Shrewsbury Food Hub

Depot brainstorming meeting 18 May 2017

Present: Katy A, Susan B, Rob M, David G, Carrie E, Katie D, Charlie B, Mike H, Andy ?, Pauline W, Emma B (notes)

Notes

1.Fundraising update

* £650 from Buck's Head raffle on St George's Day
* £150 from Stiperstones WI garden fete
* £67 Sainsbury's collection

2. Depot update

* Shropshire Council agree in principle to letting us have a unit at the Food Enterprise Centre, Harlescott (next to incinerator)
* KA meeting head of estates next week
* Rent free (normally £10k pa); one month's notice; we pay utilities and insurance.
* 1500 sq ft with chiller room and store room; more than we need!

3. Depot discussion

All agreed on benefits:

* being able to manage food in one place means it will be easier to match food to recipients across the town
* having more space means we can accept food from more supermarkets and other sources; and distribute to more groups, which in turn means drops may be less widely-spaced so rounds quicker.
* better hygiene and health and safety
* will make it possible to have more detailed tracking of what food we get from where, and who it goes to
* potential to handle chill-chain food in future though not immediately
* potential to use a wider pool of volunteers at the depot eg people who can't/don't want to do early mornings or who don't have use of a vehicle
* better working environment for volunteers. No lone working at depot.

Discussions on specific issues

Vehicle for collections:

* transit van size? Several people present have experience of driving one; however it may be expensive to insure a lot of drivers. Could a supermarket lend a driver for 2 hours each morning??
* buy or lease? Latter would mean we get a vehicle with cleaner/more modern engine; however grants are often easier to get for capital (ie purchase) than revenue costs
* Would need driver + 1 in the van for lifting
* Van could go to the larger supermarkets/places where we get more food; smaller collections could still be done by vounteers en route to the depot for sorting, to save time
* chilled food has to be transported in a specific container within the vehicle.

Timings

* KA suggested that the work could be spread over a longer period; eg
* 7am van collects from supermarkets;
* 8am team arrives at the depot to sort;
* 9am onwards deliveries to groups (different team?) .
* This could enable more efficient sorting and allocation; plus avoid the heaviest traffic for drivers doing deliveries

Location

* While all agree on the benefits of the depot there was some concern about whether its location will make the time commitment longer in the mornings.
* We will need to work in pairs at the depot
* Most current volunteers live in the centre or south half of town – including Bayston Hill; driving to Harlescott and back could add 30 mins or so each shift.
* The attraction for some is being able to finish by 8.30 in time for work.
* But the point was made that we may attract a different pool of volunteers if we can offer sessions starting at 9am ( see previous para)
* Google Maps can be used to plan the quickest route for collections/deliveries **Rob offered to do this**

Issues to sort out

* **Survey our groups** to find out whether they could potentially collect their food from the depot (in some cases this could be done by their own volunteers eg the hospice); and what is their "time window" for receiving food. Eg can schools receive food the previous day for breakfast clubs? May not be an option as much of the fruit and veg needs to be used the day we collect it.
* **Ask the supermarkets** if they are flexible about when we collect
* **Do a draft** of what a rota might look like when we move. Possibly have 2 teams (at least on busy days):
* 7am -8.30 smaller collections (en route using own car); sorting; maybe 2 or 3 early deliveries on way home ie schools
* 9am- 10.30 Main deliveries team
* **Health and Safety:** we need better and more detailed tracking of food. If we have storage for the store-cupoard items that will give us more time to think about who can best use it.

29.5.17