

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2018-2019

**FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date 28.01.19

**REPORT OF:
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND
INCLUSION SERVICES**

Agenda Item No. 4

**COMMUNITY MEAL CENTRAL
PRODUCTION**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Community Meals service change and the savings achieved.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

Scrutinise and comment on the information contained within this report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To raise Members' awareness on the progress of changes to the previous delivery of the Community Meal Service provision.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 A Community Meals service review was approved by Cabinet on the 25th January 2018 with the objective of developing a service that improves the quality of life for the people who use it in a way which allows the service to be responsive to demand.

4.2 The current Community Meal Service continues to serve people well in Rhondda Cynon Taff and plays a vital role in ensuring that older people have daily contact with others and have their nutritional needs met. However, the demand for the weekday service fell by 29% and for the weekend service by 66% during the last 5 years. Therefore it was vital to review and implement a new service to reduce overheads, production costs and rationalise assets.

- 4.3 A new service was implemented in August '18 and resulted in 3 community meals kitchens being reduced to 1 central production kitchen located in Ynyshir, Rhondda.
- 4.4 The existing community meal kitchen in Ynyshir received refurbishment works including relocation of existing equipment from the other two redundant Community Meals kitchens to enable the new service to be delivered out of the existing premises. As part of those works the garage annexe was converted into a fridge and freezer room, dry stores, trolley wash, office and staff room which enabled centralised meal production.
- 4.5 Centralised production enabled a reduction of 20 staff, from 62 to 42. All redundancies were on a voluntary basis with some kitchen staff finding new employment with Age Connect, supporting their new dining service in St Mairs day Centre. The service change also enabled long term casual staff to be employed on a permanent basis.
- 4.6 The over-riding objective of the review was to retain a service that improves the quality of life for clients and remains responsive in a changing environment, ensuring that older people have daily contact with others and that their nutritional needs are met.
- 4.7 The number of clients has reduced from 725, November '17 to 703 December '18. However, we have gained an average of 9 new clients a week post service change.
- 4.8 The client demographic has remained static (Table 1) 68% of clients are aged over 80 years old. A 19% of clients have mobility issues and an 11% of clients suffer from mental health in terms of confusion and dementia. 10% of clients have both mobility issues and memory loss.

Table 1: Client Age Profile	
Age Range	% of Total Clients
50 - 59	3%
60 - 69	8%
70 - 79	21%
80 - 89	45%
90 - 99	22%
> 100	1%

5. DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY MEALS

- 5.1 The Community Meal Service is producing on average 550 meals per day for clients across the Authority. Meals are prime cooked on site using fresh produce and packed by 12 kitchen staff. Meals consist of a main course and a dessert. Special dietary requirements are also catered for e.g. pureed, diabetic.

- 5.2 Meals are provided in sustainable packaging which is made from environmentally-friendly paper pulp and the containers can be recycled.
- 5.3 The meals are distributed to clients in their own homes by 30 delivery staff using 15 vans. The service also provides a bulk delivery of meal to Wattstown Day Centre and St Fagans and Ramoth Church luncheon groups. Emergency meals are also provided to nursing homes and Day Centres within RCT as and when required.
- 5.4 Meals are produced to the NACC (National Association of Care Caterers) nutritional standards and food safety is paramount.
- 5.5 A frozen weekend meal service is offered to clients. The meals are procured from an external supplier and a choice of 5 meals is offered to clients. Extensive research was completed to find a high quality frozen meal. Sample meals were tested from 4 suppliers. Consultation on meals provided by the preferred supplier was completed by Catering Services, Community Meal staff and clients to decide on the selection of meals to be offered.
- 5.6 Community Meal contingency planning has been reviewed and plans have been updated for inclement weather and created for utility and equipment failure. The inclement weather contingency plan has been updated to include the use of Aberdare Community School. A stock of frozen meals is being stored on site and Cynon Valley based staff will be re-directed to the school. A utility and equipment failure plan has been created with a 4 day contingency using store cupboard items e.g. tinned meat and vegetables and frozen meals.

