	Executive Meeting – 8 February 2017	Agenda Item No. **10**

Title	Recommendations from the One Stop Shop (OSS) Review
For further information about this report please contact	Graham Folkes-Skinner Waste Policy and Performance Officer Graham.folkes-skinner@warwickdc.gov.uk 01926 456337
Wards of the District directly affected	All
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	The proposal for a review of the OSS service was agreed as part of an Executive Report entitled "Review of WDC/WCC Customer Service Centre & Digital Transformation initiatives" on 30 September 2015
Background Papers	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	Yes
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes Ref No. 812
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	No (If No state why below)
Not in detail at this point	

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	**Date**	**Name**
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	20/01/2017	Andrew Jones
Head of Service	20/01/2017	Rob Hoof
CMT	17/01/2017	Chris Elliott Andrew Jones Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	17/01/2017	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	17/01/2017	Andrew Jones
Portfolio Holder(s)	20/01/2017	Dave Shilton
Consultation & Community Engagement		
There will be consultation with Warwickshire County Council.		
Final Decision?	No	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1.   **Summary**

1.1   Warwick District Council (WDC) and Warwickshire County Council (WCC) work in partnership to deliver a "One Stop Shop (OSS)" Service across 5 sites in the District, at Riverside House, Leamington Spa; Shire Hall, Warwick; Kenilworth Library; Whitnash Library and Lillington Library.

1.2   This joint working arrangement has been in place since 2005.

1.3   This report provides the Executive with information gathered as part of this review and supplies an overview of the current OSS service. It suggests that a Business Case is put together to implement its findings, which can potentially deliver financial savings and a smarter way of working in line with Council Strategy and improve the service provided to customers.

1.4   A final report will be produced within 12 months and as part of that there will be an evaluation of the potential IT customer service options.

2.   **Recommendations**

2.1   That the executive agrees that a business case for the change in approach to service delivery at the One Stop Shops is produced for its consideration based on the following principles:-

a) That customers are encouraged to access Council services digitally wherever practicable;
b) That a face-to-face service is removed and replaced at One Stop Shops by digital access where the current service is not providing value for money;
c) That the partnership arrangement between Warwick District Council and Warwickshire County Council is reviewed to ensure an effective employer/employee relationship is in place.

2.2   That subject to agreeing recommendation 2.1, the Executive agrees that officers consult with frontline staff and Warwickshire County Council in the production of the aforementioned business case.

2.3   Subject to agreeing recommendation 2.1, Ward Members will be consulted at appropriate points in the development of the business case.

3.   **Reasons for the Recommendations**

3.1   The current cost for WDC face to face enquiries at the WCC owned sites is very high compared to the recognised national average. See Table 8.4, Para 8.7 and Appendix C. This needs to be looked at critically and ways of reducing that cost considered as below.

3.2   There are opportunities to improve the technology available at the OSS's that will enable a better service to be offered to customers alongside bringing the service in line with WDC's ICT & Digital Strategy (See Para 4.2 & 8.14). This will provide the opportunity to a) enhance and widen the service offered to customers and b) reduce the cost per enquiry.

3.3   Consideration needs to be given to the opening hours of the OSS sites to ensure value for money vs. the service demand. Particular attention needs to be given to Whitnash and Lillington where the WDC face to face service is only offered 1.5 days per week. (See Appendix A).

3.4 The majority of the present enquiries taken at the OSS sites are WCC related, (the exception being Riverside House).The number of WDC enquiries taken per day at the sites is also low. In relation to Para 3.3 above, the service provided needs to be critically reviewed to ensure that it offers value for money.

3.5 The present joint partnership with WCC needs to be formalised to ensure that the most efficient and effective employer/employee arrangements are in place. The current situation creates uncertainty for members of staff and managers around which employer terms and conditions and practices should be followed.

3.6 Consideration will be given to the different options within the current existing localities of the One Stop Shops that could potentially provide opportunities for the use of a building or office space that may improve the range and quality of services provided e.g. The Chain in Lillington. Officers will also ensure that the relevant ward Members are consulted.

4. **Policy Framework**

4.1 The pursuance of a business case to implement the findings of the OSS Review is in line with the three strands of **Fit for the Future**. It will ensure that the service is customer focused, (Service strand); and ensure that we are getting value for money from the service (Money strand). Finally the proposed communications with staff during this process covers the People strand.

