

## TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2009

### CREATION OF A ONE STOP SHOP

#### REPORT OF HEAD OF CUSTOMER SERVICES & BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To request the Cabinet to endorse the creation of a One Stop Shop at Civic Offices.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To endorse the creation of a One Stop Shop facility at Civic Offices.
- 2.2 To migrate the basic 'one stop shop' service currently provided at First Point at Telford (our temporary credit crunch advice centre at Telford library) into the permanent one stop shop at Civic Offices before the go live date, anticipated to be before the end of January 2010.
- 2.3 The affordability of continuing to fund a CAB presence within the First Point facility beyond March 2010 should be considered as part of the budget strategy for 2010/11 and as part of a wider review of the services we currently commission from CAB.
- 2.4 The additional costs of continuing to fund the Housing Advice Team post March 2010 should again be considered as part of the budget strategy for 2010/11 to ascertain whether this service is affordable on a continuing basis in the new one stop shop.

## 3. Summary

- 3.1 The report details the benefits of a One Stop Shop, the services that would be provided from the One Stop Shop in the first instance and the associated costs. The development of a one stop shop is in line with the customer services strategy approved by Cabinet in 2007
- 3.2 A One Stop Shop located on the ground floor of Civic Offices will enable the Council, in conjunction with our partners, to build on the success of First Point at Telford (our Credit Crunch Advice Centre based in the Telford Library) and provide enhanced access to a much wider number of council and partner services on a permanent basis.
- 3.3 The services that will be provided on the day of opening are detailed in **Appendix A**. Additional council and partner services can be added over an agreed period of time, subject to funding being available where required.
- 3.4 The ability to create a One Stop Shop on the ground floor east of civic offices has been made possible by the recent accommodation moves agreed by the Corporate Management Team at their meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

- 3.5 First Point at Telford is time limited and has been created to address the current economic downturn, by supporting residents and businesses to gain assistance. However, it is also time limited in terms of the constraint on the space available with Telford Library and the inability to develop the service further into a potential one stop shop for a wider number of services.
- 3.6 The Scrutiny Leadership Board have recently recommended a permanent One Stop Shop facility in the vicinity of the town centre. The cost of setting up First Point within the shopping centre was explored at the time however the high cost of rental for a relatively small area and additional staffing requirements resulted in the development not able to demonstrate value for money. Therefore the option to develop a one stop shop at Civic Offices offers the best value for money and a much larger space from which to develop the service.
- 3.7 The objective is also to set up a one stop service in advance of new civic offices allowing new ways of working to be fully developed and tested and then migrated into a new civic office development.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 The cabinet approved the Customer Services Strategy in 2007. The main objective of this strategy is to deal with as many customers at the first port of call, at a time and place convenient to them. One of the actions within the customer services strategy was to introduce a One Stop Shop within the area of Telford Town Centre.
- 4.2 Due to the onset of the economic recession the council re-acted quickly to offer assistance to residents and businesses by setting up a temporary credit crunch advice centre branded as First Point at Telford within the central library. Since it's opening, approximately 140 customers per week are using First Point Telford. One of the most significant benefits has been having a number of complimentary services co-located ensuring a joined up service solution for customers, with a number of services working together to help customers deal with a number of related issues in one visit.
- 4.3 Customer numbers clearly show that the presence of CAB has been critical to the success of First Point Telford but the additional one off funding of £70K they were granted to be able to participate at First Point Telford would need to be considered as part of the 2010/11 budget strategy alongside a review of services currently commissioned from CAB which may help to reduce the level of additional funding required to continue this service from the one stop shop.

#### **5. BENEFITS OF A ONE STOP SHOP**

- 5.1 The aim of the One Stop Shop is to provide residents and businesses with a single point of contact for multiple Council and partner organisation services, building on the success and delivery model of First Point Telford.
- 5.2 The creation of the One Stop Shop, with more accommodation than First Point Telford, will allow additional services to be delivered through this single point of contact.
- 5.3 A number of customers currently find themselves being passed from Darby House to Civic Offices to access services. The creation of a one stop shop will offer the opportunity to explore the possible closure of Darby House as a customer access point and to provide access to those services from the one stop shop as long as key

front line service staff can be accessed within Civic Offices. This would deliver savings to cover the additional ongoing costs of the basic facility at Civic by 2011/12.

