

ADULT SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 52

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Commissioning Plans for Community Meals		
Date of Meeting:	March 12th 2012		
Report of:	Director of Adult Social Services / Lead Commissioner People		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Philip Letchfield	Tel: 29-5078
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Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No: ASC 27455	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The Council provides a well established Community Meals service through a contract with the Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS).
- 1.2 This contract comes to an end in March 2012. The Council is considering the future commissioning plans for this service. This report summarises the key issues that are being considered and the emerging principles that will inform future commissioning plans.
- 1.3 A waiver has been approved to extend the existing WRVS contract initially until the end of September 2012, with an option for a further extension until March 2013, to enable the development of a commissioning plan and allow for any future procurement programme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the principles proposed in paragraph 3.15, that will inform the commissioning planning, are approved
- 2.2 That a further report is submitted to the June Cabinet Member Meeting outlining the options considered and recommending a preferred model of service to be commissioned.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS

- 3.1 The Women' Royal Voluntary Service is the current provider for the Community Meals contract in Brighton & Hove.

- 3.2 The WRVS supplies hot and frozen meals to people who have been assessed as needing them and delivers the meals to their own homes thereby assisting people to remain living independently.
- 3.3 The service operates 365 days per year and there is a requirement that a 'safe and well' check is made for each person who has a meal delivered.
- 3.4 The WRVS are responsible for ensuring that meals weights and nutritional values comply with the latest recommended standards for community meals developed by the national association of care caterers. The delivery time and temperature of the first and last meal delivered on each round are recorded daily.
- 3.5 Since October 2009 the WRVS have been leasing 4 hot vans to deliver meals in the BN1 and BN2 districts of the city. Volunteers using private cars with insulated thermo boxes deliver in other areas of the city.
- 3.6 The value of the contract is a combination of a fixed and variable cost. The rate charged for the variable element decreases on a sliding scale as the number of meals that have been provided increases. Service users are not charged the full cost of the meal and the Council subsidises the service at a cost of £242,000 for the year 2011/12. The service user is currently charged £3.00 per meal.
- 3.7 The number of meals provided has been steadily decreasing in recent years but this decline reached a plateau this year. The number of meal provided was 96,362 in 2007 /08 and in 2010/11 this had declined to 81,864.
- 3.8 The service provides a choice of meals and is also able to cater for those who may have special dietary or religious needs. In 2010/11 the service provided meals to 15 customers requiring kosher meals, 8 vegetarian customers and 36 people with diabetic needs. The meals are sourced from a company in a Wales and arrive frozen at the WRVS centre. There are only 3 national providers who provide meals that fit the WRVS delivery model and none of these are local.
- 3.9 The service is monitored through the Adult Social Commissioning Support unit and there are regular contract reviews during the year. The Council funds a lay assessor's scheme to interview service users each year and the WRVS also regularly gather feedback from people that use the service. The satisfaction levels with service are broadly high.
- 3.10 The contract is coming to an end and this has provided an opportunity to review the future commissioning plans for this type of service. The policy context, the market for meals and expectations have changed considerably in the years since this contract began.
- 3.11 The key issues that have been identified are |:
- 3.11.1 Providing such a service through 1 single contractor limits the choice and control that people have over services and is not in line with the personalisation programme that is at the core of adult social care
- 3.11.2 The service is not able to source locally produced meals and is not in line with the Councils priority to create a sustainable city.
- 3.11.3 The Council is providing a subsidised service in relation to people's meals

- 3.11.4 There is an opportunity to provide services more creatively and with a more local base.
- 3.11.5 The availability of meals delivered to a person's home has changed considerably since this contract was first put in place. There are now a range of providers who are willing to deliver meals in a person's home and more opportunities to purchase meals locally.
- 3.11.6 Only a relatively small number of people in the city receive community meals. The existing information and signposting re meals services for people who need this type of service is limited. There is an opportunity for the Council to develop this and this would support the broader well being agenda in the city and more people
- 3.12 We have benchmarked the charges made for this service with other councils in the region and the charges in Brighton & Hove are one of the lowest.
- 3.13 Any change in this service will require careful planning and transitional arrangements that take account of those people who are currently receiving their meals through WRVS.
- 3.14 The Adult Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Committee (ASCHOSC) have been considering the future options for this service through a scrutiny review. The outcomes from a workshop are attached at appendix 1 and the ASCHOSC will be considering these at their meeting of March 8th. A verbal report will be available at the Cabinet Member Meeting of March 12th on the outcomes of the ASCHOSC meeting.
- 3.15 It is proposed that the service is commissioned in line with following principles :
- 3.15.1 The commissioning plans should promote personalisation and individual choice and control
- 3.15.2 The commissioning plans will promote locally sourced food in the delivery of this service
- 3.15.3 The Council will ensure that it can meet its statutory duties for those with eligible care needs through the new arrangements
- 3.15.4 The commissioning plans will encourage an innovative, creative approach to meals provision and encourage partnership working. We will be looking at services that could be city wide or neighbourhood based and that could be providing meals to the person's home or in a community based setting. The potential for pilot projects will also be explored.
- 3.15.5 The signposting and information available on the range of services available will be improved so that anyone interested in accessing such a service is better able to do so. This will include information regarding the nutritional value of the meals.
- 3.15.6 The current level of subsidy will be reduced on a phased basis and any remaining subsidy will be only available for those people who have eligible needs.
- 3.15.7 That transitional arrangements are considered to ensure that current service users continue to receive a service
- 3.16 The next stage of planning will involve gathering some more in depth data information and analysis in relation in relation to people who currently use the service, their needs and their location.

