

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

Agenda item:

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Meeting:	Community Consultative Forum
Date:	July 2 nd 2003
Subject:	Review of Social Services for Older People from Black and Other Minority Communities
Responsible Chief Officer:	Acting Chief Social Services Officer
Status:	Part 1
Ward:	All
Enclosures:	Enclosure 1: Report to CCF Meeting April 2 nd 2003. Agenda number 9 – “Review of Social Services for Older People from Black and Other Minority Communities.”

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report updates members of the Community Consultative Forum (CCF) on the work being undertaken in the Social Services Department to review services provided to older people from the black and other minority communities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **The CCF is asked to note that the consultative sub group has now met and that a verbal report will be given at the CCF meeting.**

REASON: Consultation with the representatives of the black and minority communities is an integral part of this review.

3. Relevant Previous Decisions

- 3.1 At the CCF held on April 2nd 2003 it was agreed that a sub group of the CCF is established to work with officers of the Social Services Department to advise on the departmental review of services to older people from the black and other minority communities.

4. Relevance to Corporate Priorities

4.1 The activity is consistent with the Council's commitment to “improve the quality of health and social care in Harrow ...by promoting and maximising the independence of disabled, frail, and chronically ill people...”

5. **Background Information**

- 5.1 At the last CCF meeting a report was presented (enclosure 1) which sets out the detail of a review the Social Services Department was undertaking of its services for older people from black and other minority communities in Harrow. The Race Relations Amendment Act requires councils to review their services to minority communities and establish whether any form of discrimination is occurring in the planning and provision of those services. Additionally through the complaints procedure and other informal avenues, the Department has become aware of some concern within the communities about the level and appropriateness of the Departments provision for older members of these communities, particularly the Asian community.
- 5.2 A small officer working group has been established to explore what action the Department needs to be taking to review the present level of provision and act upon it. Consultation with the minority communities is seen as key to this process.
- 5.3 The exercise will fall into 5 phases, each phase considering the group of services we are providing. The phases are
- Meals on Wheels Service
 - Day care
 - Residential care
 - Care management and assessment (fieldwork)
 - Support to the voluntary sector and the prevention strategy

6 **Meals Service**

- 6.1 Work has already commenced on the meals service. The work has shown that the waiting list, compared with the waiting list for the standard meals service, is considered to be disproportionately disadvantaging older Asian people who require the vegetarian meal. No funding had been available to the Department to improve the position.
- 6.2 A review of the existing transport arrangements identified some spare marginal capacity, which could be used to reduce the waiting list by about 24 from an average of about 75 to 80 people waiting. Following further work after the last CCF report it was identified as possible to only take 18 people of the existing waiting list. This has now happened and people are now receiving the freshly cooked vegetarian meal.
- 6.3 It was originally proposed to trial a pre cooked frozen meal but ultimately the cost of this meal was so close to the cost of the freshly cooked meal that it was decided to use existing capacity at the Milap kitchen. The additional meals are provided to the new users on a permanent basis.

7. **Next Steps**

- 7.1 The above arrangements can only be considered as a temporary arrangement. The objective must remain the elimination of the waiting list for meals for people from the Asian community. Also, we must consider how we provide meals to other minority communities in Harrow. The current issue remains the availability of funding to extend the existing service at a price that is affordable. Discussions are on going with the Council's catering service to identify the most cost-effective way forward. These issues will be discussed in more detail with the consultative sub group. Any developments reported to the CCF meeting

7.2 The officer group is now planning to review day care provision for older people which includes that directly provided or funded by the Social Services Department and that which is indirectly funded by grants or direct payments. An outline of this issue will be discussed with the consultative sub group at the first meeting and the outcome reported to the CCF meeting.

7.3 At the last CCF meeting three representatives from the CCF's member organisations agreed to join the consultative sub group. In agreement with the Chair of the CCF, Cllr Shah, it has been agreed to extend the membership of the group to ensure a wider representation. A representative from HACAS has been invited but at the time of preparing this report a reply has not been received. A representative of the Association of Senior Muslim Citizens has also agreed to participate in the work of the sub group.

8. **Finance Observations**

8.1 Any expansion of the meals on wheels service will have to be contained within existing budgetary provision.

9. **Legal Observations**

9.1 no comments

10. **Conclusion**

10.1 This report updates members of the CCF on the progress on dealing with the extension of the meals service for Asian older people and reports that the consultative sub group has now started work.

11. **Background Papers**

11.1 None

12. **Author**

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