

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO: POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 10 JUNE 2002
SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 17 JUNE 2002**

REPORT ON : WELFARE MEALS SERVICE

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

REPORT NO: 532-2002

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report seeks authority to extend the current meals service provided to the Social Work Department to include meals currently prepared by home care workers in service users' homes. The increased volume of meals would require the City Council to facilitate Tayside Contracts' intention of developing a new kitchen production facility at Claverhouse Industrial Estate.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that: -

2.1 The Committee agrees to discontinue the preparation of meals by Social Work staff in service users' own homes, to take effect when the new kitchen facility is fully operational.

2.2 The Committee approves capital expenditure of £200,000 for adaptations to an industrial unit at Claverhouse Industrial Estate for Tayside Contracts to use as a kitchen facility for the provision of a meals service to the Social Work Department.

2.3 The Director of Economic Development is authorised to enter into appropriate leasing arrangements with Tayside Contracts.

2.4 The Director of Social Work concludes formal agreements for the full specification and conditions of contract including costs for the meals service to be provided by Tayside Contracts once the proposed new facility is available to provide the service.

2.5 The Director of Social Work brings forward a report to a future meeting of the Social Work Committee providing a detailed analysis of the budget and staffing implications of an extended meals service.

2.6 The Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection brings forward a report which recommends appropriate monitoring arrangements and the financial and staffing implications thereof to ensure that food safety procedures are adhered to throughout the Council.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The cost of adapting and fitting out a production kitchen facility in an industrial unit at Claverhouse Industrial Estate is estimated at £400,000. Tayside Contracts can finance equipment requirements of £200,000 through an operating lease facility leaving an unfunded balance of £200,000. Since Tayside Contracts have no separate capital allocation distinct from its constituent authorities, this sum would require to be financed by Dundee City Council. Specific allowance of £136,000 is included in the Chief Executive's capital budget for 2002/03 and the balance of £64,000 will be met from the capital budget provision for Health and Safety works. The capital charges on this investment will be recovered from Tayside Contracts through rent charges for the unit incorporated into the lease agreement negotiated with the Economic Development Department.

- 3.2 The additional revenue costs for the provision of a meals service from a new facility to an increased volume of service users will be £170,000 in a full financial year as detailed in the attached Appendix A. This will be funded from additional resources allocated to Dundee City Council to implement the report of the Joint Future Group. These resources are included in the Social Work 2002/03 revenue budget. As recommended in 2.5 above, the budget implications will be the subject of a further detailed report by the Director of Social Work to a future meeting of the Social Work Committee.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report reflects the Council's objective to support the delivery of services to defined neighbourhoods. This will ensure accessibility and equity of access across the city and is the basis for continuing to involve service users in decisions about the kind of home care services the Council provides and commissions.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report takes account of the right of vulnerable service users to have equal access to services, which allow them to play their full part in the community.

6.0 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 The Social Work Department has been developing different ways of delivering home care services following a Best Value Review report submitted to the Best Value Sub-committee of the Policy and Resources Committee on 7 September 1999.
- 6.2 The Social Work Committee on 21 August 2001 approved a report on "The Development of the Home Care Service - a Neighbourhood Approach", which recommended the reshaping of home care services to take account of the Best Value Review and of the increased need for social and personal care. To release scarce Social Care and Home Care Workers' time to carry out these priority care tasks, it is necessary to discontinue the cooking of meals in service users' homes.
- 6.3 There are also significant food safety issues to be considered. Stringent food hygiene and infection control measures must be in place for all food preparation activity. Compliance with these measures is an integral part of the contract with Tayside Contracts. However, it is not reasonably practical, within the resources available, to ensure that the standards which are essential to protect service users can be developed and sustained in each service user's home when Home Care staff are producing meals. This represents a significant risk to service users, and potential liability for the Council should an incident occur.
- 6.4 The third relevant factor is nutritional standards. The provision of safe and nutritious food is a critical element of supporting increasingly frail older people to stay at home. The Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care has recently published a National Standard that the Council will be required to meet. This states that "food will be handled safely and meals will reflect your choices and dietary needs". Meeting standards in relation to nutritional content is a fundamental part of the contract with Tayside Contracts and this ensures that people receive a nourishing, well-balanced meal. Again these standards cannot be guaranteed in service users' homes, where staff have no control over the nutritional content of the meal, or the environmental conditions in the home.
- 6.5 For all the above reasons, it is recommended that the practice of preparing meals in service users' homes is discontinued, to be replaced by delivered meals. This change would take effect when the proposed new kitchen facility is fully operational.
- 6.6 To ensure that these improved arrangements comply with food safety and hygiene standards, adequate monitoring arrangements will be required. Such monitoring arrangements will be needed across all Council departments which use Tayside Contracts or other food providers. It is therefore recommended that the Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection, in

