

REPORT FOR: Decision by Leader of the Council

Subject: Provision of Meals on Wheels Service to the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

Responsible Officer: Paul Walker, Corporate Director, Community

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Graham Henson, Leader of the Council

Key Decision: Yes, because the Council will be making savings which are significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates

Power to be exercised: Paragraph 3 of the Appendix to Executive Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution

Exempt: No, except for Appendices 2 and 3 to this report which are exempt under paragraphs 2, 3 and 5 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) in that they include information likely to reveal the identity of an individual, information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and others, and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

Urgent/Non Urgent: Urgent, because the Council needs to commence statutory consultations with affected staff and the service needs to commence on 8 April 2019

Wards affected: All Wards

Enclosures:

- Appendix 1 – Business Case
- Appendix 2 – Business Case (Exempt information)
- Appendix 3 – Financial Analysis (Exempt information)

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the proposals for delivering a meals on wheels service to the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

Recommendations:

The Leader of the Council is requested to:

- Grant approval to enter into a legal agreement with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham to provide a meals on wheels service.
- Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Community, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, to finalise the proposals in this report.

Reasons:

- To support shared service objectives that enhance sustainability of the Council's current meals on wheels service.
- The decision cannot wait until the March Cabinet because the Council needs to commence statutory consultations with affected staff and the service needs to commence on 8 April 2019.

Section 2 – Report

1.1 During the 2016/17 financial year the meals on wheels service was transferred from the People Directorate to the Community Directorate. The service had seen dwindling number of meals being delivered and efforts have been made to ensure it could be sustainable service. The service was reviewed by the commercialisation arm of the Community Directorate and was the subject of a January 2017 business case that outlined that service sustainability was intrinsically linked to an expansion of the service on two fronts i.e. increasing the meals delivered in Harrow but also engaging in shared service or contractual arrangements with other boroughs.

1.2 Over the last financial year there have been discussions with other boroughs that had outsourced their meals on wheels service. This was done to explore opportunities for operating under different delivery arrangements.

Options considered

The following options were considered:

- (a) Maintain the status quo delivering a service to Harrow only- this option was rejected as this would not meet the objectives around sustainable services.
- (b) Expand the service to other boroughs- this is the recommended option as it ensures the sustainability of the current service.

Current situation

Harrow has engaged with a number of boroughs to explore opportunities for expanding its meals on wheels service. This has included Harrow being signposted on a number of boroughs' CarePlace systems to raise awareness of the Harrow offer for meals service.

In November 2018, Harrow entered into discussions with Hammersmith and Fulham Council whose external meals and wheels contract ends on the 7th April 2019. These discussions have led to the proposals for Harrow to deliver this service to Hammersmith and Fulham from 8th April 2019. The details of the proposal are set out in the appendices. This also sets out the high level discussions between Harrow and one other borough.

Implications of the Recommendation

The proposals require Harrow to undertake the preparation and delivery of 120 meals per day to Hammersmith and Fulham. The details of the resources required and the costs associated with the service are set out in the Exempt Appendices 2 and 3.

Below are some key aspects of the proposal:

- Meals are prepared fresh and then packaged for delivery
- Meals can be delivered hot, chilled or frozen to request
- Can scale upwards the number of meals that may be required
- Online booking system that facilitates out of hours bookings and payments
- Will respond to queries within 24 hours
- All of Harrow Commercial Services drivers are enhanced disclosure and barring services (DBS) checked, and are customer service trained.
- There is a 4 week rotational menu available on the Harrow Commercial Services website

Performance issues

There are a range of performance indicators that will govern this arrangement. These are linked to ensuring that the service is delivered to and meets the expectations of those using the service.

Environmental Impact

The meals will be prepared using the same facilities that are used for the Harrow Service. The delivery into Hammersmith and Fulham will be undertaken using new vehicles that are 100% electric and therefore support the Council's objectives as set out in its Climate Change Strategy.

Data Protection Implications

The proposals will involve holding personal information in terms of names and addresses for those individuals to whom the service is to be delivered. The consent required will be obtained from the individuals prior to the start of the service.

Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? Yes

The main risks associated with the proposals are :

- Food quality: Meals are arriving warm/cold - This is being mitigated by ensuring that food is kept in correct containers and regenerated in the tried and tested fashion. Periodic quality inspections (e.g. monitoring temperature of food) to be carried out as part of recorded QC process.
- Food quality: Reports of food poisoning received - Harrow will maintain 5 star food hygiene rating.
- Back office: Booking system crash / IT failure - Harrow will ensure that there is a separate back-up of delivery schedule / adapt Business Continuity Plan to ensure back up procedure is in place to maintain service delivery.
- Service: Meals arrive late - This is mitigated by route scheduling designed to ensure delivery slots are maintained. Regular review of journey times and travel patterns to ensure consistent service.
- Service: Meals not delivered / wrong meal delivered – This is mitigated by utilising written processes and QC procedures to ensure meals are delivered correctly, and orders fulfilled. Automated booking system with additional QC checks should ensure service reliability.
- Service: Complaints about staff - All staff will have enhanced DBS checks, and be trained in customer service protocol, and be in uniform. Line manager will maintain regular QC checks. Staff will have regular

appraisals, and robust complaints procedure will be in place if any incidents arise.

- Transport: Vehicle breakdowns, vehicles off the road - Harrow operates a modern fleet including state of the art electric vehicles. All vehicles are in well maintained order, and back-up vehicles are available if regular fleet is off the road for servicing.

Procurement Implications

Any procurement activities associated with the proposal will be undertaken in line with public procurement rules and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Legal Implications

Under paragraph 3 of the Appendix to Executive Procedure Rules in Part 4D of the Constitution when an urgent decision needs to be taken in circumstances where to wait until the next scheduled meeting of the Executive would be prejudicial to the best interests of the Council, and where a Portfolio Holder is not empowered to act, then:

- The Leader may, after consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, take the decision.
- Before taking the decision, the Leader must first consider whether the importance of the matter warrants the calling of a special meeting of the Executive.
- The decision must be taken in a way that fully complies with the Procedural Rules of the Council and in particular with the rules relating to "key decisions".
- A copy of the minutes of the decision must be published within two clear working days of the decision and published on the Council's website with electronic notification given and no hard copies circulated.

Where a decision is deemed to be urgent, and where Procedure Rule 16 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules has been followed, that decision will not be subject to the call-in procedure provided the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree.

There are various statutory provisions that permit these arrangements, including the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970, The Civic Restaurants Act 1947, The Care Act 2014, section 111 of the Local

Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 2003, and the Localism Act 2011. Essentially, these provisions together with the mandatory and discretionary powers of local authorities to provide meals on wheels and adult catering services establish the legal framework that facilitates these arrangements. The legal comments at Section 4 of the Business Case attached to this Report provide further information about this.

Financial Implications

Harrow's Adults Catering service has a net budgeted cost of £33,000 in 2018/19. The latest budget forecast indicates an adverse variance of around £40,000 against its budget. This is considered not financially viable should the service continue to be delivered in the same way due to the small volume of the meals. The proposal to deliver the meals on wheels service to other boroughs will provide the opportunity for economies of scale and utilise the resource capacity already available in-house to expand its service.

Table 1 as set out in the Business Case in Appendix 2 (exempt information) provides the financial projections for delivering 120 meals per day to Hammersmith & Fulham. The net surplus will first be used to make Harrow's service financially sustainable and any remainder will be used to contribute to existing MTFS targets (Income from Depot Expansion – a total of £1.234m over 4 years).

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

The EQIA associated with the proposal has been undertaken by Hammersmith and Fulham as the service is being delivered to their residents.

Council Priorities

This proposal meets the Council's objectives to:

Protect the most vulnerable and support families- and **be more business like and friendly** as these proposals ensure the sustainability of Harrows meals on wheels service to residents who need that service.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Signature:

Name: Dawn Calvert

Chief Financial
Officer

Date: 01/03/2019

Signature:

Name: Stephen Dorrian

on behalf of the
Monitoring Officer

Date: 01/03/19

Section 3 - Procurement Officer Clearance

Signature:

Name: Nimesh Mehta

Head of Procurement

Date: 01/03/19

Ward Councillors notified:

NO - it impacts on all
Wards

EqIA carried out:

NO

EqIA cleared by:

The service is being
delivered to residents out of
Harrow

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Venetia Reid-Baptiste, Divisional Director
Commissioning and commercial Services
venetia.reid-baptiste@harrow.gov.uk Ext 2492

Background Papers: None

Signature:

Position: Divisional Director, Commissioning and Commercial Services

Name: (print) Venetia Reid-Baptiste

Date:

For Leader

* I do agree to the decision proposed

* I do not agree to the decision proposed

* *Please delete as appropriate*

Notification of disclosable non-pecuniary and pecuniary interests (if any):

[Should you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, you should not take this decision.]

Additional comments made by and/or options considered by the Portfolio Holder

Signature:

Leader - Councillor Graham Henson

Date:

**Call-In Waived by the
Chair of Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

**Yes
(Call-in does not apply)**