

scrumptious ('skɹʌmpʃəs) *adj.* *Inf.* very pleasing; delicious — 'scrumptiously *adv.*

scrumpy ('skɹʌmpɪ) *n.* a rough dry cider, brewed esp. in the West Country of England.

scrunch (skɹʌntʃ) *vb.* **1.** to crumple or crunch or to be crumpled or crunched. — *n.* **2.** the act or sound of scrunching.

scruple ('skɹu:pəl) *n.* **1.** a doubt or hesitation as to what is morally right in a certain situation. **2.** *Arch.* a very small amount. **3.** a unit of weight equal to 20 grains (1.296 grams). — *vb.* **4.** (*obs.* when *tr.*) to have doubts (about), esp. from a moral compunction.

scrupulous ('skɹu:pjuləs) *adj.* **1.** characterized by careful observation of what is morally right. **2.** very careful or precise. — 'scrupulously *adv.* — 'scrupulousness *n.*

scrutinise or **-nize** ('skɹu:ti:nəɪz) *vb.* (*tr.*) to examine carefully or in minute detail. — 'scruti.niser or -nizer *n.*

scrutiny ('skɹu:tɪni) *n.* **1.** close or minute examination. **2.** a searching look. **3.** official examination of votes [from Latin *scrūtiniūm* and *scrūtārī* to search even to the rags, from *scrūta*, rags, trash.]

scuba ('skju:bə) *n.* an apparatus used in skin diving, consisting of a cylinder or cylinders containing compressed air attached to a breathing apparatus.

scud (skʌd) *vb.* **scudding**, **scudded.** (*intr.*) **1.** (esp. of clouds) to move along swiftly and smoothly. **2.** *Naut.* to run before a gale. — *n.* **3.** the act of scudding. **4. a.** a formation of low ragged clouds driven by a strong wind beneath rain-bearing clouds. **b.** a sudden shower or gust of wind.

scuff (skʌf) *vb.* **1.** to drag (the feet) while walking. **2.** to scratch (a surface) or (of a surface) to become scratched. **3.** (*tr.*) *U.S.* to poke at (something) with the foot. — *n.* **4.** the act or sound of scuffing. **5.** a rubbed place caused by scuffing. **6.** a backless slipper.

scuffle ('skʌfəl) *vb.* (*intr.*) **1.** to fight in a disorderly manner. **2.** to move by shuffling. — *n.* **3.** a disorderly struggle, the sound made by scuffling.

scull (skʌl) *n.* **1.** a single oar moved from the stern of a boat to propel it. **2.** one of a pair of double-handed oars, both of which are pulled by the same person. **3.** a racing shell propelled by a single oar. **4.** an act, instance, period, or distance of sculling. **5.** to propel (a boat) with a scull. — 'sculler *n.*

scullery (skʌləri) *n., pl. -leries.* *Chiefly Brit.* a small room or part of a kitchen where kitchen utensils are kept.

scullion ('skʌljən) *n.* **1.** a mean or despicable person employed to work in a kitchen. **2.** a scullion's work.

sculpt ('skʌlp) *vb.* **1.** variant of **sculpture**. **2.** to carve. — *n.* also: **sculp.**

sculptress ('skʌlpɹes) *n.* a female sculptor.

sculpture ('skʌltʃə) *n.* **1.** the art of making a three-dimensional work of art by carving wood, stone, metal, etc. **2.** work of art made by such means. **3.** a representation of a person or thing in three-dimensional form.

by natural processes. — *vb.* (*mainly tr.*) **4.** (*also intr.*) to carve, cast, or fashion (stone, bronze etc) three-dimensionally. **5.** to portray (a person, etc.) by means of sculpture. **6.** to form in the manner of sculpture. **7.** to decorate with sculpture. — 'sculptural *adj.*

scumble ('skʌmbəl) *vb.* **1.** (in painting and drawing) to soften or blend (an outline or colour) with an upper coat of opaque colour, applied very thinly. **2.** to produce an effect of broken colour on doors, panelling, etc. by exposing coats of paint below the top coat. — *n.* **3.** the upper layer of colour applied in this way.

scunner ('skʌnə) *Dialect, chiefly Scot.* — *vb.* **1.** (*intr.*) to feel aversion. **2.** (*tr.*) to produce a feeling of aversion in. — *n.* **3.** a strong aversion (often in **take a scunner**). **4.** an object of dislike.

scupper¹ ('skʌpə) *n.* *Naut.* a drain or spout allowing water on the deck of a vessel to flow overboard.

scupper² ('skʌpə) *vb.* (*tr.*) *Brit. sl.* to overwhelm, ruin, or disable.

scurry ('skʌɹɪ) *vb.* **-rying, -ried.** **1.** to move about hurriedly. **2.** (*intr.*) to whirl about. — *n., pl. -ries.* **3.** the act or sound of scurrying. **4.** a brisk light whirling movement, as of snow.

scut (skʌt) *n.* a small animal, esp. one of animals such as the deer or rabbit.

scuttle ('skʌtl) *vb.* **1.** to move quickly. **2.** *Dialect chiefly Brit.* to cut up (vegetables, etc.) **3.** to move quickly, esp. to run or move quickly.

scuttled ('skʌtləd) *vb.* **1.** to run or move quickly. **2.** to cause to scuttle.

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Community Meals Service Scrutiny Task Group

Final Report

TG No. 40
April 2008

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FOREWORD



As Chair of the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, I am pleased to introduce this report of the Community Meals Task Group, on which I served as a member.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my fellow task group members and advisers for their hard work in looking at how to improve the food served to the elderly and vulnerable residents within our Borough. Our recommendations, if accepted by Cabinet, will allow our words to be put into action, in so many different ways. The aim of this Task Group was to look holistically at our provision and be a mechanism by which to improve the standard of meals supplied to our residents both in their own homes and in our intensive day centres.

I recommend this Task Group Report wholeheartedly to both the Adult Social Care & Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to Cabinet.

Councillor Sue Jones

Chair of the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee



INTRODUCTION



I am delighted to introduce this scrutiny report which is the result of an in-depth investigation into Community Meals provided at home to some of our most vulnerable residents, and in our Intensive Day Centres.

The task group was charged with this investigation in July 2007. It immediately became clear that two 'phases' would be required since a quick recommendation – accepted by Cabinet in October 2007 – was needed to 'hold' the situation pending a much more detailed examination.

I would like to thank everybody who has contributed to the work of the group. Many people gave up large amounts of time to attend meetings and share their experience and knowledge with us. Their collective expertise has been invaluable in assisting the task group to formulate informed, evidence-based recommendations which, if taken as a package, we believe will result in a great improvement to the Community Meals service provided by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

Individual thanks must go to Dinos Kousoulou, our consultant. His clear and concise reports helped us all focus on often complex issues. Christian Scade of Democratic Services has been a tower of strength. He kept us all on our toes with huge efficiency and, above all, unfailing good-humour.

Cllr Anna Davies
Chair of the Community Meals Service Scrutiny Task Group



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

‘Evidence suggests that the presentation of food, eating in a social context and assistance with eating have the most beneficial health outcomes.’

(MJFOCUS – 28.02.2008)

1. A key aspect of the Department of Health *Dignity in care* campaign is to ensure vulnerable older people have enough to eat and drink – which is, indeed, a basic human right. ‘TV chef Jamie Oliver has focused attention on school meals, and as a nation, we are obsessed with diets and obesity. One group that has been sadly neglected in this emphasis on food is the over-65s, of whom, 14% are malnourished’ (MJFOCUS – 28.02.2008). Members of the task group hope that their work on the council’s Community Meals service will help to develop a better meal for service users ‘not just as a way of improving their quality of life, but also as a way of keeping them healthy and, ultimately, cutting the cost to the public purse of lengthy hospital stays’ (MJFOCUS – 28.02.2008).
2. Suggestions for change, covering a wide range of issues, have been put forward. It’s hoped that these will be taken forward by Cabinet and where appropriate other stakeholders.
3. The task group believe that the following recommendations should be given priority status:
 1. For meals provided at the Intensive Day Centres it is recommended that the Council provides a meal cooked on site using fresh vegetables and frozen multi portion meat dishes (**Recommendation 3**).
 2. For the home delivered service it is recommended that the Council moves towards a frozen only service with assistance for service users where necessary (**Recommendations 7**).
4. However, due to the complex nature of the subject, the task group agree that overall service improvements will only be made if the report and recommendations are treated as a package. This is because the success of



some recommendations will hinge on whether other recommendations are acted upon.



PART I:

**ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE
COMMUNITY MEALS SERVICE TASK GROUP**

BACKGROUND TO THE TASK GROUP

5. The Council's Community Meals service has been supplied by Apetito, an independent organisation, since 1999. There are two separate contacts (a) Meals Delivered to Individuals' Homes and (b) Intensive Day Centre Meals. The Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee were informed in June 2007 that the contract (extended in 2003) would expire in April 2008.
6. **The existing service:** There are four Intensive Day Centres, managed by the Council. Three of the four currently serve pre-cooked meals, delivered by Apetito. This is known as a hot meals service. The other Intensive Day Centre has meals provided by the residential home that is on the same site. For meals delivered to individuals' homes, Apetito currently offer a hot and frozen meal service to all service users meeting the eligibility criteria. People who meet the criteria receive a hot two course meal delivered to them at lunchtime or receive the frozen service which is primarily aimed at service users who are more able to reheat a meal themselves. Frozen meals are currently delivered to service users every fortnight. Further information about the current hot and frozen service is attached at **Appendix B**.
7. The officer recommendation, outlined in the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny report (June 2007), was to tender and implement a frozen only service to replace the existing hot and frozen meals service. While there are pros and cons to this option, the Committee agreed that a scrutiny task group should be set up to investigate all the options more closely (see **Appendix C**, Suggestion for a Scrutiny Review).
8. It was also agreed that Member-led scrutiny and contributions to major commissioning exercises, particularly in the formative stages of defining strategic objectives, scope, affordability, key outcomes and the overall nature of a contract would help improve both the procurement process and service outcomes.



9. This was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group, on the 23 July 2007, who set up the Community Meals Service Task Group to help develop and promote alternatives to the current service. At their initial meeting, on 14 August 2007, the group established the following terms of reference:
- (a) To review the current Community Meals service
 - (b) To examine the various options available, the ancillary factors involved and the experiences of other Councils
 - (c) Assist the Council in developing its Community Meals service as a whole and the future of its Hot Meals Service in particular.
10. It should be noted that European procurement requirements meant that the task group had very little time to gather evidence and respond to the officer recommendation in the timeframe available. As a result (and to ensure continuity), it was decided that the task group would need to decide very quickly whether it supported the withdrawal of the hot meals service or whether they needed more time to consider additional information / options (which would require an extension to the contract with Apetito).
11. Given the very tight timeframe the task group agreed, after its second meeting, that it had no choice but to recommend an extension to the contract with Apetito. This interim suggestion (agreed by Cabinet in October 2007) gave the task group more time to gather evidence and ensured their final recommendations were based on evidence. Further information concerning these problems (and how they were resolved) can be found in the **methodology** and **stage one – ensuring continuity** sections of the report.

METHODOLOGY

12. In order to assist with the development of the council's Community Meals service the task group agreed it was important to gather evidence from a range of stakeholders including the voluntary sector, service users, carers, other local authorities and industry leaders.
13. Members agreed from the start there were some overriding factors that needed to be taken into account when collecting evidence and making recommendations.



These included: the council's legal obligations; timeliness, value for money, service users needs and aspirations, current policy objectives and financial strategies. These are discussed in more detail in **part two** of the report.

