

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Policy & Performance Portfolio Holder

26 January-2012

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director, Corporate Services

CONTACT CENTRE OPENING HOURS PROPOSAL

Purpose

1. To inform the portfolio holder of planned changes to the contact centre opening hours in line with reductions in corporate budgets within Cambridgeshire County Council, and to consider any impact on the managed service delivered to South Cambridgeshire District Council.
2. This is not a key decision but requires the portfolio holder's approval.

Recommendation

3. That the portfolio holder approve the proposed reduction in contact centre opening hours from the current Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm, to Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm (no change to Saturday service).

Reasons for Recommendations

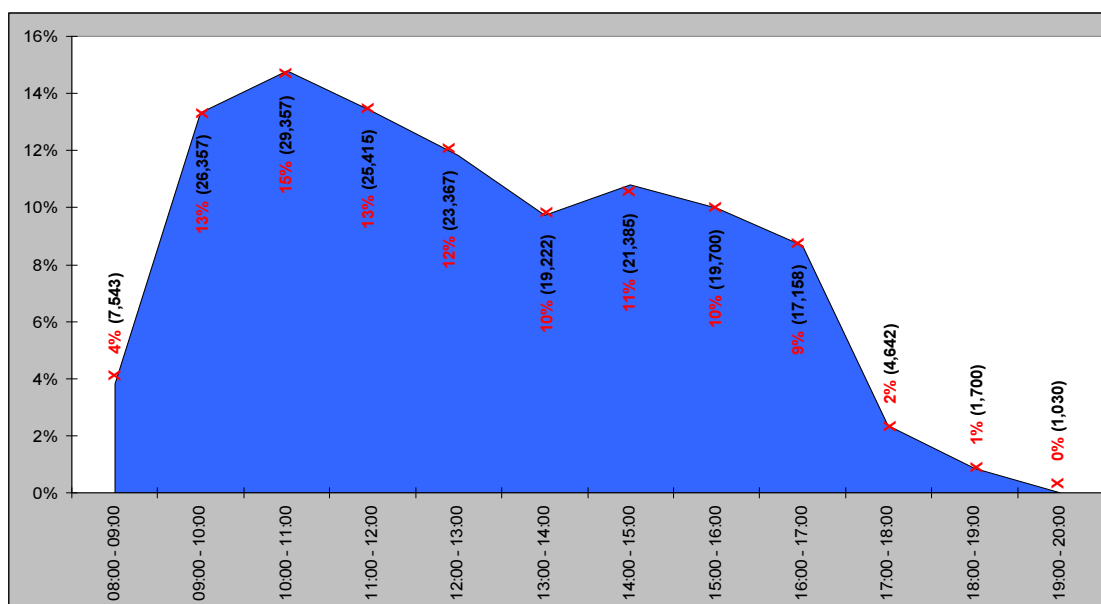
4. Following on from Cambridge County Council's budget reductions for 2011/12, its Cabinet have agreed further budget reductions for the corporate contact centre.
5. To ensure service delivery to the reduced budget it is proposed that the contact centre reduces opening hours from the current Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm, to Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm (no change to Saturday service).
6. The reduced opening hours will result in a reduction in resource requirements to deliver the service and a £15,000 cost reduction for South Cambridgeshire District Council in the 2012/13 fiscal year.

Background

7. On 4 December 2002, South Cambridgeshire District Council entered into a contract with Cambridgeshire County Council for the provision of a contact centre service. On 27 April 2005 the contract was amended to include the same provision for an extended number of services, later referred to as 'Phase 2 Services'. The contract expires on 3 December 2012.
8. After a review conducted by an officer and member task and finish group, this Council's Cabinet agreed on 7 July 2011 that its contact centre service, currently provided by Cambridgeshire County Council, should be re-located at South Cambridgeshire Hall and managed in-house. It was agreed this would take effect at the end of the Council's contract with Cambridgeshire County Council on 3 December 2012.

Considerations

9. Current service delivery for the Council matches that of Cambridgeshire County Council in both service levels and opening hours.
10. To ensure service cover during peak contact periods the service delivery model is based on Full Time Equivalent (FTE) across the whole contact centre service, and not a split into a South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council operation.
11. The proposal to reduce opening hours (finishing at 6pm Monday to Friday) is based on the low number of calls that are received after 6pm.
12. The Scrutiny Task and Finish Group found that the average percentage of South Cambridgeshire District Council calls presented between 6pm and 8pm is 1% of the overall calls presented. Cambridgeshire County Council has confirmed this figure. The call volume data is displayed in the chart below.



13. The proposed reduction in opening hours will see a reduction in FTE requirement for South Cambridgeshire District Council services of 0.61 FTE, which equates to a £15,000 a year reduction in funding requirement. The contact centre will not recruit to current vacancies to meet this reduction.

Option

14. To accept or reject the proposal and the subsequent £15,000 reduction in funding requirement.

Implications

15.

Financial	Accepting the proposal will result in a £15,000 saving in the 2012/13 fiscal year.
Legal	None.

Staffing	Cambridgeshire County Council will reduce its staffing requirement by 0.61FTE. The reduction will be sourced from existing vacancies. There is no impact on South Cambridgeshire District Council staffing.
Risk Management	None.
Equality and Diversity	No adverse impacts identified.
Equality Impact Assessment completed	No.
Climate Change	None.

Consultations

16. Cabinet members considered Cambridgeshire County Council's proposal at the Leader's meeting on 6 January 2012.

Effect on Strategic Aims

17. The recommendation of this report supports the Council's aim to provide first class services accessible to all. The recommendation also takes into account the financial pressures placed upon the Council and the needs of its residents.

Consultation with Children and Young People

18. None.

Conclusions / Summary

19. The proposal made by Cambridgeshire County Council is well considered and will have minimal impact on the residents of South Cambridgeshire. The Council has the opportunity to save £15,000 in the 2012/13 fiscal year.
20. The proposal is in line with the recommendations of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group to reduce opening hours within the new in-house contact centre due to be implemented on 3 December 2012.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Contact Centre Funding Change Proposal – Cambridgeshire County Council

Contact Officer: Paul Knight – Customer & Business Services Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713309