

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD – 19 NOVEMBER, 2009**

**REPORT TO UPDATE THE SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD ON THE  
PROGRESS AGAINST THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FIRST POINT  
TELFORD**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CUSTOMER SERVICES & BUSINESS  
TRANSFORMATION**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To respond to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Leadership Board in respect of First Point Telford, that they made in March 2009, and report the progress that has been made in respect of those recommendations.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the progress against the recommendations of the Scrutiny Leadership Board is noted.

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Following the Scrutiny Leadership Boards review of First Point Telford in March 2009, they made three recommendations to Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009.
- 3.2 The Cabinet's response to those recommendations is attached as Appendix 1.

**4.0 SUMMARY**

- 4.1 This report gives the Scrutiny Leadership Board an update on the progress against their recommendations and the Cabinets response.

**5. RECOMMENDATION 1: CONTINUAL MONITORING OF FIRST POINT  
TELFORD TO ENSURE THAT THE APPROPRIATE RANGES OF  
SERVICES ARE PROVIDED TO THE PUBLIC**

- 5.1 Since opening in February 2009, First Point Telford has helped over 4,600 customers. An analysis of the services that customers have used at First

Point Telford is shown in Appendix 2. It should be noted that approximately 35% of customers are assisted by CAB.

**5.2** Appendix 3 shows the outcomes of the customer visits, with debt and benefits advice enquiries creating the largest demand.

**5.3** It was recognised that First Point Telford had limited capacity for expansion, however additional services have been introduced. These include A4U, The Princes Trust and Employment Link. A full description of the services that they provide is detailed in Appendix 4.

**6.0 RECOMMENDATION 2: THE CABINET CONSIDER PROVIDING A PERMANENT POINT OF CONTACT FOR COUNCIL SERVICES IN THE TOWN CENTRE VICINITY**

**6.1** The creation of a One Stop Shop at Civic Offices, building on the success of First Point Telford, was agreed by Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2009. The One Stop Shop will be larger than the facility at First Point Telford, creating the opportunity to introduce more services and provide a better facility for our customers.

**6.2** We are aiming for the One Stop Shop to be open on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010. It will be located on the ground floor of Civic Offices.

**6.3** Cabinet will shortly be asked to consider a report that recommends that initially the One Stop Shop will be open: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 8:30 am to 6:00 pm; Thursday 8:30 am to 8:00 pm; Saturday 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, to ensure that, subject to affordability, the service meets the needs of our customers.

**6.4** Cabinet will also be asked to continue with the funding for CAB, to allow them to continue to provide debt and welfare advice through the One Stop Shop.

**6.5** In addition to Council services, the following partners will also provide a service at the One Stop Shop: CAB (subject to funding being agreed by Cabinet); PCT; Princes Trust; Employment Link; A4U; Shropshire County Training. A full list of individual services that will be provided at the One Stop Shop is detailed in Appendix 4. The PCT will have a consulting room, where they can provide health and well being advice e.g. healthy heart, healthy eating etc.

**6.6** The following Council services: Anti Social Behaviour Reporting (a joint initiative with West Mercia Police, Wrekin Housing Trust and the Fire Service); Environmental Maintenance; Street Scene; Land Charge Searches; Leisure and theatre bookings; Customer Feedback will be added to the Council services that are provided at First Point Telford when the One Stop Shop opens in March 2010. These include Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Council Tax, Business Rates, Housing Advice, Affordable Warmth, Next Steps Community Training and the Family Information Service.

**7. RECOMMENDATION 3: THE CABINET CONSIDERS THE USE OF LIBRARY FACILITIES TO OFFER A FIRST POINT OF CONTACT FOR COUNCIL SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE BOROUGH; ESPECIALLY IN AREAS WHERE THE LIBRARY IS USED ON A PART TIME BASIS.**

**7.1** In their response to this recommendation, Cabinet stated a review of Leisure and Culture is being undertaken by Northgate Kendric Ash and the Business Efficiency Team and that they have been asked to consider this recommendation as part of their review.

**7.2** It was anticipated that the report on the outcome of the Leisure and Culture Review would be available by September 09. However, with the agreement of the Corporate Management Team, the review will not report its findings until January 2010.

**8.0 FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS**

**8.1 Making Ends Meet Booklet**

**8.1.1** In partnership with CAB, The Department For Works & Pensions and the Wrekin Housing Trust, we have produced a booklet "Making Ends Meet" which aims to give customers advice on a whole range of issues including: mortgage, rent, household bills, loans, credit card arrears and what help is available if someone's income has reduced through losing their job or having their hours reduced at work.