- 5.4 A number of partner organisations have already expressed a strong interest in joining the one stop shop including the Primary Care Trust, the Princes Trust and A4U, which is an organisation that helps customers with a disability.
- 5.5 Not all council services will be accessible from the one stop shop on the first day of opening. However by having some other popular front line services located above the one stop on other floors will allow for appointments to be made and a service provided without having to ask customers to visit another building. This approach will apply to those services already accommodated within Civic Offices. Longer term the development of a new civic office will allow for this approach to be applied to all front line services.
- 5.6 An additional benefit of a One Stop Shop is that it provides partner organisations with accommodation, in a central location, improving access for their customers without increasing their financial burden.
- 5.7 By bringing services and organisations together, it encourages customers to access services that they may not have been aware of previously.

## **6. GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **6.1 Equality & Diversity**

- 6.1.1 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.
- 6.1.2 An equality impact assessment will be undertaken on the One Stop Shop prior to the service opening to ensure we are addressing all equality and diversity needs.

### **6.2 Environmental Impact**

- 6.2.1 The creation of a One Stop Shop that brings services together, including partner organisations, will lead to an overall reduction in customer contacts, which in turn will lead to a reduction in the carbon footprint of the Council and the customers using the facility.
- 6.2.2 By implementing a One Stop Shop in an existing Council building, it will only lead to a marginal increase in the Council's energy consumption, which will be significantly lower than opening a new facility, thus reducing the Council's carbon footprint.

### **6.3 Legal Comment**

- 6.3.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

### **6.4 Links with Corporate Priorities**

- 6.4.1 The development of a One Stop Shop, to improve access to council and partner organisation services addresses many of the Council's Corporate Priorities,

particularly the priority for a Modern, Effective Council.

## **6.5 Opportunities & Risks**

- 6.5.1 The opportunities and risks associated with the creation of a One Stop Shop will be identified and actions put in place to mitigate any perceived risks during its development.

## **6.6 Financial Implications**

- 6.6.1 The capital programme for 2009/10 includes an allocation of £160k for the creation of a One Stop Shop. This should be sufficient to cover any conversion costs within Civic Offices.
- 6.6.2 The total additional ongoing revenue cost of the basic 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 from 2011/12 onwards and in the interim from savings identified from within the customer services budgets linked to the cash handling process.
- 6.6.4 For 2009/10 there would be a part year impact of the revenue costs above and these are likely to be covered by one off money set aside for the Advice Centre.
- 6.6.5 In addition to the costs of the basic provision outlined above, one off funding of £67k was identified for Housing Needs Staff and £70k for the CAB to provide a service through the Advice Centre established within the Library, for a 12 month period, in response to the Credit Crunch. If these services were to continue through the One Stop Shop additional ongoing funding of up to £137k would also need to be identified for either or both. The affordability of this would need to be considered as part of the 2010/11 budget strategy and a review of services currently commissioned from CAB which may help to reduce the level of investment required.

## **6.7 Ward Implications**

- 6.7.4 Borough wide implications.

## **6.8 Background Papers.**

- 6.8.4 Customer Services Strategy.
- 6.8.5 Cabinet Report – ‘Credit Crunch’ Advice Centre, Telford Town Centre
- 6.8.6 Response To Scrutiny Report – Review Of First Point Telford

## Initial Services To Be Provided At The One Stop Shop on the day of opening

Service Provider	Services on offer
CAB  (subject to £70K ongoing funding post March 2010 to be considered as part of a review of services commissioned from CAB and the budget strategy 2010/11)	<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> </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  (subject to £67K ongoing funding post March 2010 as part of the budget strategy 2010/11)	<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> </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	Through close links Learning Skills Councils, Jobcentre Plus, Business Link and Connexions, providing funding and placements for training and development.
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> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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
- Environmental Health
- Registration of births, deaths and marriages
- Adult & Child Care assessment of needs
- Concessionary pass travel/Timetable information etc...