

Appendix 1 – Responses to the consultation

Results based on 33 responses – a response rate of 24%

Q1- Do you or someone you know currently use the Meals on Wheels service in Haringey	Total
Yes - I use Meals on Wheels	88%
Yes - I care for someone who uses Meals on Wheels	0
Yes - I know someone who uses Meals on Wheels	9%
No	3%

Q2 – On which days do you receive Meals on Wheels?	Total
Monday	97%
Tuesday	94%
Wednesday	88%
Thursday	91%
Friday	91%
Saturday	91%
Sunday	88%

Q3 – As the council looks to make the necessary savings whilst still supporting the most vulnerable, do you agree with the proposal to remove the council subsidy and for service users to pay the real cost?	Total
Yes	0
No	85%
Don't Know	15%

Q4 – What would you most look for in a meals service? Score importance on a scale of 1- 5 (with 1 being not very important and 5 being very important)					
	1	2	3	4	5
Delivery at the weekends	4%	11%	0%	11%	74%
Hot meals (rather than frozen meals that need reheating)	3%	0%	9%	0%	88%

Social interaction	12%	8%	24%	12%	44%
Lunchtime hot meal (rather than in the evening)	7%	3%	7%	10%	73%
Variety of meal choice	3%	3%	7%	7%	79%
Price	4%	4%	4%	18%	71%

The following table is based on 33 comments which have been grouped into similar phrases.

What do you like about the existing service?	Number of people	Percentage
Consistent, regular, reliable, 7 days a week	9	27%
Hot meals	9	27%
Good, very good, great service, everything	6	18%
Convenient, do not have to travel, delivered, home based	5	15%
Choice, variety, fresh	6	18%
The staff – friendly, caring, helpful	5	15%
Affordable	3	9%
Nothing	2	6%

Specific comments:

“I am bed ridden so I rely on this service”

“I am blind and cannot cook meals”

“I like the fact that even when I do not feel like eating, when I receive it, I will always try to eat it. To make one myself I would not bother.”

“social aspect of something meeting the person getting the meal”

What do you dislike about the existing service?	Number of people	Percentage
Nothing, everything is fine	20	61%
They bring the same meals 2 to 3 days at a time	2	6%

Variable taste, the food	3	9%
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Q5 – With the Meals on Wheels subsidy being removed, how do you think you would access the service?	Total
Frozen meal delivery service	36%
Family/friends/carers	27%
Supermarket/local shops	12%
Local cafe/restaurant or pub	3%
Takeaway service	15%
Day centre/community centre	12%
Private hot meal delivery service	30%
None of the above	30%

Additional comments:

“I am house bound and don’t know how I would cope.”

“None of the above are any good to me as I cannot cook anything myself or heat food up as I have spilt hot food on myself and got burnt. I do not have any family to cook anything for me. I cannot get out as most days I am bed bound so that is why meals on wheels is very important to me.”

Q6 – Would you be able to afford to pay extra for the delivery of a daily hot meal?	Total
Yes	42%
No	58%

Q7 – What is the maximum amount you would be able to afford for the delivery of a daily hot meal?	Total
No more than £3.40	30% (10)
£3.50 - £4.40	24% (8)
£4.50	6% (2)
£5.00	21% (7)
More than £5.99	18% (6)

Q8 – Would you be interested in attending a regular lunch club if one was available?	Total
Yes	29%
No	71%

Additional comments:

No – “because I cannot get out every day as a lot of time I am in bed in bad pain so most of the time I am bed bound and I cannot get out of the house so a lunch club or day centre will be no good to me.”

Yes – “maybe. Transportation would need be needed”.

No – “cannot attend due to illness”

Q9 – What is your preferred meal choice?	Total
European	56%
Cypriot	9%
African	0%
Caribbean	19%
Halal	0%
Vegetarian	3%
Kosher	3%
Other	9%

Letter accompanying a returned paper questionnaire:

"I know that by writing this letter nothing is going to change, Haringey Council has already reach a decision to stop the meals on wheel service to people living in one of the most deprived areas in the country. Why are the councils failing to serve the communities? What does it take for councils to understand that lives mean more than money, another Grenfell Tower.