4.2 Warwick District Council's (WDC) ICT & Digital Strategy 2015-19 highlights a number of priorities for the Council. The ones that are relevant to this report are Digital Customer and Digital Workforce. This aims to put the customer first "by knowing the customer's needs, anticipating their expectations with regards to excellent online customer care and developing universally acceptable and easy to use service offerings." To lower the cost of service provision there needs to be a shift towards a "digital by default" approach and the development of a business case for changes to the OSS will encompass this approach. Secondly any recommendations within the business case will look at the aspirations behind the Digital Workforce, ensuring that back office documents that are digitized and that the One Stop Shop service depends upon are fit for purpose. Further details on this strategy can be found in Para 8.14 below.

4.3 **Impact Assessments**

4.3.1 The business case will need to consider that part of the districts population that cannot or will not embrace the move towards the digital services. It needs to take account of the most vulnerable within the district.

4.3.2 The business case will potentially develop new ways of working and these will need to be taken into account.

5. **Budgetary Framework**

5.1 The current costs to WDC for the OSS service are approximately £474K per annum.

5.2 Following initial discussions with WCC over potential new ways of working and changes to opening hours at the OSS sites together with an estimate to the costs of introducing new technology, there is the potential to make savings,

however this will require a major change to the way services are delivered at the One Stop Shops.

5.3 As part of the Business Case, further work will need to be done on the cost of the technology and what type of digital transformation is possible through the service. With this in mind there will potentially be some one-off costs for this technology.

6. Risks

6.1 The following highlights the potential risks to the initiative alongside the mitigation:-

i. *Technology not fit for purpose*
The introduction of technology within the OSS needs to be tried and tested and needs to be fully integrated into the Council's "back office" systems.

ii. *New way of working not accepted by OSS users or staff*
There needs to be timely and appropriate communication about any proposals, with the benefits highlighted and the support provided to users.

iii. *Savings not realised*
At this stage it is difficult to accurately estimate the savings and the next stage through the business case will need to more accurately pin down the costs and the potential savings however initial calculations indicate that savings can be made and access to Council services improved.

iv. *WCC and WDC priorities change*
The potential for savings and to follow the Digital agenda, which is a priority for both WDC and WCC, means that currently the review and the potential business case to implement any changes will be undertaken in partnership. A formalisation of the partnership in the future though a Service Level Agreement and a formalised way of working will protect both organisations from any priority changes directly affecting the service.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1 One option is to maintain the current way of working and realise the priorities of WDC's ICT & Digital Strategy. It is considered that to realize the priorities of this strategy the current way of working needs to change so they both need to be considered together.

7.2 Another option considered is for WDC to withdraw from the OSS service altogether. However, there will always be a proportion of users that will require assistance in using the digital services and those that cannot or will not engage with the technology.

8. Background

8.1 During 2003 links were made between WDC and WCC to explore the feasibility of establishing joint OSS's in libraries across the central area of Warwickshire and the decision had the strategic support of both WCC's "Customer Access Strategy" and WDC's "Best Value Review of Customer Access." In 2004 a joint Project Initiation Document (PID) was produced which identified implementation phases for the current sites with the last site to open being Lillington in early 2009. There was a joint interest in improving access to Council Services.

8.2   There are currently 5 One Stop Shop sites within Warwick District, namely, Kenilworth, Shire Hall, Warwick, Riverside House, Leamington, Whitnash and Lillington. Four out of the five locations are located within a WCC library building, the exception being Riverside House which is located within WDC's main office. A summary of these together with their current opening times can be found in Appendix A.

8.3   *Staffing*: A full complement of staff within the service consists of 22 Customer Service Advisors (CSA's) and 2 Team Leaders (TL's). The employment of the team is shared between WCC & WDC with 15 employed by WDC and 9 employed by WCC. The CSA's share a Warwickshire Direct job description but defer to the two different employers for their Terms and Conditions. There are joint team meetings and the Team Leaders liaise on a routine basis for day to day operational issues and sort out the rota systems for the CSA's to cover the 5 sites.

8.4   With technology becoming more widely and publicly available work has gone into reducing the processing costs of managing customer contact in front facing services. Saving figures are often based on the kind of figures set out in Table 8.4

Table 8.4

Source Channel	Socitm insight May 2012*	WDC enquiries – Kenilworth**	WDC enquiries – Whitnash**	WDC enquiries – Lillington**
Face-to-face	£8.62 per transaction	£39.00 per transaction	£71.00 per transaction	£36.00 per transaction
Phone	£2.83 per transaction			
Web	£0.15 per transaction			

Taken from "Transforming local public services – LGA"
*Socitm is a society for IT Practitioners in the Public Sector with the Insight service undertaking research into various issues
**Calculated from 2015/2016 WCC supplied statistics as part of the OSS Review

8.5   The main types of enquiry dealt with by the OSS can be seen in Appendix B.

8.6   The review highlighted the following aspects of the service that need consideration in order that the service meets the various aspirations and requirements of Council policies highlighted in Para 4.

