

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Decision Maker: | Executive Member for Adult Social Care |
| Date: | 29 June 2012 |
| Title: | Community Meals Service |
| Reference: | 3921 |
| Report From: | Director of Adult Services |

Contact name: Alex Burn

Tel: 01962 847279

Email: Alex.burn@hants.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Executive Member for Adult Social Care to go out to tender, during 2012, for a new Community Meals Service, to start from April 2013.
- 1.2. Hampshire County Council aims to provide continuity in the provision of meals on wheels across the county, through the Community Meals Service.
- 1.3. The report includes both the revised model for delivering meals on wheels and a new volunteer led Meals Support Service, making up the Community Meals Service.
- 1.4. Sections 2 -13 of this report relate to the proposed changes to meals on wheels and section 14 to the proposed new Volunteer led Meals Support Service.
- 1.5. As part of the departments prevention and early intervention service, meals on wheels will become a service available to older people, over the age of 55 years, supported by the volunteer-led Meals Support Service.
- 1.6. The Eating well-living well Community Nutrition Strategy for Older People 2011-2014, provides the context for these changes and highlights the growing need to address malnutrition and dehydration amongst older people living in their own homes.
- 1.7. The Community Meals Service will support older people to live independently at home for as long as possible with a positive quality of life and supports the aims and objectives of the Ageing well in Hampshire Older People's Well-Being strategy, 2011- 2014.

- 1.8. It will help to deliver the Hampshire County Council Adult Social Care Vision for 2012-2015 by providing a universal prevention and early intervention service to older people in their own homes.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. Meals on wheels are currently provided on a district council area basis. In the majority of the district /borough council areas ,it is a jointly funded service between Hampshire County Council and the district councils (approximately 50%:50%). This has led to a situation whereby there are different approaches/services in different parts of the county. District council areas have different providers, a varying numbers of days that hot meals are provided and differing amounts of meal choice.
- 2.2. Adult Services caps the charge for a meal with its meals policy, "Charges for Meals to Clients at Day Services and to Staff and Visitors at all Establishments" The charge for 2012/13 is capped at £3.40 per meal. However, some district councils further subsidise the meal so there are different prices charged to the customer in different district council areas.
- 2.3. In April 2011 a working group was established with borough/district council representatives to ensure a collaborative approach to the review and development of the new service specifications.
- 2.4. The majority of district/borough councils do want to continue to have a meals on wheels service in their districts but at the same time they need to consider making financial savings from 2013/14 onwards.
- 2.5. Reports from the Caroline Walker Trust from the 1990s,the International Longevity Centre UK (ILC) report on Personalisation and Community Meals, March 2010, highlight the social and economic argument for providing good nutrition to older people to enable them to remain living independently at home. It is estimated that 1in 10 older persons living in the community is malnourished and does not drink enough fluids, and 40% of older people on entering hospital are malnourished. Meals on wheels has the potential to improve these figures by providing an opportunity for daily social contact and re-stimulating an interest in food and crucially regular mealtimes.
- 2.6 Changes to the current meals on wheels service began April 2012, as part of a planned gradual move towards a prevention and early intervention service.
- 2.7 From April 2012 all referrals are made via a Hantsweb on-line form and meals on wheels are available to anyone over 55 years of age who meet one or more of a set of 5 prevention and early intervention criteria.
- 2.8 Up until this date only those who had been assessed by Adult Service care managers as meeting the department's eligibility criteria could be eligible for the service.

2.9 Current provision

Outlined below are the 3 stages in delivering the current provision of meals on wheels across the county.

2.9.1 Purchase of the frozen individual meals

The individual and multiportion frozen meals are currently purchased against a contract managed by Hampshire County Supplies.

2.9.2 Regeneration (reheating) of the individual meals

There are many different kitchen sites across the county carrying out this process, all of which have paid employees ,but often only for three/fours hours, on the days meals on wheels are delivered.

2.9.3 Delivery of the meals

The majority of deliveries are carried out by volunteers, including the WRVS, using their own cars, with the meals transported in insulated boxes to the clients home. There are often local coordinators, working a few hours a week to organise these deliveries. However, the numbers of volunteers is declining, so paid drivers supplement the numbers in specific areas of the county.

In one area a private company cook fresh meals daily and have their own paid delivery drivers, and in another area all three elements are carried out under separate contracts with Hampshire County Council.

