

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 20th November,
2013

at 2.00 pm

PLEASE NOTE TIME

Council Chamber - Civic Centre

Members of the Council

The Mayor – Chair

The Sheriff – Vice-chair

Leader of the Council

Members of the Council (See overleaf)

Contacts

Director of Corporate Services

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The agenda and papers are available via the Council's Website

WARD	COUNCILLOR	WARD	COUNCILLOR
Bargate	Bogle Noon Tucker	Millbrook	Furnell Laming Thorpe
Bassett	Hannides B Harris L Harris	Peartree	Keogh Lewzey Dr Paffey
Bevois	Barnes-Andrews Burke Rayment	Portswood	Claisse Norris Vinson
Bitterne	Letts Lloyd Stevens	Redbridge	McEwing Pope Whitbread
Bitterne Park	White Baillie Inglis	Shirley	Chaloner Kaur Mead
Coxford	Morrell Spicer Thomas	Sholing	Mrs Blatchford Jeffery Kolker
Freemantle	Moulton Parnell Shields	Swaythling	Mintoff Turner Vassiliou
Harefield	Daunt Fitzhenry Smith	Woolston	Cunio Hammond Payne

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Role of the Council

The Council comprises all 48 Councillors. The Council normally meets six times a year including the annual meeting, at which the Mayor and the Council Leader are elected and committees and sub-committees are appointed, and the budget meeting, at which the Council Tax is set for the following year.

The Council approves the policy framework, which is a series of plans and strategies recommended by the Executive, which set out the key policies and programmes for the main services provided by the Council.

It receives a summary report of decisions made by the Executive, and reports on specific issues raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

The Council also considers questions and motions submitted by Council Members on matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the City.

Public Involvement

Representations

At the discretion of the Mayor, members of the public may address the Council on any report included on the agenda in which they have a relevant interest.

Petitions

At a meeting of the Council any Member or member of the public may present a petition which is submitted in accordance with the Council's scheme for handling petitions.

Petitions containing more than 1,500 signatures (qualifying) will be debated at a Council meeting.

Deputations

A deputation of up to three people can apply to address the Council. A deputation may include the presentation of a petition.

Questions

People who live or work in the City may ask questions of the Mayor, Chairs of Committees and Members of the Executive.

Southampton City Council's Priorities:

- **Economic:** Promoting Southampton and attracting investment; raising ambitions and improving outcomes for children and young people.
- **Social:** Improving health and keeping people safe; helping individuals and communities to work together and help themselves.
- **Environmental:** Encouraging new house building and improving existing homes; making the city more attractive and sustainable.
- **One Council:** Developing an engaged, skilled and motivated workforce; implementing better ways of working to manage reduced budgets and increased demand.

Smoking policy – The Council operates a no-smoking policy in all civic buildings.

Mobile Telephones – Please turn off your mobile telephone whilst in the meeting.

Fire Procedure – In the event of a fire or other emergency, a continuous alarm will sound and you will be advised by Council officers what action to take.

Access – Access is available for disabled people. Please contact the Council Administrator who will help to make any necessary arrangements.

Dates of Meetings(Municipal Year 2013/14)

2013	2014
15 May	12 February (Budget)
17 July	19 March
18 September	4 June*
* Date reflects current understanding of date of European Elections which will be combined with local elections.	
20 November	

CONDUCT OF MEETING

FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

The functions of the Council are set out in Article 4 of Part 2 of the Constitution

BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED

Only those items listed on the attached agenda may be considered at this meeting.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

The meeting is governed by the Council Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

QUORUM

The minimum number of appointed Members required to be in attendance to hold the meeting is 16.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members are required to disclose, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, **both** the existence **and** nature of any "Disclosable Personal Interest" or "Other Interest" they may have in relation to matters for consideration on this Agenda.

DISCLOSABLE PERSONAL INTERESTS

A Member must regard himself or herself as having a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter that they or their spouse, partner, a person they are living with as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were a civil partner in relation to:

(i) Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

(ii) Sponsorship:

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from Southampton City Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expense incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

(iii) Any contract which is made between you / your spouse etc (or a body in which the you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest) and Southampton City Council under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed, and which has not been fully discharged.

(iv) Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of Southampton.

(v) Any license (held alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of Southampton for a month or longer.

(vi) Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) the landlord is Southampton City Council and the tenant is a body in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interests.

(vii) Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of Southampton, and either:

- a) the total nominal value for the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body, or
- b) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest that exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Other Interests

A Member must regard himself or herself as having a, 'Other Interest' in any membership of, or occupation of a position of general control or management in:

Any body to which they have been appointed or nominated by Southampton City Council

Any public authority or body exercising functions of a public nature

Any body directed to charitable purposes

Any body whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy

Principles of Decision Making

All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:-

- proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
- due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;
- respect for human rights;
- a presumption in favour of openness, accountability and transparency;
- setting out what options have been considered;
- setting out reasons for the decision; and
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

In exercising discretion, the decision maker must:

- understand the law that regulates the decision making power and gives effect to it. The decision-maker must direct itself properly in law;
- take into account all relevant matters (those matters which the law requires the authority as a matter of legal obligation to take into account);
- leave out of account irrelevant considerations;
- act for a proper purpose, exercising its powers for the public good;
- not reach a decision which no authority acting reasonably could reach, (also known as the "rationality" or "taking leave of your senses" principle);
- comply with the rule that local government finance is to be conducted on an annual basis. Save to the extent authorised by Parliament, 'live now, pay later' and forward funding are unlawful; and
- act with procedural propriety in accordance with the rules of fairness.

Director of Corporate Services
M R HEATH
Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LY

Tuesday, 12 November 2013

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the COUNCIL to be held on WEDNESDAY, 20TH NOVEMBER, 2013 in the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC CENTRE at 2.00 pm when the following business is proposed to be transacted:-

1 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies.

2 MINUTES

To authorise the signing of the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 18th September 2013 attached.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER

Matters especially brought forward by the Mayor and the Leader.

4 DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To receive any requests for Deputations, Presentation of Petitions or Public Questions.

5 EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

Report of the Leader of the Council, attached.

6 MOTIONS

(a) Councillor Letts to move

Council notes the cost both in financial and social terms of the late night economy in the City Centre.

Council requests the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services begin the process of statutory consultation required prior to Council deciding whether to bring in a Late Night Levy. This Levy should it be brought in would be used to contribute towards the costs of keeping those using the night time economy safe.

(b) Councillor Moulton to move

This Council notes that it is contrary to the general duty under s120 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1994 to raise on street parking charges for the sole intended purpose of helping to close the Council's budget gap. Council further notes that last year the on street parking account generated a surplus of over £1m and that over a quarter of this was not even spent in 2012/13.

Furthermore Council notes that the accumulated surplus for the on street parking account was over £1.7m as of 1st April 2013.

In light of this and the overwhelming public hostility to increases in residents' parking charges and night time parking charges, and the fact they will hit both struggling families and businesses, Council calls on the Executive to abandon both of these tax increases.

NOTE: This motion has been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 16 as this is a motion to rescind a decision made at the Annual General Meeting on 15th May 2013 (ie the past six months) and as required, the notice of motion has been signed by one third of the Members of the Council.

(c) Councillor Hannides to move

Following the recent commencement of works to build the Arts Complex, the Council acknowledges the positive and constructive approach taken by the Executive in facilitating the delivery of the next phase of the city's flag ship cultural quarter development.

The Council notes there are substantial capital pressures that support the development of the Arts Complex and further resolves to urge the Executive to raise much needed funds through the sale of high value items from the city council's art collection. In so doing it should also be guided by the following principles:

- De-accessioning is compliant with the terms of the relevant Bequests.
- The items do not form part of the Gallery's core collection as presently defined.
- The Gallery's national collection status is retained.

(d) Councillor Morrell to move

This Council deplores the dire financial straits into which it has been driven by the government's cuts in local authority funding. Before even last year's budget the Leader of the Council, Councillor Simon Letts described the axing of services and jobs as equivalent to "removing limbs", and now the council is confronted with making even more cuts amounting to £60 million over the next three years on top of the £57 million cut over the last three years.

This Council rejects the government's argument for cutting local authority spending. It is the bankers and the super-rich, who created the world financial crisis, who should be made to pay, not ordinary people and council workers in Southampton.

This Council demands from the government the funding needed to maintain services. As a first step to mobilising support for the Council's stand, public and private-sector trades unions, community, tenants, youth and pensioners groups from across the City will be invited to a pre-budget conference to discuss the real budget needs of the City.

Hilary Benn, Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will be invited to Southampton to explain to the conference how a future Labour government will resolve the local authority budget crisis.

This Council will invite other Labour authorities in the region - Oxford, Reading and Slough - and beyond, to join it in a campaign to defend jobs and services.

(e) Councillor Kaur to move

The Council calls on the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the forthcoming Autumn Statement to announce plans to allow Sixth Form Colleges to reclaim VAT on their purchases in the same way that Academy and local authority School Sixth forms can. This would create a level playing field between such institutions in Southampton and provide both Richard Taunton and Itchen sixth form colleges with additional funding of up to potentially £300,000 to pursue their missions in raising and supporting the ambitions of the most disadvantaged students in our City.

7 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES OR THE MAYOR

To consider any question of which notice has been given under Council Procedure Rule 11.2.

8 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

To deal with any appointments to Committees, Sub-Committees or other bodies as required.

9 CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION - COUNCIL PETITION SCHEME

Report of the Director of Corporate Services seeking comments on recommendations to changes to the Council's Constitution, attached.

10 SCRAP METAL DEALER LICENSING

Report of the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services recommending to Council to delegate the function to the Licensing Committee, attached.

11 REFURBISHMENT OF 315 COXFORD ROAD

Report of Cabinet Member for Children Services, seeking approval to refurbish 315 Coxford Road for the Integrated Family Assessment and Intervention Service, attached.

12 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM

To move that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, specifically the Access to Information Procedure Rules contained within the Constitution, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in respect of any consideration of the confidential appendix to the following Item

The appendix attached to this report is not for publication by virtue of category 3 paragraph 10.4 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules. This is required as the report contains information relating to the potential financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is not considered in the public interest to release this information

13 DEVELOPMENT OF SITES IN LORDSHILL

Report of the Leader of the Council, outlining plans to dispose of the former Oakland's School sites and associated site and plans to reopen the swimming pool, attached.

14 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM

To move that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, specifically the Access to Information Procedure Rules contained within the Constitution, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in respect of any consideration of the confidential appendix to the following Item

Confidential Appendix 1 contains information deemed to be exempt from general publication by virtue of category 3 to paragraph 10.4 of the Councils Access to Information Procedure Rules as contained in the Constitution. Publication of this information may be to the Council's financial detriment

15 THORNHILL DISTRICT ENERGY SCHEME

Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Sustainability, detailing considerations relating to a district energy scheme in Thornhill, attached.

16 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM

To move that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, specifically the Access to Information Procedure Rules contained within the Constitution, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in respect of any consideration of the confidential appendix to the following Item

Confidential appendix 1 contains information deemed to be exempt from general publication based on Category 3 of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules. It is not in the public interest to disclose this because information relates to the financial affairs of the Authority.

17 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL LIMITS MID YEAR REVIEW

Report of the Head of Finance and IT regarding the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Limits Mid Year review, attached.

18 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM

To move that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, specifically the Access to Information Procedure Rules contained within the Constitution, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in respect of any consideration of the confidential report to the following Item

The confidential report contains information deemed to be exempt from general publication based on Category 3 of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules. . It is not in the public interest to disclose this because this information relates to the project costs and commercial contracts between third parties which are commercially sensitive.

19 SOUTHAMPTON NEW ARTS COMPLEX

Confidential report with respect to Southampton's New Arts Complex outlining an urgent decision made by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

20 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM

To move that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, specifically the Access to Information procedure Rules contained within the Constitution, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in respect of any consideration of the following report.

Appendix 1 is considered to be confidential, the confidentiality of which is based on category 3 of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules. It is not in the public interest to disclose this because information relates to the financial affairs of the Authority.

21 WATERMARK WEST QUAY AND REGIONAL GROWTH FUND (

Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Leisure Services, seeking approval for matters relating to the Watermark West Quay site and the Regional Growth Fund, attached.

22 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM

To move that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, specifically the Access to Information Procedure Rules contained within the Constitution, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in respect of any consideration of the confidential appendix to the following Item.

Confidential appendix1 contains information deemed to be exempt from general publication based on Categories 3 (financial and business affairs) and 7A (obligation of Confidentiality) of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules as contained in the Council's Constitution. It is not in the public interest to disclose this information as this appendix contains confidential and commercially sensitive information supplied by Capita Business Services Limited. It would prejudice the Council's ability to operate in a commercial environment and obtain best value in negotiations and would prejudice the Council's commercial relationships with third parties, if they believed the Council would not honour any obligation of confidentiality.

23 STRATEGIC SERVICES PARTNERSHIP (SSP) CONTRACT - PROPOSED CONTRACT EXTENSION (

Report of the Leader of the Council, seeking approval for a proposed contract extension of the Strategic Service Contract, attached.

NOTE: There will be Christian prayers and a Thought for the Day by the Reverend Doctor Julian Davies in the Mayor's Reception Room at 1.45 pm for Members of the Council and Officers who wish to attend.



M R HEATH
Director of Corporate Services

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SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2013

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor White
The Sheriff, Councillor Mrs Blatchford
Councillors Baillie, Barnes-Andrews, Bogle, Chaloner, Claisse, Cunio, Daunt, Fitzhenry, Furnell, Hammond, Hannides, B Harris, L Harris, Kaur, Inglis, Jeffery, Keogh, Kolker, Laming, Letts, Lewzey, Lloyd, Mead, Minto, Moulton, Noon, Norris, Dr Paffey, Parnell, Payne, Pope, Rayment, Shields, Smith, Spicer, Stevens (items 51-56(a) and 56(c) onwards), Thomas (Items 51-55 only), Thorpe, Tucker, Turner, Vassiliou, Vinson and Whitbread (items 51-56(b) and 56(d) onwards)

51. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Burke, McEwing and Morrell.

52. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 17th July, 2013 be approved and signed as a correct record.

53. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER

(i) Cancellation of Extraordinary Council and Special Cabinet Meetings (16th October)

Members were reminded that there was no longer a need to hold an Extraordinary Council Meeting or Special Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 16th October.

(ii) European and City Council Elections 2014

It was noted that the Council of Europe had now determined that the European Elections would be held on 22nd May 2014; and the Government had approved the required regulations to confirm that the local elections in 2014 would be deferred so they were combined with the European elections. Accordingly, the Annual Council Meeting would be held on the 4th June as provisionally published.

54. DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- (i) The Council noted that the deputation from Mr Westcott concerning Group Leaders' Allowances had been withdrawn.
- (ii) The Council received and noted a deputation from Mr Fitzpatrick and Mr Simms concerning Dale Valley Residents' Association – New Charges to Residents' Parking Schemes.

- (iii) The Council received and noted a deputation from Issa Farrah concerning Cuts to Youth Services.

55. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The report of the Leader of the Council was submitted setting out the details of the business undertaken by the Executive (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

The Leader and the Cabinet made statements and responded to Questions.

The following questions were then submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1:

1. Permit Charges

Question from Councillor Moulton to Councillor Rayment

What is the Executive's rationale for the introduction of 1st permit charges in residents' parking areas?

Answer

The justification was stated in the Cabinet report earlier this year.

This stated that we accept the need to have residents parking priority where there are pressures from parking caused by commuters, visitors or shoppers. The Council is seeking to cover some of its costs in issuing residents parking permits.

Background:

- Current income from second permits and visitors' permits brings in around £50k per year.
- The cost of administering all types of permits in these areas is £260k every year.
- The proposal to charge £30 for first residents permits are expected to bring in £130k per year . This would still leave an annual cost to all the residents of the City of £80k.
- There have been policies for charging for different types of permits since 1973. The proposed charge is designed to ensure that the schemes become more self funding by those that benefit from the scheme.

We will be further consulting with the residents in all the zones to ensure that parking restrictions that best meet their current needs.

2. City Centre Parking charges

Question from Councillor Moulton to Councillor Rayment

In light of potential night time commuter parking on the outskirts of the City Centre, as a result of the new night time City Centre parking charges, will the Executive consult with other residents' parking areas close to the City Centre in Freemantle Ward, and not just the Polygon area, about the possible extension of enforcement times to 8pm?

Answer

The current First permit proposals were advertised with Polygon Area Controlled Parking Zone hours extended until 8pm so that this would limit displacement from the City centre evening charges proposals if approved.

We are consulting with all 13,000 residential properties within all the Controlled Parking Zones to understand how well their parking restrictions are working and whether any changes are necessary. Any changes will be dependent upon the level of response that we receive.

If the evening charges are approved and there are any displacement effects on other resident parking areas close to the city centre adjustments to permit times will be considered as necessary.

3. Athelstan Road highways issue

Question from Councillor Lewzey to Councillor Rayment

Could the Cabinet Member please confirm that she has been looking at the Athelstan Road highways issue.

Answer

I can confirm that I have visited Athelstan Road to see for myself the problems caused by large lorries using this north – south highway route.

I have asked officers to develop a revised proposal that builds upon previous ideas and I will bring this forward for consideration when it has been designed and costed.

4. Fraudulent Claims

Question from Councillor Vinson to Councillor Barnes-Andrews

What use has the Council made of its powers under the 2002 Proceeds of Crime Act to recoup fraudulent claims?

Answer

Regulatory Services have arrangements in place to carry out financial investigations to pursue Proceeds of Crime Act action in relevant cases. There are currently two cases under financial investigation. Further details cannot be provided at this stage due to legal reasons

5. Potholes and Uneven Pavements

Question from Councillor Vinson to Councillor Rayment

How many complaints has the Council received during each of the last three years concerning damage and injuries to (a) motorists (b) cyclists and (c) pedestrians as a result of potholes and uneven pavements? How many litigations have there been as a result of deficient road and pavement surfaces ? What has been the cost to the Council of such complaints and/or litigation and how does this compare as a proportion of the Council's spend on highway maintenance?

Answer

Highways claims received by Southampton City Council are categorised as 'carriageway' or 'footway'

Southampton City Council

Claims received by SCC:

Year	No. of 'Carriageway' Claims Received	No. of 'Footway' Claims Received
2010-11	62	64
2011-12	6	7
2012-13	3	1

Payments by SCC during year on Highways claims:

Year	Total Payments During Year
2010-11	£604,755
2011-12	£478,751
2012-13	£604,957

The 'Total Payments During Year' figure relates to all 'highways' claim settlements or part payments made in the period irrespective of when the claim was received, noting that complex and high value claims can take a significant period to reach conclusion, and that a claimant has up to three years from the date of an incident in which to submit a claim.

The Council entered into a Highways Service Partnership with Balfour Beatty in October 2010 and they assumed responsibility for dealing with all new claims in respect of loss, damage or injury occurring after this date, from potholes or uneven pavements.

In terms of 'highway claims', the Council is therefore dealing with a decreasing number of claims from before this date.

Balfour Beatty

Complaints received by BBLP

Year	Motorists	Cyclists	Pedestrians
2010-11*	132	5	95
2011-12	98	7	187
2012-13	183	8	163

Claims Received by BBLP

The figures below represent all claims received since 4th October 2010 including those that have proceeded to the litigation stage.

Year	Claims From Motorists	Claims From Cyclists	Claims From Pedestrians
2010-11 *	89	3	28
2011-12	41	6	80
2012-13	59	10	95

*The highways partnership commenced on the 4th October 2010 hence these figures represent a partial year from 4th October 2010 – 31st March 2011.

Cost to the Council of such complaints and/or litigation and how does this compare as a proportion of the Council's spend on highway maintenance?

Under the terms of the highways contract, a lump sum of approximately £2.7m is paid annually for revenue activities including reactive maintenance. It is the responsibility of Balfour Beatty to allocate this budget. Balfour Beatty take the risk regarding insurance claims, so repudiation and settlement of all claims is their responsibility. Hence there is no additional cost to the council for claims on events that have taken place since 4th October 2010.

The Council is currently investing £4.2m Capital into roads maintenance in 2013/14.

6. Equal Pay

Question from Councillor Smith to Councillor Barnes-Andrews

Would the Cabinet Member please update Council on the progress to deal with the outstanding issue of equal pay?

Answer

We have held discussions with Trade Unions about ways we can future proof the Council against any risk of equal pay claims. Informed by those discussions we will be formally consulting on a set of concrete proposals with the aim of reaching an agreement.

7. Off Street Parking Charges

Question from Councillor Smith to Councillor Rayment

What surpluses are generated from on street and off street parking charges?

Answer

The surpluses that were generated from on street and off street parking charges in 2012/13 were as follows:-

Net Operating Income (Surplus)	
	<u>2012/13</u> <u>Actual</u> <u>£</u>
On Street	1,077,000
Off Street	2,542,000
Total	3,619,000

The on street surplus is ring fenced for transport related initiatives (including financing of Multi Storey Car Parks and highways capital works) and may be carried forward between financial years.

8. Limited Waiting Restrictions

Question from Councillor Moulton to Councillor Rayment

What Council budget changes have been made since May 2012 relating to introducing new parking schemes such as introducing limited waiting restrictions?

Answer

If the Member is asking if we have removed a budget for minor traffic management schemes the answer is that no changes have been made.

9. Off Licences

Question from Councillor Moulton to Councillor Kaur

At the last council meeting I asked to be sent the legal advice that the Cabinet Member received regarding the use of Cumulative Impact Licensing policies with respect to off licences. Please can I have this as promised as it has not been sent to me (preferably printed in the written response to this question)?

Answer

The matter is in hand. However it would be inappropriate to include the Council's legal advice in any public response.

The legal position when the matter was first raised in relation to off licences has changed, not least due to revised Home Office guidance which would appear to support the proposition that the Licensing Cumulative Impact Policy may now be applicable to off licences. This requires some site specific analysis as nationally this has not been tested by many authorities. Richard Ivory will ensure that Councillor Moulton is provided with the information and, if required, a briefing as soon as possible.

10. Fountains Cafe and Bargate

Question from Councillor Hannides to Councillor Tucker

What are the Executive's future plans for Fountains Cafe and the Bargate?

Answer

Following an assessment of the options available to us, we intend to offer the opportunity to operate Fountains cafe to the open market.

Some prolonged negotiations with a prospective tenant for the Bargate have recently come to an unsuccessful conclusion. We intend to liaise with local community and cultural groups to assess the level of interest from them to become occupiers of the Bargate. Securing a use, which would deliver public access is our preference, alongside reducing costs / attracting income for the Council.

11. SeaCity Museum

Question from Councillor Hannides to Councillor Tucker

Following a successful first year for SeaCity Museum, what are the Executive's plans for exploring alternative management arrangements for the museum?

Answer

There are no current plans for alternative management for SeaCity museum.

12. Outsourcing

Question from Councillor Hannides to Councillor Barnes-Andrews

Are there any Council Services that are being considered for outsourcing?

Answer

As part of the challenging Budget Process all options to produce a balanced Budget will be considered by the Labour Group.

13. Highways Work

Question from Councillor Vinson to Councillor Rayment

Is the Cabinet Member aware of the power granted by the Transport Secretary to Surrey and East Sussex County Councils to require commencing work on the highways and to decide when companies can dig up the roads?

Answer

Yes I am aware of the Traffic Management Common Permit Scheme being implemented by these authorities.

Southampton has reserved its position to become a member of this scheme at a later date, depending upon the results of the business case currently being worked on by our officers.

14. Personal Information

Question from Councillor Vinson to Councillor Barnes-Andrews

To whom has the Council sold the personal information of individuals, e.g. from the electoral register?

Answer

The only instance relates to the sale of the edited electoral register. The law requires the sale of the full register of electors to specified organisations for specified uses, the charges for which are also laid down in the regulations. In addition, the law also lays out the rules for the sale of the edited electoral register.

Since publication of the last register in December 2012 the following companies have requested and been supplied with copies of the full electoral register:

- Equifax PLC
- Callcredit PLC
- Experian Ltd
- Aristotle International Europe
- Crediva Ltd

The edited register has been requested and supplied to University of Southampton.

The prescribed forms of registration advise potential electors of the requirements for the full and edited registers. The Electoral Registration Officer makes and keeps two versions of the electoral register - the full register and the edited register. The full register lists everyone who is entitled to vote. It can be checked by calling at the council offices or at some local libraries. Only certain people and organisations can have copies of the full register, and they can only use it for specified purposes. These include electoral purposes, the prevention and detection of crime and checking identity on applications for credit. The law says who can have a copy of the full register and what

they can use it for. The full list of such persons and purposes is given in the Representation of the People (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2002. It is a criminal offence for them to pass it on to anyone else or to use it for any other purpose.

The edited register leaves out the names and addresses of people who have asked for their names to be excluded from that version of the register. The edited register can be bought by anyone who asks for a copy and they may use it for any purpose.

It is this that has raised issues recently, given that on payment of a fee, the law requires that it must be supplied to anyone who pays for it, and the use is unlimited.

15. Drop Kerb Costs

Question from Councillor Moulton to Councillor Rayment

What increases have there been in the cost of drop kerb installations over the past couple of years?

Answer

Prior to the commencement of the Highways Services Partnership with Balfour Beatty in October 2010, the average council charge for providing a vehicular dropped crossing into a residential property was approximately £1,300.

The current charge is approximately £1,700.

The reason for this difference is that Balfour Beatty includes the full cost of providing the service including New Roads and Street works Act compliance, multiple inspections.

One of the benefits of the Balfour Beatty contract is that it has revealed the full cost of the services I provided. Previously not all costs would have been allocated to individual priced works.

Officers are aware of the impact of this real cost increase, and are exploring ways to make it easier for smaller contractors to carry out the works direct for residents.

16. CCTV

Question from Councillor Moulton to Councillor Kaur

What plans does the Administration have for expanding CCTV coverage in the city, in particular in crime hot spots in residential areas?

Answer

Southampton has an extensive network of CCTV cameras available to the Council and the police for the detection of crime and keeping local residents and businesses safe. The majority of these cameras are in fixed locations. In addition to these the Council maintains three mobile CCTV cameras that can be deployed in a range of locations to

address the needs and concerns of residents and businesses across the City about crime and anti-social behaviour.

CCTV cameras in Southampton are managed by Balfour Beatty. The Council works closely with its partners to review how best to respond to crime hot spots through a range of interventions and strategies, including the targeted use of CCTV.

We will continue to work together to maximise the impact through partnership of our own council resources, new resources such as Section 106 funding arising from City development as well as through joint working with our partners in Hampshire Police and Balfour Beatty as part of a wider approach to cutting crime and keeping our residents safe.

17. The Former Boating Lake

Question from Councillor Parnell to Councillor Tucker

What is the Administration's present position and policy for the future of the former boating lake on the Sports Centre?

Answer

Following the Planning and Rights of Way Panel hearing in June and the consultation on the former boating lake, Active Nation had been engaged and were developing plans for the Sports Centre. A timetable had been prepared and funding was being identified. All the information was presently being collated and once assimilated would be circulated to all Members.

18. HMOs

Question from Councillor Turner to Councillor Payne

Will the Cabinet Member for Housing tell us if he has plans for HMOs to be licensed in accordance with the Additional licensing measures?

Answer

The licensing of all houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) in the Bargate, Bevois, Portswood and Swaythling wards commenced on 1st July 2013. A team is now in place to process applications and inspect licensable properties. Over 200 applications have been received to date.

The Council's new additional licensing scheme means that properties within these wards such as shared houses, bedsits, and some flats where facilities are shared, will be checked to ensure that they are safe and well-managed. Landlords must also have suitable arrangements in place to deal with anti-social behaviour and the disposal of waste.

The success of the scheme will be reviewed in 2016 to determine whether other wards within the City would benefit from the licensing of all HMOs.

19. Primary School Places

Question from Councillor Turner to Councillor Bogle

Could the Cabinet Member for Children's Services tell us if enough has been done to provide places in primary schools for this year and the following year?

Answer

The City remains committed to working with Primary schools to explore ways of meeting current and future demands for places and I feel we are doing well to meet a significant rise in demand.

For the 2012/13 academic year there were a total of 3,060 places available in Year R (the first year of primary school). This number of places will be replicated in each primary age year group so children can stay in the same school throughout their Primary education.

In May 2013 there were 2,964 Year R children attending schools in the city, leaving a surplus of just under 100. In 2013/14, we anticipate a Year R cohort of just under 2,900, leaving an anticipated surplus of 160.

In 2014/15 several additional school expansions will provide the city with 3,135 Year R places compared to a predicted Year R cohort of 3,058 for that year.

For the academic year that has just started, more parents got their first preference school at both Reception (86.2% compared to 82.1%) and Infant to Junior Transfer (97.6% compared to 97.2%) than in 2012. Similarly, fewer parents could not be offered any of their preferences than last year in both Transfers (3.6% compared to 4.9% Year R, and 0.9% compared to 1.1% in the Infant to Junior transfer).

By way of comparison in the 2006/2007 academic year the Year R cohort was just over 2,100.

20. Traffic Safety Outside of Schools

Question from Councillor Moulton to Councillor Rayment

With numerous primary schools expanding and in some cases tripling in size, what plans does the Administration have to improve road and traffic safety outside of schools?

Answer

The Council actively works with schools through their School Travel Plans in order to reduce the amount of cars associated with the school journey. There is generally no safety issue associated with children in the vicinity of schools, although where the need for improvements are identified, we work closely with colleagues in Children's Services to find an appropriate solution.

We maintain close links with Children's Services colleagues throughout the entire Primary School Expansion Programme.

21. Community Payback

Question from Councillor Moulton to Councillor Kaur

What Council budget changes have been made relating to supporting Community Payback work since May 2012?

Answer

The Council budgets and resources deployed in supporting Community Payback work have remained constant since May 2012 and consistent with levels of support before that time. The outcomes targeted and delivered have also remained unchanged, i.e. at least 10,000 hours of Community Payback work each year delivering environmental improvement projects to directly benefit Southampton's neighbourhoods and communities.

56. MOTIONS

(a) Royal Mail

Councillor Pope moved and Councillor Jeffery seconded:-

"Given the two delivery offices in Southampton, the Southampton Mail Centre and delivery offices just outside the City, this Council recognises that the Royal Mail is part of the fabric of our nation and believes that plans for its privatisation will lead to high prices, a loss of jobs that will impact on our citizens and a reduction in services for the people in our City who need those services the most. Therefore we resolve that Southampton City Council should formally sign the "Save our Royal Mail" petition to put pressure on the Government to reverse its decision and protect the country's postal services; and that the Leader of the Council should write to the Secretary of State for Business and Enterprise conveying the terms of this Resolution."

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED CARRIED

RESOLVED that the motion be approved.

(b) Community Pubs

Councillor Letts moved and Councillor Lloyd seconded:-

"Given the recent changes of use of pubs in Southampton, for example the Castle at Midanbury to a Tesco store and the Hope and Anchor at Freemantle to a Co-op store, and the prospect of other pubs being similarly affected, Council notes the possibility of submitting the following proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act:

'That the Secretary of State help protect community pubs in England by ensuring that planning permission and community consultation are required before

community pubs are allowed to be converted to betting shops, supermarkets and pay-day loan stores or other uses, or are allowed to be demolished.'

The Council notes that if this power was acquired it would allow the Council to determine if pubs should be demolished or converted into other uses and could save many valued community pubs.

The Council resolves to submit the proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act and to work together with Local Works and the Campaign for Real Ale to gain support for the proposal from other councils in the region and across the country."

Amendment moved by Councillor Fitzhenry and seconded by Councillor Moulton:-

Second paragraph, third line, delete "to betting shops, supermarkets and pay day loan stores or other users, or are allowed to be" and replace with "or"

Third paragraph, second line, delete "could save many valued community pubs" and replace with "determine the impact of such changes."

AMENDED MOTION TO READ:

Given the recent changes of use of pubs in Southampton, for example the Castle at Midanbury to a Tesco store and the Hope and Anchor at Freemantle to a Co-op store, and the prospect of other pubs being similarly affected, Council notes the possibility of submitting the following proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act:

'That the Secretary of State help protect community pubs in England by ensuring that planning permission and community consultation are required before community pubs are allowed to be converted or demolished.'

The Council notes that if this power was acquired it would allow the Council to determine if pubs should be demolished or converted into other uses and determine the impact of such changes.

The Council resolves to submit the proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act and to work together with Local Works and the Campaign for Real Ale to gain support for the proposal from other councils in the region and across the country."

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE AMENDMENT WAS DECLARED CARRIED

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION AS AMENDED WAS DECLARED CARRIED

RESOLVED that the motion as amended be approved.

NOTE: Councillor Letts declared a personal interest in the above matter, as a Member of CAMRA, and remained in the meeting during the consideration of the matter.

Councillor Stevens declared a pecuniary interest in the above matter, as a former owner/consultant within the pub trade, and left the meeting during the consideration of the matter.

(c) Bus provision

Councillor Fitzhenry moved and Councillor Daunt seconded:-

“Council notes that as part of this year’s budget the Council withdrew c£500,000 of bus subsidies from bus operators in the City. Council recognises that the changes in routes that took place in June of this year following these cuts has led to real problems for many residents in the City. Council recognises that many residents no longer have a local bus and that other residents now are faced with significantly reduced services. Council believes that the current situation is not acceptable.

Council urges the Executive to urgently look at the situation and seek to improve matters with partners and that in doing so, they ensure they maximise the use of government grants and capital monies awarded to ensure bus provision is useable by all members of the community. Council also urges the Executive to reinstate the bus users’ forum and seek to hold an urgent meeting to discuss possible solutions.”

Amendment moved by Councillor Thorpe and seconded by Councillor Jeffery:-

First line, first paragraph delete “c£500,000” and replace with “c£392,000”

At the end of second line in the first paragraph insert “bus companies”

Third line, first paragraph delete “that took place” and “following these cuts”

Fourth line, first paragraph delete “real” and “many residents” and after “problems for” insert “some bus users”

Fourth line, first paragraph delete the sentence “Council recognises that many residents no longer have a local bus and that other residents now are faced with significantly reduced services.”

Seventh line, first paragraph delete “acceptable” and replace with “ideal.”

First line, second paragraph delete “urgently look at the situation and seek to improve matters with partners and that in doing so, they ensure they maximise the use of government grants and capital monies awarded to ensure bus provision is useable by all members of the community” and replace with “build on existing relationships with these private companies and to continue to effectively encourage the use of all forms of sustainable transport.”

Fifth line, second paragraph delete “reinstate the bus users forum and seek to hold an urgent meeting to discuss possible solutions” and replace with “lobby local bus companies on more rigorous public consultation.”

AMENDED MOTION TO READ

Council notes that as part of this year's budget the Council withdrew c£392,000 of bus subsidies from bus operators in the City. Council recognises that the bus companies' changes in routes, in June of this year, has led to problems for some bus users in the City. Council believes that the current situation is not ideal.

Council urges the Executive to build on existing relationships with these private companies and to continue to effectively encourage the use of all forms of sustainable transport. Council also urges the Executive to lobby local bus companies on more rigorous public consultation."

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE AMENDMENT WAS DECLARED
CARRIED

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION AS AMENDED WAS DECLARED
CARRIED

RESOLVED that the motion as amended be approved.

NOTE Councillor Whitbread declared a pecuniary interest in the above matter, as a shareholder, and left the meeting during the consideration of the matter.

(d) Litter and fly tipping

With the consent of the meeting, Councillor Vinson altered and moved and Councillor Turner seconded:-

"This Council is concerned at the rising tide of litter and fly tipping across our City, and calls on the Administration to bring forward a strategy as soon as possible, drawing on the full range of available powers and best practice elsewhere, including consideration of education, waste reduction measures, waste collection facilities, levies, penalties and rewards, to combat this more effectively."

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE ALTERED MOTION WAS DECLARED
CARRIED

RESOLVED that the altered motion be approved.

(e) Biomass power station

Councillor Moulton moved and Councillor Fitzhenry seconded:-

"This Council notes that Helius Energy may need to find significant local demand for the heat energy produced by its proposed biomass power station, if it is to take advantage of potential government funding or subsidies. In light of the Council's previously stated opposition to the proposed power station, this Council agrees that in so far as is legal it will never become a customer of Helius Energy's heat output or of any companies that might in the future build or operate its scheme or one like it on a similar scale, on the same site or elsewhere in the Western Docks. On the same basis, Council makes it clear that

should a large wood burning biomass power station be approved and eventually built in the Western Docks the City Council will at no stage ever directly or indirectly purchase any heat power generated by it.

Council resolves that it will write to Helius Energy to advise them accordingly, with the letter preferably signed by all 4 Group Leaders”

With the consent of the meeting, Councillor Shields altered and moved an amendment and Councillor Furnell seconded:-

Add two new paragraphs at the beginning of the Motion:

“Council reaffirms its commitment to the Low Carbon Strategy adopted in 2011, and in particular priority number two which commits the Council and its partners to generate and use energy in a sustainable way so that Southampton will be a city where carbon-intensive living will be ‘powered down’ by reducing energy demand and diverse low-carbon energy supply will be ‘powered up’ by new technologies through efficient design and a diverse low-carbon energy supply mix.

Council maintains its opposition to a large wood burning biomass power station in the Western docks and – should a planning application be submitted by Helius Energy along the lines that have been proposed – urges the Government of the day to respect local concerns and use its authority to block the plan.”

Add after “heat” in the first paragraph, sixth line “or electricity”

Add after “heat power” in the first paragraph, last line “or electricity”

Add at the end of the last paragraph:

“A copy of this letter should also be sent to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change to help inform any decisions taken on the plant’s future.”

AMENDED MOTION TO READ:

Council reaffirms its commitment to the Low Carbon Strategy adopted in 2011, and in particular priority number two which commits the Council and its partners to generate and use energy in a sustainable way so that Southampton will be a city where carbon-intensive living will be ‘powered down’ by reducing energy demand and diverse low-carbon energy supply will be ‘powered up’ by new technologies through efficient design and a diverse low-carbon energy supply mix.

Council maintains its opposition to a large wood burning biomass power station in the Western docks and – should a planning application be submitted by Helius Energy along the lines that have been proposed – urges the Government of the day to respect local concerns and use its authority to block the plan.

This Council notes that Helius Energy may need to find significant local demand for the heat energy produced by its proposed biomass power station, if it is to take advantage of potential government funding or subsidies. In light of the Council’s previously stated opposition to the proposed power station, this Council agrees that in so far as is legal it will never become a customer of Helius Energy’s heat or electricity output or of any

companies that might in the future build or operate its scheme or one like it on a similar scale, on the same site or elsewhere in the Western Docks. On the same basis, Council makes it clear that should a large wood burning biomass power station be approved and eventually built in the Western Docks the City Council will at no stage ever directly or indirectly purchase any heat power or electricity generated by it.

Council resolves that it will write to Helius Energy to advise them accordingly, with the letter preferably signed by all 4 Group Leaders. A copy of this letter should also be sent to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change to help inform any decisions taken on the plant's future.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE AMENDMENT WAS DECLARED
CARRIED

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION AS AMENDED WAS DECLARED
CARRIED

RESOLVED that the motion as amended be approved.

57. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES OR THE
MAYOR

It was noted that no questions to the Chairs of Committees or the Mayor had been received.

58. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

It was noted that the appointment of Councillor Jeffery and Councillor Pope on South East Employers had been swapped. Councillor Pope would now have the role as representative, and Councillor Jeffery the role of substitute.

59. HAMPSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE PLAN: ADOPTION

The report of the Leader of the Council was submitted recommending to Council the adoption of the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Inspector's report be noted;
- (ii) That it be noted that the Minerals and Waste Plan (2013) would supersede the saved policies of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan (1998) and the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (2007);
- (iii) That the Minerals and Waste Plan (2013) which incorporates the Inspector's Main Modifications and Additional Modifications be approved and adopted;
and

- (iv) That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning, Transport and Sustainability, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make minor changes to the Plan prior to adoption.

60. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14 - 2017/18

The report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Sustainability was submitted seeking approval for the revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme (copy of report circulated with the agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) That the revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved; and
- (ii) That the use of resources to fund the HRA Capital Programme as shown in Appendix 3 to the report be approved.

61. THE GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13 - 2015/16

The report of the Cabinet Member for Resources was submitted seeking approval for changes to the Capital Programme (copy of report circulated with the agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) That the revised General Fund Capital Programme, which totals £167.0M (as detailed in paragraph 4 of the report) and the associated use of resources be approved;
- (ii) That the changes to the programme as summarised in Appendix 2 and described in detail in Appendix 3 to the report be noted;
- (iii) That the portfolio programme and structures changes, slippage and re-phasing and financial and project issues as described in detail in Appendix 3 to the report be noted;
- (iv) That £2,820,000 be added to the Environment and Transport Capital Programme funded by Local Transport Plan (LTP) government grant in 2014/15 for Integrated Transport Schemes (£1,351,000) and Highways Maintenance Schemes (£1,469,000);
- (v) That a sum of £508,000 be added to the Children's Services Capital Programme for Bitterne Park 6th Form in 2013/14 funded by government grant;
- (vi) That it be noted that the revised General Fund Capital Programme is based on prudent assumptions of future Government Grants to be received, due to the uncertainty surrounding the Comprehensive Spending Review for 2015/16 and future years;

- (vii) that it be noted that the additional temporary borrowing taken out in 2010/11 and 2011/12 due to cash flow issues, now totalling £9.4M, is expected to be repaid by the end of 2014/15 when anticipated capital receipts are finally forecast to be received;
- (viii) That in addition to the forecast capital receipts that are assumed as a key element of funding the capital programme presented for approval, it be noted that there may be additional receipts that flow from the sale of assets programme and that towards the end of 2013/14, it should be possible to better estimate the amount and timing of any forecast additional receipts;
- (ix) That the financial and project issues for each portfolio which are set out in paragraphs 29 to 33 of the report and detailed in Appendix 3 to the report be noted.

62. SAFER CITY AND YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGY

The report of the Cabinet Member for Communities was submitted, detailing the Safer City and Youth Justice Strategy for Southampton (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED that the Safe City Plan 2013/14 (Appendix 2 to the report) and the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2013/14 (Appendix 3 and 4 to the report) be approved.

63. PEOPLE DIRECTORATE TRANSFORMATION

The report of the Cabinet Member for Change was submitted detailing the project plan for the People Directorate Transformation Programme and seeking the delegation of authority to the Director of People to act in strategic and operational matters relating to this transformation (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) That the progress from April 2013 to implement the transformation of the People Directorate, including the specific savings proposals which will impact on the 2014/15 budget and staffing levels detailed in appendices 1 & 2 to the report be noted;
- (ii) That the Executive's proposals for staffing reductions in Adult Social Care and Children's Services within the People Directorate which are brought forward for consultation as part of the Transformation work and are set out in appendices 1 & 2 to the report be noted;
- (iii) That the proposed establishment of an Integrated Commissioning Unit, which will lead to budget pressure of up to £125k per annum from 2014/15, and a part year pressure in the current year be noted;

- (iv) That delegated authority be granted to the Director of People, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Change (lead member for the decision), and the Cabinet Member for Resources, the Cabinet Member for Health & Adult Social Care, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Chief Financial Officer, to enter into formal consultation with staff, recognised trade unions, partners, customers, parents, carers and stakeholders on the wider transformation work and the savings proposals set out in the appendices to the report with a view to being able to implement the structural changes necessary to implement the transformation by April 2014; and
- (v) That the Director of People be authorised to undertake any ancillary actions necessary to deliver the Transformation Programme as agreed by Cabinet.

Agenda Item 5

DECISION-MAKER:	COUNCIL		
SUBJECT:	EXECUTIVE BUSINESS		
DATE OF DECISION:	20 th November 2013		
REPORT OF:	Leader of the Council		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Suki Sitaram	Tel: 023 8083 4428
	E-mail:	suki.sitaram@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None

BRIEF SUMMARY

This report outlines Executive Business conducted since the last Council meeting on 18th September 2013.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) That the report be noted

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This report is presented in accordance with Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not applicable

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

INTRODUCTION

1. This report highlights the contribution of different Portfolios towards the Council's priorities since the last council meeting on 18th September 2013.
 - I want to emphasise the following developments since my last report:
 - City Deal update: I was part of the team which led the City Deal pitch to Government in the summer, including promoting Southampton's marine and maritime strengths, enabling business growth, unlocking development sites and support skills and employment of Southampton and Portsmouth residents. Officers from both cities continued to work hard to agree the detail and funding with the Cabinet Office and relevant government departments, and I pleased to report that the City Deal was signed on 12 November. Government funding of over £61M has been secured and is expected to bring in public sector leverage of over £300 M. This will support the creation of more than 4,500 new jobs, unlock significant new employment floor space, enable 500 small businesses to grow, help employers to access the skills they need and provide employment support for more than 2,500 unemployed people and those facing redundancy. The City Deal has also enabled us to strengthen our relationship with Solent LEP,

Portsmouth City Council and central government, which will place us in a stronger position to influence Southampton's economic growth in the future.

- Consultation with residents and staff on our medium term priorities – this was considered when we finalised our draft budget proposals for 2014/15. This will not be a one off event as I consider it very important for us explore new ways of providing information to residents and getting regular feedback from them on a wide variety of issues. Therefore I was encouraged that over 599 people have expressed an interest in joining a Residents' Panel and over 881 people expressed an interest in using Stay Connected as a channel. In the coming months, we hope to establish a Residents' Panel reflecting the diversity of the City's population so that we can seek their views regularly.
- I am very proud to say that Southampton City Council picked up the top local authority award for Transport City of the Year. This was no mean feat as we beat other worthy candidates (Aberdeen City Council, Coventry City Council and Centro, and Nottingham City Council). We were recognised for our impressive multi-dimensional transport programme underpinning the economic growth strategy for Southampton and benefitting residents and visitors to the City.
- Further to the devastating announcement of the loss of jobs at BAE Systems in the Portsmouth dock yard, I have been working to ensure that the necessary support is available for those affected. With over 40% BAE employees being Southampton residents, this is a major issue for the City. The Council is playing its full part in the Task-Force that has been set up to oversee support services for the employees and wider supply chain. We have received feedback from Ford that the Task Force we convened and chaired to address the Ford closure was effective, with fewer than 5% of the 750 people affected having made welfare benefit claims in the period following the closure. We are now adapting this model for BAE. I have also been working with Portsmouth City Council and Solent LEP to lever additional resources into the area for activities to mitigate against future economic shocks.
- I am delighted that Stuart Love will be joining us as Director, Place (Environment and Economy) on 2nd December. Stuart brings a lot of experience and knows the City and sub region and will no doubt make a significant contribution to achieving our priorities. I would also like to place on record thanks from my Administration to John Tunney who has covered the role of interim director with great skill and determination. His excellent contribution has been received positively by the Cabinet Members he has supported, his managers and peers.
- A successful Community Safety conference was held on 29th October at the Central Hall. Thanks to the close working between many

agencies through the Safe City Partnership, there were 26 stalls of information, creating quite a buzz! We want to hold this event annually, in the summer, perhaps linked to another event so that we are able to reach out to more residents.

- The Go Rhino campaign created a lot of fun in the summer and was appreciated by many residents and visitors to the City, particularly those with young families. I am therefore delighted that the council, with Capita, participated in the auction of the Rhinos and we were successful in bringing back 'Glint' to the Civic Centre.
 - Fairness Commission update: Progress has been made on developing the Southampton Fairness Commission. The Chair and Vice Chair have now been appointed and the short-listing for the commissioner roles is underway. There has been interest from wide range of representatives and the quality of candidates has been impressive. An initial framework of themes has been developed and the first meeting will be held on the 3rd December 2013.
2. We have been successful, with our partner SCRATCH, in getting £670,000 from the European Regional Development Fund. This is for a project known as CRUMBS (Coordinated Re-use Makes Business Sense). This will offer supermarkets and office based businesses a sustainable and cost-effective alternative to landfill waste disposal. It will :
- Establish a recover-recycle-reuse network focussed on 'in-date' perishable food and office equipment
 - Increase the amount and value of business waste diverted from landfill
 - Reduce carbon emissions
 - Support 50 residents into volunteering and paid work
 - Alleviate the food poverty being experienced by our most disadvantaged residents
 - Support local charities and SME start-ups through the redistribution of unwanted office furniture and equipment.

PROMOTING SOUTHAMPTON AND ATTRACTING INVESTMENT

3. I am delighted to report to Council that contracts have been exchanged with Grosvenor Developments Limited for the construction of Southampton's New Arts Complex and work is due to start on 18th November 2013. This will form a major part of a new mixed use development on the eastern side of the Cultural Quarter and fronting onto Guildhall Square. This news will, I am sure, be welcomed by all Members as the Arts Complex will at last now be built after so many years in project development. The building of the Arts Complex will complete the City's cultural quarter and bring in many more visitors to the City and enrich the cultural life of Southampton residents.

