

SSA EQUALITY IMPACT AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

Directorate	Adult Social Services
Service Area	Commissioning and Operations
Service/policy/function being assessed	Proposal to decommission the Community Frozen Meals Contract
Which borough (s) does the service/policy apply to	Wandsworth
Staff involved	Hana Alipour – Commissioning Manager (author)
Date approved by Directorate Equality Group (if applicable)	
Date approved by Policy and Review Manager All EINAs must be signed off by the Policy and Review Manager	2017
Date submitted to Directors' Board	

SUMMARY

Wandsworth Borough Council entered into a contract on 1 July 2015 with Apetito to provide frozen meals to residents in their own homes. The contract term was for 2 years with the option to extend for up to 3 years. The 2 year contract term ended in July 2017 and consequently the provider and the Council are working under an implied contract for this service until a decision is made about the service provision going forwards.

Council finance and performance data indicates that demand for the service has declined, and the provider has requested that the contract is not renewed, citing that it is not viable for them to run this service as a local authority contract. Apetito does not run meals contracts with local authorities where there are less than 50 service users as the resource required to manage the contracts is not proportionate to demand and spend for the service.

It is proposed that the frozen meals contract with Apetito is not extended and the service is therefore decommissioned. Under the proposals, Wandsworth Borough Council will instead sign post and support current service users to alternative provision in the market place going forwards. Apetito will offer existing service users the opportunity to become a private client, which will provide continuity of service to those wishing to take up this offer.

Individual solutions in the local community will need to be found for any new people assessed as requiring this to meet their support needs, for example lunch clubs or other catering companies that service users can purchase services from.

The people that are most likely to be impacted by the proposal are frail and elderly people.

Finance and performance data shows that demand for the service is declining:

Financial year	Number of service users	Gross expenditure
2014/15	26	£16, 529

2015/16	16	£10, 054
2016/17	11	£7, 546

Source: SSA Finance Team

Apetito has feedback that they now have 7 Wandsworth Borough Council customers for frozen meals.

The profile of current service users based on 2016/17 customer data shows that the majority of service users are female, white British and over the age of 70 years old.

Decommissioning the current service will therefore have a neutral impact, recognising that consumers now have more choice in accessing meals services than previously.

If this contract is not renewed and the service is thus decommissioned, negative impacts on the current service users will be mitigated by the current provider contacting current service users and carers with an offer to move them across as a private client and support from the Council to sign post service users to suitable alternatives. There is also more choice in meals services than previously, with access to meals when attending day services, affordable food at super markets and luncheon clubs, so impact should be minimal.

1. Background

Current service

The Council currently has a contract with Apetito to deliver frozen meals to Wandsworth residents with assessed eligible needs. The types of service users who receive meals on wheels range from older people, people with physical disabilities, with mental health conditions and carers.

The service is available between 9am to 7pm Monday to Friday, with delivery times agreed with the meal recipient.

The cost of the meals are met by client contributions and there is no cost to the council.

Service users pay for the cost of the meal, with this dependent on the type of meal selected. A variety of different meal types are available within this service to meet the cultural needs and preferences of service users. These meal types are outlined below:

- Traditional – meal and dessert
- Afro-Caribbean/ Halal/ Asian
- Kosher
- Other – pureed meal and dessert

The range of meals includes soups, protein, fish, vegetarian, hot desserts and reduced/ low sugars food.

Proposals

The proposal is to not extend the existing contract or recommission this service, rather to instead find individual solutions for people in the local community that they can choose to purchase as they wish. For individuals this will include:

- Providing information about companies that can provide frozen meals
- Providing information about e.g. day services that individuals can access where they may also be able to participate in a lunch club
- Supporting people to use their personal budgets in a different way, such as support to prepare their own meals at home
- A review of individual needs by a social worker.

Legislation

Local authorities do not have a statutory duty to fund any meals related costs, other than those costs related to the provision of support to people who meet the national eligibility criteria for adults with care and support needs under the Care Act 2014, to help them access and consume meals. Whilst people with eligible care and support needs are given personal budgets and are able to spend that on services of their choosing to meet their needs, it is important to note that personal budgets cannot be used to fund the purchase of meals (or food). Furthermore, Council's have a statutory duty to assess individual's presenting needs for social care services, however, there is no statutory duty or responsibility to provide meals services.