3. Financial Implications of changes and value for money

- 3.1. The total available budget for the County Councils contribution to these meals in 2011/12 was £319,000. The complexity of the current arrangements results in delay after the end of the financial year before accurate information is available on the number of meals provided during the year.
- 3.2. The final figures for 2010/11 financial year, show that during this period the total gross cost of meals on wheels provided across Hampshire was around £1.183m. This was partially funded from contributions paid by the customer as well as district and borough councils (a total of approximately £756,400), resulting in an annual net cost to the County Council in the region of £426,600.
- 3.3. This cost is based on a total of 221,867 meals being provided during this period, which represents a reduction of around 5.8% from the previous financial year (2009/10) when 235,571 meals were provided.
- 3.4. The proposal for a consistent service over 365 days of the year offers an opportunity for Adult Services to utilise a cost effective but regular

solution for providing a hot mid-day meal. This will also link the provision of a meal together with a Meals Support Service. By utilising the Prevention & Early Intervention model and offering a universal meals on wheels service across the county, it is anticipated that longer term cost reductions will be achieved as the need for more intensive services are reduced or delayed.

- 3.5. The overall cost calculated for the provision of a meal includes the cost of the frozen meal as well as the regeneration and delivery costs. It is proposed that the customer continues to be charged a set contribution toward the overall cost of providing a mid-day meal, with the remaining costs being met by the County Council.
- 3.6. It is anticipated that this set contribution will continue to increase by inflation annually. For 2012/13 the charge is £3.40 per meal and, for the purpose of the calculations completed, it has been assumed that this will increase by a further 10p per meal each year during the next five years (i.e. £3.50 in 2013/14 increasing to £3.90 in 2017/18). This is in line with the expectation that the price charged to customers should be held below £4 per meal for the first three years of the contract. Conversations and research with older people have clearly shown that the cost of meals should not go over this £4 threshold in the near future (see section 9).
- 3.7. Whilst there has been a decline in the total number of meals provided since 2009/10, it has been assumed that there will be a 10% increase annually (compared with the number of meals provided in 2010/11) over the five year period 2013/14 to 2017/18, due to the move to a well publicised prevention and early intervention service.
- 3.8. Based on these assumptions (and using the 2010/11 assumed base line position of 221,867 meals on wheels being delivered in 2013/14), the cost to the County Council is estimated to be £481,000 in 2013/14, increasing to £677,000 by 2017/18 as summarised in the table below. This position assumes a 5% rise in food prices each year.

| | Year 1 (2013/14) £000 | Year 2 (2014/15) £000 | Year 3 (2015/16) £000 | Year 4 (2016/17) £000 | Year 5 (2017/18) £000 | Totals £000 |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Estimated costs: | | | | | | |
| Cost of frozen meals | 322 | 372 | 429 | 496 | 573 | 2,192 |
| Regeneration and delivery costs | 936 | 1,030 | 1,133 | 1,246 | 1,371 | 5,716 |
| Total estimated cost | 1,258 | 1,402 | 1,562 | 1,742 | 1,944 | 7,908 |
| Funded by: | | | | | | |
| Customer contribution | 777 | 879 | 993 | 1,122 | 1,267 | 5,038 |
| HCC contribution | 481 | 523 | 569 | 620 | 677 | 2,870 |

3.9 Based on these assumptions, the total value of the regeneration and delivery contract for a three year contract with the option of a two year extension will be maximum of £5.716m. In addition the cost of purchasing the frozen meals will be a further £2.192m, and these will be purchased through a separate framework agreement as managed by County Supplies (see 2.9.1). The overall cost of these contracts will be partly funded by estimated client contributions of £5.038m, with the remaining balance of £2.870m being funded by the County Council. Providers will have the option to bid on the basis of either sourcing the frozen meals from the contract managed by County Supplies or make alternative arrangements. Should variant bids be accepted the total value of the contract (for both the frozen meals and the regeneration and delivery costs) will be up to £7.908m (i.e. £5.716m plus £2.192m).

3.10 The net available budget in 2012/13 toward the County Council's contribution to these costs is £296,000. Assuming this budget is not subject to an inflation allocation increase in future years, this would result in an increased budget pressure of around £185,000 in 2013/14, rising to £381,000 in 2017/18.

3.11 Future budget planning will incorporate these proposed changes to the community meals service as part of prevention and early intervention .The known demographic pressures, especially the increase in numbers of people over 85 years of age have also been taken into account . A

prevention and early intervention approach will contribute to cost effective care packages and reduce or delay the need for more intensive services.

- 3.12 In addition to the mid-day meals provision, the new service specification will also require provider(s) to consider developing tea and breakfast options at no cost to the County Council.

4. Performance Implications

- 4.1. The new service will be consistent across the county with contract(s) working to a single service specification. This will enable the department to measure both the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of the service on a quarterly basis.