14. Members also decided it would be useful to hear about Member-led scrutiny and contributions to major commissioning exercises from other local authorities. The task group were aware that over the past year, Hammersmith and Fulham's Cleaner and Greener Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been involved in the tendering process for market testing their Street Cleansing, Waste Collection and Grounds Maintenance services. The Chair of this Committee, Councillor Eugenie White, agreed to share her experiences with the task group. Although the services are very different this proved to be very useful, especially in relation to developing the contract specification and establishing the overall aims of the Community Meals service in Richmond upon Thames.
15. Following Cabinet's decision to extend the current contract the task group commissioned a consultant, Dinos Kousoulou, to explore alternative options of providing meals. Following the problems faced by the task group at the start of the review this was seen as vital as it allowed the task group to draw on the skills of an independent expert who has considerable expertise in this area of local government. The project initiation document, agreed by the task group, is attached at **Appendix D**.
16. The task group interviewed the following witnesses as part of their evidence gathering (in order of appearance before the group): Paul Blow, Contracts Manager; Craig Brewin, AD Strategy and Resources; Gareth Davies, Contracts Development Manager; Gill Ford, Head of Policy, Performance and Quality Assurance; Jim Rogan, AD Commissioning Care Services; Councillor Carr, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing; Councillor Eugenie White, Chair of Hammersmith and Fulham's Cleaner and Greener Overview and Scrutiny Committee; Ms June Evans, Sheen Day Centre; Ms Harfleet, Sheen Day Centre; Ms Valerie Hawkins, Sheen Day Centre; Ms Sandra Morrison, Chief Officer of Age Concern Richmond upon Thames; Ms Hilary O'Brien, Richmond Good Neighbours; Ms Rachel Tawadrous, Care Manager, Crossroads; Range George-Naidoo, Quality and Compliance Manager; Paul Howell, Apetito; Mike Morant, Apetito; Barrie Tottman, Apetito; Jeff Jerome, Director of Adult and Community Services; Dinos Kousoulou, Project Manager; John Heap, Sodexo and Kevin Crawshaw, FlowFood Ltd.



17. As well as written and oral evidence the task group undertook a series of site visits (at lunchtime) to intensive and social day centres and held meal tasting sessions with Apetito, Sodexo and FlowFoods Ltd. This part of the review was very important as Members wanted to investigate, in detail, the different types of meals available.
18. The reports and minutes from all task group meetings are listed under **Selected Reading** at the end of this report and are a good starting point for anyone requiring further information.



TASK GROUP MEMBERSHIP

- Councillor Anna Davies (Chair)
- Councillor Frances Bouchier
- Councillor Kate Howard
- Councillor Sue Jones
- Councillor Helen Lee-Parsons
- Councillor Philip Morgan
- Sylvia Bridge



PART II – FINDINGS

Stage One – Ensuring Continuity

19. As noted above, the task group was initially faced with a very short timeframe to make recommendations on the future of the community meals service.
20. During stage one of the review (August – October 2007) members of the task group received a significant amount of (written) information¹ (some tabled at meetings) and interviewed key witnesses, including carers and service users. However, due to the complex nature of the issues under discussion, the task group agreed that in order to make evidence based recommendations they needed to consider a number of important issues. These included: the council's legal obligations, value for money, service users needs and aspirations, current policy objectives, the impact of self directed support, financial strategies, ways to increase social interaction and ways to improve choice and the quality (taste and nutrition) of the food provided.
21. Due to the limited time available the task group agreed that they did not have enough time to make an informed decision concerning the officer recommendation² and agreed it would have been better if the issue had been brought to Members' attention a year before, to avoid the tight deadline. The task group were also concerned that due to the lack of time it could be perceived that overview and scrutiny was being used to rubber stamp officer recommendations.
22. As a result, and to ensure continuity, the task group had little choice but to make a number of interim recommendations after its second meeting. The task group also discovered very early on that the contract for meals delivered to homes and the contract for day centre meals expired at slightly different times. It was agreed that this wasn't ideal and it was recommended, at this early stage, that both contracts should finish at the same time.

¹ The reports and minutes from all task group meetings are listed under 'Selected Reading' at the end of the report.

² To tender and implement a frozen only service to replace the existing hot and frozen meals service.



23. Given the task group needed more time to make recommendations on the future of the service it was agreed it would also be useful to investigate the viability of providing fresh cooked food for people attending Intensive Day Care Centres, as opposed to what is currently being provided - pre-cooked meals. This investigation looked at whether it was possible, considering all factors, to provide fresh cooked food to people who attend Intensive Day Care Centres and proved useful during stage two of the review.
24. The task group's initial recommendations are noted below and were agreed by Cabinet on the 8 October 2007. A copy of the 8 October 2007 Cabinet report and minutes are attached at **Appendix E** and provided the task group with a good starting point for stage two of their review.

Interim Recommendations agreed by Cabinet

The task group recommended that Cabinet agree to extend the current contracts with Waldens Wiltshire Foods (trading as Apetito) for the meals at home and the meals at day centres for older and vulnerable people until 30th April 2009.

The task group recommended that both contracts (for day centre provision and home provision) end at the same time.

The task group recommended that Cabinet agree to a feasibility study of providing fresh cooked food at a local authority older people's day centre.

25. In relation to Members not having sufficient time to enable them to make an informed decision, a report was requested to the November 2007 Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report looked at how Social Services and Housing establish contracts with suppliers and the process for managing the termination, completion and renegotiation of contracts. This report satisfied Committee Members that in future, sufficient time would be set aside to ensure careful consultation with all interested parties and that the necessary steps were in place to ensure the Council is clear about what it wants to procure, with the resources and time available.



Stage Two – A service for the future

Obligations and Policy Objectives

26. Under the *Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970* the Council is required to make arrangements to meet the needs of chronically sick and disabled people including, where required, the provision of meals at home or elsewhere. All meal providers must meet the minimum standards set by the National Association of Care Catering (NACC). The Commission for Social Care Inspection is responsible for inspecting providers. The Council also monitors food quality.
27. The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames is now one of a minority of authorities that still provides services to people with moderate needs and changes to the meals service in other authorities tends to be linked to the overall movement in service provision towards higher needs clients and the requirement to achieve year on year efficiency gains. The table below shows comparative information using the Audit Commissions group of comparator boroughs.

Comparative Group of Boroughs for March 2006

Council	Older clients receiving meals per 1,000 population aged 65 and over
Harrow	19.7
Richmond upon Thames	22.4
Redbridge	19.2
Kingston upon Thames	20.0
Bexley	14.4
Merton	17.9
Sutton	14.2
Hillingdon	13.2
Hounslow	14.9
Barnet	10.2
Bromley	6.7
Richmond rank	1 st



28. The table above demonstrates that Richmond upon Thames provides a home delivered meals service to a higher level than comparable boroughs. This is likely to be because Richmond upon Thames provides a service to people on a moderate FACS banding. Of the people receiving a hot meal at the end of June 2007, 56% also received home care and 2% received direct payments.

FACS banding	Meals Only		Meals and home care / DP		Total
Moderate	95	72.5%	36	27.5%	131
Substantial	85	29.6%	202	70.4%	287
Critical	4	9%	17	81%	21
Total	184	41.9%	255	58.1%	439

29. The task group recognised the administration’s commitment to retain moderate banding across all available services, an approach endorsed by Age Concern. The task group hoped that by providing sufficient services at an early stage it would maintain people’s health and promote greater activity. It was also suggested that people receiving short term moderate help, e.g. after hospital discharge, should be reviewed in a timely way to ensure they don’t stay on the moderate banding for longer than is required.

Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that the eligibility criteria for the meals service should continue to cover critical, substantial and moderate service users.

30. The task group were also made aware that the Council’s medium term financial strategy sets out the need to make ongoing financial savings over the next three years, including central government’s requirement to make annual efficiency savings of 3%. With this in mind the task group agreed that it was vital the new service provided value for money.

Self Directed Support

31. In developing the Community Meals service it’s important to remember that the Council is currently moving towards a more individualised care service with an



emphasis on developing the local market to respond to customer choice. Self-directed care and individual budgets in the provision of social services are integral to this approach.

32. Under Self Directed Support everybody who qualifies for support from Adult and Community Services will be allocated a cash amount, 'an Individual Budget'. Individual Budgets put service users in control of how money is spent. This is done by telling them how much they are entitled to and putting service users at the centre of the planning process.
33. The introduction of Self Directed Support means people will have greater control over their money. However, it also means they might choose not to buy meals provided through the Council's contractor. As part of their investigations the task group heard from Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council and West Sussex County Council, two authorities, who like Richmond upon Thames, have been used as a pilot for the Self Directed Support scheme. These authorities do not currently provide a contracted Meals Service. Oldham refers people to one of the supermarket chains who provide a home delivery service. West Sussex refers people to the Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS) who run a 'meals on wheels' service.

Changing Demand in the Community

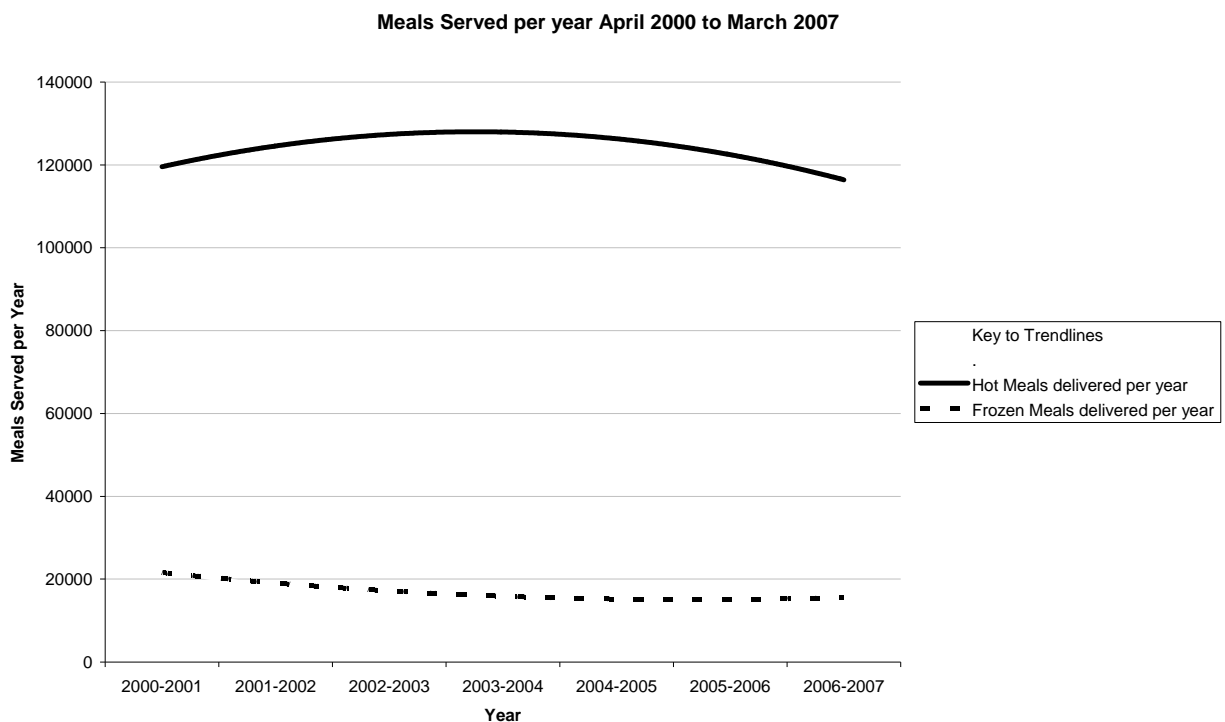
34. Across the UK Community Meals have consistently shown a drop off in service user levels. The number of meals delivered in Richmond upon Thames, hot and frozen, has fluctuated over the last 7 years with an overall reduction in the numbers. There was a correspondently significant reduction in the number of hot and frozen meals delivered between 2005-06 and 2006-07. In addition there was a significant reduction in the number of frozen meals delivered between 2000-01 and 2001-02 (21.5%).
35. The table below indicates the total number of hot and frozen meals delivered since 2000 - 2001.