Summary

Finance and performance data shows that demand for the service is declining:

Financial year	Number of service users	Gross expenditure
2014/15	26	£16, 529
2015/16	16	£10, 054
2016/17	11	£7, 546

Source: SSA Finance Team

The finance and performance data above shows that demand for the service has been declining. Reasons for this decline are unknown, but may be attributable to the ready availability of chilled or frozen ready meals from supermarkets, online shopping and food delivery and more people being able to use microwaves to heat meals in their own home. In comparison, the contracted frozen meals service offers a standard menu range delivered at a fixed time of day dependent upon where customers live along the route.

Apetito recently contacted the DASS Commissioning Unit to advise that the number of Wandsworth Borough Council customers has now declined to 7, and propose that the contract is not renewed. For the provider, it is not viable to continue running a service with less than 50 service users under a local authority contract; the resources and administration associated with managing the contract is not proportionate to the volume and spend associated with service delivered. The providers proposal is to write to all service users confirming that the contract has come to an end and will not be renewed. Existing service users will be given the opportunity to become a private client with Apetito and can keep current equipment they have been provided with (fridges, and microwaves for example), however, they will be liable for them.

2. Analysis of need and impact

Protected group	Findings
Age	<p>All 11 service users are over the age of 70, with the majority aged over 80.</p> <p>The Wandsworth Borough Council Older People's strategy 2015 to 2020 shows that 28,000 of the borough's resident population are people aged 65 and over (this is 9% of the borough's population).</p> <p>Source: Older People's Strategy – Our Vision for 2020 http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/downloads/file/9660/older_peoples_strategy_-_our_vision_for_2020</p>
Disability	<p>A small number of service users accessing the frozen meals service have mental ill health and memory and cognition support needs.</p> <p>Whilst we cannot project the number of people with a disability who may access a frozen meals service, there will be a need to ensure that information is provided on choice of providers in formats people can understand.</p>
Gender (sex)	<p>The majority of customers purchasing a frozen meals service are female.</p> <p>Source: MOSAIC, based on service users invoiced for</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>There is no data available to identify service users who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery.</p> <p>Transgendered service users will not be affected any differently from other groups by virtue of their gender reassignment</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>Not applicable. Meals are not specifically provided to people in this group and thus will not be affected any differently from other groups by virtue of their relationship status.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Not applicable. Current service users are over the age of 70.</p>
Race/ethnicity	<p>The majority of customers purchasing frozen meals are White British.</p> <p>Source: MOSAIC, based on service users invoiced for</p> <p>10 out of 11 service users have the 'standard' meal type, with only one service user purchasing the Afro-Caribbean meal type.</p> <p>Source: SSA Financial data, based on invoices</p> <p>Based on Census data, the Wandsworth Older People Strategy – Our vision for 2020 states that a quarter of the Wandsworth population aged 65 years and older is from Black and Minority Ethnic groups</p> <p>Source: Older People's Strategy – Our Vision for 2020 http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/downloads/file/9660/older_peoples_strategy_-_our_vision_for_2020</p>
Religion and belief, including non belief	<p>The frozen meals service caters to dietary requirements for people in relation to religion/ belief.</p>

	<p>Performance data of the service for 2016/17 shows that no foods were purchased relating to religious beliefs e.g. no kosher or halal foods were purchased.</p> <p>Source: MOSAIC, based on service users invoiced for</p>
Sexual orientation	There is no data available to identify the sexual orientation of community meals service users. It is anticipated that the impact from the proposals will be neutral.

Data gaps.

Data gap(s)	How will this be addressed?
None	

3. Impact

Protected group	Positive	Negative
Age	May mean more choice, as consumers will have more variety of foods/ providers to choose from.	<p>The meals service is targeted towards those in society who need help to access and/or consume a meal. Elderly residents are the majority users of this service and are therefore impacted by the proposals to decommission the service. Elderly service users are likely to be concerned about the changes and maybe unsure of the signposting process.</p> <p>A decision to cease the meals service may also have an adverse impact on carers, however, number of carers is low (less than 10).</p> <p>To mitigate the impact on elderly service users any issues and concerns will need to be discussed with service users and their carers. The Council and Apetito will need to work with service users to transfer them to private customers with Apetito if they wish to do so, or to transfer to other services.</p>
Disability	May mean more choice, as consumers will have more variety of foods/ providers to choose from.	<p>Some service users may be incapable of understanding or managing a change of meal provider. Some disabilities will mean that some service users will require support to consume a meal.</p> <p>A decision to cease the meals service may also have an adverse impact on carers, however, number of carers is low (less than 10).</p>