5. HR- staffing implications

- 5.1 There are 8 existing providers of meals on wheels who run with a combination of paid staff and volunteers, working various hours across the week. TUPE notifications were sent to existing providers on 24 May 2012 in preparation for the inclusion in the Invitation to Tender documents.
- 5.2 There is a requirement for a Hampshire County Council Authorised Officer to be identified to work with the new service provider(s) to monitor and manage the contracts.

6. Risk Assessment

- 6.1 There is a risk of districts/borough councils withdrawing or reducing future funding post April 2013, either immediately or at some point within the 5 years. This has been taken into consideration in preparing the recommended option for the future of the service. The service proposal will not be dependent on district/borough council funding.
- 6.2 The new prevention and early intervention model was introduced from April 2012 and a small rise in numbers of requests for meals on wheels has been noted. This could result in a small increase in costs to both the districts/borough and county council during 2012/13. However, a leap in referrals is not expected as meals on wheels are currently only provided on a limited number of days in the majority of the county.
- 6.3 Following the anticipated service changes in 2013 there could be an initial drop in numbers (experienced in other parts of the country due to the increased cost to the client). Feedback has been obtained from current service users and potential new customers on the optimum price to charge to mitigate this as much as possible.
- 6.4 In implementing the new service model there could be some change in location as to where meals are prepared. This may result in some existing preparation sites no longer being required. The full impact of this is not known but it is unlikely to impact heavily on Hampshire County Council's resources.

- 6.5 There will be redundancy and TUPE costs to be factored in but again these figures are not known at this stage. TUPE notifications were sent to existing providers on 24 May 2012 in order to be available to include in the Invitation to Tender documents.
- 6.6 Depending which organisation wins the new contract(s) there may be changes to the role played by volunteers. The volunteer led Meals Support Service proposed in section 14 of this report, will go some way to mitigate this issue.
- 6.7 There is the possibility the tender for meals on wheels will not attract the level of interest to enable it being awarded within the required timescale. To go out to tender again may result in Single Tender Approvals being requested in respect of existing providers. The proposal to offer a variation as well as the standard tender submission will go some way to mitigating this risk.
- 6.8 Hampshire County Supplies is participating in a PRO5 tender exercise for the provision of individual and multiportion frozen meals when the existing contract expires. The successful contractor(s) will be known by September 2012 and Hampshire County Supplies is aware of the need to have the contract fully in place by April 2013.
- 6.9 The financial model for the proposed new service requires the provider(s) to keep the average meals costs below an agreed price for each financial year. Monthly management information will be provided to the Authorised Officer to reconcile numbers of meals against the average cost per meal. Also at quarterly meetings the menus and meal costs for the next quarter will be jointly agreed.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 In exercising its functions an authority must have due regard to the need to: eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8. People and Community Impact Assessment

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and can be found using the attached link: <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/as-equality-ia-archive.htm>
- 8.2 It shows that the proposal to expand the service to include all older people without the need for a care manager assessment will have a positive impact on the community, making it accessible and appropriate to all communities in Hampshire.

- 8.3 Within the agreed publicity and marketing plans for the new service specification and the relevant performance indicators, attention will be given to age, race and faith and we will monitor performance against all protected characteristics, to ensure changes and modifications are made in a timely manner.

9 Consultation with Older People and District/Borough Councils

- 9.1 A structured programme of feedback was organised with older people in July/August 2011, using questionnaires, focus groups and face to face discussions. Approximately 250 older people in receipt of the current service were contacted via a questionnaire distributed by the WRVS volunteers. The same number of more independent older people have had their views sought through older people's forums and existing organised information events.
- 9.2 Their input has helped to inform the optimum price that can be offered for a meal and shaped the new volunteer led Meals Support Service element of the proposed new Community Meals Service .
- 9.3 There have been regular meetings with district/borough council officers since April 2011 to enlist their views and share the initial proposals.
- 9.4 Two meetings, chaired by the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, were held in November 2011 and February 2012 to present the proposed new Community Meals Service to district/borough council relevant Portfolio holder and their officers.

10 Outline of Options

The three options considered

Option 1 - Continue to provide meals on wheels in its current format as outlined in section 2 of this report.

