

 Executive Meeting – 7 March 2018		Agenda Item No. 7
Title:	One Stop Shop Business Case	
For further information about this report please contact	Graham Folkes-Skinner Business Support and Development Manager Graham.folkes-skinner@warwickdc.gov.uk 01926 456337	
Wards of the District directly affected	Whitnash & Crown Ward	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?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	Executive Report entitled "Recommendations from the One Stop Shop (OSS) Review" was agreed at the Executive Meeting on 7 February 2017. Minute No. 93	
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. 894
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	20/02/18	Andy Jones
Head of Service	08/02/18	Rob Hoof
CMT	08/02/18	Chris Elliot, Andrew Jones, Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	07/02/18	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	20/02/18	Andrew Jones
Finance	07/02/18	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	08/02/18	Moirra-Ann Grainger
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Ongoing consultation and liaison with Warwickshire County Council and the relevant Councillors within the affected Wards.		
Final Decision?	Yes	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 This report is a follow on to the Executive Report entitled "Recommendations from the One Stop Shop (OSS) Review" presented to Warwick District Council's (WDC) Executive Committee on 8 February 2017.
- 1.2 This report consolidates all the information gathered and suggests the removal of OSS resource in areas of the service that do not provide value for money and a way forward to bring the service in line with WDC's ICT & Digital Strategy 2015-19.
- 1.3 The report has been produced in full consultation with Warwickshire County Council (WCC)

2. **Recommendation**

- 2.1 That Executive notes the evidence and information provided in this report highlighted in Para.3.1 which supports recommendation 2.1(b) of the 2017 Executive Report in concluding that the current OSS service at Whitnash and Lillington does not provide value for money
- 2.2 That Executive agrees that by the end of June 2018 the OSS staff resource is withdrawn from:-
 - Whitnash and Lillington Library sites &
 - Saturday afternoons at Shire Hall, Warwick.
- 2.3 Subject to agreeing recommendation 2.2, Executive agrees to a reduction in the OSS staff resource of 2 x Fixed Term Posts.
- 2.4 That Executive notes that self-serve technology is piloted at Riverside OSS and should this prove successful by both WDC & WCC it will be rolled out at Kenilworth and Warwick OSS's.

3. **Reasons for the Recommendation**

- 3.1 The Executive Report in February 2017, highlighted the low numbers and high cost of OSS related enquiries taken at Whitnash and Lillington Libraries using data from 2015/2016. These low enquiry numbers and high costs continued into the 2016/2017 year and this comparison can be found in Appendix A.
- 3.2 The current OSS face to face service at Whitnash and Lillington libraries is 1.5 days/week; Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons at Whitnash Library and Thursday mornings and Friday's at Lillington Library. On average Whitnash OSS receives 6 WDC enquiries per day and Lillington OSS receives 13 WDC enquiries per day
- 3.3 Following a WCC Budget Setting meeting on 6 February 2018, it has been agreed that if Recommendation 2.2 above is agreed Whitnash and Lillington Libraries will remain open for the current number of hours, staffed by WCC library staff.
- 3.4 Currently the OSS/Library at Shire Hall, Warwick is open from 9.00am to 4.00pm on a Saturday. The data for Saturdays at Shire Hall during 2016/17, presented in Appendix B shows that the issues presented reduce by half in the afternoon and the footfall approximately by a third. In addition general

enquiries for the library alongside the use of the library computers increases on a Saturday afternoon. The experience of both staff and management within the OSS service suggest this is down to a number of factors:-

- The Warwick Town market occurs on a Saturday morning and customers take the opportunity to use the OSS part of the service offer during this period.
- The library services are accessed more on a Saturday afternoon after the market has finished
- The Post Office has recently closed on a Saturday afternoon reducing the number of customers visiting Shire Hall
- Anecdotal evidence from staff indicate that the OSS side of the service offer at Shire Hall on a Saturday afternoon is quiet

