

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 14 April 2022

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Adult Social Care

SUBJECT: Community Meals: Direct Award of Contract to Apetito

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek Executive Board approval for a waiver in compliance with 1.14.4 (v) of part 3 Procurement Standing Orders to grant a Direct Award to Apetito for the supply of pre-prepared meals for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That Executive Board

- 1. Note the contents of the report; and**
- 2. Approve the request for a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3 for the Direct Award of a contract to 'Apetito' for a period of 12 months.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Council provides a Community Meals Service to eligible adults within Halton who are unable to shop or prepare a meal for themselves due to age, illness or disability. To determine if an individual qualifies for the Community Meals Service, an Adult Social Care worker considers the needs of an individual and the circumstances of any carers. The ongoing need for the meals service is then periodically reviewed.

3.2 An external catering provider (Apetito) currently supplies the Council with frozen, ready prepared meals. The frozen meals are heated by the Council's in-house catering team and are delivered by the Council's fleet management service. Hot meals are provided in service users' own homes, up to seven days per week between the hours of 11am and 1pm. The Council can also provide an optional cold meal tea time pack, which is delivered during the lunchtime delivery period.

3.3 The Community Meals Service is a chargeable service that is non means-tested. Service users are billed on a four weekly basis for meals provided during the four-week period.

3.4 The Council's Internal Audit team undertook a planned internal audit of the Community Meals Service for the financial year 2020/2021. Outlined in the Audit report, the Internal Audit Team made a number of recommendations for the service.

3.5 One of the recommendations sets out that an interim contract should be awarded to the existing supplier whilst the Council considers alternative community meals service delivery options. During the interim contract period, the Council will explore various options in relation to the supply of the meals and charging levels.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None at this stage.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 A direct award of a contract to the existing provider would support continuity of provision for recipients of Community Meals.

5.2 The total financial cost of the service is circa £150,000 per annum. This amount can vary depending on the number of service recipients and number of meals provided to each recipient.

5.3 The service is a chargeable, non-means tested service and a significant proportion of the cost of this contract is met through income received. A council subsidy is currently required to meet infrastructure costs i.e. heating the meals and on transportation used to deliver the meals.

5.4 Work will be undertaken by the Council's Financial Management Team during 2022/2023 to calculate appropriate charging levels to be introduced from 1st April 2023 for the financial year 2023 – 2024 onwards. The aim is to remove the need for the Council subsidy to meet the infrastructure costs. All service costs will be met through charging.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

None identified.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None identified.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The provision of healthy, nutritional meals that cater for all types of diets, including special diets, is a significant contributory factor in maintaining the health and wellbeing of local residents.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None identified.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The direct award of a 12 month contract with the current supplier, Apetito will ensure continuity of service provision.

8.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The Community Meals service is a non-means tested and inclusive service which is open to all residents of Halton, provided that they meet the eligibility criteria of the service as determined via assessment undertaken by Adult Social Care.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Internal Audit Report – Community Meals	Runcorn Town Hall	Amanda Lewis, Commissioning & Development Manager