Option 2 - To implement the new service model as detailed in section 10

Option 3- Withdraw from meals on wheels service in the county

Option Analysis & Comparison

10.1. Options considered

- a) **Option 1- Continue to provide meals on wheels in its current format as outlined in section 2.9 of this report**

This option would not resolve the following known issues with the current service :-

- the fragmented arrangements across the county
- the inconsistent quality of services to the client
- the lack of choice of meals and the limited days when meals are available
- the lack of management and financial information

- It is also dependent on the district/borough councils contributing their current level of funding ,which is uncertain into the future.
- The inconsistency associated with the existing arrangement
- Estimated cost to Hampshire County Council would be, as a minimum, £426,000 (based on 2010/2011 known costs)

b) Option 2-To implement the new service specification as detailed in section 10

This option would enable the recommendations outlined in the Community Nutrition Strategy to be implemented by providing :-

- a consistent and coherent service across the county
- a nutritionally balanced meals service 365 days of the year with choice and an opportunity to include breakfast and tea
- accurate financial and management data
- an opportunity for the service to be fully part of the prevention and early intervention agenda for the county to maintain the independence of older people in the community.
- support to older people who are on the “cusp” of requiring Adult Social Care services.
- remove the on going uncertainty of obtaining regular and reliable contributions from district/ borough councils to the service.
- Costs are outlined in table in paragraph 3.8.

c) Option 3 - Withdraw from meals on wheels service in the county

This option would be contrary to the recommendations of the Community Nutrition Strategy and the Vision for Adult Social Care. It would also :-

- leave vulnerable older people without access to regular hot meals.
- need the establishment of alternative sign posting arrangements to be implemented to other sources of meals, which would not necessarily be reliable, consistent, affordable or meet the nutritional standards for older people.
- increase cost to Hampshire County Council of providing increase level of personal care to ensure a hot meal was provided to vulnerable clients.

As a result of this analysis the recommendation is to adopt option 2.

11. Proposed new service model for Option 2

11.1 It would be renamed a Community Meals Service to reflect the broader service specification and the objectives of the overarching Eating well living well Community Nutrition Strategy for Older People 2011-2014..

11.2 It would recognise the provision of a nutritional balanced diet as being essential to the health and well-being of an older person.

- 11.3 As part of a pro-active prevention and early intervention programme of services it would be available to older people over the age of 55 years of age, who meet one or more of the prevention and early intervention criteria. A coordinated marketing and publicity campaign will be run across the county with partners to expand the numbers and range of recipients.
- 11.4 It would still support those who meet Adult Services eligibility criteria.
- 11.5 The core of the service will be an improved and consistent delivery of a hot main course and pudding to an individuals home. It will be available 7 days a week (with the possibility of using frozen meals for the week end) with one pricing scheme for the whole county and an opportunity to purchase teas and breakfast
- 11.6 A Health and wellbeing check will be provided by the person who delivers the meal to the home. This will identify changes/deterioration in the individual and when and who to contact. The Hampshire County Council Trigger Tool, developed for those visiting older people in their own homes, will form an integral part of the training.

12. Referral Process

- 12.1 The referral will be via an- on line referral form using a set of agreed prevention and early intervention criteria. Having implemented this system during 2012/13, valuable learning has been gained in advance of the new services beginning from April 2013.
- 12.2 The new service aims to support an individual to receive the service at specific times and perhaps for relatively short periods in their life when that “bit of help” could avert a crisis. For example following a bereavement; a serious illness; having family move away; short term respite care for a carer under stress.
- 12.3 The Hampshire County Council Adult Services Community Independence Team (CIT) will refer in to the service as part of support for people on the cusp of needing more intensive and expensive Adult Services assistance.
- 12.4 It will still include those assessed by Adult Services care managers as requiring meals on wheels.

13. Funding

- 13.1 The complete cost of the frozen meal, the regeneration and the delivery will be paid for from the charge to clients plus the Hampshire County Council funding.
- 13.2 The advertised contract value will have a minimum value to include only the regeneration and delivery cost, and a maximum to include the cost of the meals should variant bids be accepted.

13.3 From April 2013, the districts/borough councils will not be required to make any financial contribution to the meals on wheels service (outlined in section 11).

13.4 They have, however, been asked to consider funding a voluntary Meals Support Service as outlined in section 14 to enable them to continue to support the wellbeing of their local vulnerable citizens through planned visits at or around meal-times. This funding will be used directly to support the volunteers involved in providing the service in their district/borough council area.

14. Volunteer led Meals Support Service

The service

14.1 The Meals on Wheels service specification outlined above will provide nutritional balanced meals to older people and the essential initial health and wellbeing check. However as explored more fully in the Eating well-living well Community Nutrition Strategy for Older People 2011-2014, there is another important element to meals; namely the social and communal aspect of eating.

14.2 The aim of the Meals Support Service would be to provide an opportunity for an enhanced level of regular support to identified older people. It would use the "befriending" model of working, whilst specifically targeting the visits around meal times.

