

CWOP/40/10

Policy & Scrutiny Committee Community Wellbeing and Older People

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Meals on Wheels Service Background

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a brief overview of the Meals on Wheels Service in Essex.

Background

The 3 year Meals Service contract with WRVS commenced in October 2007 and was extended for 2 years (no break clause) from the 1st October 2010. Based on current usage the revenue contract value to WRVS is worth £15M over the 5 years with £6M value remaining. This revenue level results in a current ECC subsidy level of £1M per annum. From the 1st October 2010 the cost of a standard meal is £5.48 increasing to £5.58 from the 1st October 2011 £5.58

What the Meals service provides

- Hot and frozen meals are provided 365 days of the year across Essex to 1663 vulnerable adults. 99% of the meals provided are hot, with only 13 service users receiving a frozen meal.
- The number of service users receiving a meal has remained consistent over the last 18 months.
- The split of service users across the county is shown below.
- The meals provided fulfil diverse dietary and ethnic requirements.
- Families are given reassurance that a health and wellbeing check is provided by WRVS. This includes for example:
 - raising an alarm if the service user does not answer their door
 - assists service users in the event of falls
 - ensure that services user are warm in winter and hydrated in hot weather.
- Service users have contact with drivers when the meal is delivered, providing some social interaction

Benefits of a Meal Service

The Meals Service is not a statutory service, however, it is positioned to provide a alternative to low level domically support. The majority of service users receiving a meal service have significant needs and often the meal service is the only service they receive. This service includes a 'safe and well check' which includes elements of a home support visit.

If the Council ceased the provision of a meal service they would need to provide alternative means for the service users to avail themselves of a meal as well as ensuring the service users continued safety and wellbeing.

Existing Plans for the Meals Service

It is planned to review the need for this service and how it is operated post October 2012 and consider possible future procurement options. Members will be involved in this process.

Service User Distribution

Basildon District	181
Braintree District	141
Brentwood District	110
Castle Point District	121
Chelmsford District	221
Colchester District	157
Epping Forest District	137
Harlow District	39
Maldon District	90
Rochford District	128
Tendring District	197
Uttlesford District	141
Total	1663