

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health
Date:	22 November 2017
Title:	Meals on Wheels Service
Report From:	Director of Adults' Health and Care

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health approval to modify, by extension, the three Meals on Wheels contracts for a period of six months from April 2018. The estimated value of these modifications total £1.3 million over the extended period.

2. Contextual Information

2.1. The current contracts were devised to reduce variation caused by the number of different approaches and services across Hampshire. Prior to 2012 the services operated differently in parts of the county. District council areas had different providers, a varying number of days that hot meals were provided and different amounts of meal choice. There were different charging rates and levels of financial support from the different councils. This resulted in variation in quality and customers paying different prices for their meals.

2.2. The existing contracts provide a Hampshire wide service to supply and deliver Meals on Wheels 365 days a year. These contracts are due to end 30 March 2018.

2.3. On average there are 1,780 active customers receiving Meals on Wheels from 1 to 7 days a week. The service primarily delivers a two course hot lunchtime meal and drivers are trained to carry out a well-being check in addition to delivering the meal. Customers can also request delivery of an afternoon tea.

2.4. For some people the service assists in meeting an eligible need to manage and maintain nutrition while for others it is a preventative service that helps maintain independence.

2.5. In April 2017 the contracts became self financing, with each customer paying £4.55 for their meal.

- 2.6. Meals are delivered to people who are struggling to manage and maintain nutrition. In addition, the provider supplies a small number of meals directly to people who independently contract with the provider.
- 2.7. The majority of referrals for this service are made by frontline care practitioners, including teams seeking to discharge people from hospital.
- 2.8. It is recognised that the Meals on Wheels service contributes to ensuring that people living in their own homes maintain independence. It prevents an increase in dependency, potentially resulting in more expensive care packages being required. It is also recognised that the service provides much needed human contact to people who might otherwise be totally isolated.
- 2.9. As the service provides a hot meal that does not need to be heated, this helps to minimise the need for lunch time visits by care staff to support an individual to prepare and eat a meal.
- 2.10. The inclusion of the welfare check ensures that wellbeing and safety concerns are identified and action is taken in a timely fashion. Drivers frequently report concerns to the relevant Hampshire County Council team or call for emergency services where necessary.

3. Single Tender Approval Rationale

- 3.1. The current contracts cease in March 2018. The proposed six month extension would provide adequate time to undergo a rigorous process to identify the most appropriate future service as well as follow appropriate procurement processes.
- 3.2. Work has commenced to identify future service requirements and the most appropriate service delivery model. The solution will need to take into account the changes which have occurred over the last five years. These include the evolution of the service, changes in the financial landscape as well as the needs of people who might be eligible for the service.
- 3.3. The next iteration of the service specification can not be designed in isolation. It needs to be developed in line with the County Council's wider demand management and prevention strategy alongside an option appraisal. In order to ensure that there is continuity of service, it is proposed that the current contracts are modified to extend the term for an additional period of six months. The extension will not alter the nature of the contract.
- 3.4. The modification would enable support to be maintained and enable the service to be delivered without disruption to eligible people. It will also provide sufficient time for the wider dependency of the demand management and prevention strategy to inform the future specification.

4. Engagement

- 4.1. In order to understand the provider perspective, an event took place on 4 September 2017. This gave an opportunity to hear concerns, ideas and questions, as well as offer an opportunity for providers to consider working

more collaboratively. It has also helped to inform the service specification and understand the providers' perspectives.

- 4.2. Specific issues were raised by providers which included; inclusion to under 55 year olds in regard to likely volumes, increased caloric amounts and risk assessments; assumptions as to the likely growth of customers; price point and sensitivity of customers to increases; quality standards and the most appropriate bodies to use as reference; key performance indicators and monitoring.

5. Financial Implications and Risks

- 5.1. In line with Transformation to 2017 (Tt2017) savings, any proposal will require no additional investment from the County Council. People who purchase meals on wheels will continue to be required to pay the provider directly for their meal. This includes people referred by the Adults' Health and Care Department.
- 5.2. Extending the current contracts will provide continuity of service with little or no disruption to existing customers and staff. The current terms and conditions will apply. As the lifetime of the current contracts are coming to an end, the market is expecting an imminent procurement process. However a 6 month delay offers an opportunity to consider ideas expressed by providers and reflects a willingness to listen.
- 5.3. The County Council held a provider engagement session at the start of September 2017 which was attended by only two providers. This suggests that there is only limited interest in the opportunity at the present time. There would be high infrastructure requirements to deliver this opportunity meaning a six month opportunity would not be attractive to the market.
- 5.4. In order to ensure that the service continues to be self financing, it is important that the volume of people using the service is maintained. The contract allows for an inflationary meal price rise each April. It is likely that there will be an inflationary increase in meal price from April 2018. This may have a negative impact on customers and a number could cease using the service or reduce the number of days that they receive meals. Should the volume fall significantly, the provider may not be able to supply meals without financial support from the County Council. Current experience suggests that a modest increase will not result in sufficient reductions and is unlikely to require a reintroduction of a subsidy.
- 5.5. The Meals on Wheels service is a relatively high profile service within the community. It is held in high regard by customers, their families and the public. It has strong links to the demand management and prevention agenda and any decisions will need to address community concerns.

