

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

9th February, 2011

Members Present: Councillor Foster
Councillor Lakha
Councillor Mrs Lucas (Chair)
Councillor Mulhall (Substitute for Councillor McNicholas)
Councillor M. Mutton
Councillor Noonan (Substitute for Councillor Taylor)
Councillor Ridley
Councillor Ruane
Councillor Sawdon
Councillor Walsh (Substitute for Councillor Lancaster)

Other Members Present: Councillor Duggins
Councillor O'Boyle

Employees Present: L. Commane (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
M. Coult (Chief Executive's Directorate)
M. Godfrey (Community Services Directorate)
J. Parry (Chief Executive's Directorate)
M Salmon (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
A. West (Chief Executive's Directorate)

Apologies: Councillor Lancaster
Councillor McNicholas
Councillor Taylor

Public Business

67. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

68. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2010, were signed as a true record.

69. Consideration of Call-in – Stage 2 – Consultation on Promoting Independence through Home Meal Provision

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community Services that had been considered by Cabinet Member (Community Services) (their Minute 34/10 refers) and was called in by Councillors Foster, Noonan and Dixon.

The report outlined the Council's statutory duty to make arrangements for the provision of home meals to support disabled people who met 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 focused on ensuring that people had access to information, advice and support to meet their nutritional needs and also more choice and control over their lives and the way care and support services were arranged. Under this agenda the Council wanted to ensure that people in Coventry were easily able to understand the range of options that were available to them to meet their nutritional needs and how much this may cost irrespective of eligibility.

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

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

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

The reason for the call-in was " To better understand exactly what pricing levels service users will be consulted on as a result of this decision."

The Call-in had been deemed valid by the Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on advice from the Assistant Director (Democratic Services) and in conjunction with the Council Solicitor/Assistant Director (Legal Services), the Call-in reason having met the requirements of the Council's Constitution Scrutiny Rules on the Call-in Procedure and the criteria decided by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.

Councillor Foster, a Member of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, Councillor Noonan, a co-opted Member of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee (attending this meeting as a substitute for Councillor Taylor) and Councillor Dixon were in attendance for consideration of the Call-in. Councillor Noonan spoke in support of the Call-in requesting that the maximum cost of home meals, not clearly identified within the Cabinet Member report, be set out in the consultation document.

The Cabinet Member (Community Services), the Assistant Director (Adult's Social care) and the Assistant Director (Special Projects Finance), who attended the meeting to respond to the matter, referred to a briefing note, circulated to the Committee in advance of the meeting, that provided background information to the issue and addressed matters raised by the Call-in. The Briefing Note confirmed the City Council's statutory duty to make arrangements for specific services to support disabled people to remain in their own homes and that the provision of meals, whether in the home or elsewhere, was one of these duties. They indicated that the current service was provided in house from the Chace kitchen and passenger transport. A review of the service as one strand of the Catering Fundamental Services Review had identified that the current service exhibited the following features:

- Limited choice and control for individuals which do not align with the principles of personalisation – and the service is currently only available for people who are eligible.
- Inflexible (small menu choice, set delivery times)
- Issues about quality
- Significant reduction in take up year on year
- High cost to Council/low Value for money

The current cost of producing and delivering a meal was £10.32. Existing users contributed £4.23 a meal and the Council subsidised the remainder at a total annual cost of £467k. Soft market testing had identified that external providers could provide hot delivered meals for between £5 and £6 per meal. Frozen meals could be provided for a lower price of between £3 and £4. It was unlikely that the current in-house service could reduce costs to a level that was comparable with external providers. There were no proposed changes to existing users in that their contribution of £4.23 will remain the same and they would receive a meal on a like for like basis. It was proposed that new people accessing home meals would pay the full cost of the delivered meal after new arrangements were in place. It was not proposed that new users would pay £10.32 per meal.

Following the consultation a separate report on options would be presented to Cabinet, this was likely to recommend putting in place new arrangements to externalise the service. This would mean that the full cost new users would pay under the new arrangements would be determined through a procurement process. It was anticipated that the cost to new users would be substantially cheaper than the full cost of the current in-house service and was likely to be in the region of £5 - £6 per meal.

Consultation of these types of changes was normally carried out in advance of a formal decision to change policy. The consultation was planned to last for 12 weeks, starting on 21 February 2011 until 15 May 2011 and would focus on what was important for current and potential users and citizens in meeting their nutritional needs. Specifically this would cover how services could be improved, potential future models of service provision and costs for home meals. Existing users would be sent letters and would be offered a visit to assist with reviewing existing arrangements and responding to the consultation. Three public meetings were planned to take place on 8 March 12noon-2pm, 10 March 6pm-8pm and 17 March 12noon-2pm to be held in Lower Hall, Central Methodist Hall. Views would also be sought from voluntary organisations and interest groups from across the City.

Members questioned the Cabinet Member and officers on the matter and discussed, at some length, issues relating to the Call-in and the proposals for the future provision of home meals, including: costs, delivery, nutrition and menu choice. They considered the call-in and voted on the decision as follows:

Ask the Cabinet Member (Community Services) to reconsider the decision, requesting that officers revisit the proposals with a view to providing a more detailed consultation.

