

TRUST BOARD
29th September 2011

TITLE	Our Vision for Catering Services
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Trust is currently retendering its catering contract which has fallen due for renewal, giving an opportunity to make some bigger changes to modernise and improve services for patients, visitors and staff.
BOARD ASSURANCE (RISK)/ IMPLICATIONS	<p>Good quality nutritious meals with menus that provide good food choices are essential to high quality patient care.</p> <p>Our café and restaurant facilities for staff, patients and visitors should be accessibly located, open at appropriate times of the day/evening and provide choice for all.</p>
STAKEHOLDER/ PATIENT IMPACT AND VIEWS	Input has been obtained from key users and stakeholders to inform the future contract requirements. Further involvement will also be sought from staff and patients during the evaluation and final selection process.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES	Food availability will take account of patient's religious preference. This will also include menus in different languages appropriate to our local population, and menus for people with visual impairment.
LEGAL ISSUES	The Trust needs to comply with OJEU procurement rules.
The Trust Board is asked to:	Note the report
Submitted by:	Chris Bell, Associate Director, Estates and Facilities on behalf of Valerie Bartlett, Deputy Chief Executive
Date:	21 st September 2011
Decision:	For Noting

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29th September 2011

Our Vision for Catering Services

1 Introduction

The Trust's catering contract has fallen due for renewal and we are currently tendering for a new contract to cover the next five years. This presents an opportunity to make some bigger changes to modernise and improve services for patients, visitors and staff.

As part of our vision to be one of the best hospitals in the country we want to be able to offer the best possible food and nutrition to our patients, and the results from patient surveys show this is not always as good as it could be. The advice received by the Board suggests that in order to significantly improve the quality of patient food, the Trust needs to have one contract to cover all its catering requirements including all public catering and retail outlets. The market has changed significantly during the last five years since the Trust last tendered the patient food service. Due to the recession, the key commercial providers are looking for contracts that can also offer them the best development and business opportunities. If the Trust was to tender solely on the basis of our patient food contract we would be unlikely to attract suppliers at the top end of the market, which would not bring us the best solution for our patients.

We also want to provide an improved restaurant service for our patients, visitors and staff. For example at St Peter's there is no hot food available within the main hospital at weekends, and the public and staff restaurant is quite some way from the main hospital building. In the future, we would like to bring this into the main building, whilst at Ashford we would like to provide a smaller, better located food and drink outlet in the main entrance, with a new tea and snack bar in the outpatient department which is being refurbished next year. We would also like to see an extended trolley service on the wards for patients, particularly at St Peter's where this could be expanded to include weekends as well.

Regrettably this does mean the Trust would lose the catering and retail services currently provided by both hospital Leagues of Friends and the WRVS, although any paid members of staff would transfer over to the new supplier. This has been a difficult decision for the Board to make but, in order to meet the changing needs of patients, visitors and staff, and to make the significant improvements described, only a larger commercial supplier is able to offer the necessary investment and development opportunities required.

It is the Trust's firm wish and intention to continue to work closely with both Leagues of Friends to find a beneficial way forward. The contributions the Friends and all our volunteers make to the Trust – to both patients and staff - is enormous and very much recognised by the Board.

2 Benefits to patients and staff

The new contract is expected to bring a number of significant benefits for patients, visitors and staff, including:

- To provide the best possible patient catering service in line with our vision to be one of the best healthcare Trusts in the country

- To significantly improve the quality of our patient food, with a wider choice of nutritious, appetising meals, with demonstrable improvements in patient survey results
- Extended availability of trolley service for our wards (7 days a week at St Peter's)
- More accessible and improved catering and retail facilities for patients, visitors and staff, including the centralisation of the staff and visitor restaurant within the main building at St Peter's
- Improvement in availability of catering and retail services out of hours, particularly at weekends and evenings, including the availability of hot food within main building at St Peter's at weekends
- The development of a high end (branded) retail outlet at the St Peter's site
- To ensure a wide range of meal and beverage choices available for patients, visitors and staff, including low cost options
- To ensure good staff and patient engagement in the selection process of the successful bidder
- Release of significant space from Ashford and St Peter's hospitals restaurants.

4 Stakeholder involvement

Stakeholders will be engaged throughout the decision making process including the short listing process, tenderers' presentations and final recommendations. The groups involved will be staff and public governors, patient panel representatives, Employee Partnership Forum representatives as well as Executive and Non Executive Directors. At the presentation stage there will be further invitation to staff who may have an interest in being part of the process.

5 Timescales and next steps

15 th August 2011	Invitations to Tender issued
17 th October 2011	Tender returns deadline
4 th November 2011	Evaluation of bids completed
9 th November 2011	Tender Steering Group to sign off and shortlist three tenders to go forward
16 th November 2011	Bidders Presentation Day
30 th November 2011	Recommendation for award of contract by Tender Steering Group
15 th December 2011	Trust Board decision expected
4 th January 2012	Contract conclusion and start of mobilisation (12 weeks)
1 st April 2012	Formal start date of new contract.

Subject to Board approval the new contract will start on 1st April 2012, although the new visitor/staff restaurant and retail facilities at St Peter's will not be fully open until 2013 following the relevant planning permission approvals and building works. While this work is taking place, temporary catering and retail facilities will be put in place to ensure patients, visitors and staff still have access to quality and accessible services.

The details of the design and build element will be subject to discussion and change, with key stakeholder involvement at all stages.

7 Conclusion

The Board is asked to note the progress on the improvement of the Trust's catering facilities and to note the anticipated benefits to patients, visitors and staff.

Chris Bell, Associate Director, Estates and Facilities
20th September 2011