**8.1.2** The booklet has been sent to all councillors and parish council's and is available from all partner offices including libraries and community centres.

**8.2 Corporate Contact Centre & One Stop Shop**

**8.2.1** As front line service delivery of key customer services are migrated to the Corporate Contact Centre, those services will also be made available through the One Stop Shop. A report is currently being drafted that will set out proposals for migrating services to the Contact Centre, based on the successful migration of Revenues & Benefits and Environmental Maintenance services.

**8.2.2** A number of customers currently find themselves being passed from Darby House to Civic Offices to access services. The One Stop Shop will offer the opportunity to explore the possibility of closing Darby House as a customer access point and this will be explored as Phase 2 of this project, commencing in April, post go live of the One Stop Shop.

**8.3 Council Website**

**8.3.1** There have been a number of changes to the Council's current website, to make it easier for customers to find the information that is relevant to them.

**8.3.2** Customers are now able to make payments on the Council's website.

**8.3.3** The Council has, through a full tender process, contracted with a company, JADU, to develop a new website for the Council. The product that we have purchased will offer more functionality for customers e.g. the ability to apply for services online, and will offer a more engaging, informative and relevant website for customers.

**8.3.4** The new website is due to be implemented in the first quarter of 2010/11.

## **9.1 GENERAL**

### **9.1 Equality & Diversity**

**9.1.1** Every effort is made to assist customers when accessing services to ensure that wherever possible we are able to provide them with the services/information that they require in a manner that is beneficial to them. This is the cornerstone of the Customer Services Strategy.

**9.1.2** All of the reception staff have received Equalities & Diversity training, and aware of individual customers needs, and know how to access translation and interpretation services where they are required.

**9.1.3** An equality impact assessment is currently being undertaken for the One Stop Shop.

### **9.2 Legal Comment**

**9.2.1** There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

### **9.3 Links with Corporate Priorities**

**9.3.1** The development of First Point at Telford, and it's expansion into larger premises at Civic Offices, to offer advice and guidance on issues relating to the current economic recession addresses many of the Council's Corporate Priorities, particularly the priority for a Modern, Effective Council.

### **9.4 Opportunities & Risks**

**9.4.1** The opportunities and risks associated with the creation of a One Stop Shop have been identified and actions put in place to mitigate any perceived risks during its development.

### **9.5 Financial implications**

**9.5.1** The capital programme for 2009/10 includes an allocation of £160k for the creation of a One Stop Shop.

**9.5.2** The total additional ongoing revenue cost of the One Stop Shop facility is £42k. Within the current budget strategy for 2009/10 provision of £20k has been made for ongoing revenue costs of the One Stop Shop, this does not meet the all of the ongoing revenue costs leaving £22k unfunded for the basic

provision. It will be possible to find this from savings in closing the customer access at Darby House from 2011/12 onwards and in the interim from savings identified from within the customer services budgets linked to the removal of cash handling in the new development.

## **9.6 Ward implications**

### **9.6.1 Borough wide implications.**

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **10.1 Report Of The Scrutiny Leadership Board to Cabinet – First Point Telford – 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