4. I am also pleased that we have exchanged contracts with Enterprise House for the refurbishment of the adjacent building to provide workspace for creative industries. I hope to see a strong synergy between this project and the Arts Complex.
5. Southampton City Council's (SCC) Planning & Development team is trialling the Coastal Concordat principles as part of the waterfront 'Royal Pier' proposal. The idea was first developed by DEFRA with Southampton City Council and as a result we are one of the first early adopters and have worked with the DEFRA bodies to trial the approach on Royal Pier. This has resulted in a joint scoping report between the Council and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), with the Council leading on it. In return, the MMO will lead on the Habitats Regulation Assessment, the resulting negotiations with the developer, and writing up the joint report, but with the council retaining involvement throughout, as the competent authority. This has been a very welcome initiative locally, especially given historical issues that have arisen through a lack of cohesion across regulatory parties in the past. This scheme has enabled planning for a major Southampton city waterfront development to become joined up and effective by working across regulatory bodies. It has led to a streamlined approach for progressing the necessary consents, while ensuring full scrutiny also takes place, which I know will be of great benefit to other areas around the UK.

RAISING AMBITIONS AND IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

6. I am pleased that we have exceeded the national average for our Key Stage 2 results for the first time. These are the tests taken by 11-year-olds in their last year of primary school. This news comes after our secondary schools recorded their best ever GCSE results. All credit goes to the pupils, their families, staff and governors.

IMPROVING HEALTH AND KEEPING PEOPLE SAFE

7. Redesigning and commissioning integrated health and social care services will improve quality and outcomes and result in more effective use of resources and cost avoidance and as a consequence release savings. Towards this end, Cabinet agreed the establishment of a joint Integrated Commissioning Unit (between the council and the Clinical Commissioning Group) within a single management structure overseen by an Integrated Commissioning Board. Accountability for commissioning decisions will be retained by the Cabinet and CCG Governing Body.
8. It has been identified that some investment will be required to attract the skill set needed into some of the more senior posts to ensure the leadership, experience and rigour necessary to achieve the change required at scale and pace. Cabinet approved the establishment of an Integrated Commissioning Unit and related additional cost of to the Council of £90,800 from 2014/15 onwards which is included in draft budget proposals. Cabinet also agreed delegated authority to agree and execute the Memorandum of Understanding.

9. Cabinet approved Southampton's Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2013-2018. The Homelessness Act 2002 requires the Local Authority to review all forms of homelessness in the City and produce a new Homelessness Strategy, based on the review findings, every five years. The new strategy builds on achievements of the past few years by strengthening the focus on prevention, rather than tackling the crisis of people losing their home. This is increasingly important in the current financial climate. The Government's Welfare Reform agenda introduces unprecedented change which, along with the current economic conditions, has the potential to seriously impact on Southampton residents and result in increased homelessness. The strategy considers the future challenges Southampton faces and the likely impacts on the City's residents and services.

HELPING INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES TO WORK TOGETHER AND HELP THEMSELVES

10. The council and Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group are working together to develop an Integrated Person Centred Care Programme. This will involve local people at all stages in planning, shaping, designing and delivering services. Integrated Person Centred Care focuses on managing people's individual needs through co-ordinated multi-agency planning and service delivery placing the individual at the heart of the process. The majority of NHS and social care funding is used for people with complex health, social, psychological and domestic problems and while these numbers are set to rise, the available additional funding is limited. The overall aim of the programme is to intervene early to avoid, reduce or delay the use of costly specialist services, including hospital and residential care, whilst promoting independence, and self-management in the community.
11. The council has been invited to bid for the NESTA Mobilising Volunteers for Impact funding stream. If successful, this will fund a two year programme, with a focus on volunteering, skills and the economy. In addition, early discussions have also started about potentially bidding for "Our Place" funding, to trial community budgeting in the City.

ENCOURAGING NEW HOUSE BUILDING AND IMPROVING EXISTING HOMES

12. The Council is in the process of securing Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding. This is a significant opportunity to secure insulation, heating and hot water improvements to parts of the Council's housing stock. An ECO funded energy improvement programme will support the Council's strategic aspirations to improve insulation and heating in its housing stock, and to provide support to residents with the aim of responding to fuel cost rises and tackling fuel poverty. As part of this investment programme council is today requested to approve the next stage of development for a District Energy (DE) scheme in the Thornhill area of the City. Such a scheme has the potential to provide fuel bill savings for residents, achieve significant carbon reductions, provide a long-term revenue stream for the Council and generate local employment opportunities.

MAKING THE CITY MORE ATTRACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE

13. Cabinet agreed to progress the development of key sites in the Lordshill area (Oaklands Community School, Lordshill Housing Office and Lordshill Community Centre) in a single package to secure best value for the council and enabling the delivery of investment and new homes. This will include progressing the refurbishment of the Oaklands Swimming Pool building, bringing a community facility back into use and progressing negotiations with Lordshill Community Association to relocate resulting in an enhanced community facility for local residents.
14. With regard to the pool, Cabinet also agreed capital expenditure of £90,000 in 2013/14 from the Economic Development and Leisure Capital programme, subject to the revised scheme value being approved by Council today.
15. The historical significance of our Central Parks has been recognised by English Heritage and they have been awarded the prestigious Grade II* listed status on English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest. Southampton's Central Parks are made up of five open green spaces - Andrews (East) Park, Hoglands Park, Houndwell Park, Palmerston Park and Watts (West) Park, which cover 21 hectares in total.
16. The people making a real difference to transport across the UK were recognised at the prestigious National Transport Awards in London this week (the transport equivalent of the Oscars). This is the first year that the council has entered and we were nominated for two categories. In our first category - for frontline employee of the year we received a commendation for Jess Eden for her commitment to have sustainable transport recognised as a viable option for children in social services. It's fantastic to see individuals recognised for their dedication and going the extra mile.

DEVELOPING AND ENGAGED, SKILLED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE

17. A review of our pay and allowances has been overdue for some time. We know that there are inconsistencies and complexities to our current pay and allowances that cause potential problems in respect of equality of pay, are unfair and also make any necessary organisational changes very difficult to implement. We must ensure that the council has a fair, equal and affordable pay and allowances structure and has a consistent and transparent approach to pay and allowances across the organisation. Therefore we have commenced consultation with staff and unions on a number of proposals.

IMPLEMENTING BETTER WAYS OF WORKING TO MANAGE REDUCED BUDGETS AND INCREASED DEMAND

18. Considerable work is now underway within the People's directorate to undertake transformational service redesign. Work is also underway on the development of a transformation strategy and plan, in line with the recommendations of the LGA Peer Review.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

20. N/A

Property/Other

21. N/A

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

22. As defined in the report appropriate to each decision.

Other Legal Implications:

23. None.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

24. Council Plan 2013-16.

KEY DECISION? No

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	None
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Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None	
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Agenda Item 9

DECISION-MAKER:	GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE COUNCIL		
SUBJECT:	CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION – COUNCIL PETITION SCHEME		
DATE OF DECISION:	23 SEPTEMBER 2013 20 NOVEMBER 2013		
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Mark Heath	Tel: 023 8083 2371
	E-mail:	mark.heath@southampton.gov.uk	
Director	Name:	Mark Heath	Tel: 023 8083 2371
	E-mail:	mark.heath@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

BRIEF SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to consider a change to the Council's Petition Scheme. The changes need to be considered and discussed by the Governance Committee in its governance role and by Full Council as the ultimate decision-making body as to the Council's Constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

- (i) To consider and recommend the changes to the Constitution as set out in this report;

COUNCIL

- (i) To agree the changes to the Constitution as set out in this report; and
- (ii) To authorise the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services to make the changes to the Council's Petition Scheme.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is appropriate for the Council to keep its Constitution under regular review and to amend it, both to reflect experience and changing circumstances.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. The Council resolved in May 2002 to review its Constitution on an annual basis. Therefore, it is appropriate that this report is considered by Members. Members have the option of approving or rejecting the changes set out in this report.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3. Local Authorities were required to adopt a Petition scheme, setting out the detail the way in which they would respond to petitions that achieved a certain number of signatures. Whilst the Localism Act 2011 has repealed the statutory obligation on the Council to have a petition scheme, it is considered that it remains useful to the public to use this route should they wish to bring to the Council's attention any significant issues. Therefore, Council resolved in May 2012 that the Council's petition scheme should remain as part of the Council Constitution.

As a result, petitions containing 1,500 signatures (a qualifying petition) or more will require a debate at a Council meeting.

4. The Constitution currently states that a petition that requires a debate (over 1,500 signatures) at Full Council will be managed at the discretion of the Mayor and in accordance with the Council's Procedure Rules, after which a vote will be put.
5. This is the regime that the Council has in place and reflects the fact that whilst the Council is no longer legally obliged to have a Petition Scheme, it has in essence retained much of the thrust of the original approach, giving people the right to have petitions debated at Full Council.
6. At its meeting held on 15th May 2013, Council considered a report setting out its annual review of the Constitution, which included a number of changes to the Council's Petition Scheme. These changes reflected the practicalities of operating the scheme and the need to allow more flexibility with the scheme. These changes were approved by Council.
7. On the same agenda for the Council meeting on the 15th May, was a qualifying petition containing over 1,500 signatures concerning the NHS and thus requiring a debate at the Council meeting.
8. Previously, such requests for petitions that had triggered a debate at Council had required a motion to be prepared in response from the Executive. The Executive's motion was shared with the other Group Leaders and circulated at the meeting. Such motions had not previously been formally included on the Council Summons for the meeting.
9. One of the issues that arose from the Council meeting was the lack of a formal documented process concerning such debates on petitions. In order to address this issue, it is suggested that an amendment is made to the Council Procedure Rules, specifically Council Procedure Rule 10.4b as follows:
10. "For the purposes of initiating such a debate at Full Council, the Leader, who may direct any other member to instigate this on his behalf, shall submit a motion in accordance with CPR 13.1A, which shall, like all other motions, be printed on the Council agenda, and shall be subject to all the normal Council Procedure Rules in relation to amendment, alteration, etc and the timeframes for such activities as set out within these Council Procedure Rules. This rule may be varied by the Mayor"
11. It is therefore, suggested that, in the interests of openness and transparency, this revision to Council Procedure Rules is adopted. This

will therefore mean that such motions are formally included and printed on the Council agenda which will clarify and formalise the procedure.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

None

Property/Other

None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

The Executive Arrangements and Constitution are dealt with under the Local Government Act 2000.

Other Legal Implications:

None

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

None

KEY DECISION? No

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	None
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Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None	
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Agenda Item 10

DECISION-MAKER:	LICENSING COMMITTEE			
	CABINET			
	COUNCIL			
SUBJECT:	SCRAP METAL DEALER LICENSING			
DATE OF DECISION:	26 SEPTEMBER 2013 (Licensing Committee)			
	15 OCTOBER 2013 (Cabinet)			
	20 NOVEMBER 2013 (Council)			
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF LEGAL, HR & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES			
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>				
AUTHOR:	Name:	John Burke	Tel:	023 8083 3002
	E-mail:	licensing@southampton.gov.uk		
Director	Name:	Mark Heath	Tel:	023 8083 2371
	E-mail:	mark.heath@southampton.gov.uk		
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY				
Not applicable				

BRIEF SUMMARY

The Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 introduces a new licensing scheme from 1 October 2013, replacing the previous simple registration requirements for scrap metal dealers and motor salvage operators.

Legal difficulties in the implementation by central government have resulted in a very tight timescale and the function being deemed to fall to the Cabinet pending anticipated changes to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Licensing Committee:

- (i.) To note the contents of this report;
- (ii.) To note the fees associated with the function determined under delegated powers by the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services;
- (iii.) The Committee recommends to Cabinet to delegate to the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services:
 - the administration and enforcement of the function and;
 - the power to request further information of applicants (paragraph 4, schedule 1);
 - to determine applications (including refusal), revoke licences or to impose conditions under section 3(8);
 - the power to issue or cancel a closure notice for unlicensed sites,

and, where appropriate, to apply for closure orders (schedule 2) and take such other action in this respect as may be required.

- (iv.) The Committee recommends to Council to delegate the function to the Licensing Committee, when the power to do so is available.

Cabinet:

- (i) That Cabinet resolves to delegate to the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services:
- the administration and enforcement of the function and;
 - the power to request further information of applicants (paragraph 4, schedule 1);
 - to determine applications (including refusal), revoke licences or to impose conditions under section 3(8);
- the power to issue or cancel a closure notice for unlicensed sites, and, where appropriate, to apply for closure orders (schedule 2) and take such other action in this respect as may be required

Council:

- (i) That Council resolves to delegate the function to the Licensing Committee, when the power to do so is available.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The legislation gives the Council new statutory licensing powers replacing existing registration powers with effect from 1 October 2013.
2. The Council is required to carry out the function, although, at the date of this report, it has not been made clear whether this will be an executive or non-executive function.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Given the statutory nature of the function, there are no alternative options.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

1. In recent years metal theft has been one of the fastest growing crimes in the UK. It affects communities, businesses and Councils themselves and a Local Government Association (LGA) survey shows that metal theft cost Councils over £5.25 million in 2010/2011.
2. Since 2011 a number of organisations including the Police, Councils and the Environment Agency through “Operation Tornado” have been successful in reducing the amount of metal theft in the UK. This led to the LGA along with other bodies pressing the Government to update the regulations relating to scrap metal dealers.
3. Scrap Metal is defined in the Act as “*any old, waste or discarded metal or metallic material or any product, article or assembly which is made from or contains metal and is broken, worn out or regarded by its last holder as having reached the end of its useful life. But gold, silver and any alloy of which 2 per cent or more by weight is attributable to gold or silver is not considered scrap metal*”.

4. The Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 comes into force from 1 October 2013 and repeals the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964 and Part 1 of the Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001 (motor salvage operators), replacing them with a new system of licensing to be administered by local authorities.
5. Significant differences between this and the previous scrap metal dealer and motor salvage operator functions are as follows:
 - Licences, as opposed to registrations, with a consequent power to consider suitability of applicants
 - Scrap metal dealer and motor salvage operators are now both regulated by the same legislation
 - Requirement not to issue a licence unless the Council is satisfied as to the applicant's suitability and power to revoke a licence
 - Power to impose licence conditions in case of conviction as to the times when scrap may be received and that scrap metal must be kept in its original form for a specified period following receipt
 - Two categories of licence – sites and collectors
 - No cash payments for scrap metal, although an exception remains for the purchase of vehicles in limited circumstances
 - Power to give notice to close unauthorised sites
 - Licences are for a three year period
 - The holder of a licence can only hold one licence in each local authority's area, but may hold licences in multiple local authority areas. Thus the holder of a site licence in one area might hold a collector's licence in another.
 - The legislation requires that an application for a licence is accompanied by a fee set by the local authority.
 - Specific compliance and enforcement powers for the council and police
6. The following fees have been calculated in accordance with the legal requirements and recent Home Office guidance to ensure, so far as is possible, that the costs of administering the function and ensuring compliance by licence holders can be met.

Site licence - grant and renewal	£450.00
Site licence variation	£100.00
Collector's licence - grant and renewal	£300.00
Collector's licence variation	£100.00
Replacement licence	£25.00
7. These fees have been set by the Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services under delegated powers after consultation with the Leader of the Council and will be reviewed on a periodic basis..
8. Under the scheme of delegation, it is proposed that the function be delegated to the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services, save that where it is proposed that an application should be refused, a licence revoked, or

conditions imposed and the applicant or licence holder exercises their right to make representations, such hearings should be dealt with by the Licensing (General) Sub-Committee, when the legal power to delegate the function to that sub-committee is available.

9. Determinations of applications will be subject to guidance by the Home Office, which had not been made available at the date writing this report.
10. Where an application is refused or a licence revoked, there will be a right of appeal to the Magistrates' Court against the decision.
11. Currently, because the government has yet to amend the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000, the default responsibility for this function is with the Executive.
12. When these regulations have been amended, it is recommended that Council should delegate the function to the Licensing Committee as a non-executive matter.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

13. None, save that the proposed fees are intended to ensure that the costs of carrying out the function are met, in respect of administration and compliance, in their entirety.

Property/Other

14. It is anticipated that this function will be carried out within the Licensing Team within existing resource constraints.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

15. The Scrap Metal Dealer's Act 2013 comes into effect from 1 September 2013 in respect of setting fees, from 1 October 2013 in respect of the remainder of the legislation, save for the offences and powers of closure, which come into effect on 1 December 2013.
16. The Act imposes a duty on the Council to carry out the various functions it provides.

Other Legal Implications:

17. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires that:
"Without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all it reasonably can prevent crime and disorder in its area (including anti social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment) ..."
18. The licensing of scrap metal dealers clearly engages with this requirement and it is considered that the requirement will be met if the course of action indicated in this report is followed.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

19. None.

KEY DECISION? No

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	Not applicable
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	None.
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Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.	None	
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Agenda Item 11

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET COUNCIL
SUBJECT:	REFURBISHMENT OF 315 COXFORD ROAD
DATE OF DECISION:	19 NOVEMBER 2013 20 NOVEMBER 2013
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>				
AUTHOR:	Name:	Vanessa McCabe	Tel:	023 8083 3996
	E-mail:	vanessa.mccabe@southampton.gov.uk		
Director	Name:	Alison Elliott	Tel:	023 8083 2602
	E-mail:	Alison.elliott@southampton.gov.uk		

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY
Not applicable

BRIEF SUMMARY

315 Coxford Road is owned by the Council and is part of the People's Directorate accommodation portfolio (previously known as Fairfield Lodge). The building was a children's residential unit but more recently had been the location for staff to undertake direct and therapeutic work with children, young people and their families through the Behaviour and Adolescent Resource Services. There was also a provision for an emergency residential bed. 315 Coxford Road was closed in December 2012 when some Health and Safety risks were identified. Staff were dispersed to other locations and the building closed.

A feasibility study identified that there would still be a significant financial cost benefit if services were amalgamated and co-located into Coxford Road and the vacated buildings closed and sold for the Capital receipt and savings in annual revenue costs.

The Head of Children's Services has requested that due to the buildings currently being used by the Behaviour Resource Service, Specialist Assessment Team and Supervised Contact Scheme requiring significant redesign and refurbishment to make them suitable for providing direct service provision to children, young people and their families that these buildings should be considered for closure and services moved to 315 Coxford Road. The three buildings identified for closure are:

- 46 Peartree Avenue
- 1 Sutherland Road
- Derby Road Contact Centre

RECOMMENDATIONS:

CABINET

- (i) To approve, subject to Council approval on 20th November 2013, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, capital expenditure of £247,000 in 2013/14 from the Children's Services Capital Programme to carry out works at 315 Coxford Road.
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Director of People, following consultation with the Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services, to do anything necessary to give effect to the recommendations in this report including but not limited to entering into contracts for goods and service subject to compliance with contract and financial procedure rules.

COUNCIL

- (iii) To add, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, a sum of £247,000 to the Children's Services Capital Programme for works at 315 Coxford Road funded from Council resources.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. 315 Coxford Road has been identified as the most suitable building in the Children's Services Directorate accommodation portfolio to amalgamate and co-locate three services to provide a range of direct support, assessment and supervised contact to children, young people and their families.
2. Some modifications and alterations will be required to 315 Coxford Road to bring it back up to specification for service use and modify the water supply to ensure that any Health & Safety issues are avoided.
3. Capital works, previously agreed through the Children's Capital Board need to be re-commissioned to meet Health & Safety requirements and energy efficiency targets.
4. Selling three vacated buildings will save the Directorate approximately £48,000 per year in ongoing revenue costs, and enable economies of scale and efficiencies in staffing and service provision which will benefit the Directorate and clients. However, since the Council approved the closure of 3 buildings in the 2013-14 budget, these savings have already been taken into account in future revenue budgets.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

5. Full Council approved the closure of 20 Salerno Road, 46 Peartree Road and 1 Sutherland Road in February 2013. This resulted from the approved closure of the 'Our House' residential unit which was based at Salerno Road, and the anticipation that family centre work could be transferred to Children's Centres. Subsequently, a health and safety issue led to the closure of Coxford Road and the re-location of the Adolescent Resource Centre into Salerno Road. In addition, a further review of the family centre service identified that a transfer of the full service to Children's Centres was not appropriate. A Health & Safety analysis has recently been undertaken at Derby Road and identified that significant work needs to be undertaken on the heating and cooling system which is estimated to cost in the region of £80,000 to upgrade
6. Considerations were made to refurbish Peartree Avenue, Forest View and Salerno Road these were rejected due to the service benefit of amalgamating and co-locate services to improve support and assessment to children, young people and their families and cumulative costs to refurbish three buildings as opposed to one.
7. Consideration was made to co-locate staff in the North Block of the Civic Centre this was rejected due to the nature of the service i.e. direct work with families, children and young people that couldn't be facilitated in an office environment.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

8. Up until December 2012, 315 Coxford Road was an office and direct work base for the Adolescent and Behaviour Resource Services which also had an emergency residential bed.
9. Due to a significant Health & Safety issue which was identified at 315 Coxford Road in December 2012 an initial decision was taken by the senior management team to close the building and disperse the staff / services into three alternative buildings in the portfolio.
10. A feasibility study was commissioned by the Head of Strategic Commissioning in April 2013 to establish if it would be a more cost effective option to address the Health & Safety issues identified through refurbishment and modification of Coxford Road and re-open, or, upgrade, refurbish and maintain three alternative buildings.
11. The People Directorate Management Team has recommended the option to modify, refurbish and re-open 315 Coxford Road and sell three other buildings:
 - 46 Peartree Avenue, Bitterne, SO19 7JP
 - 1 Sutherland Road, Lordshill, SO16 8GA
 - Derby Road Contact Centre, Mount Pleasant , SO14 0DZ

12. This recommendation was based on the feasibility study which identified that keeping Coxford open was the most the cost effective and efficient option for the Council, and would provide significant economies of scale in the following areas:
 - Service provision
 - Business support and reception
 - Annual revenue costs
 - Repairs and maintenance
 - Management cover
 - Health and Safety
13. The benefits to children and their families will be:
 - Contact Supervision, Social Care Assessments and therapeutic work will be carried out in the same building – currently they are carried out across three building on different days
 - It is proposed that assessments and supervision will be planned to be held concurrently to reduce the number of appointments families have to attend. This will also reduce the amount of transport refunds that are currently incurred by the Division.
 - Coxford Road is on a direct public transport route and has good Road access and parking. Coxford Road has been used for the past 5 years as a therapeutic and direct work centre and families have been used to attending this building.
14. It is currently being considered, as part of the children’s transformation project that the amalgamation and co-location of the services currently based in Peartree Avenue, Sutherland Road and Derby Road, would be better serviced in one building to provide an Integrated Family Assessment and Intervention Service. This would enable a continuity of location for children, young people and their families attending therapeutic sessions and / or supervised contact, undertaking assessments or parenting support work.
15. Capital works at 315 Coxford Road would include:
 - Modification of the current water supply to address health & Safety issues by removing bathrooms and deadlegs from the water supply, replacing galvanised pipework with copper, running new pipework to feed required modified water systems, installation of electric water boilers and heaters as appropriate
 - Replacing windows and cladding with UpVC which haven’t already been replaced
 - Upgrading the electrical supply where identified
 - Removal of commercial laundry and kitchen
16. The buildings where current services are based will require significant investment to bring them up to specification for future service provision as identified through the current transformation projects. They also require investment to address defects in the fabric of the buildings to ensure that they stay safe and healthy.

17. It is proposed that the office space at Coxford Road will be modified to meet the same standards being considered for North Block, Civic Centre.
18. Managers of the services being considered for amalgamation into Coxford Road have been consulted on this proposal. There will be ongoing consultation which will continue as part of the transformation project. The majority of staff affected by this proposal were previously based in Coxford Road and are keen to move back. All staff affected by the proposed closure of the three buildings and re-opening of Coxford will be consulted with, under the appropriate policies, and Unions will be.
19. The equality impact assessment does not identify any negative impact on stakeholders. Stakeholders currently receiving services in the buildings proposed for closure will not be the same cohort of stakeholders that will be affected by the move of services to Coxford Road.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

20. Capital costs

The estimated Capital costs of refurbishing and modifying Coxford Road as described in paragraph 15 are estimated to be £247k

21. The refurbishment costs of Peartree Avenue, Sutherland Road and Derby Road are estimated to be in the region of £276,600, which is in excess of the costs to refurbish Coxford Road.

22. It is proposed that funding for the project will be from Council resources. Capital receipts will be generated from the sale of the three vacated sites and whilst we do not earmark specific receipts to ensure flexible funding of the capital programme, these receipts will contribute to the overall resources available to fund the Capital Programme. It is anticipated that the sale of the three buildings will generate a receipt exceeding the cost of the refurbishment of Coxford Road.

23. Revenue costs

Staff moves and building set up costs are estimated to be £40,000. Funding will have to be identified from within the existing Children's Services portfolio budget to meet these costs.

24. The revenue costs of running Coxford Road are currently budgeted at £33,600 excluding non domestic rates. It is anticipated that energy costs can be reduced by up to 30% due to the modifications to the heating and water systems. The premises costs of the other three buildings are approximately £48,000. These revenue costs have already been identified as a saving to the Council and the budgets removed.

Property/Other

- 23 The proposal will result in the need to dispose of the three properties, detailed below.

46 Peartree Avenue, Bitterne, SO19 7JP

1 Sutherland Road, Lordshill, SO16 8GA

Derby Road Contact Centre, Mount Pleasant , SO14 0DZ

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

25. The Council has the power to provide facilities , including accommodation, where necessary to or in order to facilitate the delivery of it's service functions in accordance with s.111 Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with s.1 Localism Act 2011.

Other Legal Implications:

- 24 Any refurbishment of the building will need to be undertaken having regard to the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010, particularly in relation to accessibility for disabled staff and visitors, together with s.17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998 (the duty to exercise its functions, including those relating to property works, with a view to reducing or preventing crime & disorder in it's area. The refurbishment works will need to be procured in accordance with the Councils Finance and Contract Procedure Rules.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 25 The proposals set out in this report are consistent with the service transformation proposals for Children and Family Services in the People Directorate, and reflected in the Council Plan in terms of best value in respect of accommodation and resources as part of the Council's wider accommodation strategy. They are consistent with the priorities set out in the current Health and Wellbeing Strategy which replaces the 2009-12 Children and Young People's Plan.

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Potential economies realised at 315 Coxford Road through changes in water supply and heating
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Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	N/A
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	Yes
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s) Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.	Equality Impact Assessment	
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Appendix 1

Potential economies realised at 315 Coxford Road through changes in water supply and heating.

- Removal of the storage calorifier: This generates approximately a 30% saving on energy usage, this is reflected in the compliance under L8 water quality regulations, which state, the water temperature should be stored at 60 degrees at all times. Further benefits are storage hot water vessels are renowned for producing scale which assists the risks of legionella developing within the system.
- Heating system controls up-grade will produce further savings by controlling the temperatures and set point produced by the boiler.
- Removal of the hot water flow and return pipework delivering hot water to each outlet within the building, due to the length of the runs and heat losses through the pipework will produce energy savings this also mitigates the risk of legionella.
- Removal of showers and baths, this is a direct energy saving and removing the risk of low usage which then mitigates the risk of legionella.
- Removal of the existing galvanised pipework, the condition of the pipework is poor this was reflected during usage and rusty water would be produced at the outlets. By removing the galvanised pipework it mitigates a really high risk of bacteria forming and with this comes the development of legionella within the system..
- The introduction of single point hot water heaters within the ablution areas and the benefits this brings as follows.
 1. Heaters set at 38 degrees no need to add cold water. All of which will produce energy/usage savings.
 2. No storage of hot water therefore producing a high energy saving, and water usage savings.
 3. No long pipe runs reducing water wastage and usage, therefore producing savings.
 4. Tea boilers these are not the standard type where they keep boiling water temperatures 24/7, the models selected will have an in-built timer and can be programmed to match the building occupation, therefore shutting down weekends and after working hours. They also have a mode facility if they are not used say within two hours they will shut down. This against a normal boiler will produce up to 25 to 40% energy savings, for this type of facility.
 5. A new cold mains throughout the building, this will take away dead legs and will support the low usage plant and equipment all areas will be brought up to the current water regulations and mitigate further building risks such as legionella developing within the system, this will reduce maintenance costs.
 6. Isolation and drain off points, this will afford areas to be isolated without disrupting the complete building in times of major reactive works.
 7. Hot and cold services drawings detailing the current installation, this will assist with the water quality risk assessment for this building

Jim Simpkins

Project Manager – Lead for Coxford Road modifications

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Equality and Safety Impact Assessment Appendix 2

The **public sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the council to better understand the potential impact of the budget proposals and consider mitigating action.

<p>Name or Brief Description of Proposal</p>	<p>Re-open 315 Coxford Road (Fairfield Lodge) and amalgamate the services i.e. supervised contact service, Specialist Assessment team and Behaviour resource service which are currently undertaken across three building, 46 Peartree Avenue, 1 Sutherland Road and Derby Road Contact Centre and these building are subsequently closed.</p>
<p>Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)</p>	<p>46 Peartree Avenue, 1 Sutherland Road and Derby Road Contact Centre are currently used to undertake Direct assessment and therapeutic work and supervised contact sessions with children, young people and their families who are receiving a service from Children’s Social Care. Approximate number of Customers 250 per week.</p>
<p>Summary of Impact and Issues</p>	<p>Children, young people and their families are currently expected to travel to any of these three building which are located in Bitterne, Lordshill and Mount Pleasant to receive a service, attend supervised contact or undertake an assessment. They are currently likely to have to</p>

	attend on different days in different parts of the City depending on who they are required to meet on a particular day. This currently leads to multiple appointments, multiple journey's, increased costs due to refunds in travel expenses,
Potential Positive Impacts	Amalgamating the services into one location will reduce the number of buildings that clients have to visit, reduce the number of journey's and ultimately save costs, enable concurrent sessions reducing the number of contacts with different staff on different days. This should also have a positive benefit on the mental Health of the clients and reduce incidents of anger or frustration caused by multiple appointments on multiple days in multiple locations.
Responsible Service Manager	Vanessa McCabe
Date	18.10.13

Approved by Senior Manager	Theresa Leavy
Signature	
Date	18.10.13

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age		
Disability	Some clients living in the East of the city will have always travel to the West whereas at present they may only have to travel to	Reduction in the number of appointments as Contact and Assessments will be planned to run on the

	Derby Road or Peartree Avenue.	same day wherever possible. 315 Coxford is on a major bus route
Gender Reassignment		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		
Pregnancy and Maternity	Some clients living in the East of the city will have always travel to the West whereas at present they may only have to travel to Derby Road or Peartree Avenue.	Reduction in the number of appointments as Contact and Assessments will be planned to run on the same day wherever possible. 315 Coxford road is on a major bus route.
Race		
Religion or Belief		
Sex		
Sexual Orientation		
Community Safety		
Poverty		
Other Significant Impacts		

Agenda Item 13

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET COUNCIL		
SUBJECT:	DEVELOPMENT OF SITES IN LORDSHILL		
DATE OF DECISION:	15 OCTOBER 2013 20 NOVEMBER 2013		
REPORT OF:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Mike Harris	Tel: 023 8083 2882
	E-mail:	mike.d.harris@southampton.gov.uk	
Director	Name:	John Tunney	Tel: 023 8091 7713
	E-mail:	John.tunney@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

The appendix attached to this report is not for publication by virtue of category 3 paragraph 10.4 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules. This is required as the report contains information relating to the potential financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is not considered in the public interest to release this information

BRIEF SUMMARY

Further to the Cabinet and Council reports of 16th and 17th July 2013, feasibility work regarding Oaklands Pool has been completed leading to recommendations regarding the procurement and delivery of works that could be complete in October 2014. Consideration to the disposal of three related development sites in Lordshill (Oaklands Community School, Lordshill Housing Office and Lordshill Community Centre) has also been taken forward leading to a proposal to combine the disposal of the sites in a single package to secure best value for the Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

CABINET

- (i) To delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Economy, following consultation with the Director of Resources, the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services and the appropriate Cabinet Members to negotiate and agree terms of sale and dispose of the sites identified within this report
- (ii) To approve, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, capital expenditure of £90,000 in 2013/14 from the Economic Development and Leisure Capital programme, prior to the full scheme value being approved by Council on 20th November 2013.

- (iii) To approve, subject to Council approval on 20th November 2013, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, the remaining capital expenditure of £1,580,000 phased £152,000 in 2013/14, £1,423,000 in 2014/15 and £5,000 in 2015/16 from the Economic Development and Leisure Capital programme for refurbishment works at Oaklands swimming pool.
- (iv) To approve the revenue expenditure of £60,000 to implement works to secure the site and building, and to provide ongoing support to Oaklands Pool Ltd.
- (v) To authorise the Head of Finance to agree the terms and form of any future loan at an appropriate time, up to a maximum of £73,000 to Oakland's Swimming Pool Ltd.
- (vi) To allocate £133,000 from the General Fund Revenue Budget contingency of £410,700 in order to provide the additional revenue resources required as set out in recommendations (iv) and (v) above.

COUNCIL

- (i) To add, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, an additional sum of £412,000 to the Economic Development and Leisure Capital programme for refurbishment works at Oaklands swimming pool to be funded from Council resources.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To progress the development of key sites in the Lordshill area, enabling the delivery of investment and new homes.
2. To progress the refurbishment of the Oaklands Swimming Pool building, bringing a community facility back into use.
3. To progress negotiations with Lordshill Community Association to relocate resulting in an enhanced community facility for local residents.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

4. To dispose of each development site separately – rejected on the basis that a more comprehensive proposal for the area can be delivered through a single disposal and will secure better value for the Council
5. To proceed with a reduced range of works, delivering a shorter timeframe to open the swimming pool – rejected on the grounds that the building will need sufficient investment to allow an operator to develop a customer base, and a reduced scope of works retains the risk of closures being required for further repairs and maintenance.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

6. Further to the Cabinet and Council reports of 16th and 17th July 2013, a considerable amount of work has been carried out to assess the works needed to deliver a viable future for Oaklands swimming pool.
7. Recommendations were made at those meetings to shorten the timescales for delivery of capital works as far as possible, and procurement methods to

address the aspiration for quick delivery have been considered

8. A method of procurement known as Prime Cost has been recommended and it is anticipated that this will enable works to be completed by October 2014. There will subsequently be some time required for the operator of the pool to prepare for opening before public access will resume.
9. The works proposed are planned to deliver a 15 year lifetime for the building and the mechanical and electrical elements. They include a comprehensive replacement and refurbishment of the pool plant, repairs to the roof and ceilings, alongside the provision of new flooring.
10. The procurement approach will secure contractors on site in January 2014. In the interim, it is proposed to implement some roof repairs, required as a result of vandalism in recent months. This will keep the building watertight over the next few months and will not be abortive work. The site will also be made secure.
11. Prime Cost is not a procurement route that the council tends to use as there are potential cost risks associated with this approach. The contractor does not tender on a firm contract sum as the exact nature and extent of the work is not known at the time of the appointment. Full design documents are not completed until after work has commenced and the condition of hidden elements, such as buried pipes become known. Options for mitigating the risks associated with this approach focus mainly on additional quantity surveyor resource which is provided on site to value the works as they are carried out and to monitor the resources being used. Strong client supervision combined with a contractor with reasonable labour costs and a good supply chain can deliver benefits in the right circumstances. In essence this approach shifts the cost estimate risk from the contractor to the council and so a larger than usual contingency of 20% has been built into the estimate.. However, it should be noted that traditional procurement routes can still result in extra costs and overspends in some circumstances and the nature of this project does lend itself more to prime cost method than would more straight forward building refurbishment projects. The likelihood (see paragraphs 17 and 18) of having to include as yet unknown extra works for the adjacent former nursery building during the contract also fit well with the flexibility of the prime cost approach.

Capita advise that this would also be the quickest contract procurement route possible to secure a 15 year life for the building. A more conventional method of procurement would take several months longer. An earlier completion allows some preparation prior to the start of the winter School term, which subsequently enables a positive start to the trading period as lessons and group bookings are often based on School terms.

12. The Community group has formed a Company Limited by Guarantee (Oaklands Pool Ltd) and has done an extensive amount of work to produce a business plan. The Consultants assisting them with their development recognise some strengths and weakness in the current plans and structure:
 - “The business plan is now much improved and has significantly developed, ...there is a rationale for how the income projections have been developed... the income is considered to be realistic and

achievable with the correct marketing and promotion”

- “we have concerns that the present committee requires bolstering with expertise from the Financial and Legal profession.....Without up front financial assistance and an improved level of Business Expertise on the Board namely Finance and Legal expertise OCP will not be in a position to manage and operate Oaklands Swimming Pool. “

13. The business plan projects a loss in year 1 with surpluses rising from then on, as set out in the table below:

	Forecast profit (loss) £
Year 1	(10,249)
Year 2	1,526
Year 3	43,603
Year 4	45,371
Year 5	47,336

A sensitivity analysis shows that should income fall by 10% from projections, losses of £35,000 - £40,000 would be incurred in years 1 and 2.

14. The current business plan allows for paying full business rates. The group’s intention is to apply for Charitable status, which would create further headroom in the business plan. This will take some time and initial costs. As reflected in the consultants advice above, the business management skills and experience in the community group are currently limited and there remains a reasonable risk of the community group failing to meet its business and income projections, with the subsequent risk of the organisation failing. This could lead to the closure of the pool while an alternative operator was sought.
15. It is proposed that ongoing support from the consultant is provided, to help address the weakness identified above, so that the Council’s investment is safeguarded and sufficient reassurances regarding preparing appropriately for opening can be secured.
16. Should the community group fail to make the necessary progress towards securing the additional skills and experience and enable the business consultant, or Officers, to present a positive recommendation to the Council it will still be possible for the Council to secure an alternative operator for the swimming pool. Equally, should the community group start to operate the pool, but fail to deliver a sustainable model, the Council would seek to regain the property under the terms of the lease and seek an alternative operator. However the ability of the Council to actually terminate the lease will depend on the terms of the lease, yet to be discussed and agreed, and the circumstances at the time. The Council would not be liable for any losses that the group would accrue, although it would be unlikely that any outstanding loan payments would be secured.

17. Discussions with Lordshill Community Association have been taking place about the occupation of buildings on the former school site. Their current facilities are on a site close to the former school, in two interlinked buildings; an older porta-cabin style building and a more recently constructed modular building. Discussions about the former Special Educational Needs (SEN) building have concluded that this will not meet their needs, but the Association have expressed an interest in locating to the former nursery building which is part of the Pool building. Negotiations are ongoing as to the detailed terms of any such occupation. The decision on the SEN building means that this can now be included in the demolition, incurring additional costs in the short term, but increasing the scope of the site for development.
18. An assessment of the impact, if any, that the works to the pool building will have on the Nursery area is required. The costs of carrying out this assessment are included in the capital costs in paragraph 24. In addition, the site has significant variations in levels and a means of providing access to the Nursery building from the new Car Park will have to be provided, should the occupation of the building proceed. Further work is needed to clarify the costs of these works.
19. Should the negotiations with Lordshill Community Association regarding the occupation of the Nursery building prove fruitful the Association will vacate its current site. This will free up the site to contribute to the development values referred to in appendix one. Some minor works will be required to ensure the former nursery building is fit for purpose as a community centre
20. The disposal of the rest of the former school site is to be combined with the disposal of the Lordshill Housing Office and Community Association sites, to provide a larger land deal to secure the best value for the Council. This is subject to the Community Association moving to the nursery building on the former school site, and vacant possession being obtained.
21. Receipts from the sale of the sites could be achieved in 2015/16, subject to vacant possession being achieved for the community centre site.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital

22. The £1,258,000 scheme for Pool Refurbishment Works was added to the Economic Development and Leisure Capital Programme by Council on 17th July 2013 funded from Council Resources.
23. Further to the detail now available within this study, together with a requirement for shortened timescales for the delivery of capital works, the latest estimated costs required to deliver the project are set out below. It is now anticipated that this will enable works to be completed by October 2014.

	£000's
Total cost of pool works including fees and contingency	1,520.0
Estimated car park costs based on £3,000 per space	150.0
Total estimated costs	1,670.0
Funding approved on 17 th July 2013	1,258.0
Additional capital funding required	412.0

24. It should be noted that the prime cost procurement method described within the report carries with it certain risks which have been identified, in particular the potential for cost overrun or a partially unfinished project. A contingency sum has been allowed within the overall cost envelope but there is a risk that this will be insufficient even if mitigating action is taken.
25. The costs of providing access to the Nursery building entrance have yet to be assessed, and could require additional funding.
26. In order to achieve the October deadline for completion of the works, design and procurement activity is underway. Costs of £90,000 will have been incurred up to the point of the Council decision on 20th November 2013.
27. It is proposed that funding for the project will be from Council resources. A capital receipt will be generated from the sale of the site and whilst we do not earmark specific receipts to ensure flexible funding of the capital programme, this receipt will contribute to the overall resources available to fund the Capital Programme.
28. Works to assess the potential development value of the former school site, the Lordshill Housing Office site and the Lordshill Community Centre site, both individually and collectively, have progressed. Confidential appendix one contains indicative values of the sites. Lordshill Housing Office is surplus to requirements and is currently unoccupied. It is not required for use by any other service within the council.
29. It should be noted that both the Lordshill Housing Office site and the Community centre site are within Housing Revenue Account (HRA) ownership. Any capital receipts associated with these sites will be retained by the HRA.

Revenue

30. The revenue costs of the project are summarised in the table below:

	£000's
Start up support for Oaklands Pool Ltd	73.0
Immediate repairs and security	13.0
Demolition of Special Educational Needs building	30.0
Consultant Support	17.0
Total	133.0

31. In order to prepare properly for opening, to cover the projected deficit in the first year and to secure necessary equipment that fall outside of the capital works Oaklands Pool Ltd require start up funding. The total is estimated to be £73,000 and it is proposed that the Council offer a loan to Oaklands Pool Ltd to assist with bridging this shortfall in the early years. It is hoped that the group will seek and secure external funding to reduce the amount of funding required, whilst any reduction in the business rate bill may also help to reduce the term of the repayment. The form and terms of any future loan at an appropriate time, up to a maximum of £73,000 to Oakland's Swimming Pool Ltd, will be agreed by the Chief Financial Officer.
32. The revenue costs, including the loan requirements are estimated to be £53,000 in 2013/14 and £80,000 in 2014/15, subject to anticipated progress by the community group on securing charitable status.
33. There remains a reasonable risk of the community group failing to meet its business and income projections, with the subsequent risk of the organisation failing. This could lead to the closure of the pool while an alternative operator was sought. Any costs associated with this would need to be assessed separately and at this stage no provision has been made for this.

Property/Other

34. Oaklands Community Pool group have requested a 25 year lease and this is currently being considered by the council, alongside the obligation of a full repairing responsibility. This length has been requested by the Community Group to assist in attracting external funding. The business plan shows reasonable levels of maintenance budgets, and the building will have been subject to a comprehensive refurbishment. It is not anticipated that revenue funding will be ongoing, and so the site will be disposed of through a lease with permitted uses clauses directing the anticipated uses. There is not expected to be a management agreement or service concession to influence service design or delivery.
35. The pool building will need ongoing investment and care to ensure it can last beyond the 15 years delivered by the refurbishment programme. The business plan shows over £80,000 p.a from year 3 onwards available for building and equipment maintenance and repair. This, alongside the projected surpluses demonstrates an acceptable allowance for meeting this need.
36. The indicative values of the three sites are identified in confidential appendix one. The values assume that a successful purchaser will seek to locate the affordable housing elements of the scheme on the former housing office and community centre sites. However this will be for the developer to take a view on, and will be subject to the planning permission granted for the sites.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

37. Pursuant to section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, a local authority may provide such recreational facilities as it sees fit, including indoor or outdoor swimming pools and any related facilities.

Other Legal Implications:

38. It should be noted that the prime cost procurement method described within the paper carries with it certain risks also identified within the paper, and particularly the potential for cost overrun or a partially unfinished project. This should be balanced against the potential advantages of this approach, notably a project finish date approximately 2 months earlier than possible if utilising a more predictable procurement method. State aid rules may apply to the proposed arrangements with the community group, depending on the overall value of the assistance provided.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

39. The proposals are in line with the Council's Policy Framework

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	Predominantly Coxford
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Lordshill Site Valuations - Confidential
2.	

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	
2.	

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	Yes/No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.		
2.		

Agenda Item 13

Appendix 1

Document is Confidential

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DECISION-MAKER:	COUNCIL		
SUBJECT:	THORNHILL DISTRICT ENERGY SCHEME		
DATE OF DECISION:	20 NOVEMBER 2013		
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND SUSTAINABILITY		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Colin Rowland	Tel: 023 80833561
	E-mail:	colin.rowland@southampton.gov.uk	
Director	Name:	John Tunney/Alison Elliot	Tel: 023 80917703
	E-mail:	John.tunney@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential Appendix 1 contains information deemed to be exempt from general publication by virtue of category 3 to paragraph 10.4 of the Councils Access to Information Procedure Rules as contained in the Constitution. Publication of this information may be to the Council's financial detriment.

BRIEF SUMMARY

The Council is in the process of securing Energy Company Obligation (ECO) grant funding. This is a significant opportunity to provide for insulation and environmental improvements to the Council's housing in the City and also includes funding for new heating and hot water systems in Thornhill. Initial proposals to develop this project were approved by Cabinet on October 15th.

An ECO funded energy improvement programme supports the Council's strategic aspirations to:

- improve insulation and heating in its housing stock,
- provide support to residents with the aim of responding to fuel cost rises and tackling fuel poverty.
- reduce carbon emissions and contribute to a more sustainable city.
- promote job creation and retention in Southampton to support the city's economic development.

Council is requested to approve the next phase of the Thornhill District Energy scheme, which includes: negotiating a best value contract price with the preferred ECO partner for a Design and Build, (DB) contract to build a district energy station, securing ECO funding, seeking planning approval and engaging with residents.

A decision to proceed or not with the scheme will not be taken until early 2014 when final prices on all elements are available for final financial modelling and risk assessment. The proposed scheme also provides the opportunity to generate electricity and so reduce the costs of energy for the Council's civic buildings. The confirmation of this aspect of the project is likely to be critical to the case to proceed with the scheme.

As part of this overall investment programme the Council is recommended to provide capital funding for the Thornhill District Energy Scheme from the HRA Capital

programme. Substantial Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding support is available. It is expected that this will fully meet the General Fund's capital costs and this is essential to the financial viability of the scheme. There will also be ongoing revenue implications for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Fund (GF).

A more detailed financial business case has been prepared which includes the longer term capital and revenue implications of the scheme, an analysis of the associated risks and benefits and how the risks need to be managed and mitigated.

The detailed financial business case is based on the preferred ECO contractor commencing works in early 2014 (utilising appropriate delegated approvals). Subsequent stages of the project would see design, build and operation of the plant, laying heating mains, connecting the flats to the new facility and setting up the payment mechanisms by April 2015.

The tight timescales for this project arise from the end date of April 2015 for the Government's current round of ECO funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To approve the financial recommendations set out in the confidential appendix to this report to deliver a district energy scheme, insulation and other associated measures for the suitable homes in Thornhill.
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Director, Place, after consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to enter into negotiations with the preferred ECO delivery partner to design and build a suitable scheme that represents the best value for the respective residents of Thornhill, and for the Council.
- (iii) To delegate to the Director Place, after consultation with Chief Financial Officer, the Director of Corporate Services, Head of Housing Services and the Cabinet Members for Resources and Housing and Sustainability, to review the progress with the resolutions of the risks identified in this report and take a final decision whether to proceed with the scheme or whether a further report should be submitted to Cabinet or Council as appropriate.
- (iv) Subject to (iii) to delegate authority to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to agree and sign the relevant contracts and; to delegate authority to the Director ,Place, after consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to take any other action necessary to implement the scheme.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This is a significant opportunity to provide for a new heating and hot water system to one of the Council's large housing areas of the City.
2. The scheme has the potential to meet a number of the Council's key strategic objectives by providing the opportunity for savings for residents on their fuel bills, a reduction in Carbon and the generation of a long-term revenue stream for the Council.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

3. An alternative option is for the longer term development of a heating system upgrade in the Thornhill estate in anticipation of further ECO funding support being available post April 2015. This approach carries a risk that ECO funding may no longer be available for this purpose and that the scheme could not proceed.
4. An option not to invest in this scheme would leave residents with inefficient and expensive heating and not address fuel poverty.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

Background

5. On 15 October 2013 Cabinet gave approval for a further feasibility stage in the development of a delivery programme for the Thornhill district energy (DE) scheme
6. The Council wishes to address the continuing rise in energy bills affecting its tenants and leaseholders in the City. A large proportion of the Council housing stock in the City has heating systems that are inefficient, costly to run and generate relatively high amounts of Carbon.
7. Alternative and appropriate heating system technologies are being considered for use across all of the Council's housing stock. These include:
 - Newer more efficient and controllable electrical heating systems;
 - Individual gas boilers and where appropriate communal gas or biomass boiler district heating systems for tower blocks and larger blocks of flats;
 - District Energy networks with gas Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and biomass boilers for two or more multi occupied buildings.
8. District Energy (DE) covers both district heating and cooling, and can also include Combined Heat and Power (CHP) through electricity generation and using the wasted heat for a hot water network. These schemes are seen to be the most cost effective and efficient ways to deliver heat and hot water in areas such as Thornhill with high building densities and demonstrate the following benefits:
 - Helping to tackle fuel poverty by providing residents with more control over current and future energy costs with prices below alternative domestic tariffs;
 - Improving building performance and reducing long term maintenance and replacement costs for alternative heating systems;
 - Producing a potential revenue stream for the scheme owner;
 - Significantly reducing CO2 levels on a whole lifecycle basis.

