

Appendix 1 - Consultation Approach

Statutory consultation was carried out between 9 July and 7 October 2013 on the future of Leicester's Mobile Meals service. The proposal that we consulted on was:

Stopping the Council's current mobile meals service and helping people to prepare or obtain meals in alternative and more flexible ways.

Comments were invited on the proposals from people who receive mobile meals, their families and interested parties. The following methods were used.

Letters and questionnaires to service users

Letters and questionnaires were sent to everyone who was using the mobile meals service on 9 July 2013. An information booklet and a frequently asked questions booklet were also included. All of these were made available in different formats or languages where requested. A prepaid envelope was supplied to allow people to respond as easily as possible. If anyone felt that they would have difficulty in filling in the questionnaire, an officer was available to visit them and assist.

A reminder letter and another copy of the questionnaire were sent out on 23 September 2013 to give people a further opportunity to respond if they hadn't already done so.

On line questionnaire

The questionnaire was made available on the Council's website for anyone to fill in.

Focus groups

Two focus groups were held for service users or their relatives/carers. There is nothing to report back on these as only one person took up this opportunity. A one-to-one meeting was held with this person to discuss the issues and take the person's views through a questionnaire.

One-to-One interviews and additional support

The documentation was provided in different languages on request and, where appropriate, the information was converted to Easy Read and/or support workers assisted customers to understand the proposal so that they could contribute if they wished. Officers visited customers in exceptional circumstances to help them fill in the questionnaires. There were two such visits.

Key stakeholders, councillors and MPs

Letters were sent to various groups representing the wider interests of older people, including Healthwatch and Age UK, inviting them to take part in the consultation. Various forums were also consulted, such as the 50+ Network, Carers Reference Group, Discuss (Customer User group) and Forum for Older People. Each Leicester City councillor and MP was also written to about the proposal. Cllr Lynne Moore was also written to in her role as chairperson of the Adult Social Care & Housing Scrutiny Commission Chairperson.

Helpline

A dedicated helpline was available for people to discuss any issues between 8.30am and 5pm Monday to Thursday (4.30 on Friday).
All calls to this number were logged and responded to appropriately.

Email

A dedicated email address was set up for people to contact the Council via this means if they wished.

Letters to and meetings with current providers

The two current external providers of meals on behalf of Leicester City Council were sent a letter informing them of the proposal. Individual meetings were held for each provider to discuss their views and concerns. Notes were taken of the comments raised at these meetings and they were invited to submit further responses if other issues came up as a result of the meeting.

Staff and trade unions

Meetings were held with staff of the internal services (catering and transport) and trade unions and their views gathered.