consultation with the Directors of Education and Social Work, investigate the corporate arrangements required to ensure food safety.

7.0 CURRENT SERVICE PROVISION

7.1 Tayside Contracts has provided a meals service for Dundee City Council since its inception, formerly from approximately 20 school kitchens but latterly the service was centralised by upgrading the kitchen facilities at Harefield House in 1999. It was recognised at that time that this was not necessarily the best long-term solution as it was anticipated that the demand for the service could ultimately grow beyond the capacity of Harefield House. This point has now been reached and accordingly it is necessary to consider the means of provision of a meals service over the next ten years.

8.0 REVIEW OF SERVICE

8.1 The Finance and Social Work Departments have recently undertaken an option appraisal of the meals service. These discussions included a revised service specification, conditions of contract and a unit pricing structure reflecting economies of scale from the anticipated increase in volume of meals. While the current Social Work budget includes provision for approximately 200,000 meals from Tayside Contracts, it is anticipated that the transfer of meals from home care workers provision in service users' homes together with increases from demographic changes will increase the volume requirement to 350,000/400,000 by 2003/04. Clearly the current facility at Harefield House is not viable for this level of production and discussions with the Economic Development Department have located a suitable vacant industrial unit at Claverhouse Industrial Estate which could be adapted to provide the required service.

8.2 While Tayside Contracts are currently continuing to provide a service to the Social Work Department under existing contractual arrangements, discussions are now sufficiently well advanced with Tayside Contracts on the terms of a new meals service to provide the comfort that the proposed service will provide the most cost effective option for the Council.

9.0 NEW KITCHEN FACILITY

9.1 Prior to the Council and Tayside Contracts concluding new contractual arrangements, however, Tayside Contracts will be required to commit themselves to a lease of the identified unit at Claverhouse Industrial Estate and invest resources in adapting the premises to fit the purpose.

9.2 The total cost of adapting and fitting out the new facility is estimated at £400,000. Tayside Contracts are prepared to arrange an operating lease facility for the equipment element of this cost amounting to £200,000. The balance of £200,000 relates to capital works for adapting the unit to comply with the Local Environmental Health Department and the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 with regard to wall, ceilings and floor surfaces etc.

9.3 Since Tayside Contracts do not have a separate Section 94 Consent for capital expenditure Dundee City Council had included a provision of £136,000 for this expenditure in the draft Capital Budget for 2002/03. The balance of £64,000 will be met from the Capital Budget for Health and Safety works. The capital charges on this investment will then be recouped from Tayside Contracts through the rent charged for the industrial unit by the Economic Development Department.

10.0 CONCLUSION

10.1 A commitment to invest capital resources in this industrial unit provides the City Council with the opportunity to ensure an economical long-term solution to the provision of a meals service to the Social Work Department. A new kitchen production facility will be required to accommodate the increase in volumes from the current level of meals provided, and to ensure safety, quality and good nutrition.

10.2 The conclusion of contractual arrangements for the new service provision will maintain continuity with the existing service provider, Tayside Contracts, and help to ensure continuity of employment in the catering division of this organisation.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 The Directors of Support Services, Education, Environmental and Consumer Protection, and Economic Development have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

12.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

SIGNATURE

Director of Finance

Date

Director of Social Work

Date

APPENDIX A

SOCIAL WORK MEALS SERVICE

	Current Budget Full Year £000	Cost of Extended Service Full Year £000
Staff Costs	316	293
Purchase of Meals	365	705
Non staff costs	65	173
Income	-159	-414
	587	757

Additional revenue cost of £170k to be met from monies allocated to Dundee City Council to Implement the Joint Future report