Report prepared by Andrew Meredith, Customer Services Manager. Tel: 01952 382560

**APPENDIX 1**

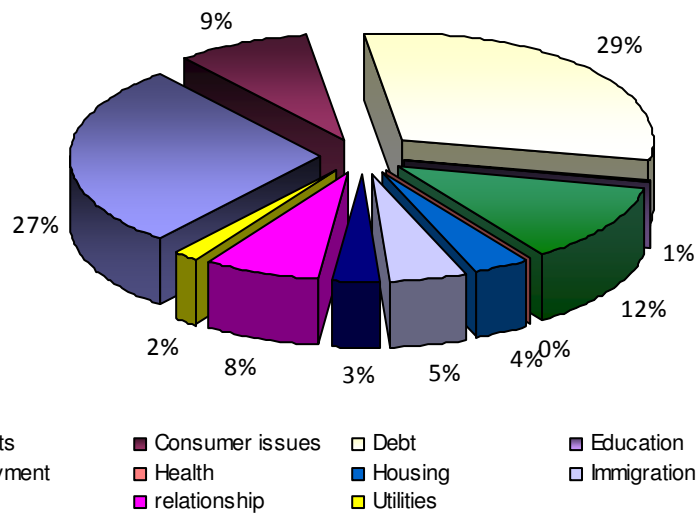
	<b>Scrutiny Commission Recommendations</b>	<b>Benefits of recommendation</b>	<b>Summary of Action Being Taken</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Officer responsible</b>
<b>1</b>	Continual monitoring of First Point Telford to ensure that the appropriate ranges of services are provided to the public;	To ensure that the services that are provided at First Point Telford are those that meet the current needs of customers experiencing the impact of the current economic recession.	First Point Telford has limited capacity due to the size of the accommodation. However, whilst all of the major services are already provided, new services are being added on a regular basis, through the use of surgeries. The latest partner wishing to explore the benefits of co-location at First Point is the PCT.  The introduction of a larger 'One Stop Shop' (see recommendation 2) will create the opportunity to add further services to our one stop offer, building on the success of First Point at Telford.	Autumn 2009 and ongoing	Andrew Meredith, Customer Services Business Manager
<b>2</b>	The Cabinet consider providing a permanent point of contact for Council services in the town centre vicinity;	To ensure that the benefits realised by the creation of First Point Telford available to our customers on a permanent basis.	The Corporate Management Team will shortly be asked to consider a proposal that will allow a One Stop Shop to be developed on the ground floor of Civic Offices. The One Stop Shop will build on the success of First Point Telford, bringing together many more council and partner services into one facility.	Autumn 2009 for outline of plans	Angie Astley, Head of Customer Services
<b>3</b>	The Cabinet considers the use of library facilities to offer a first point of contact for Council services throughout the Borough; especially in areas where the library is used on a part time basis.	To extend the benefits provided by First Point Telford across the borough, making the services even more accessible.	This recommendation is in line with the Customer Strategy. The current review of Leisure and Culture being undertaken by Northgate Kendric Ash and the Business Efficiency Team have been asked to consider this recommendation as part of their review.	Review will report in September 09	Angie Astley, Head of Customer Services

## First Point Telford Visitor Analysis

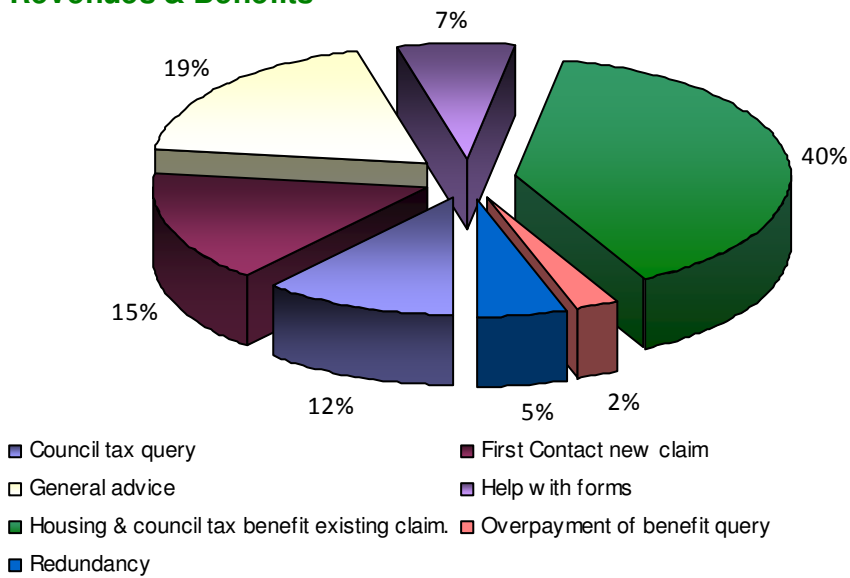
Service Area	Visitor Numbers
Revenues & benefits	619
CAB	1340
Family information service	1
Shropshire training	677
Community Learning	253
Housing Advice	106
Affordable warmth	42
General Information	538
Princes Trust	16
A4U	45
Employment Link	2
<b>Total Visitors</b>	<b>3639</b>