- 3.5 Within the WDC staff resource there are two fixed term posts whose contracts end on 29 June 2018. These were advertised as fixed posts in anticipation of the ongoing OSS Review and to provide flexibility and greater security to the full time staff. With the recommended withdrawal of resource from Whitnash and Lillington alongside the proposal to move more enquiries on-line via self-serve, this additional resource is not required.
- 3.6 Offering the public use of self-serve technology into the One Stop Shop's will bring the service in line with WDC's ICT & Digital Strategy enhancing and widening the service and reducing the cost per enquiry.
- 3.7 In a bid to understand the types of self-service technology used and available in other local authorities, site visits were made to other Councils, both within Warwickshire and nationally. These visits showed that self-serve technology can be used effectively and efficiently as part of the front-facing customer service offer. Variations were found between Councils in the proportion of self-serve and face to face options that they offer, ranging from almost a complete self-service/online service offer with little face to face without a prior appointment to the self-service offer being in the background.
- 3.8 A number of Councils were visited where the self-serve technology has been introduced into OSS's but has minimal use. That experience has influenced the proposal within this report to phrase in the introduction of the equipment across the 3 WDC sites. A phased approach will allow the change to be embedded into the way the staff approach and support customers to acquire the necessary digital skills. It will raise awareness of the benefits of a digital approach to customers in a controlled manner and allow any underlying WDC/WCC policies to be simplified which could otherwise detract from the customer experience before it is introduced across the District.
- 3.9 The phased approach will start at Riverside House, which is the busiest in terms of WDC enquiries. There needs to be a "proof of concept" approach to enable the commitment to the technology to be financially prudent before transferring to the other two sites. There will be two main concepts to the technology:-
- Self-Serve PC's**
- These will be normal desktop PC's with larger 32" monitors provided within either a self contained area to provide a degree of confidentiality to the user or one of the current face to face booths "turned around" and converted into a self-serve facility. There will be some simple "kiosk" software that will allow access to both the WDC and WCC websites via various main enquiry "big button" options. These will be facilitated by OSS staff. The cost details highlighted in Appendix C are based on 3 self-serve PC's, although more detailed work needs

to be completed to understand the optimum number needed. Appendix D illustrates a self scanning facility and a self-serve PC with kiosk software

Self Scanners

The example explored for this report uses an Android App and a tablet PC set in a "cradle" which takes a photograph of the document and automatically sends it to the back office software. The Customer will need a Reference No. i.e. Benefit or Council Tax and that will allow any documentation to be automatically linked up with any previous or ongoing claim.

- 3.10 With the OSS being a shared service between WDC and WCC, the decision to extend the use of self-serve technology to Kenilworth and Shire Hall, Warwick needs to be agreed by both sides as the installation and/or change in the working environment will be happening in WCC owned buildings and clearly needs their agreement
- 3.11 As part of the partnership the self-serve equipment will be used for both WDC & WCC enquiries and although there are currently no WCC services that require a scanning facility, it will be ensured that any installation will be "future proofed" to allow the technology to adapt to any future requirements.
- 3.12 There are ongoing discussions with the new WDC HQ Project Group to discuss the requirements of the OSS service within the new Covent Garden offices.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

"The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects.

"The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy."

FFF Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/ productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
Impacts of Proposal		
N/A	This aims to put the customer first "by knowing the customer's needs,	Provide value for money by moving more enquiries to a "digital by default"

	anticipating their expectations with regards to excellent online customer care and developing universally acceptable and easy to use service offerings” ICT & Digital Strategy 2015-19	
Internal		
Effective Staff	Maintain or Improve Services	Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers’ needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money
Impacts of Proposal		
The staff will be provided with the opportunity to concentrate on those customers that cannot or will not interact with the self-serve options	This will increase the digital provision and make the best use of new technology	Creates capacity for staff to be more efficient in the delivery of services

4.2 Supporting Strategies

Each strand of the FFF Strategy has supporting strategies and the relevant one for this proposal is the

WDC ICT & Digital Strategy 2015-19

“This strategy outlines the approach that Warwick District Council will take to develop and deploy digital technologies that support service delivery, ensuring that these solutions work for our customers.”