9. Although residents will inevitably be subject to future energy price rises, DE schemes provide the scope to fix prices below market rates to offer a degree of protection to consumers. The gas required as a fuel for a CHP engine can be purchased in bulk at a commercial rate that is much cheaper than the domestic alternative. Additional recycled fuels such as woodchip can also be utilised in appropriately designed schemes.
10. The Thornhill area of the City is considered to be the best starting point for developing a DE scheme, in conjunction with energy efficiency improvements, for the following reasons:
 - The area qualifies for ECO funding in the current programme criteria with a scheme that could be brought forward quickly, delivering substantial carbon savings.
 - Most of the properties identified are in need of insulation with a large number of the current heating and hot water provision being provided by electricity.
 - There are 3 tower blocks and a large number of walk up blocks within the scheme area, comprising over 1,100 individual properties in a very closely defined geographical area. This reduces the cost of installing the heat distribution network and provides a good level of heat load to sustain a scheme. This would constitute Phase 1 of the scheme.
 - Within the same area, there are a number of potential additional future connections including a further 450 housing units, schools, and the Antelope Retail Park, providing for further potential financial benefits to energy consumers and the Council. The 450 extra dwellings would constitute Phase 2 of the scheme which is not part of the detailed financial appraisal at this time.
 - There is a clearly identifiable location for the heat station, on a portion of the land currently owned by the Council on the old Eastpoint site.
11. Although Thornhill is seen as the best choice for an initial DE scheme, it is important to emphasise that this forms part of a much wider energy efficiency programme in the Council's housing stock. The delivery of a DE scheme in Thornhill is part of a wider major programme of energy efficiency works throughout the City which could be facilitated through ECO funding.
12. The potential availability of substantial Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding allows the Council to deliver measures across the housing stock to maximise this available subsidy and improve the housing stock in the City. ECO funding is currently guaranteed until April 2015 to support insulation and heating upgrades to Council housing. The lack of certainty over future ECO funding post April 2015 is a significant driver for the actions and the timescales relating to ECO schemes planned across the City, including Thornhill.
13. As advised previously, due to the time constraints on the availability of ECO funding Council is requested to approve the commencement of negotiations with the preferred ECO delivery partner to deliver the scheme using the provisions in the negotiated ECO contract.

Financial Appraisal

14. A detailed financial evaluation has been undertaken of Capita's outline operational and financial model for the Thornhill scheme. Capita's study was a key element of the feasibility study approved by Cabinet in October. The main project outputs have been identified following the more detailed financial appraisal. More detail of the financial elements is provided in the attached confidential report but the paragraphs below provide a summary of the results.
15. The scheme would provide substantial savings for around 670 tenants currently using electricity for their heating and hot water many of whom are experiencing fuel poverty. Smaller savings would be available for around 430 tenants currently using gas.
16. The initial capital contribution from the HRA can be funded from savings in the 2013/14 capital programme and virements within the 2014/15 HRA capital programme. Using the current assumptions on the level of ECO funding available to support the scheme there is no initial General Fund borrowing. The level of ECO funding to support the project cannot be formally established until an agreement is reached with an energy supplier on a 'Best and Final Offer' basis, which would run concurrently with the negotiations for the design and build contract.
17. The main ongoing risks for the scheme are in the General Fund. A particular issue is the need for an electricity 'sleeving' arrangement, which is the proposed mechanism for the Council to use generated electricity to reduce its own energy costs for civic buildings. This is key to securing a future income stream to ensure scheme viability (a definition for 'sleeving' of energy is found at paragraph 30 on Page 7). This arrangement is subject to more detailed investigations including early negotiations with the Council's energy supplier. An initial meeting has been positive.
18. The financial and technical work carried out to date will also be externally validated and updated as better information becomes available. All work carried out by the Council so far would suggest the Thornhill DE scheme is viable with electricity 'sleeving', but the potential issues that could change that assessment include:
 - If the external validation significantly changed the technical or financial assumptions.
 - External funding from ECO and / or Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) not being available at required levels.
 - Failure to secure a satisfactory 'sleeving' deal for the generated electricity

Other Issues

19. All tenants with homes identified as part of the scheme will be required to take the replacement heating system being provided by the council as a landlord's fixture. This requires consultation with them before a decision is made which affects their supplies. At least 430 homes on the proposed scheme currently have gas boilers. It is proposed that those tenants with older gas heating appliances will also be required to move onto the new DE

scheme. Based on feasibility work so far, these residents will have lower fuel bills, initially, and also potentially into future. As existing pipework and radiators will be retained in the gas properties there will be minimal disruption to these residents from the switch over. Electrically heated homes will require the installation of radiators and heating pipes.

20. The Council will need to operate the scheme in balance and it will need to set its charges to a minimum required to, fully recover its costs. For example, if costs increase, charges to tenants would also need to increase accordingly to reflect this. It should be noted, however, that due to the increased efficiencies of district heating and the ability for the Council to negotiate commercial rates for fuel the cost for tenants for heating are likely to remain lower than the price individual domestic customers could negotiate for gas or electricity
21. This charging policy will be an important part of the future management of the scheme. Tenants on the scheme will no longer have the ability to go elsewhere for their energy so the Council will need to do its best to ensure that charges to tenants and leaseholders will be kept below the level of domestic alternatives. Further details of arrangements will be developed in conjunction with the operation and maintenance options for the scheme to be determined during the next 2 – 3 months.
22. The Council is required to obtain relevant planning consent for the district energy centre. Planning consent will also be required for the heating pipe network and the external insulation works and other works as required. A potential location for the energy centre for the scheme has been identified at the old Eastpoint school site. Pre planning negotiations have commenced to seek planning permission by the end of February 2014.

Resident Engagement

23. An early programme of resident engagement has commenced in the Thornhill area on the proposals to provide new heating systems and provide insulation measures. This has included an introductory letter to all residents in the area and attendance at tenants meetings. The local housing office and other local groups have been briefed on the scheme proposals. A project team has been set up to support the consultation elements and assist in the delivery of the scheme. A further programme of engagement is planned for appropriate stages in the development of the scheme.
24. The initial response from tenants has been positive for the provision of lower cost more controllable heat combined with insulation works to their properties. Due attention will be paid to the Housing Act requirements on formal consultations and responding to any comments. Consultation will also take place with leaseholders affected. Planning discussions will involve wider consultation with neighbours and will be linked to the tenant liaison process.

Project Timescales

25. The timescales for the delivery of the scheme are still tied to the availability of ECO funding up until April 2015 for completed schemes. However, the ability to make immediate use of the ECO contractor to deliver the scheme reduces the risks of delivery to this timescale and the risks associated with a

separate procurement exercise. The ECO contractor will be formally appointed later this month but negotiations on contract mobilisation have already commenced.

26. Members are requested to provide in principle approval for negotiations to be carried out with the preferred ECO contractor to deliver a design and build (DB) solution with the intention that works would commence in February 2014.

Contractual Issues

27. Provisions have been written into the ECO contractor's contract that allow for the design and build of district heating schemes such as that proposed for Thornhill and to secure ECO funding for these projects. This provision removes the time risk to the Council of entering into an additional OJEU procurement exercise
28. A full survey of the current electric space and hot water heating has commenced to design the more detailed scheme requirements. This work also supports the development of the design to seek planning consent. The completion of Employers Requirements, the contract negotiations and ongoing planning process will reduce the delivery risks and support a commitment from the ECO contractor and ECO utilities to secure a best and final offer price for the contract and the ECO subsidy.

Risks

29. Members are advised that all the financial and other key risks identified in this report could have implications on the viability of a scheme and therefore a decision will need to be made in early 2014 whether or not to progress to delivery. A decision by Council to continue to progress feasibility and planning of this project at this time does not therefore mean that the scheme will definitely go ahead. All the identified risks need to be fully assessed and monitored, and the financial model will be continually updated as firmer information becomes available.

Sleeving (or Netting)

30. This term refers to the ability to pass on the electricity generated from the Thornhill DE scheme for uses by the Council to replace other electricity provision at a lower cost. The Council currently pays an average of 9p/KW. 'Sleeving' or 'Netting' is widely operated by industry. A link to the Npower website is provided here: <http://www.npower.com/Large-Business/Generating-energy/Selling-power/Third-party-netting/>
There are currently no examples of local authorities undertaking this practice. However, initial discussions with energy companies have been positive in this regard. Other local authorities nationally have expressed an interest in this method of electricity generation and information and guidance on selling locally generated energy including 'sleeving' is to be facilitated through local authority energy collaboration.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

31. As it will be necessary for the Council to enter into negotiations with the preferred ECO contractor to obtain the best value for the respective residents of Thornhill and the Council the resource implications arising out of the scheme are the subject of the attached confidential report.
32. Capita has prepared a fee proposal for their continued work on this project up to February 2014 for a total value of £194,000. This includes the £120,000 reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 15 October. There is budget provision in the HRA revenue budget for 2013/14 to meet this cost.

Property/Other

33. The provision of ECO funding and Council capital funding will significantly improve the standard of the relevant housing stock in the Thornhill estate, reduce fuel poverty and improve the health and well-being of tenants.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

34. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 permits the Council to do anything that any other person or private body could do (the 'General Power of Competence') subject to complying with any other statutory requirements such as the Housing Act 1985. The use of the power is also subject to a number of pre and post commencement limitations, none of which are considered to apply in this case.
35. The Housing Acts 1985 gives the council the powers to undertake these changes. Under s105 of the Housing Act 1985 the Council is permitted to introduce changes to the management of the housing service following a period of consultation with residents. Where Leaseholders may be affected by any changes the Council will be required to undertake consultation under the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002. A consultation plan will be developed alongside the further development of the proposal.

Other Legal Implications:

36. The Thornhill DE project will be delivered in accordance with Finance and Contract procedure Rules and any procurement and subsequent delivery of the project will be subject to compliance with the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010, in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty and having regard to the need to reduce crime and disorder in accordance with S.17 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

37. As mentioned in the main body of the report the delivery of a District Energy scheme in Thornhill satisfies a number of Council policies and key objectives, which are included in the provisions of the Southampton Connect Plan, and the Council's housing and property strategies.
38. The Council approved the development of a Strategic Energy Action Plan (SEAP) in December 2012 as a response to the priority issues of energy cost, energy security and CO2 reduction, as well as other key priorities such as jobs

and economic growth. One of the main SEAP project streams is to secure Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding which is currently available from the energy utilities to support the delivery of insulation and to fully or partly fund new heating installations in selected Council owned housing areas of the City.

39. In March of this year DECC published its strategy for heat, which sets out a framework for delivery which accords with the proposals outlined in this report: A link to the strategy Low Carbon Heating in the UK. is provided below:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190149/16_04-DECC-The_Future_of_Heating_Accessible-10.pdf

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	ALL
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Thornhill District Energy Scheme CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX
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Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	Yes
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1. Equality Impact Assessment	

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Document is Confidential

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Agenda Item 17

DECISION-MAKER:	GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE COUNCIL			
SUBJECT:	TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL LIMITS MID YEAR REVIEW			
DATE OF DECISION:	23 SEPTEMBER 2013 20 NOVEMBER 2013			
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF FINANCE AND IT (CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER)			
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>				
AUTHOR:	Name:	Alison Chard	Tel:	023 8083 4897
	E-mail:	Alison.Chard@southampton.gov.uk		
Director	Name:	Mark Heath	Tel:	023 8083 2371
	E-mail:	Mark.Heath@southampton.gov.uk		

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

There is a confidential appendix attached to this report, the confidentiality of which is based on Category 3 of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules. It is not in the public interest to disclose this because information relates to the financial affairs of the Authority.

BRIEF SUMMARY

The Council approved a number of indicators at its meeting of the 13 February 2013. Following the September update of the Capital Programme and an analysis of Treasury Management activity in 2012/13 and between April and August 2013, these indicators have been reviewed for 2013/14 and are reported in accordance with CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management, (the "CIPFA TM Code"), and in line with the approved Treasury Management Strategy (TMS).

The core elements of the 2013/14 strategy are :

- To make use of short term variable rate debt to take advantage of the continuing current market conditions of low interest rates.
- To constantly review longer term forecasts and to lock into longer term rates through a variety of instruments as appropriate during the year, in order to provide a balanced portfolio against interest rate risk.
- To secure the best short term rates for borrowing and investments consistent with maintaining flexibility and liquidity within the portfolio.
- To invest surplus funds prudently, the Council's priorities being:
 - Security of invested capital
 - Liquidity of invested capital
 - An optimum yield which is commensurate with security and liquidity.
- To approve borrowing limits that provide for debt restructuring opportunities and to

pursue debt restructuring where appropriate and within the Council's risk boundaries.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

- i) To note the current and forecast position with regards to these indicators and endorse any changes.
- ii) To note that the continued proactive approach to Treasury Management (TM) has led to reductions in borrowing costs and safeguarded investment income during the year.
- iii) To note action taken in response to the down rating of the Authority's Bankers, (the Co-operative Bank), as set out in the Confidential Appendix to this report (Appendix 1).

COUNCIL

- i) To approve any changes to the Council's Prudential Indicators as detailed within the report.
- ii) Continue to delegate authority to the Chief Financial Officer, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources to approve any changes to the Prudential Indicators or borrowing limits that will aid good treasury management. For example increase the percentage for variable rate borrowing to take advantage of the depressed market for short term rates. Any amendments will be reported as part of quarterly financial and performance monitoring and in revisions to this strategy.
- iii) To note that the continued proactive approach to Treasury Management (TM) has led to reductions in borrowing costs and safeguarded investment income.
- iv) To note Action taken in response to the down rating of the Authority's Bankers, (the Co-operative Bank), as set out in more detail in Confidential Appendix to this report (Appendix 1).

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The TM Code requires public sector authorities to determine an annual TM Strategy and now, as a minimum, formally report on their treasury activities and arrangements to full Council mid-year and after the year-end. These reports enable those tasked with implementing policies and undertaking transactions to demonstrate they have properly fulfilled their responsibilities, and enable those with ultimate responsibility/governance of the TM function to scrutinise and assess its effectiveness and compliance with policies and objectives.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. No alternative options are relevant to this report

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

CONSULTATION

3. The capital programme update on which this report is based has been subject to its own consultation processes.

BACKGROUND

4. TM is a complex subject but in summary the core elements of the strategy for 2013/14 were:
 - To make use of short term variable rate debt to take advantage of the continuing market conditions of low interest rates.
 - To constantly review longer term forecasts and to lock in to longer term rates through a variety of instruments as appropriate during the year, in order to provide a balanced portfolio against interest rate risk.
 - To secure the best short term rates for borrowing and investments consistent with maintaining flexibility and liquidity within the portfolio.
 - To invest surplus funds prudently, the Council's priorities being:
 - Security of invested capital
 - Liquidity of invested capital
 - An optimum yield which is commensurate with security and liquidity.
 - To approve borrowing limits that provide for debt restructuring opportunities and to pursue debt restructuring where appropriate and within the Council's risk boundaries
5. In essence TM can always be seen in the context of the classic 'risk and reward' scenario and following this strategy will contribute to the Council's wider TM objective which is to minimise net borrowing cost short term without exposing the Council to undue risk either now or in the longer in the term.
6. Treasury management is defined as *"The management of the local authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."*
7. Overall responsibility for treasury management remains with the Council. No TM activity is without risk; the effective identification and management of risk are integral to the Council's treasury management objectives. The main risks to the Council's treasury activities are:
 - Liquidity Risk (Inadequate cash resources)
 - Market or Interest Rate Risk (Fluctuations in interest rate levels and thereby in the value of investments).
 - Inflation Risks (Exposure to inflation)
 - Credit and Counterparty Risk (Security of Investments)
 - Refinancing Risks (Impact of debt maturing in future years).
 - Legal & Regulatory Risk (i.e. non-compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, risk of fraud).
8. This report:
 - a) is prepared in accordance with the revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the revised Prudential Code,
 - b) presents details of capital financing, borrowing, debt rescheduling and investment transactions,

- c) reports on the risk implications of treasury decisions and transactions,
- d) gives details of treasury management transactions during 2013/14 to date, and
- e) confirms compliance with treasury limits and Prudential Indicators.

DEBT MANAGEMENT

9. Activity within the debt portfolio to date is summarised below:

	Balance on 01/04/2013	Debt Maturing or Repaid	New Borrowing	Balance as at 31/8/2013	Increase/ (Decrease) in Borrowing for Year	Average Life / Average Rate %	
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	Life	%
Short Term Borrowing	34	(28)	0	6	(28)	5 Months	0.41
Long Term Borrowing	276	(4)	0	272	(4)	23.3 Years	3.31
Total Borrowing	310	(32)	0	278	(32)		

Please note that these figures do not reflect the accounting convention of moving loans maturing in the year from long term to short term

	31-Mar-13 Actual	31-Mar-14 Approved	Current Portfolio	31-Mar-14 Current Estimate	31-Mar-15 Current Estimate	31-Mar-16 Current Estimate
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
External Borrowing:						
Fixed Rate – PWLB Maturity	139	156	139	163	184	199
Fixed Rate – PWLB EIP	93	90	89	115	100	85
Variable Rate – PWLB	35	60	35	35	35	35
Variable Rate – Market	9	9	9	9	9	9
Long Term Borrowing	276	315	272	322	328	328
Short Term Borrowing						
Fixed Rate – Market	34	50	6	50	50	50
Other Long Term Liabilities						
PFI / Finance leases	57	62	57	61	66	63
Deferred Debt Charges	17	17	17	17	16	16
Total Gross External Debt	384	444	352	450	460	457
Investments:						
Deposits and monies on call and Money Market Funds	(66)	(50)	(72)	(50)	(50)	(50)
Supranational bonds	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Total Investments	(69)	(53)	(75)	(53)	(53)	(53)
Net Borrowing Position	315	391	277	397	407	404

Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) Borrowing

10. The PWLB remains the Council's preferred source of long term borrowing given the transparency, flexibility and control it offers.

PWLB Certainty Rate

11. The Council successfully qualified for borrowing at the 'Certainty Rate', following the submission of the Certainty Rate form to Central Government, which included details of the capital expenditure and borrowing plans for the Council over the next three years. PWLB borrowing from 1 November 2012 has been available at a 20bps reduction from the standard. In April the Council submitted its application to the Department for Communities and Local Government's (CLG) along with the

2013/14 Capital Estimates Return to access this reduced rate for a further 12 month period from 1 November 2013.

Loans at Variable Rates

12. The loan portfolio contains £35M of PWLB variable rate loans which currently have an average rate of 0.57% which mitigate the impact of changes in variable rates on the Council's overall treasury portfolio (the Council's investments are deemed to be variable rate investments due to their shorter-term nature). The Council's variable rate loans were borrowed prior to 20 October 2010, (the date of change to the PWLB's lending arrangements post the Comprehensive Spending Review), and are maintained on their initial terms and are not subject to the additional increased margin. The uncertain interest rate outlook further supported the case for maintaining variable rate debt. As the economy still appeared susceptible to economic shocks, growth remained insipid and official interest rates were forecast to remain low for much longer, the Council determined that exposure to variable rates was warranted. It also made sense from an affordability and budgetary perspective in the short to medium term. Any upward move in interest rates and interest paid on variable rate debt would be 'hedged' by a corresponding increase in interest earned on the Council's variable rate investments.
13. The interest rate risk associated with the Council's strategic exposure is regularly reviewed with our Treasury Advisors against clear reference points, this being a narrowing in the gap between short and longer term interest rates by 0.5%. When appropriate this exposure will be reduced by replacing the variable rate loans with fixed rate loans.
14. In achieving interest rate savings, the Council has exposed itself to variable interest rate risk and whilst in the current climate of low interest rates this is obviously a sound strategy, at some point when the market starts to move the Council will need to act quickly to lock into fixed long term rates which may be at similar levels to the debt it has restructured.
15. It was therefore recommended in the February 2009 Treasury Management Strategy report to Full Council that an Interest Equalisation Reserve be created from the savings arising from the switch to lower rate variable interest rate debt, and maintained at a prudent level to help to manage increases in the future and ensure that there is minimal impact on annual budget decisions. However, it should be noted that the sum set aside in the Interest Equalisation Reserve is a one off sum of money to help manage the initial transitional period when the council will convert its variable rate loan portfolio to longer term fixed rate debt. The actual ongoing recurring revenue impact of switching to fixed rate long term debt will still need to be factored in to the budget forecasts for future years. Based on the current predictions of lower for longer interest rate forecasts, it is unlikely that this pressure will emerge in the short term, but it is likely to become a reality towards the back end of the Council's current medium term forecast horizon. The funds set aside in Interest Equalisation Reserve will be reviewed as part of the budget setting process for the 2014/15 budget.

Internal Borrowing

16. Given the significant cuts to local government funding putting pressure on Council finances, the strategy followed was to minimise debt interest payments without compromising the longer-term stability of the portfolio. The differential

between the cost of new longer-term debt (4.36% average rate for a 20 year PWLB fixed rate maturity) and the return generated on the Council's temporary investment returns was significant (3.55%).

17. As at the 31 March 2013 the Council used £52M of internal resources in lieu of borrowing which has been the most cost effective means of funding past capital expenditure to date. This has lowered overall treasury risk by reducing both external debt and temporary investments. However, this position will not be sustainable over the medium term and the Council will need to borrow to cover this amount as balances fall. Following the latest update of the Capital Programme, submitted to Council on 18 September 2013, the Council is expected to borrow £79M between 2013/14 and 2015/16. Of this £38M relates to new capital spend (£42M HRA; GF repay £4M) and the remainder to the refinancing of existing debt and externalising internal debt to cover the expected fall in balances and also the need to lock back into longer term debt prior to interest rises.
18. However due to the continued and increased uncertainty in the markets and the expectations of interest rates staying lower for longer it may be appropriate to maintain the council use of internal resources for part or all of this amount; providing that balances can support it. No long term borrowing has been taken to date and is none is expected to be taken until the second half of the year and will be assessed in conjunction with the Council's treasury advisor.

INVESTMENT ACTIVITY

19. Security of capital remained the Council's main investment objective. This was maintained by following the Council's counterparty policy as set out in its TM Strategy Statement for 2013/14. This has restricted new investments to the following institutions:
- Other Local Authorities;
 - AAA-rated Stable Net Asset Value Money Market Funds;
 - Call Accounts, Certificate of Deposits (CDs) and term deposits with UK Banks and Building Societies systemically important to the UK banking system.
 - Debt Management Office.
20. The table below summarises activity during the year:

	Balance on 01/04/2013	Investments Repaid	New Investments	Balance as at 31/8/2013	Increase/ (Decrease) in Investment for Year
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
Short Term Investments	26	(16)	15	25	(1)
Money Market Funds & Call Accounts	40	(204)	211	47	7
EIB Bonds	3	0	0	3	0
Long Term Investments	0	0	0	0	0
Total Investments	69	(220)	226	75	6

A break down of investments as at 31 August 2013 by credit rating and maturity profile can be seen in following table.

Current Rating	Initial Rating	Less than 1 Month £000's	1 - 3 Months £000's	3 - 6 Months £000's	6 - 9 Months £000's	9 - 12 Months £000's	Over 12 Months £000's	Total £000's
A	A	16,590	5,000	7,000	6,000	6,000		40,590
A+	A-	600						600
A+	A	5,330						5,330
A+	A+		1,000					1,000
A+	AA-	700						700
AA-	A+	50	0					50
AA-	AA-	19,808						19,808
AA-	AA	4,200						4,200
AA	AA-	140						140
AA+	AA+							0
AAA	AAA						3,036	3,036
		47,418	6,000	7,000	6,000	6,000	3,036	75,454

21. Counterparty credit quality is assessed and monitored with reference to: Credit Ratings (the Council's minimum long-term counterparty rating is A- (or equivalent) across rating agencies Fitch, S&P and Moody's); credit default swaps; GDP of the country in which the institution operates; the country's net debt as a percentage of GDP; sovereign support mechanisms /potential support from a well-resourced parent institution; share price.

Authority Banking Arrangements

22. As reported previously it is becoming more common for local authorities to bank with financial institutions that no longer meet their investment criteria (following downgrades of some banks credit rating). This is presently the case for the Council as current bank, the Co-Op, no longer meet our minimum credit rating of A-. It is a costly and complicated process to change bankers and we are under contract with the Co-operative Bank until October 2014. However following the recent down grading of the Co-operative Bank we have taken immediate action.
23. The action taken to date and other relevant issues are set out in the Confidential Appendix to this report (Appendix 1).

COMPLIANCE WITH PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

24. All indicators to date complied with the Prudential Indicators approved by Council on 13 February 2013, item 100.

<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=122&MId=2322&Ver=4>

Details of the performance against key indicators and any proposed changes are shown below:

Capital Financing Requirement Gross and Actual External Debt

25. The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) measures the Council's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose. In order to ensure that over the medium term net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose, the Council ensures that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the CFR in the preceding year, plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years. It differs from actual borrowing due to

decisions taken to use internal balances and cash rather than borrow. The table below shows the actual position as at 31 March 2013 and the estimated position for the current and next two years based on the capital programme submitted to council on the 18 September 2013.

Capital Financing Requirement	2012/13 Actual £M	2013/14 Approved £M	2013/14 Forecast £M	2014/15 Revised Estimate £M	2015/16 Revised Estimate £M
Balance B/F	445	437	433	442	448
Capital expenditure financed from borrowing	11	14	30	23	8
Temporary Funding (Repayment)	(3)	(6)	(6)	(3)	0
HRA Debt	0	7	0	0	0
HRA Voluntary Repayment of Debt	(10)	0	(6)	(5)	(5)
Revenue provision for debt Redemption.	(8)	(13)	(6)	(6)	(7)
Movement in Other Long Term Liabilities	(2)	(2)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Cumulative Maximum External Borrowing Requirement	433	437	442	448	441

26. The Council reports that it has not borrowed in advance of need and that it has continued the use of internal resources in lieu of borrowing as this has been the most cost effective means of funding past capital expenditure to date. In the Prudential Code (November 2011), it states '*Where there is a significant difference between the net and gross borrowing position the risks and benefits associated with this strategy should be clearly stated in the annual strategy*'. The Council has had no difficulty in meeting this requirement so far in 2013/14, nor is there any difficulties envisaged for future years. This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans and the proposals in the approved budget.

	31/03/2013 Actual £M	31/03/2014 Approved £M	31/03/2014 Estimate £M	31/03/2015 Estimate £M	31/03/2016 Estimate £M
General Fund CFR	269	261	265	260	251
Housing CFR	164	176	177	188	190
CFR	433	437	442	448	441
Gross Long term Debt	350	394	400	410	407
Difference	83	43	42	38	34
Short Term Debt	34	50	50	50	50
Difference	49	(7)	(8)	(12)	(16)
Borrowing in excess of CFR? (Y/N)	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Investments	(69)	(53)	(53)	(53)	(53)

*Please note that borrowing is only in excess of the CFR as it includes assumptions for short term borrowing for cash flow purposes.

Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

27. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to set an Affordable Borrowing Limit, irrespective of their indebted status. This is a statutory limit which should not be breached. The Council's **Affordable / Authorised Borrowing Limit** was set at £898M for 2013/14 (£817M for borrowing and £81M for other long term liabilities).
28. The **Operational Boundary** is based on the same estimates as the Authorised Limit but reflects the most likely, prudent but not worst case scenario without the additional headroom included within the Authorised Limit. The Operational Boundary for 2013/14 was set at £857M (£779M for borrowing and £78M for other long term liabilities).
29. The above limits are set to allow maximum flexibility within TM, for example a full debt restructure. Actual borrowing as detailed in paragraph 9 is significantly below this and reflects decisions taken to use internal balances and cash rather than to physically borrow and shows the position at a point in time. No new borrowing is expected to take place until the second half of the financial year.
30. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) confirms that there were no breaches to the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary and during the period to the end of August 2013, borrowing at its peak was £310M (other long term liabilities £74M) and there is no proposal to change these limits at this time.

Upper Limits for Fixed and Variable Interest Rate Exposure

31. These indicators allow the Council to manage the extent to which it is exposed to changes in interest rates. The upper limit for variable rate exposure allows for the use of variable rate debt to offset exposure to changes in short-term rates on our portfolio of investments.

	Limits for 2013/14
	%
Upper Limit for Fixed Rate Exposure	100
Compliance with Limits:	Yes
Upper Limit for Variable Rate Exposure	50
Compliance with Limits:	Yes

32. The Upper limit represents the maximum proportion of borrowing which is subject to variable rate interest and was set at 50%, although in practice it would be unusual for the exposure to exceed 25% based on past performance, the highest to date is 15.8%. The limit was set at a higher level to allow for a possible adverse cash flow position, leading to a need for increased borrowing on the temporary market and to take advantage of the low rates available through the PWLB for variable debt. There has been no adverse cash flow to date but it is proposed that the limit remain at 50%, to allow for flexibility in case of any slippage in expected capital receipts.

Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days

33. This indicator allows the Council to manage the risk inherent in longer term

investments; the limit for 2013/14 was set at £50M. With the maximum maturity period for a number of banks being extended to 12 months, we reintroduced the rolling programme of yearly investments from November and currently have £20M invested at an average rate of 0.86%, although it should be noted that rates are falling and new deals are expected to be around 0.65% to 0.75%. Due to the falling rates enquires are being made via our Financial Advisors about the possibility of investing in Property funds for our core investments.

Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing

34. This indicator highlights the existence of any large concentrations of fixed rate debt needing to be replaced at times of uncertainty over interest rates and is designed to protect against excessive exposures to interest rate changes in any one period.

	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Actual Fixed Debt as at 31/8/2013	Average Fixed Rate as at 31/8/2013	% of Fixed Rate as at 31/8/2013	Compliance with set Limits?
	%	%	£M	%		
Under 12 months	0	45	7	0.95	3.15	Yes
12 months and within 24 months	0	45	0	0.00	0.00	Yes
24 months and within 5 years	0	50	0	0.00	0.00	Yes
5 years and within 10 years	0	75	88	3.23	37.56	Yes
10 years and within 15 years	0	75	0	0.00	0.00	Yes
15 years and within 20 years	0	75	0	0.00	0.00	Yes
20 years and within 25 years	0	75	0	0.00	0.00	Yes
25 years and within 30 years	0	75	5	4.65	2.14	Yes
30 years and within 35 years	0	75	10	4.65	4.27	Yes
35 years and within 40 years	0	75	42	3.99	17.93	Yes
40 years and within 45 years	0	75	51	3.62	21.61	Yes
45 years and within 50 years	0	75	31	3.56	13.34	Yes
50 years and above	0	100	0	0.00	0.00	Yes
			234	3.32	100.00	

Please note: the TM Code Guidance Notes (page 15) states: "The maturity of borrowing should be determined by reference to the earliest date on which the lender can require payment. If the lender has the right to increase the interest rate payable without limit, such as in a LOBO loan, this should be treated as a right to require payment".

For this indicator, the next option dates on the Council LOBO loans will therefore determine the maturity date of the loans.

Balances and Useable Reserves

35. Estimates of the Council's level of overall Balances and Useable Reserves for 2013/14 to 2015/16 are shown below. Forecasts for future years will be updated in light of development of both revenue and capital spending plans.

	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Estimate	2014/15 Estimate	2015/16 Estimate
	£M	£M	£M	£M
Balances and Reserves	76	42	36	33

Credit Risk

36. The Council confirms it considers security, liquidity and yield, in that order, when making investment decisions. Credit ratings remain an important element of assessing credit risk, but they are not the sole feature in the Council's assessment of counterparty credit risk. The Council also considers alternative assessments of credit strength, and information on corporate developments of and market sentiment towards counterparties. The following key tools are used to assess credit risk:
- Published credit ratings of the financial institution (minimum A- or equivalent) and its sovereign (minimum AA+ or equivalent for non-UK sovereigns);
 - Sovereign support mechanisms;
 - Credit default swaps (where quoted);
 - Share prices (where available);
 - Economic fundamentals, such as a country's net debt as a percentage of its GDP);
 - Corporate developments, news, articles, markets sentiment and momentum;
 - Corporate developments, news, articles, markets sentiment and momentum.

The Council can confirm that all investments were made in line with minimum credit rating criteria set in the 2013/14 TMSS.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Limit on Indebtedness

37. Local authorities are required to report the level of the HRA CFR compared to the level of debt which was imposed by the CLG of self-financing at the time of implementation. The following tables show this plus the movement in year.

HRA Summary of Borrowing	2012/13 Actual £m	2013/14 Approved £m	2013/14 Estimate £m	2014/15 Estimate £m	2015/16 Estimate £m
Brought Forward	174.2	168.8	163.8	176.823	187.8
Maturing Debt	(10.4)	(5.6)	(5.6)	(5.1)	(5.1)
New borrowing	0	12.5	18.574	16.086	7.299
Carried forward	163.8	175.7	176.8	187.8	190.0
HRA Debt Cap (as prescribed by CLG)	199.6	199.6	199.6	199.6	199.6
Headroom	35.8	23.9	22.8	11.8	9.6

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

38. This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet borrowing costs. The definition of financing costs is set out at paragraph 87 of the Prudential Code. The ratio is based on costs net of investment income. The increase in the HRA financing costs is due to the reform of HRA of council housing finance which took effect from 28 March 2012. During 2012/13 the HRA made a voluntary debt repayment of £10.4M, which has led to an

increase in the financing ratio for the year. This will result in lower borrowing costs for future years. The upper limit for this ratio is currently set at 10% for the General Fund to allow for known borrowing decision in the next two years and to allow for additional borrowing affecting major schemes.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2012/13 Actual %	2013/14 Approved %	2013/14 Forecast %	2014/15 Approved %	2015/16 Approved %
General Fund	6.14%	6.78%	6.33%	6.97%	7.24%
HRA	24.95%	17.51%	17.16%	16.18%	15.57%
Total	12.06%	10.43%	10.01%	10.20%	10.54%

SUMMARY

39. In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice this report provides members with a summary report of the treasury management activity up to the 31 August 2013. As indicated in this report none of the Prudential Indicators have been breached and a prudent approach has been taking in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield
40. In addition to the CIPFA's requirement to produce a mid and year end report, each quarter as part of corporate monitoring a summary of Treasury Management activity is prepared. This is presented to Cabinet as part of the Quarterly Revenue Financial Monitoring report where a further update on the Co-operative will be submitted.
41. For further information please see the following links:
Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2013 on 13 February 2013, item 100.
<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=122&MId=2322&Ver=4>
Treasury Management Outturn Report on 17th July 2013, item 13.
<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=122&MId=2466&Ver=4>
Quarterly Revenue Financial Monitoring report, item 8 (Appendix 12)
<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=126&MId=2475&Ver=4>

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital / Revenue

42. The Capital implications were considered as part of the Capital Update report submitted to Council on the 18 September 2013.
43. The revenue implications are considered as part of ongoing monitoring which is reported to Cabinet each Quarter and as part of the budget setting process.

Property/Other

44. None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

45. Local Authority borrowing is regulated by Part 1, of the Local Government Act 2003, which introduced the new Prudential Capital Finance System. From 1 April 2004, investments are dealt with, not in secondary legislation, but through guidance. Similarly, there is guidance on prudent investment practice, issued by the Secretary of State under Section 15(1)(a) of the 2003 Act. A local authority has the power to invest for "any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment or for the purposes of the prudent management of its financial affairs". The reference to the "prudent management of its financial affairs" is included to cover investments, which are not directly linked to identifiable statutory functions but are simply made in the course of treasury management.
- This also allows the temporary investment of funds borrowed for the purpose of expenditure in the reasonably near future; however, the speculative procedure of borrowing purely in order to invest and make a return remains unlawful.

Other Legal Implications:

46. None

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

47. This report has been prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on TM.

KEY DECISION? Yes/No

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Confidential: Authority's Banking Arrangements
2.	Glossary of Treasury Terms

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL LIMITS 2013/14 to 2015/16 – Council 13 February 2013	
2.	REVIEW OF PRUDENTIAL LIMITS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTURN 2012/13 – Council 15 July 2013	
3.	QUARTERLY REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT– Cabinet 20 August 2013.	

Agenda Item 17

by virtue of paragraph number 3 of the Council's Access to information Procedure Rules

Appendix 1

Document is Confidential

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<p>Authorised Limit (Also known as the Affordable Limit):</p> <p>A statutory limit that sets the maximum level of external borrowing on a gross basis (i.e. not net of investments) for the Council. It is measured on a daily basis against all external borrowing items on the Balance Sheet (i.e. long and short term borrowing, overdrawn bank balances and long term liabilities).</p>
<p>Balances and Reserves:</p> <p>Accumulated sums that are maintained either earmarked for specific future costs or commitments or generally held to meet unforeseen or emergency expenditure.</p>
<p>Bank Rate:</p> <p>The official interest rate set by the Bank of England’s Monetary Policy Committee and what is generally termed at the “base rate”. This rate is also referred to as the ‘repo rate’.</p>
<p>Basis Point:</p> <p>A unit of measure used in finance to describe the percentage change in the value or rate of a financial instrument. One basis point is equivalent to 0.01% (1/100th of a percent). In most cases, it refers to changes in interest rates and bond yields. For example, if interest rates rise by 25 basis points, it means that rates have risen by 0.25% percentage points. If rates were at 2.50%, and rose by 0.25%, or 25 basis points, the new interest rate would be 2.75%. In the bond market, a basis point is used to refer to the yield that a bond pays to the investor. For example, if a bond yield moves from 5.45% to 5.65%, it is said to have risen by 20 basis points. The usage of the basis point measure is primarily used in respect to yields and interest rates, but it may also be used to refer to the percentage change in the value of an asset such as a stock.</p>
<p>Bond:</p> <p>A certificate of debt issued by a company, government, or other institution. The bond holder receives interest at a rate stated at the time of issue of the bond. The price of a bond may vary during its life.</p>
<p>Capital Expenditure:</p> <p>Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of capital assets.</p>
<p>Capital Financing Requirement (CFR):</p> <p>The Council’s underlying need to borrow for capital purposes representing the cumulative capital expenditure of the local authority that has not been financed.</p>
<p>Capital Receipts:</p> <p>Money obtained on the sale of a capital asset.</p>
<p>CD’s:</p> <p>Certificates of Deposits with banks and building societies</p>
<p>Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR):</p> <p>Comprehensive Spending Review is a governmental process in the United Kingdom carried out by HM Treasury to set firm expenditure limits and, through public service agreements,</p>

define the key improvements that the public can expect from these resources. Spending Reviews typically focus upon one or several aspects of public spending while the CSR focuses upon each government department's spending requirements from a zero base (i.e. without reference to past plans or, initially, current expenditure).

Corporate Bonds:

Corporate bonds are bonds issued by companies. The term is often used to cover all bonds other than those issued by governments in their own currencies and includes issues by companies, supranational organisations and government agencies.

Cost of Carry:

The "cost of carry" is the difference between what is paid to borrow compared to the interest which could be earned. For example, if one takes out borrowing at 5% and invests the money at 1.5%, there is a cost of carry of 3.5%.

Counterparty List:

List of approved financial institutions with which the Council can place investments with.

CPI :

Consumer Price Index – the UK's main measure of inflation.

Credit Rating:

Formal opinion by a registered rating agency of a counterparty's future ability to meet its financial liabilities; these are opinions only and not guarantees.

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) :

The DCLG is the UK Government department for Communities and Local Government in England. It was established in May 2006 and is the successor to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, established in 2001.

Debt Management Office (DMO):

The DMO is an Executive Agency of Her Majesty's Treasury and provides direct access for local authorities into a government deposit facility known as the **DMADF**. All deposits are guaranteed by HM Government and therefore have the equivalent of a sovereign triple-A credit rating.

Diversification /diversified exposure:

The spreading of investments among different types of assets or between markets in order to reduce risk.

Federal Reserve:

The US central bank. (Often referred to as "the Fed").

FTSE 100 Index:

The FTSE 100 Index is a share index of the 100 companies listed on the London Stock Exchange with the highest market capitalisation. It is one of the most widely used stock indices and is seen as a gauge of business prosperity for business regulated by UK

company law. The index is maintained by the FTSE Group, a subsidiary of the London Stock Exchange Group.

General Fund:

This includes most of the day-to-day spending and income.

Gilts:

Gilts are bonds issued by the UK Government. They take their name from 'gilt-edged': being issued by the UK government, they are deemed to be very secure as the investor expects to receive the full face value of the bond to be repaid on maturity.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP):

Gross Domestic Product measures the value of goods and services produced within a country. GDP is the most comprehensive overall measure of economic output and provides key insight as to the driving forces of the economy.

The G7:

The G7, is a group consisting of the finance ministers of seven industrialised nations: namely the US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Canada and Japan. They are seven of the eight (China excluded) wealthiest nations on Earth, not by GDP but by global net wealth. The G7 represents more than the 66% of net global wealth (\$223 trillion), according to Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report September 2012.

IFRS:

International Financial Reporting Standards.

International Labour Organisation (ILO):

The ILO Unemployment Rate refers to the percentage of economically active people who are unemployed by ILO standard and replaced the Claimant Unemployment Rate as the international standard for unemployment measurement in the UK. Under the ILO approach, those who are considered as unemployed are either out of work but are actively looking for a job or out of work and are waiting to start a new job in the next two weeks. ILO Unemployment Rate is measured by a monthly survey, which is called the Labour Force Survey in United Kingdom. Approximately 40,000 individuals are interviewed each month, and the unemployment figure reported is the average data for the previous three months.

LIBID:

The London Interbank Bid Rate (LIBID) is the rate bid by banks on Eurocurrency deposits (i.e. the rate at which a bank is willing to borrow from other banks). It is "the opposite" of the LIBOR (an offered, hence "ask" rate, the rate at which a bank will lend). Whilst the British Bankers' Association set LIBOR rates, there is no correspondent official LIBID fixing.

LIBOR:

The London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) is the rate of interest that banks charge to lend money to each other. The British Bankers' Association (BBA) work with a small group of large banks to set the LIBOR rate each day. The wholesale markets allow banks who need money to be more fluid in the marketplace to borrow from those with surplus amounts. The

banks with surplus amounts of money are keen to lend so that they can generate interest which it would not otherwise receive.

LOBO:

Stands for Lender Option Borrower Option. The underlying loan facility is typically very long-term - for example 40 to 60 years - and the interest rate is fixed. However, in the LOBO facility the lender has the option to call on the facilities at pre-determined future dates. On these call dates, the lender can propose or impose a new fixed rate for the remaining term of the facility and the borrower has the 'option' to either accept the new imposed fixed rate or repay the loan facility. The upshot of this is that on the option exercise date, the lender could propose an extreme fixed rate, say 20 per cent, which would effectively force the repayment of the underlying facility. The borrower's so called 'option' is only the inalienable right to accept or refuse a new deal such as a fixed rate of 20 per cent.

Maturity:

The date when an investment or borrowing is repaid.

Maturity Structure / Profile:

A table or graph showing the amount (or percentage) of debt or investments maturing over a time period. The amount or percent maturing could be shown on a year-by-year or quarter-by-quarter or month-by-month basis.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP):

An annual provision that the Council is statutorily required to set aside and charge to the Revenue Account for the repayment of debt associated with expenditure incurred on capital assets.

Money Market Funds (MMF):

Pooled funds which invest in a range of short term assets providing high credit quality and high liquidity.

Multilateral Development Banks:

See Supranational Bonds below.

Non Specified Investment:

Investments which fall outside the CLG Guidance for **Specified investments** (below).

Operational Boundary:

This linked directly to the Council's estimates of the CFR and estimates of other day to day cash flow requirements. This indicator is based on the same estimates as the Authorised Limit reflecting the most likely prudent but not worst case scenario but without the additional headroom included within the Authorised Limit.

Premiums and Discounts:

In the context of local authority borrowing,

- (a) the premium is the penalty arising when a loan is redeemed prior to its maturity date and
- (b) the discount is the gain arising when a loan is redeemed prior to its maturity date.

If on a £1 million loan, it is calculated that a £150,000 premium is payable on premature redemption, then the amount paid by the borrower to redeem the loan is £1,150,000 plus accrued interest. If on a £1 million loan, it is calculated* that a £50,000 discount receivable on premature redemption, then the amount paid by the borrower to redeem the loan is £950,000 plus accrued interest. PWLB premium/discount rates are calculated according to the length of time to maturity, current market rates (plus a margin), and the existing loan rate which then produces a premium/discount dependent on whether the discount rate is lower/higher than the coupon rate.

**The calculation of the total amount payable to redeem a loan borrowed from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) is the present value of the remaining payments of principal and interest due in respect of the loan being repaid prematurely, calculated on normal actuarial principles. More details are contained in the PWLB's lending arrangements circular.*

Prudential Code:

Developed by CIPFA and introduced on 01/4/2004 as a professional code of practice to support local authority capital investment planning within a clear, affordable, prudent and sustainable framework and in accordance with good professional practice.

Prudential Indicators:

Indicators determined by the local authority to define its capital expenditure and asset management framework. They are designed to support and record local decision making in a manner that is publicly accountable; they are not intended to be comparative performance indicators

Public Works Loans Board (PWLB):

This is a statutory body operating within the United Kingdom Debt Management Office, an Executive Agency of HM Treasury. The PWLB's function is to lend money from the National Loans Fund to local authorities and other prescribed bodies, and to collect the repayments.

Quantitative Easing (QE):

In relation to the UK, it is the process used by the Bank of England to directly increase the quantity of money in the economy. It *“does not involve printing more banknotes. Instead, the Bank buys assets from private sector institutions – that could be insurance companies, pension funds, banks or non-financial firms – and credits the seller’s bank account. So the seller has more money in their bank account, while their bank holds a corresponding claim against the Bank of England (known as reserves). The end result is more money out in the wider economy”*. Source: Bank of England.

Revenue Expenditure:

Expenditure to meet the continuing cost of delivery of services including salaries and wages, the purchase of materials and capital financing charges.

RPI:

Retail Prices Index is a monthly index demonstrating the movement in the cost of living as it tracks the prices of goods and services including mortgage interest and rent. Pensions and index-linked gilts are uprated using the RPI index.

(Short) Term Deposits:

Deposits of cash with terms attached relating to maturity and rate of return (Interest).
<p>Specified Investments:</p> <p>Term used in the CLG Guidance and Welsh Assembly Guidance for Local Authority Investments. Investments that offer high security and high liquidity, in sterling and for no more than one year. UK government, local authorities and bodies that have a high credit rating.</p>
<p>Supported Borrowing:</p> <p>Borrowing for which the costs are supported by the government or third party.</p>
<p>Supranational Bonds:</p> <p>Instruments issued by supranational organisations created by governments through international treaties (often called multilateral development banks). The bonds carry a AAA rating in their own right. Examples of supranational organisations are the European Investment Bank, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.</p>
<p>T-Bills:</p> <p>Treasury Bills are short term Government debt instruments and, just like temporary loans used by local authorities, are a means to manage cash flow. Treasury Bills (T-Bills) are issued by the Debt Management Office and are an eligible sovereign instrument, meaning that they have a AAA-rating.</p>
<p>Temporary Borrowing:</p> <p>Borrowing to cover peaks and troughs of cash flow, not to fund capital spending.</p>
<p>Treasury Management Code:</p> <p>CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services, initially brought in 2003, subsequently updated in 2009 and 2011.</p>
<p>Treasury Management Practices (TMP):</p> <p>Treasury Management Practices set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve its policies and objectives and prescribe how it will manage and control these activities.</p>
<p>Unsupported Borrowing:</p> <p>Borrowing which is self-financed by the local authority. This is also sometimes referred to as Prudential Borrowing.</p>
<p>Yield:</p> <p>The measure of the return on an investment instrument.</p>

Agenda Item 19

by virtue of paragraph number 3 of the Council's Access to information Procedure Rules

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Agenda Item 21

DECISION-MAKER:	Council		
SUBJECT:	Watermark WestQuay and Regional Growth Fund		
DATE OF DECISION:	20 th November 2013		
REPORT OF:	Cabinet Member for Economy and Leisure		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Barbara Compton	Tel: 023 80832155
	E-mail:	barbara.compton@southampton.gov.uk	
Director	Name:	John Tunney	Tel: 023 80917713
	E-mail:	john.tunney@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Appendix 1 is confidential, the confidentiality of which is based on category 3 of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules. It is not in the public interest to disclose this because as this information relates to the project costs which are commercially sensitive, particularly at this stage until Regional Growth Fund is awarded.