6. HR Implications

- 6.1. By providing the Meals on Wheels service under contract to the County Council there would be no Hampshire County Council staff issues involved with this decision.
- 6.2. As the proposed modification extends the current provider's contract there will be no transfer of undertaking (TUPE) issues.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1. Under the Care Act 2014 the County Council has a duty to meet a person's eligible needs including managing and maintaining nutrition. In addition, the County Council has a general duty to promote an individual's well-being and must have a regard to the importance of preventing or delaying the development of needs for care and support.
- 7.2. Separately the County Council must provide or arrange for the provision of services, or take other steps to contribute towards preventing or delaying the development of needs for care and support by adults and carers in its area.
- 7.3. The statutory guidance under the Care Act states that local authorities must ensure that a person's income is not reduced below a specified level after charges have been deducted. The purpose of this minimum income guarantee is to promote independence and social inclusion and ensure that people have sufficient funds to meet basic needs such as purchasing food.
- 7.4. It is for the decision maker to have due regard to the need to: eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.5. Legal advice is contained in the exempt appendix.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.1. In carrying out the Equalities Impact Assessment, those characteristics which relate specifically to the people using Meals on Wheels service have been considered. These are age, gender and disability. The impact of this proposal will be positive for all 3 characteristics. The proposed 6 month extension will prevent any disruption to the current customers while a future service is being developed.
- 8.2. Disability is of high relevance to the service as the majority of people have physical and mental disability, including dementia, sensory loss and frailty. Of those, a proportion will be unable to prepare a meal and require assistance to manage and maintain their own nutrition.
- 8.3. It is acknowledged that the service has a disproportionate impact on women. This is due to the fact that currently there are more women than men using the Meals on Wheels service. However, it is also acknowledged that many

widowed men use the service as their spouses had historically supported them.

- 8.4. Currently the majority of customers are over 55 years of age, with physical or mental disabilities. Over 64% of customers are aged 75 or over, with 36% aged between 55 and 75. Any changes in provision will have a high impact on this group of people.
- 8.5. The Meals on Wheels service is able to provide meals which meet religious requirements and beliefs. Any customers who require these meals will also experience no disruption while a future service is being developed.
- 8.6. There will be a positive impact with regard to rurality. The Meals on Wheels service operates across the full geographical jurisdiction of Hampshire County Council, so a proportion of customers live in rural areas.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1. That the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health approves the modification of the existing contracts to extend the Meals on Wheels service by 6 months, to commence 1 April 2018.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Strategic Plan**

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	no
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	no

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Community Meals Service reference 3921	3921	29.06.12
Proposed Price Increase Meals on Wheels	8051	17.01.17
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>		<u>Date</u>
Care Act 2014		April 2014
Care and Support (Eligibility Criteria) Regulations		2015
Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health		September 2016 (revised)

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

NONE

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1 The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2 Equalities Impact Assessment

In carrying out the Equalities Impact Assessment, those characteristics that relate specifically to the people using Meals on Wheels service have been considered. These are age, gender and disability.

Age: Positive impact

The service is used by eligible residents aged 55 years and over 64% of active Meals on Wheels customers are aged 75 or over, with 36% aged between 55 and 75. The proposed 6 month extension will prevent any disruption to the current customers while a future service is being developed.

Disability: Positive impact

Disability is of high relevance to the service because the majority of people who access the service have either a physical or mental disability, including dementia, sensory condition and frailty. Of these, a proportion will be unable to prepare a meal for themselves and require assistance to manage and maintain their own nutrition. The proposed 6 month extension will prevent any disruption to the current customers while a future service is being developed.

Gender: Positive impact

It is acknowledged that this proposal would have a disproportionate impact on women. This is due to the fact that there are more women than men using the Meals on Wheels service. However, it is also acknowledged that many widowed men use the service because their spouses had historically supported them. The proposed 6 month extension will prevent any disruption to the current customers while a future service is being developed.

Rurality: Medium Impact

The Meals on Wheels service operates across the full geographical jurisdiction of HCC. Therefore, a proportion of customers live in rural areas. The proposed 6 month extension will prevent any disruption to the current customers while a future service is being developed.

Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1 No impact has been identified

Climate Change:

- a) How what does is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

No impact has been identified

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No impact has been identified