8.7   *The cost per visit to each One Stop Shop*
The cost per enquiry varies dependant on the location and whether it is a WDC or WCC issue. It is more expensive to deal with a WCC enquiry at Riverside House whilst it costs more to deal with a WDC issue at Shire Hall for example. Full details can be seen in Appendix C.

8.8   Savings can be realised if there is a move from face to face interactions to dealing with issues via a digital platform following the principles of Warwick District Council's ICT & Digital Strategy (See Para 8.14) It is generally recognized that a face to face interaction is more expensive than the same issue being resolved via a digital route (See Para 8.4) and there needs to be a recognition of this and the current costs highlighted in Appendix C, through different ways of working within the OSS service.

8.9   *Volume of interactions handled by OSS Service*
Out of the 5 sites, Shire Hall, Warwick and Riverside House, have the majority of enquiries with the quietest being Whitnash and Lillington. The statistics can be seen in Appendix D, Figures 1 and 2. The lack of enquiries per person per day, (See Appendix C), account largely for the expensive cost per enquiry with WDC enquiries at Whitnash and Lillington only accounting for 28% and 30% of the total.

8.10   *Current ways of working – Digital transformation*
Both WDC and WCC have digital transformation agendas and OSS service needs to reflect that. Assisted digital options need to be considered at the sites to complement the face to face interaction which arguably is still required for those members of the community that cannot or will not embrace the digital options. The advisors role would potentially move more to a facilitator of the available technology. There needs to be good communication between the OSS service and the "back office" to ensure that any digital transformation is seamless and fit for purpose.

8.11   *Value for money for both WDC and WCC*
The current salary costs for WDC and WCC are approximately £346K and £193K respectively. Four out of the five sites are based around libraries and that is reflected in the fact that the majority of the issues dealt with by the OSS staff are library related which is a WCC function. Equally the number of WCC related issues dealt with at Riverside House are low compared to WDC ones such as Benefit and Council Tax issues. Finally 4 of the 5 sites are WCC owned with the associated building costs. The formal working relationship between WDC and WCC needs to be strengthened, there needs to be a written Service Level Agreement and a formalised way of working which currently does not exist.

8.12   Warwick District Council, alongside it's partner in the OSS shared service, WCC, are responsible for delivering the majority of public sector transactions in the area and have an obligation to design services in the most accessible, economic and "user-friendly" way and must ensure that these local services are built around the customer rather than the needs of service deliverers.

8.13   Considering Para 8.12 above there is an argument to say that business as usual is no longer an option. The rapidly changing technological and digital landscape offers opportunity to implement customer focused approaches that can deliver both improvement and efficiency. Although there is the opportunity to apply technological approaches to delivering the Council Services, it also needs to be remembered that there will still be a minority of people who cannot or do not wish to embrace technology and digital access to services and the Council cannot afford to neglect them, and "assisted digital" is possibly an option.

8.14   WDC's ICT & Digital Strategy 2015-19 states that:-
"A new model for digital customer service delivery needs to be developed that states, among other things that:
- *Services should be delivered through customer self-service*
- *Structured, intelligent web-forms should be used for requests ensuring the correct information is captured at the first point of contact.*
- *Service fulfilment should be completed on-line.*

Within the same document, one of its 5 strategic themes is called Digital Customer, this states:-

"For many customers face-to-face contact or the use of the telephone was the preferred channels when contacting the council. However, the council now believes that a tipping point has been reached and moving forward the web and digital services will be the preferred method for interacting and transacting with the council. Therefore after 15 years of investing in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, the council will no longer support this technology but will focus on investing in digital self-service technologies. This change of approach will enhance the provision of council services, reduce costs and extend the availability of services beyond the time constraints that could be reasonably expected of a face-to-face or telephone service."

In Appendix 2 of the strategy - Customer Access Channels- it details the present arrangements and Digital optimisation for customers making service requests

Channel	Present arrangements	Digital optimisation
Face to face	Staff deal with issues on behalf of face-to-face customers	Staff will direct customers to the PCs available in Reception areas and libraries and, if necessary, take time to show them how to complete the task on the website (mediated digital) The PC, and other kiosk devices, will provide access to the standard WDC website – in order to encourage future self-service.

8.15 There needs to be consultation with WCC as it is a shared service and at the local level with the team. Any changes to the way that WDC services are undertaken at the OSS sites needs to be built into any initiatives that other Service Areas undertake, due to the large amount of interdependencies that the OSS service has with WDC. If the recommendations of this report are agreed, there will need to be consultation with the appropriate Services Areas that act as the "back office" to the procedures that the OSS follows i.e. Council Tax and Benefits; alongside ICT and the OSS Team itself. A Member Working Group will be established to assist in the way forward