Year	Frozen	Hot	Total number of meals at home
2000 / 2001	22,452	120,503	142,955
2001 / 2002	17,635	124,325	141,960
2002 / 2003	17,778	126,114	143,892



2003 / 2004	14,699	125,856	140,555
2004 / 2005	16,126	128,202	144,328
2005 / 2006	16,086	125,432	141,518
2006 / 2007	14,704	113,821	128,525

36. The reduction in the number of meals delivered between 2001-02 and 2006-07 reflects a 16.6% reduction in the number of frozen meals and an 8.4% reduction in the number of hot meals delivered. The last change in the eligibility criteria was in 2003 so it can be concluded that reduction in the number of meals is not related to a change of policy.



37. The contract price for meals is based on the number of meals served and the fall in numbers in the last year has led to a higher cost per meal than budgeted for, although the overall cost to the Council is offset by the overall reduction in meal numbers.
38. Service users are charged £3 per meal (around 70% of the cost) and results in the Council making an overall contribution to the provision of the service of £230,000 per year. Additional information from the Audit Commissions group of comparator boroughs is outlined below:



Borough	Hot Meals	Frozen Meals	Cost to Service User
Hounslow	Yes	No	£3.70
Harrow	Yes	Yes	Hot £4.25 Frozen £2.78
Redbridge	Yes	Yes	£2.80
Kingston upon Thames	Yes	Yes	£3.35
Barnet	Yes	No	£3.99
Merton	Yes	Yes	Hot £3.25 Frozen £3.00
Hillingdon	Yes	Yes	£2.70
Bromley	No	Yes	£2.50
Bexley	Yes	Yes	£2.60
Richmond upon Thames	Yes	Yes	£3.00

- Bromley provides a frozen only option and provides care support for residents who are unable to re heat the frozen meal.
- Bexley is phasing out the subsidised meals service and will be referring residents to companies that will deliver meals.

39. Richmond upon Thames demographic patterns for the over 65s reflect national trends with a steady reduction in the number of over 65s taking place in the first part of the decade followed by a steady increase in numbers over the second part of the decade. The table below indicates the numbers at the last census and the projections to 2011.

Age Group	2001	2008	2009	2010	2011	% change
65-69	5,845	6200	6600	6800	7200	+9%
70-74	5,444	5000	5100	5200	5200	+2%
75-79	5,067	4300	4300	4200	4200	-2%
80-84	3,730	3500	3400	3300	3400	---
85-89	2,409	2187	2187	2187	2126	-3%



90+	925	1413	1413	1413	1374	-3%
Total 65+	23420	22600	23000	23100	23500	+2%

40. The demographic changes may explain some of the fluctuations in the numbers of meals delivered to 2006 but clearly the major reduction in numbers between 2005-06 and 2006-07 cannot be related to demographic changes alone. Following further investigation it emerged that there had been a comprehensive review of people receiving meals during 2006-07 and as a result of these reviews it found that a large number of people no longer qualified for the Meals Services and the service was withdrawn.

Changes in Demand – Conclusions

41. In conclusion, there is a steady national decline in the number of people receiving a Meals Service. The demographic projections for Richmond upon Thames is for the number of people aged over 65 to increase as indicated above.
42. The decline in the number of people receiving meals is not as a result of changes to the eligibility criteria.
43. The Council has introduced Self Directed Support and although it is difficult to predict the impact of Self Directed Support it is likely that this will further reduce the number of meals needed to be provided by the Council.
44. One other development that could impact on this service is the continued development of supermarket home delivery services. It is not possible, however, to measure the impact of this.
45. The final figures for 2007-08 were not available in time for consideration by the task group. However, based on the actual figures for the period April to November and projected figures it is estimated that 121,000 meals will have been delivered in 2007-08. Based on the information available and the trends over the last two years the task group agreed it was sensible to assume there would be a further reduction in the demand for meals in 2008-09 by approximately 5,000.
46. Given these changes, the task group agreed that a new long term contract for a traditional Community Meals service may not, in the longer term be in keeping with the current trends in service use. With this in mind the task group agreed that it was vital that other options were fully investigated. These options are outlined, with a brief description and list of the relevant positive and negative factors, in the next section of the report.



Options for the Future

47. 'Promoting the health, housing and well being of all residents' is a priority in the Richmond upon Thames Corporate Plan 2007/10. The document states that the Council 'will improve the range and quality of local care services and ensure that these services are increasingly subject to service user choice and control'.
48. This important priority was noted by the task group and, as mentioned earlier, the task group agreed that the Council should develop a Community Meals service that would help:
- improve the quality and choice of food provided
 - promote social interaction
 - ensure value for money.
49. These important issues were addressed when the task group considered option appraisals and it was at this stage that the task group agreed to split the review up into two parts (a) Meals delivered to individual homes – hot and frozen and (b) Meals served in Intensive Day Centres. This helped to simplify the review process as there are different issues and options for each service. It was also agreed that a full tendering process should be carried out for each service to ensure the most competitive price for the service was obtained.

Recommendation 2:

It is recommended that separate contracts be used for the Intensive Day Centres and the home delivered service and that a full tendering process take place for both³.

50. Before looking at the different options the task group were informed that it may be concluded that none of the options meet the desired criteria completely. As a result, the task group agreed that while the options selected would be important there were other things that could be done to improve the Community Meals service in Richmond upon Thames. These issues are discussed in more detail later.

³ Other benefits of tendering in relation to the Intensive Day Centres are outlined in the next section of the report – **Options for meals served in Intensive Day Centres.**



Options for meals served in Intensive Day Centres

51. There are four Intensive Day Centres, managed by the Council. Three of the four serve pre-cooked meals, at lunchtime, delivered by Apetito. The other has meals provided by the residential home that is on the same site.
52. Attached at **Appendix F** are two tables that give an indication of each centre's capacity and a breakdown of the user satisfaction survey carried out by officers. The attendance at day centres is governed by a revised set of eligibility criteria. The introduction of the revised criteria did lead to a significant reduction in the number of people attending these centres and there was a corresponding decrease in the number of meals served at day centres. It is expected that the demand for meals at day centres will remain consistent for the foreseeable future. The projected figures for 2007-08 indicate that there will be an increase of approximately 500 meals served compared to 2006-07.
53. During stage one of the review the task group had asked for a feasibility study of providing fresh cooked food at a local authority older people's day centre. The option of running a pilot at one of the intensive day centres was also discussed to determine whether it was possible to significantly change the meal provision in intensive day centres. The original proposal was for a totally fresh cook option. However, the task group agreed to defer a decision on the pilot whilst all options were fully explored.
54. With this in mind the task group went on to look at a number of different options including:
 - Re-tender the contract to supply meal on the current basis
 - Council to provide a meal cooked on site using fresh ingredients
 - As above but to contract out the cook on site service
 - Council to provide a meal cooked on site using fresh vegetables and frozen multi portion meat dishes
 - As above but to contract out the cook on site service
 - Contract out meals provision to a local supplier with meals prepared off site and delivered to centres. This could include the possibility of school meal providers delivering the service.
55. An initial option appraisal of all of these options was discussed by the task group in January 2008. This information is attached below:



Initial option appraisal for day centre meals.

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages	Financial impact
1. Re-tender the contract to supply meals on the current basis	Tender contents are well established so the re-tendering process should be managed effectively and the Council should be in a good position to manage the process effectively	No or limited capacity to introduce a more flexible service.	Neutral
2. Council to provide a meal cooked on site using fresh ingredients.	Meals prepared to meet users nutritional needs with greater control of meal contents, size, quality etc.	Would reduce choice as it would not be cost effective to have the range of choice that currently is available	Significant capital to bring kitchen to a full production levels and additional revenue in relation to staff and materials.
3. Council to provide a meal cooked on site using a combination of fresh vegetables and Multi portion frozen meat dishes.	Meals prepared to meet users nutritional needs with greater control of meal contents, size, quality etc.	Would reduce choice as it would not be cost effective to have the range of choice that currently is available	No capital costs, as kitchens are set up for this type of service. Limited additional revenue cost, as a qualified cook would not be required.
4. As above in 2 and 3 but to contract out the cook on site service	Meals prepared to meet users needs.	Would reduce choice, as above and there would be less control.	Cost would be borne by the contractor.
5. Contract out meals provision to a local supplier with meals prepared off site and delivered to centres. This could include the possibility of school meal providers delivering the service.	Meals prepared to meet users needs and could produce a greater range of choice.	Less direct control over meal contents, size, quality etc.	Would be dependent on contracting process.



56. The task group decided not to pursue the total fresh option because of the significant capital investment required and the additional revenue cost associated with this option.
57. As a result, and by using the criteria that the task group had set themselves, it was agreed that the following options should be investigated more thoroughly:
- Re-tender the contract to supply meals on the current basis
 - Council to provide a meal cooked on site using fresh vegetables and frozen multi portion meat dishes.
58. The detailed appraisals for the options selected by the task group are outlined below.



Intensive Day Centre Meals Service

EVALUATION CRITERIA	Option 1 RE-TENDER THE CONTRACT TO SUPPLY MEALS ON THE CURRENT BASIS	Option 2 PROVIDE A MEAL COOKED ON SITE USING FRESH VEGETABLES AND FROZEN MULTI PORTION MEAT DISHES	Factors common to both options
Service meets core service objectives. Issues considered: Specific dietary needs, H&S, Hygiene, staffing issues, delivery of meals on time.		Staff competency and training will need to be of a higher standard in this option as will hygiene. H& S issues will be of greater significance.	Both options should be able to meet the service core objective and these will need to be included in the Specification.
Value for Money/ Financial impact and affordability	Unless the specification is changed to a higher level, the cost parameters for this option will be neutral. The moderate satisfaction rating of the current service would suggest that service users may not regard the service as value for money	There will be increases in cost both in terms of the additional staff time required to cook fresh vegetables and the cost of fresh ingredients. There may also be additional costs relating to the need to have individual portions for special dietary needs.	As both options may result in a tendering process the final cost of the service will not be known until after the process has been completed.
Requirement for Capital investment	Unlikely to require any capital financing.	There may be some additional capital financing required but this is likely to be minimal.	
Quality of meal in terms of: Nutrition Choice End product when served.	Meals meet current national nutritional standards. The Council could choose to improve the standard of the meals by varying the contract specification. The current contract offers the service user a wide choice of menus.	Choice would be limited to the standard meal, a soft meal option and a vegetarian option. However, there would be better control of portions and nutritional value. The end product is likely to look more	



	There will be no change to the look of the end product	appetising.	
Equality issues: Issues considered, Cultural, religious, medical needs, and ethnicity.	Current choice offered does meet the equality needs of service users.	In addition to the 3 main choices of meals, individual portions will be provided to ensure that equality needs are met.	Equality needs must be reflected in the service specification.
Risks	Service User Satisfaction level are unlikely to improve	There could be additional risks in relation to staff cover, training etc. if the Council or a small contractor provides the service.	TUPE would apply in relation to Apetito staff currently employed in the 3 Intensive Day Centres
Benefits	Tender contents are well established so the re-tendering process should be managed efficiently and the Council should be in a good position to manage the process effectively	Meals prepared to meet users nutritional needs with greater control of meal contents, size, quality etc	

59. Using the evaluation criteria above the task group suggested changing the service in the Intensive Day Centres to a part fresh/part frozen option. In view of this broad support for the option a number of issues were explored in more detail:

- **An evaluation of any potential capital investment to bring the kitchens up to the standard required:** The main potential investment will be on providing each kitchen with a high pressure steamer. Two kitchens have steamers in place at the moment and it may be the case that these could be adequate although they may need to be serviced. The remaining items identified are all small items that could potentially be purchased from revenue budgets. It is calculated that the maximum level of capital investment will be in the region of £12,000.
- **An assessment of the additional cost for preparing fresh food:** Two potential costs need to be taken into account. Firstly there may be some



additional staff time required to prepare the fresh vegetables for steaming. There will also be an increased cost for delivering fresh ingredients

- **Service User Survey:** A survey was conducted across all Intensive Day Centres to ascertain users' views on the proposed changes and whether they would be prepared to pay an additional 25p to 50p for an improved meal. These results are attached at **Appendix G** and highlight a number of important issues. The first is that service users support the proposed change and would be willing to pay slightly more for a better meal. However, the survey also indicates that there would be greater support for the change if there was more choice. The issue of choice was also raised during the various site visits to day centres where a number of social day centres develop their menus in consultation with carers and users. This approach worked well and was endorsed by the task group.
- **Internally or externally provided meals:** As recommended above the task group agreed that a full tendering process should take place. The major benefits of tendering this service can be summarised as:
 - It would remove the day to day responsibility for meal production from the managers of the Intensive Day Centres, whilst maintaining responsibility for menu planning etc.
 - The contractor would be responsible for covering gaps in service as a result of leave, sickness etc.
 - The contractor would be responsible for training.

