

Report



meeting	SOCIAL SERVICES STANDING SELECT COMMITTEE	
date	8 th June 2004	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

PROGRESS REPORT ON UNIT STRATEGY FOR THE MEALS SERVICE AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HOT VAN MEALS DELIVERIES

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise members on the progress of the project to extend and develop the Rainworth Distribution Unit as the central base of operations for the meals service throughout the county.

2. Information and Advice

- 2.1 A report to the Standing Select Committee on the 16th December 2003 advised members that Cabinet had endorsed the recommendation to extend the Distribution Unit at Rainworth in order for it to service the whole of the county from a single base utilising 13 mobile oven vans.

2.2 Adaptations to the Rainworth Unit

- 2.2.1 The original project was to be managed in three phases, two of which were reported on and agreed. The first phase involved extending the freezer capacity of the existing unit and providing temporary portakabin accommodation for delivery staff. The second phase involved the construction of a new building to provide permanent accommodation for meals service delivery and administrative staff.
- 2.2.2 To facilitate the first phase, a temporary freezer was installed on site to ensure continuity of service to the 4,160 service users who have distributed to them every week 11,500 meals. This part of the operation has been very successful - the newly extended freezer is now fully operational and the temporary unit has been removed from site. It was the original intention to increase the freezer size utilising the existing unit supervisor's office. However, it was considered that a small extension to the existing building proved to be a more cost effective solution, and therefore this option was adopted.
- 2.2.3 The second phase involves the construction of the additional building, and this is on scheduled for completion by the end of July 2004.

2.3 The Retford Distribution Unit

- 2.3.1 The notice to terminate the tenure of our distribution unit at Retford Hospital expired on the 31st March 2004. In anticipation of this deadline, the staff affected by the closure were transferred to the Rainworth Unit during the middle of March 2004.

2.4 The Willow Road Distributuion Unit

- 2.4.1 Nottingham City Council took over the management of the Willow Road distribution unit as part of the disaggregation process on the 1st April 1998. Since that time, the meals have become considerably more expensive to regenerate in comparison with the units managed within the county.
- 2.4.2 Notice was therefore served on the City Council to discontinue the conurbation meals service for the county, with effect from the end of April 2004. All operations from the Willow Road unit were transferred to Rainworth on the 1st May 2004, although as part of the process of withdrawing from the Service Level Agreement, payments to the City Council cease at the end of May.
- 2.4.3 In order to manage the migration as seamlessly as possible, a temporary portakabin has been installed on land adjacent to the Rainworth Distribution Unit for the use of staff transferring from the Retford and Willow Road Units. The portakabin was moved from the Willow Wood Day Centre site at Sutton in Ashfield and will be used by the Redoaks Day Centre when the Rainworth project is completed.

2.5 Oven Vans

- 2.5.1 As previously reported, it is the intention to meet the requirements of service users assessed to be in need of a hot service in the extremities of the county using oven vans.
- 2.5.2 Nine of a total fleet of 14 Ford Connect vehicles converted into oven vans by Special Vehicle Projects on the Isle of Wight are now in service. Five are serving Bassetlaw and 4 are serving parts of Rushcliffe and Broxtowe. Meals delivered by the oven vans have been very well received by the service users who have commented on the improved delivery temperatures and the "just cooked" freshness. The remainder of the vehicles will be delivered during May 2004.
- 2.5.3 The alterations to the delivery processes due to the use of the oven vans have involved the distribution unit and delivery staff in greatly revised working arrangements. All staff involved are to be congratulated on their hard work and dedication in responding to the new challenges.

2.6 Implications for Service Users as a result of implementing the Meals Review recommendations

- 2.6.1 As a result of the implementation of the recommendations of the recent Meals Service Review, the delivery of hot meals has been reduced from 80% of turnover to 63%. This has created cost benefits through the reduction of

routes from 48 to 41 further facilitated by staff leaving or retiring from the service without the requirement to replace them.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that this report is noted.

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