## First Point Telford – Visitor Outcomes

### Citizens Advice Bureau

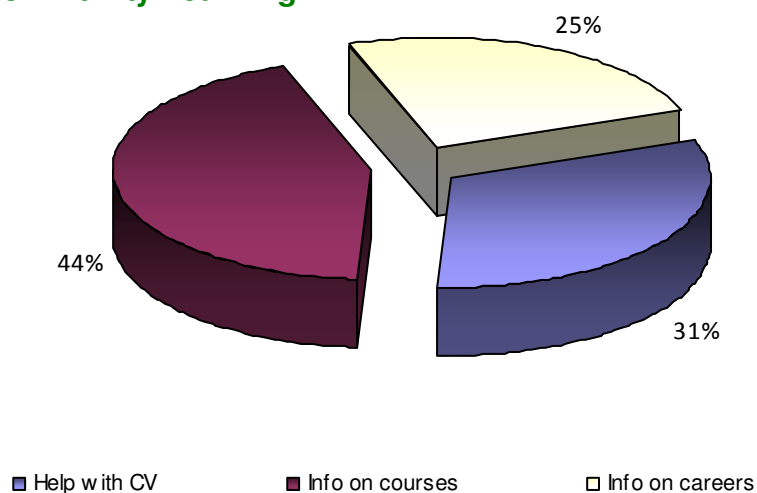


### Revenues & Benefits

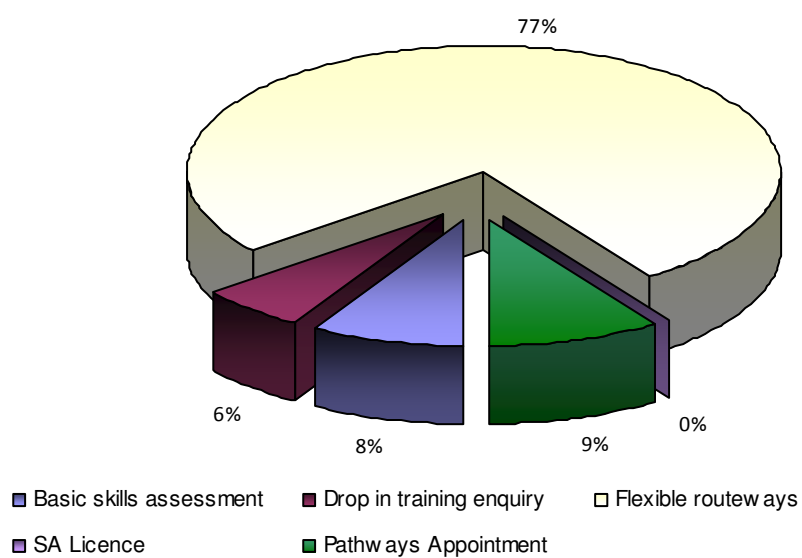




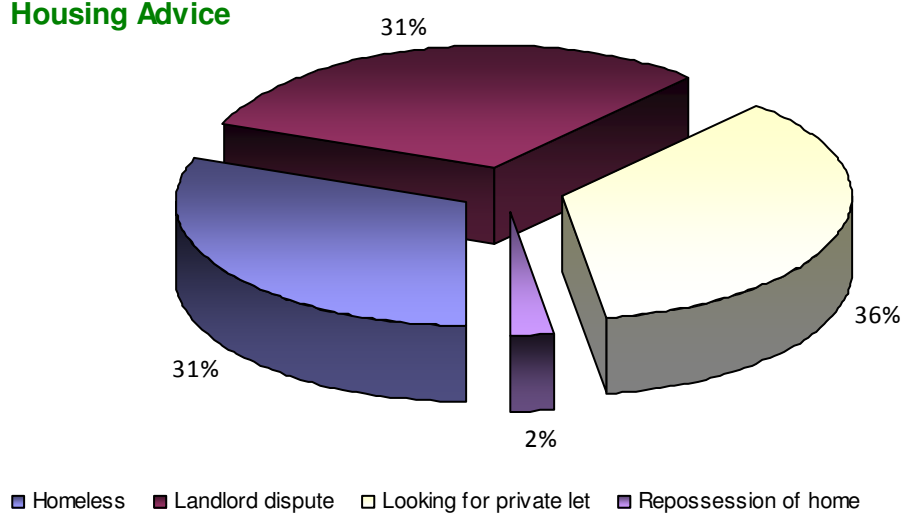
## Community Learning



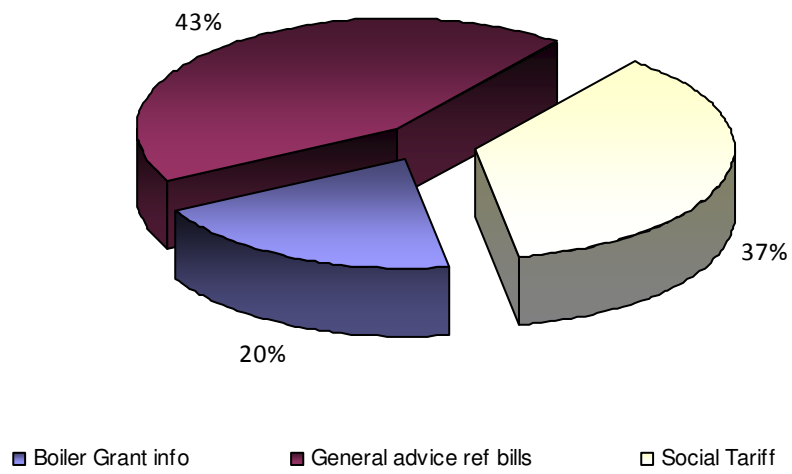
## Shropshire County Training



## Housing Advice



## Affordable Warmth



## Initial Services To Be Provided At The One Stop Shop

Service Provider	Services on offer
CAB  (subject to £76K ongoing funding post March 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welfare benefits</li> <li>• Specialist Debt management</li> <li>• Employment issues</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Relationship issues</li> <li>• Consumer advice</li> <li>• Immigration and nationality issues.</li> <li>• Dealing with redundancy and reduced working hours</li> <li>• Case work for customers with complex issues</li> </ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council tax benefit</li> <li>• Housing benefit</li> <li>• Local Housing allowance</li> <li>• Free school meals</li> <li>• Blue Badge Parking Permits</li> <li>• Carers Allowance</li> </ul>
Council Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Tax Arrears</li> </ul>
Housing Advice & Affordable Warmth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy Efficiency Advice</li> <li>• Cavity wall and loft insulation</li> <li>• Boiler repairs and replacement (if broken)</li> <li>• Heating systems</li> <li>• Access to grants and other funds</li> <li>• Free, independent housing advice on tenants issues</li> <li>• Prevention of homelessness</li> <li>• Housing options, including access to bond and rent deposit schemes.</li> <li>• Advice on private renting</li> <li>• Women's refuge</li> </ul>
Next Steps Community Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Careers advice and information</li> <li>• Completing job applications forms and CV writing</li> <li>• Local courses</li> <li>• Interview skills</li> <li>• English, maths and computing skills</li> <li>• Career change/ voluntary work</li> </ul>
Shropshire County Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through close links Learning Skills Councils, Jobcentre Plus, Business Link and Connexions, providing funding and placements for training and development.</li> <li>• Job Retraining</li> <li>• Accessing training for disabled people accessing work</li> <li>• Pathways – helps people with health benefits back into work</li> <li>• Routeways – helps people with benefits back into work</li> <li>• NVQ placements</li> </ul>
A4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free and confidential advice and impartial information, advice and support for people with disabilities</li> <li>• Enable people with disabilities to maximise their choices</li> <li>• Access to work for people with disabilities</li> </ul>
