

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 8<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2011**

**RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY REPORT ON FIRST POINT FOR BUSINESS**

**REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER HOUSING, REGENERATION &  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT**

**1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS**

To inform Cabinet Members of the proposed Cabinet response to the recommendations made by the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee in the scrutiny report on First Point for Business.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the recommendations made in the scrutiny report are noted and the response set out in Appendix 1 is approved.**

### 3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<b>COMMUNITY IMPACT</b>	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	The recommendations in this report link to the Council's emerging priorities to offer better customer service, joining together with our partners, and around education and skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A commitment to user focus and citizen engagement</li> <li>• understanding our communities</li> <li>• clarity of purpose</li> <li>• communicating in appropriate ways;</li> <li>• and delivering change and improved outcomes.</li> </ul>
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	
<b>TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE</b>	<i>April 2012</i>	
<b>FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT</b>	Yes/No	Costs associated with developing and implementing a "First Point for Businesses" contact point need to be worked up in detail. Any additional costs identified of operating a "First Point of Contact for Businesses" will not be funded through the current budget strategy and consideration will need to given as to how to cover the extra costs to the Council.
<b>LEGAL ISSUES</b>	Yes/No	If the Council is to implement a " <b>First Point for Business</b> ", consideration must be given to the legal functions and processes which need to be maintained. Services such a Planning, Licensing and Environmental Health have prescribed procedures to allow them to perform their legal functions. This is currently administered by staff who in many cases are professionally trained and in any event are fully

		<p>familiar with statutory requirements and approved processes. In some cases, the communication between businesses and officers could either form a key part of an application (such as a planning application) or could be in relation to a matter that results in enforcement action which could result in scrutiny of the Council's procedures in court.</p> <p>When setting up "<b>First Point for Business</b>" consideration should be given to what will happen to the administration of statutory functions as this does form a significant part of the interaction which the council has with local businesses. If there is to be any transfer of functions internally from the officers currently undertaking those assistance and advice roles to "First Point" then there needs to be an appreciation of the risks involved. Provision for both appropriate training and internal systems of communication must be in place to ensure that these functions are properly maintained.</p> <p>It is advisable to have detailed consultation with the Council's regulatory services during any development process for this service and further legal input can be provided if required.</p>
<b>OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b>	Yes/No	<i>If yes, briefly list any other significant impacts, risks &amp; opportunities- see separate guidance note for areas to consider</i>
<b>IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS</b>	No	<i>Borough-wide impact</i>

## **PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **4. INFORMATION**

The aim of 'First Point for Business' is to provide local businesses and potential investors with a single point of contact for the diverse range of council and partner services that they need to help them start and grow their companies. Businesses include voluntary and community organisations that face many of the same issues as the private, particularly social enterprises that are essentially businesses with social objectives..

Offering focused customer services will help to widen access, improve responsiveness, improve understanding of local business preferences and develop a more consistent and better value for money response to customer contacts.

### **5. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

None

### **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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