- 3.17 A consultation programme will be developed to gather the views of stakeholders including existing service users and prospective service users.
- 3.18 It is planned to hold a stakeholder event of all services across the city with an interest in providing a meals related service to promote innovation, partnership and also map out more fully what is currently available.
- 3.19 We have done some initial work to identify the approach other Councils have taken in relation to community meals service. It would be fair to say this is varied and this reflects the discretionary nature of this service. Some Councils no longer provide a contracted service but have focused on improved signposting , some still provide a service but have increased charges significantly above those in Brighton & Hove whilst others appear to be in a similar position to the city. We will build on this work to help inform future commissioning plans.
- 3.20 A further report will be presented to a future Cabinet Members Meeting, outlining future options and detailing a clear preferred model regarding the future commissioning and delivery of this service.
- 3.21 It is the intention of the Council to return to the original access routes into the Community Meals service with effect from April 2012. From 1997 to 2008 access to this service was only through an Adult Social care assessment linked to the Councils eligibility criteria. This is set out in the actual contract. In 2008 the Council and WRVS devised an arrangement that enabled people to access the service either through Adult Social Care (as previously) or via a direct referral to WRVS. In the latter instance the WRVS would undertake an assessment to ensure people needed a meals service. People accessing the service through this route are not placed on the Councils data base and information about their needs is not readily available.
- 3.22 Returning to referrals only being made through an Adult Social Care assessment will give us a better understanding of people's needs, allow us to explore more personalised options for that person and ensure a consistent approach to eligibility. This will have no impact on existing users who will continue to receive the service.
- 3.23 Further discussions will be held with the WRVS regarding commissioning intentions for this service and the referral arrangements in the interim period.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Adult Social Care Housing & Overview Scrutiny Committee have undertaken a pre policy scrutiny on this matter. See appendix 1.
- 4.2 A full consultation programme will form part of the next stage of the planning for the future commissioning.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The net annual budget for 2011/12 is £242,590 (this includes the client income collected on behalf of the Council by WRVS). The net unit cost per meal is currently £2.73 (based on latest estimated meal numbers of approximately 83,000 per annum).

The future commissioning plans will seek to reduce the net unit costs and offer improved value for money, in line with the latest budget strategy.

Finance Officer Consulted: Name Mike Bentley Date: 28/02/12

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Whilst the Local Authority does not have a duty to provide Community Meals it chooses to exercise its statutory power to do so. In exercising this power and delivering this service the Local Authority must have regard to the national and local personalisation agenda, individual's Human Rights as enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998 and its duty to the public purse. Under the section 47 of the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990 the Local Authority has a duty to undertake an assessment of the care needs of an individual where it appears to that authority the individual may be in need of services; recipients of community meals may trigger this duty and it is therefore important the referral pathway ensures the Local Authority is able to identify such individuals.

Lawyer Consulted: Sandra O'brien Date: 28/2/12

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 A full Equalities Impact Assessment will form part of the next phase and will be reported back to the Cabinet Member Meeting.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The current service provider is not able to access locally sourced meals and receives its frozen meals from a company based in Wales.

One of the proposed principles in relation to future commissioning is that it promotes the opportunities to source meals locally.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no specific implications for crime and disorder.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 At this stage in the process agreement is being sought re the broad principles that will underpin future commissioning plans. A future report will consider the

options for implementation and the risk and opportunity management implications.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 The Community Meals service provides nutritionally balanced meal which meets industry standards. Access to community meals is an important element in the health and well being of people.

The principles outlined in this report seek to develop this service so that it is more accessible and more personalised.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 The community meals service and its delivery are directly linked to the Councils priorities of supporting vulnerable adults to live healthy independent lives and creating a sustainable city.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 This will form a key part of a future report which will focus on options and a preferred service model. At this stage the focus is upon agreeing the broad underlying principles.
- 6.2 It is not an option to simply continue with the existing service, at the very least a procurement exercise would be required even if we maintained the current model of service delivery. The current model of service delivery is not in line with local policy and priorities which are summarised through the broad commissioning principles.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The contract for this service is coming to an end and this is an opportunity to review and commission a service that is more in line with local priorities and the personalisation of services.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. ASHOSC Workshop Notes

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None