The strategy envisages a new model for digital customer service delivery that needs to be developed and states that services should be delivered through customer self-service. It acknowledges that successful achievement of the digital strategy will require considerable changes in corporate culture involving acceptance that the council’s approach to service delivery is to optimise use of digital technologies with the website being a key element of service delivery.

It states that:-

“For many customers face-to-face contact or the use of the telephone were 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."

The proposals for introducing self-service technology to the OSS sites is in-line with the above policy but the service will not ignore the proportion of the district's population that for whatever reason cannot or will not engage with the digital means of interaction. There will continue to be the option of a face to face enquiry for those members of the population that cannot engage with the digital approach.

4.3 Changes to Existing Policies

This report is in accordance with existing policies

4.3 Impact Assessments

Please see Appendix E

The Impact Assessment concludes that any potential affects of the proposals is mitigated by the fact that the service will still maintain a face to face enquiry service for those residents that cannot use the services on-line.

5. Budgetary Framework

- 5.1 The budget for 2017/18 for WDC's staff within the shared OSS service is £360,500.
- 5.2 The removal of the two WDC Fixed Term Posts will offer a direct saving of £58,200.
- 5.3 Withdrawing the OSS resource from Whitnash and Lillington Libraries would offer an internal resource saving of approximately 1 FTE whilst the removal of the Saturday afternoon resource at Shire Hall, Warwick would equate to approximately 0.3 FTE
- 5.4 The cost of the self-serve technology for Riverside House is summarised in Appendix C. This is based on 3 self-serve stations alongside a self-scanning facility (The principles of which are described in Section 3). In summary there will be an approximate initial capital cost of £6,000.
- 5.5 In the February 2017 Budget Setting Report, £50,000 funding was agreed for OSS Digital Investment and this and future capital costs for the other two sites will be taken from this allocated amount.
- 5.6 There is also an ongoing annual cost of approximately £9,000 for phone line rental etc. and this will be "netted off" the staff saving proposed in Para. 5.2 above, offering a net saving of approximately £49,000 per annum. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) includes savings of £50,000 per annum from June 2018. Consequently the MTFS will need to be updated to reflect this reduced saving.
- 5.7 During 2016/2017 there was a total of 16866 scanning events for Benefit and Council Tax enquiries, undertaken by the OSS service at Riverside House and offering a self-scanning option could potentially offer a estimated saving of approximately 1 FTE. At this stage this should be regarded as a non-cashable saving as it will be an efficiency allowing staff to concentrate on other roles. Please see Appendix F for details.

6. Risks

- 6.1 There are a number of potential risks linked to the proposal and they can be divided into two main areas:-
- Removing resource from Whitnash & Lillington sites and restricting the service offer on a Saturday at Shire Hall, Warwick.
 - Installation of Self-Serve Technology

6.2 *Removing Resource.*

This risks restricting access to both WCC and WDC services in certain parts of the District. This risk is minimal because

- Statistics indicate that the number of residents accessing the services at these sites is low – See Appendix A
- There are alternatives through the use of the Councils on-line services or visiting the Council's main office at Riverside House.

This risk is further mitigated through ongoing improvements to the Councils on-line service offer and the option that the main services used through the OSS service, namely Council Tax and Benefits, have 2 visiting officers that can visit individuals in their homes. Clearly this is an expensive option and is restricted to residents where they are housebound and do not have friends or family that can assist. In addition Lillington residents have the availability of The Chain Community Hub which provides a place where people can discuss issues such as money, anti-social behaviour, home repairs etc. and they have internet access that local people can use to contact local authorities, search for information etc.

6.2 *Installation of Self-Serve technology*

There is the risk that self-serve technology is installed and either does not work, is not user-friendly or is not used.

