

# Chichester District Council

THE CABINET

9 July 2019

## Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services Review Post Project Evaluation (PPE)

### 1. Contacts

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### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Post Project Evaluation (PPE) report included in Appendix 1 be approved.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 At its meeting on 7 March 2017 the Cabinet approved the Project Initiation Document (PID) for a review of the Revenues and Benefits (R&B) service and the Customer Service Centre (CSC).
- 3.2 In accordance with that decision an internal service review was carried out during 2017-18 that sought to identify improvements, generate efficiency savings and maximise performance within R&B and the CSC.

### 4. Outcomes to be Achieved

- 4.1 The project was expected to deliver the following outcomes:
- (a) Cashable efficiency savings to support the Council's Deficit Reduction Plan.
  - (b) Maximise performance in the collection of business rates and council tax and in the processing of benefits.

### 5. Proposal

- 5.1 The project was broken down into the following key work-streams:
- (a) The transfer of R&B customer contact from the back-office into the CSC.
  - (b) The review of R&B processes to identify improvements, generate efficiency savings and maximise performance.

- (c) The implementation of new R&B software that enables a significant increase in self-serve functionality for the customer.
- (d) The identification of future year reductions in Customer Services staffing levels through proactively managing how customers interact with the Council.

## **6. Alternatives Considered**

- 6.1 The alternative options were to retain the existing operating models or to only continue with a reduced number of the key work-streams. However, the shared service programme had clearly demonstrated opportunities to improve in-house processes and deliver ambitious savings targets whilst continuing to provide a good quality service, therefore the Cabinet approved to proceed with the all-encompassing option proposed in the PID.

## **7. Resource and Legal Implications**

- 7.1 The total delivery costs were estimated at £327,000, the majority of which related to IT investment and possible staff redundancies. The estimated annual revenue saving was £224,000, of which £177,000 would be realised by the 2018-19 budget cycle (year 1). Actual costs and savings against these estimates are outlined in the PPE included as an appendix to this report.
- 7.2 The project would be managed and primarily delivered in-house with some external support required for the implementation of new IT software.

## **8. Consultation**

- 8.1 Consultation took place throughout the review; staff briefings and engagement with members and the staff union through Joint Employee Consultative Panel (JECF) was followed by a formal staff consultation document that detailed the options and the preferred approach.

## **9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks**

- 9.1 Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services are all customer-facing services. The proposed changes would make information more readily available for customers who wish to interact with the services online. Contacting the Council in person or by telephone would still be available, therefore there was deemed to be no detrimental impact on the community.

## 10. Other Implications

	Yes	No
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>		X
<b>Climate Change and Biodiversity</b>		X
<b>Human Rights and Equality Impact</b>		X
<b>Safeguarding and Early Help</b>		X
<b>General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)</b>		X
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>		X
<b>Other</b> (please specify)		X

## 11. Appendix

11.1 Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services Review - Post Project Evaluation (PPE).

## 12. Background Papers

12.1 Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services Review Project Initiation Document (PID)  
– Cabinet Report 7 March 2017.