

BRIEFING NOTE

Agenda Item No. 6

TO: Social Care & Inclusion Scrutiny & Performance Panel

DATE: 15 January 2012

RE: Taste For Life Meals Service Update

Purpose

This note has been written in response to the Panel requesting an update on the Taste For Life Service.

Update on Taste For Life Service

The Taste for Life service has been in place since 7th January 2011, providing borough wide co-ordination and an advisory service, linking citizens with local community and commercial meal providers. The aim is to promote the availability of a range of meals services across the Borough and facilitate access to such provisions.

Overall, since its launch Taste for Life has had contact with 580 citizens of the borough, in their own homes providing support in areas such as meal provision or assistance with meal preparation and/or shopping and accessing community based lunch club provisions.

Since April 2012 Taste for Life has continued to seek to extend the portfolio of community based meals facilities, so as to not create an indirect dependency on transport or on Taste for Life itself. A recognised success factor for this service is the ability to broker meal services on a truly local level. As a consequence, Taste for Life are investing efforts to make links with varied, local provision across the borough and to encourage new ways of working.

Taste for Life frontline staff are now participating in "Capability Assessments" pilot, in conjunction with Social Care and Inclusion Directorate, a local academic institution and other third sector organisations. In summary, the pilot focus is to consider a person in terms of their capabilities and the possible individual contributions a person can make, to positively impact on their local community. The intention is to extend this process from January 2013 with existing and new Taste for Life clients, seeking to promote greater independence and fulfilment, leading to an enhanced quality of life.

A rolling program of briefings has now recommenced, delivered by Taste for Life Service, in order to promote the service and explain the aim to develop a brokerage facility focused on client's capabilities.

A further initiative has commenced to make further contact with the entire, original cohort of "Meals on Wheels" clients, to ascertain if their circumstances or needs have changed.

Taste for Life continue to seek out both commercial and volunteer meals providers at a very local level, having learnt earlier that any requirement for road transport is a significant disincentive. Taste for Life has concluded that third sector agencies are keen to get involved but often find it difficult to get started. For this reason, time has been devoted to developing a model that has the potential to be utilised in a wide variety of locations, either independently or under the umbrella of another like-minded organisations. The first sessions arising from this approach will begin shortly.

It is intended that The “Come Dine with Me” project will commence during November. The basic idea is to establish sessions in the local area to enable people to come together to learn and to share cooking skills in a safe environment, followed by a positive social experience both during and after the meal. The first of these will take place in Caldmore.

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