

**18 November 2010**

## **Community Meals**

**Ward(s)**                      All

**Portfolios:**    Cllr B McCracken – Social Care & Inclusion

### **Executive Summary:**

Community Meals is currently a commissioned service, with the existing contract in place since 7<sup>th</sup> January 2008. The provider delivering the contract is Sodexo Healthcare Services Limited, based on a 3 year plus option to extend a further 2 years. The contract is a cost and volume contract. The contract remit is the delivery of frozen or hot meals, hire of freezers and microwaves and includes the delivery of a culturally appropriate meals provision. Also factored into the contract is the undertaking of safe and well checks, at the point of meal delivery. Sodexo undertake income recovery directly, however, the Council retains debt management responsibility.

The service is subsidised, where the service user pays a contribution of £3.10 per meal and the Council contributes £3.28 per hot meal (these figures are based on a price banding system – which links total number of meals delivered). Throughout the life of the contract the total service uptake has continued to be around 420 service users.

The budgeted cost to the Council of supplying meals through Sodexo in 2009/10 was £680 175 and budgeted income from service users for same period was £255 54. Thus giving a net cost to the Council of £360 791 during 2009/10.

Currently, negotiations are in progress with the current meals provider in relation to contract extensions. Alongside these negotiations, a community model of delivery is being developed. The principles behind the community model are as follows: service provision and delivery is localised, with provision via Walsall's community and voluntary sector; the mode of delivery is one which provides the citizen with a range of options, including transportation and support to attend a local lunch club; support within a citizen's home to enable meal preparation (this could include shopping for groceries), provision of a cooked or frozen meal.

The emphasis of this model is one that prioritises the importance of a nutritional meal, but one that acknowledges this meal should be delivered in the context of person's overall well being, which includes socialisation, support around the home to continue to live independently and the ability to access a range of services within

the local community. The emphasis is on empowering citizens to live independently in their own home.

Additionally, a commitment has been given to install lifeline equipment in the homes of current meals service users, so as to ensure in the unlikely event of an emergency, the person has access to an immediate call for assistance. The telecare service is staffed by Walsall Council officers 24 hours per day, 7 days per week who will immediately respond to the emergency call being raised.

A process of reviewing all existing service users in receipt of community is being led by Assessment and Care Management.

### ***Reason for scrutiny:***

The reasons for scrutiny are to provide a progress update following Cabinet agreement to continue negotiations with current provider in relation to contract extension and approval to develop a community model.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1. Continue to support to the community model development*

### **Background papers:**

Not applicable

### ***Resource and legal considerations:***

Considered and potential impacts are as follows:

- Reduction on Council spend, as the service ceases to be a commissioned service;
- An opportunity for voluntary and community sector to diversify business interests, work in partnership and develop direct provider relationships with citizens of the borough
- Supports the Adult Social Care transformation agenda
- Provides the opportunity for all citizens across the borough to access a community based service
- Opportunity for community associations to expand currently service delivery
- Development of a service for the citizens of the borough, which has greater flexibility

### ***Citizen impact:***

Impact on the public:

- The opportunity to access a greater range of services provided within their local community;
- Commitment that no current service user will be left without access to a meal;
- Through the installation of telecare equipment, access to 24 hour emergency support
- Currently, approximately 10% of adult social care service users access the meals service and a significant proportion of these user access meals as single service. The development of community model of delivery would enable a greater number of citizens to access this service.

### ***Environmental impact:***

The development of a more localised mode of service delivery would have a positive environmental impact

### ***Performance management:***

The increased targeting and development of localised services will ensure that more citizens are able to access services at times of their lives that they require the service and for the duration that is citizen led. Additionally, efficiencies are realised as the Council ceases to directly commission a community meals service.


### ***Equality Implications:***

An equality impact assessment is currently underway with input from the Equalities Team, which considers areas such as demographical issues, accessibility and socio-economic areas.

### ***Consultation:***

- Procurement
- Social Care Assessment and Care Management
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Neighbourhood Community Officer Team

### ***Contact Officer:***

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