60. The task group were also keen to improve the presentation of meals served at Intensive Day Centres. During the site visits it was noted that when day centres used plates it greatly improved the presentation of the food. It was therefore recommended that in future all food served in intensive day centres should be served on plates.

Recommendation 3:

For meals provided at the Intensive Day Centres it is recommended that the Council provides a meal cooked on site using fresh vegetables and frozen multi portion meat dishes.

Recommendation 4:

It is recommended that the menus at the Intensive Day Centres be developed in



consultation with carers and users. Ideally there would be two meat options (or one meat, one fish) and a vegetarian option each day. Special diet options should also be made available.

Recommendation 5:

To improve the presentation of the meals served at the Intensive Day Centres it's recommended that all meals be served on plates.

Options for a home delivery service

61. Before looking at other options the task group reviewed the current hot and frozen meals service. This model has been highly successful in both its practical operation and results from surveys suggest the meals are popular. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that satisfaction surveys are not always the most reliable source of information, especially when considering services provided for the elderly. As a result the task group requested further work be undertaken on user satisfaction as this was an area that required careful consideration.
62. Following this request, officers carried out a further user satisfaction survey, using the range of questions Apetito uses for their annual survey. 26 people were contacted and participated in the survey. These results are compared below:

Questions	Apetito survey	In house survey	
Would you describe the drivers as polite and friendly?	Yes = 256 100% No = 0	Yes = 26 No = 0	
Both surveys indicate 100% satisfaction with the Drivers.			
When do you usually receive your meal?	Before 11:30 = 12 11:30 – 13:30 = 281 After 13:30 = 1	Before 11.30 = 2 11.30- 13.30 = 24 After 13.30 = 0	
Very similar results with the vast majority of meals delivered between 11.30 and 13.30			
Do you receive the meal you are expecting?	Every Time = 163 Often = 72 Rarely = 10 Never = 1	11 15 0 0	
There is a difference indicated by the higher % of people in the in house survey who often receive the meal they were expecting.			
Are your meals hot when delivered /served?	Every Time = 231 Often = 28 Rarely = 0 Never = 0	17 9 0 0	
There are a greater number of people in the in house survey indicating that the meals are often hot.			



Questions	Apetito survey	In house survey	
On the whole, do the meals look appetising?	Yes = 238 No = 21	20 5 1 no response.	
The Apetito survey shows greater satisfaction with the look of the meal.			
Is the portion size sufficient for you?	Too Big = 16 Too Small = 21 Just Right = 259	0 2 24	
Similar results in both surveys.			
Do you finish your meal?	Every Time = 148 Often = 79 Rarely = 17 Never = 5	10 13 3 0	
Similar results			
Are you satisfied with the variety of meals available?	Yes = 204 No = 46	19 7	
Similar results			
Do you consider the meals good value for money?	Yes = 237 No = 13	21 3 2 no response	
Lower value for money results with the in house survey.			
What is your overall opinion of the service?	Excellent = 131 Good = 105 Average = 16 Below Average = 0	12 6 1 0	
Higher satisfaction recorded with the in house survey.			
Please tick the 3 most important aspects of the meal service for you as a customer.	Hot Meal = 175 Quality of Meal = 126 Daily Visit = 126 Menu Choice = 122 Personality of Driver = 70 Time of Delivery = 58	16 17 7 6 6 9	
If this type of service was to continue, would you be very pleased?		Very pleased 8 Pleased 15 Neutral 3 Not sure 0	

63. In general the results of the two surveys are similar although the in house survey did produce slightly less favourable responses than reported by Apetito. However, despite the relative success of the current model the levels of service user participation have consistently dropped, especially in regard to hot meals.



With this in mind the task group went on to look at a number of different options including:

- Re-tender contract on current basis
- Form a partnership with LB Hounslow form meal service provision
- Move towards all meals being prepared fresh at home through a Domiciliary Care package
- Move towards frozen only meals with assistance for service users where necessary
- Provide frozen meals to all moderate band service users and heated meals for Substantial and Critical FACS banding.
- Remove subsidy and encourage service users to make their own arrangements, only providing a direct service, to service users who are unable to make these arrangements independently.
- Encourage take up of Self Directed Support with friends/neighbours being paid to provide meals
- Transport people to day centres/luncheon clubs
- Contract out meals provision to local small providers such as restaurants or take away service.

64. An initial option appraisal of all of these options was discussed by the task group in January 2008. This information is attached below:

**Initial option appraisal:
Alternative Options for Meals Delivered to Individuals' Homes**

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages	Financial impact
1.Re-tender contract on current basis	Tender contracts are well established so the re-tendering process should be managed efficiently and the Council should be in a good position to manage the process effectively	Limited capacity to introduce a more flexible service.	Neutral
2. Form a partnership with Hounslow Council for meals service provision.	The larger joint contract should provide opportunities to reduce costs and influence the	Could lose the local focus of the service. Negotiations would be more complicated.	Could reduce contract costs.



Option	Advantages	Disadvantages	Financial impact
	contractor.		
3. Move towards all meals being prepared fresh at home through Domiciliary Care package.	Provides meals that meet customer needs and would be very flexible	Domiciliary care contractors face recruitment difficulties and may not be able to resource the additional staff required.	Would inevitably cost significantly more than the current contract.
4. Move towards frozen only meals with assistance for service users where necessary.	Consistent service provided to everyone who qualifies for a meals service.	Reduced choice	Meals contract would reduce in cost but there will be increases in the Dom care budget.
5. Provide Frozen meals to all moderate band Service Users and heated meals for Substantial and Critical FACS banding.	Flexibility in the service provided is maintained, with a differential according to FACS banding.	Some moderate banded users may not be able to cope with Frozen meals.	Will most likely increase the cost to the Dom care budget.
6. Remove subsidy and encourage service users to make their own arrangements, only providing a direct service, to service users who are unable to make these arrangements independently.	Targets the service at the most vulnerable and makes best use of limited resources.	In effect a change in policy and in the eligibility criteria. This would in remove the current subsidy to many service users.	Will most likely lead to a reduction in the budget needed for the Meals Service.
7. Encourage take up of Self Directed Support with friends/neighbours being paid to provide meals.	Produces a more flexible service that is designed around user needs and would maintain current subsidy levels.	Monitoring of quality and consistency would be difficult	Neutral
8. Transport people to day centres/luncheon clubs.	Would provide a respite from being housebound but unless the meals service in the Centres change there can be no assumption that food quality will	Centres have limited capacity	Cost to the council would increase due to additional transport costs.



Option	Advantages	Disadvantages	Financial impact
	improve.		
9. Contract out meals provision to local small providers such as restaurants or take away services	Would provide a possibly more flexible localised service	The capacity does not currently exist and it will take some time to develop	There is likely to be an increase in cost as the benefits of a single large contract would no longer exist.
<p>All options which would result in regular contact with service users have the additional benefit of adding to the process of monitoring their well being and ensuring they are safeguarded.</p>			

65. The pros and cons of each of the options were discussed and the group's first task was to decide which options they wanted to be developed into full option appraisals for discussion at their February meeting. Based on the evidence received and the criteria that had been set it was agreed that the following options should be investigated more thoroughly:

- Form a partnership with LB Hounslow for a hot and frozen meal service.
- Move towards frozen only meals with assistance for service users where necessary.
- Transport people to (social) day centres/luncheon clubs.

66. Unfortunately it wasn't possible to determine the level of mobility of service users who receive a meals only service. This information is not recorded unless there has been an Occupational Therapy Assessment so it is not possible to easily extract this information from the current database. However, information collected during the review process, suggests that social care centres in the borough do have the physical capacity to accommodate additional people at lunchtime. There would also be social benefits for some service users to have some of their meals in a luncheon club.

67. The task group wanted to increase the number of people eating meals in a social context so this idea was welcomed by the task group. However, this option would only be feasible if transport could be provided on a voluntary basis and if luncheon clubs were resourced to take the additional numbers. Whilst the current review of Day Centres might not, at this stage, be able to investigate this option fully, the task group agreed further work needed to be done to promote social interaction.



Recommendation 6a:

To increase social interaction it is recommended that further work be undertaken on the option of transporting people to lunch possibly in conjunction with the review of the Day Centres that is currently being undertaken.

Recommendation 6b:

It is also recommended that Cabinet look at the possibility of supporting the establishment of Luncheon clubs in the borough.

68. The detailed appraisals for the other two options are outlined below.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	Option 1 FORM A PARTNERSHIP WITH HOUNSLOW COUNCIL FOR MEALS SERVICE PROVISION	Option 2 MOVE TOWARDS FROZEN ONLY MEALS WITH ASSISTANCE FOR SERVICE USERS WHERE NECESSARY	Issues common to both options
Service meets core service objectives. Issues considered: Meals served hot within agreed time bands and meet nutritional value for the customer base.	Will meet service core objectives.	Will meet core objectives providing sufficient additional home care hours can be found to assist service users requiring assistance over the lunch period.	
Maintains regular contact with the Service User	Service would ensure daily contact with service users receiving a hot meal service	This option would reduce the number of service users who are visited on a daily basis.	
Value for Money/ Financial impact and affordability	Subject to the outcome of the establishing Richmond's tender costs arising from the Hounslow tendering process this option is currently assessed to be broadly neutral in relation to costs.	When this option was previously proposed it was assumed that there would be an increase in cost due to the additional number of home care hours required to support people in preparing their meals.	The tendering process would govern both options so it is difficult to predict accurately what the financial impact would be for the



	Customer satisfaction with the current service is good and so provides Value for Money.	Using volunteers could reduce these costs but this service would need to be established and the volunteers CRB checked. Frozen meals are clearly not as popular as the hot meal service as evidenced by current take up. However, the Frozen meal service carries a far smaller subsidy from the Council so there would be a saving on the Meals budget.	council.
Quality of meal in terms of Nutrition Choice End product when served.			It is likely that the successful provider will provide the same range of meals for both the frozen and hot meal service so in terms of this factor both options are evaluated as being equally able to meet this criterion.
Equality issues			As Above
Benefits	Maintains daily contact with Service Users receiving the hot Meal Service and maintains the current choice between a hot and frozen service. Maintaining this option allows other options considered by the Task Group to be developed and pursued over the timescale of the next contract.	Would reduce costs to the Council for its meals service and could be implemented at a pace that was manageable for the Service and Service Users.	
Risks	The perceived	The potential financial	



	<p>dissatisfaction with the service would continue. The uncertainty at this stage on the tender price for Richmond</p>	<p>risks to the Council as it is likely that any cost reduction generated by moving to a frozen only service would be more than off set by the additional cost of providing support to those people who are unable to heat their meals. There is also a risk that unless a significant number of volunteers can be recruited to assist in this task the Local Domiciliary Care agencies might not be able to meet demand for care hours over the lunch time period.</p>	
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69. The task group was concerned that every effort should be made to improve quality and choice as part of the review process. The above matrix evaluates these issues. However, the task group concluded that neither option necessarily improves quality or choice. As a result, and before a final recommendation could be made, a number of additional factors were considered in an attempt to ensure the Council was doing everything it can to improve the overall service provided.