		Any issues and concerns will need to be discussed with service users and their carers. The Council and Apetito will need to work with service users to transfer them to private customers with Apetito if they wish to do so, or to transfer to other services.
Gender (sex)	May mean more choice, as consumers will have more variety of foods/ providers to choose from.	The proposals are likely to have a disproportionate impact on female service users as they are over-represented (82%) in the current service user pool. The impact and mitigating actions set out above will therefore apply more to female service users than male However, women will not be affected any differently from other groups by virtue of their gender.
Gender reassignment	There is no available data on this protected characteristic but it is anticipated that the impact from the proposals will be neutral. Transgendered service users will not be affected any differently from other groups by virtue of their gender reassignment	
Marriage and civil partnership	No impacts identified for this category. Service users will not be affected any differently from other groups by virtue of their relationship status.	No impacts identified for this category. Service users will not be affected any differently from other groups by virtue of their relationship status.
Pregnancy and maternity	Service users will not be affected any differently from other groups by virtue of their status. It is anticipated that the impact from the proposals will be neutral.	Service users will not be affected any differently from other groups by virtue of their status. It is anticipated that the impact from the proposals will be neutral.
Race/ethnicity	Data shows that there are very few service users with BME backgrounds currently using the frozen meals service, with the majority of service users	BME users who may not have English as a first language may have difficulties understanding communications around the changes and the signposting literature. Also signposting must reflect the needs of

	<p>being white British. Impact will therefore be neutral/ low.</p> <p>Service users will be given the opportunity to become a private client with Apetito if they wish.</p> <p>May mean more choice, as consumers will have more variety of foods/ providers to choose from.</p>	<p>the BME group particularly in the requirement for ethnic food choices.</p> <p>Any issues and concerns will need to be discussed with service users and their carers. The Council and Apetito will need to work with service users to transfer them to private customers with Apetito if they wish to do so, or to transfer to other services.</p>
Religion and belief, including non belief	<p>Service users will be given the opportunity to become a private client with Apetito if they wish.</p> <p>May mean more choice, as consumers will have more variety of foods/ providers to choose from.</p>	<p>Religion may have a bearing on food choices.</p> <p>The Council will need to ensure that the information it makes available regarding providers of meals includes those providers who offer cultural specific meals and providers that can meet the dietary requirements of different community groups and other specialist meals.</p> <p>Any issues and concerns will need to be discussed with service users and their carers. The Council and Apetito will need to work with service users to transfer them to private customers with Apetito if they wish to do so, or to transfer to other services.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>There is no data available to identify the sexual orientation of community meals service users. It is anticipated that the impact from the proposals will be neutral.</p>	<p>There is no data available to identify the sexual orientation of community meals service users. It is anticipated that the impact from the proposals will be neutral.</p>

4. Actions

These actions will be tracked by the Policy and Review Team.

Issues identified and groups affected	Action	Lead Officer	Deadline
Lack of support for individuals	<p>Social work review of all current service users and support plans to identify needs and plan future support accordingly e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - becoming a private client with Apetito or exploring another provider. 	Locality Teams	December 2017

	<p>- individuals to have a Personal Assistant / care worker to support them with meal preparation</p> <p>The additional cost pressure for support with meal preparation will need to be absorbed by adult social care, with personal budgets and direct payments revised to reflect this, however, it is anticipated this will be minimal.</p>		
	Refer individuals to enablement where appropriate for support to enable them to do own meals preparation and be more independent.	Review Team Enablement	Ongoing – embed into BAU
Lack of information re alternative options	Produce a leaflet with information on alternative options e.g. frozen meals providers, online delivery services, day centres Update information directory Update care place	Information and Projects Team	January 2018
Lack of information for individuals	Individuals are given information on choice of providers in formats they can understand.	Access Team Review Team	Ongoing
	Ensure information sourced on potential meal providers offering Kosher, Halal and other culturally specific meals is available.	Access Team	Ongoing
Potential risks for individuals in relation to nutritional intake in the future	Individuals identified who have particular risks relating to nutritional intake to be reviewed on a more regular basis following any change in service.	Review team	Ongoing – embedded into BAU already
Potential safeguarding risks arising from changes to the service	Ensure that all care providers working with individuals are aware of safeguarding policy and procedures and are able to alert if necessary.	Review team Commissioning Quality Assurance	Ongoing – embed into BAU
Lack of provision for culturally specific meals	Ensure information is provided on meals providers who offer culturally specific meals e.g. halal, kosher and for people with swallowing difficulties.	Commissioning Access Team	January 2018 and embed into BAU