

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET

1)	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
2)	<b>Date:</b>	<b>16th January, 2013</b>
3)	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Customer Service Centres</b>
4)	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>

### 5. Summary

This report provides information on the usage of the Council's six Customer Service Centres and suggests ways in which services can be delivered to customers in a greater number of communities across the borough, whilst also releasing savings of approximately £80,000 in 2013 – 2014.

The report also recommends that consultation is undertaken on proposals to cease the delivery of Customer Services from Swinton and Dinnington Customer Service Centres, whilst introducing services at Dinnington, Mowbray Gardens, Swinton and Wath libraries.

The current Customer Service Centre buildings at Swinton and Dinnington would be declared surplus to requirements by the Service.

### 6. Recommendations

1. Cabinet notes the current services which are available at each of the Council's six Customer Service Centres.
2. Cabinet approves the undertaking of public consultation on the model, which proposes changes to the way services can be accessed at Swinton and Dinnington Customer Service Centres.
3. Cabinet approves the undertaking of public consultation on the proposal to deliver additional services from Mowbray Gardens Library and from Wath Library.
4. That a further report be brought back to Cabinet following the consultation detailing proposals for the future delivery of Customer Services.

## 7. Proposals and Details

### 7.1 Access to Services

The Council offers services to customers in different ways. These are

- 1) By telephone
- 2) By letter or email
- 3) Online
- 4) In person via the Council's network of Customer Service Centres.

Following consultation in 2004, Members agreed that access to services 'in person' should be available from 6 locations across the borough. Since then a programme of development work has taken place to create Customer Service Centres in the six communities and the final Customer Service Centre, based at Rawmarsh, was completed in 2012.

The location of the Customer Service Centres is detailed in table 1, together with the services which are available at each site and the average Council Services visitor count.

**Table 1**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Primary Access Point</b>	<b>Customer Access provision</b>	<b>Average monthly visitor count (council services only)</b>
Central location	Riverside House	Making payments Access to all council services Central library Arts Heritage Café	26264 visitors per month
South/East of the Borough	Maltby Leisure and Service Centre	Leisure Centre Making payments Access to wide range of council services GP Practice Community health facilities Pharmacy CYPS Contact Rooms Café Community room	5360 visitors per month  (excludes DC Leisure footfall + GP Practice footfall)
South of the	Aston Customer Service Centre	Making payments Access to wide range	7625 visitors per month

Borough		of council services Library GP Practice Community health facilities Pharmacy CYPS Contact Rooms Community room	(excludes GP practice and pharmacy footfall)
South of the Borough	Dinnington Customer Service Centre	Making payments Access to a wide range of council services	2844 visitors per month
North of the Borough	Rawmarsh Customer Service Centre	Access to wide range of council services Library GP Practice Community health facilities Pharmacy (not yet open) CYPS Contact Rooms Community room	3139 visitors per month  (excludes GP practice footfall)
North of the borough	Swinton Customer Service Centre	Making payments Access to a wide range of council services	3092 visitors per month

The Council has worked closely with the Rotherham Primary Care Trust to develop multi-tenanted Customer Service Centres based in Maltby, Aston and Rawmarsh and this has increased the number of services which are available to customers.

This has helped to increase footfall into specialist service areas such as libraries and has increased customer satisfaction by enabling access to varied services under one roof. In addition it has enabled partner locality teams to work together successfully, building stronger working relationships and achieving efficiencies.

Swinton Customer Service Centre and Dinnington Customer Service Centre are not currently multi tenanted buildings. Customer footfall is therefore lower in these sites and the cost of service delivery is increased as the Council has to deliver public access services from both a library building and a Customer Service Centre building.

Opportunities exist for the Council to deliver a library service and to provide access to other Council Services from the same locations at Swinton and at Dinnington. The Resource and Community Centre is already used as the location for Dinnington library and the Area Assembly, and has a café and community rooms. Relocating wider customer access provision to this building will help to create a 'one stop shop' in Dinnington and will provide opportunities for the Council to reuse the existing Customer Service Centre building.

Swinton Library is located next to Swinton Customer Service Centre. The building has ample space for the council to provide access to other council services. This change will enable the Customer Service Centre at Swinton to be considered for alternative uses.

## **7.2 Customer Service Delivery Model**

Over recent years, the Council has moved towards delivering the same level of access to Council services at each of its Customer Service Centres across the borough. It has become evident however that demands for services are greater in certain communities, particularly when customers need to access advice relating to benefits and other support services. The findings from the recent public library review consultation also support this view.

To enable the Council to deliver increased levels of service in communities outside of the Customer Service Centres within current resources it is proposed that the 'in person' Customer Service delivery model is amended to the model detailed in Table 2.

This model proposes that customers are able to access Council Services such as benefits advice or council tax advice from Swinton and Dinnington sites 'in person' for two days per week. Access to services outside these times can be obtained from public access free phones or by using the public access computers which are available in the library. Customers will be able to make payments for council services using self service payment machines. Staff members will be available to support customers when using payment machines or when using public access computers.

