

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance)	Executive Cabinet	20 March 2014

## REVIEW OF THE MEALS ON WHEELS PILOT

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report is presented to provide the Executive Cabinet with an overview of the findings of the recent evaluation of the Meals on Wheels pilot service. It provides recommendations on the way forward and seeks approval to undertake a procurement exercise to enable the continuation of the service.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that the Executive Cabinet agree;
  - a. To approve the proposal for the continuation of the Meals on Wheels Service subject to successful completion of the pilot period on the 4 April 2014.
  - b. To approve the completion of a procurement exercise, the proposed approach and associated evaluation criteria.
  - c. To give the Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance authority to approve the preferred provider.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. This report provides a summary of the background to the 6 month Meals on Wheels pilot service and the outcomes of the recent 10 week evaluation. It then goes on to outline potential options and proposals for the continuation of the service, subject to the successful conclusion of the pilot. The report outlines the costs and benefits of this option and also details the proposed approach to procurement. The report seeks approval for a number of recommendations and next steps.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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<b>Reason</b> Please bold as appropriate	<b>1, a change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more</b>	<b>2, a contract worth £100,000 or more</b>
	3, a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more	4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more

		wards
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**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

4. It is estimated that the overall value of the Meals on Wheels contract over a period of 4 years will be worth more than £100k, therefore it is important, in order to conform to procurement rules and demonstrate transparency that Member approval is obtained.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

5. The alternative option would be to let the pilot run to its conclusion without any consideration of future service provision. This has been rejected on the basis that the pilot has clearly demonstrated a demand and a need for the service with benefits for both the customer, the organisation and wider partners.

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

6. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	x	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities	x	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	x

**BACKGROUND**

7. The Meals on Wheels pilot was implemented as part of a larger piece of work to address social isolation amongst older people in Chorley by connecting communities through food. This work identified that some people, due to chronic health or mobility problems, will be unable to attend activities in the community. Therefore some provision is needed to support the most vulnerable residents, to ensure that they get a hot meal and some company during the day.
8. The Meals on Wheels project looked to develop a pilot Meals on Wheels service, building on current provision by developing a service that not only delivers hot meals to people’s homes but also provides some extra support and safety checks, along with a level of company and social interaction. The service was targeted at the more vulnerable members of the community who need more support and are most at risk of becoming socially isolated.
9. The following outcomes were the intended impact of running the pilot;
- Meals delivered hot to residents who may be otherwise unable to cook for themselves
  - Affordable and accessible meals delivered at a convenient time
  - Better health outcomes by having a balanced diet with nutritious meals
  - Safe and sound check – providing additional support around the home, some company and peace of mind for next of kin
  - Vulnerable older residents able to live independently in their own homes
  - Option for additional support such as home shopping service
10. A subsidised service model was agreed with a set subsidy amount of £1 per person, per day for 3 days a week, towards a meal or a meal and a dessert. This brought the overall cost to the customer down to £2.25 or £2.75 for a meal and dessert.

11. The pilot was to be open to residents of Western Parishes as those most at risk of social isolation and targeted at customers who may be particularly vulnerable. A number of customers from other rural wards such as Brinscall were also targeted.
12. The 20 week pilot commenced in November 2013 with an evaluation to be completed after 10 weeks and then on conclusion of the pilot after 20 weeks on the 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

## **SERVICE EVALUATION**

13. The evaluation sought to understand the response to the pilot, the current user profile and the performance of the service. It also looked to gather some initial feedback on future proposals for the service following the conclusion of the pilot. The evaluation method comprised of a customer satisfaction survey to all of the subsidised Meals on Wheels service users and also a review of key performance indicators collated by the provider organisation.

The evaluation report is included at appendix 1. Key findings from the evaluation are:

- To date, approximately 38 customers have taken up the Meals on Wheels service which reflects prior research that suggested average national take up of around 2% of the population aged over 65.
  - Overall, the service has been very well received and levels of customer satisfaction are high across the board; 100% of customers stated that they were very or fairly satisfied with 78% very satisfied. The majority of customers would choose to continue with the current service if it was available.
  - The pilot reached key customers within the target group and achieved objectives in relation to supporting a feeling of reassurance with 100% of customers stating that they felt reassured to know that someone would be visiting to deliver the meal.
  - Customers accessing the service ranged from those who were still relatively independent but in need of some care and assistance, through to a number of others who had more critical and complex needs and may otherwise remain unknown to service providers.
  - In terms of the cost of the meals, customers indicate that they are happy with the current subsidised rate and a proportion would consider making a greater contribution to the cost if necessary.
14. The evaluation puts forward a number of options for the future of the service following the conclusion of the pilot which include: discontinuing the service, continuing the current subsidised pilot in limited areas, or extending the service to cover the entire borough. The evaluation also considers the level of subsidy which could either be removed, remain the same or be reduced.