14.3 The meals on wheels service would be used as a way of identifying the older people who were becoming disengaged from their local community and feeling isolated. They would be offered an opportunity to have regular visits from the Meals Support Service.

14.4 The Meals Support Service would use local volunteers in the district/borough council areas to provide the service, and would be coordinated at County level by a County Coordinator. Each district/borough council will play an important role in ensuring their local provision reflects their specific requirements.

14.5 The County Coordinator, role only, would be funded through Adult Services. They will manage the flow of requests between the Meals on Wheels provider(s) and the organisations delivering the volunteer meals support service.

14.6 The planned 'befriending' visits will enable an older person to have access to relevant information and opportunities to take part in local activities based around their interests and needs, for example lunch or social clubs. Also arrangements for shopping, transport contact with other local groups and community activities can be established.

15. Funding the proposed volunteer service

15.1 A meeting was held on 10 November 2011, chaired by Councillor Hindson, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, to which the relevant

portfolio holders and officers from each district council was invited. The new Volunteer led Meals Support Service was presented and agreement was gained, in principle, for the service. The Portfolio holders requested more detailed work to be carried out on the impact financially to each individual district/borough and how the proposed service would link into their existing voluntary sector organisations and activities.

- 15.2 Meetings were arranged with each district /borough council early in 2012 to ascertain how they wanted to take forward the volunteer led Meals Support Service locally, and the level of their possible financial contribution to such a service.
- 15.3 By the date of this report the majority of district/borough councils have agreed, in principle, to make a financial contribution for a one year pilot, 2013/2014.
- 15.4 The district/borough council funding is to be used specifically within their own district/borough council area to benefit their own vulnerable residents. They will not be required to have any direct management or monitoring involvement in the service running in their area. Regular feedback will be provided through the working group referred to in section 2.3.
- 15.5 Hampshire County Council will only be responsible for funding the cost of the meals support service county co-ordination, which will be hosted and managed by an external organisation, for the one year pilot, with the annual cost of £55,000.

16. Conclusion

- 16.1 In order to remove all the inconsistencies and anomalies in the present service there is a need to implement a new service specification for meals on wheels as part of a wider Community Meals Service
- 16.2 The changes will enable it to be an integral part of the prevention and early intervention programme of the department and support older people to remain living independently in their own homes for as long as possible, in addition to ensuring support for those who meet Adult Services eligibility criteria.
- 16.3 The volunteer led Meals Support Service would enable the experience and skills of local volunteers to be used to provide the social and community aspects of food and meal times. They would provide the links back into the local community and promote the independence of older people.

17 Recommendations

- 17.1. That the Executive Member for Adult Social Care gives approval to go out to tender for a new service model for meals on wheels with total contract value of up to £7.908 million which represents the regeneration,

delivery costs and the cost of the frozen meal for a 5 year contract based on 3 years+1+1 period.

- 17.2 That the Executive Member for Adult Social Care gives approval for a procurement process for a volunteer led Meals Support Service to begin in 2012 with the new service implemented for a one year pilot from April 2013, at a cost of £55,000 for management and hosting.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Hampshire safer and more secure for all: | yes |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Maximising well-being: | yes |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Enhancing our quality of place: | yes |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1 Meals on Wheels will, as part of a Community Meals Service aim to maintain independence both for people who meet the Hampshire County Council Critical and Substantial criteria and for those who do not, but who would benefit from the provision of regular nutritionally balanced meals.
- 1.2 The re-provision will cover all of Hampshire including the most rural areas.
- 1.3 The meals and the means through which they are advertised and offered will be inclusive of the younger old (55yrs +), faith communities, BME communities, and other excluded communities. Support to facilitate appropriate marketing may be required from Hampshire County Council Community Development Officers.
- 1.4 The service will monitor uptake of meals against all protected characteristics and work with the meal delivery organisations to appropriately market and develop the service

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. The provision of information to older people via the Community Meals Service on for example local Scams, will help to build safer communities and reduce the fear of crime.
- 2.2. Training provided on the Trigger tool will skill up those delivering the meals to sign post to relevant organisations. For example how to access Trading Standards Rapid response service and so help to reduce crime. Also how to access organisations to improve home security if required.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

The recommendation is to tender for the service in 3 geographical lots, which will help to reduce the mileage. Access whenever possible local staff and volunteers and local suppliers for certain elements of the service specification.

The service specification will make specific reference to efficient use of route planning.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

The service specification makes specific reference to reducing packaging, using safe and sustainable farming practices, and no use of GMO products