

MEALS ON WHEELS PRICE FOR 2004/2005**1 Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to set the Meals on Wheels meal price for 2004/2005 and to request a supplementary estimate for 2003/04.

2 Background

- 2.1 Hampshire County Council (HCC) have set the price for Meals on Wheels at £2.60 per meal from 12th April 2005. This is an increase of 10 pence for the County and is 15 pence more than the New Forest District recipients are currently paying.
- 2.2 In recent years the meal price to New Forest residents has tracked the County price, albeit at a lower amount.
- 2.3 At the time the NFDC Meals on Wheels budget for 2004/2005 was set, HCC had not decided on the County meal price. As a result the 2004/05 budget was based on the existing meal price. (In terms of client income, and on the HCC's existing meal charge in determining the County's contribution).
- 2.4 The Women's Royal Voluntary Service have found it necessary to increase their charges for delivery of Meals on Wheels within the District by £6,600 for 2003/04. This additional charge will be split 50/50 with HCC resulting in a supplementary estimate of £3,300 being required for NFDC in the current financial year.

3. Housing, Health and Social Inclusion Review Panel comments

The Housing, Health and Social Inclusion Review Panel meeting on 17 March 2004 considered the impact of a price increase. The Panel accepted the need for an increase this year to the cost of meals to the customer. The Panel hoped the current meals on wheel review would lead to the availability of more detailed financial information, sooner in the financial year and this would enable more informed decisions in future years. The Panel also recommended that the supplementary estimate of £3,300 for the Women's Royal Voluntary service be accepted by Cabinet.

4. Portfolio holder's comments

Both the Health and Social Inclusion and the Finance and Support Portfolio Holders support the recommendations contained in this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Meals on Wheels and Sheltered Housing Residents Meals are budgeted to cost this Council £68,560 in 2004/05. A 10p increase of the meal price from the current £2.45 to £2.55 will increase income by £6,400 for the full year. This income will be shared 50/50 between HCC and NFDC. Any increase below 10p, would still leave NFDC having to fund the £3,200 County share and leave a lesser share to NFDC to fund increasing service costs.

However, if the cost were to be increased by 15p to £2.60 in line with the County Council Charge, this would reduce NFDC's costs by a further £3,200.

6. Environmental Implications

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

7. Crime and Disorder Implications

7.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

8. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

8.1 Cabinet set the Meals on Wheels meal price for 2004/05 at £2.60 per Meal, generating an additional budget contribution of £6,400 towards increased service costs as outlined in 5.1.

8.2 Cabinet agree a supplementary estimate of £3,300 for the 2003/04 financial year in respect of increased charges from the Women's Royal Voluntary Service.

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