## **PROPOSAL FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE SERVICE**

15. The pilot has shown significant benefits and positive outcomes for those customers who have been involved through improved health and wellbeing as well as increased access to wider support services. Importantly, it provides a key early intervention mechanism for customers who may be at risk of longer term, more serious issues linked to being or becoming socially isolated.
16. Whilst this type of provision would usually fall within the remit of upper tier authority social care provision, there are benefits to the council of supporting this service as it provides the opportunity to engage with a key target population, coordinate local partnership provision and prevent more complex issues with more significant downstream costs for the Council and its partners.

17. Subject to the successful conclusion of the pilot, the proposal is to extend the service to the entire borough. The service provision will be based on the same model used within the pilot whereby the service is outsourced to a third party provider responsible for the preparation and delivery meals with the council subsidising the cost of each meal to a fixed amount. The service should also include the additional services included within the pilot such as customer interaction, general assistance with basic duties and a safe and sound check.
18. Given positive customer feedback in relation to the cost and also to ensure that the service is as widely available as possible, the proposal is to offer a subsidy of 50p per meal rather than £1 per meal. The total cost annually to subsidise the service is estimated at between £25,000 and £30,000 depending on the level of take up; this will support between 350 and 400 customer to receive hot meals. The contract for the service will be subject to a formal procurement process in order to identify a suitable provider.
19. Budgetary provision for the Meals on Wheels service was made in the 2014/15 budget, approved by Council on the 25th February 2014.

## **PROCUREMENT APPROACH**

20. The contract will be offered for one year with the option to extend annually. Where a contract has the option to be extended on a recurring basis, the contract value is taken over a period of 4 years. This brings the total contract value to over £100,000 and makes it a high value procurement.
21. The procurement process will be an open advertisement through The Chest, asking for tenders from providers who can deliver the service as set out in the specification. An evaluation team will then assess and evaluate the tenders with further clarification meetings as necessary.
22. Tenders will be assessed and evaluated using the criteria of 60% quality and 40% cost. The quality criteria will be assessed using the information that tenderers provide in their method statements and a taste test may also be requested. Evaluation criteria will cover the following proposed elements:
  - Supplier delivery model for provision of a hot meal delivery service with additional provision of basic household duties including mobilisation arrangements
  - Supplier knowledge and experience of dealing with vulnerable older people including Safeguarding policies and procedures
  - Ability to deliver outcomes related to health and wellbeing including supporting people to remain independent
  - Ability to meet the diverse and individual needs of customers including specific dietary and lifestyle requirements
  - Ability to deliver outputs related to service performance including service quality and customer satisfaction
  - Quality and performance monitoring arrangements
  - Food preparation, storage and transport procedures in line with current legislation
  - Hygiene control procedures and compliance with current legislation

Note that these criteria may be subject to change as part of specification development.

23. Subject to the procurement process, it is anticipated that the contract will be awarded to start at the beginning of May 2014. Given the timescales and need to get the service up and running with minimal break in provision for those already receiving the service,

approval is requested for the decision on the preferred provider to be delegated to the Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance. Delegated authority is also requested to approve any necessary extension to the existing pilot service in order to ensure continuity of service until any new service is in place.

24. If these proposals and recommendations are agreed, the following next steps will apply;

Action	Outline timescale
Develop 'invitation to tender' documentation for the contract and advertise on the chest	March
Evaluation of tenders received and decisions on preferred provider to be taken by Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance and Executive Member for People	April
Contracts to be developed and signed for service delivery to begin on 1 <sup>st</sup> May	April

### IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

25. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	x	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	x	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

### COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

26. The details of the financial implications were considered in the 2014/15 budget papers presented to Council in February. A provision of £30,000 was made in the base budget and should the recommendation be accepted this budget would fund the continuation of the scheme.

### COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

27. The processes and proposals within the report are compliant with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and national legislation

GARY HALL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Victoria Willett	5248	21 <sup>st</sup> February	Meals on Wheels

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Special council budget papers	25 <sup>th</sup> February	Council papers	<a href="https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s42622/APP%20C1%202014-15%20Budget%20Investment%20Mandates.pdf">https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s42622/APP%20C1%202014-15%20Budget%20Investment%20Mandates.pdf</a> page 15

