Research plan and discussion guide: residents who are self isolating and struggling to access food deliveries

1. Research plan

Research objectives

To understand resident's:
- challenges in obtaining food - including:
  - the cause of their food poverty or household food insecurity
  - the reasons why they asked us for help
- attitudes, perceptions and expectations of the service - including:
  - when they applied for help
  - currently
  - in the future
- strengths and community assets - including:
  - their ability to access food
  - awareness of organisations / resources available for
    - accessing food
    - managing the food they have

Who we want to talk to

People who've asked us for help with food deliveries because they are:
1. self isolating and struggling to access food deliveries but not struggling to pay for food
2. self isolating and struggling to pay for food
3. shielding (clinically extremely vulnerable) and can afford to buy food but can't access food deliveries
4. shielding and can't afford to buy food

For our first round of 4 to 6 interviews, we'd like to talk to people in the first group ideally. This is because we think we can potentially reduce our service offer to this group most easily.

We can use the analysis of service users to help make sure we are talking to the right people.

Screening criteria for first round of interviews
- Aged 50 or over
- 1 or 2 people in the household (no children)
- Social tenant
- Struggling to access food deliveries
- Ideally not struggling to pay for food
- Include people with low digital skills and confidence or accessibility needs

Finding participants
- asking existing users of the service (no incentives for taking part)
- Hackney Matters research panel (incentives required)

Methodology
- Phone interviews
- How we get consent - email or audio recording
- Recording audio and text using Otter

2. Discussion guide

Introduction

We're conducting research to understand the challenges residents have in obtaining food and their experiences, attitudes and expectations in getting help from Hackney Council with food deliveries.

The idea today is to go through a few questions which should last about 45 minutes. We'll use what you say to help make council services better.

Before we start there are a few things to let you know:
- Your participation is voluntary
- I'd like to record the audio from the phone call so that I don't have to take notes
- You can ask any questions at any time
- Your answers are kept confidential

We may also share anonymised results of our research with colleagues across other teams of Hackney council, other councils and government agencies. However, none of the data we share with these groups will be linked back to you.

You may change your mind at any time and ask us to delete any notes we've made of the session.

Is that ok?

Do you have any questions before we start?

If verbal consent is given, press record and continue.

Tell me about yourself
- Whereabouts in Hackney they live
- How long they've lived there
- Housing situation (Live alone / relatives)*
- What a typical day looks like for them now

- What a typical day looks like for them before lockdown
- Employment situation
- If/what they use the internet for*
- What devices they use (mobile or desktop)
- Whether they have any disabilities or accessibility needs*

Challenges in obtaining food
- Their biggest challenge in getting food currently*
- Why that challenge exists (which may be Coronavirus related or not - losing a job, on low wages/Universal Credit/other benefits, single parent etc.)
- If they have any difficulties going out to get food or arranging food deliveries*
  - If so, why those challenges exist
  - Amount of assistance they need
  - If there are any challenges using online supermarket delivery services
- If they have any challenges in paying for food*
  - If so, why those challenges exist
  - Amount of financial help they need
- Whether they had challenges getting food before the coronavirus pandemic
  - If so, what were they
  - What caused the challenges
- Whether the coronavirus pandemic had an impact on getting food
  - If so, how
- In an ideal world, what they think would need to be in place for them to have food during lockdown
- How much food they need per week currently

Attitudes, perceptions and expectations of the service:
- How they found out about Hackney's food delivery service
- Why they chose the council for help*
- What they expected to happen when they asked for help
- Whether the service they've received so far has met their expectations or not
- After received a food delivery, what did they expect to happen next
  - What actually happened next
- Whether their needs have changed since asking for help originally
  - If so, in what way
  - Reasons why
- What other support they think they may need over the next few weeks or months
  - Explore this in relation to food and other needs
  - Why they think that
- What help do they expect over the next few weeks or months (councils and others)*
- Their opinion on what the council's role will be in helping them
  - Reasons why

Strengths and community assets
- Whether they have help from the local community in getting food*

- ○ The sources of help (eg family, friends, neighbours, volunteers/mutual aid groups)
    - ○ How they help (eg food or anything else)
- Whether they have help from other organisations (such as charities or central government to get food)
    - ○ Who they are
    - ○ If they've used food banks
        - ■ How long they've been using food banks
        - ■ How often they use food banks
- Whether they are aware of other resources or organisations who could help with getting food
    - ○ Would they use them if they knew more about them
- Whether they are aware of mutual aid groups/volunteers in the local area
    - ○ How they'd feel about getting help from volunteers/mutual aid groups
- How they manage the food that they already have
    - ○ How they plan their meals
- Whether they find they have enough food from the parcels
    - ○ Whether they use all the food
        - ■ If so, how much food is wasted

Attitudes on assisted digital option for residents to help residents book and pay for food deliveries
- Whether they would use something like this,
- How they would feel about making a payment over the phone
- Whether they have paid for services over the phone before
    - ○ What worked well / what didn't
- How they would feel about making weekly or monthly food orders (as opposed to more regular shops)
- Expectations of what the councils role in this
- Expectations of supermarkets role in this
- Suggestions for how this could work well for them
- Attitudes on the option of supermarkets providing vouchers to them, which they can then give to others (such as volunteers) to buy their food on their behalf

Anything else you'd like to tell me?

Thank you for your time.

Stop recording.

Desirable topics removed from the discussion guide

Experience of our food delivery service *(this topic is desirable, not essential)*
- When they first realised they needed help with food
  - What they felt they needed at the time
  - What did they do when they first realised they needed help with food
  - Where they went first
  - Why
- What happened when they asked the council for help
  - For each step in the process
    - How long it took
    - How they felt
- Once they received a food delivery
  - How did they feel about the quality of service overall