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18 January 2011

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member (Community Services) – Councillor O'Boyle

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Director of Community Services

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Consultation on Promoting Independence through Home Meal Provision

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

The Council has a statutory duty to make arrangements for the provision of home meals to support disabled people, who meet the Council's eligibility criteria (currently critical and substantial under Guidance on Eligibility Criteria for Adult Social Care 2010) to remain in their own homes. The personalisation agenda focuses on ensuring that people have access to information, advice and support to meet their nutritional needs and having more choice and control over their lives and the way care and support services are arranged.

In continuing to implement the personalisation agenda, the Council wants to ensure that people in Coventry are easily able to understand the range of options that are available to them to meet their nutritional needs and how much this may cost irrespective of eligibility.

Currently home meals are provided in-house. The Council has considered the current service and concluded that it offers limited choice and control for individuals, is inflexible and does not demonstrate value for money when compared against externally provided options. Over recent years there has been a significant reduction in take up of this service. It is recognised that for some people a home meals service is the only daily social contact and can also act as a monitoring service, alerting others if there is no response or a crisis.

The Council is considering a number of options for the future provision of home meals which will be determined once the consultation is complete. The proposal (subject to consultation) is that the service for existing users will remain unaffected, including the level of financial contribution towards the cost of home meals (£4.23 per meal). It is proposed that new people accessing the home meals service after the new arrangements are in place will pay the full cost of a meal.

This report is seeking permission to consult on the proposed changes to the future provision of home meals.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member is requested to approve a 12 week consultation period from 21 February 2011 until 15 May 2011.

**List of Appendices included:**

None

**Other useful background papers:**

None

**Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it, or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

**Report title:**

Consultation on Promoting Independence through Home Meal Provision

**1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons' Act 1970 places a statutory duty on local authorities to make arrangements for specific services to support disabled people to remain in their own homes, and the provision of meals whether in the home or elsewhere, is one of these duties.
- 1.2 The Council has a responsibility to support people who meet the Council's eligibility criteria (currently critical and substantial under Guidance on Eligibility Criteria for Adult Social Care 2010) to live as independently as possible and this includes ensuring that people have access to information, advice and support to meet their nutritional needs. The Council does not have a duty to purchase food for people.
- 1.3 Putting People First (2007) and the personalisation agenda focuses on supporting people to have more choice and control over their lives and the way care and support services are arranged.
- 1.4 As part of supporting people to meet their nutritional needs, a range of approaches are currently taken as follows:
  - Supporting people to make their own arrangements
  - Enablement to support an individual to regain or maintain skills to prepare, cook and eat a meal
  - The provision of home support to support a person to prepare, cook and eat a meal
  - The provision of delivered hot home meals
- 1.5 Home meals are currently provided in-house by the Council. The service provides meals for Chace residents (a hostel within the city), the home meals service and meals to some day centres. For people who have cultural dietary requirements, meals are currently bought in from an external provider and re-heated. Home meals are delivered by the City Services passenger transport team.
- 1.6 In recent years, the in-house service has experienced a significant reduction in demand. There is little choice and control for individuals, a limited menu choice with issues about quality and set delivery times. City Services undertake a regular survey of people receiving the home meals service. In November 2009 38% of people receiving the home meals service responded (92) and 67% of this group (62) considered the quality of meals was very good or good (this equates to 25% of the total number of people receiving home meals). There were many suggestions made for improving the meals.
- 1.7 The cost to the Council for each home meal is currently £10.32, and people using the service contribute £4.23 per meal, meaning that the Council subsidises the service. Our recent research has shown that an independent provider would charge between £5 and £6 for a hot delivered meal and between £3 and £4 for frozen meals. This would suggest that the current service does not represent good value for money.
- 1.8 It is recognised that for some people the home meals service is their main daily social contact and can also act as a monitoring service alerting others if there is no response or a crisis. For those people who are eligible under Guidance on Eligibility Criteria for Adult Social Care then this element is considered as part of the individual's Support Plan.

## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 In continuing to implement the personalisation agenda and support people to exercise more choice and control, the Council aims to ensure that there are an increased range of options available for people to meet their nutritional needs, irrespective of eligibility. Therefore this report is seeking permission to undertake a consultation, specifically in relation to the factors that will be important to people as part of future home meals provision. This will include the extent of menu choice, meal types including specialised meals, hot and frozen options, delivery times for meals and the role that the home meals service plays as a monitoring service. The Council is considering a number of options for the future provision of home meals which will be determined once the consultation is complete.
- 2.2 The key reasons for considering changing the way that home meals are provided to current and potential users of the service are:
- To support the delivery of the personalisation agenda in providing choice and control and better quality services for people in Coventry
  - To improve the quality of meals provided
  - To provide more flexible options in terms of increased menu choice and delivery times
  - To offer both hot and frozen meal options
  - To enable home meal options to be extended to all adults irrespective of eligibility, in line with the principles of personalisation, at no cost to the Council
  - To provide a financial saving to the Council
- 2.3 For existing users the level of their financial contribution towards the cost of their home meals (£4.23 per meal) will remain unaffected on a like for like basis. It is proposed that new people accessing home meals after new arrangements are in place will pay the full cost of a meal.
- 2.4 The consultation will seek the views of three groups of people as follows:
- Current users - letters will be sent to the 243 people who receive the home meals service, seeking views on how services can be improved and changed in order to better meet their needs and support agreed outcomes.
  - Potential future users who meet the Council's eligibility criteria - views will be sought from across the City including voluntary organisations and interest groups about potential future models of service and provision, to ensure our statutory responsibilities are met, that people's needs and outcomes are supported and that value for money services are commissioned.
  - Potential future users who do not meet the Council's eligibility criteria - views will be sought from the wider population about the future model of service and provision, to ensure that we provide access to a range of services and provision that support people with a well balanced and healthy food that people can choose to access independently, offering choice, control and good value.
- 2.5 The consultation will also provide the opportunity to give people in Coventry information and advice about the types of universal services that are or could be available to meet people's nutritional needs.

- 2.6 An analysis of the current users of the home meals service will be undertaken to identify levels of care, health condition, information about exit rates, etc. Individuals will be offered a home visit to review existing arrangements, respond to the consultation and ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to meet their nutritional needs. All of this work will help the Council to shape future arrangements.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 The consultation will comprise a 12 week period, including letters to existing users and voluntary organisations/interest groups, public meetings, information placed on the website, which will take place from 21 February 2011 until 15 May 2011.
- 3.2 Following the consultation a report will be presented to Cabinet in June 2011 proposing a new policy clearly setting out the Council's responsibilities and approach to meeting individual nutritional needs as part of changing the way the Council supports people through personalisation. The Cabinet report will also recommend implementation of the preferred delivery option for home meals.

### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 Decisions made by Cabinet will be implemented in January 2012.

### **5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services**

#### **5.1 Financial implications**

There are no financial implications associated with the consultation process itself. Following the consultation process, implementation of an externally provided home meals service would expect to deliver full year savings for the Council of £0.35m rising to £0.46m over time.

#### **5.2 Legal implications**

S29 National Assistance Act and S2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 places a statutory duty on the local authority to make arrangements for the provision for home meals to disabled persons meeting the eligibility whether in the home of elsewhere.

Consultation on the proposed changes to the policy will ensure that the Council gives due regard to eliminate any unlawful discrimination and promote equality.

### **6. Other implications**

None

#### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / LAA (or Coventry SCS)?**

N/A

#### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

N/A

### 6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

N/A

### 6.4 Equalities / EIA

An Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken during the consultation period.

### 6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

N/A

### 6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

N/A

#### Report author(s)

##### Name and job title:

Mark Godfrey, Assistant Director (Adults Social Care)  
Lisa Commane, Assistant Director (Special Projects Finance)

##### Directorate:

Community Services

##### Tel and email contact:

[mark.godfrey@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:mark.godfrey@coventry.gov.uk) Telephone: 024 7683 3402

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

<b>Contributor/approver name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Directorate or organisation</b>	<b>Date doc sent out</b>	<b>Date response received or approved</b>
<b>Contributors:</b>				
Amanda Carr	Assistant Director (Adults Social Care)	Community Services	6.1.11	6.1.11
Simon Brake	Assistant Director (Policy and Performance)	Community Services	5.1.11	6.1.11
<b>Names of approvers: (officers and members)</b>				
Finance: Ewan Dewar	Finance Manager Community Services	Finance and Legal Services	5.1.11	5.1.11
Legal: Julie Newman	Solicitor	Finance and Legal Services	22.12.10	6.1.11
Brian Walsh	Director of Community Services	Community Services	20.12.10	5.1.11
Cllr Jim O'Boyle	Cabinet Member (Community Services)		20.12.10	21.12.10

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