

Committee(s)	Dated:
Corporate Services Committee	23 August 2022
Subject: Staff Christmas Lunch costs and Review of Staff Summer Receptions	Public
Report of: Emma Moore, Chief Operating Officer	For Approval
Report author: Claire Holdgate, Events Manager	

Summary - Staff Christmas Lunch costs

The Staff Christmas Lunches are held annually over three days in December. All Corporation staff on the payroll (including Barbican Centre, Museum of London, civilian Police) are invited to apply for a place. They are served a three-course meal, side dishes, wine, soft drinks and tea/coffee.

Capacity is limited by both budget and venue restrictions – as such, the maximum number of staff that could attend would be 2,100 in total (700 per day).

Payment of the lunches is subsidised by the Corporate Services Committee – staff pay a contribution which is deducted from their January pay. Members of the Corporate Services Committee are invited to attend across the three days.

Below are the increases in both staff contributions and catering costs since 2013 (listed where there was a price adjustment).

Staff Christmas Lunch catering costs		
Year	Cost to staff (pp)	Overall cost (pp)
2013	£10.00	£33.00
2015	£11.00	£34.00
2017	£15.00	£35.00
2018	£18.00	£40.00
2019	£18.00	£40.00
2022	£20.00 (proposed)	£65.00

Due to increasing food prices, staffing costs, and other related price increases associated with Covid, cost of living and Brexit, the cost of the Lunches has increased from £40pp in 2019 to £65pp in 2022.

The caterers honoured with the 2022 lunches (following the Covid cancellation of the Lunches in 2021) recently proposed a substantial increase in their costs for 2022. Despite negotiation, they were unable to reduce the per head cost to a satisfactory price. This percentage increase was also not indicative of more wider price rises for other Guildhall events. Therefore another Guildhall caterer has been engaged to supply the Lunches for 2022 at £65pp.

Recommendation

Members are asked to approve:

- That in consideration of the increasing food and drink prices, staff contribution increases from £18pp to £20pp
- Members may wish to consider a greater staff contribution, as catering costs are expected to rise further in 2023 and beyond. Members are advised that the budget for any increase in the overall costs of the Christmas Lunches is subject to approval from other committees.
- The committee considers whether (subject to Chief Officer approval) Chief Officers could make provision for locally based hospitality, for those staff based offsite who are unable to attend the Christmas Lunches

Staff Summer Receptions

In December 2021, the increased Covid-19 infection rate prompted the cancellation of the annual Staff Christmas Lunches. In response to suggestions from Members and Officers, it was proposed that a free staff reception could be held later in 2022. These one-off events would also serve as a thank you to staff for their work during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The carry forward request for the unspent Lunch 2021 budget of £45,000 was granted. This allowed provision for a series of four summer receptions in Guildhall Yard for staff on the Corporation payroll. Capacity was limited by budget, allowing for a maximum of 300pp per day. Staff again were invited to apply on a first come, first served basis.

The StreetFoods Market provided the food and drink; staff were provided with tokens to make their 'purchases'; music was provided by the Guildhall School; and Members of the Corporate Services Committee were invited to attend.

Anecdotal feedback from staff attending was positive: staff were appreciative of the gesture; and grateful for the opportunity to freely network with colleagues. Both the Policy Chairman and the Town Clerk have proposed this to be an annual event to compliment the Staff Christmas Lunches.

If the Summer Receptions were to be held on an annual basis, it is suggested that staff could make a modest contribution to the catering costs. A budget for the receptions going forward needs to be considered and funding secured through appropriate channels.

Recommendation

Members are asked to approve:

- That Staff Summer Receptions are recommended to be held annually, on behalf of this Committee, subject to funding being available.
- Members are reminded that any budget considerations will need to be sought from the relevant committee, so this proposal is subject to a detailed costing report for assessment and agreement by the Finance Committee.

Implications

There is no current budget allocated to cover the cost of an annual Staff Summer Reception and for any proposal to go forward will require a fully costed plan to be agreed by the relevant spending Committee.

Conclusion

1. Members are asked to approve the increase to staff contributions for the Christmas Lunches 2022 and beyond, from £18pp to £20pp.
2. The committee considers whether (subject to Chief Officer approval) Chief Officers could make provision for locally based hospitality, for those staff based offsite who are unable to attend the Christmas Lunches.
3. Members are asked to approve the Staff Summer Receptions to be held on an annual basis from 2023, subject to funding

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