BRIEF SUMMARY

As part of City Deal the Council has requested Regional Growth Fund (RGF) assistance from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills to unlock the regeneration of Watermark WestQuay, to support local economic growth and deliver more jobs for the city. Due diligence work is due to be completed by 30th November 2013. The final terms of the grant must be agreed by 15th December 2013.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To delegate approval to the Chief Financial Officer to enter into an agreement with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills to receive Regional Growth Fund (RGF) grant to unlock the regeneration of Watermark WestQuay and for the Council to act as Lead Accountable Body.
- (i) If the application is successful, to accept the grant set out in the Confidential Appendix 1 from the Regional Growth Fund.
- (ii) To add, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, a sum set out in Confidential Appendix 1 to the Economic Development & Leisure capital programme for the regeneration of Watermark WestQuay.
- (iii) To approve, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, capital expenditure in 2014/15 and as set out in Confidential Appendix 1 from the Economic Development & Leisure capital programme to award a capital grant for the regeneration of Watermark WestQuay
- (iii) To delegate approval to the Director of Environment & Economy to

enter into a grant agreement with Hammerson to distribute RGF resources for the Watermark WestQuay scheme and to take all ancillary actions to give effect to this resolution .

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The RGF grant will provide funding to unlock the regeneration of Watermark WestQuay to provide a high quality development with associated public realm which will contribute to delivering the aims and objectives contained in the City Centre Masterplan.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. Not to receive the RGF could jeopardise the delivery of the Watermark WestQuay project.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3. Southampton's City Centre Master Plan is a visionary development and investment framework for the city centre over the next twenty years. It is envisaged that it will deliver £3B of investment and initially at least 7,000 jobs. The Masterplan is focused on seven 'Very Important Projects' which are designed not only to transform the city centre but deliver maximum impact in terms of jobs and investment. As one of the 'Very Important Projects', developed by Hammerson, Watermark WestQuay is central to the transformation implementation that the City Centre Masterplan will deliver. The site is immediately bordering Hammerson's WestQuay Shopping Centre. This mixed-use scheme will be delivered in two phases. The first phase comprises a landmark cinema building, up to 15 restaurants and additional retail space, alongside newly created public space in front of the city's historic walls. This phase will create a new high quality leisure area for the city's night time economy.
4. The second phase has the potential to include a residential tower, a hotel, flexible office space, restaurants and additional public space. Watermark WestQuay will help reinvigorate the southern area of central Southampton.
5. The scheme was approved by the Planning and Rights of Way Panel in July 2013. The site will play a key role in terms of the growth of the leisure and tourist industry in Southampton (with its unique maritime offer, particularly for international visitors). It is envisaged that the project will start on site in summer 2014 and provide in excess of 500 jobs.
6. The Southampton/Portsmouth City Deal centres around four key strands which includes unlocking development sites. For Southampton, Watermark WestQuay has been put forward for City Deal as a key site which is one of a pipeline of strategic sites that will support economic growth and housing provision over the medium to long term. This site was prioritised on the basis of such things as deliverability, job creation, private sector financial investment and the wider regenerative economic impact.
7. The Regional Growth Fund is designed to help companies throughout England to create jobs up to the mid-2020s. The Regional Growth Fund supports projects and programmes that are using private sector investment to create economic growth and sustainable employment. The first 3 rounds of the Regional Growth Fund are now delivering, with £2 billion awarded

nationally to almost 300 projects and programmes. Projects and programmes which have committed to delivering 473,000 jobs and £12 billion of private sector investment.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

8. As part of City Deal, a bid has been made for grant assistance from the Regional Growth Fund Phase Four, from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) with the Council acting as Lead Accountable Body.
9. Grant assistance is required essentially for public realm and infrastructure works in order to enhance the setting of the historic walls but also to improve physical pedestrian links and permeability around the City Centre. Elements included in this would cover (for Phase One):
 1. A new public plaza - The plaza will allow the movement of people between the different shopping areas and will ensure that the development is undertaken in a way so as to preserve the historic city walls.
 2. Construction of pedestrian links - linking Western Esplanade to Harbour Parade to facilitate cruise passengers to access (by foot) the full range of shopping/leisure/cultural facilities provided by the city.
 3. Upgrading Harbour Parade itself
 4. Construction of ramps around the plaza to provide enhanced accessibility with the change in levels between the site and the main shopping area.
5. Work is now ongoing with BIS to secure these resources. Hammerson and the council are undertaking due diligence with respect to the project, the final report of which has to be agreed by 30 November 2013. The final terms of the grant must be agreed by 15 December 2013.
6. It is proposed that a capital grant will be paid by the council to Hammerson to fund these works. The grant is paid by BIS to the Council on the basis that 500 jobs will be created by 2016. If employment space targets are not met, BIS may reclaim some, or all of the grant from the City Council as lead accountable body. These grant conditions will be passed onto Hammerson as part of the capital grant agreement.
7. Under the current terms of RGF, the grant has to be defrayed by 2015/16. This timescale is currently under discussion with BIS and the Cabinet Office

Property/Other

- 8.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

9. Localism Act 2011. RGF is paid under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 10.

Other Legal Implications:

11. None

12.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

13. The City Centre Masterplan (September 2013) outlines ambitious and realistic plans for the future of Southampton’s city centre - and the changes that will be made to deliver the following vision:

*Southampton: International Maritime City
The city centre is the power house for the city and beyond - generating economic growth and new jobs within a low carbon environment. By 2026 new offices, shops, homes, cultural attractions and entertainment venues will be found across the city centre, notably in a new Royal Pier waterfront scheme, a Business District right next to the Central Station and in the upgraded and expanded shopping area. A variety of new residential areas will add to the appeal of city centre living. Distinctive new buildings, public spaces and walking routes will reconnect different parts of the city centre including its waterfronts, Victorian parks, medieval Old Town and Central Station and transform the whole city centre into a more attractive, walkable place with a buzz about it– **a great place to do business, visit and live.***

Southampton will be the focus for significant new development over the next 20 years which will transform the city centre. Watermark WestQuay will make a critical contribution to delivering this agenda.

KEY DECISION? No

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	Bargate
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Confidential Appendix
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Documents In Members’ Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	Yes/No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be
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DECISION-MAKER:	COUNCIL CABINET		
SUBJECT:	*STRATEGIC SERVICES PARTNERSHIP (SSP) CONTRACT – PROPOSED CONTRACT EXTENSION		
DATE OF DECISION:	20 NOVEMBER 2013		
REPORT OF:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Appendix 1 of this report is not for publication by virtue of categories 3 (financial and business affairs) and 7A (obligation of Confidentiality) of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules as contained in the Council's Constitution.

It is not in the public interest to disclose this information as this appendix contains confidential and commercially sensitive information supplied by Capita Business Services Limited. It would prejudice the Council's ability to operate in a commercial environment and obtain best value in negotiations and would prejudice the Council's commercial relationships with third parties, if they believed the Council would not honour any obligation of confidentiality.

BRIEF SUMMARY

The contract for the Strategic Services Programme (SSP) with Capita Business Services Limited (Capita) commenced on 1 October 2007 for a term of ten years. The outsourced services comprise Customer Services, IT Services (including printing services), HR and Payroll Services (including health & safety, learning & development and occupational health), Property Services (comprising professional construction related services and valuation and estates management services), Local Taxation and Benefits Services and Procurement Services.

Following negotiations, pursuant to the provisions in the SSP contract allowing for its extension, the Director of Corporate Services seeks authority to extend the contract by five years and to implement simultaneously changes to the contract which are set out in this report. Five years is the maximum extension permitted under the SSP contract and the EU contract notice under which it was originally awarded and the extension would mean that the expiry date of the SSP contract would become 30 September 2022 (rather than the currently scheduled 30 September 2017).

In conjunction with service amendments included in the contract changes, the extension would produce forecast net savings for the Council of £24M over the period from 1 December 2013 (the intended date of implementation of the contract extension) to 30 September 2022.

Further benefit would accrue to the City Council from the flexible charging mechanisms included in the proposed contract changes, which would enable the Council to deal with changing demand for many of the services delivered under the SSP in the future in a way which is more appropriate than the originally structured contract given the less predictable environment we now find ourselves in.

Service delivery would be modernised in Customer Services and IT Services and revised Governance arrangements would be introduced.

The purpose of this report is to enable Council to make a Policy Framework decision. Full Council is being invited to express a view as to whether or not the SSP contract should be extended. This would form an addendum to the Council's Policy Framework.

If Full Council makes a Policy Framework decision to proceed, the Executive will then need to implement that decision. If the decision is to extend the SSP contract, the Director of Corporate Services, who has overall responsibility for the SSP, together with the Chief Financial Officer and the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services, will be given joint delegated authority to agree the detailed terms and conditions. The Head of Legal HR and Democratic Services will be given authority to complete the necessary legal documentation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

COUNCIL:

- (i) Notes the Consultation process that was followed as outlined in paragraph 59 and Appendix 4.
- (ii) Notes the Equality and Safety Impact Assessment process that was followed as set out in paragraph 60 and Appendix 3.
- (iii) Approves as a Policy Framework decision, the extension of the SSP contract with Capita Business Services Limited for five years, so that its expiry date becomes 30 September 2022 (extended from 30 September 2017), subject to the changes to the contract described in this report being made simultaneously, (except for that relating to sub-£100,000 spend being brought within the Procurement Services).
- (iv) Recommends that the Executive implements the Policy Framework decision to extend the SSP contract by five years.
- (v) Approves the introduction of an IT Development Reserve to smooth the cost of future capital expenditure needed to maintain the desktop estate and associated hardware on an ongoing basis, thereby enabling effective planning to be undertaken over the medium term.
- (vi) Approves the introduction of a Pension Reserve to manage expenditure associated with employers' pension contributions payable to the Hampshire Pension Fund for TUPE staff over the term of the contract and smooth the impact on the General Fund revenue budget in any one year.
- (vii) Notes and endorses the governance arrangements set out in Appendix 2 (in so far as they are matters for Full Council).

- (viii) Notes that the changes made during final negotiations as set out in Appendix 1, have taken into account the recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee which met on 16 October 2013.
- (ix) Authorises the Director of Corporate Services, together with the Chief Financial Officer and the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services to take any further action necessary to give effect to the decisions of Full Council in relation to this matter.
- (x) Notes that these decisions will form an addendum to the Council's Policy Framework.

CABINET:

- (i) Notes that on 20 November 2013 Full Council approved the extension of the SSP contract with Capita Business Services Limited by five years with a new expiry date of 30 September 2022 (extended from 30 September 2017), subject to the changes to the contract described in this report being made simultaneously.
- (ii) Implements as a consequence of the Full Council's Policy Framework decision, the extension of the SSP contract by five years, as recommended by Full Council.
- (iii) Approves the proposal to bring sub-£100,000 spend within the Procurement Services delivered under the SSP Contract.
- (iv) Delegates authority to the Director of Corporate Services, together with the Chief Financial Officer and the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services to agree the detailed terms and conditions in connection with the above recommendations.
- (v) Authorises the Head of Legal HR and Democratic Services to enter into the necessary legal documentation.
- (vi) Notes and endorses the governance arrangements set out in Appendix 2 (in so far as they are matters for the Executive).
- (vii) Notes that the changes made during final negotiations as set out in Appendix 1, have taken into account the recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee which met on 16 October 2013.
- (viii) Authorises the Director of Corporate Services, together with the Chief Financial Officer and the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services to take any further action necessary to give effect to the decisions of the Executive in relation to this matter.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There are a number of reasons for the recommendations and these are set out below. Namely to :
 - Make a contribution towards the financial savings the Council has to find.

- Improve flexibility in the charging mechanisms under the SSP contract, so that the charges under the SSP contract can more closely reflect the changing size of the Council's operation in the future.
- Modernise service delivery under the SSP contract, particularly in relation to Customer Services and IT Services.
- Postpone the cost of re-procuring, or bringing back in house, the services.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. The prevailing pressures on the Council's budget mean that it cannot afford the SSP contract in its current form. Also, the contract does not contain sufficient flexibility to enable the Council to deal with changing demand for many of the services delivered under the SSP in the future in a way which is appropriate to the less predictable environment we now find ourselves in.
3. There are a number of alternative options which could have been pursued to address these issues and these are set out in turn in the following paragraphs.
4. Firstly, do nothing and allow the contract to expire naturally at the end of September 2017. This option was not pursued, as it would do nothing to help meet the Council's current financial challenges, improve flexibility or modernise service delivery.
5. Secondly, terminate the contract and bring the services back in house. This option was not pursued, as it was deemed unaffordable (as set out in Appendix 1). In addition, this option would increase the Council's exposure to equal pay issues and require the Council to rebuild a management structure and recruit staff, depending on the mix of human resources transferring back to the Council under TUPE.
6. Finally, terminate the contract and re-procure the relevant services. This would involve many of the costs associated with bringing the services back in house and would also require budgetary provision to be made for the cost of the procurement process. It would also probably be a more difficult process to manage than bringing the services back in house, there would be a substantial lead time and there is no guarantee that the services could be re-procured at lower cost. Consequently, this option has not been pursued.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

INTRODUCTION

7. In view of the need to review the SSP as set out in paragraph 1 above and the dismissal of the alternative options, negotiations commenced with Capita in 2012 with a view to reducing the cost of the SSP contract and reshaping the contract to improve the long term flexibility and governance of the SSP. There were two submissions from Capita of its "SSP Relaunch" proposal, one in September 2012 and the other in November 2012 following discussions on the initial submission.

The absence of competitive tension during the negotiations has resulted in a longer elapsed time to reach acceptable terms to the Council.

8. The negotiations have focused on:
- Realising immediate savings in the fixed charges by extending the contract by five years and by agreeing changes to service delivery
 - Enabling future savings by introducing flexible charging mechanisms, which would allow the charges to flex with changes in demand for the outsourced services.
 - Ensuring limited termination costs after the expiry of the current contract period in September 2017 should the Council choose to terminate the contract after that point in time.
9. As an interim measure during the course of the negotiations, savings initiatives from the SSP Relaunch proposal, which could be developed and delivered relatively easily, have already been implemented under the SSP contract change control procedure to take effect in accordance with the budget set for the current financial year, 2013/14. These “early implementation” savings are set out in Appendix 1 to this report and they will continue to accrue regardless of the decision that is made in respect of a five year contract extension.
10. An additional interim measure adopted from the SSP Relaunch proposal has been the cessation of service level agreements between the Council and schools for the provision of IT Services and HR and Payroll Services with effect from 1 April 2013. This has removed from the SSP contract the work required to support these service level agreements and Capita now seeks to contract directly with schools for the provision of the relevant services. This has reduced the fixed charges under the SSP contract which balances the related loss to the Council of income from schools. More importantly, the change has transferred to Capita the risk of schools choosing not to take up the services.

CURRENT SHAPE OF THE PROPOSAL

11. The detailed drafting to reflect final agreed negotiations for the SSP Relaunch is still continuing at the point of writing this report. It is substantially complete and has been subject to legal review on behalf of the Council by Sharpe Prichard, the solicitors who originally advised the Council on the initial award of the SSP contract. However, the documents are still subject to an internal commercial review by Capita and it is not known whether this will raise further substantial issues. The recommendations in this report are written on the basis that it will not.
12. Subject to the caveat in the previous paragraph, the result of the negotiations on the remaining savings, relating to services currently in scope of the SSP contract, and other commercial issues is that an extended contract, in conjunction with the changes to service delivery proposed in this report, would deliver the following benefits to the Council in addition to those already secured through the “early implementation” savings:
- Forecast net savings for the Council of £24M over the period from 1 December 2013 (the intended date of implementation of the contract extension) to 30 September 2022, as set out in Appendix 1 to this

report.

- Flexible charging mechanisms to enable the Council to deal with changing demand for many of the services delivered under the SSP in the future in a way which is more appropriate than the originally structured contract to the less predictable environment we now find ourselves in and offer the potential for future savings.
 - Revised measure of indexation to be applied to the charges, which will better balance risk through the more accurate reflection of the inflationary pressures that affect the cost of providing the services.
 - Manageable termination compensation from September 2017, which would not inhibit the City Council from considering terminating the contract at or after that point.
 - Developing One Guildhall Square (OGS) as a regional business centre, creating employment opportunities for local people.
 - Revised governance as summarised in paragraph 55 to 56 and set out in more detail in Appendix 2 to this report, which would reinforce co-operation on the part of both parties to work together to leverage benefits in support of the Council's change programme and key strategic priorities.
 - Corporate social responsibility (CSR) commitments from Capita, including a commitment that the changes in the SSP Relaunch proposal will be "jobs neutral", that is any job losses arising from the savings initiatives will be off set with work for other clients delivered in OGS. In the past 12 months Capita has brought 95 FTE jobs into the City.
 - Settlement of several long outstanding commercial issues within IT Services, including responsibility for upgrading software infrastructure, charging for the impact of projects on support requirements, the impact of third parties on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and late delivery of the disaster recovery (DR) service and of Lagan (CRM) integrations.
 - Innovation and transformation in Customer Services and IT services.
 - Revised Profit Sharing / Gain Sharing arrangements as set out in Appendix 1.
13. The above benefits are not dependent on the outsourcing of additional services to Capita and more detail is set out in Appendix 1 to this report, which contains the key commercial and financial considerations for the SSP.
14. The following paragraphs provide additional information on some of the benefits which will be delivered

Flexible Charging

15. The SSP contract is currently based largely on fixed service charges, which are subject to a review procedure when there is a departure from the stated assumptions and / or volumes for a particular service area.
- However, the review procedure does not produce an automatic result and any outcome is often dependent on the result of protracted negotiation. One of the objectives for the Council in negotiations on the SSP Relaunch has been to achieve greater control and influence over the charges. The aim has been that a greater proportion of the fixed service charge should be subject

to flexible charging mechanisms resulting in a more automatic adjustment to the fixed charge as service drivers or volumes vary through agreed bands. This is not the same as variable charging, which constantly varies according to volumes and unit prices. Flexible charging mechanisms would exist in the following service areas:

- IT Services – Based on volumes of end user devices, data lines to supported sites, home-working and software or applications supported.
 - HR and Payroll Services – Based on volumes within discrete parts of the service, such as payroll and learning & development.
 - Customer Services – Based on contact time on telephone calls, in Gateway and on mail handling.
 - Local Taxation and Benefit Services – Based on volumes of properties for council tax, business premises for NNDR and applications for benefits.
16. The application of a flexible mechanism for Procurement Services was considered and it was decided to maintain but strengthen the current process rather than introduce a volumes driven method which is not easily applicable. At present each year a work plan is agreed with Capita by the Head of Property, Procurement and Contract Management to match the resources within the contract price. This work programme can be expanded and any additional costs flow through to the Council but the resources cannot be reduced. As part of the negotiations this has been reviewed to ensure that the programme can be both expanded and contracted. Whilst the resulting financial impact is not be driven by an automatic mechanism, the aim is that the Council has a degree of control to manage the cost of this service as we move forward.
17. Property Services (to a greater extent) and Print Services (entirely) are already charged for on a variable basis and so flexible charging has not been further pursued in these service areas. In addition, it is considered that the Health & Safety Service and the Occupational Health Service do not lend themselves to flexible charging.
18. The adoption of more flexible charging mechanisms will increase the Council's ability to plan for the consequences of changes in the way it operates in the future. Further information about the potential financial impact of these mechanisms is set out in Appendix 1.

Termination Compensation

19. Capita is not seeking to extend the time span of the existing obligation of the Council to pay compensation for loss of profit on termination for convenience (that is termination at the election of the Council).
20. Capita will however require a separate provision for "clawback" of profit which it is proposed will be smoothed. The draft payment obligations that would arise on early termination under this new provision are set out in Appendix 1.
21. Consideration should be given to putting aside a portion of the savings equal to the profit "clawback" payable in 2017, to fund termination of the contract at that point. This would enable the Council to retain ultimate flexibility at that

point in the event that that the anticipated benefits of the SSP Relaunch do not materialise. Any decision to set aside a portion of the savings can be addressed as part of the development of the budget for 2014/15 or future years.

Regional Business Centre

22. Capita aims to create a shared service centre within OGS for the delivery of services to other customers and has already secured business from the London Borough of Lambeth, Hart District Council, Havant Borough Council and the Houses of Parliament, thereby creating jobs in Southampton.
23. However, the certainty of service delivery in OGS required by further prospective clients of Capita is undermined by the current SSP contract having less than five years to run, making OGS less attractive than other Capita business centres such as Swindon or West Sussex. New service contracts are rarely let for less than five years and typically are let for between five and ten years.
24. An extension of the SSP contract period to 30 September 2022 would make OGS much more attractive to prospective Capita customers as a shared service centre, offering greater opportunities for new jobs and investment in Southampton. Capita has committed to remain in OGS, if the contract extension proceeds and the Council will benefit from this.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

25. Capita is already an active participant in Business Solent and is represented on the board of Business South. The CSR obligations which it is prepared to take fulfil within the SSP Relaunch price are set out in Appendix 6 to this report.
26. These activities will provide real opportunities for local people to gain experience of working for a FTSE100 company and support local business. Local jobs in Capita would be publicised as alternative employment opportunities for displaced Council employees.

CHANGES TO SERVICES

27. The main changes to each of the services (with the exception of Property Services which is unchanged as a result of the Relaunch) are summarised below.

HR and Payroll Services

28. Payroll Automation - Capita would, through online forms and / or bulk upload spreadsheets, provide automated processing by Council managers of overtime, timesheets, expenses, casual claims, sickness and restructures (redundancy and post changes). These automated processes would be mandated to the exclusion of manual systems in order to eliminate double keying; (the second time by Capita).
29. Payroll Simplification - The existing five payrolls, (600 weekly payees; 450 fortnightly payees; 25 claims payees; 100 foster carers etc payees; 5,000 monthly payees), could be simplified to a single monthly payroll. This would reduce the administrative burden on the Capita payroll service and be in line with the practice of most local authorities. Full consultation will be

undertaken with the unions before implementation is progressed and transitional arrangements would assist staff to transfer to monthly salary payments. This consultation will be undertaken as part of the review of Pay and Allowances.

30. Job Evaluation - The current NJC job evaluation process would be reviewed and the administration required from Capita and the Council would be reduced by adopting a core suite of job descriptions within job categories and job families. Job evaluations would only have to be carried out by exception. A full review of the Council's roles and existing job descriptions would be undertaken in consultation with the unions. Progression of this change will be undertaken as part of the review of Pay and Allowances.
31. Learning & Development - The service would be re-designed to be more flexible in response to the needs of the Council and be provided with 20% less FTE resource by Capita.

Customer Services

32. Channel Shift Through Web Self-Service - This would be based on internet technology, to enable customers to use a quicker and more efficient channel, available 24/7, to access those of the Council's services which are suited to this type of transaction. Capita would use this technology to put online its existing automated processes for service lines within the Contact Centre, thereby driving down the call handling time in the call centre, enabling Capita to offer a saving in fixed charges in the SSP Relaunch pricing. This technology is also key to transformation to the new target operating model in the People Directorate, and will allow other areas of the Council to exploit channel shift to drive savings in back office processes.
33. Gateway Refurbishment - In order to facilitate the movement of customers to the web-based channel, Gateway would be refurbished and self serve terminals installed. This work is planned for 2014.
34. E-Forms - All relevant paper forms would be replaced with an electronic version and the paper version would only be available on request. Gateway would no longer offer to check paper forms as they are handed in by customers. These measures would encourage the use of online forms or other automated processes.
35. Automated Switchboard - All telephone customers would go through a full interactive voice response (IVR) solution with messages to encourage use of the web self-serve channel or other automated processes, before an option was presented to talk to a customer service agent (CSA). It would therefore take longer to speak to a CSA, if that is what the customer wanted or needed to do. Many organisations, including the London Borough of Lambeth for whom Capita provide customer services in OGS, now use automated telephony for their switchboard function. This is a proven technology, developed over many years.
36. Face to Face Appointments - Except for vulnerable persons, face to face appointments with a CSA would only be available to customers after triage in Gateway or on calling the Customer Service Centre (CSC). After triage, appointments would only be booked for a later date. The objective of the triage process would be to ensure that face to face appointments were

offered only when the relevant process had to be done in Gateway. For example, because there was not a relevant online process or other automated process, signatures were genuinely required or verification by a CSA was required of proofs in documentation provided by the customer. Internet booking would not be available for face to face appointments, because it would undermine channel shift to web-based services. Capita staff would be trained to recognise contacts involving vulnerable persons, who would attract a same day face to face appointment. Any customer (or other person involved in their enquiry) would be included in the category of vulnerable persons who:

- was unable, (as opposed to unwilling), to use the online processes or other automated processes for self-service;
- was facing an imminent threat to their safety, (including domestic violence or homelessness); or
- would face an increased risk of loss of or damage to personal property or personal injury from delayed action.

IT Services

37. **Flexible Staffing** - Capita would have the flexibility to deploy staff on the provision of IT Services from both inside and outside the administrative boundary of the Council. Exceptions to this would be Capita's Head of IT Operations, the local Engagement Office (account and project management) and the most complex infrastructure and network support work, all of which would continue to be provided from OGS. Also, projects would be charged on an agreed set of rates, wherever the work was carried out.
38. **Investment** - Capita would invest in technology and business process re-engineering, including online benefits forms and greater integration of Lagan CRM with the Council's website, to promote the web-self-serve as a channel for Council services.
39. **Cloud / Shared Support Services** - Capita would virtualise 80% of the Wintel servers by 1 May 2016, consolidating applications on fewer servers, to enable migration of software applications supported under the SSP to the "Cloud" or to a shared service centre off-site and outside Southampton. The migration would be subject to Capita obtaining the Council's approval, on a case by case basis, of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) relating to the relevant application after migration and of subsequent exit arrangements, (including the cost of continued support on a scaleable subscription basis following expiry of the SSP contract, if the Council so elected). The process would provide the Council with a robust and scaleable IT infrastructure and its realisation would be at Capita's risk.
40. **New Software or Applications (or major upgrades)** - The Council will be able to procure software from the Cloud from other providers, subject to an evaluation exercise to determine whether in the Council's view that offers best value in comparison with the software being supported by Capita their infrastructure. This enables the Council to make savings from moving to Cloud services for upgrades of the major applications for which it retains licensing responsibility and for new applications.

41. End User Computing Devices (EUDs) - The volumes would be rebased and compared quarterly with an assumed glidepath for reduction of their numbers. There would be adjustment of the IT Service fixed charge depending on whether the volumes are below or above the glidepath at the quarterly review. This will enable the Council to make further savings from careful management of volumes within the desktop estate.
42. Refresh Budget - The budget for refresh of EUDs would be returned to the Council. The Council would be able to maintain technological currency through a service catalogue offering the latest technological options, to align with the Council's future mobile workforce strategy and enable lowering of IT device costs. This is a process that the Council will need to carefully manage and plan in order to maintain the cost of the desktop estate and associated hardware within affordable bounds and ensure it is fit for purpose. To support the management of this across financial years it proposed that an IT Development Reserve is approved and maintained as explained in more detail in paragraph 65.
43. Refresh Cycles - These would be extended for EUDs, servers and network equipment as follows:
- With retrospective effect from 1 April 2013, EUDs would be refreshed every 5 years (currently 4 years).
 - With retrospective effect from 1 April 2013, servers would be refreshed every 6 years (currently every 5 years).
 - With effect from 1 December 2013, network equipment would be refreshed every 6 years (currently every 5 years).
44. Software Upgrades - Under the current contract both parties have been in dispute about the responsibility for funding the upgrading of software. As part of the Relaunch, software upgrades would be provided on an agreed set of supported applications. Capita would also complete a programme to upgrade the infrastructure software, including Email to Microsoft Exchange 2013 from Microsoft Exchange 2003 and Microsoft Office to 2013 from 2003 for all EUDs during 2014, with a target completion date of 31 May 2014.
45. The KPI performance mechanism would remain substantially the same although measurement of performance against monthly IT Performance Indicators and KPIs would be the average monthly performance over a rolling period of three months rather than month by month.

Local Taxation and Benefits Services

46. New Technology – New technology would be implemented by Capita to enable housing benefit and council tax reduction (CTR) claims, together with notification of change of circumstances, to be made online. Assumptions have been made about the percentage of all claims and notifications made using online forms and adjustment to the Relaunch Proposal pricing will be made if they are not realised.
47. E-Forms - Online forms for claims and notifications have been implemented in a number of other Capita sites, most notably in Sheffield, where 98.8% of new claims are now made online. There are significant benefits to the

claimant, as the form cannot be submitted until all the correct information has been included, which prevents claims being delayed. Currently, if all the relevant information is not provided on a paper form, there can be delays, as assessors have to write to claimants for the information. Additionally, as the information would be collected electronically, it would be more efficiently processed by the Capita's administration team, saving time and errors.

Procurement Services

48. A proposal has been developed to give the Council central visibility and control over the procurement of the element of spend, which is currently devolved to Directorates (sub £100,000 spend). The total estimated value of this spend is in the region of £35M per annum, (with almost £22M falling within the General Fund). The proposal is to manage this spend centrally through Capita Procurement Services through a Southampton based team of purchasing specialists. This service would provide an operational and commercial solution allowing the Council to procure its sub £100,000 spend in the most cost effective and operationally efficient manner.
49. The new service will provide the Council with a fully managed Order and Quotation Management Service at no service or financial risk to the Council. Capita is willing to implement the service with a guarantee of cost neutrality after five years - a Savings Guarantee, "Promise" - whereby Capita will refund its fee for this service if it does not save the City Council in excess of this amount at the end of the five year term.
50. The provision of this service should deliver improvements and benefits in terms of savings, greater efficiencies and improved controls. A key benefit will be the ability to better influence sub £100,000 spend in terms of sustainable procurement and local sourcing. The finalisation of the proposal has come too late for it to be implemented as part of the SSP Relaunch, because there is a considerable amount of work involved in drafting and agreeing the necessary amendment of the SSP Contract. Therefore, a separate delegated authority is sought in relation to this matter.
51. This service will deliver sustainable procurement benefits across the Council and the estimated net savings which will accrue to the General Fund from 2015/16 have been included in the Executive's draft budget proposals which will be approved by Cabinet on 19 November 2013.

OTHER CHANGES

Performance Management

52. Ideally a full and comprehensive review of performance measures would have been undertaken as part of the Relaunch, but resources and time did not allow this to be completed before the Relaunch date. A high level review of the performance measures has however been undertaken. It is planned to hold a review of KPIs and other performance measures annually and the first such in depth review will take place in January 2014.
53. In the meantime, the Relaunch would see the removal of a performance measure originally intended to measure customer satisfaction across the partnership as a whole, which has proved costly and resource intensive to operate with little benefit. In future we will focus on customer satisfaction

measures within individual service areas.

54. A new category of measures will be created in January 2014, namely Key Strategic Indicators (KSIs). It is intended that KSIs will monitor the overall health and state of the Partnership relationship and support the overall objectives of the Council. For example KSIs will be created around the apprenticeships, volunteering and jobs commitments contained within the Relaunch proposals.

Governance Arrangements

55. The partnership will be re-launched and more streamlined governance arrangements will be put in place with focused responsibilities at different levels as set out in Appendix 2. These arrangements will centre around a Strategic Partnership board (SPB) which will meet twice each year and shall be made up of key members of the Executive, a representative from the opposition, senior officers and provider representatives. Key functions of the SPB will be to oversee the strategic operations of the SSP, set strategic direction, consider new partnership initiatives, receive and approve the Annual Report and consider and resolve issues escalated to the SPB.
56. A number of operational level boards will operate under, and report by exception to the SPB. Principally these will be:
- Partnership Management Board, will meet monthly and will oversee the operational aspects of the SSP.
 - Service Area Reviews (SARs) will meet monthly and will review the business plan and in depth operational running of individual service areas.
 - Cross Partnership Review Board (CPRB) will meet monthly and will focus on commercial issues, risks and communications across the SSP.

FUTURE SAVINGS

57. Capita recognises there will be regular reviews in the future to find further savings from the SSP contract.

ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS

58. The Relaunch Proposal contained a number of suggested changes which were not progressed and these are set out in Appendix 1.

CONSULTATION

59. The Council has received legal advice from Sharpe Pritchard, solicitors, on the form of consultation which should be undertaken in connection with this decision. They advised how the consultation should be conducted in such a way as to satisfy the requirements of both best value and equalities legislation, which has meant focusing on the proposed contract extension and on the proposed changes in Customer Services and in Local Taxation and Benefits Services. The best value and equalities consultations are set out in Appendix 4 to this report and they have been posted on the Council's website since 10 July 2013. The responses to the consultation exercises, together with an analysis and summary are also set out in detail in Appendix 4.

60. An Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) has also been prepared which is Appendix 3 to this report. The original ESIA was drafted prior to the consultation so that the consultation process could be guided by it. It has subsequently been developed and updated to take into account comments received and the consultation responses.

Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC)

61. OSMC approved at their meeting on 16 October 2013 the following recommendations:
- That the Executive encourage Capita to consider how they can develop their Corporate Social Responsibility offer in Southampton.
 - That the Executive explore opportunities for additional services to be added to the Capita contract as soon as possible, where advantageous for the Council to do so.
 - That the Leader be requested, during further negotiations, to encourage Capita to sign up to the Council's Living Wage pledge.
 - That membership of the SPB includes a member of the opposition.
 - That a list of the current Capita contract KPI's be circulated to OSMC.
 - That in recognition of the reputational risk to the Council and the channel shift proposals, the developing KSIs and KPIs place an emphasis on customer service.
62. OSMC's recommendations have been taken into account in subsequent negotiations and updates are as follows:
- Corporate Social Responsibility – Further dialogue with Capita to develop the social responsibility aspects of the SSP has secured the following:
 - Allow its employees working on the SSP 519 volunteering days per Contract Year to work in the Southampton community via the Provider's employee volunteering programme.
 - Run one event per quarter in support of the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) programme and employability skills initiatives in schools
 - Capita has implemented a new policy to support reservists for the armed forces, where any individual undertaking this role would be entitled to ten days paid leave per year for training.
 - Capita will run a second IT innovation fair for local businesses during Contract Year 9 (2016).
 - Additional Services - As explained by the Leader of the Council at OSMC, the Executive will explore further opportunities to add additional services to the Capita contract, where it is advantageous to do so, after signing of the Relaunch.
 - Living Wage - Further dialogue has resulted in the Council and Capita reaching an agreement which will see all staff working within OGS being paid the Living Wage.
 - Strategic Partnership Board - The governance provisions at Appendix 2 have been amended to include the Leader of the largest opposition group

(or their nominated representative) on the board.

- Key Performance Indicators - These were circulated to OSMC members on 28 October 2013.
- Customer Service - A full review of the KPIs and PIs is scheduled for January 2014 and customer service will be included in the review. Some members at OSMC expressed concern at the quality of some of the responses received by members of the public to their telephone enquiries to the Customer Service Centre. This is one of the most difficult aspects of the service to bring within a performance measurement regime, but there is already a KPI which enables us to focus on the quality of responses to telephone calls by checking the quality of a cross sample of recorded responses. It is intended that this should continue.

63. Since the presentation of the shape of the Relaunch proposals to OSMC on 16 October 2013, a number of outstanding issues have been finalised and for clarity these are set out in detail in Appendix 1. Issues which have been finalised include the application of the Living Wage, flexibility mechanisms and new arrangements for profit sharing and gain sharing. Detailed drafting on some of these points which have only just been concluded is underway as set out in paragraph 11. It is substantially complete and has been subject to legal review on behalf of the Council by Sharpe Prichard, the solicitors who originally advised the Council on the initial award of the SSP contract. However, the documents are still subject to an internal commercial review by Capita and it is not known whether this will raise further substantial issues. The recommendations in this report are written on the basis that it will not.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

64. The key financial and commercial considerations of the SSP Relaunch are set out in detail in the confidential Appendix 1 to this report.
65. The budget for refresh of EUDs would be returned to the Council under the SSP Relaunch proposals and responsibility would pass to the Council to maintain technological currency as set out in paragraph 42. In addition, investment required for infrastructure software and some telephony hardware will be the responsibility of the Council to fund. This is a process that the Council will need to carefully manage and plan in order to maintain the cost of the desktop estate, associated infrastructure software and some telephony hardware within affordable bounds and ensure it is fit for purpose. This will require additions to be made to the General Fund Capital Programme on an ongoing basis. The scale and timing of capital expenditure in the medium term has not yet been fully scoped, but the funding for this which has been factored into the financial assessment of the Relaunch, will need to be set aside to enable effective planning to be undertaken over the medium term and it is therefore proposed that an IT Development Reserve is created for this purpose. More detail is set out in Appendix 1.
66. As part of the SSP Relaunch the mechanism for the payment of employers pension contributions to the Hampshire Pension Fund for TUPE staff will

change. Under the current contract these payments are made by Capita and included in the charges to the Council. However, a specific amount was included within the current contract charges to cover these costs which would then be reconciled to the actual payments at the end of the contract. Ultimate responsibility for these costs and hence any risk remained with the Council. Under the SSP Relaunch these payments will be removed from the charges and instead dealt with as a “pass through” cost so the need for any reconciliation will end. The Council will need to budget for these costs directly and due to a level of uncertainty around the timing and scale of these costs will need to make use of a reserve to manage expenditure over the term of the contract and smooth the impact on the General Fund revenue budget in any one year. It is therefore proposed that a Pension Reserve is created for this purpose. More detail is set out in Appendix 1.

67. Should the decision be made on 20 November 2013 to proceed with the extension of the SSP contract with Capita Business Services Limited by five years with a new expiry date of 30 September 2022 (extended from 30 September 2017), subject to the changes to the contract described in this report being made simultaneously, further work will be required to reconfigure budgets. This work will need to ensure that budgets reflect the new contractual arrangements and that provision is made for any transfer of financial responsibility from Capita to the Council.

Property/Other

68. The proposed contract extension would secure continued occupation by Capita of accommodation in OGS until 30 September 2022.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

69. The legal powers to pursue the course of action recommended in this report are contained in the Local Government Acts 1972, 1999 and 2000 and the Localism Act 2011. Both Full Council and the Executive will need to make their decisions in accordance with the Council’s normal statutory duties, for example the duty to achieve best value in the manner in which it discharges its functions under the Local Government Act 1999, section 3 of which requires the Council as a best value authority to:-
- “...make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. [Local Government Act 1999 – Section 3].

Other Legal Implications:

70. All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:
- proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
 - due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;
 - respect for human rights;
 - a presumption in favour of openness, accountability and transparency;
 - setting out what options have been considered;

- setting out reasons for the decision; and
 - clarity of aims and desired outcomes.
71. In exercising discretion, the decision maker, (in this case, the Council and Executive), must:
- understand the law that regulates the decision making power and gives effect to it. The decision-maker must direct itself properly in law;
 - take into account all relevant matters (those matters which the law requires the authority as a matter of legal obligation to take into account);
 - leave out of account irrelevant considerations;
 - act for a proper purpose, exercising its powers for the public good;
 - not reach a decision which no authority acting reasonably could reach, (also known as the "rationality" or "taking leave of your senses" principle);
 - comply with the rule that local government finance is to be conducted on an annual basis. Save to the extent authorised by Parliament, 'live now, pay later' and forward funding are unlawful; and
 - act with procedural propriety in accordance with the rules of fairness.
72. To be lawful, a decision:-
- if taken in full Council, Committee or sub-committee must comply with the principle of being reached by a majority of Councillors present and voting at a properly constituted meeting;
 - be one which the decision-maker is empowered or obliged to take, otherwise it is ultra vires;
 - not offend against Wednesbury reasonableness;
 - if intended to secure action (as opposed, for example, to a resolution merely expressing the Council's collective view on an issue), be capable of execution or will be of no effect; and
 - not purport to undo what has already been done irrevocably (but it can rescind an earlier decision where this is feasible).

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

73. A Policy Framework decision of Full Council is required prior to the Executive deciding whether or not to enter into a contract to extend the SSP contract. This is consistent with the decisions made prior to entering into the SSP Contract in 2007 and reflects the legal regime applicable to a decision of this nature given its impact on the Council's budget and service delivery arrangements. This report recommends that Full Council approves as a Policy Framework decision the extension of the contract with Capita Business Services Ltd to 30 September 2022, detailed terms and conditions to be delegated to the Director of Corporate Resources, together with the Chief Financial Officer and the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services. The Executive would then implement that decision.

KEY DECISION? Yes (Executive decision)

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Financial Summary Report (Confidential)
2.	Governance Arrangements
3.	Equality and Safety Impact Assessment
4.	Report on Consultation Exercises
5.	Delivery to Date under the SSP
6.	Corporate Social Responsibility

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	N/A
2.	

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	Yes
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None	
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Document is Confidential

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GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The governance arrangements define how the City Council and Capita work together in partnership. They are designed to ensure the Council retains control of the strategic direction and priorities for the partnership and that the partnership delivers the agreed outcomes.

As part of the Relaunch revised governance arrangements have been developed which will reinforce co-operation on the part of both parties to work together to leverage benefits in support of the Council's change programme and key strategic priorities;

The revised arrangements are set out below:

1. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

1.1 The City Council and the Provider shall establish and maintain throughout the Contract Period the following boards and reviews, through which the governance of the partnering relationship between the City Council and the Provider shall be managed:-

1.1.1 the Strategic Partnership Board ("the SPB")

1.1.2 the Partnership Management Board ("the PMB")

1.1.3 the Service Area Reviews ("the SARs")

1.1.4 the Cross Partnership Review ("the CPR")

1.2 The Provider shall also attend the City Council's Scrutiny Board upon request by the City Council.

2. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

2.1 Role

2.1.1 The role of the SPB is to set the overall vision and strategic direction for the SSP.

2.2 Membership

2.2.1 The membership of the SPB shall comprise:-

2.2.1.1. City Council representatives:-

- City Council Leader or their nominee
- Portfolio Member for Resources
- Leader of the largest Opposition Group or their nominee
- Chief Executive
- Director of Corporate Services
- Chief Financial Officer

- Head of Contract Management
- 2.2.1.2. Provider representatives:-
- Managing Director of Capita Local Government Services
 - Regions South Director (Local Government Services)
 - Regions South Finance Director
 - Southampton SSP Partnership Director
- 2.2.2 The SPB members listed above may be amended by agreement, to reflect organisational changes and to deliver the functions of the SPB.
- 2.2.3 A member of the SPB may appoint an alternate (who may be another representative of that party).
- 2.3 Functions**
- 2.3.1 The SPB's functions are to:-
- 2.3.1.1. set, and be the custodian of, the strategic objectives, values and culture of the SSP (including the partnership success criteria) and to review these on an annual basis;
 - 2.3.1.2. set and review targets associated with SSP savings and growth and development of the SSP;
 - 2.3.1.3. discuss areas for potential expansion of the Services, including the introduction of new service elements in accordance with the Change Control Procedure or Further Services Approval Procedure set out in Schedule 14 and 15 to this Agreement;
 - 2.3.1.4. identify and consider new business and trading opportunities for the SSP, including how parties can collaborate to realise benefits;
 - 2.3.1.5. agree and trigger communication of key messages about the SSP;
 - 2.3.1.6. consider and resolve issues escalated by the Partnership Management Board;
 - 2.3.1.7. promote continuous improvement by challenging strategic performance of each Service Area;
 - 2.3.1.8. promote the SSP and the Services with key external stakeholders;
 - 2.3.1.9. receive and approve the Annual Service Report (as set out in Schedule 13) on SSP performance, service improvement targets and any other initiatives agreed by the parties.
- 2.4 Chair**
- 2.4.1 The role of Chair of the SPB shall alternate between the City Council's Chief Executive and the Provider's Managing Director of Local Government Services (or their deputy where appropriate).
- 2.5 Frequency of meetings**
- 2.5.1 The SPB shall meet twice each year or as agreed by the parties.
- 2.6 Minutes**
- 2.6.1 Minutes of all at meetings of the SPB shall be kept by the City Council and

copies circulated to the Provider, normally within 10 Business Days of the meeting. A full set of minutes shall be kept by the City Council and shall be open to inspection by the Provider at any time upon request.

3. PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT BOARD

3.1 Role

3.1.1 The PMB shall report to the SPB.

3.2 Membership

3.2.1 The membership of the PMB shall comprise:-

3.2.1.1. City Council representatives:-

- Head of Finance and IT
- Head of Contract Management
- Contract and Governance Manager
- Commercial Manager

3.2.1.2. Provider representatives:-

- Regions South Finance Director
- Southampton SSP Partnership Director
- Commercial Manager

3.2.2 The PMB members listed above may be amended by agreement, to reflect organisational changes and to deliver the functions of the PMB.

3.2.3 A representative on the PMB may appoint and remove an alternate (who may be another representative of that party).

3.3 Functions

3.3.1 The PMB is responsible to the SPB and its functions are to:-

3.3.1.1. oversee the day to day management of the SSP;

3.3.1.2. ensure the SSP strategic objectives are being implemented through the Service Delivery Plans and such other documentation as may be required from time to time, including the encouragement of continuous improvement and innovation across the SSP;

3.3.1.3. manage the performance of the SSP and the relationship between the parties;

3.3.1.4. manage operational elements of the SSP including priorities, delivery, people and culture, financial and strategic alignment;

3.3.1.5. on an exception basis, monitor Monthly performance of the Services against KPIs, volumes and delivery of programmes and projects;

3.3.1.6. ensure resources are aligned to deliver SSP priorities agreed by the SPB;

3.3.1.7. maintain a positive commercially sustainable position for both parties;

- 3.3.1.8. develop and maintain SSP risk register and ensure appropriate risk mitigations are in place;
- 3.3.1.9. ensure that the cultures and behaviours set out by the SPB are adopted by the SSP at all levels within the organisations of the parties;
- 3.3.1.10. resolve outstanding issues identified from the Service Area Reviews;
- 3.3.1.11. escalate issues to SPB where resolution cannot be agreed;
- 3.3.1.12. prepare and submit the Annual Service Report (as set out in Schedule 13) to the SPB;
- 3.3.1.13. discuss contractual commitments and change requests; agree and submit proposals for Further Services to the SPB.

3.4 Chair

- 3.4.1 The role of Chair for the PMB shall alternate between the City Council Head of Contract Management and Capita's Southampton SSP Partnership Director (or their deputy where appropriate).

3.5 Frequency of meetings

- 3.5.1 The PMB shall meet Monthly or as agreed by the parties.

3.6 Minutes

- 3.6.1 Minutes of all meetings of the PRB shall be kept by the City Council and copies circulated to the Provider, normally within 10 Business Days the meeting. A full set of minutes shall be kept by the City Council and shall be open to inspection by the Provider at any time upon request.

4. THE SERVICE AREA REVIEWS (SARs)

4.1 Role

- 4.1.1 The SARs are the forum for the City Council and Provider to discuss service specific performance and issues.

4.2 Membership

- 4.2.1 A SAR shall be constituted for each of the Services Areas and its membership shall comprise:-

- 4.2.1.1. City Council representatives:-

- client representative
- representative of Head of Contract Management

- 4.2.1.2. Provider members:

- Head of Service

- 4.2.2 Additional representatives from the City Council and/or Provider may also attend regularly or when required to contribute to specific discussions.

4.3 Functions

4.3.1 The SARs report to the PMB and their functions are to:-

- 4.3.1.1. agree the business plan for the Service Area for each Contract Year;
- 4.3.1.2. review service management and operation against the business plan for the current Contract Year;
- 4.3.1.3. share information regarding changes for either party which may have an impact on the Services, including availability of resources and their deployment
- 4.3.1.4. monitor performance of the Services including identifying any areas of the Services which are underperforming or where the Provider is failing to achieve KPIs or PIs;
- 4.3.1.5. agree actions to improve service performance and mitigate risk when required;
- 4.3.1.6. review the Services against the Output Specification;
- 4.3.1.7. discuss and consider options for cross-service working;
- 4.3.1.8. discuss and implement continuous improvement, innovation, best practice and learning opportunities associated with the Services and across the SSP, including identifying areas where new applications of technology or innovation may be of benefit to the City Council or the Provider;
- 4.3.1.9. manage delivery of service specific projects, including receiving and reviewing highlight reports and service improvement programmes within the Services, ensuring that interdependencies between the Services and other City Council services are identified and managed and dealing with escalated project issues;
- 4.3.1.10. act in accordance with the objectives, values and culture set by the SPB;
- 4.3.1.11. escalate issues to the PMB when resolution cannot be reached by a SAR;
- 4.3.1.12. continually review the Services to ensure that value for money is consistently achieved, options for savings are identified and implemented and the Services are customer-focused;
- 4.3.1.13. review and discuss the current relevant Change Controls.