6. EVALUATION OF THE COMMUNITY MEAL SERVICE

- 6.1 The impact of the service change has been positive. Clients have not been affected and complaints have been minimal with only 4 documented complaints received whilst we closed 2 kitchens down and kept a service running.
- 6.2 Service evaluation has been conducted via a client telephone survey. Feedback has been very positive.
 - 93% of clients were happy with the Community Meal Service. Comments included 'Very happy'. I have spoken to other people who have a similar service where food is delivered and they don't think very much of it but I can't say the same. The food and everything else is excellent".
 - 83% wouldn't change anything about the service whilst 12% would like additional items on the menu.

- 90% of clients are happy with the times that their meals are being delivered. Comments included “Could be a bit earlier but somebody has to be last”.
- 95% of clients are happy with the new menu. Comments included “Yes. Ham & parsley sauce today was lovely” and “Yes, happy with what they received”.
- 100% of clients are happy with the delivery staff. Comments included very nice and very kind. In addition they are very happy which is lovely when you live on your own” and “Yes extremely happy. I am visually impaired and they always ask if they can help or reach or open something for me. Extremely helpful.”
- 100% of clients are happy with the office staff. 48% of clients commented that they have no need to speak to office staff because they have no complaints. Comments included “Always polite and nice and go out of their way to help”.

6.3 The effect of the service change on staff has also been positive. Both kitchen and driving staff have been proactive and have designed and implemented new processes to enable the service to become more efficient. The morale is good and members of staff have commented that they feel valued.

6.4 Staff sickness has improved post service change. The sickness rate has fallen by an average of 4.5% from 7.7% to 3.2%. The December '18 sickness rate was 1.6% which equated to 23 days (Table 2).

Table 2: Staff Sickness Analysis			
Ave Sick Days per Month Before Service Change	Ave Sick Days per Month After Service Change	Sickness Rates per Month Before Service Change	Sickness Rates per Month After Service Change
122	41	7.7%	3.2%

6.5 Workforce planning is ongoing. The staff age profile has reduced, 54% of staff are now under 50 years old. All members of staff have received food safety and manual handling refresher training and casual staff are being trained to perform both kitchen and driving duties.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as the contents of this report are for information purposes only.

8. CONSULTATIONS

No formal consultation exercises have been undertaken, however the Community Meals Service staff consulted with all clients on the changes proposed and the new menu.

9. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The previous service had high production costs, overheads, staff costs, and packaging, transport and delivery costs. The implementation of the centralised production has resulted in a reduction of 20 employees and transport savings will be achieved by reorganising routes to reduce delivery vans, from 18 to 15. Table 3 displays the average service costs before and after service change and the average monthly savings that are being achieved.

Table 3: Community Meals Actual Costs 2018/19

	Actual P1-8 £'s	Ave Monthly Actual Before Service Change £'s	Ave Monthly Actual After Service Change £'s	Average Monthly Savings £'s	Estimated Full Year Savings £'s
Employees	679,196	98,233	71,567	26,666	319,991
Premises	20,134	2,127	2,906	-779	-9,344
Transport *	19,023	1,326	3,430	-2,104	-25,245
Supplies & Services	163,330	21,911	18,921	2,990	35,877
Capital Financing	71,000	0	0	0	0
Income	-325,582	-42,550	-38,845	-3,705	-44,458
Total	627,250	81,047	57,978	23,068	276,821

** Post service change transport costs have increased due to 2 additional ovens being installed in vans*

The service continues to be subsidised for clients, but the subsidy levels have reduced (Table 4).

Table 4: Community Meal Subsidy per Meal

	2015/16 £'s	2016/17 £'s	2017/18 £'s	Est 2018/19 £'s
Community Meal - Delivery				
St Mairs	3.15	4.14	5.17	
St Georges	2.45	3.58	4.37	
Ynyshir	2.73	4.67	5.42	
CPU (post service change)				3.49

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

11. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP

The provision of the community meal service links to the 'People' and 'Place' priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan, the 'Safety', 'Health and 'Prosperity' priorities within Rhondda Cynon Taf's Single Integrated Plan and contributes towards achieving many of the seven wellbeing goals.

12. CONCLUSION

Clear links can be seen between the provision of community meals and the achievement of the Council's priorities. The provision of this service has supported some of our most vulnerable elderly people in the County Borough. The service provides nutritional support and welfare assurance and has gained positive feedback from both clients and their families.