for funding such a change. All the costs of the service are funded by the schools that elect to join it – the Council does not fund any aspect of the service to schools. This option is therefore not recommended.

Not offer a service to schools – this would effectively mean that schools would have to manage the provision of a catering service directly or procure their own contracts. Both options may detract from their core purpose of teaching and learning. There may be increased costs for schools with this option due to them having to buy in expertise on due diligence checks for food safety, food labelling (e.g., 14 statutory allergens), traceability as well as managing catering teams, and procurement activities. Smaller primary and special schools would be disproportionately disadvantaged as they do not have the capacity in their administrative teams. This option is therefore not recommended.

5. **Documents used in making decision:**

Form 2a – Report

6.1 **Any conflict of interest declared by any Executive Member who is consulted by the Officer when making the decision**

None

6.2 **Any dispensation granted by the Head of Paid Service**

None

7. **Respective Director Responsible for Implementation**

Executive Director, People Services