

REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

(Meeting held 11 September 2009)

1. ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COUNCIL'S CATERING AT APPLETREE COURT (REPORT C) (MINUTE NO. 9)

Because the Committee's terms of reference include making recommendations on employees' terms and conditions of employment, the Committee has considered proposals to change the catering arrangements at Appletree Court. The matter has also been considered at the Industrial Relations Committee and the Cabinet.

The issue was raised because over the last few years the usage of the staff restaurant (Café Revitalise) has steadily decreased, despite efforts to encourage greater patronage. On average, only 15 hot meals per day are purchased. The daily income is now in the region of £80. Café Revitalise currently employs one full time and two part-time employees. The shortage of income and the cost of overheads have called into question the economic viability of the Café operating in its current format.

The Committee acknowledges the need to provide catering arrangements at Appletree Court. A visiting van to provide sandwiches and other food items on a daily basis, use of an external provider for food when is required for member meetings, and the option of using the kitchen next to the Members' Lounge for the preparation of hot drinks for meetings are currently proposed. Members consider that these proposals would provide acceptable levels of service while saving an estimated £36,000 per annum.

The Committee is mindful of the representations made by the employee side for the retention of the Café; but also of the fact that very few employees use the facility. The Café is clearly uneconomic and, in the light of the very low usage and the need for the Council to make savings wherever possible, the Committee is of the view that the Café should be closed and that catering be provided as summarised above.

RECOMMENDED:

That with effect from January 2010, employee catering at Appletree Court be provided in the manner set out in paragraph 3 of Report C to the Committee.

**Cllr A W Rice
Vice-Chairman**