I am in my seventies, have a disability and many chronic ailments that will never be cured and will only get worse. The area around me has completely changed many of my friends and neighbours have either died, or moved away. The rest are either newcomers or completely unknown to me. There are times when I do not see or speak to a person for days on end, only my meals person provides some relief.

In the summer might be able to live on a diet of salads, in winter perhaps tin soup and a sandwich, if I can open the tin. If I am in too much pain I will just not get up.

It appears that we are no longer living in age with a caring society to provide some support, however little, to help the old, disabled and sick.

How sad can that be!!!"

Appendix 2: Consultation response from meals on wheel provider, Sodexo.

As part of their consultation process I would like the Council to take note of the following regarding its delivered meals service

1. I have through Christine Mosedale – Adult Social Services Commissioning Manager offered to the Council officers who are involved in the consultation process the opportunity to accompany our delivery drivers so that they can better understand the frailty and needs of our Service Users and the benefits in addition to the provision of a hot meal at lunchtime that Sodexo provide before making a decision on the future of the service
2. I have detailed below some of the benefits of a hot delivered meal service, which supports Haringey Councils own declared aims of both
 - Making Haringey an even better place to live
 - Enable all Adults to live healthy, long and fulfilling lives
 - Support Haringey's Health and Wellbeing Board in promoting a healthier Haringey by ensuring that people receive the support they need to maintain their independence
3. Between once and twice per month the Sodexo delivery staff have to call an ambulance to assist with a Service User who has either fallen or has been discovered very unwell needing urgent medical assistance
4. Sodexo currently provide hot meals to just over 100 active Service Users who receive meals daily up to 7 days per week 365 days per year with the following age profiles
 - a. Age 0 to 74 28%
 - b. Age 75 to 84 32%
 - c. Age 85 + 40%

Statistics produced by the Office of National Statistics show that the UK population is aging and that the number of people living beyond 75 has increased by 25% in the last 10 years and will increase by a further 50% over the next 10 years

5. An Independent study has shown that for every £1 invested in a core Meals on Wheels service generated around £5.28 of Social Value to the wider community
6. Our Service in addition to providing a varied nutritious meal to vulnerable Service Users supports Haringey as its provision provides other preventative benefits such as reducing the number of GP visits and supporting speedier recovery from ill health, and reducing the level of loneliness and isolation that Service Users can feel and finally the Service made them more able to remain independent in their own home.
7. The Councils own published findings from engagement events and focus groups said that
 - a. They want to have better access to GP's and primary care services – Our service helps with this by reducing the number of GP visits and allowing earlier hospital discharges
 - b. Helps to tackle social isolation, which is a contributing factor to long term conditions including Mental Health issues such as depression particularly amongst the elderly
8. A large range of both ethnic and medical diets are catered for including Kosher – Halal – Afro Caribbean – Gluten Free – Diabetic – Pureed etc. which meet the diverse population requirements of the Council

Additionally as part of our meal delivery process our drivers carry out a “daily safe and well check” where

- Driver asks Service User how they are feeling and if anything is worrying them
- Looks to see if they look unwell or if they notice any deterioration in Service User or they seem more confused than normal
- Checks whether the environmental state of their accommodation is adequate and asks if Service User is warm enough reporting back any issues or concerns
- Where required opens the meal container and plates the main meal and ensures that Service User has a drink and cutlery available and sits them down with their lunch – some form of additional service is now provided for around 50% of our Service Users – which whilst increasing the length of the visit does provide human interaction alleviating loneliness

From this visit Sodexo provide daily feedback to Social Services and/or next of Kin highlighting any concerns