Other issues considered

- 70. The option of working in partnership with the London Borough of Hounslow was considered very carefully by the task group. It was agreed that working with another local authority had a number of advantages. However, after further investigation the task group agreed that this option could result in a reduced local focus and negotiations could be extremely complicated.
- 71. With this in mind the task group agreed that the issue of quality and choice would be very important if they were to recommend a frozen only service.
- 72. Meal tasting sessions were held with Apetito, Sodexo and FlowFoods Ltd. This gave the task group a chance to sample a range of different food including so called 'basic' and 'premier' meals. After tasting the samples it was agreed that the food served on one compartment trays was not as well presented and was not as



appetising as the 'PET' or a three compartment tray meals. The cost differential between a standard meal and a premier meal is approximately 20p.

73. The task group also sampled a number of meals from the so called 'gourmet' range. These meals received positive feedback but two of the three providers informed the task group that these meals were only available as frozen options and could not be delivered hot. The meals in the gourmet range were also more expensive.
74. Following the meal tasting it was agreed that recommendations should be put forward to allow service users access to a wider range of meals within a fixed subsidy provided by the Council. The task group endorsed the exploratory work that has begun on devising a strategy to ensure residents who have a meals only service have an opportunity to have their incomes maximised through the partnership developed with Richmond Aid and Richmond Community Partnership. As part of the 'Fairer Charging for Domiciliary Care', the Council is obliged to ensure that everyone who is subject to a financial assessment also has an opportunity to have their benefits reviewed and to ensure that they are claiming all the benefits they are entitled.
75. These processes are not currently applied to residents who have a meals only service, as there is no financial assessment undertaken. Extending the Income Maximisation process to meals only service users would ensure that everyone has the means to make a choice over the type of meal they wish to have supplied.
76. Another concern in relation to developing a frozen only service was the additional care costs for service users unable to heat a frozen meal. The original officer recommendation (considered by Adult Social Care and Housing OSC in June 2007) was to switch over to a frozen meal only service. A number of assumptions/calculations were made in developing the proposal that would have reduced the cost of the meals contract. The resources released through the change to a frozen only service would then have been set aside to provide the additional support some residents would have required to heat and serve the meal.
77. The assumptions/calculations can be summarised as:
 - The frozen only service would reduce the basic costs of a meal to the Council by approximately £1.40 a meal.
 - There would be additional savings, as the increased volume of frozen meals would reduce the unit cost under the contract.



- The overall number of residents receiving meals would reduce as it was anticipated that some residents would choose to make their own.
78. The task group were informed that ½ hour of domiciliary care would be required to assist service users who are unable to heat their own meal. The current charge for ½ hour of care ranges from £7.44 to £9.69. The current profile of service users would indicate that, through the proposed change to a frozen only meals service, approximately 66 service users could be supported through the savings made. Clearly if the demand for support were higher than this level there would be an overall increase in the cost to the Council.
79. The London Borough of Bromley moved from a mixed frozen and hot meals service to a frozen meal only service in 2005. Bromley’s advice highlighted the need to carefully examine potential extra domiciliary care costs and they also recommended a long referral process to help move service users from hot meals to frozen meals. In Richmond upon Thames, this would mean people’s needs being reviewed and transitional arrangements being put in place as quickly as possible.
80. Another issue that was highlighted related to the risk that unless a significant number of volunteers could be recruited, to assist in this task, the local domiciliary care agencies might not be able to meet demand for care hours over the lunch time period. The task group noted these concerns and suggested that the Council needed to work with the Voluntary Sector to identify potential volunteers who would be able to provide support for service users where necessary.

Recommendations – Home Delivered Service

81. Consideration of the evaluation criteria and ‘other issues’ allowed the task group to make the following recommendations:

Recommendation 7:

For the home delivered service it is recommended that the Council moves towards a frozen only service with assistance for service users where necessary.

Recommendation 8:

To improve the quality and presentation of the home delivered service it’s recommended that food is not contained in just one compartment. For example, consideration should be given to using ‘PET’ or a three compartment



tray (even if this option costs approximately 20p more per meal).

Recommendation 9:

It is recommended that further work be undertaken to ensure residents who have a meals only service have an opportunity to have their incomes maximised. This would keep the Council's contribution consistent through the agreed subsidy whilst giving service users the means to make a choice over the type of meal they wish to have supplied.

Recommendation 10a:

In relation to the home delivered service, it's recommended that further work be undertaken, with the Voluntary Sector, to identify potential volunteers who would be able to provide support for service users where necessary. Thought should also be given to the Domiciliary Care arrangements. For example, requiring volunteers to serve the meals prepared on plates and doing the washing up.

Recommendation 10b:

To increase choice, it's recommended that the Domiciliary Care arrangements be as flexible as possible in relation to time. These timings should be negotiated with service users so that people can determine when they eat their community meal.

Recommendation 11:

The recommendations put forward (if accepted) will result in a frozen only service being delivered to individuals' homes. As a result, it's recommended that people's needs be reviewed and transitional arrangements put in place as quickly as possible.



Additional Recommendations

82. The task group had the opportunity to look at a wide range of issues during their investigation. These additional recommendations have been put forward to help improve the overall service in areas that might not have been reviewed had it not been for the in-depth scrutiny of the service.
83. In terms of information about the service the task group were unable to find much information produced by the Council that explains what services are available to residents. Whilst the website (www.richmond.gov.uk) gives an introduction to the service the task group believe that more should be done to ensure appropriate sign posting exists. For example, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council provides a Community Meals Fact Sheet.
84. The task group were informed that all Community Meals had to meet strict nutritional criteria set by the Commission for Social Care Inspection. However, the task group suggested that further work should be undertaken to ensure service users are advised not to rely solely on their community meal for their Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA).
85. The task group were also informed during the meal tasting sessions that a number of local authorities had started to enquire about the packaging used for meals. Evidence received from industry leaders suggested that efforts were being made to ensure packaging was as sustainable as possible. Given the Council's commitment to help minimise waste the task group agreed that the packaging used in Richmond upon Thames, for both the home delivered service and the Intensive Day Centres should be as sustainable as possible.
86. The Adult Social Care and Housing OSC also agreed, given the limited time available, that consideration of the draft specifications, for both contracts, should be delegated to the following Overview and Scrutiny Members – Cllr Jones, Cllr Davies and Cllr Bouchier - before going out to tender. This would ensure Member input via scrutiny at this vital stage of the tendering process.



Recommendation 12:

It is recommended that further work be undertaken to ensure appropriate sign posting exists for all options in relation to the meals service.

Recommendation 13:

It is recommended that further work be undertaken to ensure service users are advised not to rely solely on their community meal for their Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA)

Recommendation 14:

It is recommended that the packaging used for both the home delivered service and the Intensive Day Centres be as sustainable as possible.

Recommendation 15:

Given the limited time available, consideration of the draft specifications, for both contracts, should be delegated to the following Overview and Scrutiny Members – Cllr Jones, Cllr Davies and Cllr Bouchier – before going out to tender.



TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Rec. No.	Recommendation	For action by:
1.	It is recommended that the eligibility criteria for the meals service should continue to cover critical, substantial and moderate service users.	Cabinet
2.	It is recommended that separate contracts be used for the Intensive Day Centres and the home delivered service and that a full tendering process take place for both.	Cabinet
3.	For meals provided at the Intensive Day Centres it is recommended that the Council provides a meal cooked on site using fresh vegetables and frozen multi portion meat dishes.	Cabinet
4.	It is recommended that the menus at the Intensive Day Centres be developed in consultation with carers and users. Ideally there would be two meat options (or one meat, one fish) and a vegetarian option each day. Special diet options should also be made available.	Cabinet
5.	To improve the presentation of the meals served at the Intensive Day Centres it's recommended that all meals be served on plates.	Cabinet
6a.	To increase social interaction it is recommended that further work be undertaken on the option of transporting people to lunch possibly in conjunction with the review of the Day Centres that is currently being undertaken.	
6b.	It is also recommended that Cabinet look at the possibility of supporting the establishment of Luncheon clubs in the borough.	Cabinet
7.	For the home delivered service it is recommended that the Council moves towards a frozen only service with assistance for service users where necessary.	Cabinet
8.	To improve the quality and presentation of the home delivered service it's recommended that food is not contained in just one compartment. For example, consideration should be given to using 'PET' or a three compartment tray (even if this option costs approximately 20p more per meal).	Cabinet
9.	It is recommended that further work be undertaken to ensure residents who have a meals only service have an opportunity to have their incomes maximised. This would keep the Council's contribution consistent through the agreed subsidy whilst giving service users the means to make a choice over the type of meal they wish to have supplied.	Cabinet
10a.	In relation to the home delivered service, it's recommended that further work be undertaken, with the Voluntary Sector, to identify potential volunteers who would be able to provide support for service users where necessary. Thought should also be given to the Domiciliary Care arrangements. For example, requiring volunteers to serve the meals prepared on plates and	Cabinet



Rec. No.	Recommendation	For action by:
	doing the washing up.	
10b.	To increase choice, it's recommended that the Domiciliary Care arrangements be as flexible as possible in relation to time. These timings should be negotiated with service users so that people can determine when they eat their community meal.	Cabinet
11.	The recommendations put forward (if accepted) will result in a frozen only service being delivered to individuals' homes. As a result, it's recommended that people's needs be reviewed and transitional arrangements put in place as quickly as possible.	Cabinet
12.	It is recommended that further work be undertaken to ensure appropriate sign posting exists for all options in relation to the meals service.	Cabinet
13.	It is recommended that further work be undertaken to ensure service users are advised not to rely solely on their community meal for their Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA).	Cabinet
14.	It is recommended that the packaging used for both the home delivered service and the Intensive Day Centres be as sustainable as possible.	Cabinet
15.	Given the limited time available, consideration of the draft specifications, for both contracts, should be delegated to the following Overview and Scrutiny Members – Cllr Jones, Cllr Davies and Cllr Bouchier – before going out to tender.	Adult Social Care & Housing OSC



SELECTED READING

- Community Meals Report, Cabinet Meeting, 23 March 2003
- Equality Impact Needs Assessment (1) – The Meals Service, Adult Social Care Division, November 2006.
- Community Meals Service Report, Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 June 2007
- Community Meals Service Report, Cabinet Meeting, 8 October 2007
- Management of Contracts with Suppliers, Adult Social Services and Housing OSC, 28 November 2007
- Corporate Plan 2007/10
- Task Group Agenda Papers
 - Meeting 1 – 14 August 2007
 - Meeting 2 – 4 September 2007
 - Meeting 3 – 3 December 2007
 - Meeting 4 – 30 January 2008
 - Meeting 5 – 20 February 2008
 - Meeting 6 – 19 March 2008
 - Meeting 7 – 15 April 2008



Appendices

Appendix A	Attendance and Timetable of Task Group Meetings
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Appendix A