4.4 Chair

4.4.1 The role of Chair for each SAR shall alternate between the City Council client representative and the Provider's Head of Service (or their deputy where appropriate).

4.5 Frequency of meetings

4.5.1 The SARs shall meet Monthly or as agreed by the parties, with more frequent meetings at points of major transition or change.

4.6 **Minutes**

- 4.6.1 Minutes of all meetings of each SAR shall be kept by the City Council and copies circulated to the Provider, normally within 10 Business Days of the meeting. A full set of minutes shall be kept by the City Council and shall be open to inspection by the Provider at any time upon request.

5. **CROSS PARTNERSHIP REVIEW BOARD**

5.1 **Role**

- 5.1.1 The CPRB is the forum for the contract management representatives from the parties to discuss cross-SSP performance and delivery issues and themes.
- 5.1.2 The CPRB will initially focus on commercial/risk and communication.

5.2 **Membership**

- 5.2.1 The membership of the CPRB shall consist of contract management representatives from both parties.
- 5.2.2 Additional representatives from the City Council and/or Provider may also attend when required to contribute to specific discussions.

5.3 **Functions**

- 5.3.1 The CPRB reports to the PRB and its functions are to:-
 - 5.3.1.1. share information regarding changes for either party which may have an impact on cross-SSP delivery, including availability of resources and their deployment;
 - 5.3.1.2. monitor the effectiveness of the commercial and communication processes and agree improvements in accordance with SSP requirements;
 - 5.3.1.3. support and promote cross-service working, programmes and projects;
 - 5.3.1.4. review service provision to ensure best value and identify opportunities and monitor progress of savings;
 - 5.3.1.5. escalate issues to the PMB when resolution cannot be found;
 - 5.3.1.6. discuss and implement continuous improvement, innovation, best practice and learning opportunities, including identifying areas where new applications of technology or innovation may be of benefit to the City Council or the Provider;
 - 5.3.1.7. help to improve the perception of the SSP through stakeholder engagement, communications and cross-service planning;
 - 5.3.1.8. act in accordance with the objectives, values and culture set by the SPB;
 - 5.3.1.9. work towards additional objectives agreed by the parties.

5.4 **Chair**

- 5.4.1 The role of Chair for the CPRB shall alternate between the parties.

5.5 Frequency of meetings

- 5.5.1 The CPRB shall meet Quarterly or as agreed by the parties, with more frequent meetings when the requirements of the SSP dictate.

5.6 Minutes

- 5.6.1 Minutes of all meetings of the CPRB shall be kept by the City Council and copies circulated to the Provider, normally within 10 Business Days of the meeting. A full set of minutes shall be kept by the City Council and shall be open to inspection by the Provider at any time upon request.

6. AMENDMENT OF THE PARTNERING GOVERNANCE

- 6.1 The parties recognise that the partnering governance arrangements and structures set out in this Schedule will need to be reviewed regularly throughout the Contract Period, to ensure that they remain appropriate and workable.
- 6.2 This Schedule shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the PMB and, if appropriate, shall be amended through the Change Control Procedure.

7. STATUS OF GOVERNANCE MEETINGS

- 7.1 This Schedule is not intended to supplant or undermine the Change Control Procedure in Schedule 14 or the Further Services Approval Procedure in Schedule 15.
- 7.2 The governance boards and reviews established and maintained under this Schedule (including the individual members acting in their capacity as such) shall not have any authority to vary the provisions of the Agreement or to make any decision binding on the parties.
- 7.3 Neither shall either party rely on any act or omission in the governance boards or reviews (including those of the individual members acting in their capacity as such), so as to give rise to any waiver or personal bar in respect of any right, benefit or obligation of either party under this Agreement. No discussion, review or recommendation by the boards or reviews shall relieve the parties of any liability or vary any such liability or any right or benefit.
- 7.4 Where the boards suggest any Changes to the Services or to the Agreement, these will be referred to the Change Control Procedure. Where the boards suggest that any services be considered for implementation and delivery by the Provider as Further Services under the SSP, these will be referred to the Further Services Approval Procedure.

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The **public sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the council to better understand the potential impact of the budget proposals and consider mitigating action.

<p>Name or Brief Description of Proposal</p>	<p>Strategic Services Partnership (SSP) – Possible Extension of Contract with Capita on Revised Terms.</p>
<p>Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)</p>	<p>The SSP commenced in October 2007. It covers the following service areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Services: the front line contact with the council's customers through Gateway and the customer service centre, internal post and document management. • Human Resources & Payroll: recruitment, payroll, employee relations, health and safety, occupational health, learning & development, and strategy & reward. • Property Services: professional consultancy, project management, valuations, managing investments, accommodation strategy, repair and maintenance, highways and bridges, regulatory services and property records. • Procurement Services: undertaking procurement projects to source appropriate suppliers able to meet the Council's needs on high value projects. • Local Taxation & Benefits: administering the collection of council tax, national non-domestic rates and the calculation and payment of housing and council tax benefits. • IT Services: grouped into the four main areas of strategy and planning, service delivery, technical infrastructure and applications development and support. • Print Services: providing a one stop shop for all printing and printed related services, including a central photocopying service, finishing and any print related projects. <p>The contract was awarded to Capita for a period of ten years (until September 2017), with the option of a five year extension (until</p>

	<p>September 2022). The proposal under consideration includes awarding the five year extension, changes to the services provided and more flexible contract terms (including an overall reduction in cost).</p> <p>Other than Customer Services and Local Taxes and Benefits, the services provided by the SSP are internal support services.</p> <p><u>Customer Services Statistics</u></p> <p>Over the twelve months from June 2012 to May 2013 Gateway received 114,000 visits from customers. The biggest proportion were regarding benefits (32%), Council Tax (11%) and Parking (10%).</p> <p>Over the same period the call centre received 770,000 calls of which 177,000 (23%) were taken by the switchboard and so are directly affected by the automation proposals. Other areas with large call volumes are: Actionline (14%) Children and Families (11%), Council Tax (10%), Benefits (9%), Adult Services (6%).</p> <p>The council achieved four stars from the Socitm Better Connected Survey which evaluates council web sites on usability. Web site statistics have been somewhat distorted by the impact of the EU Directive on cookies. However Google Analytics shows the number of visitors over the six months to June 2013 as nearly 600,000. On average each visitor made 2.2 visits.</p> <p>Survey results show that 30% of visitors to the web site visit it at least monthly. 59% of visits are just to find information, but 18% of visits are to undertake a transaction. Satisfaction results are:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Very satisfied</td> <td>30.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quite satisfied</td> <td>22.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OK</td> <td>22.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quite dissatisfied</td> <td>10.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very dissatisfied</td> <td>13.7%</td> </tr> </table>	Very satisfied	30.2%	Quite satisfied	22.8%	OK	22.4%	Quite dissatisfied	10.9%	Very dissatisfied	13.7%
Very satisfied	30.2%										
Quite satisfied	22.8%										
OK	22.4%										
Quite dissatisfied	10.9%										
Very dissatisfied	13.7%										
<p>Summary of Impact and Issues</p>	<p>The main concern is that some people may be prevented or hindered in accessing services because of the changes proposed in Customer Services (i.e. online self-service and the automated switchboard).</p> <p>The people most likely to be affected are those that are “digitally excluded” through lack of access to the internet or through lack of skills and confidence. Digital exclusion is most likely in the elderly, disabled people and people in poverty. In Southampton the Housing Services tenant feedback questionnaire 2012 showed that 49% of respondents</p>										

never use the internet outside of work.

The trend towards reliance on the internet for administering the benefits system (both local and national Government) led the Southampton Citizen's Advice Bureau (along with the New Forest and Basingstoke Bureaux) to undertake a survey of their clients. 158 responses were received and the headline results are:

- 8% of all respondents said they had no access to the internet
- 35% said they were not confident about completing forms online
- 67% of those over 65 did not have access to the internet at home.
- 78% of those over 65 did not feel confident filling in forms online.

The problem is of course not unique to Southampton and the move to "digital by default" is taking place across national and local government. In particular Universal Credit must be claimed online and initiatives are underway to support people who may have difficulty with this approach.

In one of these the government is investing £50 million in an "assisted digital" project to address digital exclusion. It is aimed both at people without internet access at home and people lacking the skills and/or confidence to use computers. It is likely that a series of partnerships or consortia will form to run the project, involving organisations such as UK Online Centres; Citizens Advice; major high street retailers and digital access charities. A supplier workshop was recently held for potential suppliers.

Southampton City Council has a good record in providing public access to the internet in libraries and is currently providing 169,000 hours of IT access in libraries per year across 11 sites and 159 computers. Over 92% of people in the City live within 1 mile of a library and 100% live within 2 miles. Free public WiFi will also be operational by end July in five main district libraries and Thornhill library.

It is reported by the Libraries Service that the average job search application, form filling activity or subscription takes over 30 minutes of support for a user who is computer able but not skilled and using the system for the first time. For those who have not used a computer it can take 2-3 sessions. Libraries are well placed to provide such support and are contracted to provide support to 200 job seekers on computer skills this year. Additionally UKonline/Tinder Foundation have contracted them to introduce 200 people to computers and support 150 with greater IT skills within the learning centre.

The Libraries Service points out that it is imperative that libraries are

	<p>involved in early planning stages of initiatives to provide meaningful information on patterns of usage, the non-computer user's experience, support required based on existing initiatives (Universal Job Match, HomeBid, Schools Admissions) and how it can be delivered economically and what training is required. For any initiative to be successful, it needs to take into account the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library opening hours decreased by 11 % last year and are among the lowest for unitaries in the whole country • Library staffing has reduced by 36% in the last 5 years. • The additional time/cost to support further users.
<p>Potential Positive Impacts</p>	<p>For the majority of residents, who already have internet access, this will mean quicker service and better interactions with the council. For those who could use digital public services, but lack skills and confidence, support will be provided thus boosting their knowledge and confidence when using such services again in future. This has the potential to help towards reducing digital exclusion, for example by giving access to other benefits from being online, such as job adverts.</p> <p>A recent study by O2's Local Government Practice found that 48% of citizens like to use the internet, mobile apps or social media for essentials like paying for council tax or getting information on local services, however just 7% have used these technologies to communicate with their local authority in the last year – either because they are unavailable or don't provide the information and services they need. The study also noted that smartphone penetration is expected to reach 90% in the next three years.</p>
<p>Responsible Service Manager</p>	<p>Rob Harwood Head of Contract Management</p>
<p>Date</p>	

<p>Approved by Senior Manager</p>	<p>Andy Lowe Head of Finance and IT</p>
<p>Signature</p>	
<p>Date</p>	

Version control

Version	Date	
0.1	5 June 2013	Initial draft provided by Carol Harwood
0.2	16 July 2013	Updated by Paul Medland with statistical information and further detail.
0.3	30 July 2013	Incorporate comments from Carol Harwood. Include information from O2's Digital Community Study.
0.4	6 August 2013	Incorporate comments from Raymond Clowes. Tidy up for publishing on consultation website. Updates following meeting with Spectrum Centre for Independent Living.
0.5	7 November 2013	Updated following consultation results.
1.0	11 November 2013	Final following internal review and sign off

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions																														
<p>Age</p>	<p>The proposed changes may make it harder for some older people, who are statistically less likely to go online, to access services.</p> <p>The ONS statistical bulletin shows a high correlation between age and internet use. Almost all people aged 16 to 44 are internet users, but this reduces to just over 30% for those aged 75 and over.</p> <p>The survey of council tenants shows that for this population this trend is even more pronounced. 49% of respondents to the survey were aged 66+ which perhaps indicates that the impact on council tenants may well be more pronounced than in the general population of Southampton.</p> <p>The CAB survey also supports this view. CAB clients are likely to be Gateway customers. Their survey found that 67% of those over 65 did not have access to the internet at home and 78% did not feel confident filling in forms online.</p> <p>A survey of visitors to the council's web site gave the following age profile:</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr><td>80 and over</td><td>1.2%</td></tr> <tr><td>65-79</td><td>19.3%</td></tr> <tr><td>60-64</td><td>13.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>50-59</td><td>25.9%</td></tr> <tr><td>40-49</td><td>17.1%</td></tr> <tr><td>30-39</td><td>10.6%</td></tr> <tr><td>18-29</td><td>10.1%</td></tr> <tr><td>17 and under</td><td>2.1%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Total for 65+ is 20.5%</p> <p>For Gateway the profile is:</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr><td>75 and over</td><td>2.4%</td></tr> <tr><td>65-74</td><td>7.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>55-64</td><td>11.8%</td></tr> <tr><td>45-54</td><td>15.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>35-44</td><td>20.8%</td></tr> <tr><td>25-34</td><td>27.6%</td></tr> <tr><td>18-24</td><td>15.1%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Total for 65+ is 9.4%</p> <p>For the call centre the profile is:</p>	80 and over	1.2%	65-79	19.3%	60-64	13.5%	50-59	25.9%	40-49	17.1%	30-39	10.6%	18-29	10.1%	17 and under	2.1%	75 and over	2.4%	65-74	7.0%	55-64	11.8%	45-54	15.0%	35-44	20.8%	25-34	27.6%	18-24	15.1%	<p>Where the problem is one of access to equipment, information about sites with free access to the internet is already being promoted to all residents (for example in the last City View). The Council's libraries offer 2 hours free use per day.</p> <p>Support will be given in Gateway to people who need assistance with the self-service terminals. It is likely that a high proportion of elderly visitors will require such help.</p> <p>The option of telephoning will be available. Also, face-to-face interviews will still be available by appointment on a same day basis to "vulnerable persons", i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to any customer who is unable (as opposed to unwilling) to use the online processes or other automated processes for self-service; - where any customer or other person related to their enquiry is facing an imminent threat to their safety (including domestic violence or homelessness); or - where delaying action may otherwise give rise to the customer or other person related to their enquiry facing an increased risk of loss of or damage to personal property or personal injury. <p>The consultation process, including the distribution to public contact points of leaflets, has increased awareness of alternatives to online access and further public communication will be</p>
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Disability	<p>The proposed changes may make it harder for some people with visual, audio or learning impairments to access services.</p> <p>The ONS statistical bulletin shows that individuals with no disability are over three times more likely to have used the internet than individuals with a disability</p> <p>In Southampton a sample of visitors to the council's web site were asked: "If your use of the internet is impeded please indicate how". The responses indicate that 2.6% of visitors had a vision impairment; 4.0% had mobility difficulties; 1.1% had a cognitive or learning difficulty and 2.6% had a hearing impairment.</p> <p>Similar questions were asked of users of Gateway and the Call Centre. A similar breakdown by impairment is not available, but 15.7% of visitors to Gateway and 20.4% of callers to the call centre responded that they considered themselves to have an impairment.</p> <p>Self-service terminals must be at heights that are accessible for all users. The layout and interior design of Gateway must meet the needs of people who have impaired vision, mobility difficulties, a hearing impairment or who have cognitive or learning difficulties.</p> <p>The automated switchboard may be a barrier for people who do not understand (because of language or learning difficulties) or who cannot make themselves understood by the system.</p> <p>Some individuals will have difficulty</p>	<p>The information on the website and phone services will be accessible and the language used to access services will be simple and easy to understand. Where a customer is unable to use the internet or phone options, appointments can be made.</p> <p>The design of Gateway will include self-service terminals which are at wheelchair height. Capita will also engage with representatives of service users who have disabilities when the final Gateway design is being developed.</p> <p>Where a caller to the automated switchboard cannot understand, or fails to make himself/herself understood, the system will transfer the call to an operator.</p> <p>Floorwalkers will be available to assist customers. They will be trained to identify and approach customers who seem lost or uncertain. The quality of this training, and monitoring of its effectiveness, will be important in order to ensure that no-one slips through the net.</p> <p>The council uses the Readspeak speech system on its website so that visitors with visual problems can hear the content of the pages. At the bottom of every page there is a link titled "Listen" which will</p>																

	<p>understanding the environment and will not know what to do.</p> <p>The consultation results highlighted concerns about accessibility to services for people with disabilities and highlighted that an impairment that may not be severe can still prevent use of keyboards and phones (for example early arthritis or an inability to read and write). There was also concern about the difficulty in identifying “vulnerable” people and a feeling that many may not be identified and will not access the services they need.</p>	<p>open up Readspeakr. The web content can then be listened to in whole or part by using the different controls to activate the speech system.</p> <p>All web content produced by Southampton City Council will conform to W3C/WAI's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0, Conformance Level AA wherever possible. New, updated, and existing web content provided for the council's site by third-parties will conform to Conformance Level A.</p> <p>Web pages can be made easier to read by magnifying the page (zooming in). Everything on the Web page will be magnified (including text, images, and controls). Zooming will change the magnification of the web site, regardless of the web site's formatting.</p> <p>The consultation process, including the distribution to public contact points of leaflets, has increased awareness of alternatives to online access and further public communication will be undertaken as part of the roll-out of any change</p> <p>The option of telephoning will be available. Also, face-to-face interviews will still be available by appointment on a same day basis to “vulnerable persons”, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to any customer who is unable (as opposed to unwilling) to use the online processes or other automated processes for self-service; - where any customer or other person related to their enquiry is facing an imminent threat to
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		<p>their safety (including domestic violence or homelessness); or</p> <p>- where delaying action may otherwise give rise to the customer or other person related to their enquiry facing an increased risk of loss of or damage to personal property or personal injury.</p>																																		
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	<p>disproportionately impact in this category for the majority of customers.</p> <p>The gender profile for use of the web site is:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>55.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>44.4%</td> </tr> </table> <p>However the ONS statistical bulletin shows the older females (65+) are less likely to use the internet than older males. This is confirmed by deeper analysis of the council’s web survey:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Female</th> <th>Male</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>80 and over</td> <td>23%</td> <td>77%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65-79</td> <td>47%</td> <td>53%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60-64</td> <td>48%</td> <td>52%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50-59</td> <td>57%</td> <td>43%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>40-49</td> <td>62%</td> <td>38%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30-39</td> <td>58%</td> <td>42%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18-29</td> <td>65%</td> <td>35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17 and under</td> <td>70%</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>For Gateway 52.8% of visitors are male and 47.2% female. For the call centre 34.3% of callers are male and 65.7% female.</p> <p>In the online survey there was a significant difference between the views of men and women on one question in particular – i.e about whether public access PCs and the phone service are alternatives that meet the needs of people without access to a PC or smartphone of their own. 80% of women felt this did not meet their needs compared to 54% of men. The difference is unexplained, but may reflect a reluctance to use public PCs.</p>	Female	55.6%	Male	44.4%		Female	Male	80 and over	23%	77%	65-79	47%	53%	60-64	48%	52%	50-59	57%	43%	40-49	62%	38%	30-39	58%	42%	18-29	65%	35%	17 and under	70%	30%	<p>access to equipment, information about sites with free access to the internet is already being promoted to all residents (for example in the last City View). The Council’s libraries offer 2 hours free use per day.</p> <p>Support will be given in Gateway to people who need assistance with the self-service terminals.</p> <p>The option of telephoning will be available. Also, face-to-face interviews will still be available by appointment on a same day basis to “vulnerable persons”, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to any customer who is unable (as opposed to unwilling) to use the online processes or other automated processes for self-service; - where any customer or other person related to their enquiry is facing an imminent threat to their safety (including domestic violence or homelessness); or - where delaying action may otherwise give rise to the customer or other person related to their enquiry facing an increased risk of loss of or damage to personal property or personal injury. <p>The consultation process, including the distribution to public contact points of leaflets, has increased awareness of alternatives to online access and further public communication will be undertaken as part of the roll-out of any change.</p>
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<p>Community Safety</p>	<p>The proposed changes should not disproportionately impact in this category.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Poverty</p>	<p>The proposed changes mean residents may spend longer on the telephone, may have to visit Gateway twice (to book an appointment and for the actual appointment) and are designed to push them to use the internet. These factors could have a negative impact on people with lower incomes who may not have access to the internet at home and who could struggle to find additional telephone or transport monies.</p> <p>Homeless people (and those in imminent danger of homelessness) are often assisted by third parties (e.g. advice agencies or potential landlords) who will find it inconvenient to deal with an appointment system.</p>	<p>Where the problem is one of access to equipment, information about sites with free access to the internet is already being promoted to all residents (for example in the last City View). The Council’s libraries offer 2 hours free use per day.</p> <p>Support will be given in Gateway to people who need assistance with the self-service terminals.</p> <p>Where the customer is unable to use the internet then the existing phone and face-to-face options are available, although face-to-face will require an appointment.</p> <p>The consultation process, including the distribution to public contact points of leaflets, has increased awareness of alternatives to online access and further public communication will be undertaken as part of the roll-out of any change.</p> <p>The option of telephoning will be available. Also, face-to-face interviews will still be available by appointment on a same day basis to “vulnerable persons”, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to any customer who is unable (as opposed to unwilling) to use the online processes or other automated

		<p>processes for self-service;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - where any customer or other person related to their enquiry is facing an imminent threat to their safety (including domestic violence or homelessness – this will deal with the specific example given opposite); or - where delaying action may otherwise give rise to the customer or other person related to their enquiry facing an increased risk of loss of or damage to personal property or personal injury.
<p>Other Significant Impacts</p>	<p>Impact on advice agencies and libraries as providers of free internet access.</p> <p>Other impacts identified by the consultation process are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing sensitively with customers who are emotionally vulnerable (for example have suffered a death in the family). • People with poor literacy skills may not be identified as requiring assistance. • People may have difficulty fitting in appointments around work commitments. • Some people have difficulty remembering appointments. • There is a perceived inequality around some people having to wait for an appointment when others are seen without an appointment 	<p>As part of the rollout of the online benefits claim form (which is likely to be the most complex service to be provided online) briefings/training will be offered to advice agencies and library staff so they can assist their clients or customers.</p> <p>The training to identify vulnerable people will address this point.</p> <p>The training to identify vulnerable people will address this point.</p> <p>There should be sufficient appointments available to ensure flexibility.</p> <p>A system of phone/text reminders will be investigated.</p> <p>Floor walkers can explain why there is a need to see some people urgently to customers to anyone who complains or makes comment.</p>

REPORT ON CONSULTATION EXERCISES

Introduction

1. This report sets out the outcomes from the consultation exercises which ended on 1 November 2013. A summary is given below, but there are a number of annexes that give further information about the consultation exercises and the detail of the responses.
2. The annexes are:
 - Annex 1 - Consultation methods and timescales.
 - Annex 2 – Best value consultation.
 - Annex 3 – Equalities consultation.
 - Annex 4 – Summary of responses to the on-line consultation.
 - Annex 5 – Analysis of on-line responses by ward.
 - Annex 6 – Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation.
 - Annex 7 – Detailed responses to the paper version of the consultation.
 - Annex 8 – Responses received by other means.
 - Annex 9 – Results of survey undertaken in Gateway.

Summary Results

3. Equalities issues have been raised by respondents through all forms of response to the consultation and have been particularly highlighted by Spectrum Centre for Independent Living and at a meeting with the Southampton Learning Disability Partnership Board. Many of these had already been recognised in the consultation and in the mitigating actions included in the Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA).
4. The consultation did though highlight that there should be more consideration of some circumstances or groups of people and the ESIA has been amended to take account of these. They include:
 - People with literacy difficulties.
 - People with comparatively minor disabilities, such as arthritis, which make using a keyboard or a phone very difficult.
 - People who are homeless and those supporting them.
 - People with language difficulties.
 - The difficulty in identifying people who are vulnerable and so need to be seen without an appointment.
5. The consultation also highlighted some other aspects that people were concerned about, including:

- The potential additional cost of longer telephone calls.
 - The potential cost of additional journeys to Gateway in order to make and then attend an appointment.
 - The perceived inequality of some people having to make an appointment whilst others are seen without an appointment.
 - The difficulty of fitting appointment times around work commitments.
 - The number of “no-shows” as often customers’ lifestyles mean they do not have the ability to organise themselves to attend an appointment.
 - Access to computers in libraries has been restricted as library opening hours have reduced.
6. A common sentiment expressed was regret that the council was becoming “faceless” and would be seen as uncaring. The importance of personal contact to many people was stressed. There is support for increasing the services available online, which is seen as particularly helpful for those at work and who have the ability to use computers. However there is little support for compulsion or making alternative channels more difficult to access.
7. Many views were expressed about the extension to the Capita contract. A letter in favour was received from Business South who comment that “Capita is doing a good job for Southampton in partnership with Southampton City Council”. This view is echoed by a number of respondents, but the majority of views have been quite negative. Often the views expressed reflected an ideological stance, for example a belief that services are best provided by the public sector, but there are also criticisms of the service currently being provided. The need to demonstrate best value through a competitive process is also mentioned.
8. Overall the consultation results show that the majority of respondents are not in favour of the proposed changes. However many concerns expressed were because of a perceived compulsion to access services only online and the majority of the inequalities highlighted are addressed in the ESIA. It is also of course a largely self-selecting sample, with people supporting change being less likely to respond.

Consultation Methods and Timescales

Interest Groups	Methods	Timescales	Lead
All Stakeholders	Questionnaire available through the council's website.	10 July 2013	Paul Medland
Meetings with specific interest groups	Meeting with Spectrum Centre for Independent Living.	16 July 2013	Paul Medland
Southampton Connect, partners and external organisations	Email with link to consultation	8 August 2013	Carol Harwood
Specific groups such as community and voluntary sector organisations	Email to Anti-Poverty Network with link to consultation	7 August 2013	Sarah Crawford
	Meeting with Anti-Poverty Network	16 September 2013	Sara Crawford
	Southampton Inter-Generational Network	20 August 2013	Paul Medland
	Learning Disability Partnership Board	10 September 2013	Paul Medland
	Leaflets sent to welfare rights groups for customers	2 October 2013	Paul Medland
	Meeting with Block representatives (followed by leaflets sent to reps).	3 September 2013 24 September 2013	Paul Medland
Service users	Exit survey of Gateway users.	w/c 14 October 2013	Paul Medland
	Leaflet available in Gateway, Libraries and Local Housing Offices.	24 September 2013	Emma Howard
	E-alert	28 August 2013	Lucy Calvert

Consultation Methods and Timescales

Interest Groups	Methods	Timescales	Lead
Businesses	Letters to Business South, Chamber of Commerce, Business in the Community	30 July 2013	Paul Medland
Staff	Article in Weekly Bulletin	31 July 2013	Lucy Calvert

Best Value Consultation

The consultation described below concluded on the 1 November 2013. The findings from this, and the consultation on equalities, are included elsewhere in this report.

Strategic Services Partnership – Possible contract extension

Since October 2007 Southampton City Council has been in contract with Capita to provide a number of services. This arrangement is known as the Strategic Services Partnership (SSP). The services covered are:

- Customer Services - The front line contact with the council's customers through Gateway and the customer service centre, and internal post and document management.
- Human Resources & Payroll Services - Including recruitment, payroll, employee relations, health and safety, occupational health, learning and development, and strategy and reward.
- Property Services - Including professional consultancy, project management, valuations, managing investments, accommodation strategy, repair and maintenance, highways and bridges, regulatory services and property records.
- Procurement Services - Undertaking procurement projects to source appropriate suppliers able to meet the Council's needs on high value projects.
- Local Taxation & Benefits Services - Administering the collection of council tax, national non-domestic rates and the calculation and payment of housing and council tax benefits.
- IT Services - Grouped into four main areas; service delivery, technical infrastructure, applications development and support, and programme management.
- Print Services - Providing a one stop shop for all printing and printed related services, including a central photocopying service, finishing and any print related projects.

The council's contract with Capita currently runs until 30 September 2017, but the council is considering whether to extend it by five years to 30 September 2022 (this extension was allowed for in the original contract).

We would like your views about the possible extension of the contract with Capita. The main alternatives at the end of the contract term would be to bring the services back "in-house", so that they are provided directly by the council; to enter a partnership arrangement with another council; or to retender the contract in full or in part.

Why extend the Strategic Services Partnership?

The council and Capita have recently been discussing changes to the SSP that would benefit the council and reduce the cost as part of an extended contract.

There is no intention to extend the services outsourced or to transfer council staff to Capita as part of this proposal.

The main benefits are:

- Guaranteed financial savings totalling almost £24 million over the next nine years (compared with costs projected over that period on the basis of the current cost of the contract due to expire on 30th September 2013);
- Flexibility in pricing for future volume changes. The flexibility in pricing for volume changes will give opportunities for further savings if the council's staff shrinks and provides a sound framework for as yet unknown changes;

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- Capita will develop One Guildhall Square as a Southampton business centre, providing job opportunities for local people, guaranteeing that any job losses from the changes to the SSP will be offset by additional jobs from business with other Capita clients. In the past 12 months, Capita has brought 95 FTE worth of new jobs into the City.
- Capita will support the greater community by providing volunteering opportunities for Capita staff through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme.
- Capita will promote apprenticeships, internships and work experience opportunities in local Southampton schools, colleges, and universities and will itself commit until September 2022 to offer a minimum of:
 - 40 apprenticeships.
 - 100 summer internships and/or work experience placements.
- Capita will support the SME local business community with expertise and practical services, for example with free of charge local workshops for business on public sector procurement to enable them to bid effectively for local public sector opportunities.
- In Customer Services, Capita will invest in technology and process re-engineering to allow changes necessary for channel shift (moving more services online). These changes are subject to a separate consultation which can be found on the Council's website
- In the IT Services, there will be transformation activity including deployment of the latest technology strategies:-
 - cloud based hosting and server virtualisation, which will provide a robust yet flexible infrastructure;
 - a major project in 2013/14 to upgrade the council's Microsoft Windows, Office and Exchange desktop environment and the server software infrastructure;
 - a shared service model in which resources and service elements are provided from one or more of Capita's sites around the country.
- Both parties will work together to support the Council's change programme.
- The proposal will bring long-term clarity and assurance for Capita staff, improving morale and providing opportunities during this period of major change.
- Delaying from 2015/16 to 2020/21 the need to undertake a procurement exercise costing at least £2 million.

The consultation process

Consultation on these proposals runs until 1 November 2013. You may give your opinion on any aspect of the proposals by writing to the address below. Comments will be consolidated into a report which will be available to Members of the Council when they make a decision on the proposals. This is expected to be later in October 2013.

Please send your views to:

Paul Medland

Lower Ground Floor

Civic Centre

Southampton

SO14 7LY

Email: paul.medland@southampton.gov.uk

Equalities Consultation

The consultation described below concluded on the 1 November 2013. The findings from this, and the consultation on equalities, are included elsewhere in this report.

Have your say on how you access our services

We're making changes to the way you can contact us and access our services, but before we make any final decisions, we'd like your views on our proposals. In order to modernise our services and reduce the running costs, we need to enable and encourage online and automated phone access to services wherever possible.

We recognise that these changes may not suit everyone; therefore we're keen to find out how these changes may affect you and others you know, in order to keep any negative impacts to a minimum. Please help us make the right decisions by completing a short questionnaire (link below) about access to our services. The deadline for entries is 1 November 2013.

Our proposals

Wherever possible we want to ensure that any contact with you is via our online and self-service facilities that do not require you to speak to a member of staff face-to-face or over the phone.

Changes to our website

We will need to make some improvements to our website and plan to introduce more online forms so you can request a range of services including applications for housing benefit and council tax reduction over the internet. We will also develop mobile-friendly web pages so you can access our website easily using a smartphone.

Many of our services can already be accessed online and more are becoming available all the time. Our proposed changes will improve the current online arrangements and expand the services on offer with the aim of making the internet the preferred method of access to services for most people. To help reduce costs and improve efficiency, paper forms will be significantly reduced and will only be provided in exceptional circumstances.

It is now commonplace within many organisations to expect customers to use the internet to purchase and manage products and services. We also know that the number of people who are able to access the internet has increased substantially over the last few years and this trend seems set to continue. We're therefore bringing ourselves up-to-date with this trend and are confident our online services will be more convenient for many customers. This approach has been adopted successfully for a number of central government services (for example car road tax and HM Revenue & Customs self-assessments) and in future other major services such as Universal Credit will be dealt with online.

Changes to our call centre

In addition to our online improvements, we will be making changes to our call centre to enable you to self-serve over the phone. Our switchboard will be automated and simple transactions will be carried out without the need to talk to a member of staff. However, please be assured that if our extended self-service menu options do not meet your needs; you will be able to speak to someone at the call centre.

Changes to Gateway, One Guildhall Square

Changes will also be made to our 'one-stop-shop' for services at Gateway. You will be encouraged to use the self-service terminals which are going to be installed, and a

Equalities Consultation

member of staff will be on hand to help if you're having difficulty with the system. If you require a service which you cannot access using our automated or online facilities, you will be able to meet a member of Gateway staff on an appointment basis only.

The consultation process and questionnaire

You may give your opinion on any aspect of the proposals, but we have set out some questions which may help guide you in an online questionnaire available here:

Changes to our customer contact arrangements online survey

Alternatively, you can submit your response in writing to:

Paul Medland
Project Manager
Lower Ground Floor
Civic Centre
Southampton
SO14 7LY

Please note the deadline for feedback to this consultation is 1 November 2013.

Our customer services

These customer services are provided on behalf of the council by Capita as part of a Strategic Services Partnership. The council's contract with Capita runs until 30 September 2017 but, to bring in these changes, reduce costs and secure flexible pricing in the future, the council is considering extending it by five years to 30 September 2022 (this extension was allowed for in the original contract). This is subject to a separate 'best value' consultation which can be found on the council's website [here](#).

Other services provided by Capita under the same partnership arrangement are:

- Local Taxes and Benefits
- Procurement Services
- Human Resources
- IT Services
- Property Services
- Print Services

We would like your views on proposals to extend the contract with Capita. The main alternatives would be to bring the services back "in-house" so that they are provided directly by the council; to enter a partnership arrangement with another council; or to retender the contract in full or in part.

Summary of responses to the on-line survey.

A full listing of the comments received is given in annex 6.

Questions			
<p>1. Not everyone will have access to their own PC or smartphone. Public access PCs will be available in Gateway and libraries. A phone service through an automated switchboard will also be available.</p> <p>Do you feel providing these facilities meets the needs of people without access to the internet?</p> <p>Any comments?</p>	Replies	185	
	Yes	30	16%
	No	132	71%
	Not Sure	23	12%
<p><i>Comments highlight the difficulties that some people have using online and phone services, particularly some people with disabilities, including learning disabilities, people with language difficulties and the elderly. The fact that library hours have been reduced has been raised by a number of people and there is concern about capacity both in libraries and in Gateway. A preference to talk to a person rather than deal with a machine is expressed by a number of respondents.</i></p>			
<p>2. There will be people who will have difficulty using or are unable to use an online service including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ People with visual impairments ➤ People with learning difficulties ➤ Some elderly people <p>These people will still be able to use the phone service or can make an appointment to see someone face-to-face in Gateway.</p> <p>Do you feel this approach would meet their needs?</p> <p>3. Are there other groups of people who may have difficulty with online access?</p> <p>Any comments?</p>	Replies	187	
	Yes	63	34%
	No	75	40%
	Not Sure	49	26%
<p><i>Responses included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with physical disabilities who have difficulty using computer or phone keyboards. • People who are emotionally vulnerable. • People with poor literacy skills. • People with language difficulties. • Homeless people. <p><i>Comments tend to echo those to the first question. The cost to the caller of long calls to the council is also mentioned.</i></p>			
<p>4. There will be people who will have difficulty using or are unable to use the automated phone switchboard including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ People with hearing impairments ➤ People with learning difficulties ➤ People who have difficulty understanding spoken English 	Replies	181	
	Yes	52	29%
	No	90	50%
	Not Sure	39	22%

Summary of responses to the on-line survey.

<p>➤ Some elderly people</p> <p>These people will still be able to use the online service if they are able to do so, or can make an appointment at Gateway to see someone face-to-face (with an interpreter if necessary).</p> <p>Do you feel this approach would meet their needs?</p> <p>5. Are there other groups of people who may have difficulty with an automated phone service?</p> <p>Any comments?</p>			
<p><i>Responses included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with physical disabilities who have difficulty using computer or phone keyboards. • People who are emotionally vulnerable. • People with poor literacy skills. <p><i>There are many negative comments about automated phone services which are perceived as difficult to use, unfriendly and time consuming. Many respondents emphasised the desirability of interaction with a person. There is also concern that there would be additional pressure on Gateway from people visiting rather than using the phone service.</i></p>			
<p>6. Moving to an appointments system in Gateway will encourage drop-in callers to use the self-service terminals (with assistance from Gateway staff as needed). However some people will have to be seen immediately and it will not be appropriate that they wait for an appointment. Gateway staff will be trained to recognise where this is the case and an immediate interview will be available in these exceptional cases.</p> <p>Can you see any difficulties with this approach?</p> <p>Any comments?</p>	Replies	186	
	Yes	114	61%
	No	42	23%
	Not Sure	30	16%
<p><i>There are many negative comments about this approach. These include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scepticism that vulnerable people will be recognised, particularly at busy times. • Training is unlikely to help. • That the service will be seen as “unfriendly and uncaring”. • There will be long waiting times, even for self-service. • Customers will be aggressive so that they are seen immediately. • It is unreasonable to expect people to call twice, once to make an appointment and once to attend. <p><i>Again the desirability of interaction with a person is emphasised.</i></p>			
<p>7. Other than online via the web and automated phone services, are there other approaches that the council should be considering when looking at customer contact?</p> <p>Please give your reasons for your answer.</p>	Replies	130	
<p><i>There is an emphasis on face-to-face contact, either maintaining the status-quo or expanding face-to-face to include more visits or training library/housing staff to be able to help with more queries. Other suggestions include mobile phone apps and greater use of email with more timely responses.</i></p>			
<p>8. Over time the council will move as many services as</p>	Replies	116	

Summary of responses to the on-line survey.

<p>possible to online and/or phone self-service.</p> <p>Are there any services that you feel should not be considered for this approach and why do you think they are not suitable?</p>			
<p><i>Responses include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adult and children's social services.</i> • <i>Safeguarding.</i> • <i>Any dealings with people with learning difficulties.</i> • <i>Homeless support</i> • <i>Financial problems</i> • <i>Cash office</i> 			
<p>9. To encourage people to use online forms the number of paper forms will be substantially reduced and they will not be widely distributed. There will always be a paper version if it is needed, but one will have to be requested. Can you see this causing any difficulties?</p> <p>10. Are there any council services where this approach is not appropriate?</p>	Replies	185	
	Yes	96	52%
	No	56	30%
	Not Sure	33	18%
<p><i>Knowing that a paper form can be requested is seen as an issue, as is queuing to get a form where one can just be picked up currently. The difficulty this would create for people being visited in their homes was raised – visiting officers take paper forms with them.</i></p>			
<p>11. The council is considering whether to extend its contract with Capita by five years beyond the current end date of 30 September 2017.</p> <p>Do you have any views on such a contract extension, or the alternatives that you would like the council to take into account?</p>	Replies	139	
<p><i>Mixed views, but with the majority being against an extension to the contract. Views expressed include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Services should be provided by council staff.</i> • <i>There should be competition to ensure best value.</i> • <i>The contact is providing good value.</i> • <i>There are issues with the current service provision by Capita</i> • <i>The current arrangements are too restricting</i> • <i>The contract has moved work to council managers</i> 			
<p>15. Any further comments?</p>	Replies	70	
<p><i>There is some support here for modernising services and providing more on-line access, but the concerns over automated phones and reduced face-to-face access are repeated.</i></p> <p><i>There is some criticism that the consultation has not been publicised wider and that the paper forms have been delayed. Others thanked the council for the opportunity to comment.</i></p>			

NB. Questions 12 to 14 ask for sex, age range and postcode

APPENDIX 4
Annex 5

Analysis of on-line responses by ward

	Question 1			Question 2			Question 4			Question 6			Question 9		
	Yes	No	Not sure	Yes	No	Not sure	Yes	No	Not sure	Yes	No	Not sure	Yes	No	Not sure
Bargate	2	8	1	3	6	3	4	6	2	7	4	1	6	4	2
Bassett	3	3	0	3	3	0	3	3	0	4	1	1	3	3	0
Bevois	1	7	0	1	5	2	1	4	3	7	0	1	7	0	1
Bitterne	0	4	0	0	2	2	0	2	1	3	0	1	2	0	2
Bitterne Park	1	7	1	3	4	2	1	6	2	3	1	5	4	2	3
Coxford	0	3	0	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	1
Freemantle	2	8	4	4	6	3	2	7	3	8	3	3	7	3	4
Harefield	1	5	1	3	2	2	2	3	1	4	3	0	3	3	0
Millbrook	3	4	1	5	0	3	4	3	1	4	3	1	1	4	3
Peartree	4	5	1	5	4	1	6	3	1	6	4	0	7	3	0
Portsmouth	2	10	2	4	5	5	4	6	4	9	3	2	6	5	3
Redbridge	0	5	0	2	1	2	1	3	1	3	0	2	3	1	1
Shirley	1	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	1	4	1	2	4	1	2
Sholing	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	0	0	3	0	0
Swaythling	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1
Woolston	4	7	1	5	4	4	5	4	3	7	2	3	6	6	1
Not known	5	50	7	20	28	15	13	34	14	40	16	7	34	18	9
	30	132	23	63	75	49	52	90	39	114	42	30	96	56	33

NB – Where the ward is shown as not known this is because:

- The question wasn't answered, or
- The postcode given is not in the city, or
- The full postcode was not given.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 1 - *Not everyone will have access to their own PC or smartphone. Public access PCs will be available in Gateway and libraries. A phone service through an automated switchboard will also be available. Do you feel providing these facilities meets the needs of people without access to the internet? Any comments?*

Not everybody wants to use a computer - not every query fits nicely into a tick box survey.

Some of the people I visit on behalf of the council can not get out of the house, they do not have internet feel isolated without it already as every thing they read or watch tells them there is information on the web. If changing is going to make the phone call longer when they do try to phone in they will give up and could be at risk in the community with they feel no support. I myself is in my 50's and have internet connection in my home I would still rather speak to a human being when trying to sort things out, I would especially want a quick contact if I was going through a crisis.

Needs to cater to the older generation, people with visual impairment and without computer knowledge.

I believe people attending Gateway need at the very minimum the service that is currently being offered

Its all very well saying that libraries have Public Access PCs yet they've been hit hard with budget cuts and opening hours have been cut and will continue to be cut, not all of us can get into Gateway.

I am concerned that it will not always be possible for Customers to come into Gateway therefore their enquiry may not be dealt with.

For older or less mobile people who find it difficult to travel, it will be very difficult to regularly arrange an appointment and get to the library/gateway each time they need to use a service. These more vulnerable people may also find it harder to use an automated phone system, and be more used to talking to someone. If they have to wait a long time to get through to a 'real person' on the phone this will add to their phone bills too.

Because a number of people are still unable to use the internet and they will also feel 'time pressured' to complete items e.g. forms on-line if they are sat in Gateway with a large queue behind them

Pointing them in the direction of a free PC is not enough. There needs to be adequate support for people who have not used a PC before or do not use them regularly. I'm concerned about directing people to libraries. Whenever I go to the central library the computers are all in use. Library hours have been reduced. Will there be more library staff to help people?

It will be elderly people who will suffer from these proposals they don't all understand the internet and it would take them longer to get through to speak to someone if they understand all the options!!

Many of our clients do not have internet access and furthermore find it difficult to leave the house. Extended telephone menus can be extremely confusing and run up high phone bills for clients with little money to spare. An option to speak to an adviser should be offered on the first menu to avoid running up high bills and confusing clients who find it difficult to take in information.

There are a significant number of people in the city such as vulnerable adults living in supported housing and older vulnerable people living in their own homes who not only don't have access to the Internet but also have other problems, such as physical and mental ill health, that make it very difficult for them to leave their homes and access the Internet through public facilities.

A lot of people without Internet access have, in our experience, one of the following issues: Mobile phone only household - calls to call centres are expensive for mobile only households, particularly if they have to listen to lots of options and it takes a long time to speak to a human. Maybe look at 0300 numbers and 0303 numbers, though I'm not sure if these are free to the user or just low cost. This is important as across the board, people with the lowest incomes - often includes mobile only households, are the ones that pay the most to access services and pay bills. Not addressing this, would not be good from an equality impact point of view. Poor literacy - 1 in 5 of the U.K. population do not have functional literacy (includes ability to fill in forms) and this is higher amongst people who access a lot of council services. People with poor literacy struggle to use the Internet and fill in forms. Phone may work, but in many cases face-to-face is the only option. Need to make sure there are face-to-face options which are adequately staffed. Disabilities - again people with disabilities tend to be over represented in the lower socio economic groups, who tend to access council services more. Both physical and mental characteristics of illnesses can make the Internet or phone unviable options depending on the disability and extent. Need to ensure there is still a face-to-face options that is well staffed. Older people - whilst many older people do use the Internet, there are many who do not, especially amongst the frail elderly. In our experience older people often preferred a face-to-face service in order to ensure their understanding of what is happening. Need to ensure there is a face-to-face service that is well staffed, and that the needs of older people are well understood. Even for those with Internet access who can use it, it needs to be borne in mind that a lot of people do not have printers/ opportunity to print copies of forms they have filled in, which is of concern to some if it is all online, especially if it is something like Planning Permission. Also how will you confirm that the form has been received successfully and what to expect will happen next?

Not everyone is confident enough to use PC's

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 1 - *Not everyone will have access to their own PC or smartphone. Public access PCs will be available in Gateway and libraries. A phone service through an automated switchboard will also be available. Do you feel providing these facilities meets the needs of people without access to the internet? Any comments?*

Will the telephone contact arrangements be free? Otherwise the more vulnerable/less well off may incur costs not incurred by others accessing services.

Not everyone can use PC's

Many of the most vulnerable customers will always need face to face support and advice. In addition people may be vulnerable at key times eg trauma, ill health or bereavement. I recently had to deal with DWP about a bereavement issue and they have a specialist section for face to face work for people in these circumstances. Pensions service do home visits for benefits take ups. From my knowledge of working in Southampton over many years I estimate about 30% of residents need more not less face to face help and ideally it should be nearer where they live as having to come into Gateway is a huge effort on public transport. It's also not always able to help people and the service can be expensive £1.25 for 1 A4 photocopy. I would advise you to have a focus group for block reps and for tenants and residents associations.

Not completely. Will there be enough computers available to meet demand based on the amount of caller traffic into Gateway currently? Your brief also suggests that it may be time consuming for people using the remote phone service which again can lead to customer dissatisfaction.

We have already learnt from the new smart city card for the bridge that people do not want to use on line, this is the reason they still come in to housing offices as they want to speak to someone and it's very frustrating when you ring the SCC for any thing all you get are a long list of options.

Not if (like my parents) they have no knowledge of using a PC and avoid them like the plague. I think the two systems need to run parallel for a while yet.

As long as there are still enough customer support advisors available for a face to face service for those who do not have access or are not IT literate.

Yes if the libraries are open at times which are convenient for people who are working

People with disabilities will find it difficult to access libraries and Gateway for use public PCs. Automated switch board can be very confusing for hard of hearing, older people and those with learning difficulties.

People with low literacy and/or poor English will have difficulty using PC based services. They will also lack the confidence to use them and will be discouraged from sorting out problems at an early stage leading to complications which can take SCC staff longer to resolve.

If people cannot go out due to a physical disability or an anxiety issue they will not be able to access these.

The option to talk to a person must still be available as these are usually the most vulnerable

"meets the needs" - the answer is in the question. Every case is different, needing nuanced answers not available from a robot.

Many people do not have internet access at home and have to rely on library facilities, which have been significantly reduced lately

People feel that it is a way of cutting costs, and also increasing the costs of getting hold of people in the council for a variety of things. Plus the automated switchboards are not always the most clearest of things to understand as there will be times when they don't direct you to the place you want to go to.

There will be some people who do not have internet access

Not everyone is able to actively leave their home, everyone they want to contact you. What if the weather is bad or the nearest public internet access is far away. Not everyone can use a PC or what if they forget their details.

Opening hours of libraries is not enough. Is it possible for one PC in each library to be reserved for Gateway use?

Yes, but only so long as the council can give a commitment to keep libraries open. To close libraries or shorten opening hours will discriminate against those members of the public without access to the internet.

Public services providing these PCs have reduced opening hours compared to a year ago, and the risk that they are gradually eroded further will mean that access to these resources and therefore the council's communication will be reduced too.

Some older people get confused with automated phone services, there must be access to a person. Sheltered housing usually have a community room these could be accessed to help train the local older population in the use of the internet. Child services and domestic violence in the home should always stay staff orientated.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 1 - *Not everyone will have access to their own PC or smartphone. Public access PCs will be available in Gateway and libraries. A phone service through an automated switchboard will also be available. Do you feel providing these facilities meets the needs of people without access to the internet? Any comments?*

Although it may be off putting for the elderly

providing they are clear and easy to use

Depends on how many libraries survive cut backs and the hours they are open. People work shift patterns and people have more than one part time job so a 9-5 Monday to Friday opening of libraries and the Gateway would not be sufficient. Automated phone systems need to be professionally designed and should not be money making premium numbers. The number(s) provided should be included in the included number range in the common phone packages provided by mobile and fixed service providers.