In addition, it is recommended that customers are also able to obtain access to wider advice about Council Services from Mowbray Gardens Library and from Wath Library for one day per week.

**Table 2: The Customer Contact service delivery model**

Location	Riverside House	Rawmarsh Customer Service Centre	Aston Customer Service Centre	Maltby Customer and Leisure Centre	Swinton Library	Dinnington Resource Centre	Community Libraries across the borough	Other places
Where can I make a payment	You can pay at our cashiers desks or by using one of our self service payment machines	You can use our self service payment machine	You can use our self service payment machine	You can use our self service payment machine	You can use our self service payment machine	You can use our self service payment machine	<p>You can use our self service payment machine at Wath library.</p> <p>Our other libraries do not have any payment facilities.</p>	<p>You can pay free of charge at any post office or pay point facility.</p> <p>You can also set up a direct debit to make regular payments or you can pay online.</p>

Location	Riverside House	Rawmarsh Customer Service Centre	Aston Customer Service Centre	Maltby Customer and Leisure Centre	Swinton Library	Dinnington Resource Centre	Community Libraries across the borough	Other places
Where can I get help and advice on....	A drop in or appointment service is available	A drop in or appointment service is available	A drop in or appointment service is available	A drop in or appointment service is available	A drop in service is available each Monday and Tuesday	A drop in service is available each Wednesday and Friday	A drop in service is available at Mowbray Gardens Library and from Wath Library from 10am – 4pm each Thursday.	Supported online self service facilities are also available on our mobile library.
Council Tax	Mon – Fri 9am – 5.30pm	Mon – Fri 9am – 5.30pm	Mon – Fri 9am – 5.30pm	Mon – Fri 9am – 5.30pm	9am – 12noon & 1pm – 5pm	9am – 12 noon & 1pm – 5pm		
Benefits					Customer appointments are also available by request.	Customer appointments are also available by request.		
Housing	Supported online self service is available here. You can use our kiosks and computers at Riverside House and our helpful customer service or library staff will assist you to get online.	Supported online self service is available here. You can use our kiosks and computers at Rawmarsh CSC and our helpful customer service or library staff will assist you to get online.	Supported online self service is available here. You can use our kiosks and computers at Aston CSC and our helpful customer service or library staff will assist you to get online.	You can use our dedicated housing kiosks to bid online for council properties at Maltby CSC				Key Choices
Licensing							Public access free phones are available.	Property Shop
Blue badges					Public access free phones are available.	Public access free phones are available.	You can also use our kiosks or computers and our helpful library staff will assist you to get online.	offers a dedicated Housing Service.
Parking					You can also use our kiosks and computers and our helpful library staff will assist you to get online.	You can also use our kiosks and computers and our helpful library staff will assist you to get online.		
Submitting planning applications								

Where can I tell you about....	We would prefer you to tell us about these problems using our website or mobile app. You can find this at <a href="http://www.rotherham.gov.uk">www.rotherham.gov.uk</a>
Street or environmental issues	Alternatively you can telephone us on 01709 336003
Problems with waste collection, including arranging for bulky waste to be collected	Computers and free phones are available in our customer service centres if you need help.
Where can I get help and support for adult social care	We have lots of information on our website. You can find this at <a href="http://www.connecttosupport.org/rotherham">www.connecttosupport.org/rotherham</a>  If you need further information or would like us to assess whether you are eligible for care services, please telephone us on 01709 822330
Where can I get help and support for children's social care	We have lots of information on our website at <a href="http://www.rotherham.gov.uk">www.rotherham.gov.uk</a>  If you need further information, please contact us on 01709 823987

### **7.3 Public Consultation**

As we are proposing changes to the customer contact service delivery model, further work is required before we are able to finalise and implement the model. This includes:

- Complete public consultation on the proposed model, including consultation with individual communities, partners, stakeholders and staff.
- Equality analysis of the proposed service provision.
- Complete detailed feasibility studies to support the relocation of Dinnington and Swinton Customer Service Centres into Dinnington Resource Centre and Swinton Library.

This work will be undertaken during February and March 2013.

### **8. Finance**

Changes to the customer contact service delivery model are expected to realise savings of approximately £80,000 in 2013 – 2014. This will be generated through improved efficiency in service delivery.

Final details of the savings which can be achieved will be provided following completion of the public consultation exercise.

### **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The proposed changes to the service delivery model will require customers to use alternative ways to access services, such as public access computers, self service payment machines and public access telephones. Staff members will be on hand to support customers through this change, but customer satisfaction levels may be impacted in the short term.

### **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The proposed changes to service delivery support the Council's Customer Access Strategy and will deliver key efficiency and value for money improvements.

Increasing service provision within some of the Council's deprived communities supports the Corporate Plan and its policy and performance agendas.

The rationalisation of property assets is essential to reduce budget pressures and to support the delivery of front line services in the most cost effective way possible.

### **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

 Customer Access Strategy 2011 – 2015

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