Attendance and Timetable of Task Group Meetings

Meeting No.	Witnesses	Date
1.	<p>Officers: Paul Blow, Contracts Manager; Craig Brewin, AD Strategy and Resources; Gareth Davies, Contracts Development Manager; Gill Ford, Head of Policy, Performance and Quality Assurance; Jim Rogan, AD Commissioning Care Services.</p> <p>Other witnesses: Councillor Carr, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing; Councillor Eugenie White, Chair of Hammersmith and Fulham's Cleaner and Greener Overview and Scrutiny Committee; Ms June Evans, of Sheen Day Centre; Ms Harfleet, of Sheen Day Centre; Ms Valerie Hawkins, of Sheen Day Centre; Ms Sandra Morrison, Chief Officer of Age Concern Richmond-Upon-Thames; Ms Hilary O'Brien, Richmond Good Neighbours; Ms Rachel Tawadrous, Care Manager, Crossroads.</p>	14 August 2007
2.	<p>Officers: Paul Blow, Contracts Manger; Gareth Davies, Contracts Development Manger; Gill Ford, Head of Policy, Performance and Quality Assurance; Range George-Naidoo, Quality and Compliance Manager; Jim Rogan, AD Commissioning Care Services.</p> <p>Cabinet Member: Councillor Carr, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing;</p> <p>Apetito representatives: Paul Howell, Head of Sales; Mike Morant, Area Manager and Barrie Tottman, Acting Area Manager.</p>	4 September 2007
3.	<p>Officers: Paul Blow, Contracts Manager; Gareth Davies, Contracts Development Manager; Gill Ford, Head of Policy, Performance and Quality Assurance; Jeff Jerome, Director of Adult and Community Services; Dinos Kousoulou, Project Manager; Jim Rogan, AD Commissioning Care Services.</p> <p>Cabinet Member: Councillor Carr, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing.</p>	3 December 2007
4.	<p>Officers: Paul Blow, Contracts Manager; Gareth Davies, Contracts Development Manager; Dinos Kousoulou, Project Manager; Jim Rogan, AD Commissioning Care Services.</p> <p>Cabinet Member: Councillor Carr, Cabinet Member</p>	30 January 2008



	for Adult Services, Health and Housing.	
5.	<p>Officers: Paul Blow, Contracts Manager; Gareth Davies, Contracts Development Manager; Dinos Kousoulou, Project Manager; Jim Rogan, AD Commissioning Care Services.</p> <p>Cabinet Member: Councillor Carr, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing.</p>	20 February 2008
6.	<p>Officers: Paul Blow, Contracts Manager; Gareth Davies, Contracts Development Manager; Jeff Jerome, Director of Adult and Community Services; Dinos Kousoulou, Project Manager.</p> <p>Cabinet Member: Councillor Carr, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing.</p> <p>Representatives from FlowFoods, Sodexho and Apetito.</p>	19 March 2008
7.	Officers: Dinos Kousoulou, Project Manager.	15 April 2008

As part of their evidence gathering the task group also visited a number of day centres in the borough (intensive and social) and held meal tasting sessions with Apetito, Sodexho and FlowFoods Ltd.



CURRENT SERVICES

(Source: www.richmond.gov.uk)

APETITO SERVICES

apetito is an independent organisation and the only provider of Community Meals contracted by the Council since 1999. They offer a hot and frozen meal service to all our service users meeting the criteria to receive community meals. The manufacturer of the meals delivered by apetito is Wiltshire Farm Foods which is based in Trowbridge.

apetito are also able to provide meals to cater for all your dietary, health and cultural needs. Meals available to you include:

- Diabetic
- Low-salt
- Low-fat
- Pureed
- Soft
- Gluten-free
- Weight reducing
- Kosher
- Halal
- Vegetarian
- Afro Caribbean

apetito source different manufacturers for ethnic meals so advance notice is required.

FROZEN MEALS

One of our most important objectives is to promote your independence and give you the freedom to manage your needs around what suits you best.

The frozen meal service allows you to have this freedom as you can decide when to have your meal and what type of meal that will be. This service is aimed at those of you who are more able to manage reheating a meal for yourself or for those of you who have a carer who could reheat the meal for you. If you are eligible for community meals, we will arrange a delivery of nutritious frozen meals to you every fortnight. You will receive your delivery every alternate Thursday and should expect to receive your meals at around the same time every week (based on the time of your first delivery).

Details of the service

For your first delivery, you will be given a variety of meals consistent with your dietary and cultural needs. Along with this delivery, you will be given an information pack about the service which will include a handbook, catalogue of meals and order forms. You can choose from a range of main courses and desserts.

The minimum delivery is two meals with the maximum being 14.

You can give the driver your order for your next delivery each time s/he delivers to you. Alternatively, you can phone your order through to apetito's local office.

You may need a freezer to store some if not all your meals. apetito will provide you with a small, table top freezer that will be on loan to you for the duration of your meals service. You may also need a microwave or a servotherm heating device to reheat your meals. apetito can also provide you with this. All the equipment is free on loan to you and you will be shown how to use the equipment safely by an apetito driver.

HOT MEALS

The hot meal service is aimed at those of you who are eligible for community meals but are unable to re-heat them safely. If you meet the criteria, we will arrange for a delivery of a nutritious hot, two course meal delivered to you at lunchtime on the days that you require them.

Details of the service

Hot meals are delivered on a daily basis from 11:30am to 1:30pm, 365 days a year.

Meals are delivered in vans called Chef Mobiles. Each Chef Mobiles has an oven in the van which heat up the meals to ensure that you receive them piping hot.

On your first delivery, you will be given a handbook containing information on the service. apetito provide 4 choices of main meals a day (2 standard meals, a vegetarian option and a salad) and two puddings a day (hot and cold).

You will be given a menu two weeks in advance for you to select a meal of your choice.

Suggestion for a Scrutiny Review

Please complete this form if you would like an area or topic to be considered for scrutiny review. Please return completed forms to the Scrutiny Team in Democratic Services.

Name: Adult Social Care & Housing OSC

Suggested topic: **Community Meals Service**

Date of Request: 27 June 2007

Proposed scope / focus of review

To develop and promote alternatives to the current hot meals delivery service to help provide greater choice to older people seeking a delivered hot meal.

Your rationale for selection

(What are the objectives – the reasons for reviewing the topic?)

It is proposed that a 'Frozen Meals Plus' type service could enable the Council to meet the needs of the majority, but there will be people who would still choose a hot delivered meal if the option were available. The Council needs to decide whether to make this service available, and whether to subsidise it. Given that the Council can meet its statutory duty, and the needs of service users, by using 'Frozen Meals Plus' it can look at the provision of hot meals service as a means of providing a choice. There are a number of options to consider and input from scrutiny would be useful and timely.

General comment: Member-led scrutiny and contributions to major 'commissioning' exercises, particularly in the formative stages of defining strategic objectives, scope, affordability, key outcomes and the overall nature of a contract can help improve both the procurement process and service outcomes.

Evidence

(To support the need for the review. What are the issues / facts?)

The introduction of self-directed support means that people have greater control over their money and might choose not to buy meals in the same way as before. Current demand for the service is falling and it is unlikely that the Council will extend its current contract for hot and frozen meals. As a result, a new approach is needed to deliver this important front line service. Scrutiny could play an important role in this process.

Desired outcomes

(What should the review seek to, or be likely, to achieve?)

There is scope for creative thinking in devising new ways of providing the service, including a wide range of choice. If a Task Group was set up it could work with the voluntary sector and service users to ensure a suitable service is provided.

A Task Group would need to make recommendations regarding what the Council should tender for and will also need to inform the development of the specification,

key performance measures and outcomes. Post-award, the ASCH OSC may want to have a role in monitoring performance.

Equalities and Community Cohesion Implications

The Council provides a small number of meals from non European menus but an equality impact assessment of the meals service was recently carried out which showed that the demand for ethnic meals is very low. The inhibitors to the take up of ethnic meals could be addressed by broadening scope of providers using local companies. This is something that could be investigated by a Task Group.

Other comments

(e.g. links to corporate priorities, timescales, other information or queries)

The Local Authority has a duty to make arrangements for the provision of meals, either in a person's own home or elsewhere if a resident of the area is ill or disabled and the authority is satisfied that it is essential for the meeting of that person's needs (*Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970*).

The Council is now in the final year of a contract with a commercial company for the provision of hot and frozen meals which expires in March 2008. Due to uncertainty regarding demand for future meals, and the rising cost should demand continue to fall, the Council must decide whether it is wise to contract for another long term arrangement of the current type, or whether other options should be considered.

The Council currently provides around 120,000 hot meals per year and 15,000 frozen meals. There are around 370 people receiving hot meals (either 2, 5 or 7 per week) and 60 receiving frozen meals.

Given that all new arrangements would commence from April 2008 the time available for the tendering process is very tight. If scrutiny wants to be involved they will have to set up a task group as quickly as possible to ensure all options are considered.

Further information on this topic can be found in the Community Meals Service report which went to the 27 June 2007 ASCH OSC meeting.

(Please continue on a separate sheet if required)

If you require further information on selecting topics for review please speak to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group or officers from the Scrutiny Team in Democratic Services – tel: 020 8891 7158 or email: scrutiny@richmond.gov.uk

APPENDIX D



PROJECT INITIATION REPORT

Project Name	Review of Community Meals Service	Project Ref	
Initiator	Jim Rogan	Authoriser	Jim Rogan
Version	1	Submitted On	
PIR Status	Service Review	Date	3 rd December 2007
1	Background to the Project		
<p>The Council wishes to review its contractual arrangements for the Community Meals Service. The current contract with Apetito finishes on 31st March 2008. Cabinet has agreed in principle to extend the Apetito contract to enable alternative methods of providing meals to be fully explored through the Community Meals Service Scrutiny Task Group. The contract extension will also enable the impact of Self Directed Service and the review of Day Centre and Respite Care Services to be fully considered.</p>			
2	Project Objectives		
No.	Objective	Description	
1	To analyse current information on service users' views on services provided through Apetito and Age Concern, and to investigate the benefit of carrying out further satisfaction surveys		
2	To explore different patterns of service that service users might prefer and to determine if service users would be prepared to fund any improvement in service through higher charges		
3	To research alternative methods for providing Community Meals used by other Authorities		
4	To explore further the benefits of undertaking a pilot project in one day centre to determine the viability of providing meals cooked fresh on site		
5	To map all current provision within the Borough and investigate the possible development of local small providers being encouraged into the market.		
6	To provide regular reports to the Scrutiny Task Group that will allow the Task group to steer the review process and ensure that key policy decisions are made in a timely manner		
7	To provide a final report with options and recommendations on the best way to structure any future contracts for the Community Meals service.		

PROJECT INITIATION REPORT

Project Name		Review of Community Meals Service		Project Ref			
3 Initial Risk Assessment							
No.	Risk	Probability	Impact	Overall Risk	Score	Owner	
1	Sufficient resources are not identified to complete review within agreed timescales.	2	5	Medium	10	Jim Rogan/ Dinos Kousoulou.	
2	Core information requirement not readily available to complete analysis of projected future needs	2	5	Medium	10	Jill Davies/ Dinos Kousoulou	
3	Insufficient time to analyse pilot projects prior to contract process commencing mid year 2008	3	15	High	15	Jim Rogan/ Dinos Kousoulou	
4 Project Deliverables							
No.	Deliverable					Comments	
1	Full set of project documents						
2	Regular reports to the Task group						
3	Final report with recommendations on the future Contract package for meals that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides value for money. • Meets the needs of service users who are house bound and those who attend Intensive Support Day Centre. • Provides appropriately for the nutritional needs of services users. • Maintains the principles of independence, dignity and choice. • Takes account of the demographic changes, changes in services profiles and the introduction of Self Directed Support and the review of Respite and Day Care Services 						
5 Benefits of running with this Project							
No.	Benefit	Performance Measure				Financial Benefit	
1	New contract will provide a flexible service that will meet service users' needs within the budget set by the Council	User Surveys					
2	The Council's financial position will be safeguarded against future fluctuations in service demands.	Contract Monitoring					
6 Initial Estimates of Cost, Time and Staff Resources							

PROJECT INITIATION REPORT

Project Name	Review of Community Meals Service	Project Ref	
Cost	Consultancy costs £5500.		
Time (Duration of Project)	Project to be concluded by 31 3 07		
FTE Days	10		
Comment	Social Services staff time has not been estimated but there will be demands made on Social Services staff during the life time of the project.		
7	Related Documentation		
	Document	Type	
	Terms of reference of the Community Meals Scrutiny Task Group		
8	Project links		
	Council Programme	Council Services	Wards affected Borough Wide =All No wards = None
	Review of Respite Care	Social Services	All
	Review of Day Care Services	Social Services	All
	Introduction of Self Directed Services	Social Services	All

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

CABINET **LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND
UPON THAMES**

DATE: **8 OCTOBER 2007**

REPORT OF: **CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT
SERVICES, HEALTH AND HOUSINGS**

**LEAD
OFFICERS:** **DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL
SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **COMMUNITY MEALS SERVICE**

WARD: **ALL**

KEY DECISION?: YES

IF YES, IN FORWARD PLAN?: YES

Agenda Item No.