Most people who do not have internet are too concerned or frightened to learn how to use it - then automated telephones are just as bad to them.

Elderly may find automated system daunting

Going to use a terminal somewhere is not always convenient and you only get a set time on the terminal in some settings

Older Persons need to talk to a human via a direct line not via 10 prompts to get to the right Dept. Older Persons do not have or want PC skills they want someone to talk to. Council should make arrangements for persons over 50 years of age to have paper forms...

Everyone knows that automated switchboards are universally disliked so while I support the introduction of more online services, why on earth would you introduce a service you know will be disliked by almost everyone.

Older people often need help and these are the very people who are unlikely to be able to use the internet. As people get older they are not as capable of doing things which they perhaps could have handled at a younger age.

Those without internet are more likely to be elderly. They may not even be able to get out and access any facility.

Whilst I am happy with this I have elderly relatives who would not use the internet so would be totally reliant on a phone service which you describe as slow and will take longer to get through to an operator

Unfortunately the people most likely to require assistance with services are those without access to the internet (via whatever medium. these people will be further alienated from participation in society.

a lot of elderly people will not use new technology

Need to speak to local people when you need to phone up. Haven't heard good things about Capita.

Some matters are better discussed face to face or perhaps given personal difficulties of communication /understanding or a personal issue being discussed a 2nd meeting would be preferred by the customer

My answer is qualified with 'so long as there is enough funding for the extra PCs'.

No when ever I have gone to gateway, I have had to leave before seeing anyone because it takes too long and I run out of time. It's OK if you're not working but difficult for a working person to be able to wait around.

most people can make it to libraries

For the majority yes, but ensuring that those that are vulnerable won't be disadvantaged by these changes.

Not enough access points

People like to be dealt with face to face and there is nothing worse than automated response. This does not allow for people's questions.

You need to consider vulnerable clients. Some clients have never used PCs, or smartphones. Automated switchboard is not good for elderly clients

There are not enough staff to help those unsure/unable to use internet. also saying they are available in Libraries may be so but there is a cost to printing which isn't taken into account.

Unsuitable for some elderly people (eg my mum, who although still independent has early stages of Alzheimers) who cannot use computers and are confused by automated switchboards. They rely on letter writing or face-to-face contact

The fittest and most able will manage to make use of public internet provision and will benefit from learning to use this technology. I am concerned about the situation of older and vulnerable people.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 1 - *Not everyone will have access to their own PC or smartphone. Public access PCs will be available in Gateway and libraries. A phone service through an automated switchboard will also be available. Do you feel providing these facilities meets the needs of people without access to the internet? Any comments?*

Many people especially those with mental health problems, older people with hearing difficulties have difficulty conducting phone conversations. In my experience the options offered are often phrased in such a way as not to seem relevant to the query or not include anything about the query. An example is Southern Water one of whose options is 'If you want to pay your bill' there is nothing that says 'If you want to amend your direct debit'. Is this paying a bill or something completely different and not included in their menu.

there will be a loss of privacy and that may give a worry about security too

It will not be appropriate for those who are not comfortable with technology and would prefer to speak to a real person.

Some people have no experience of computers and may not want to use them. They should not be made to use something they do not want to.

Older people may not use public PCs and unless the switchboard is very clearly and simply organised

please realise that not everyone has access to the internet. this applies mostly to the elderly who are most likely to need help or information

Concerned that phone calls will involve longer waits

Will not meet the needs of those with English as a second language or low education/levels of understanding.

Not everyone is computer literate and even those who are can often not negotiate their way around the system. Face to face contact is essential.

help for vulnerable consumers on a personal basis must also be available

It needs to be remembered that many libraries are being closed or reduced services, hours etc. If PC's are provided at Gateway, how are these managed, time allocated, queuing system etc. If someone has made a special visit to Gateway, surely they may as well speak to an Advisor in person?

Those most in need of information and help such as elderly may well not have access to on-line or mobile facilities

There is a risk that the most vulnerable will suffer. It is not clear how 'unable' will be differentiated from 'unwilling'.

Even if they have access they may not be able to use a computer or understand the site

Long waiting periods for both public and internal staff listening to public service announcements. Callers wrongly transferred by Contact Centre and note announce, failing to give recipients chance to respond by saying the call is not for our team, Phone just put down as soon as transferred so caller has to go through the whole explanation they have just given to contact centre operative again; very poor customer service. It seems the Contact Centre are not able or willing to go the extra mile to find out what a customer really wants, particularly if they have language difficulties, hearing or speech problems and seem to just transfer callers to get them off their line for someone else to sort out. Callers are therefore, very frustrated by the time they get put through to us. As for transferring back wrongly directed callers to the Contact Centre, even by calling internally we have to queue with the public and are subject to the same public announcements, sometimes taking as long as 15 - 20 minutes, by which time the caller we are trying to put back through who was wrongly transferred in the first place has hung up. Members of the public, particularly social care clients should not be expected to wait for such lengthy periods at cost to them, particularly as often their only form of contact is via a mobile phone so long waiting periods eat in to their credit, and may well learning difficulties or mental health problems which may be exacerbated by lengthy periods of waiting for an answer, on the telephone causing stress, frustration and anxiety. As for public access to PCs in Gateway, many social care clients, and indeed members of the public do not have these at home, nor the inclination or ability to use one. They are often frail and elderly, and unable to travel any distance to access one, and would not know how to anyway. As an employee of the council, I, myself do not find the council website user friendly and often find difficulty getting the information I need, and find that I often find outdated information which raises concern about reliability of what a search throws up. Extending the Capita Contract is definitely a bad idea for both Council staff and members of the public, particularly the social care client group and the elderly.

But it does not help those who need additional support by face to face contact with a person. People who have a disability or who are intimidated by computers / don't have the skills to use them.

I work in the Central Library where people without internet access are directed to use our public machines. The problem is that without a computer, many of them do not have IT skills to use the computers without a lot of staff help which we do not have now. It would be good if the city promoted IT skills in a big way. The learning centre in the Library does some courses for job seekers but more is needed.

Leaflets and brochures (especially guides to better care and support and residential care guide) are not ordered, or only provided in very limited numbers, this makes it difficult to give information to clients who do not have access to the internet.

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Because some people don't have internet for a reason, they don't want it! Some do not wish to travel or can't without support or assistance especially the elderly & it won't help people who do not speak or read English.

more free wireless internet access across the city would be good (in tower blocks and sheltered housing schemes)

Not everyone can get gateway and my understanding is that they are not prepared to help people when they do, other than point to the nearest pc. Not everyone is comfortable using a computer you know! Phone service? oh come on!

an automated phone service is always frustrating to use and hard to get ones head round if you are old or disabled, personally I struggle with them even though I am fit, technology literate and in my prime...

This will have specific implications for disabled/blind etc. No access to online facilities and/or 'phone contact costing/taking more time.

Does this work successfully in other councils?

Gateway access via PC will be limited to those who can use the machines. The crush in Gateway always puts me off, will there be enough machines? Phone service - will there be dozens of alternatives following press 1 for.. etc?

Still difficulties with people who have certain disabilities.

Will enough public access PCs be available?

Phone services tend to be 0845 or other premium rate numbers. Those who are unable to access on-line are often the poorest in society who cannot afford this type of phone service. These phone services also then often have a list of options and you never speak to anyone. There are very few pcs available in Libraries and most libraries have just experienced a cut in hours. If you have to come into Gateway to use a pc it will be easier to speak to some-one and more cost effective. PC and/or phone only often lead to second or thirds requests to get it right, when one meeting gives you the opportunity to ask and answer questions and get it right first time.

Too many libraries are no longer open as much as they used to be, if at all

Some people will need face to face contact and they will not have straightforward matters that can easily be resolved.

don't you feel that removing the human element in such a draconian way will endanger us to become an insular society. how will people with mental health issues cope if the online system isn't in a logical format that they might require. I consider myself of average intelligence and I find this compulsive need to replace people with machines extremely worrying. as for increasing Capita's contract, do you happen to know what they are known as? Bring on the profits!!!

a) there are not enough public access PCs in public libraries b) the regrettable cut in library opening hours means a corresponding difficulty in accessing these PCs c) what about those residents who do not have easy access to a library, through physical difficulties, lack of public transport etc? d) what about those who are unable for various reasons to use the internet etc?

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 2 - *There will be people who will have difficulty using or are unable to use an online service including: people with visual impairments; people with learning difficulties; some elderly people. These people will still be able to use the phone service or can make an appointment to see someone face-to-face in Gateway. Do you feel this approach would meet their needs? Are there other groups of people who may have difficulty with online access? Comments?*

Elderly people and those with learning difficulties are not going to want to sift through a multitude of options on the automated phone service. How that system is setup is key to whether it's adequate.

Anybody who wants to talk to a human being.

contrary to believe there are a lot of people in the city that does not have internet connection. This is not just a young persons City.

There are still many people who are not able/comfortable with using computers. Also people usually prefer seeing someone face-to-face, so the appointment system is likely to be subject to high-demand.

face to face contact must be maintained

People who have to provide support to relatives will need to be able to drop into gateway to access services with the relative to provide assistance

As long as it does not take in excess of 2 Mins to get an answer to a telephone call which is not uncommon at present. Having to wait in excess of 3 mins is also not unheard of.

There are a considerable number of people out there that will not do things online as they don't want to or don't trust computers, fraud and the like and I have to say that I know at least 4 people in their 20s & 30s who refuse to use computers and self service anything

These 'customers' pay the wages of all the employees of the City Council and of Capita - is it too much to ask that a 'customer' speak to a real person and not have to run the gauntlet of automated services.

People who prefer to speak to a person

Difficult for those who have English as a second language, or those who do not have someone to assist them make an appointment or who cannot physically come into Gateway

Person reports things online, but still phone to check it has been received. So repeat contact

People without experience in IT/computer skills. Could also be confusing for people for whom English is not their first language.

A number of these people will probably also have difficulty in working out which 'option' to select when using the automated phone system. As for face-to-face appointments, how long will people have to wait? How many appointments will be available, will there be evening and weekend appointments to suit everyone?

Some people who are physically disabled, whose impairment prevents them from using a PC.

Anyone who is long-term sick or disabled may have difficulty accessing online services. Our clients have mental health problems - many cannot afford broadband and are unable to use libraries or other public spaces due to anxiety and other issues. Furthermore it is not just the groups described above who may have difficulty learning to use the internet - again many of our clients struggle with basic tasks due to poor memory and concentration caused by their mental health conditions.

People without access or skills in IT

Adults with mental health problems and substance misuse problems, of which there are a large number in the city.

People with poor literacy, people with poor IT skills and people with disabilities affecting memory will struggle with online services. Many people who do not regularly use the Internet may need some hand holding the first couple of times - need to ensure this help is easily available. The phone can cause problems for people with learning difficulties - both mild and severe, and people with poor memory problems. People tend to say 'I think I said that on the phone and I'm not sure if that was right', or 'I can't remember what I said', and become concerned/ confused about what was said/ agreed. A drop in service face-to-face service should still be available, as many people will travel over especially, costing money.

Vulnerable people who have problems around drugs / alcohol addictions etc

Many clients I deal with who either have poor use of English language, mental health issues or poor confidence/ intellectual ability need help to even access any phone service with too many options and also need help to access appointments system

Many people prefer talking to a human being rather than a machine!

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People that cannot afford PC's

The cost of access at home is beyond many households budgets and an increasing number of people are on low incomes. Those who do have access via mobile phone often don't have a printer so can't fill in and check forms, prepare for meetings, take part in consultation etc. Access online via libraries is more difficult as libraries close branches and reduce opening hours. Demand for services when libraries are open is increasing as benefits have to be claimed on line and students need places to study. A significant number of people who need to contact the council do not have the literacy and technical skills to go on line. Phone services are expensive from mobiles. The council's switchboard is in my own experience slow and poor at connecting you to the correct section or individual. I think people should be seen closer to where they live. I suspect that many people will, like me, have made an appointment at Gateway and find that the information isn't available so the journey needs to be repeated. The proposed changes discriminate not just against those in your list above but against people on low incomes,

the most effective communications mechanism for difficult/complex or unpalatable messages is often face to face

Those over 65 who are the ones who mostly need the services often without computer facilities.

people whose first language is not English. also a lot of people still have poor I.T skills which may make it difficult for them to know 'how to' even if they know where.

Only if there is a one stop option to talk to an operative.

Those who are not IT literate or do not have access to online facilities.

Adults with poor literacy numeracy

English as a second language speakers might find it difficult too

People for whom English is not their first language and others will have limited reading and writing skills.

People with poor English or learning difficulties may struggle with a telephone service. An appointment-only service still requires them to use a PC or telephone to make the appointment in the first place!

Some people who suffer with mental health problems.

Deaf people as they do not always understand English as it is not their first language

I am not a member of this group

Physically getting to a terminal if you are at work all day or even on shift work.

People who do not have access to the net either at home or through a public access venue, and there will be some people who do not have a telephone but not many but a few.

People with learning difficulties

Foreigners, people without technology skills

Online services can be designed with people with visual impairments in mind

There are people who cannot afford to have internet access/buy a pc/smartphone

the homeless, victims of domestic violence

There will be some instances where an elderly person may struggle to get their request across so home visits may be required to fully understand the requirements for a council-requested job.

This could work if there were enough people to assist but I doubt if there would be. This would mean that the most vulnerable people would be left waiting and confused

people whose disability causes problems with using their hands eg. severe arthritis, parkinsons disease

some disabled people with limited hand mobility,

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Question 2 - *There will be people who will have difficulty using or are unable to use an online service including: people with visual impairments; people with learning difficulties; some elderly people. These people will still be able to use the phone service or can make an appointment to see someone face-to-face in Gateway. Do you feel this approach would meet their needs? Are there other groups of people who may have difficulty with online access? Comments?*

My cousin is over 90 years old and his wife 87years old. They still pay their community payment in cash at he Gateway each month. It will confuse them if this method is changed.

Whilst online access to some services is welcomed for those who can or want to use it, it is not ideal for everyone and any situation. Anyone who is either not familiar with computers (whatever age) or not trusting them especially with sensitive information. Some people actually want to deal with a human rather than an automated service. You can't always get an answer from a computer. Making an appointment is also not ideal for everyone. Losing the ability to pop in when convenient would in my opinion be a big loss. People with for example mental health issues may not be able to judge in advance when they could make it down for an appointment.

If you can't use the online or phone service how will you make an appointment to see somebody? Attending the Gateway to make an appointment and then having to return another day is not acceptable. What help, if any, will be available to people who visit libraries to access online services? Will housing offices be able to help? Will Gateway staff have regular surgeries at libraries rather than sitting in their ivory tower?

If the phone service is easy to use yes, but invariably it will be press 1 then 6 then 5 then 4 with questions that do not fit purpose for the vulnerable.

Some people with physical difficulites

The over 50 years of age have no PC skills and do not want to use this type of system

Some people just do not want to use the internet as they are scared of change and may need extra education in its use.

there will always be people who are uncomfortable with computers, not able to afford a computer or would just rather deal direct with a real person.

there are many disabilities where people would find this difficult not just visual impairments and learning difficulties

Arthritic and similar conditions.

the young unemployed and other disadvantaged groups who are being more and more alienated by political dogma and bureaucratic B.S.

many elderly can not use online methods

Gateway is already a total shambles with exdisting Staff-long delays inevitable.Reduce or eliminate Staff and the service must deteriorate even further

Our most vulnerable should not have to make an appointment

People where english is not their first language. People with complex / detailed needs or requests especially in housing / homelessness situations
Complainants may wish to speak to someone f2f

Some groups of disabled people - any with problems affecting fingers/hands will also have problems as they can't always eaisly use keyboards or phones.

Those with no literacy skills - through my experience some people still cannot read People who do not speak/read English (their primary language isn't English)

There seems to be a big assumption that the younger generation are computer literate or intelligent enough to use on-line. Having worked in schools this is not accurate. This statement also applies to any person of any age, not necessarily whether elderly etc, that some people do not use computers at all. This is a personal choice.

Vulnerable Children and clients who can't read or write or speak English.

People need people!!!! Online forms and contact are not helpful to many, face to face is important. Phone services are poor for people with hearing disabilities and even making an appointment to see someone face-to-face sounds as if it would be made on the phone or online. MANY do not have easy computer access or knowledge.

you say if they ring it will take longer to actually get through to a person or the right department! how frustrating is that? Not acceptable and not a service.

Homeless

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Any person who is not IT literate will have a problem. It is not always older people or people with learning difficulties.

Speakers of languages other than English. This is likely to affect a high percentage of middle-aged women from Muslim families.

Making an appointment to meet someone is preferable. People with Mental Health problems may have difficulties accessing a phone service but may also forget appointment times. They often do things spontaneously. Many people do not have a landline therefore how much will the phone call cost from a mobile phone? Will this be too expensive for those on a low income How will people whose first language is not English cope? What system will be in place for those who are deaf and do not have a computer

People with no knowledge of computer technology??, how easy will it be to book an appointment?

some elderly people and some people with learning difficulties will not be comfortable using an automated phone service, they need to be able to get through to a real person with a minimum number of selection options

different languages

Why always the need to make an appointment?

Will depend on quality and speed of phone service

Illiterate people and those with English as a foreign language

Please keep the human interface.

Nearly everyone needs to be able to have face to face contact just to ask simple questions and be pointed in the right direction. Even if you have to wait a while at the moment you know how will see someone that day to explain things. The fact you can call to make an appointment will only add to worry time and stress levels. Too many organisations have gone this route and it means nothing but trouble.

There are still many people who are unable to navigate through the internet who do not have learning difficulties but not high achievers at school. There are still many adults who are unable to read properly, how are they going to manage?

People with English as a second language

People for whom English is not their first language may find contact more difficult. If those with other difficulties are faced with more menu options and / or a longer wait for contact, they may give up or put more pressure on other agencies, such as Social Services, to help them.

People who are computer illiterate

People from other ethnic backgrounds how's first language is not English.

Providing there are enough staff to cover the appointments on daily basis and an appointment can be made within a number of hours as opposed to days.

A phone service in its current form would not meet the requirements of the above because of the long delay in getting a reply and the apparent lack of understanding/experience of some of the operatives as described previously. This could be very frustrating and stressful for people with psychological and mental health problems (not covered in the list above, who often see this as an obstacle to getting to where they want to be. I myself have had incidents where people have complained to me about the inept abilities of the Contact Centre. As I said previously, for people with severe physical disability or for those who are very frail, even getting out of the house is a challenge, let alone making their way in to the city centre to access the free PC or face to face contact.

See previous rant.

People with medical conditions or mental health problems. Because listening to the annoying automated messages again and again will give you mental health issues if you don't already have them. What about people with speech impairments who cannot talk properly over the phone & cannot travel without assistance? How long will they have to wait to resolve a problem.

Sit for hours trying to phone a real person. People will just love that. Nothing like press 1 then 2 then 3 then 4.... getting the picture?

people with hearing impairments

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People who are not used to using computers - because they do not have them at home, nor internet access. So although terminals are to be provided, these people will feel at a disadvantage, and may avoid coming for advice because they don't want to stand out. This is not silly, but a common human reaction when people feel they lack skills they are expected to have.

Previous comment refers

Staff without PC access. Even if PC made available, additional lost time incurred by managers helping them to complete forms

People with limited means. To get into town requires bus fare to phone requires money. Often multiple visits are required. Cant facilities be made available more locally. Also there are many people in the City who do not fall into these groups and are not conversant with technology and they will be the ones who require the service. people who work in offices and use computers all the time will be fine.

See previous answer and some people dislike the 'coldness' of computer access, preferring to speak to a pleasant human being who can understand subtlety in the way a pedantic computer cannot.

Mental health. Promoting good mental health means COMMUNICATION.

The call staff will need to be very helpful to these people as it is sometimes extremely confusing, even for us being sent through a series of alternative. Sometimes I have even been returned to the start. Other information relayed whilst waiting can only add to this confusion.

Please see previous answer. Your own stats show that only 70% of the population of Southampton interact on-line with you. As Southampton has high levels of poverty, a majority of people will not be able to afford a pc, printer and the telephone connections. This will put additional pressure on the inevitable reduced staffing in Gateway. People will give up.

There are those who choose not to use the internet following bad experiences (such as our less than reliable online payments system) and bad press. Not all issues are related to Revs and Bens!

Homeless Non English reading

people with low literacy levels / people who have trouble reading and comprehending written information

As before, for those with more complex problems a face to face contact is better

Most people prefer to be dealt with by a person. Go into Asda at any given time and the only ones using the self service check outs are students and people in a rush. I ring the call centre regularly to get through to my local library and it is so frustrating as I have to go through the whole gammat of questions before they finally agree that I need to be put through. as for making an appointment to see someone at Gateway, is this going to end up like a Gps where you have to wait 2 weeks to get an appt yet only have 1 days in which to pay the council tax bill!!!!

homeless, less organised and disengaged people who tend only to use drop in services. Illiterate people. In other words, people with serious needs.

What about those with mobility difficulties?

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Questions 4 and 5 - *There will be people who will have difficulty using or are unable to use the automated phone switchboard including: people with hearing impairments; people with learning difficulties; people who have difficulty understanding spoken English; some elderly people. These people will still be able to use the online service if they are able to do so, or can make an appointment at Gateway to see someone face-to-face (with an interpreter if necessary). Do you feel this approach would meet their needs? Are there other groups of people who may have difficulty with an automated phone service? Any comments?*

Anybody who suffers from even a mild form of stress disorder. Automated switchboards are great for everybody except the users.

Please do not automatically assume people with disabilities are unable to use technology - many if not most are more than capable. Add translation features to the website

If you have say arthritis, and are unable to mobilise outside they are unable to get to Gateway. Also if we are asking them to try to do this will there be someone there that is able to answer any of their concerns whether it be for housing, care needs, benefits ECT. If it is felt they can then be sign posted and have chronic depression or Dementia they will not be able to follow the advice

Members of the public and professional customers often find automated phone systems very frustrating-especially if they are ringing with complaints or concerns.

Automated phone services do not meet anyone's needs and the vast majority of people dislike them intensely and have nothing but trouble from them. In fact I believe many companies are moving away from them and using this fact as a positive marketing exercise to attract more customers. You have not mentioned above people on limited incomes who make up the vast majority of Gateway Customers, once the phone is answered by the machine the charges start to rack up, by the time you've pressed 1 for this and 2 for that you are then held in a queue and could be on the phone for 30 minutes before you speak to a human. Are you going to make these calls free from landlines and mobiles? If not this idea should be dismissed out of hand!

Automated phone services are slow, clumsy and increase customer frustration. A menu system that is complex or has too many choices makes service worse instead of better

Blind etc

Anyone that has had a brain injury as they won't necessarily be able to compute what's being asked of them. Will Automated phone services allow for a carer to help?

Anyone already irritated by the endless options, repeated (usually inappropriate) automated messages which seem to have replaced human contact and actual service

Costly if too long on automated service,

Persons get fed up with press this option for this and this for that. It will be as bad as ringing the bank

See my previous comments

People who are unable to use online services and also unable to use the phone system, for example an elderly person with a hearing impairment. Will they still be able to walk into Gateway and be seen?

It depends on how easy the phone system elderly people find it confusing now!!

As previously, our clients with mental health needs may struggle with an automated service. Extended menu options can be confusing particularly for those with concentration and memory problems. Furthermore there is the issue of increased phone bills due to having to go through multiple menus.

Very elderly people with vision impairments who simply can't react quickly enough to automated instructions.

I suspect lots of people will drop in, as if they struggle with understanding and contacting organisations, in some cases they are unlikely to be able to call to arrange an appointment. Need to ensure there is still a drop in face-to-face service that is well staffed. People with conditions affecting their memory recall will struggle - includes lots of conditions including learning disabilities, dyslexia, people who have had stroke, head injuries, mental illness, substance misuse, people on certain medications, Alzheimers/ dementia etc.

In course of work with people who have debts I come across many whose lack of confidence / mental issues and lack of experience with technology conspire against them using automated systems

People that only use mobiles as the prices will be expensive

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Phone services are expensive from Mobiles The long list of options costs money and is very confusing and hard for people to remember . Many people do not read or write well The council's switchboard is in my own experience slow and poor at connecting you to the correct section or individual The automated system is useless for most people

those with limited understanding of what the right questions are to ask, telling their own story is not going to be possible through this system?

As before

there are a lot of people who lack the confidence to contact official departments by phone - not knowing what to say or who to ask for. these people are often represented by support agencies who may not always have the time to deal with urgent issues.

Success will be dependent on how obstructive we are to facilitate face to face appointments. (If we are measuring success in terms of customer satisfaction).

They still need to use a phone or PC to make an appointment. If it is a simple problem it can waste advisers' time reserving a whole appointment slot for something that can be dealt with in a few minutes. People may not think it worth making an appointment until the problem has got out of control and has become more complex to resolve.

If you feel excluded, you don't ask. It is far too humiliating. What you are doing is reducing the level of service so that only those who can cope with it, use it and then you can say how the number of queries has gone down. What will the cost be of the automated service? Experience has shown that you spend a significant amount of time holding on for a reply and it is always on a premium rate.

Depends on how quick it is to get through and the cost of the call.

Disabled people who probably have a special phone service which will be incompatible with yours.

There are text comm facilities for hearing impaired people

If an elderly person has difficulty using an automated phone, it is likely that they will also have difficulty accessing transport to get into town/arranging an appointment

the homeless

Again would there be sufficient staff to meet the needs of vulnerable people

Automated switchboards are very impersonal and can be confusing with too many options and levels. If it was limited to 2 levels with not too many options this would be more manageable.

My 90 year cousin can't use the phone very well. So how will he cope?

Anyone who actually wants to speak to someone when they ring. An extended automated service is all very well for those that want to use the service but for people who purely want to speak to someone it is a great irritation to have to navigate through numerous options before getting the opportunity to speak to someone. It may prove too stressful for those that already find phone calls difficult. A simple option at the beginning of the call for either self service or a human would be preferred.

Having to attend the Gateway to make an appointment is not acceptable if you cannot use the phone or online services. Help should be available at any council office including schools anywhere in the community for these people to be helped to make appointments and Gateway staff should venture out to regular surgeries.

Even educated and IT savvy people like me regularly get confused by the variety of options and the continual messages that just add time plus more confusion.

Over 50's do not want a prompt press No 5 for whatever service you require then press No 6 for.....what/who ever (Answer the phone with a real person!

As I said in my previous comment automated phone services are disliked by almost everyone and they would much rather speak to an operator. This proposal has no positive points so must just be a cost cutting exercise

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People want personal contact at the first point of contact

said it yourself, deaf or hard of hearing people

people are already fed up with the endless list of possibilities when they try to phone

In all these cases you have already said in your proposals that it will take longer to answer people's queries when they phone. There are bound to be situations that do not fit neatly into the boxes "on line" and they too will be inconvenienced

People who cannot afford to pay to phone a computer

people with mental health issues

Arithic and similar conditions.

The general public who are increasingly fed up with automated phone lines. press 1 for this, 2 for that, 3 for something else. what is wrong with talking to a person straight off.

some people will not use new technology as they are frightened of it

our most vulnerable should not have to make an appointment

As above; those with physical disabilities preventing them from doing so.

How will those who become or are homeless access services?

Same as before - automated responses do not allow for questions to be asked - unless they fall in the categories provided. Its also extremely time wasting, having spent time myself trying to get through to a government dept with automated response.

Its so frustrating listening to automated machine, it takes 5 minutes to listen to automated services. It might be easier for us, However elderly clients do not have patience to listen and stand for that long.

Calls cost money and to have to wait and go through the long process these automated systems put you through cost the already vulnerable and poor.

People without phones or ability to pay for a phone call

Visiting Gateway to make an appointmen and then returning for the appointment could be quite expensive in terms of bus fare.

how will they make the appointment to see someone face-to-face, and what if they are unable to get there?

community support might be needed for less mobile

encourage those who live in this country to learn or have access to speak our language

Will depend on ease of getting a convenient Gateway appointment. People with speech problems have difficulty in responding to automated phone systems, e.g. I have had my voice box removed and speak through a voice prosthesis

We need to keep the option of a human interface as the First Priority. The websites are very good but should not supercede an active and prompt "first port of call" managed by real people!

It depends on the system, many automated systems take ages to get through, you keep having to press option x, and then get further choices. This costs money unless it is a freephone number which is being provided.

Many people find automated phone services difficult to navigate due to the number of unclear options that need to be chosen

People with visual impairments and how will they be able to make an appointment. Some poeple will get frustrated if they turn up and are told that they can't be seen until they make an appointment

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Questions 4 and 5 - *There will be people who will have difficulty using or are unable to use the automated phone switchboard including: people with hearing impairments; people with learning difficulties; people who have difficulty understanding spoken English; some elderly people. These people will still be able to use the online service if they are able to do so, or can make an appointment at Gateway to see someone face-to-face (with an interpreter if necessary). Do you feel this approach would meet their needs? Are there other groups of people who may have difficulty with an automated phone service? Any comments?*

Same comments as before. Staff at Gateway would have to be very patient, trained to a high level and be able to spend sometimes a considerable time in order to understand and correctly deal with caller. People with psychological or mental health problems might find an automated phone service challenging and frustrating.

People will feel very lost and will miss the personal approach. For libraries it is a social opportunity for some.

How will they be able to make an appointment to meet someone face to face in gateway if they are unable to use the automated phone service.

Yes people with mental health, they do exist!

Automated ... meet needs. You really have no idea do you? Can you make an appointment without an automated service? Can you?

anyone who is not an auditory kind of person and finds it hard to process information delivered to them acoustically, that does not have to be a disabled person, in the normal course of events not everybody can relate to this method of communicating

I am a member of my GP practice consultation group, and one of the main complaints the surgery gets is against the automated phone service, especially from older clients.

Not everyone can get to Gateway. I have hearing issues and have difficulty in dealing with automated services. It cost a lot more to, because i have to keep going back to understand what options are available.

I assume this does not apply to staff wishing to contact Capita.

Maybe see previous answer. I personally dislike Gateway with the queuing and crush

Everyone in the whole universe HATES automated phone services, FACT. Don't become like everyone else and lose your customers voice, and staff for that matter.

some people with mental health issues find it very difficult to communicate using the phone and may not have access to internet facilities at home. Still a lot of people with poor IT skills in community.

Telephone operators will need to be extremely helpful especially for these groups of people. Trawling through alternatives can become very frustrating and confusing. At times I have been returned to the start without any reason. Also information relayed whilst waiting can be frustrating any, at times irritating. It must also be remembered that prolonged telephone calls cost money and time.

If you can't use the phone, how do you make an appointment. As the service provider's aim is to reduce costs, there will be an automated service in order to make an appointment with the aim being to deter appointments. It will be a humiliating process. Automated phone services are expensive and those who are on low incomes whether through work or benefits will be unable to afford the service.

An automated phone service is reknown for putting callers off making contact this way, which means we loose a payment opportunity.

Again making an appointment for help??!! please, that is just unbelievable service.

Less confident people. People whose names are not recognised by some systems. People who cannot make appointments. Not everyone has a phone.

See previous comment re those with mobility problems

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 6 - *Moving to an appointments system in Gateway will encourage drop-in callers to use the self-service terminals (with assistance from Gateway staff as needed). However some people will have to be seen immediately and it will not be appropriate that they wait for an appointment. Gateway staff will be trained to recognise where this is the case and an immediate interview will be available in these exceptional cases. Can you see any difficulties with this approach? Any comments?*

The public will not like being turned away by staff; they'll end up quickly feeling devalued by the council. (I've never had need to use Gateway, personally)

LONGER WAITING TIMES AND POORER CUSTOMER SERVICE

what happens to the people that are house bound will Capita have a service to go out and visit to find out what the person needs.

There is an expectation that people can drop-in and have their queries dealt with off-spec and so this change would need to be carefully communicated. Also, the self-serve terminals would need proper staff support to assist people with any technology issues. It is also important to note, that system failures can really undermine the service. Overall, I think this creates an impersonal and unfriendly impression of the Council.

An appointment based system is good in theory but people that drop in need to be seen also and will not take kindly to people jumping the queue - it will give the appearance of Gateway pandering to the people that shout the loudest getting the service - this should not be the way a professional organisation such as the council should run

The aim of the changes are to reduce SCC costs, however the number of staff required to service gateway will remain the same for a considerable time or as part of a proving period to see if the solution works.

Capita use a lot of staff with limited knowledge and experience. While the theory is good the staff are routinely not up to the job.

exceptional cases?? just because a member of staff has been trained doesnt mean that they necessarily understand whats exceptional to any given customer - judging on this is going to be incredibly difficult and deemed as unfair to others waiting.

Your 'customers' deserve the right to speak to your servers and have their queries answered without having to book an appointment or to use the hugely impersonal online facility. For a 'people' organisation the face to face contact should be paramount.

This feels like a 'you don't really matter to us strategy' maximum inconvenience to the public

As long as there are enough staff to help the Customers as they will not want to have to wait to use the computers or wait.

Would need more staff at busy times of the day, and consequently more appointments should be available. Some people will not want to admit that they cannot use self service terminals.

Not the amount of staff on hand as there is now and persons escalating what there issue is to be seen sooner

It could be difficult to distinguish which cases are seen as needing immediate attention - individuals may have travelled in especially and feel their need is urgent only to be turned away. While many things are straightforward and could be done through self service, it is all the more complex individual issues that will present a problem.

Spotting people in desperate need of assistance may not actually be that easy. Sometimes those people most in need make the least fuss. Also offering help with self-service terminals could take up a lot of staff member time, you only need to take a look at self-service tills in supermarkets!

will there be enough staff to cope with this? because i can imagine a lot of people will want to speak to someone personally

In my experience Gateway staff do not have a good track record for recognising those in distress or those who need immediate attention, and indeed I have had to complain to Gateway formally about treatment of clients with mental health issues and serious housing problems in the past. I would not be confident that staff would recognise these situations nor deal with them appropriately.

I think this will encourage people to make a scene in order to be seen quickly which will only result in irritating people who initially were prepared to wait.

The staff would have to be well trained to decide where an immediate appointment is required as many people's opinions will be different.

The biggest concern, in my experience, is the potential loss of the drop-in service. My concerns would be: 1) that staff will not be good at recognising who does/ does not need to use this service - for example we worked with a lady with severe dyslexia who looked perfectly normal but this caused significant memory recall difficulties as well as poor literacy. This individual would need instant support (would not recall appointment time otherwise), but could well be missed. I am concerned about how staff will decide who needs help and how they will be able to pick up on people with vulnerabilities, which are often hidden. 2) I suspect, from our experience, that these cases will not be exceptional and I am concerned that good staffing levels will not be in place to meet this demand. Not having sufficient staffing will likely lead to a number of problems, including: a) people

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not paying their bills on time etc - concerned that action will be taken against them or that the council will not get the revenue in it expects b) stress caused to residents, especially vulnerable residents

Many people feel they need to be seen and heard immediately, so could cause some disagreements IF staff are not available as you state they will be

The disadvantaged groups mentioned already will be unable to use self service terminals. If the 'meet and greet person is able to give people time to explain their problem and always offers face to face option if CLJET sees it as urgent. Asking to come back for appointment will incur another lot of bus fare - very unfair to many on low income

A perception may be created whereby you can simply turn up - possibly complain and be seen immediately. This could encourage others not to bother with the appointments system

self service terminals need people to staff them . When I have been in gateway people have been struggling to access information and even when an agency has accompanied someone they still find it difficult Training staff to recognise vulnerable people is unlikely to be successful .Check the work done by secret shoppers many years ago. via choices advocacy .

Computers do not explain people do.

customer understanding.unfortunately people do not always appreciate the needs of others may be greater than their own. some people could construe this approach as queue jumping and could potentially lead to difficult to manage situations for staff and possibility of a danger to the public

Managing the volume of enquiries if only a small staff team available. Managing the expectations of the general public who may want to speak to someone in person.

I do not believe that this ad hoc approach - to "recognise" the need is good enough. People find it difficult to resolve the issues now; the mistakes are made all the time....

Possible lack of staff

See answers to the previous questions. Anything that discourages people from sorting out simple problems straight away leads to them becoming large, complex problems that are more difficult to resolve.

The ticket system at the moment seems to work well.

For deaf people they will need to speak with someone who signs or need an interpreter present straight away

Stand by the self service checkouts in supermarkets and note how often staff are needed to sort out problems & how many self service checkouts there are in relation to staffed tills. This is simple scanning of barcodes. Dealing with a myriad of human issues is far more complex.

Everyone should be entitled to a face to face adviser. It is what we pay our Council Tax for.

Not having enough trained staff available to deal with people coming in that need an immediate interview.

Some people have trouble with travel arrangements

Not always obvious who needs help and who doesn't. Also unless staff member is trained and supported by management and on a permanent contract they won't stay long.

how will the queuing system work

Although I agree with the idea in principal, the council should make clear in which incidences immediate interviews will be required visually and to take a strong stance with people who abuse the situation.

As long as staff are well trained to recognise this need

What about original documents (that may be valuable/sensitive)that need to be copied that people don't want to leave in a post box? Parking permits etc, will you need to make an appointment for things like that?

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Who defines what 'exceptional cases' are and what appeal process will there be? The danger is that those who make a scene will be given an immediate appointment while those in real need will just walk away.

I hope the training offered is much better than presently given !

With public transport access so poor it will be very difficult for people to commit to a set appointment without wasting a lot of time.

I think people with problems generally need a personal contact. Life is far too 'automated' as it is.

People are worried about feeding info into a Terminal.....The over 50's

As long as there enough staff on duty to see people straight away and still keep to appointment times.

A drop in service is always more accessible and approachable. Maybe a blend of appointments only and drop in availability at different times.

You are providers of a public service and you should aim to provide as much public contact 'on demand' as possible. The only appointment I have made was with a person who freely admitted she was not a person who could answer the questions outlined prior to the appointment.

staff are never trained well enough to deal with difficult situations

Why can staff just not answer the query?

Again some people will find this embarrassing and difficult, even using self service terminals is difficult for a lot of people

Not enough staff and too many people at once. Should this happen.

yes technology in all its guises is notorious for not working when required. so much so that you would have to employ a person to stand by it to assist. why not just employ the two people and save the cost of the technology.

not all staff are tolerant of elderly people and can be quite rude to them

Requires the provision of committed, interested and efficient Staff-Can this be provided from the existing base?

if a member of the public has an emergency situation then this should also be dealt with

Sometimes people may not present clear or overt signs that their need is urgent or immediate or know that the system allows them to jump the queue. Also once people realise this will some people try to use the system to jump the queue? How will staff be checking for signs or is there a triage system in place?

Obviously some people will feel that others are getting preferential treatment. The Gateway staff will need to be trained to deal with those customers.

Having the correct number of staff to deal with with this system will be challenging. Will the Gateway be centrally based, if it is an appointment system could not the appointments be more local for residents in alternative venues eg libraries

it may be a struggle to get her for some residents, and may be difficult to get back again without assistance. elderly people in particular will have difficulties

This will only work if there is enough staff available

You can only ever see the obvious people but there are many people who will become quietly distressed by this and will cause anxiety and illness and they will then possibly ignore bills as they are too frightened of the system.

Not everyone can travel which means we are saving money, vulnerable clients will have to pay for transport.

Disabilities are not always obvious. Sufferers of conditions such as M.E. have difficulty waiting and certainly with standing, but often don't use aids. How is one to 'recognise' this? This is only one example.

Will there be enough staff to help those using the automated systems?

Depends on level of training provided which should include dealing with people with learning difficulties or early dementia

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There may be a higher proportion than expected on some occasions. It is difficult to see how Gateway staff will be able to manage high demand and I am afraid that the criteria may be altered when this is the case.

I would like to be optimistic and hope that anyone who needs an immediate appointment will get one, but my concern is the training staff will get to recognise those in need and identify those who may not be included in the categories they have been trained in. Not everyone fits into a neat box

This may cause resentment with people who are queuing..

This sounds like a move to quite a faceless and unapproachable organisation. A lot of queries may be resolved quickly by technology. Why does someone who simply wants to discuss something face to face have to be viewed as an exception?

Need to be very well trained

I feel people would still prefer direct contact whatever the issue.

every case is different and i find it hard to believe there will be enough staff to meet this need. I believe you want to save money.

Border line cases will be difficult to decide on without causing upset to some

Treat people as valued customers and see them in person in a minimum time frame.

I am not sure it's always easy to spot those who need help, but time and experience will help

As long as there are sufficient resources to manage this.

Much the same as previous comments

There will be a long bedding in time while people get used to the new arrangements and the transient population will need to be supported each time. The system is likely to put a lot more pressure on those Gateway staff who remain on the front line.

It is short-sighted to believe that staff can determine what needs to be dealt with immediately and what does not. What would the criteria to make decisions consistent

some people have problem communicating and may be accepting of being told to book an appointment when the matter could be very urgent

How are staff trained?

It will create confusion and also disruption for people who are already stressed in some cases.

Success will depend on the quality of the training and the staff.

Having used Gateway myself I found the system confusing, I was given a differently numbered ticket than the number they called out for me (luckily I went first thing in the morning and was the only one waiting) staff were rude and obstructive and unhelpful. It was the first time I had used Gateway and I hope, based on this experience, I never have to again. If I had any type of difficulty or was agitated in any way I would not feel confident in staff's ability to manage effectively or prioritise.

What about when there isn't staff available?

Trained! trained, is customer service? As they now? haaaa! ohh! haaaa!

Gateway is busy now. This will only increase waiting times and frustrate customers further. Customers usually come in when the problem has got really bad so they expect to see someone on the same day not to be told they have to make an appointment for another day. Service will be poorer.

Not clear what are the signs that the Gateway staff will be trained to recognise. The general 'feel' of this proposal is that it will put people off approaching the Council due to shyness or shame. Having someone to talk to immediately, who might then do a sort of 'triage' might be a better way of deciding who needs what

Cannot see any benefit in encouraging people to visit gateway, just to go online to make an appointment, when staff will be available anyway?

Busy sessions may mean staff do not see the problem

The waiting time at Gateway is already long how will you ensure that it does not rise further?

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I don't see how Gateway staff can recognise this. Last time I was there I joined a long queue to hand in a letter as I was not sure if the drop box was appropriate. I waited as explanations of others were listened to and help given (the lady was very good at this)but nevertheless I didn't feel I could jump the queue. I handed in a letter destined for Marlands House where the porter refuses to accept it telling me to go to Gateway (and giving me further to walk when I was tired and had a hurting leg)

Why would you want to dissociate from your client base, embrace your public instead of pushing them into isolation.

A lot will depend on the IT equipment installed in order to be able to assist individuals with their enquiries and how many units are installed.

The aim of the service provider is to reduce costs. This they already do by ensuring that the Gateway service already does not have enough staff and by ensuring that most probationary staff in their call centre never meet the standard to move onto anything above the minimum wage. There will be less staff and I have no faith in the service provider ensuring that staff have the necessary training.

Gateway staff do not have the scope of knowledge required to handle all queries and there is a continuing risk of inappropriate advice/direction being given

you'll need more staff at the Gateway, it would be nice to have these appointments held more locally instead of making people travel into town if the service is very 'short staffed' how will staff be able to manage this?

I know some people don't keep their appointments and have an expectation that they can just turn up and see someone - there needs to be that culture shift really on the part of the public

Think if I'm sat there with a big problem in my eyes yet a member of your team has said no you need to make an appointment and someone else comes in and is deemed as urgent that a lot of ill feeling will persist. Not very well thought of but then again this is the council that closed their visitors centre and put in a self service machine in its place!!

It would depend on how exceptional these cases are. Speaking to a person makes one feel positive towards a service. Compulsory on-line and automatic call centres make me and most people I know feel extremely hostile. If there is waiting time, one pays from the start.

This system is too reliant upon the ability of one member of staff to spot problems which may not be easily seen by other than trained professionals e.g. in mental health

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 7 - *Other than online via the web and automated phone services, are there other approaches that the council should be considering when looking at customer contact? Please give your reasons for your answer.*

Being able to talk to someone face to face.

Provided your staff are trained to help people who need urgent advice / services and provided you have a range of options, I see no reason why a move to online and phone should be a problem. You may want to look at facilitating community outreach 'surgeries' eg in libraries to widen access routes

There will be people who need face to face advice in their own homes. There will be people who need interpreters. For some people one call or visit will not be enough assistance to get things back on the right track with problems they have

Yes! Continuing to run Gateway to serve the public rather than putting a cheap money saving plan into place that pays lip service to the customers but supplies them with a unsuitable service.

Use libraries for sharing services A local library could be used for housing staff, social services staff and for gateway staff. Better use of physical council assets, more local service for city residents.

face to face contact

Any telephone number that is rang should be a free phone number so if the delays that currently take place continue then the public will not have to pay for being kept waiting.

Face to Face - stop making everything computerised or automated, by the time 'Crapita' finishes their contract people will have forgotten how to communicate with each other.

The Council should be considering not considering the impersonal and socially isolating use of computers and automated, not local, phone systems.

Real human beings to deal with real human situations. The recent introduction of the 'green bins' in our area shows that no one, not even IT savvy neighbours actually looks at the council website- why would they? Consequently large numbers continued to put out green bags for several weeks totally unaware of the new charging service. Green bags are minor stuff compared to some of the issues dealt with at the Gateway

Having staff fully trained in all aspects that they are to cover. If mistakes are made in the first contact that a customer has, it can take months to remedy which causes grief to the customer. Not to mention the complaints or MP enquiries which may result from the initial error and the extra work for the department involved.

For each service area have at least one customer service contact with a direct phone number, so that if people aren't sure of where to go or have more specific questions they can speak to someone. Offer of arranging appointments to come and see people in their own homes or a more local venue for those who find travelling in to town difficult.

Keep Gateway as it is

Many people still prefer face to face contact. Although it is more expensive, cutting off access to staff makes the council feel inaccessible. If the council wants to put customers first, as stated in the newly refreshed Council Plan, it needs face to face contact.

Personal contact has got to be the best way customers can be reassured immediately

It should be easy to contact the council by letter and simple to find the relevant addresses to write to for the appropriate departments - this is helpful for agencies such as ourselves who provide support to users of council services as it can be quicker and simpler than telephoning. There are also difficulties with online/automated only access when we are not with a client so there need to be other options such as speaking to a member of staff.

I think there is a danger in moving towards these type of automated systems, that can in general work quite well, as there are groups of people who will simply not be able to have their questions or concerns responded to because they can't manage automated systems, have no Internet access and can't afford to have Internet access or because of health issues end up being isolated from their community and from the local authority which has a duty to ensure that local people get the services they pay taxes for.

There always needs to be a back up if people do not want /like using automated services, as long as there is still a facility to speak to a person if required it should be ok.

Drop in and appointment service is vital. Mobile phone reminders? Resourcing community organisations to help people complete forms/ provide Internet access

There probably are, I need to think about it!

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 7 - *Other than online via the web and automated phone services, are there other approaches that the council should be considering when looking at customer contact? Please give your reasons for your answer.*

Face to face contact is always better - there is nothing more frustrating when you have an automated phone system and cannot get through to anyone re a problem and many people - old people just don't have access to the web - if it is anything like the call centres for example BT or Sky etc - it most definitely will not work - you just cannot get through to anybody and there is no way that you can leave a message for them to call you back

Really still need some form of immediate face to face contact for the vulnerable groups mentioned - eg highly trained triage person to greet personal callers at Gateway. Especially as there are now very few advice agencies to assist with online/ automated contact.

There should always be the option of talking to or meeting with a human rather than dealing with machines.

Visiting people that cannot leave their homes & do not have any family or friends that may help

making the contact more meaningful first time, giving the customer the right amount of time to get to understand their issue/need and then give the right level of information to enable them to act themselves.. Put another way we need to give more time for initial contacts and balance this with restricting time for persistent enquiries that add nothing to the resolution of an issue for a customer.

Automated phone services are dire. Cut back overpaid management and combine with other Councils. Front line should be the last to be replaced. So many people do not have on line or fancy phones. Think again think customer.

customers always prefer to deal with people face to face as it is easy to feel 'fobbed off' on the end of a phone. remote contact can be very frustrating - you cannot ask a computer questions. there could also likely be a lot of follow up/multiple contacts until customers feel their query has been fully dealt with. 1-2-1 appointments will be in demand - perhaps there needs to be additional personal services - LA surgeries for example to make up some of the shortfall.

keeping face to face approach and local housing offices / gate way open full time.

We know customers like to talk to a person rather than a machine with a script that doesn't extend beyond a limited "drop-down menu" of limited options. A reduction in the service we offer to our customers could only be justified if the savings are perceived to be solely advantageous directly to SCC rather than just improving the profitability of Capita.

