

**HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL****Report**

<b>Committee:</b>	Safe and Healthy People Select Committee
<b>Date:</b>	20 July, 2012
<b>Title:</b>	Community Nutrition Strategy – to receive details of the Community meals review ongoing in Hampshire, as part of the Community Nutrition Strategy
<b>Reference:</b>	4128
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Adult Services

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## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to explain how The Eating well-living well Community Nutrition Strategy for Older People 2011-2014, <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/adult-services/bettertime/publications-strategies.htm> provides the context for the changes to the current meals on wheels service and highlights the growing need to address malnutrition and dehydration amongst older people living in their own homes.
- 1.2. To provide an update on the review of the current meals on wheels service that has been carried, and the resulting new Prevention and Early Intervention Community Meals Service that will start from April 2013.
- 1.3. The Community Meals Service will consist of a new model for delivering meals on wheels and piloting a volunteer led Meals Support Service.
- 1.4. 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. 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. The review was carried out to establish how to provide a more coherent and consistent service across the county, recognising the important role a regular hot meal was to both the health and social interaction of an older person.
- 2.3. To ensure the new service would be available for older people over the age of 55 years of age as part of Adult Services prevention and early Intervention programme of services, whilst ensuring those clients meeting the department's eligibility criteria would continue to receive a meal.
- 2.4. 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.
- 2.5. Meals on wheels are currently provided in the majority of the county from frozen meals, that comply with the National Association of Community Catering guidelines (NACC), which are regenerated (reheated) in several locations across the county. They are then delivered in most cases by volunteers using their own cars, to the individuals home. There are paid staff for a few hours on the days the meals are provided in a given area, to oversee the regeneration and delivery of the meals.
- 2.6. There have been some limited changes to the current meals on wheels service since April 2012, as part of a planned gradual move towards a prevention and early intervention service.
- 2.7. As part of the review, 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 had their views sought through older people's forums and existing organised information events.
- 2.8. 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.
- 2.9. The details of the resulting new Community Meals Service are outlined in section 3.2.

### **3. The Eating well-living well Community Nutrition Strategy for Older People 2011-2014**

- 3.1. It was recognised that any changes made to the existing meals on wheels provision, should not be seen in isolation, but rather part of a wider strategic approach to the provision of good nutrition.
- 3.2. This would in turn support the aim of the Ageing Well in Hampshire - Older People's Well-Being Strategy 2011-2014, "to support older people to live independently and live well for as long as possible"  
<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/adult-services/bettertime/publications-strategies.htm>

3.3. The principles of the Community Nutrition Strategy are:-

- Good nutrition for older people is an integral part of the prevention and early intervention work stream of Adult Services.
- Recognition of the social and economic value of supporting older people to remain independent in their own homes with a good nutritional status.
- Raise awareness of the need for good nutrition amongst older people and those working with older people to prevent decline in their health and well-being.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for older people to access a nutritionally balanced diet, both in their own homes and in social settings, and to promote the importance of meal times in reducing social isolation and loneliness.

3.4. These principles have informed the review of meals on wheels and the subsequent new Community Meals Service model.

3.5. Reports from the Caroline Walker Trust from the 1990s, and 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.

3.6. It is estimated that 1 in 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. The Community Meals Service 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.

3.7. Older people can be particularly susceptible to malnutrition, which can contribute to increased mortality, an increased risk of infection and an increased risk of falls and fracture.

3.8. Research carried out by the "Campaign to end loneliness", February 2011 suggests that loneliness is a greater threat to an individual's health than smoking or obesity. It is estimated that older people spend 70% -90% of their time on their own, which will invariably impact on their health and wellbeing and their ability and desire to eat or begin socialising again.

3.9. Eight priorities were identified within the strategy to be taken forward over the next three years, through the partnership Ageing well in Hampshire Older People's Well-Being Action plan. This included the establishment of a Community Meals Service, consisting of a Meals on Wheels service and a Meals Support Service.

3.10. The others areas include; the provision of easily accessible information for older people, the development of Community Cookery classes (specifically targeting older men), the promotion of physical activity by linking in with the Better Balance for life falls prevention programme, greater access to community eating venues and looking at the intergenerational opportunities

(including “skills swaps”) and exploring opportunities for older people to access school meal times.

3.11. Work has begun on several of these other key priority areas, in order to support the new Community Meals Service from April 2013.

**3.12. The Community Meals Service**

3.13. The procurement process for both the Meals on Wheels Service and the Meals Support Service opened on 6 July 2012.

**3.14. Meals on Wheels Service**

3.15. The core of the service will be an improved and consistent delivery of a hot main course and pudding to an individual’s 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 overtime.

3.16. 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.

3.17. The new prevention and early intervention service aims to not only provide meals on a regular basis but also for an individual to receive the service at specific times and perhaps for relatively short periods in their life. For example when that “bit of help” could avert a crisis; following a bereavement; a serious illness; having family move away; short term respite care for a carer under stress.

3.18. It would still support those who meet Adult Services eligibility criteria and due to its consistent delivery across the county it will be in a position to contribute to cost effective care packages and reduce or delay the need for more intensive services.

3.19. 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.

3.20. The meals on wheels service will be paid for from the charge to clients plus the Hampshire County Council funding. The service, from April 2013, will not be dependent on borough/district councils funding.

**3.21. Meals Support Service**

3.22. The Borough/district councils have been asked to consider funding a voluntary Meals Support Service to continue to support the wellbeing of their local vulnerable citizens. This funding will be used directly to support the volunteers involved in providing the service in their district/borough council area. The service will be initially piloted for one year.

- 3.23. As explored more fully in the Eating well-living well Community Nutrition Strategy for Older People 2011-2014, the other important element to meals is the social and communal aspect of eating. Loneliness, social isolation and depression have been identified as the predominant sociological factors leading to a decreased appetite and reduced food intake.
- 3.24. The aim of the Meals Support Service would be to provide an opportunity for an enhanced level of regular support to identified older people, who may be falling into this category. It would use the “befriending” model of working, whilst specifically targeting the visits around meal times.
- 3.25. 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, hosted and managed by an external organisation.
- 3.26. 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.
- 3.27. 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.

#### **4. Conclusions**

- 4.1. The establishment of a Community Meals Service , from April 2013, provides an opportunity to implement the strategic priorities for eating well in later life.
- 4.2. 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.

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

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

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>		
<u>Title</u> Community Meals Service	<u>Reference</u> 3921	<u>Date</u> 29 June 2012
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	

**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.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
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.

- 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