Sodexo also alert Social Services of any “no answers” should a Service User fail to answer door, after carrying out a range of checks detailed below

- a) The driver contacts our office to telephone Service User (in case they can’t hear door or have fallen asleep)
- b) They then check through windows & letterbox (have in the past discovered Service Users who have fallen and are on the floor)
- c) Office contacts next of kin to see if they know where the Service User is (could have a Doctors or Hospital appointment and failed to advise us)
- d) Finally we will advise Social Services
- e) We have around 1 no answer every day that we have to report – with around 3 per month resulting in a hospital admission

With the increasing frailty and dementia issues faced by Service Users due to stricter referral criteria - our Service impacts positively on the Councils reputation by early notification of potential issues

Sodexo does whenever possible ensure that the same delivery person visits the same Service Users each day which

- Builds a friendly relationship with Service Users
- Hold keys or have key codes to access properties of Service Users with poor mobility or visual impairment – Sodexo have keys/key codes for around 25% of current Service Users

Which delivers the obvious benefits of:

- Keeping Service Users out of hospital and having fewer visits to Doctors surgeries
- Stopping “bed blocking” in the NHS – The Kings Fund reports that around 1 in 4 people over the age of 75 in hospital beds have no medical need to be in hospital – older people frequently report lack of support on discharge from hospital. – Older people often with complex needs, including long-term conditions and frailty, are at particularly high risk of readmission without adequate home support

- Gives a daily person contact – stops instances of SU being left on the floor – or worse deceased and undiscovered with the associated bad press
- Reduces instances of malnutrition – which is a major cause and consequence of poor health and older people are particularly vulnerable in a report produced by the Malnutrition Task Force – where it is estimated that in the UK around 1 million people over the age of 65 are malnourished or at risk of malnutrition
- Sodexo meals are all nutritionally analysed and produced specifically for the health care sector to ensure that adults do not get meals which include too much sugar – fats or salt
- Alleviates loneliness – in many instances our delivery staff are the only daily personal contact that Service Users have

From focus groups carried out by Sodexo we have been advised that Service Users from having both a daily nutritious meal delivered, along with the human contact of knowing that someone will see and check up on them everyday report that they felt safer and more secure with improved independence and ability to stay in their own homes as well as improved health and happiness.

Within its consultation documentation the Council have advised that uptake of the meals service had been reducing over the last few years due to alternatives being available – including supermarket shopping delivery which we would reject – We have been advised by the Council that through budget cuts that they have introduced a stricter referral criteria for access to the Service (Meal numbers now around 50% of volume in 2012) - All Service Users have in the last few years been visited and reassessed by the Adult Care team with many removed from the service as not now eligible for the service and able to provide for themselves.

Within the alternative options that the Council have detailed that Service Users are able to order shopping including ready meals on-line – from a survey of the current Service Users carried out by Sodexo only 2% (3) of them have access to the internet!

Supermarket ready meals tend to be unhealthy in that they are generally high in salt sugar and fats which are unsuitable for many of our Service Users who are diabetic, or have other health issues.

Additionally, this is not a free service – each Service Users pays a £3.40 contribution to their meal cost (this has not risen in the last 5 years!) – We believe that Service users and or their next of kin would pay more for the peace of mind knowing that a hot meal was being delivered and that someone was checking on them every day. An increase in the cost of the Service User contribution would reduce the level of subsidy the Council provides (each £0.10 increase would reduce the subsidy by circa £4K – so an increase in price to £4.50 would reduce the current subsidy of £140K by around £44K).

Sodexo employ 12 staff on its Haringey meal delivery contract – all of whom are Haringey Council Tax payers and who are likely to be unemployed should the Council decide to scrap the service!

Finally, I would reiterate our offer for Council Officers to accompany our delivery drivers on their delivery rounds so that they able to meet with some of our Service Users and see their level of need and be thus better able to make informed decisions as to the value of this service

Jarek Plewa

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Home Service Business Director