Explore phone apps. Ensure that the system can deal with all web users. I cant top up my Itchen Bridge account on line as the system cannot do this from an Apple IMac. The IT system needs to be fit for purpose and allow as many users easy access

Personal contact is still needed and one of the best

Staff at libraries, local housing offices (for instance) trained to give some advice

The range of online services needs to be far larger than at present. For example, the only way I can find out if a person's housing benefit is in payment is by telephone, frequently with a long wait. I can send information *to* the council easily, but there is very little information on individual cases that can be obtained *from* the council online. e.g. current rent balance, council tax balance, progress on applications such as school admissions, housing repairs or licence applications, place in school admission waiting list and so on. Look at ways to simplify the language and clarify the layout of online services. Deploy staff to train and encourage people to use online services when they arrive at Gateway. Offer structured training in using online services at libraries. But, above all, retain a drop-in advice service for the few people that are not able to cope with online or phone services.

twitter - fast, immediate, personal. Big companies do it all the time now.

Face to face always works best. The advisers could be placed in local libraries across the cities or local housing offices.

I'm sure there will be occasions when a face to face contact is required but your proposals appear to cover this.

No. Having enough staff for face-to-face contact is best.

I think that there should be someone on hand for immediate consultation without having to make an appointment

Promote the email address and encourage people to use it.

not sure

There MUST always be the option to speak to someone by phone or in person. Even the most computer literate person sometimes feels that an on-line system fails to meet their requirements.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 7 - *Other than online via the web and automated phone services, are there other approaches that the council should be considering when looking at customer contact? Please give your reasons for your answer.*

As stated in the alternatives in your introduction, an in house system could be reintroduced - Capita are notorious for giving poor service for money, especially when the key priority of the customer is to obtain a reduction in charges/cost as seems to be the case here, rather than providing good service

I feel that there must always be a member of staff available on the phone system and at Gateway

There should be a place in the centre of town (e.g. desk in West Quay shopping centre) where residents could go to for certain forms (e.g. council tax reduction/bulky waste etc).

Someone to be at Gateway to see people when they come in a bit like the triage system at a hospital, to give them advice on what to do next.

I am sure that as the services develop it will become apparent who needs extra assistance

as long as consideration is given to the elderly and non-tech people then online works. automated phones are not ideal as there never seems to be the question that you are wanting to ask. so provided there is back up to an operator if necessary then that would work.

I would like to see weekend openings for those that are usually at work during the council's "office" hours. Can be very difficult to get face to face with council staff if the only time the offices are open require you to take time off work.

The council should be making better use of local voluntary community organisations, such as the Southampton Cycling Campaign.

Continue with notices in the local press or the local radio. Not everyone has access to the internet or have smart phones. Lots of our neighbours are elderly and want things easily accessible, no automated phone calls or press button 1 for this, that or the other.

Speaking to a live person is always best..

Some people still like to write by letter, it is cheaper. Not everyone is on line or wants to use computers.

I know many elderly folk who do not use computers and are equally unhappy using automated phone services. Please do not cut their ability to speak to someone. I am sceptical that 'training' will not help. Many younger psople simply do not understand how worrying these changes can be for the elderly.

Providing the option to receive regular contact from the council online by logging into an account (property based or individual) or by email. Council tax bills and supporting documents sent by email are an obvious cost saving.

Employ more front line staff who are able to answer a much higher proportion of queries rather than having to pass them onwards. More staff at the front-end agreed, but less in the back offices

Yes, stayhng as it is.

Access via a manned phone line (Switchboard)who can connect you with the correct Dept/Person that's what's called "Customer Service" the Human!...not the machine! The Older Group within the City DO NOT WANT THIS TYPE OF AUTO SERVICE

Mobile officers, possibly setting up in various local libraries to be used as a drop-in centre

Hopefully online via the web will include email contact as I find this the easiest form of contact.

People need contact quickly and not to have fo fill in a form

It's crucial to always have the opportunity to speak to a human being where the customer feels this is preferable. This should still be made possible.

Yesy - personal contact because it was the public (your tax payers) want

a human is needed for those who have difficulty with phone buttons, waiting in a queue on an automated service is unacceptable, people who need to use text phone, how will they be dealt with?

when I have trouble with rubbish collection I am able to phone and talk to a real person. These people are helpful and polite the same goes for the rates department. This is the way I like it, I dont want to talk to a robot. My rates went up this year by the rate set for everybody and the loss of OAP discount so I think I pay enough to talk to a real person.

Post. This may be a better solution for those without IT skills or access (eg the by using the report a pot-hole cards etc.)

Increase staff hrs by 20% to bring them into line with the rest of the city , then you would not need to adopt these measures.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 7 - *Other than online via the web and automated phone services, are there other approaches that the council should be considering when looking at customer contact? Please give your reasons for your answer.*

Where the elderly are concerned could something be offered through a doctor's surgery. It is still confusing what exactly is available and a detailed list would give some guide.

Personally I would be very happy to use online services and see it as an enhancement of council services, I'm just not sure it's the approach for all.

Visiting people who are unable to get out.

customer contact is what it says contact with the customer TECHNOLOGY tends to move away from this and the personal touch is lost and we end up speaking to computers.

Yes, face to face contact will still be needed for complex cases and for those people who are unable to use online or phone services.

need to cut costs, so proposals make sense

I think if SCC is moving to an on-line system for either enquiries or reporting, if there isn't an immediate answer, residents should be able to track their enquiry. This would enable the resident (such as me) to see what is happening to my enquiry therefore assisting with the communication feedback - without SCC needing to get back to me on the status of the enquiry until it is resolved, or I as the resident need to contact someone if it's not happening as it should. I think this would be good for residents and the council.

depending on the service enquiry it may be appropriate to speak to a member of staff for some personal or delicate matters.

Could use local housing or other council owned properties if there are any left. this offers local assistance to residents without the need to come into central, bearing in mind council does not like motorists, and for some public transport is difficult

Mobile phone app that will allow customers to quickly access SCC resources rather than having to navigate around the website.

People - face to face polite people - who can respond to a question directly because they know their job - which is what they are paid to do. They can help alleviate concerns and hopefully if they know their job can provide help and suggestions at that time. Its called good customer care.

Phones should be answered after 2 rings, customers should be given the answer straight away rather than passing it on to other departments. There should be no adverts on the phone i.e Capita have fostering care on their phones , elderly clients do not want to listen to this. Its so frustrating for them, especially if you have dementia you will forget what you have phoned for? We need customer care not business centres.

Gateway face-to-face is important.

Yes customer service the old fashioned way, people want to speak to a person not a machine.

We all know how annoying an automated phone service is and how wonderful when you phone up and speak to a real person.

It is important that the Council encourages residents to ask for help from their local councillors. A lot of residents approach the MPs' offices on problems which are local, rather than national. It would help if Gateway produced a simple Guide directing people on which kinds of problems they should ask their councillors about - and a reminder of which issues - e.g. Immigration - they should go to the MPs about. I am a City Councillor for Bitterne ward and am thoroughly aware of this problem.

We should always have the option of face to face contact. Even those that have access to a computer do not necessarily want to use it in all circumstances. The Council should be accessible to all and the citizens of Southampton should not be forced to access services in ways they don't wish to use. The current automated phone service to pay council tax doesn't work. I have been unable to use the service on a number of occasions.

I cannot think of any except that Local Housing Offices, Libraries etc were good sources of information and help. This of course has been reduced with cut backs.

people still prefer to talk to an assistant, it is easier to ask questions "on the fly" than through the web

real people by phone, for the reasons already stated

may need to be flexible and have some outreach

Home visits may be appropriate in some circumstances.

We should not be reducing face to face contact to almost nothing, this will probably result in a rise in complaints as people hate automated contact if they don't get to a real person.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 7 - *Other than online via the web and automated phone services, are there other approaches that the council should be considering when looking at customer contact? Please give your reasons for your answer.*

That good old personal contact. Automated phone services are not the way forward

Letters by post or by hand

An easy to understand paper handout mailed to each address showing the different ways people can get help. Posters in libraries, police stations, and other public places. A full page in the phone directories.

Yes face to face in person and by telephone and (would you believe it) by letter.

Yes. Must retain easy personal contact.

I think it would be a good idea to have libraries a place where members of the public could go for help with issues concerning rent rates benefits etc. They could have certain days set aside where Gateway staff would be available maybe via a video skype type link. This would still be automated to a fashion but also give the face to face contact so needed. Members of library staff would be on hand to assist if required.

Postal

Face to face appointments must still be available as in some cases, information is very personal and people may not be able to explain their true circumstances on line or over an automated phone service which undoubtedly will not have the correct option to every case.

Face to face and personal contact. What is being provided with these proposals is "service" in name only.

Possibly better information 'at source', for example through the Housing Offices, Job Centre etc. (I am not familiar with the whole system as it currently stands).

SCC must ensure that staff adopt a sympathetic and understanding attitude to all types of enquiries, which I find sadly lacking with Capita when using the Action-Line service.

Older people and those with either learning and mental health problems can be confused and or frightened by technology and cope much better when dealing with a person face to face.

Is customer contact not one to one? Surely web & phones take away 'customer contact'.

I am sure customers would still like to be able to write to the Council in a conventional way. The Council could also offer a mail service at Gateway. Some customers might feel more comfortable writing down an inquiry, particularly if it is of a personal nature, and wait for a written or telephone response, particularly in the categories I have mentioned. You could supply paper head with spaces for name, address telephone no. for response and give space for description of request and provide an internal post box at Gateway. I am aware all Councils would like to get away from paper trails, but this does not suit all clients, particularly those areas I have mentioned.

Online services can be very effective, however a strong phone service back up is also important, particularly for complicated queries.

Face to face is far more personal and person centered way of doing things. It would give better customer service.

Emails, texts, apps. All cheaper than face to face

The main switchboard for the council is ineffective, calls are not directed to the appropriate place, callers are bounced around to teams that are not working with them and then have to have the same conversation with a person in the wrong team who ends up having to contact the switchboard themselves taking time away from their actual work. Many of the switchboard operators are unhelpful and quite rude, with the opinion they are right and you are wrong. I have rarely had a straightforward conversation with a member of the switchboard and I work for SCC and understand how the system works. Names are not always given to callers and calls are often put through blind. I have had calls for children's services workers (I work in adults) and have had to deal with exceptionally irate people who have been bounced around several people initially, this caller knew the name of the person he wanted to speak to and I found them with no issue in the global address book - why the person who answered the phone on the switchboard couldn't do this is beyond me. Often if the caller asks for a specific person this will be taken on face value without checking the details on the PARIS system, this then results in angry callers. I once had a phonecall from a member of the public, who had been put through blind from the switchboard who wanted to speak to someone in another team and they were told we would be able to provide the number. Surely this is the switchboard's job. I believe that the switchboard creates more problems than it solves. I believe extending the contract would be a mistake based on the current level of performance from the switchboard I deal with.

What happened to a letter in the post with clear reference numbers and contact details for customers to reply to?

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 7 - *Other than online via the web and automated phone services, are there other approaches that the council should be considering when looking at customer contact? Please give your reasons for your answer.*

Web services and automated phone services make the assumption that the customer knows what Council service they require. From my own experience of dealing with out of hours emergencies it is not always easy to establish what service is required. Complex and or unusual issues may not be resolved by web/automated services and could put residents of the city at risk

Let the people who know their job speak to the customers. That might work. Simple but effective. Or alternatively continue to pay a private company thousands of pounds, who would not know good customer service if it bite them on the nose, continue as they are? Umm what do you think? Huh?

I think it would be beneficial to have a mobile "Gateway drop in surgery" that comes to different parts of town on different days like a library bus, where people who are not comfortable using phone or internet, and who may not be able to travel into town, can benefit from the triage reception system and supported self-service terminal access you described. This would mean that older people who prefer to a speak to a person but cannot get into town don't have to feel so isolated and cut off from services they need.

providing a reception service, where people can come in and speak to a real person when they need someone to help them.

There's actually nothing to beat real live people! OK, so they're expensive. But if there were some well-trained people available at the entry point, who could then 'field' potential clients towards the right service - and most importantly towards the people who could help them use them most quickly and effectively, this might be better than providing automated responses first, and then trying to spot those in difficulties afterwards.

Face to face is what our customers want and expect

For the benefit of disabled etc, their should be an enquiry line, which would go straight through to a "person", who could fill in online forms etc on their behalf. Some people find the internet very daunting & using computers rather a scary prospect. This proposal will just isolate those who really need assistance.

Ensuring all linked computer systems will work with any changes made. (Eg lagan, Clarence, Confirm etc.)

There is nothing wrong with online but you need to be able to get to a computer or tablet or phone and then you need to have an email then you have to register, then you can do what you need to do. Will Gateway staff be training people how to use computers. Why not reduce Gateway and rent it out to another cafe, utilise existing premises like libraries and train up and use staff in locations where people can learn to use a computer and get support from trained staff. Also why invest in expensive kiosks at £10k a pop? Make sure that the information and payment interface is good on Web pages (not like the current payments pages) and offer the payments at places across the City where they already take money like libraries from simple PCs and touch screen PCs

CUSTOMER CONTACT Literally. All these measures you are considering only isolate you from having contact. People are becoming socially invisible.

Ensure e-mail in boxes are checked regularly and responses provided in a timely manner.

email

It is not always possible for clients to visit Gateway, ie elderly and infirm. Will the Council have in place means of officers to visit in exceptional circumstances?

The citizens of Southampton deserve a first class service. That we want a service where we can come in and speak to someone is shown by the fact that Gateway is always full of people. We could use our local housing offices if the Council opened them all day everyday and allowed us to make rent payments in them; staff and train them properly and we could ask our questions there.

If we are to direct as many calleres/contacts thourgh automated service we must ensure that they are reliable, cover all types of service - not just Revs&Bens and Housing and that the relevant support is in place. Online Payments are a case in point. I am fed up with the frequent reports that this system is not working and the subsequent efforts required to secure a payment off the back of this poor service.

reopen housing offices, 6 days a week all day,

I think it is important that all staff who have direct customer contact need to be trained to listen to what is being asked before redirecting the query.

Social Media presence

Home visits? But this is more time consuming so not practical

I thought Gateway worked very well when I've used it. If you got rid of those people that sit in their ivory towers making decisions then you'd save a lot of money that could be used to pay for this customer service rather than pay Capita profit money.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 7 - *Other than online via the web and automated phone services, are there other approaches that the council should be considering when looking at customer contact? Please give your reasons for your answer.*

The present system works. I understand that the council has huge financial problems but am reluctant to see people put out of work to solve them. A continued, and perhaps extended and certainly improved, use of unautomated services. Of course, there are financial implications but this is an important proposed change which will further disadvantage those already disadvantaged.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 8 - *Over time the council will move as many services as possible to online and/or phone self-service. Are there any services that you feel should not be considered for this approach and why do you think they are not suitable?*

Not so much services that should never be considered, but there are problems in certain systems where currently only a paper form process will do. e.g. Those that require customer signatures, or evidence (such as copies of birth certificates and passports) to be sent in to the council for processing. While it would be good to be able to do all of that online, I'm not sure we're in a space where that's possible.

Do we not care about Customer service any more????? I know there are cutbacks but this is ridiculous!

None - it isn't rocket science

I feel that this is not a good move, a computer or phone self service can not hear any inference in the voice of someone that is in urgent need of assistance from the council. There are some that will not stay engaged waiting for the write number to press. These could well be the most vulnerable people in the city. Also the longer it takes for some people to speak to a human can make the final call for the recipient difficult as they are by this time rightfully frustrated, maybe in tears or very angry

Services in particular which deal with vulnerable groups of people

Yes, I feel all customer facing services should be maintained and none should be replaced by automated phone lines, as I mentioned before Private Companies are already moving away from this form of customer contact. All services should be put on the internet but these services should run alongside the traditional face to face services, not replace them!

the needs of the most vulnerable people must be taken in to account before moving services completely to online

Most of Social Services.

Children's and Adults services - its bad enough having to call a contact centre to ask for help, please don't take the human element out of this service

The Council should not be considering automating the switchboard or phone access nor making automating changes to Gateway or other front facing customer services - where most organisations are reconsidering the automated and online systems SCC/Capita are hurtling towards creating a totally automated, personnel limited, impersonal system which will be socially excluding hundreds of your citizens and tax payers.

Adult and Children Services

Services for the elderly - they may need more time and would appreciate a face to face approach. they are less likely to have access to a computer and may find phone self service daunting

Housing repairs, online reporting of urgent issues delays matters being resolved. The service itself is still under going streamlining and this has been going on for years and is still not what could be delivered under the private sector.

I think it is good for as many things to be available to do online, as long as these are not the only options, and as long as the online system is efficient and easy to use.

Whilst I understand the need to save money I feel that by moving away from face-to-face we will be in danger of cutting off people across the city who most need our assistance.

It's not about whether the service is suitable it's about the customers who use it. Some customers will be happy to access everything online or by phone whereas others will struggle.

Social Services would need to be contacted personally

All services involved in safeguarding eg social services, local housing offices. All services should still have the option of speaking to an advisor. For example, complex issues regarding housing benefit could not be dealt with using an automated system.

Dementia services

I'm not sure that there are any that should not be but I think there will be people, and from my knowledge of the demographics of the city quite a lot of people, who won't be able to access the support they need because the circumstances of their day to day living will exclude them.

None I can think of

Having worked in the community I know that a lot of people struggle to access Internet and call centre services for a variety of reasons, and whilst I feel it is a good idea to encourage people who can use the Internet to do so, I think it important that there is no discrimination against people who cannot. I believe that continuing to provide a drop in face-to-face service is vital for such customers.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 8 - *Over time the council will move as many services as possible to online and/or phone self-service. Are there any services that you feel should not be considered for this approach and why do you think they are not suitable?*

No

social services ie vulnerable people, safeguarding issues, benefit queries

Housing benefit / those in severe financial need (no longer dealt with by DWP)

This approach should not be adopted because it's yet another step towards isolation, dehumanisation and erosion of community

Adults Social Care Queries

All of them the solution is impersonal. Stop the waste get up to private sector staffing and service and speed. Get private sector management experience. Look at what other Councils and organisations do.

refer back to previous comments

all front line services need to be face to face

Wide publicity should encourage the use of online services by the electorate, and the various methods should run parallel rather than being imposed if customer service is important to SCC. If cuts are unavoidable, better trust could be engendered if this message is straight and honest rather than spun with deceptive language as spin is always transparent and is always treated with disdain..

All areas of Social Services. Each contact needs to be dealt with considerately and on an individual and confidential basis.

Referrals to Childrens Social Care, CYPIS etc

I do not want to have my personal details on-line; so i should not be forced to do something i do not want to do it.

It is not so much the services, it is ensuring that all services still have a system in place to help people in person.

Social services and children's services

Services involving confidential information - account numbers, personal circumstances, debt etc.

Filling in a form never conveys all of the circumstances and often leads to having to do the same job twice. The cost of having to have on-line access and/or the cost of having to travel to use an on-line service makes it prohibitive for those who need the services the most.

There could be many. What about if I want to complain that my bins have not been emptied?

I don't know.

not sure

None that I can think of at present.

child services, asb unit, domestic violence. any chance of physical or mental harm must be dealt with immediately.

no

Action Line has to date not really worked for me with email. No one confirms action, always have to ring in to get a response from a person.

Planning control I think is an area which often has critical time scales behind it especially for those seek retrospective planning approval for house sales etc.

No

immediate homelessness, other than that everything should be ok

Making cash payments.

It depends on how you are going to deal with proofs? People may prefer personal documents that are valuable/sensitive be dropped into Gateway for copying rather than posted, scanned uploaded to web. Maybe maintaining a quick drop off copying service would be beneficial.

Yes, I believe a lot of elderly folk will have problems trying to access the benefit services in particular.

ALL services should retain other access methods so as not to disenfranchise those who are unable (in reality or by fear) to use the online or self service and for those who feel they are not getting any answer - or too long a delay before getting an answer - from auto services

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 8 - *Over time the council will move as many services as possible to online and/or phone self-service. Are there any services that you feel should not be considered for this approach and why do you think they are not suitable?*

Any services likely to need access by the elderly or disabled.

I DON't think you should be doing this with ANY of it

I can not really answer this question

Services that require a lot of form filling and providing personal information this will not fly with the over 50's....Draw a line that everyone over 50 can select to have Real Service with a Human or if PC Skilled opt into the new system....All forms should be paper format for over 50's.....you are becoming Big Brother...give the elderly the service they should have

I cannot think of any service that should not be considered but I think there must be an option for face to face appointments for any problem that cannot be resolved to the customers satisfaction by these other means.

Emergencies

All services should have personal one-to-one contact with the public on first call.

if you have ever tried to deal with the Inland Revenue then you will know how frustrating and expensive it is, computer systems never work well when they are first set up. The road tax system was a nightmare to start with, it is brilliant now but it has taken a few years. Self assessment is a nightmare still to figure out how the system works. We dont need any more to deal with.

All of them. Your staff just need to work harder

All of them I'm a person not a punter you are there to provide a service which meets my needs not change the whole system to cut Capita overheads

nothing specific comes to mind

All council services. get people to help people. Not just to make profits for doubtful companies. Look at what happen to Bournemouth.

action line is point of contact and you can explain to the staff exactly what is wrong. do you not think it is a cost cutting exercise which will most probably go wrong at the cost of people jobs.

Some services for people with learning disabilities due to the need to ensure clarity and understanding of the service needs on both sides

No, I'm fully in favour of self-service as it means I can use council services outside office hours.

All

I think all should be considered but the decisions should be based on the type of service and the customers/residents they interact with. I am sure there will be a few that would not be suitable.

some complaints including grounds maintainance

financial and contractual problems and where paperwork is involved will be much esier and user friendly with a face to face approach.

as mentioned before they are not suitable for anyone. You need to speak to a person and not to a automated phone service.

No service should be totally automated all your doing is making it more difficult for the elderly, less educated and vulnerable people to access help. Your also taking away peoples jobs

Homeless Support

Online should be offered alongside phone self service with the option to speak to someone.

Those dealing with personal or sensitive issues eg bereavement

Sorry - I can't comment on this.

As stated before, all services should be available face to face. It should be for the citizens of Southampton to choose and not to be dictated to.

I am not fully cognicance of all the services provided but I a sure that there will be a need for better information regarding bus passes etc so there must be ways of giving out this information in an appropriate way.

Reception duties. people should be able to talk to a human being.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 8 - *Over time the council will move as many services as possible to online and/or phone self-service. Are there any services that you feel should not be considered for this approach and why do you think they are not suitable?*

social services . . . when ringing for help in an already stressed state , you don't need the added strain of trying to negotiate automated services

no - but any systems will need to pick up the vulnerable and have facilities to deal with them more appropriately - less personal contact may make this harder

I really do not know.

Anything that involves personal troubles financial etc an automated phone service in that case is as much use as a chocolate teapot and that is being polite!!!

No but I only experience a few services

All services. At some times, all people will have problems with phone and internet access, such as when moving home or having had a problem such as identity theft.

We need an approach which combines the exciting technologies available now and in the future, but we should also not forget and embrace the tried and tested ways of providing a personal service. This is best achieved by maintaining a first class level of personal customer service which means human contact and not automated self service options.

why not just sub contract the whole lot to a call centre? Honestly where is the public service going here? I'm sure we have all had very bad experiences with holding for ever not getting help even when phone is answered.

Legal, Licensing and HR.

No, as long as there are always options available for people in special circumstances.

Urgent queries and those involving social services

All. See previous comments

Probably, but I am not sufficiently familiar with the range of services to comment.

People with 24/7 care needs should have their lives made easier and kept on a personal basis. I do not think the new system will achieve this.

All services can and should be online or over the phone BUT they should still be available at a physical location where clients/service users can talk face to face and not soem should not be by appointment only.

No

Social Care should have optional ways of contact as I have described earlier, because of the complex nature of many of our customers social skills and needs.

Libraries / Gateway - it was always set up as a one stop shop.

No

Safeguarding issues

Think really hard about what you are planning here. Is it really working now? Really? Is it? Sad thing is that you really have to ask.

I am not familiar enough with the different services offered, but I can see a risk that benefit fraud could increase if people claim in a de-personalized way via the internet, without ever having to look a gateway consultant in the eye as they discuss their claim and situation. I heard this happens a lot in Norway, where benefits are generous and generally claimed online and personal contact with service staff is minimal due to the limited staffing. A person can simply fill in an online questionnaire stating they are still too depressed, sociophobic, agoraphobic or whatever to go to work without ever having a chat with a suitably trained counsellor to verify their state or provide guidance on and prompts to use treatment options available...

we can encourage people to use online but i think there will be a significant number who will be unable or unwilling to use online. My concern is that our arrangements to cover for these people may not be adequate.

Certain advice services need privacy, especially those where people have to plead special circumstances (an example might be 'bedroom tax' issues; other housing issues; things where people have to discuss their family circumstances or financial problems...).

Many of our customers of all ages and cultures dont have a pc and cant afford internet services, they just prefer to speak to someone on a one to one basis.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 8 - *Over time the council will move as many services as possible to online and/or phone self-service. Are there any services that you feel should not be considered for this approach and why do you think they are not suitable?*

Actionline/repairs service, complaints/compliments etc etc.

I do not think this is a good approach to use for HR since although it may save time for Capita, it creates extra work for managers with large groups of weekly paid staff

All of your services should be face to face contact, promoting staff relationships with their clientele. Communicating with people and validating them is critical to anyone's well-being. Pressing option buttons and doing things yourself does nothing but frustrate, cause stress and remove self-esteem. How is anyone supposed to feel motivated and positive and want to support something that ultimately is saying, no-one's here, get on with it yourself!

No but providing there is always the possibility of talking to a 'real' person without too much hassle.

As a Council Tax payer, and someone who can use a laptop on occasions, the full range of services should be offered via the full range of council offices. Often, when trying to find out where you need to go within the Council or what is needed to address your issue, this only comes after questioning. In the longrun, the personal visit is quicker and cheaper as the whole range of issues is addressed rather than just ticking a few boxes or buttons on a phone. People are complex, with difficult and multiple issues.

If this decision is off the back of a customer survey, then please ignore. If it is to make savings then I think we need to understand that this is not what many of our customers will want and complaints are expensive to deal with!

Will someone reporting an incident get fed up with an automated system? Yes I think they will, they will want to speak directly with someone

Not sure - I think that when you complain about something on-line i.e via Actionline and you don't get a response, you think the issue is not really being dealt with. If everything moves to virtual service you still need to know your issue is being followed up by an email confirmation of action taken.

I have only experience of people with housing related problems and some cases are complex and need face to face contact and there are several issues that needs to be resolved.

Over time the council will move as many services as possible to online and/or phone self-service. WHY? more people out of a job, more people inconvenienced, more anger and frustration when we get put through to a call centre, will they be trained in the answer to everything??? again why are you removing human contact - its a sad state of affairs. shame on you all.

Social services.

As my earlier comments indicate, I can see very few services which would benefit from these changes

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Questions 9 and 10 - *The council is considering whether to extend its contract with Capita by five years beyond the current end date of 30 September 2017. Do you have any views on such a contract extension, or the alternatives that you would like the council to take into account?*

As I responded in the previous question, those forms where we need customer signatures or further evidence to be supplied. Currently we do in-year school admissions via paper form only (although I have looked at turning that into an online process and didn't see too many issues, it was just a case of how that's then linked up with Capita One and the rest of the school admissions information), but the most problematic process that I've come into contact with is that for applying for a child employment/performance license.

Not everyone is online - phonecalls cost for those on low incomes. People want to speak to someone and know that their issues have been picked up!

No

There are people who do not have internet access. They will miss a lot of needed information. This may well save some council finances now but will build up a higher level of social need in the future. This year it was only when reading our weekly bulletin I found I could print out my rubbish collection dates. The information did not get posted through my door till much later when I can only assume people had been asked for this info.

People need to know what is available for them. They cannot request something if they are not aware of its existence - I feel the Council vastly over-estimates the number of their customers that are internet savvy

Benefits claims (Housing etc) would have to be taken into account if a person had to wait for a paper form to be sent to them when recording the date that the claim was submitted. If there were delays in sending forms this could become a big problem for some service users.

It's hard enough finding your way around SCC website without having to rely on finding the correct online form rather than having paper versions to fill in.

Any of the front facing services. Digital default is a bullying and bullish approach which serves only to save money for the organisation and takes away local jobs at primary and secondary levels.

More hurdles for vulnerable people, adding to the impression that the council is out to make things deliberately difficult for people - and they'd be right!

Those with English as a second language would find this difficult. Housing

Not everyone has a printer, and forms can be many pages long. Even if using public services such as library for printing it costs. Forms should be readily available at housing offices and gateway to just pick up thus reduce postal costs.

This seems to be dependant on people being pro-active in requesting it themselves - some people may be unsure of what forms they need and who to contact in order to request it.

See previous comments

As long as the information about how people can request the paper form is not just online, else the people who need the paper form won't know about it.

I think wherever members of the public come into council buildings they will ask for a copy of whichever form they need

As workers we require paper forms to take out to clients as we are not always able to access online forms whilst with a client in their home.

How will people know when they need to ask for a paper version of a form?

They should be available to pick up in Gateway still and in organisations in the city who help with form filling such as SARC etc

I don't think so.

A paper copy is tangible proof, things can go missing online

Not everyone has access to web or is able to download forms

Would be ok if forms can be collected from the local housing offices or Gateway. The expense of printing out of forms is transferred to individuals / charities who are even more unable to afford.

The need for alternative systems for those without access to PCs is hard to gauge and needs to be planned for transition from one system to another. In hard times the cost of internet services is a luxury for more people and the demand may be an increasing one.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Questions 9 and 10 - *The council is considering whether to extend its contract with Capita by five years beyond the current end date of 30 September 2017. Do you have any views on such a contract extension, or the alternatives that you would like the council to take into account?*

Not sure

People will not know how/where to request a copy.

There are a number of forms that are only available on request at present, for example Housing Benefit additional needs and Housing Benefit nil income statement. If telephone services are reduced it will take even longer to get through on the phone to request them.

People may not know how to use the technology to print their own forms, may not have money to spend paying to print forms and also may not be able to get to a public computer.

but it must be clear that they can be requested - not hidden away in small print

not sure - but please look hard at .gov.uk who have been praised for the ease of use of their system for straightforward things like passports and car tax renewals.

It is very difficult to complete anything on-line.

Not having paper versions of forms available cuts down the number of applications that you will receive which has knock on effects all the way around.

Not for me.

this is not appropriate for any service. The new method of access must be better than the existing service, rather than driving people online by making existing methods of access worse

Often people do not know what form they need, or even that they need a form at all - how are they then supposed to request the correct one?

paper forms should be available at gateway or by post

As long as there are sufficient phone lines for people to request the paper form.

No as long as there is a fall back position

Not everyone can or wants to use computers.

What do you mean by the 'number of paper forms will be substantially reduced'? Does this mean you will not be printing stocks of paper forms and they will be printed at the Gateway or other locations with customer contact (housing offices, libraries, schools etc.) as required? How will people be able to request forms? Concerns raised in previous questions apply here as well. Will you carry out a full review of all forms and if they are needed? If people have online accounts with the council will there be the option for stored information to pre-populate the form?

Provided they are easily accessible and not the confusing bunch of papers in the Gateway today

Make it PAPER FORMAT for the over 50's unless they elect to go on line....I would think 80% of the over 50's in the City would wish to have a traditional paper format

Not that I can think of

blind people

most of them

How will people know there is a form to cover their specific query if they do not have internet access?

All of them. Your IT is rubbish

people with mental health issues and the elderly

How will we know what forms are actually available.

Yes more Duplicitous Bureaucratic B.S.

Most areas

I don't think so, but perhaps a printable version of forms should be available for people to print themselves.

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All

You will have to queue to get a form to then wait again

If you are going to use on line forms there MUST be the facility for the completed on line form to be sent to the residents/customers e mail address (the government departments mentioned in your consultation always sent a receipt (or offer one) to the customer). If using smartphones to complete on line forms you won't be able to print one off, but will need evidence that you did complete one.

See my previous comments

I often request (from other companies etc) printed copies of forms. This can be a lengthy telephone request which for someone hard of hearing (as I am) is not easy.

Most

Dustbin collection cards are very useful to have to hand. It would be very annoying for customers to have to check online if they forget whether the re-cycling bin is due for collection.

Planning issues.

How will people who do not have access/ cannot use a computer know 1.that they have to apply for a paper form 2.where to get a form 3.how to fill it in correctly

I think this approach could actively discourage some users

As long as it is always clear paper is available online can cause soem people great stress and timing out on online because you are struggling happens to even the IT literate any automatic saving system would be good

Any changes cause difficulties!!!

Any service that needs to be obtained at short notice where waiting for a paper form would not be acceptable.

If a paper copy is not the first point of communication then a large number of people may miss important news.

Its just more hurdles to get through.

No, as long as the paper option is retained if required.

You are making life more difficult for those who already have problems.

See previous comment.

need to make sure the forms are easy to understand and complete, have helped older clients complete forms online in the past and some have been very difficult and have need printing off to make sure that they could be completed correctly. Option to save partly completed form, so that they can log in at a later date to finish. They should also allow easy movement back and forwards to allow for changes to be made without having to retype sections completely.

Vulnerable & elderly customers

On line forms for all would not be appropriate for all as described earlier. Access to forms by the public would need to be easier. Appreciating that clients would still have the option of requesting a paper form, can I suggest that current up to date forms are all dated as to the date when they were last revised, and the intranet cleaned up as there still appears to be a lot of old, out-of-date information floating around.

People get stressed about having to ask for forms, they forget and it will increase the amount of human error such as forgetting to complete a form.

Council, Capita or Gateway are not good at informing the public with the details of where you can go or call to request forms, leaflets etc

I see it now! it makes me all warm and fuzzy inside ... really it does Not!

Libraries

All council services when computers break down - they often do, even in the best run organisations!

Not everyone will be aware that they can request paper copy

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I have had to print on line forms for our weekly paid staff to complete, and they do not work because the drop down options are not displayed on a print out.

Many services are already doing this and it causes issues in libraries for example The Housing form is over 20 pages long. If someone wants to fill this in by hand at a library do they pay £2.00 for the form to be printed out or does the library take a hit and effectively pay for someone elses printing savings by printing out for free?

Surely they will have to print out anything they have done in order to prove it was done. Constantly putting personal information online also heightens the risk of fraud surely. Is it likely that so many people have access to online facilities, how are people able to afford broadband if they are unemployed and needing help. A diverse customer base means catering to all, not favouring the capable.

Personal and/or sensitive issues. I've had to use your on-line planning service and the only way I could get what I wanted was to come on to Gateway and speak to your staff. This would have been quicker and cheaper. People do not trust technology. What happens if halfway through the system goes down? Frequently your pc service in libraries is not available. You are putting a great deal of emphasis on public access to a public service which does not exist in reality.

Paper copies should be available in Housing Offices/Reception etc.

if the on line systems go down

Can't think of any

do you have any idea as to how many people have mental health problems, or have lower intelligence. I have filled in my fair share of forms and they are a nightmare, you cannot understand them, they read like foreign novels and the worrying thing is that people wont ask for help from a machine, however they would probably step forward if there was a person with a smile to ask.

How will people know there is a form if they have to request it?

All important services: those I have identified above would be seriously disadvantaged

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Personally I'd like to see certain flexibilities given back to SCC when it comes to website development. The Capita ITS web systems developers are already overloaded with requests, so lifting certain restrictions would make SCC more efficient. For example, currently any web shortcuts from southampton.gov.uk have to be set up by Capita. I requested one on Wednesday, and it was finally actioned the following Monday. I don't see any reason why the SCC web publishers don't have access to do this themselves - it's not a hard task. We CAN do that on the intranet, so why not on Southampton Online too? It would then take minutes, rather than days. I have no real problem with a contract extension, but the amount of time that services can be left waiting for a response from the Capita team is not acceptable. There is currently an 8-week lead in time for any web development work to start - if we're trying to progress channel shift, how is long lead-in a good thing?

Has Capita saved us money? For some things they are cheaper but any extras they cost the earth with no option of going elsewhere.

In current environment and government cutbacks would suggest contract extension or sharing services with other councils are only ways forward

I have not seen an improvement in the services provided. Allowing this contract may save money but does this make us an effective council. Within my job I feel it costs more to our division due to us having to pick up things that are not quickly dealt with in the Adult Contact Centre.

There should be greater emphasis on front of house teams run by Capita being more specialist to back office teams, so that they develop more expertise in service areas, build a rapport with regular customers and so help to take the pressure off back office teams. Also, it should be easier for customers to get straight through to the team they need, if they know who they need to speak to. The time taken to answer calls should also be shorter. The pre-Capita standard of answering phones within 3 rings was less frustrating for members of the public.

I do not agree with the contract should be extended. I believe that Council Services should be run by the Council - if a third party, such as Capita are involved it is because they can make money out of the contract. If the council were running their own services that money made by Capita could be put back into the services to improve them - not cut them further - meaning that at least Gateway could continue to see customers and offer a service to be proud of!

don't

The current standard of service provided under the contract has decreased a lot in the last few years. Capita also produce on line forms that are hard to find and are not always appropriate. This has added to the time that SCC staff have to spend sorting out problems or getting through to get advice from Capita. The initial KPI's were not written in a way that was tight enough or are not met by Capita at present, but nothing seems to improve only go in reverse. This adds unaccounted costs to the SCC staff which are not taken into account.

Return to inhouse, I have nothing positive to say about the company and I'm sure you are aware of their nickname throughout the city.

Capita is, primarily, a profit making organisation which has no place in an organisation which should be run for and by the people it serves. I have no doubt that they are too powerful in Southampton to now easily be sacked although I believe they should be. If no one is able to show the strength not to re-new the contract my only hope is that the renegotiation is undertaken by people who have both enough knowledge and ethics to work out a more equitable deal than was done before.

Keep the Capita staff and get rid of Capita

Should it not go out to tender again?

As a contact centre focus is on dealing with the customer as quickly as possible, there is no emphasis on repeat contact by the customer. Some services would be better linked back to SCC to be with the back office section.

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I'm unsure, but feel that a summary of how successful the past contract has been - whether it has actually saved the council money and improved services, and if so how, would be helpful in deciding.

Has the Council looked at other providers other than Capita? What have been the successes of the contract so far and what has failed?

My personal feelings, as a council employee, are the contract has not delivered what we were told it would before it was agreed, and why would reward this with an extension and more money? For example, we were told it would lead to investment in IT, but we have not seen evidence of this (it may be in the background, but we're using outdated software that is only now being upgraded because Microsoft are making it obsolete). As a local resident, I have found the customer contact centre difficult to use and quite unhelpful. I didn't use it when it was still within SCC so cannot say if this is because it is run by a third party.

I think Capita will probably save the Council money but the level of service will drop considerably and i expect the Council will extend the Contract because its all about saving money!!

Don't - the council should deliver directly and not give money to capita.

I fully believe that local services, including local authority finances, should be managed in-house and not by large external contractors.

No

If Capita are to continue providing the service, I think the following changes are important: 1) Named staff - name and surname, so that the caller/ visitor knows who they are dealing with and can be contacted again. We got cut off due to poor mobile phone signal when half way through a specialist transaction, and it took ages for council staff to track down who had been dealing with it. 2) Clear information on what has been done, what has been agreed and what to expect next - no jargon. If legal stuff has to be provided/ included in wording then a simple covering letter explaining the above needs to be included. 3) If a ring back option is included that this is done, and done in a short timeframe 4) Staff adequately trained to deal with queries and to know where to refer people on where needed 5) Forms as simple as possible - accessible to people with lower literacy levels 6) Free phone number for residents (mobile and landline) if at all possible to access services. This is important if there may be a lot of options and a lot of waiting - don't want residents not being able to pay rent/ heating charges etc because they have used up a lot of money phoning the council.

No other views

no

I personally don't think it should be extended - vast amounts of money have been spent to date on a number of issues - we are paying exorbitant amounts of money for IT issues, moving offices and nearly all of the systems/services being contracted out to Capita

The contract must be structured to enable the flexibility to change without any penalty during times of massive change in local government. Clear customer focussed performance measures need to be incorporated that are meaningful and not simply easy to collect. Incentivisation to improve services and reduce costs is essential with some form of savings sharing.

I'm against spending public money on private enterprise and the way, in this case, council services have become more like a factory production line than a personal service to human customers. This contract certainly has had detrimental effects on my section of the Council so please don't extend it!

The fact that the general public still think that all these services are dealt with by SCC & we are the people that look bad because the services are bad!!

Too expensive. Should be renegotiated.

none

I would like to see the SCC take it over

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Re-tender. The cost may or may not have given a saving, but the services run by Capita have definitely been reduced compared to in-house provision. At the very least it will send a message to Capita not to up their game. At best we could get a more professional contractor.

The support provided by Capita appears to have improved in recent years.

The contract needs to be fit for purpose. I am not convinced it provides value for money when you consider what support services are provided eg HR, IT. If it is extended then SCC need to be explaining fully to staff about what they can expect from these support services in the future.

Fully costed alternatives to be considered. Sharing services with other councils, Costings from other private providers and bringing the service in house for example.

Why would you extend a contract with Capita and pay more for less? For instance - your "IT" would have cost SCC less if it stayed in the house! To lock SCC in the contract with Capita until 2022 is not very wise! Why this thought that everything could be delivered better if it is delivered by private/external companies?

no.

as a citizen I feel badly placed to comment. I do know Capita have a very poor reputation in many areas in which they operate so am cynical that the City will be the winner (or even a balanced partner) in this deal.

All services should be provided by directly employed council employees; this is by far the cheapest option in terms of direct and indirect pay; it ensures control over the aims and objectives of the workforce; it ensures that the services are provided for the benefit of the service users and not for the profit of the shareholders; it ensures that local residents remain the owners of the services and can have a direct say on service provision through the election of local councillors and maintain accountability.

Yes don't extend the contract and bring all the staff back under the control of the council, so the council has full control of things and are not relying on an outside agency to supply services.

I would have thought the change over could be achieved quicker than 5 years

Should consider bring service back in house.

Not sure what services Capita offers you.

Contract extension can only be made if the incumbent has met or exceeded current service levels

Think it is a good idea as it will save time and money commissioning alternative provider.

No problems so long as there are suitable penalties if Capita fail to achieve set levels of service.

I think that this would be a mistake and overlooks the possibility of providing services in house to ensure that the service delivered is the right one for the area and the people, rather than Capita's current standards

I believe that there should be a tender, if Capita come in cheaper as they are already set up then o.k. if not they lose the contract, or they reduce their price by the tender costs.

I feel that it would be important for the council to re-negotiate the contract with Capita to reflect changes since the initial contract was signed. However, I do not have any issues with regards to the services that Capita provide.

I would like to see some of the other tenders for services. Will it go out to tender?

Hard to say without any information on performance, but one would want transparency on performance and value for money on investment. If there is no in house staff with skills, then I see very little option other than contracting out

Not in a position to comment on how fast the changes can be implemented however another 5 years seems a bit excessive - perhaps 3 years?

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If less people are required because of the new system does it need to be extended as is, or will there be less agency staff?

No Problem.

Before the Contract is extended I think you should wait to see if it is necessary to make changes. Don't be too hasty.

Has the true cost of the contract been audited? In my personal experience of outsourcing many anticipated savings are not realised because the contract did not cover the full scope of work carried out by staff and all 'exceptions' to the contract were chargeable. Technology changes very rapidly. If the contract is extended will future cost reductions in services that we cannot for see today remain with Capita or pass to the council tax payer? I would like the council to look at cost savings achievable by joining together with other local authorities to share services or negotiate contracts as well as look at savings possible bt bringing the work in house rather than outsourcing.

Do much more research with "real people" rather than just the IT Savvy ones - and that is said by someone who has been an IT Consultant for more than 30 years !!!!!

No

NO EXTENSION...Out to Bid.....min of 3 quotes....table of comparisonmake it sealed bid ...open in Public THE CORRECT FAIR WAY TO TENDER FOR ANYTHING

Most contracts of this type usually mean services to the public are reduced as there are less staff due to redundancy and cost cutting and using less qualified and cheaper contractors . How can we know that the contract with Capita has bought any benefits to the Southampton public.

Emergencies

no

I dont agree with outside agencies dealing with these things, they never work well and usually end up costing more money.

As a council employee, I am against continuing the extension.

the council should keep all services in house and not contract out there services

If the majority vote favours it, then carry on

How on earth can profits for a company be better value than employing your own people and the council keep all the profits for more services.

the council should be going back to basics and treating their customers as humans.

No Views

I think this would be a good decision as Capita have provided value for money and good quality service

I've not heard good things about Capita. For instance, they've let down the Nursery my daughter attends.

Need to be clear on the value for money that the contract offers. The world has moved on dramatically in the last 10 years and the contract must be so obsolete it might be more beneficial to start again. There must be more providers available than there were 10 years ago too. Would there be merit in considering bringing back in house and/or merging some of these generic operations with other councils in Hampshire or with other public sector organisations in the city?

The council should put the contract back out to tender. There may be better options than Capita in the market. There may also be services that were previously outsourced that are more cost effectively or better delivered in-house; asking council employees who have to interact with Capita daily is probably better than asking me though, and from what I gather they think the company deserves it's nickname in Private Eye.

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don't know

As the Government if reducing funding to Local Authorities, SCC needs to ensure it is getting true VFM from the contract. The contract was written some considerable time ago, I would think the contract would need to be reviewed to ensure it is still fit for purpose with the changes that have happened and those in the foreseeable future.

some difficulties with budgets taken over by capita have meant that some work on building maintainance has suffered due to the priority of capita and not always considering the service area prioritys

don't agree that it should be extended

Contact centre staff is supposedly trained to be able to answer the majority of questions for all council services. The reality is that they have no indepth knowledge of most of the services. This may be a cheap way to operate a contact cente, however, the real work is very often left for the back office to sort out. When my department used to take the calls, we could immediatly advise the customer, make a decision and resolve the problem. Now I have look into Lagan, very often ring the customer back to find out more information. We also receive more emails as contact centre staff fails to resolve the issue satisfactorily.

The Council should bring this back in house. The cost may appear cheaper initially, but anything that was out of scope when the contract was signed would cost the Council a lot more that it would if this was back in house.

To not have captia at all. I have asked them to confirm annual leave giving a start and end date and they have got that wrong. I was also told that it would be a 3 day response for this. I have had a relative who took redundancy/early retirement last year who went through several months of paperwork beforehand ascertaining benefits/money etc and then after she left was advised that was incorrect and had to pay money back. Not exactly a small thing to get wrong and could have made a difference to whether they had accepted or not.

Capita do not have time, they rush everything to save their money and do not deliver good customer care. We have complaints everyday from clients re capita. Evidence can be provided on request.

I am strongly in favour of inhouse provision.

No their useless,most staff with knowledge have gone and when you ring capita HR etc for help it takes too long for a response and usually its wrong. The service needs to go back to inhouse as I understand other authorities that have used Capita wish they hadn't

I would like to see SCC employing directly rather than sub contracting these functions

I am concerned that Capita carry out all recruitment but only complete part of the process and the remainder is left to SCC. Capita send the packs but they could easily be printed off by SCC because they still have to be made up.

The Capita contract has lots of loopholes so that currently Capita can introduce new services or alter existing ones, and levy a charge for these which has not been foreseen. A revised contract which prevented such practices would be preferable. Many services seem to have been outsourced which were run perfectly well in-house. To let outside companies perform these duties, and make a profit, indicates that there has to be a drop in quality.

We shall be considering this carefully between now and 2017.

I would like to see all such contracts ended and all services provided by the Council direct.

I have no thoughts on the contract but would like consideration be given to the end user the client our customers who have to use this system to obtain help

Is the Council investigating the feasibility of sharing services with other Councils. The extention of the contract will undoubtedly cost the Council more than an in house or shared service, over the 5 year life cycle of the project.

I cannot admit to being convinced of the quality of capita work here and in education where I "suffered" with them for 8 years.

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I have seen other colleagues having to deal with issues we were under the impression would be dealt with by Capita and certain orders on Agresso appear to be produced twice - once by Capita and then are input to Agresso by SCC staff - the workload appears to increase rather than decrease

Capita do not have a good reputation, will they just use this extension as an excuse for supplying systems late?

I cannot comment as I do not have sufficient information.

I don't see we have much choice but that doesn't mean it is right for the Council, they are making money out of everything!

Why do you pay a private company to run our services? a private company means shareholders and they like to be paid!!! Surely the council running these services would be cheaper.

Totally unnecessary for the Council with four years to go, but a wonderful gift for Capita! Review in 2-3 years. Any extension must be performance related with get out clauses for Council and significant penalties for Capita if they perform poorly.

Who is Capita?

Not a good idea. Look for robust viable alternatives or bring the necessary portfolio in-house.

