

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2014**

**MEDIUM TERM SERVICE PLANNING – SERVICE CHANGE PROPOSALS**

**ONE4ALL CENTRES**

**REPORT OF THE CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM**

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report outlines a service change proposal in respect of the Council's One4all face to face customer contact centres as part of the Council's Medium Term Service Planning arrangements, specifically in the context of the need to reduce spend and enable the Council to fulfil its statutory responsibility and set a balanced budget from 2015/16 onwards.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet agree:

- 2.1 To implement the service reconfiguration proposal in respect of the Council's One4all Centres; and
- 2.2 To implement the proposal as soon as is practicable.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 On the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2014, Council received a report on the implications of the provisional local government settlement, as announced on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2014. This confirmed that the Council is facing a significant shortfall in resource levels for 2015/16.

- 3.2 The budget gap faced by the Council in 2015/16 currently stands at **£22.646M** after taking into account the financial implications of decisions made to date, up to and including the Cabinet meeting of the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014 (excluding those proposals which are currently subject to public consultation).
- 3.3 Given the size of the budget gap faced and the timescale requirements for any implementation of service changes, Cabinet agreed to receive reports on potential service change / cut proposals as soon as these become available.
- 3.4 This report provides details of a further service change proposal in this regard.

### **PROPOSAL**

#### **4. COUNCIL ONE4ALL CENTRES**

- 4.1 The Council currently provides face to face customer services through its One4all centres. There are currently 4 full time centres which are open between 08.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday at :
- Sardis House, Pontypridd
  - Rock Grounds, Aberdare
  - Bronwydd, Porth
  - Treorchy Library
- 4.2 A further 2 centres are operated on an outreach basis at Mountain Ash Library (10.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday) and at Pontyclun Library (1.5hrs per week, via appointment only).
- 4.3 There are a wide range of services provided from the centres including Council Tax, Housing Benefit, Bus Passes, Blue Badges, Planning and Streetcare Services. There are also specialist and partner services provided such as Citizen's Advice and Pensions.
- 4.4 A summary of current usage patterns at each of the centres is provided at Appendix 1.
- 4.5 The service has an annual budget of £0.822M.

**SERVICE CHANGE PROPOSAL**

- 4.6 It is proposed that the service is reconfigured to a model which continues to provide six centres, but on a three Core Centres and three outreach centre basis.
- 4.7 The proposed amended opening hours are shown in the table below and would result in a saving to the Council of £0.201M in a full financial year.

**PROPOSED OPENING HOURS**

	<b>Current Opening Hours</b>	<b>Proposed Opening Hours</b>
<b>Core Centres</b>		
Sardis House	Mon - Fri 8.30am to 5.00pm = 42.5hrs	Mon -Fri 9.00am to 4.00pm = 35 hrs
Rock Grounds	Mon - Fri 8.30am to 5pm = 42.5hrs	Mon -Fri 9.00am to 3.30pm = 32.5hrs
Bronwydd	Mon - Fri 8.30am to 5pm = 42.5hrs	Mon - Fri 9.00am to 3.30pm = 32.5hrs
<b>Sub Total - Core</b>	<b>Total hrs 127.5</b>	<b>100 hrs</b>
<b>Outreach</b>		
Treorchy Library	Mon - Fri 8.30am to 5pm =42.5hrs	Monday Weds Fri 10.00am – 3.00pm = 15 hrs
Mountain Ash Library	Mon- Fri 10.00am to 3.00pm = 25 hrs	Monday Weds Fri 10.00am -3.00 pm = 15 hrs
Pontyclun Library	1.5 hrs per week	Reduce to 1 hr per week (2 hrs per fortnight)
<b>Sub Total - Outreach</b>	<b>69 hrs</b>	<b>31hrs</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>196.5hrs</b>	<b>131hrs</b>

- 4.8 Currently 13% of customers prefer to make an appointment for their visit to one of our centres and the proposal is to manage demand through supporting more of our customers with appointments for pre-planned visits and at peak times.

- 4.9 The amended opening hours would also enable savings in wider Customer Care management and support costs amounting to £0.044M.

### **SUMMARY ONE4ALL CENTRES**

- 4.10 The implementation of this proposal would deliver savings for the Council of **£0.245M** (full year impact).
- 4.11 It is proposed that the implementation of the proposals be implemented as soon as is practicable.

### **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared for this proposal and has demonstrated that on equality and diversity grounds, there are no reasons for the proposal not to be implemented.

### **6. STAFFING**

- 6.1 The proposal would necessitate a review of staffing levels across the service. This review would be carried out in accordance with the Council's statutory obligations and Managing Change policy. Staff and trade unions would be fully consulted at the appropriate time.

### **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 The Council is under no statutory duty to consult in relation to this service change proposal and does not consider there is a common law duty to consult as regards the same.

### **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The Council is facing an unprecedented financial challenge over the next 3 years and all services and their delivery must be assessed.
- 8.2 The proposal in this report provides the Cabinet with a further option to contribute towards bridging the budget gap faced by the Council.
- 8.3 If implemented, the proposal contained in this report would deliver £0.245M of full year savings for the Council.

**APPENDIX 1**

**ONE4ALL CENTRE USAGE 2013/14**

Area	One4aLL Centre	% of Total Service	Advice (Initial & Interview)	Payments	Annual Total	Daily Total
Cynon Valley	Aberdare (Rock Grounds)	28.5%	31016 (77%)	9264 (23%)	40280	155
Taff Ely	Pontypridd (Sardis House)	27.8%	31057 (79%)	8246 (21%)	39303	151
Rhondda Valley	Porth (Bronwydd Site)	28.5%	32047 (80%)	8248 (20%)	40295	155
Rhondda Valley	Treorchy (Library)	12.9%	14145 (78%)	4086 (22%)	18231	70
Outreach from Centre	Mountain Ash Library (25 hrs a week)	2.2%	2317 (73%)	854 (27%)	3171	
Outreach from Centre	Pontyclun Library (3 hours per fortnight)	0.1%	193 (100%)	n/a	193	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>110775</b>	<b>30698</b>	<b>141473</b>	

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