The approach that is being taken will mitigate this risk in the number of ways:-

- "Proof of Concept" approach to its installation. The plan is to install the self-serve technology at Riverside House initially and given its successful uptake and installation migrate out to Kenilworth and Shire Hall, Warwick.
- The intended technology is simple to use and is used widely in other local authorities.

There will be a proportion of the residents within the district that cannot or will not engage with the on-line service offered by WDC. However statistics indicate that residents within Warwick District have a high propensity to access on-line services. See Appendix G. Despite these figures the proposal will still retain a face to face enquiry option at the three sites and by moving those residents that can access services on-line the staff resource will be able to concentrate on the proportion of district residents that cannot or will not access through this route.

- 6.3 A further risk could be that the proposal is not accepted by Warwickshire County Council (WCC). Clearly for the proposals to work, it needs the agreement and cooperation of WCC. However WDC have liaised with WCC, both at a staff and management level, throughout the review period, and they have been consulted at every stage.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1 *Maintaining the current service level*

This was not considered an option as the current service needs to move away from the purely face to face enquiry option and move more in line with the

Councils WDC's ICT & Digital Strategy 2015-19. In addition the service cannot avoid the high cost per enquiry at Whitnash and Lillington

8. **Background**

- 8.1 WDC & WCC have worked in partnership to deliver a One Stop Shop Service across 5 sites in the district, at Riverside House, Leamington Spa; Shire Hall, Warwick; Kenilworth Library; Whitnash and Lillington Library since 2005
- 8.2 There are currently 13 WDC and 7 WCC staff working in the OSS service which includes the 2 WDC Fixed Term posts
- 8.3 The way that residents access Council information has changed significantly since that time. Prior to September 2015 WDC prioritised face to face and telephone contact. This was reflected in successive investment and use of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) technologies which supported the joint WCC/WDC Customer Service Centre at Shire Hall and the One Stop Shops.
- 8.4 WDC has ceased its investment in CRM technologies and returned its telephony direct into its individual Service Areas during 2016
- 8.5 From October 2018 Universal Credit will affect all working age new benefit claimants within Warwick District. Any applications need to be on-line to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and will not involve Warwick District Council. WDC will have an obligation alongside other third parties to offer assistance to claimants that can't access the application process and that is where the self-service proposals at the OSS sites will be able to facilitate that duty. It is anticipated that within a couple of years of Universal Credit being implemented that the number of "change of circumstances" queries will reduce within the OSS environment as a result of Universal Credit
- 8.6 The Council's ICT & Digital Strategy 2015-2019 highlights the changes that have occurred in residents approach to accessing information. In 2010-2011 93% of WDC website access was from a desktop PC, while in 2014-2015 56% of residents accessed the website from a mobile device.
- 8.7 The above Strategy commits to a new model of digital customer service delivery and highlights various design principles which the proposals in this report are directly in line with, these include:-
 - "Digital services will be prioritised based on transaction data and customer feedback. The Council should not seek to deliver 100% of services electronically. Digital services will only be implemented where the benefits outweigh the development, support and maintenance costs. Resources should be focused on services with high transaction volumes, high delivery costs and/or customer demand"
 - "Services will be redesigned for digital, removing the need for face to face contact, hard copy ID checks or other verification documentation unless absolutely necessary."
 - "The 80/20 rule will be applied to all digital services to reduce delivery times and improve benefits realisation. If the solution is appropriate for 80% of the target audience and/or will deal with 80% of the anticipated transactions, the service will be considered fit for initial deployment"

- 8.8 The OSS service at Whitnash and Lillington libraries is both restricted and costly, and the service on a Saturday afternoon at Shire Hall is only used on a limited basis. The withdrawal of resource from these three sites will allow the staff to both facilitate the use of the self-serve equipment and concentrate on those residents that cannot use the on-line services and/or have complicated queries that cannot be dealt with on-line.