

Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee

Monday 15 September 2014.

Dear Councillors

Thank you for allowing me to address this committee on behalf of the joint trade unions.

You will have seen the UNISON report on the proposals before you tonight.

We have tried to keep it brief and succinct in order to allow the reader to understand the critical issues and concerns we have with this report.

We have reason to be concerned when we read a business case which recommends outsourcing based on growth.

I refer of course to Your Choice Barnet, which is an example of what happens when the financial experts advising the council get it wrong.

Before I start I would like to add a caveat.

The Trade Unions have not been provided with the detailed financial evidence behind many of the assumptions made in this report.

I am assuming all members of this committee have seen this evidence.

In the interests of transparency please can this information be shared in order we are able to understand the rationale behind the recommendations of the report.

Without this information the report reads as biased & ideologically driven.

It fails to acknowledge or recognise the hard work of loyal council workers.

In house services have consistently had to deal with year on year cuts and increased demand & yet still provide first class service to residents.

This resilience in the face of diminishing resources is simply not recognised in the flawed Scoring Matrix in Appendix B.

The issues facing members of the committee are:

- Dwindling financial support as a result of the cuts to local government.
- The need to develop a service delivery model which can sustain & grow in order to maintain excellent services for our community.

Councillors you have a live example of a **thriving innovative in house service** which has won business from both public and private sector in and out of this borough and is even providing services in the House Of Commons.

I am referring to the Catering Service.

In the report at paragraph 1.35 it states the
'in-house model would have less capacity for growing traded services'

This is simply not true the service has been doing just that for many years.

The Catering service is already operating within a competitive business environment.

Yet has managed to **increase** the number of schools wanting to **purchase** the in house service.

The Catering service is a **genuine traded service** which has operated as a true business for many years **returning significant profits** to the Council every year.

Why would the Council want to share any of the profits this service generates with another partner?

Councillors, I am speaking to you as you are the Employer.

How can you ignore a success story just because it is an in house service?

If an in-house service can achieve the success Catering has delivered why can't Education & Skills services?

336 council staff are watching and waiting to see what you do next

Another 1600 staff are also watching.

There is a view within the workforce that the Council just doesn't really value the staff

This is reinforced every time a service delivery model proposal disregards the in house and recommends outsourcing,

Staff working in Libraries, Street Scene Services and Early Years Children's Centres are all watching and waiting to hear how you deal with this latest outsourcing proposal.

Senior officers advise but you Councillors decide.