

BRIEFING NOTE

Agenda Item No. 7

TO: Scrutiny Panel
DATE: 4 March 2013

RE: Taste for Life Meals Service Update

Purpose

This note has been written in response to the Panel requesting further updates on the Taste for Life Service.

Context

At an earlier meeting Scrutiny had asked for more information about the customers who no longer received a meal from the previous services. The whole aim of Taste for Life was to assist people in being independent in their lives and also independent from the Council. Taste for Life is also independent of the Council and as a consequence there are not monitoring or target setting arrangements in place. Taste for Life, in the spirit of partnership, do provide regular updates on the service.

The Taste for Life service has been in place since 7th January 2011, essentially, providing a borough wide co-ordination and advisory service, linking citizens with local community and commercial meal providers. This community based service was developed following Scrutiny Panel's agreement (November 2010) to develop a community model, which replaced the traditional and non statutory meals service.

Background

Prior to the decommissioning of the traditional meals service, all citizens receiving the service were reviewed. The reviews were undertaken by officers, of the Social Care & Inclusion Directorate. The outcome of the review exercise included resulted in number of citizens choosing to purchase a meals delivery service directly from 2 commercial providers (I-Care and Wilshire Farms Foods). Both of the aforementioned providers, deliver local, more flexible service, with enhanced meals choice options and ran borough wide promotional meal tasting sessions early 2011.

In January 2011 a total of 290 citizens were offered support directly via Taste for Life. Of that number 150 citizens went on to receive support to access meals. The remaining 140 citizens were contacted again during the summer of 2011. This resulted in 2 citizens choosing to take up services via Taste for Life.

Update on Taste for Life Service

During the Autumn of 2012, Taste for Life commenced an initiative, to re-instigate contact with the original 290 citizens, who were offered the support of Taste for Life services. This exercise included those citizens who did take up the services of Taste for Life and those citizens who declined the service. The rationale behind contacting all citizens being, that Taste for Life offer co-ordination, linking and support, rather than ongoing meals provision. The purpose of this exercise was to ascertain if individual circumstances or needs had changed resulting in further support being an appropriate option.

The outcome of this exercise is by November 2012, 100 citizens had been contacted, resulting in 21 receiving support. By the end of January 2013 attempts to make contact via telephone all 290 citizens had been undertaken. Of those citizens who were contactable 60 reported either contentment with their chosen service or their requirement

for a service had ceased; 80 citizens were not contactable via telephone, due to telephone numbers being no longer valid and for the remaining citizens there was either an unwillingness to enter into discussions with a Taste for Life officer, or direct contact with the named citizen had not been achieved.

Since its launch Taste for Life has had contact with over 600 citizens of the borough, in their own homes, providing support in areas such as meal provision or assistance with meal preparation and/or shopping, as well accessing community based meals provisions.

As reported at the last Scrutiny Committee, Taste for Life has continue to extend the portfolio of community based meals facilities, so as not to create an indirect dependency on transport or on Taste for Life itself. A recognised success factor, is the ability to broker meals services on a truly local level. As a consequence, Taste for Life are investing efforts to make links with multiple local provisions across the borough and to encourage new ways of working. One example of this being a local supported housing scheme, has made available its kitchen facilities to enable the development of a community initiative. Essentially, socially isolated citizens are actively encouraged to come together to learn and to share cooking skills in a calm and safe environment, followed by a positive social experience both during and after the meal.

The most recent update advises, since December 2012, there have been 27 new referrals to Taste for Life and ongoing, face to face, borough wide promotion of the service continues, through a variety of community locations.

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