16

1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks agreement to extend the existing Community Meals contracts with Waldens Wiltshire Foods (trading as Apetito) to 30 April 2009.

. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council's (Social Services) Community Meals services have been supplied by an independent sector provider, Apetito, since 1999. The contracts relating to this expire in April 2008 and it is now necessary to extend them for a further year to allow exploration by the current Adult Social Services & Housing Overview and Scrutiny Task Group of various longer term options for meals provision.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet agree:

- 2.1 To extend the current contracts with Waldens Wiltshire Foods (trading as Apetito) for the Meals at Home Service and the Meals at Day Centres for Older and Vulnerable People Service until 30th April 2009.**
- 2.2 In accordance with Contract Standing Order 3.3, to waive the requirement in Contract Standing Orders 4 and 6 for a tendering exercise, for the reasons set out in paragraph 4.4 below.**

- 2.3 To a feasibility study of providing a hot meals service at a local authority older peoples day centre.**
- 2.4 Delegation of power to finalise terms of the extension to the Cabinet Member and the Director of Adults Social Services and Housing**

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Original Contracts and extension

3.1.1 Waldens Wiltshire Foods (trading as Apetito) was awarded both of the contracts for the Community Meals services by social services in 1999; the services commenced on 1 July 1999. The contracts were for four years with the option on the part of the Council for a further one year seven months extension. The contracts were, therefore, due for renewal in July 2003.

3.2 Contract extension 2003

3.2.1 On 25 March 2003 it was agreed to extend the contracts with Apetito by an additional five years from 1 July 2003 with the revised prices effective from 1 April 2003.

3.2.2 The decision to extend the contract was taken for a number of reasons:

- (i) Apetito was providing a satisfactory and improving service.
- (ii) By extending the contract with a re-negotiated pricing schedule the Council sought to make financial savings in 2003/04 which would not otherwise be available to it. These savings were to be continued over the subsequent 4 years. In return for a longer extension, Apetito have agreed to re-price and provide a pricing schedule which was more flexible giving incentives for an increase in frozen meals.
- ii) There was a significant cost involved in re-tendering. It was seen as possible that the tender price could increase to cover tendering, business risk and startup costs. It was deemed possible, based on previous experience and market knowledge that this contract would not attract significant interest.
- iii) Apetito had proposed a five-year contract extension with financial savings over the five-year period based on the current service configuration. This offered the Council a significant level of guaranteed savings without adversely affecting the quality of the service. The five-year contract extension identified savings based on the current volume of meals allowing for an adjustment to the current volume banding.
- iv) A comparison with unit costs paid by other authorities at the time indicated that Apetito offered LBRuT a very competitive price

3.3 The current service period

3.3.1 The general trend in falling service user take up the Community meals service has continued from the original contract period into the extension. Community Meals have consistently shown a drop off in service user levels. In the previous period in LBRuT from 1994 to 1999 there was a 2.4%¹ overall drop in the number of meals delivered by the service. This changing pattern has become more significant over the last six years with an average drop of 5.4% per year in frozen meals (1382 FM alone last year) and a drop of 5.16% for Hot Meals (11611 HM drop in the last year).

Period	Frozen Meals	% Drop	Hot Meals	% Drop
05/06	16086	0.25	125432	2.16
06/07	14704	8.59	113821	9.26

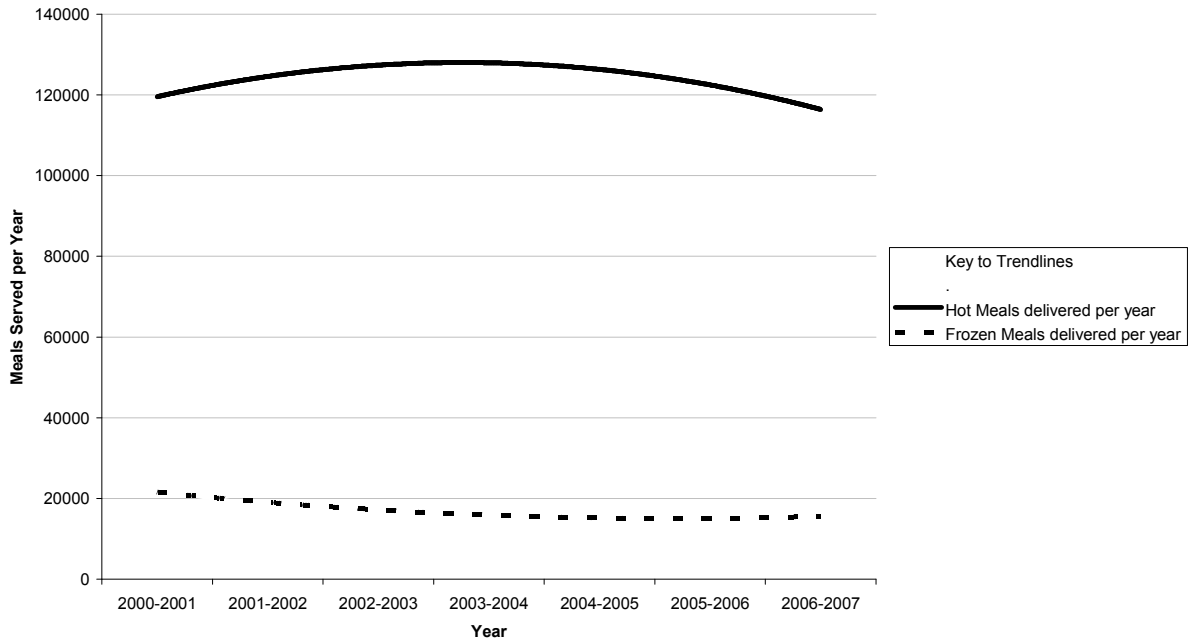
Meals delivered 2005-2007

3.3.2 The Council is, however, still providing significantly more meals than average, with 41 meals provided per 1,000 older people in the population compared to a national average of 22. This one of the highest rates in the England and Wales.

3.3.3 The contract price for meals is based on the number of meals served and the fall in numbers in the current year has led to a higher cost per meal than budgeted for, although the cost to the Council is offset by the overall reduction in meal numbers. Because the Council charges for meals at below cost it makes an overall contribution to the provision of the service of about £230,000 per year.

¹ See July 1999 – 2003 Specification for the Provision of a Meals at Home Service.

Meals Served per year April 2000 to March 2007



3.3.4 The current service has received high satisfaction levels in both the frozen and hot meals service. The results of Day Centre surveys have been more mixed than those for meals at home recipients, but has still met Council monitoring requirements. There is some anecdotal evidence of customer dissatisfaction but this is generally not borne out through customer satisfaction surveys either by the Council or by Apetito.

3.4 Current Renewal Process and Extension

3.4.1 Consideration of the retendering process began in January this year. Initially it was proposed that savings could be made if Service Users were offered a more comprehensive hot service under a similar contract to the current service but without the frozen meals option. This was not progressed due to concerns that this would increase dependency among service users

3.4.2 Adult Social Care & Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27th June 2007 considered officer recommendations that the Council should offer a baseline frozen only Community Meals service on the basis it would promote independence and create cost savings, due to the elimination of high cost hot meals. It was foreseen however that there could be additional costs caused by an increase in the requirement to have domestic care support for those service user who would not be able to prepare the frozen meals themselves.

3.4.3 It was recommended also that an Overview and Scrutiny Task Group be urgently established to further investigate various options for providing hot meals service in addition to the core frozen meals provision.

3.4.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Task Group has met twice, on Tuesday 14th August and on Tuesday 4th September 2007. In this last meeting it was decided that a one year extension to both the current contracts should be pursued for the following reasons:

- Failure to agree to the previous recommended options for re-tendering the Community Meals contracts now means a shortage of time for a full re-tendering process.
- A one year extension would give the Council time to understand the implications of the currently unfolding self directed care and Personal budget policy programmes.
- Overview and Scrutiny Task Group require enough time to adequately investigate the available options, and possible financial implications for these which need further investigation.

3.4.5 Based on the above and the fact that the current contracts expire on the 27th and 30th April 2008, the Council is requested to allow an extension as set out in the Recommendations above.

3.4.6 It is intended that the negotiations with Apetito regarding the contract extension should include discussions to vary the current contract to enable one Day Centre to operate an alternative service following a feasibility study of viability, affordability and cost efficiencies.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 The views of users are surveyed under the existing contract arrangements and these are outlined in the report above.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Under the current contract the annual cost of the meals service is £570,000 for meals at home and £78,000 for day centres, based on the current number of meals served. Income generated from charges to service users is £373,000 for meals at home and £51,000 for day centres. The cost of the contract extension is unknown, subject to contract negotiations with Apetito, however it is expected that this will be within the existing meals budget.

5.2 The capital and revenue costs of the day centre meals pilot will not be known until the feasibility study is completed and these will need to be included in the Council's Medium and Long Term Financial Strategy and annual budget setting process.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT/CONSIDERATIONS

Extending the current contract enables access to ethnic meals to remain in place. The overview and scrutiny task group recommendations will be subject to an EINA assessment to ensure that proposals are assessed against equality considerations.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

Increased costs could flow from negotiations with Apetito resulting from the loss of a day centre. Apetito may not be interested in providing a frozen meals service only.

There is a risk identified in the task force recommendation for a Day centre pilot of the affordability and sustainability to the community of hot meals from the day centre kitchen. This needs to be explored carefully.

There is a legal risk as shown below.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The services provided by Apetito are Part B services under the Public Contracts Regulations 2006, as would be the services to be provided under the proposed extension. There is much reduced requirement for compliance with the regulations for Part B contracts, and no detailed set, procedures for letting contracts are required, although contracts likely to be of interest to economic operators in other member states should be considered for possible advertisement.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Community Meals Item 28, Cabinet Member of Adults Social Service and Housing, Cabinet Meeting 23 March 2003

Equality Impact Needs Assessment (1) – The Meals Service, Adult Social Care Division, November 2006

Community Meals service Report Agenda Item 8, Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 27 June 2007

Community Meals Item 5, Director of Social Service and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Task Group, 14 August 2007

10. CONTACTS

Councillor Denise Carr, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing
Email: cllr.dcarr@richmond.gov.uk

Jim Rogan, Assistant Director, Adults Social Services
Tel: 020 8891 7608
Email: j.rogan@richmond.gov.uk

CABINET

Record of decisions taken at the meeting held on Monday, 8 October 2007.

PRESENT: Councillor Knight (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources) (Chair), Councillor Carr (Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing), Councillor Coombs (Cabinet Member for Youth, Culture and Leisure), Councillor Eady (Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education), Councillor Elengorn (Cabinet Member for Environment), Councillor Trigg (Cabinet Member for Traffic, Transport and Parking) and Councillor Williams (Cabinet Member for Communities).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Bouchier, Davies, Jones and Parsons.

