

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting: Health, Wellbeing & Social Care Portfolio meeting

Subject: Meals Delivery Service

Date of meeting: 5th December 2022

Report by: Mark Stables, Head of Market Development & Community Engagement

Wards affected: All

1. Requested by

Councillor Matthew Winnington, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing & Social Care

2. Purpose

To update the Cabinet Member and spokespeople on progress since the July 2022 portfolio meeting.

3. Information Requested

Following the breakdown of the Meals on Wheels Service in April 2022, temporary arrangements were put in place with the bulk of the meals being supplied by Somerstown hub and delivered by Radis Care. Families took responsibility for provision of meals in some cases and where a Domiciliary Care package was in place the Agency took responsibility. These arrangements were managed by the Independence and Wellbeing Team with the support of Care Purchasing, Contracts and Housing. Although arrangements were far from ideal it was an outstanding example of teams and individuals pulling together and a credit to all involved.

4. Progress since June 2022

The transition from these arrangements to provision by Age UK Portsmouth, (AUKP) was managed as a project. They needed to recruit and train staff and put the infrastructure in terms of kitchen and transport in place. The kitchen team were recruited late-May with Drivers coming on board on 6th June 2022. Three additional Drivers have been recruited since this time on 22nd August 2022.

There needed to be confidence that routes were manageable within time limits and that everything was in place to manage food safety and temperature. AUKP took over the PO2, PO3 and PO6 postcodes on 13th June 2022. In the subsequent 9 weeks, AUKP assumed responsibility for PO1, PO4 and PO5 postcode areas at 3-week intervals. The charity took on full responsibility for all 6 Portsmouth postcodes on 15th August 2022.

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AUKP had 86 residents transferred over to them and currently have 82 residents they are providing a service to. In the week of 24th - 30th October 2022, AUKP provided and delivered 433 Meals which breaks down to approximately 62 meals per day. We have received a number of compliments and very few complaints.

5. Additional value

In addition to the standard service, we have begun to see the benefits of an established Social Care Service working within a specification that includes signposting and support to access other services and supports. An example is in relation to a visit to a man who was isolated, living in poor, inhospitable, unhygienic conditions with no bedding or way of heating a meal. AUKP were able to support him to access the HIVE Discretionary Crisis Grant - up to £100 for essential items and the Hampshire & IoW Winter Hardship Fund - up to £100 for energy costs. They were able to access cleaning, furniture for the flat and a microwave. AUKP's non-charged services include benefit checks, socialisation support and goal development with the person at the centre encouraged to gradually lead the process to build self-confidence and improved resilience.

6. Next Steps

The shared ambition is that the scheme grows numerically and is able to offer a service that allows smaller rounds (therefore more time for social interaction/guided conversations) and that increasingly acts as a conduit to a range of supports, supporting the strategic preventative agenda.

There are a number of challenges to be addressed

- Financial viability. As of November 2022, the charity is delivering approximately 70 meals a day on average. Budgets were built on an average of 110 meals a day based on numbers supplied when the contract was awarded. The lower numbers are a result of people making alternative arrangements during the transition period and have had a significant financial impact on the charity. AUKP was limiting itself to referrals from IWT at PCC but is about to share its internal marketing with QA Hospital. Dependent on uptake, AUKP will consider marketing to the general population of Portsmouth early 2023.
- Capacity. AUKP cannot supply more than 90 meals a day in its current location due to a lack of equipment/oven space. A second oven is required. Commercial ovens have a cost of £3,000 - £7,000 which is not within the organisation's annual budget. PCC have offered a different site, Maritime House to accommodate this, but this came with additional risk of providing meals for the residents of Maritime House (approximately 50 a day plus Café). For this reason, AUKP felt unable to accept this offer.

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- Staffing. The main operational/continuity risk is that AUKP cannot employ more than 1 Catering Manager and 3 Catering Assistants. Should one or more members of staff be absent or on annual leave, capacity would be significantly impacted.

There is confidence, given the quality of the service and food plus the added value inherent in the model, that the scheme will grow. The increase in meal price from the previous provider appears to have little impact on take up. ASC will work with AUKP to address the remaining causes of concern and anticipate that the scheme will be a model of the approach that goes beyond straightforward service provision - in this case a meal and welfare check - to one that looks at the whole person and accesses supports that maintain wellbeing and independence for longer.

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Signed by (Director)

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location