Princes Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving practical and financial support to young people to fulfil their potential.</li> <li>• Help for young people to develop key skills, motivation and confidence to move into work.</li> </ul>
Employment Link	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowers individuals with mental health and disability issues to access and retain paid employment.</li> <li>• Assist with the completion of application forms, job coaching, aid/adaptations.</li> </ul>
Family Information Service	Is a free and confidential service providing impartial information advice

	and guidance on services for families in Telford and Wrekin, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childcare</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Youth services</li> <li>• Children's services</li> <li>• Parenting support</li> <li>• Tax credits</li> <li>• Holiday play scheme</li> <li>• Family learning opportunities</li> <li>• Recreation facilities</li> <li>• Free early years provision</li> <li>• Support for children with special needs and / or disabilities</li> </ul>
Customer Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints</li> <li>• Compliments</li> <li>• Comments/Suggestions</li> </ul>
Anti Social Behaviour Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accumulation Of Refuse</li> <li>• Noise Pollution</li> <li>• Pollution</li> <li>• Abandoned Vehicles</li> <li>• Nuisance Dogs</li> <li>• Fly Tipping</li> <li>• Graffiti</li> <li>• Vandalism</li> <li>• Nuisance Neighbours</li> <li>• Nuisance – Rowdy Behaviour/Street Drinking</li> <li>• Nuisance – Drugs Misuse</li> <li>• Needles Collection</li> </ul>
Environmental Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refuse Collection</li> <li>• Bulk Refuse Collection</li> <li>• Pest Control</li> <li>• Recycling Collection</li> <li>• Road Sweeping</li> <li>• Litter</li> <li>• Grounds Maintenance – Grass/Hedges/Shrubs</li> <li>• Street Furniture/Fencing</li> <li>• Waste Management Permits</li> </ul>
Street Scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potholes</li> <li>• Drainage</li> <li>• Street Lighting</li> <li>• Gritting</li> <li>• Road/Footpath Maintenance</li> <li>• Highway Signage</li> </ul>
Legal Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Charge Searches</li> </ul>
Leisure Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisure &amp; theatre bookings</li> </ul>

**Other potential services to be included over time might include:-**

- Planning
- Highways
- Environmental Health
- Registration of births, deaths and marriages
- Adult & Child Care assessment of needs
- Concessionary pass travel/Timetable information etc