

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**16 December 2019**

**ONE STOP SHOP REVIEW**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr David Thain
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director Finance and Resources
Ward(s) Affected	Batchley & Brockhill, Winyates, Greenlands,
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	Not at this stage
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph(s) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

This report contains a proposal to close One Stop Shops at Batchley, Winyates and Woodrow in April 2020, This is due to continued falling visitor numbers and improvements made to enable the customer to use alternative opportunities to pay for services. In addition there is a high cost of maintaining the service and the Council currently has financial pressures it has to mitigate.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND to Council that:**

**Closure of the One Stop Shops at Batchley, Winyates and Woodrow from April 2020 be approved and officers work with the public to enable a smooth transition in relation to payments and other contact requirements.**

**3. KEY ISSUES**

**3.1 Financial Implications**

The preferred option to close the One Stop Shops at Batchley, Winyates and Woodrow will deliver £65k pa savings. in addition a potential rental income of approximately £5k in the first year and £7-£7.5k in subsequent years.

**3.2 Legal Implications**

There are no specific legal implications.

**3.3 Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.3.1 The Council has a walk in Customer Service Centre at the Town Hall, and 3 satellite offices at Batchley, Winyates and Woodrow, formerly referred to as One Stop Shops.
- 3.3.2 Several years ago, due to falling customer demand the opening times of the 3 satellite offices reduced to either 9am-12.30pm or 1.30pm-5pm Monday to Friday.
- 3.3.3 For the size of the population and size of the borough, there are a high number of Customer Service Centres compared with other councils.
- 3.3.4 The Customer Service Centres now mainly provide a cashiering service for residents. A recent survey has shown that 82% of visits are to pay their council bills.
- 3.3.5 Housing (50%) and Council Tax (40%) account for the highest service payments from customers.
- 3.3.6 In a significant recent development, the council has partnered with Allpay – an organisation where customers can pay their rent and council tax at any Paypoint or Post Office outlet.
- 3.3.7 There are Paypoint and/or Post Office locations in Batchley, Winyates and Woodrow Shopping Centres, as well as many others around Redditch Borough.
- 3.3.8 Paypoint and Post Office locations are more readily available and accessible, including weekends and evenings compared to 3.5 hours per day, Monday to Friday at One Stop Shops at Batchley, Winyates and Woodrow.
- 3.3.9 Officers across a range of services have been involved in the consideration/review and housing services have options to accommodate customer interviews at the localities or the Town Hall where appropriate (Appendix 3).
- 3.3.10 Every customer who presents at the One Stop Shop will have the opportunity to discuss alternative payment and contact options. Any problems that occur during this period can be resolved before closure.

**3.4 Staffing Implications**

Closure of the 3 One Stop Shops will see a reduction in staffing requirements of 2 FTE. This will be met from a combination of deleting vacant posts and

reviewing all fixed term contract posts. Any associated costs will be met from other savings within the Customer Access & Financial Support service.

**3.5 Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

Customers will benefit from an improved access to payment services within their localities, whilst still providing alternate methods to meet customer needs.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed on this proposal. The changes recommended will make the main services (to pay bills) more accessible to more of the community in their localities. Other methods of interaction with the council are still available to those who might be more vulnerable or have additional needs subject to service need.

**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

There may be a perception that closure of the One Stop Shops will be seen as a reduction in service however the changes recommended will make the main services (to pay bills) more accessible to more of the community in their localities.

There is also a risk of a short term reduction in income for rent and council tax however this will be mitigated by communication with customers on a face to face basis, as well as wider communications to the residents of Redditch.

**5. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - One Stop Shop Business Case  
Appendix 2 – OSS Survey Summary  
Appendix 3 – Housing Opinion  
Appendix 4 – Equality Impact Assessment  
Appendix 5 – Communications Plan  
Appendix 6 – Staffing – confidential appendix

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

n/a

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