The Cabinet considered reports and **RESOLVED:**

109. APOLOGIES (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lourie

110. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

111. MINUTES (Agenda Item 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September be received and approved and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

112. REPRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda Item 4)

There were no representations by members of the public.

113. MATTERS RAISED BY EXECUTIVE MEMBERS (Agenda Item 5)

No matters were raised by Executive Members.

114. MATTERS RAISED BY NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS (Agenda Item 6))

No matters were raised by Non-Executive Members.

115. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE FOR RECONSIDERATION (Agenda Item 7)

No matters were referred to the Executive for reconsideration.

**116. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
(Agenda Item 8)**

There were no reports from Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

**117. CASHLESS PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR ON AND OFF STREET
PARKING FACILITIES (Report 9)**

That a notice be placed in the relevant E.U. and other journals to invite suitably experienced companies to express an interest in tendering for a service allowing payment of on-street and off-street parking charges to be made a via mobile telephone or other suitable electronic device.

[The reasons for the decision and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

**118. APPOINTMENT OF A COLLECTION AGENCY USING
CERTIFICATED BAILIFFS TO RECOVER MONIES DUE UNDER
SECTION 78, ROAD TRAFFIC ACT 1991 (Report 10)**

Tenders be invited to provide a collection service using certificated bailiffs to collect any unpaid penalty charge notices arising from contraventions on and off-street parking and from the Council's CCTV operations in bus lane and static camera locations.

[The reasons for the decision and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

**119. LONDON BUS PRIORITY NETWORK - AWARD OF CONTRACT
(Report 11)**

As the London Borough of Bromley is the lead Borough carrying out procurement London wide under their procedures, standing orders relating to the appointment of consultants be waived and the contracts for the South West Sector London Bus Priority Network be awarded to Peter Brett Associates and Atkins.

[The reasons for the decision and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

120. LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORKS (Report 12)

The procurement process, as set out in the report, be agreed.

[The reasons for the decision and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

121. INITIATIVES FUND GRANT TO ORANGE TREE THEATRE IN EXCESS OF £5,000 (Report 13)

The following Initiatives Fund grant be agreed for 2007/08:

Orange Tree Theatre – £5,681

[The reasons for the decision and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

122. CORPORATE REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO AUGUST 2007 (Report 149)

- (1) The projections be noted.
- (2) The budget transfer identified in paragraph 3.7.2 of the report be approved.

[The reasons for the decisions and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

123. CORPORATE CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (Report 15)

- (1) The projections for the current year, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be noted.
- (2) The revised capital programme for 2007/08, as set out in Appendices B – E to the report, be agreed.
- (3) The changes to existing schemes and new schemes, as set out in Appendix F to the report, be agreed.

[A revised graph detailing cumulative capital expenditure 2006/07 and 2007/8 was tabled.

The reasons for the decisions and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

124. COMMUNITY MEALS SERVICE (Report 16)

- (1) The current contracts with Waldens Wiltshire Foods (trading as Apetito) for the Meals at Home Service and the Meals at Day Centres for Older and Vulnerable People Service be extended until 30th April 2009.
- (2) In accordance with Contract Standing Order 3.3, the requirement in Contract Standing Orders 4 and 6 for a tendering exercise be waived, for the reasons set out in paragraph 4.4 of the report.
- (3) A feasibility study of providing a hot meals service at a local authority older people's day centre be agreed.
- (4) Authority to finalise terms of the extension be delegated to the Cabinet Member and the Director of Adults Social Services and Housing.

[Cabinet heard representations from Councillors Davies and Bouchier.

Councillor Davies, Chair of the Community Meals Scrutiny Task, Group expressed concern at the wording of the first bullet point in paragraph 3.4.4 of the report, stating that the required information was not brought to the Task Group in sufficient time to enable it to make an informed decision. The Task Group had requested a report to the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November outlining how Social Services and Housing establish contracts with suppliers and the process for managing the termination, completion and renegotiation of contracts. Councillor Davies added that she believed that the social implications of the contracts should also be considered.

Councillor Bouchier expressed disappointment at the report's recommendations given that the Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Housing had agreed with her at Council that the food was not of an acceptable standard. She requested that Recommendation (1) be amended to specify that Waldens Wiltshire Foods be the sole suppliers.

In response, Councillor Carr thanked Councillor Davies and the Task Group for their work to date. She confirmed that she had concerns about the quality of the meals and that the contract had been in need of an overhaul but added that the timeframes did not allow for the necessary research to be carried out before the current contracts expired. She also recognised the need to involve users and carers in the procurement process.

The reasons for the decisions and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

125. ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS - CHILDREN'S CENTRES (Report 17)

The decision taken to accept tenders for the construction of Children's Centres at Ham, Petersham & Richmond Riverside and at Heathfield be noted.

[The reasons for the decision and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

126. EXTENSION AND EXPANSION OF COMMERCIAL RECYCLING TRIAL SERVICE (Report 18)

- (1) The trial be extended for a further 6 month period from October 2007 until the end of March 2008 at a financial cost of £47,700 to be funded from LPSA pump-priming grant.
- (2) The fall in trade refuse collection income, and the proposal to fund some of this shortfall, be noted.

- (3) The operation be expanded to a five day service for paper and cardboard and to four weekdays and half day on Saturday for mixed glass collection.
- (4) The Commercial Waste Office be re-established to incorporate waste minimisation and recycling, with the focus on education as well as the day to day running of the integrated waste and recycling service.
- (5) The current internal Council office recycling service be reviewed to ascertain the most suitable long-term provision to maximise our recycling.

[The reasons for the decisions and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

127. RECYCLED WASTE SALES CONTRACTS (Report 19)

- (1) Contracts for recycled waste sales arising from source segregated collections, commencing 1 December 2007 for 24 months with an option to extend for a further 24 months, be awarded in specific lots as outlined in paragraph 3.2 of the report, and budgets be realigned from 2008/09 as detailed in paragraph 5.1 to reflect new prices.
- (2) Lot 5 (Textiles and Shoes) be dealt with as recommended in the confidential part of this report.
- (3) Contracts for recycled waste sales arising from co-mingled collections be not awarded in specific lots as indicated in paragraph 3.2 of this report due to the Cabinet decision of 15 January 2007 to continue with source segregated collections for the next 24 months.
- (4) Approval be granted with reference to Lot 8 (Carpet) for £5,000 capital funding, as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report, to undertake a pilot scheme, commencing 1 December 2007 for a 12 month period, for the sale of carpet collected at the Townmead Road Re-use and Recycling Centre on a spot-price basis paid per load, as available tonnages are not yet known for this material and a stable market has yet to be identified.

[The reasons for the decisions and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

128. APPROVAL FOR DISPOSAL AT PUBLIC AUCTION OF (1) ELMFIELD HOUSE, TEDDINGTON AND (2) 40 CAMBRIDGE PARK, EAST TWICKENHAM (Report 20)

- (1) Approval be given to the reserve prices referred to in paragraphs 3.1- 3.2 of the confidential version of the report for public auction purposes, based upon the current planning position.

- (2) In relation to Elmfield House, authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Environment, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources, to agree and revise the reserve price upwards, in the event that the planning position can be widened to include residential conversion and use of the property.
- (3) Authority be given for the completion of the sale of the Council's interest in each of the subject properties to the highest bidder at auction at or in excess of the reserve price for each property.

[The reasons for the decisions and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

129. ORGANISATIONAL RESTRUCTURE (Report 21)

- (1) Progress made on the organisational restructure be noted.
- (2) The virement of funds of £241,000 to cover one off implementation costs for the reasons be agreed as set out in the confidential report.

[The reasons for the decisions and any alternative options considered and rejected at the meeting are set out in the report.]

130. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS (Agenda Item 22)

Having regard to the particular nature of the business to be transacted, the Press and Public be excluded during consideration of the following items on the grounds that they were likely to disclose exempt information by virtue of Paragraphs 1 and 3 as defined in Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4.

131. COMMUNITY MEALS SERVICE (Report 23)

The report be noted.

132. ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS - CHILDREN'S CENTRES (Report 24)

The appendix be noted.

133. EXTENSION AND EXPANSION OF COMMERCIAL RECYCLING TRIAL SERVICE (Report 25)

The report be noted.

134. RECYCLED WASTE SALES CONTRACTS (Report 26)

- (1) The report be noted
- (2) Best and final offers be sought from the two highest bidders for Lot 5 as outlined in the report and authority to award the contract be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Environment.

135. APPROVAL FOR DISPOSAL AT PUBLIC AUCTION OF (1) ELMFIELD HOUSE, TEDDINGTON AND (2) 40 CAMBRIDGE PARK, EAST TWICKENHAM (Report 27)

The report be noted.

136. ORGANISATIONAL RESTRUCTURE (Report 28)

The report be noted.

CHAIR

The meeting ended at 7.33 pm.

Date of Publication of Record of Decision: 11 October 2007

Date decisions effective: 19 October 2007

Decisions 117 to 123, 125 to 129 and 134 above will come into force and may then be implemented on 19 October 2007 unless subject to call-in by two Members of the following Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Decisions 117-119, 126-127 and 134	Environment and Sustainability
Decision 120	Adult Social Care and Housing
Decisions 121-123, 126-127 and 128-129	Finance and Strategy
Decision 125	Education and Children's Services

Decision 124 above will come into force and may then be implemented on 19 October 2007 unless subject to call-in by a majority of Members of the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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Appendix F

Table one - Centre Capacity and meals delivered.

Centre	Needs serviced	Ave Number of meals Currently served	Meals supplier	Maximum Occupancy over lunch time		
Tangley Hall	Moderate to server dementia (older people)	15	Residential unit on site	15		
Twickenham	Frail and Physical Disabilities with high care needs (Older People)	28	Apetito	30		
Sheen	Frail and physically disabled older people	36	Apetito	45		
Ham	Moderate to server dementia (older people)	15	Apetito	15		

Centre Capacity

Figures provided are daily averages for the period 8.10.07 to 4.11.07

Table two - Centre Satisfaction survey

Satisfaction rating	Ham		Sheen P.H.		Sheen F.M.I		Twickenham		Tangley		Average
Very satisfied	7	41.2%	9	23.7%	2	20.0%	9	45.0%	8	61.5%	35.7%
Quite satisfied	8	47.1%	15	39.5%	6	60.0%	8	40.0%	4	30.8%	41.8%
Neither	1	5.9%	9	23.7%	0	0	2	10.0%	1	7.7%	13.3%
Quite dissatisfied	1	5.9%	3	7.9%	1	10.0%	1	5.0%	0		6.1%
Very dissatisfied	0		2	5.3%	1	10.0%	0	0	0		3.1%
No response	0		2		1	0	1		0		
Total	17	100.1%	40	100.1%	11	100%	21	100%	14	100%	100%

The Sheen Centre provides services for people with a Physical Disability (P.H) and for Frail people who are mentally infirm (F.M.I.)
 % figures have been calculated excluding the no response figures.

Appendix G

Results of the user survey in the Intensive Day Centres

Centre	Questionnaires Returned	Support proposed change to the meals service		Support for increasing cost of meal		Other Comments
		Yes	No	Yes	No	
Ham	8	7	0	7	0	One return indicates that the service user would be happy to follow the majority view
Twickenham	9	5	4	6	3	
Sheen	54	32	19	32	19	Two questionnaires returned with no comment on the proposed changes to the meals service. One return indicates satisfaction with the current service. Two questionnaires returned with no comment on price, one return indicates a willingness to pay 25p more for a meal. The feed back from the Manager at Sheen is that there would be greater support for the change if there were more choice for the main meal.
Total	71	44	23	45	22	