6 Members against and 4 Members for.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee concur with the decision of the Cabinet Member (Community Services) to approve a 12 week consultation period from 21 February 2011 until 15 May 2011.

70. Transformation Programme – Project Monitoring and Risk Management

Further to Minute 62/10, the Committee considered a briefing and received a presentation from the Transformation Programme Officer that provided a further update, following on from an update to the Committee on 19th January 2011, on the progress being made in delivering the Council's abc Transformation Programme and the management of political risks.

The Council's abc Programme consisted of a number of fundamental service reviews, that were following the Council's FSR methodology, set out in detail in an appendix to the report, as follows:

- Stage 1 – Assess: understanding what the current service provision looks like, its costs, service levels and performance.
- Stage 2 – Visioning: creating a high level vision for a future service delivery model, which seeks to improve customer service and reduce costs.
- Stage 3 – Construct: building the detailed design for the new service model, which reflects the vision agreed in stage 2.
- Stage 4 – Go Live: implementing the detailed design, and operating the new service model in real time.

The abc Programme Office maintained close contact with the project managers for each review, sat on the project team and project board meetings, and co-ordinated a monthly progress report to the Transformation Board. It also maintained and managed a Programme risk register.

The abc Programme was one of the Council's key approaches to meeting the challenges being faced by the whole public sector at the current time. The Council's medium term financial plan anticipated significant savings to help the Council balance its budget. A summary of the progress of current reviews, detailed in a further appendix to the report, identified the current stage of each review and the expected completion date. The Programme comprised a number of cross-cutting reviews, for which the outcomes would have an impact on most or all Directorates, e.g. i-Cov, and Admin and Business Support, and also a number of service specific reviews, for which outcomes would be limited to a single Directorate, e.g. Personalisation and Catering Services. The unifying factor was that both types of review had as their over-arching objectives service improvement and cost reduction.

The Transformation Programme Officer presented a Risk Analysis Summary for the current reviews which was based on four major risks that needed to be assessed and managed on an ongoing basis:

- The Acceptability Risk: in looking fundamentally at current service provision, and considering how best services might be improved and costs reduced in the future, which on occasion might lead to options which would reduce current service provision, there is a risk that Members will find some proposals unacceptable.
- The Implementation Risk: having determined a detailed design for a service going forward, which is acceptable to Members, there is a risk that technical issues, or issues arising from consultation with staff and their Trades Unions, will delay implementation or require a re-think of the service design.
- The Benefits Realisation Risk: the overall outcome of each review is to improve customer service and reduce costs. Any unplanned change or delay at any stage of the project creates the risk of a knock-on effect on the timing of the implementation of

the new service model, and the achievement of savings (on which the medium term financial plans are relying).

- The Reputational Risk: if a new service design is implemented following a fundamental service review, and there are operational difficulties after "go live", there is a risk that the Council's reputation will suffer.

The Committee noted the summary progress monitoring report and considered the risks associated with the Programme. They requested that the next update on the Transformation Programme should include information relating to the level of savings achieved by the first seven Reviews and that the Committee be given the information provided to the Transformation Board on tracking the progress of certain Reviews. They agreed that it would be useful to receive the Risk Analysis Summary for Reviews with future Transformation Programme Progress Reports and also that Scrutiny Members should be involved in the evaluation for reviews.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The next update on the Transformation Programme to include information relating to the level of savings achieved by the first seven Reviews.**
- (2) Scrutiny Members to be involved in the evaluation process for reviews.**
- (3) The Committee be given the information provided to the Transformation Board on tracking the progress of certain reviews.**
- (4) A Risk Analysis Summary for Reviews be attached to future Transformation Programme Progress Reports.**

71. Report Back on the Work of Outside Bodies – Grace Academy Foundation

The Committee noted a report back from Councillor Kelly on the work of the Grace Academy Foundation for the year 2009/2010 including details of her attendance at meetings as the City Council's representative on the Board.

The Grace Academy was an independent school, sponsored by the Grace Foundation Charity, for 11-19 year old students in North Coventry. Its status enabled flexibility in its organisation, curriculum and teaching. Cllr Kelly, as the City Council's representative on the Board, had attended three meetings of the Board, held in May 2009, October 2009 and March 2010, several governing body meetings and other meetings at the school. The attendance by a City Council representative had assisted in establishing a good working relationship with the Academy and had facilitated exchanges of information between the academy and the Local Authority. There was no remuneration for this post.

72. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2010/2011

The Committee noted the Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2010/11.

73. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

74. Meeting Evaluation

The Board evaluated the meeting. Comments given by members, that included that the meeting had been well structured and the Transformation Programme Update presentation had been very informative, would be used to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of future meetings.

75. Any Other Business

The Chair took the opportunity to remind Members of the Committee about an Administration and Business Support Services abc Review Briefing Event that had been scheduled for Wednesday, 16th February, 2011, at 2.00 p.m. in the Dame Ellen Terry Suite, which all Members were invited to attend. The event, arranged in response to Members concerns that they were not receiving enough information about the abc Review Programme, would provide details of the Reviews which were likely to have the greatest impact on the way services were delivered.