All that's been so far is more cuts worse service and unhappy staff the public. Give it back to the council.

Services currently provided by Capita should be returned in-house as per the majority of all other Local Authorities to retain more control, provide a better service and enable easier internal interaction and dispute resolution.

As long as a review period is incorporated within the 5 year period to ensure the service and standards are being retained and an option to opt is available if the service or standard is not acceptable.

Providing these services in-house gives the council more flexibility in the future and is likely to lead to a higher quality service.

The contract with a supplier preferably other than Capita (with whom I have had previous dealings, none with any satisfaction).

I am not impressed with Capita and SCC must ensure that they deliver the services to the highest standard before any contract extension is signed with a clause terminating the agreement if it is not maintained.

Some changes need to be made and I don't think this is a good idea as the level of service we had from our own staff was far superior to that currently delivered by Capita, if you try to get the same level of service from Capita you incur charges. As for the Repair service it has been a nightmare at times, when they are busy someone else takes the call asks basic details and says that someone will call you back and or report. Have had numerous occasions where I've not received a call back and have had to phone again to report or the repair has not been logged or logged to the wrong property or scheme. I have even had incidents where I as a member of the scheme staff have logged a repair and then find a Neighbourhood Warden turn up to get more details or to even check to see if the repair is as urgent as I have requested it be.

What are the results of previous years partnership between SCC & Capita? Has that made a difference? Obviously there are penalties for Capita not meeting targets/standards but individual SCC departments do not get told this information, which is relevant to their section. Not sure if good idea to extend with Capita.

Extending the contract is definitely not a good move based on the poor services experienced so far as detailed before. Our team frequently has mis-directed calls, callers put through unannounced and callers who are very upset and annoyed at the time they have been waiting on the queuing system and are surprised that they and their issue have not been announced and they have to go through it all again. It is also very wasteful of staff time to have to queue up with members of the public to redirect callers sometimes for as long as 20 minutes, blocking incoming calls as our practice is to wait for a response and introduce the caller and the nature of the inquiry. If decision should be made to extend contract. Can we please have a dedicated direct internal line to reduce the waiting time for staff?

I'm not familiar with the work currently carried out by Capita

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I would like to see that the council look to see if there is another option available and maybe even change the contract to another provider?

If the contract is based on revised terms, improved services and better value for money then extend it. Capita are a private company with HQ staff earning 6 figure bonuses. How the council gets value for money whilst lining the pockets of a private company is a difficult one for me to understand.

It would appear that Capita can change its side of the contract as the switchboard is no longer manned in the evenings and Saturdays when the Library is open. Because of the cuts, we have less staff and this is causing problems

The switchboard have no idea how the teams operate, adequate training would be beneficial. At the current time I feel extending the contract with Capita would be an error and, despite the savings, would cost more in the long run with lost time for staff having to fix multiple mistakes and spending time dealing with angry callers who did not start off that way, and wouldn't be if they were dealt with accurately during the first call.

Part of the proposals is to have customers contacting via on line, what about all the people who do not have the internet at home & do not want to travel to gain access to the internet especially the elderly? What about people who do not speak or read English? There have been many problems with Capita and them not being capable of transferring a call to the right team external or internal, where you can be on hold listening to the annoying automated issues to the point where you find people have hung up. Then all the problems with HR which gets to the point of being ridiculous, I personally feel my team and I could do our job & work on Capita's switchboard & HR department and do a better job. The council's website is not user friendly or updated as frequently as it should be, especially contact telephone numbers. The contract till 2017 is not good and extending it another 5 years to 2022 is just a really bad idea.

I think the specification of services should be reviewed to tie up on areas where a good service is not being currently provided. More quality KPI measures to be put in place. Over the years Council services have increasingly had to take over tasks that fall outside of the Capita contract, and this should be taken into account when the contract is evaluated to see if SCC are still receiving value for money. An example of this is the way that managers are encouraged to do DIY HR. Not necessarily a bad thing, but the cost of additional duties being placed on managers should be taken into account. Do we receive value for money from the Capita Contract? I don't know the answer to this, but I think the market should be explored to see if SCC is receiving value for money. I have no objection to strategic partnerships so long as they are true partnerships, but I do get the feeling that Capita seem to have been the only organisation to benefit from the existing strategic partnership (it is not a partnership, it is a contract)

Haaa, haaa, oh my tummy hurts. Stop it, oh please stop! Extend it??? Waaaah.. haaa... oh my! I hurt, I really do.

Not sure what the current contract is about, but I heard about an exclusive road maintenance contract in place with Balfour Beatty, by which the contractor can decide which roads need maintenance and to what standard and then "pay themselves". That kind of system is madness, as it opens the door for contractors to help themselves to council money without the council having a say as to how the money gets spent and what repairs to prioritise. I think this approach is dangerous and one should be wary of it. Personally I want my council to be in control of these local issues, not some contractor who benefits from the decision to go ahead with something or other!

Do not extend the contract but reemploy workers in house and work with other councils closely to save costs

Capita has not worked for us all the time, I would not extend the contract.

This is an 'empty' question - it smacks of Council seeking to tick a 'consultation' box without giving the public it asks to respond any information as to the efficiency/efficacy of the service offered by Capita so far.

would prefer to see the council moving away from private sector

No comment either for or against

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 11 - *The council is considering whether to extend its contract with Capita by five years beyond the current end date of 30 September 2017. Do you have any views on such a contract extension, or the alternatives that you would like the council to take into account?*

While Capita may mean to provide a good service and employ some excellent staff, I have not always seen positive results in my area. Occupational Health problems - not resolved. Lagan/Total mobile problems - not resolved. HR issues - too many passed to managers. Procurement - lumbered with Wolseley which has caused a huge amount of work for staff as their invoices are rarely correct. Solution? 1) Proof of savings from Capita for eg procurement 2) retain Capita for corporate HR issues, but return budget for local HR to service areas.

The issues are not with the services offered by the contract but by the restrictions of the contract. For example network lines - when the Council closes a service and there are still a number of years left on a line, the Council pays - there is no incentive for Capita to reuse that line or improve infrastructure. If the Council wants to use that line elsewhere the Council pays. Newer services run on adsl lines - these are purchased and paid for by the Council not Capita. Effectively the costs are taken by the individual business units as an extra cost.

they are rubbish

No views

Why wouldn't you use your own highly trained capable staff. It's a real shame.

Capita are a waste of space. Please consider other options

Capita will have to be sure of the quality of their call staff. So far I have found them very unhelpful, unfriendly and unsympathetic

Capita's only interest is in making profit for its shareholders. It is quite clear from the dealings I have had with them that they have no interest in providing local services to meet local needs; they make it difficult to access services so that they can report to the provider that the service is not required and they can delete it. This is the reason why they want to move everything on-line so that those in need, who cause them the most cost, are deterred from accessing the services to which they are entitled. This is not the fault of the staff who do a wonderful job in very difficult circumstances. All council services should be provided by directly employed by Council staff with the ethos is a first class service for the citizens of Southampton rather than profit for the shareholders of Capita. If this contract is extended, I will be appalled.

From my point of view the Contract with Capita has increased my personal workload considerably. Electronic forms/requests have to be chased/checked, I am expected to be able to interpret answers to questions I do not fully understand, I have to email HR for permission to take formal Attendance management proceedings, you rarely get the same person twice and rarely the same advice either. I agree the situation was not ideal before, but now for me it is worse.

There is a disconnect between someone dealing with an issue, and someone taking the details and poor advice given or incorrect details taken

Our service area has received poor service, particularly from HR and O/Health, ever since the contract started. and consequently, I am not in favour of extending the contract with Capita.

In house provision of all services provided by Capita would be better, it would make the council responsible for the service it provides, instead of blaming the contractor when things go wrong. I think you should take in to account the views of people who have to deal with Capita first, to see what the quality of service people think they provide

I think the Council needs to look carefully at the quality of customer service provided. It should not be all about Capita for example dealing with phone calls within so many seconds when clearly they have not listened to the question the caller is asking & therefore putting the call through to the wrong section/dept

I think it would be cheaper in the long run for the council to run services inhouse.

Some Capita services are in the process of potentially being cut back, and there are already Council work commitments they have set in place at significant cost. I am concerned that these cutbacks will worsen the service provided by Capita staff, particularly in Valuation and Construction, due to fewer staff being available to do the work and therefore Council projects suffering as a result. I

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation

Question 11 - *The council is considering whether to extend its contract with Capita by five years beyond the current end date of 30 September 2017. Do you have any views on such a contract extension, or the alternatives that you would like the council to take into account?*

don't think the business model has been carefully planned, nor that the COuncil's best interests are being served. That said I do think that Capita staff who do the day-to-day work with SCC staff are largely committed to providing a good service.

Please dont. From what little I know whenever they have been involved in a council scheme, business plan or anything of the ilk they have always messed up. it is embarrassing telling outside organisations that things have been delayed and in the most cases it is down to incompetance on Capita's behalf.

I can't answer this without figures on what savings Capita might have made as opposed to in-house Council provision.

It should in no way renew its contract with Capita which has a proven track record of incompetence and waste in many areas! I am not an expert in outsourcing so can not suggest alternatives

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation**Question 15 - Any further comments?**

It will be a very dark day if this goes through.

Please read above.

I realise that in the current financial situation the Council needs to save money and make cuts - what better way to do this than to save the money they are paying to third parties, who profit out of these contracts and bring the services back into Council hands. There by the cuts would come from third party profits and not from services offered to city's disadvantaged residents

I completely understand that savings are required but I do think you are looking in all the wrong places - to remove human contact from so many areas is sending us into such a poor world. I have witnessed several examples of this over the years and it does make for a much sadder environment, no-one talks anymore. Supermarkets, Libraries [I miss discussing what i've read with the librarians] Drs surgery's where you check yourself in [ours is always breaking with queues out the door as the receptionists are locked away in the back room makes for a much colder, impersonal and sadder place to live.

No

If this is a cost cutting exercise, which it clearly is you must be upfront about this and publicise how much you'll save widely , not just on the website or in council minutes. Otherwise it just looks like a load of council jobsworths making life easy for themselves

Please note I work for mental health/floating support services within the Southampton area.

Getting people who can complete forms online is a good move, but please ensure that there is no discrimination against people who cannot, by continuing to provide a drop in face-to-face service that is well staffed.

Don't agree with extending Capita contract

how do those customers without IT access know about this consultation and how can they respond?

none

My loss of broadband connection during the completion of this form almost led me to abort my contribution. I think this could also be a point when considering customers trying to fill in forms using an unfamiliar format? We could see a few less enquiries as a good thing, but is it an obvious a step backwards from the high standard of customer care we have been encouraged to cultivate up to this point?

Reductions in face-to-face and telephone services should only be made after online services have been significantly improved, enlarged and fully tested.

Whilst in theory to save money/time putting everything online, it is just not practical for a large percentage of the cities population. I also strongly disagree with benefits moving to this in the future also. Gateway works well at the moment, having a hub for all services that you can drop into. Even on a busy day you do not have to wait that long to see staff. Also telephone automated is frustrating for people.

I think it is the right way to go but please make sure your call centre operates quickly and at reasonable cost.

I am happy about the online services changes

None

Need to put reminder card about council website through residents letter boxes. Or maybe a sticker put on each residents bin?

This questionnaire is biased as it is being completed online by members of the public with access to a computer. To get an accurate response you must also make this questionnaire available in paper form.

no

none

This survey has no asked whether measures should be introduced to reduce the demand on the Council's services.

I hope decisions have not already been taken and minds already made up without waiting for the responses of the citizens of Southampton.

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation**Question 15 - Any further comments?**

Your website needs revamping to make it more attractive and user friendly to promote online access. I use the current website with reluctance rather the first point of call it should be to find out about basic things like dustbin collections etc. The website does not always display properly in Firefox.

Don't fall into the traps of the utilities etc of using automation as an excuse to reduce actual service quality. We may not be "customers" but we still hold the Council accountable and can vote with our feet !

Many elderly people have a fear of, or lack of access to computers, and because of hearing problems are nervous on the phone. A friendly caring operator at the end of the phone line is essential for them. I know this from experience with my 95 year old parents who still endeavour to be as independent as possible.

No

Offer a real Service to your Customers....it will take another 20+ years before the total population will be PC skilled.....have a cut-off point of over 50's on traditional service unless they select for PC mode....work with them don't frighten them with this leap into the future that the know nothing about

Do not underestimate the need for the council to present a human face to the public, it would be "inhuman" not to

No automated switchboard please, publish the DDI phone number of the department so that they can be called directly by the public.

Change is not always for the better and usually ends up offering a worse system than the one it replaces. You cannot substitute experience for machines which break down.

Your rubbish IT setup has taken me 30 minutes to complete this survey. You need to sack the person who runs it and fix it before these changes are implemented

No

Than for the chance to participate.

People appreciate human contact.

No.

<http://www.newstatesman.com/uk-politics/2013/08/nine-spectacular-council-outsourcing-failures>

I hope that during the move to on-line services the relevant services are engaging with interested residents to ensure what SCC think and residents think are one of the same!

a council is a public service, and whilst it needs to be mindful of using public money and how it is used, it needs also to fulfill the needs of its residents. making it more difficult for some sections may decrease their independence and increase their isolation.

Automating processes is certainly the right way, however, there will always be a number of applications that will fail due to technical problems or because the customer does not fit 100% into the preset arrangement. There will need to be very alert back office.

The Council along with Capita have made good progress in moving forward with Web technology etc. But I think it is now time to bring IT back in with Southampton CC.

Save some money by reducing the amount of team managers and higher paid staff that we never seem to have a problem with having openings for. Look closer at the people doing the jobs and ask them whats wrong with the systems instead of paying high paid consultants, over and over again - who regurgitate the same ideas. Reduce the amount of travelling costs within SCC by incorporating dept in same building. Look at those who dont use car for job anymore and take away their perks of parking, as people change jobs but dont seem to lose their perks. Stop paying out huge amounts of money for laptops and laptop trolleys etc to people who then dont actually use them for the job it is provided for (re City care). Stop paying out huge amounts to staff for changing their contracts (again City care) who cost us thousands. Look at why team managers seem to go off on long term sick for months and then seem to come back into another role. If thats the lower paid end of scale we dont get away with it. Flexible working: if there is a shortage of staff why are some people still allowed to do flexible working (working 9 longer days instead of 10) which means they are not available to respond to queries, answer phone or cover whilst others are out and when they are not others have to take up their queries. Also those who go early before 4 (again flexible working) though this seems to be again for only

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation**Question 15 - Any further comments?**

some levels of staff who claim it through childcare even though their children are over 14. Again then they are not in someone else has to pick up their phone calls/work. Surely their contract hours should be reduced if the position is supposed to be a full time one.

Sorry but I do not think Capita has been very good for us , charging us for everything where we are capable of doing i.e. IT, phones etc.

I feel the contract needs to be very carefully looked at, especially the IT. The charges that the Council have to pay for some IT equipment/services is substantial. The Council Tax should not used to make a profit by some Companies. It should be used for the good of the City.

No

Personally I am happy to do everything on line, but I'm concerned that it may not suit the most vulnerable people in the city

A move to increased technological access is a positive move but not at the expense of staff. Face to face contact or an understanding voice on the end of the phone can often stop a problem becoming a complaint. Think about how reliable these systems need to be - what will happen when the self service kiosks 'go down' (and they will). Also - did you ever hear anyone praise the excellent customer service they received from a machine?

No. Thanks for the opportunity to comment. Hope it goes well for the Council and all its service users. No need to wish the same for Capita, they are well used to looking after themselves on a national basis. We are small beer to them.

The need to embrace new technologies is important but should not be introduced to the detriment of tried and tested existing systems. I am fortunate to be able to use all the latest communication systems but also I am aware of many people who do not have access to the Internet & e:mail etc so a human point of contact at all times is crucial.

Basically its a stupid idea that will just loose jobs and leave more confused people unable to get help when they most need it. If it aint broke dont fix it.

We pay Council Tax for a CONTRACT with the authority. It seems to me to be a one sided contract with the authority providing a poorer and more unsatisfactory service as time goes on at an ever increasing cost to consumers who have no choice over whom they use to provide the service.

don't think you want any more!!!

What will happen to the existing staff @ Gateway??

I am not impressed with the contract delivery so far.

I think we should take pride in the way we work with residents of Southampton and I really believe the more face to face services we can offer people makes people feel valued and supported. Surely this is what good customer service is?

Don't be put off by the usual moaners. This is the 21st century. The vast majority are now used to doing business online (utilities, insurance, car tax etc). Provide relevant support for the elderly and infirm but don't pander to the lazy and those who will always resist change. Even though they are usually the ones with the loudest voices, they don't represent the majority

I have had many issues with the switchboard which have been raised through internal channels but no resolution is ever forthcoming and the issues remain and often worsen. Extending the contract given their current level of service would, in my and many of my colleagues opinions, be a huge mistake.

Extending the contract to 2022 is the worst idea, isn't it bad enough some 'genius' agreed to Capita's contract in the first place!

Listen to your customers and listen to your staff. No I mean it. Listen, really listen and take note. You may learn something.. Although on second thoughts... I doubt if you could be bothered.

Thanks for consulting the population of Southampton on these issues, makes me feel that democracy is still worth something in this country, even though not always reflected in the arcane British electoral system... :-)

My attention was drawn to this consultation by a friend. Could you find some way of publicising more fully that you have such a consultation on the go? I understand that only about 20% of the population of Southampton has access to computers (information via GP patient consultation group considering the same issues as you are). This is partly because Southampton has some pockets

Detailed comments received as part of the on-line consultation**Question 15 - Any further comments?**

of real poverty, so may not be as appropriate a site as some other towns/cities in the South East for the kind of automated treatments you envisage here. Same goes for smart phones - lots of people have mobiles, but smart ones are expensive...

I suggest you extend the consultation time once you have ensure that as many people in Southampton are aware of this consultation/proposal. It has not been widely advertised enough. You need to engage a larger cross section. I am aware of the fact that the leaflets concerning this matter are still being produced...not good enough. It smacks of a foregone conclusion.

Your website is very unattractive and often counter-intuitive and has been so for long enough. The Planning pages are especially awkward to navigate through.

I feel it is a sad reflection on society that people are processed and their voices diminished in favour of a finger press option and a keyboard. Vocal chords will become extinct and our cognitive skills repressed. Make the person count as an individual, not as a statistic.

Regarding access, recently my bus service was withdrawn under the "improvements" offered by First Bus following your decision to cut their subsidy. Effectively, this means I have great difficulty in getting to work. Yet, I note that there are a huge number of buses going up and down Shirley High Street going into town. Evening and weekend buses are really poor, another reason why getting to Libraries to use a pc is even more difficult.

Thank you for asking - it makes a change.

Most people prefer dealing with a real person rather than a machine. Self Service machines still have to be 'staffed'.

I think its indicative of today's society to remove human beings from certain elements; a couple of weeks ago there was a huge outcry in the news about the thousands of elderly that didnt see anyone to talk to!?!?! too many changes are being made too quickly due to monetary problems and this country as a collective is suffering as a result. the vulnerable, elderly, disabled etc are being picked on with benefits, removing human contact, cutting that face to face contact, you go into Asda and are directed to a self service terminal, I used to go in to my local library and discuss what I had read with the librarian, who would then pass my recommendation on to another reader and vice versa, now we are faced with machines that beep at us. where will this end, if so much can be made 'people free' then perhaps it is time to remove, MPs, Councillors and senior members of staff and replace them with machines, we would probably have a much fairer society. I am very concerned about the future, I dont mind change but not the wrong kind of change.

This has been a well designed questionnaire. Many of the forms I get from different sources, energy, airlines etc., etc., are not. Possibly the latter have influenced my view, but I do think that fewer people would want to lose the human touch than enthusiasts for new technology believe.

It should be clear that I consider the proposal misguided and will only be suitable for a certain sector of Southampton's population

Detailed responses to the paper version of the consultation

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
Not everyone will have access to their own PC or smartphone. Public access PCs will be available in Gateway and libraries. The phone self-service facility will also be available. Do you feel providing these facilities meets the needs of people without access to the internet at home?	There will be people who have difficulty using (or who are unable to use) an online service including: people with visual impairments; people with learning difficulties; some elderly people. These people will still be able to use the phone service or can make an appointment to see someone face-to-face in Gateway. Do you feel this approach would meet their needs? Are there other groups of people who may have difficulty accessing services online?	There will be people who have difficulty using (or who are unable to use) phone self-service facilities including: people with hearing impairments; people with learning difficulties; people who have difficulty understanding spoken English; some elderly people. These people will still be able to use the online service if they are able to do so, or can make an appointment to see someone face-to-face in Gateway (with an interpreter if necessary). Do you feel this approach would meet their needs? Are there other groups of people who may have difficulty using our phone self-service facilities?	Moving to an appointments system in Gateway will encourage people to use the self-service terminals (with assistance from Gateway staff if required). However some people will need to be seen immediately and it will not be appropriate for them to wait for an appointment. Gateway staff will be trained to recognise these urgent needs and an immediate interview will be arranged in these exceptional cases. Can you see any difficulties with this approach?	Other than online and automated phone services, are there any other approaches that the council should be considering when looking at ways to improve customer contact? Please give reasons for your answer.	Over time the council will move as many services as possible to online and/or phone self-service facilities. Are there any services that you feel should not be considered for this approach? Why do you think they are not suitable?	To encourage people to use online forms the number of paper forms will be substantially reduced and they will not be widely distributed. There will always be a paper version available if required, but these may only be provided on request. Can you see this causing any difficulties? Are there any council services where this approach is not appropriate?
What about people with learning or sensory problems (e.g. developing blindness). The elderly may not use any of the technology confidently.	How will they know about this option if they can't see/read etc. People need people.	As above. You need to access the technology to access the service. Some people have mixed disability e.g. people with learning diffs may have visual and auditory problems - haven't mentioned mental health issues	Yes. I have no trust in 'staff will be trained to recognise exceptional cases.'	People. They can go off script, react to multiple needs, read facial expressions.	Since you haven't enumerated the ones you are hoping to change it is impossible to comment.	How do you know you can request paper forms if you are unable to access the information in the first place. @if you can't read this here is the information on what you should do.'
No. Many older people and people with learning difficulties or blind will be unable to use this system. Menu-based phone systems can cause similar problems, both in terms of using them and accessing the information they need to supply.	No. see comments above.		I have experience of systems where insufficient capital was put into the equipment, software and, most importantly, staff training. It wastes staff time and can result in costing more.			
Yes.	People who are not competent in using a P.C., who do not know how to get started in finding the right 'buttons to press.'	People who have hearing difficulties.	No.		Can't think of any at this moment.	Depends if requesting is made easy by phone, face to face?
Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	No.	I don't know any other way.	Don't think police calls.	I don't think so.

Detailed responses to the paper version of the consultation

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
No. Disabled and elderly find P.C.s and smart phones frustrating. Yes - if they can get to library- cost of transport/availability of transport / access to transport. No -if peripheral neuropathy - walking to bus stop and to appointment is not possible.	No. These people can't get out and about easily. People with physical impairments i.e. tremors / shakes and early memory problems and peripheral neuropathy / appointments out of home.	Just elderly , disabled, poor hearing and poor vision getting frustrated. As in 2 above - tremors.	Staff Yes - it would be costly or physically difficult / impossible to get to appointments, of tremors.	Keep paper as reading is easier specially if you need advice. Automated services are not good for people -they need to speak to someone particularly if slow cos of tremors.	Old people find difficulty with both. Fine but must automatically transfer to a person if client can't provide info for whatever purpose.	Problem with computers. I am aged 91. Life is hard. Ensure one can print out a form to prepare slowly ready for input as one finger typing is frustrating.
No. I am deaf disabled and have a learning disability. I will find it not possible.	I am deaf. Will you have a BSL interpreter?	Deaf people. Old people.	Yes.	Letter. Deaf people and old people will have to get help from cares and family.	Housing. Wheelchair services. Care.	Lots of older people do not have internet. Too difficult for them alone. People with learning disability.
Because I use a mobile phone only I'm not sure you meet my needs	I do not what about people who are housebound.	A reliance on computers is limiting. There will always be people who do not or do not wish to use computers to do all online.	I can as some people will need an amount of time that will perhaps be longer than you can allocate.	Perhaps you need to think what would work for your customers rather than what makes your life easier.	Some people will always need a face to face service. It would seem that you are moving away from this interaction.	See all above. This may be your preferred choice but it's not just about you. Remember your customers please!
No. People without access at home probably do not know how to use it or have chosen not to. There is no viable alternative for elderly, those with learning difficulties and those without Keyboard / computer skills.	We have Power of Attorney for a relative with learning difficulties. Every time his housing benefit changes it is wrong and we have to go to Gateway and explain the problem. We do not 'do' online and our charge is unable. Why should we make an appointment to put council mistakes right?	No - you are taking away the instant face to face facility which enables people to interact in a natural manner and be 'connected' and responsible for the service. Dealing with an automated service gives no 'follow through, with the same individual.	Yes. 'Emergencies' will mean appointments running late. If assistance to use the terminals is anything like that offered in supermarkets at self-service check outs it will be rushed, confusing and uninformative and not inspire confidence for future use.	If you are looking to reduce benefit fraud - going online or how do you know who is at the other end. Also - automation relies on the right questions being asked and options given and they never are in my experience!	1) The elderly services, care, health, pensions etc. A very large percentage of those not happy with technology are the elderly and those needing face to face help. 2) Those with learning difficulties often cannot think or respond quickly enough to questions. there should always be an option.	Yes. The government said some years ago that no-one should ever be disadvantaged through not being online. This is no longer true. An alternative paper form / personal help should always be available and equally advertised.
Yes, as long as they are helped to use them as not everyone is P.C. friendly. Machines cannot answer everything.	People with hearing loss - their needs also need to be met. At times issues arise that need help instantly or the same day - online is not always good.	There are people who are not familiar or able to use the phones.	Not always easy to spot people. Some people are shy and would not like to make a fuss and would slip through the system. Leaving a lot to chance!	Always have people available to do face to face contact - not automated everything. Reasons are obvious.	Because this does not suit everyone. Too many illnesses / disabilities - special needs to make this really workable.	I know many people who will not like this and will never do online as too confusing.

Detailed responses to the paper version of the consultation

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
No. The only internet facility I have used is that provided by you in your libraries and this is so complex to access without any printed guidelines, that I always have to ask staff to help on the rare occasions I use it.	No. It is intolerable that one should have to make an appointment - I can't believe that you are so short of staff - it is like a doctor's surgery where you have to be 'in' by appointment. And I suppose we have to use the internet to even make the appointment!	You don't say whether the phone service, which is bound to have an interminable wait and a long menu of options within options, will be an 0800 no. or whether council tax payers will have to PAY to use it.	Yes - having traipsed from the outlying suburbs one is then sent / turned away and told to come another day - 2 days, a week, a month hence. What price 'one stop shop' now?	People want to speak to human beings, have a dialogue not to be constrained within the (?) menu of pre-determined options of pushing buttons. Adverts by other more sensitive organisations now BOAST that customers always speak to a human being at their call centres.	This is far too vague and open-ended a question. Any query that demands more than an automated system can provide by way of answer - there must be many - will not be satisfactorily answered, if at all.	Merely substituting online forms for paper forms seems to be a half-hearted way - what about ABOLISHING unnecessary forms?
For people who have an easy understanding of this it will be OK. However the majority of older people and those with special needs will find this difficult - I hope there will be enough members of staff to help with this.	Not really as they may not be aware and if they receive a confusing letter they may wish to see someone straight away as they may be upset.	Again I don't think this will be suitable as people like to have someone face to face to talk. If deaf maybe lip read!	How will you know who is important. We should all be important.	I do think the council should make an appointment.	Benefits - unless you will make the letters easier to understand.	You have already taken away housing apps which are hard to get hold of as people don't have printers as they are very expensive. I don't think that we would be claiming benefits if we could afford a printer or computers.
NO. What about elderly, poor mobility, deaf. Again no consideration for aged!! Yes	See above!!	NO!	YES!	Bring back old style rent office. Sorely missed at Thornhill.	All.	Yes. All services.
No. Libraries are spread thinly throughout the city and are some distance in certain areas - Mansbridge, Thornhill Park - no library. Who will want to go to Gateway to make an appointment for another time. If they troubled to get there they will want an answer or advice.	Yes.	Yes I suppose. I believe there are some people who have difficulty using our phone self service facilities.	Yes and no. There will be appointments but it may take forever to get one.	Its fine but it would be nice if there's an actual person they can contact or talk to as well.	I think it's fine.	It is OK as long as these will be available in paper versions for the people who might need it.
No. Most certainly not.	No	No. Having to make an appointment causes a delay.	If this is going to happen why change the system.		Bereavement.	It will cost the customer to get a hard copy of the forms if using a library.
	Vulnerable people will be more confused than ever. Having to make an appointment would mean delay.	Online services are not always easy and can be frustrating, especially for elderly and hard of hearing.	Very much so - judging by the complete indifference and attitude of some members of Gateway staff.	Perhaps more training of staff to be more tolerant and a little more understanding of elderly or vulnerable people.		Once again cost before consideration of public citizens.

Detailed responses to the paper version of the consultation

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
If people do not have computers at home they will not know how to use office ones. Library staff DO NOT help and you will need staff on hand all the time. There are more elderly in this country so phone self-services will not be understood.	Yes. Continue ordinary phone service or face to face interviews. I especially need to lip read and hear, especially listening to poor English speech, so phone service not of use to myself.	Yes there will. Elderly will not understand the process. Myself, I need hearing and lip reading face to face.	If people turn up at Gateway expecting to speak to someone they may not want to return or can not return. You will end up with more urgent need interviews. Appointments to be made by phone would be better.	Continue ordinary phone line. Automated are not always helpful or meet needs. Elderly do not understand 'automated'.	Online or phone self service not suitable. There are too many elderly, disabled or foreign citizens who will not understand these services and how to obtain information / answers.	I can envisage just as much paper work needed, online forms are not always clear / easy to use. THIS HAS NOT BEEN THOUGHT THROUGH!
No - library is full to bursting and may be more cuts. Vulnerable people need face to face contact. Complicated cases need face to face. Job centre already like this and people are suffering as a result.	Some elderly people - hmm - underestimation - BIG TIME!! Why don't you ask them and listen to them too. I feel you may keep people more isolated and worried. Some may well die alone in winter. Don't believe this government cares a jot!	Any human being who prefers human contact - like me. And please clean the phones from time to time for those who are to use them. Usually greasy and dirty.	Self-service terminals - Jesus Christ! It is my vision of hell. Why not just herd everyone in and tag them. Maybe have a bus out the back for the work camps. Where is the humanity.	1) Consider whether this government's punitive reforms should be carried out willy nilly. 2) Consider how you would expect to be treated yourselves. 3) Consider whether future generations will see this as the best humanity could offer.	All of them. Unless you are happy with a further breakdown of society. The Council is shooting itself in the foot by breaking itself up at the Govt's behest. What level of civic involvement will people have left?	People will have fewer options for consultation. Consultation will involve a walk to the library. Poor and vulnerable people will once again be disenfranchised. Local govt. will become less relevant to our lives. Society will suffer.
Many people are elderly and not computer literate at all. You still need to keep a phone number where people can ring for an appointment.	Disabled people. Keeping the phone line will help but many elderly people do not have patience with menus and will want to speak to real person.	As long as it is possible to speak to someone on the phone without having to jump through too many hoops / push too many buttons,	Having enough trained staff to be able to cope! I hope you have enough toilets and comfortable seating. I am particularly concerned about the elderly.	Keeping the personal approach possible for people who cannot manage online or automated services.	Adult Services. Children's Services. All forms of social work and services. These need humans to communicate with people.	As above. We all need human contact when in distress of any kind.
No. People may have computers at home but may not be able to use them. NOT everyone can use the phone or even have one. There are approx. 20% of Southampton that will have trouble getting in touch.	All the above would have trouble using phone or computer. Who thought up these silly questions.	I think all members of groups should be trained to help others. There will always be persons that miss out. Contact is needed.	Yes. What if when they sit down they are unable to use the computer and need help - who is going to do that.	Post. Posted in papers, local health centres, social workers groups ?, church, tenant link.	Need face to face. Always have always will. Person will find this is all too much effort and not bother.	No as long as person are told paper version is available i.e. paper etc. and of course groups again. PS if it was not for R Bailey I would not have known about this. Thank God for Block Reps.
No it does not - it's a discrimination against people who cannot be part of the digital age for whatever reason Disability -physical, mental, learning or even social or financial. Its given ever less to the poor. Keeping the poor and in their place.	No. The service is optimal. Only helpful to some and not everyone and to make a happy working city we need to support everyone.	People with mental health problems (depression) who are unable to communicate on a day to day basis.	You are asking customers to do the job they are already paying for. It's outrageous. Someone making double money.	Pop up shops. Pop up council pods - expand into libraries - lend a book, pay your rent - all in one to one (?).	Core packages. It's a lazy and non-people focus approach that will only bring misery. The council's across the country should be going back to the core of public sector - People.	Computers go down. Too much focus on non-approachable way of providing a service. It's profit aimed and not people aimed. This is not the public sector it's a profit sector. The ethos is dead.

Detailed responses to the paper version of the consultation

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
Most definitely not. What about disabled / immobile people? What about people who have difficulty using the phone. What about people who cannot afford to use the phone. BT's 0800 numbers are not free for every user.	Of course it won't. (And you know it). Not everyone is a confident / able user of the phone. Make an appointment? How? On the phone? How many layers of 'filtration' before an appointment is offered? Home appointment available? What about house-bound people?	I'm sure a disabled, house-bound person will really appreciate trying to make an appointment on the phone. Those who lived through WW2 will be delighted that translation service is available (at what cost??) for foreign born people.	Gateway staff will be trained to identify urgent needs? Trained by whom and to what standards? Trained to sign post (buck pass) to other agencies for them to sort out. All too common 'revolving door' syndrome which absolutely disadvantages vulnerable people.	This is a cost cutting exercise. Maximise income by employing talented, experienced, conscientious staff - not the half-witted 'jobsworths' we are used to. Try appropriate rationalisation. Get rid of the dead wood. Stop wasting tax payer's money i.e. watering the grass in the parks.	Online or self service facilities should supplement not replace face to face contact. Over time this half-cooked idea will be proven to be an expensive and potentially dangerous attempt at saving money. You know as well as I do where the money is being thrown down the pan.	Dear God do you really need assistance from the public to work this out. As previously mentioned get rid of the dead wood (start with the plank who thought this survey was a good idea) and learn basic budgeting. Infant school housekeeping. BTW - decisions have already been made, so why this charade? Happy analysing. Don't treat us all like plebs.
NO. PAPERWORK SHOULD STILL BE AVAILABLE. I'm 61 years old (following a mental breakdown I have memory problems. I'm too unwell to learn how to use a computer). I think people of 60 plus should have paper work if needed.	People with mental health problems who have lost their concentration. It is a good idea to be able to have an appt., face to face - or usual paper work.	Yes people with memory problems and people over 60 years who never grew up with computers. People with mental illness as this can affect memory and concentration.	No as long as staff are trained on dealing with individuals crisis / urgent needs - Staff need to be PATIENT!	Yes. Please can a live person always be available on the phone, not just a machine, and can paper work still be available (perhaps people could have a choice of this if over 60 years or disabled).	Yes, repairs services - as it is easier to explain what is wrong over the phone or local housing office. Council tax should have the choice of forms and paper work.	It is a good idea for paper work versions to be available on request (Council tax especially as some people have difficulty with maths and housing benefit maths).
Automated services are intimidating and frustrating, especially to someone experiencing their own crisis - ensure automated services are short and transfer promptly to a person!	Appointment system booking needs to be easy NOT automated, regular open times advertised and where. If possible a free phone number to book an appointment - WIDELY ADVERTISED HOW TO!	As long as this information is clear and advertised - pictorially and simple and clear!	No as long as staff are trained on dealing with individuals crisis / urgent needs - Staff need to be PATIENT!	Review the closure of local housing offices and times - so many people (elderly / L+D) appreciated being able to pop in to pay rent and share their concerns.	Improve action line response times and general attitude of staff. Do not close more local housing offices.	Yes if you don't inform staff in the areas that they work!!
No. Library not open some days. Partially deaf.	Yes. My son-in-law is Pakistani and can speak little English.	Yes. The questions all seem the same.	Yes. Everyone will want to be served first. Everyone thinks they are the most important.	Home visits. Some people can't get out of the house.	Could the phone service let you know how long you will be in the queue, what position you are.	I hope people will be advised how to get paper and its availability. 25% of people don't possess a computer. I don't have a mobile phone. There are still people without television! Most of my family do not have a computer.
Yes provided every effort is made to keep libraries open and accessible. This requires adequate resources, staff and equipment.	Hearing impaired people.		Much will depend on the availability of training and support given to Gateway staff.	?	?	?

Detailed responses to the paper version of the consultation

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Braille facility for blind access.	No	No.
Yes. Much needed access will improve people's situation as everything nowadays is online. A photocopier would be helpful to my son in Thornhill H/O for homework.	Yes it would. To speak to someone face to face is reassuring.	Yes	Only ignorant impatient people thinking they have pushed in.	It's hard to please everyone! Time and money can be an issue.		Most people have internet access at home but don't have a printer.
No. Fine if you do not work, but access to PCs in libraries can be difficult. I have never found one available. Housebound people cannot get to libraries etc. Evening and weekend PC access would be required. Phone self-service would need either freephone or geographic phone in - i.e. 02380 not 0845 / 0844 - too expensive.	I have an elderly relative who is terrified of 'new-fangled technology' and refuses to use any telephone service that uses the 'press one' type of service - she will not be alone.	How will they make an appointment to speak to someone on Gateway? By phoning a self-service facility to make an appointment or having to make a second journey to Gateway?		Extended opening hours - i.e. evenings and Saturdays. People work! Many of us are unable to make personal phone calls during working hours and work some distance away from Gateway. I have no intention of purchasing a computer.		How will you find out what forms are available?
No	No	No	Yes. People want to see a staff member right away and not wait for an appointment.	Leave as it is because it works. It is not all about money!!	See answers above.	All. Please leave well alone.
Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
More than 3 PCs need to be available in Thornhill library. Local housing services should diversify to meet the needs of elderly.	Just because you are old you shouldn't have to go to Gateway. Local housing services should diversify to meet the needs of elderly.		Yes as not everyone can afford to access Gateway.	Increased services available in the locality such as LHO (people cannot always access PC. Gateway).		No line is the cheapest option. Why not be honest about this when compiling questionnaires like this.
Yes	Yes		NO	None		None
Yes	Yes		No			No
Don't use	Yes	Yes	No	Don't know	Don't know	Yes

Detailed responses to the paper version of the consultation

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
Yes Action line is fairly good depending on the action of the officer (they do vary). Phone self-service could be tedious, i.e. waiting in a queue - faster to write a letter.	Gateway in my opinion was no help to me at all but my local housing office (Thornhill) bent over backwards to help.	You never get through to the right people.	Sorry but I found the staff very blunt and unfeeling not like Thornhill housing staff.	Customer care would help.	No	As long as there is someone to help them.
Yes They are of no help whatsoever as the phone costs a fortune and you can never get a computer in the library.	No There are many thousands of people who won't get any service at all, as the cut in numbers of people you can see means no appointments.	No Of course it would meet no-one's needs as you will never get to speak or see anyone.	Yes Immediately you will get a queue of people who need to be seen and won't.	It takes too long and people get fed up waiting Cut the spending on useless statues and expensive objects and building projects for financial gain. There will be more money for staff.	Yes I can.	Yes I can.
Yes Self service is ridiculous - for issues you should always be able to sit down and speak to someone rather than relying on a computer.	Yes Not clear as to HOW one makes an appointment without PC or telephone or lack of English.	Yes There are many who need 'personal' help. The computer literate and business-minded would be catered for self-service.	No Already a 'viewing' of planning application, drawings etc. is out of the reach of the 'ordinary' enquire, since the plans are 'reduced' and unreadable. No.4 seems to be very excluding.	No Other authorities use the method similar to SCC (I've been served by Swindon and Newcastle). I cannot make any suggestion for customer satisfaction.	No No current problems.	No Provided on request seems a good scheme but only if the customer is given the correct form(s). Errors in distribution could be very worrying and cause extra work for customer and staff.
I am still baffled and irritated by the non-availability of computer terminals at Challis Court which is sheltered accommodation. Looks like a waste of resources. (See OUR PROPOSALS p. 1) outside 3 hours on Monday morning.	No views but see (1) above.	No views.	No views.	Making payments to SCC can be done from a bank branch using Account Managers Machines or their HSBC equivalent. I have done so for almost 2 years sans agro. This route is the cousin of direct debit and is paperless. SCC still seems unconvinced.	I am not sure that ACTIONLINE works too well by e-mail. The now defunct cards seemed infallible but ACTIONLINE may have an on-line form which I have not seen.	(a) Yes at first but old dogs learn new tricks eventually. (b) Probably not.
Many elderly people (my husband included) have no grasp of the skills necessary to use the internet and have no PC at home.	For those having difficulty walking getting to Gateway is a problem. Nearest bus stop still not close enough.	People with hearing impairment prefer visual information prefer the printed word. They can then read and get help if necessary.	Still have to get there first.	Will exclude many of the elderly or / and those with physical, visual or hearing impairment, so services affecting these people need further thought.	See above comment.	See above comment.

Detailed responses to the paper version of the consultation

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
I have read all the questions on this form and they are misleading to suit your own ends. The people of Southampton will not be best served by these changes. The current service will be worse. If you telephone now it is a poor service and you have to go into Gateway to get help. This is a stupid idea. Please do not change Gateway.	No not really, as not all use technology. It will take longer to sort problems and people won't report them if they think it's going to be complicated then things get out of hand!! And money might be wrongly done.	There will be more people making appointments. It is a complicated system anyway. This will just complicate it more and no I do not think it would work for all concerned.	Most people do not make appointments let alone keep them! How will you know how long each individual needs. What happens when you run late. Will you let people know.	More staff on the front line as they can often help quickly, rather than lengthy appointment times, and first come first served is a fairer way to deal with problems.	Documents as how do you know if they are originals or not! There are so many fakes these days. I think this just encourages them to produce more as how are you going to know!	Forms are fine online but documents no. Also this is a way to cut staff also so there will be more people out of work and more people claiming!
No	No	No. What happens if you just want to see a person not the internet or an annoying automated voice.	No	See answer one above.	Most of them.	Yes. At least you have a paper trail you can double check.
No. Most vulnerable people don't know how to use computers.	I am deaf and this would not help my needs. I also have learning difficulties.	No. We need to keep the service we already have.	I don't always meet appts so drop in service is needed.	Keep the service the same as people with different needs need this support.	The council just wants to save money to give big pay rises and bonuses to the managers.	There are always problems with computers and people loose information.

Responses received through other means

Emails and a letter have also been received in response to the consultation and these are reproduced below.

I have a general concern regarding your proposals in that the less human contact there is with the council the wider the gap becomes between the council and the public. Individuals feel less understood, less listened too. That they are just an account number, not a person. A result of this loss of connection would be that some will report changes of circumstances more slowly or not at all. There is no doubt in my mind that many will find the ability to do more over the internet very convenient, especially those in work who have little time to visit or phone the Gateway.

But I am concerned that waiting times on the phone may increase. One of the most common moans we get from clients is from those that have run out of credit on their mobile phones trying to call a benefit centre. Hence we have many clients coming in to use our phone. Of course we will allow them to use our internet if that is the way things are going, but if the query is at all complicated queries are not easily answered online. Plus I have been finding that when I email council tax or benefit services queries are responded to within 2 to 3 weeks, the same as letters, hence with more urgent matters we have to phone. With the new online services will there be a similar delay in responding? If so people/agencies will have to phone in or drop in at gateway with the more urgent queries. Below are a few suggestions:

1. Can there be a dedicated line for advice/support agencies, like tax credits have. As advice agencies have more understanding than the average person of how the system works we will only call you if we really need to. I have found it very useful being able to talk directly to the council tax enforcement section (please let them know that)

2. If phoning up to check progress of a new claim could there be an automated response that says how long it is currently taking to process new claims and therefore give a date that we should phone no earlier than if not heard anything. (but claims should be processed within 2 weeks anyway)

3. I can't emphasise enough the value of customers being able to go through a HB claim form with someone at the Gateway. I believe a lot of claims are delayed or not made at all because people struggle with the forms. Having the forms online won't help much with this problem. People need someone to go through it with them.

We are really missing not having a housing office in Swaythling. Just recently had a client who I helped make a claim for housing benefit but because there is no longer a local housing office in which claim forms can be handed in, she sent it in the post, and consequently the form got lost in the post.

This last point is not directly relevant to your proposals but I think it is important: Non council tenants need free ways of paying council tax locally. Council tenants have a payment card, but everyone else has to use payment slips that charge. There is no local branch of the Coop in Swaythling so can't pay directly into your bank account. For those who only have a post office account or are overdrawn on their bank account, direct debits, standing orders and card payments over the phone are out of the question. In these days where everyone under pension age has to pay some council tax you need to make it as easy as possible for people to pay. Some debt collectors send out payment cards or payslips that are free to use, so why can't the council?

Responses received through other means

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September 30 2013

Dear Sir

Consultation on extending the Council's Strategic Services Partnership with Capita

Having read through the consultation document and reading through the information online, Business South would like to contribute the following input.

We are in full support of the extension of the contract and we believe Capita is doing a good job for Southampton in partnership with Southampton City Council.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Lynskey".

Sally Lynskey
CEO Business South

We had the following responses from the Ladies Self advocacy group when I told them about the proposed changes to Council and Gateway services:

Proposed changes to services at Southampton Gateway (to online services and telephone based)

The Chatterboxes responses:

"Some people might not be able to use the computer or understand it, like blind people"

Responses received through other means

"I can't use computers. I find them really difficult to understand them. But I rely on services at gateway such as getting a bus pass"

"What about people who can't speak, how are they supposed to use a telephone?"

"I can't talk. It would be so difficult for me to use that service."

"Its better to talk face to face to someone."

I wasn't sure if you were collating responses to send in together, but I hope this is of use. All the ladies thought the proposed changes were a terrible idea!

I am keen to have my voice heard in the current consultation on communication with the council. I have real concerns about the buying in of services from other organisations such as Capita and the running down of human relationships with the public in preference for virtual ones. I would like to give a few examples:

1. the civic buildings as we know them are a shadow of their former selves. once we could walk through them, feel we were able to talk to a human being about a particular issue and feel we were part of something - this city. Now, the building has been carved up, as a council tenant I have to queue in that building with the stinky carpet (where Gateway is situated) and there is no sense that the civic building is ours. The reception looks sad and unloved and the poor staff spend ages trying to put us through to people who don't seem to want to talk to us much. I was there on Friday afternoon with a couple of other residents, waiting to hang on the phone to someone who was clearly arguing with reception staff about taking calls at all and didnt know how to deal with us.

2. you are far more incompetent - I have been trying to raise the issue of a potentially dangerous road crossing between Houndwell and Hoglands Parks, where I have seen a few near misses in the last weeks, as numbers swell in the new playground and drivers keep forgetting to stop at the zebra crossing. In the past I would have walked to the civic centre and spoken to someone or phoned. This time I phoned action line and was told roads would ring back. The roads man (now Balfour Beatty) said he would do his best to research the road problem but now his work is farmed out to BB they don't liaise with parks and gardens any more, so to call parks and gardens. I then phoned actionline again and the woman really didn't want to deal with my query. Eventually I managed to persuade her to leave a message for the parks people, but she told me that I would have to call the police separately to deal with the speeding cars issue. I cannot believe that you seriously expect people to call 3 or 4 different people about a safety issue like this. If a child dies on that crossing because one hand no longer talks to the other it will not be worth the saving you have made, will it? I worry that you are also preventing us from taking civic responsibility by making it so hard to contact you.

3. Capita don't seem that great to me. As an employee on a casual basis I have been paid late on countless occasions. I miss pay at Christmas - they just shut down and don't bother - and it seems they offer pretty dodgy advice on employment rights. I have just discovered that I have some after 4 years of working for the council.

I understand the council needs to save a few bob, but I fear you are participating in your own demise by letting these jokers in. After all, the government doesn't really care whether local government sinks or swims. In fact I think they would be happy if you quietly imploded. At this rate you look as if you are doing their work for them.

I would like to give my views as a local citizen and as a member of the Labour Party.

I do not agree with outsourcing, I cant beleive there are any savings to be had.

It must cost more to provide the services through Capita than to provide them through the council or through regularly retendered contracts or through government sources.

Capita after all have to make a profit on their services which must be around 20% therefore that money could be saved straight away.

You mention savings of £24 million over the next nine years but that is meaningless; how much extra is the contract costing overall? Its like when shops discount things by 80% in a sale but they atificially raised the price just before hand.

Capita may have brought 95 new FTE's into the city but how many people have lost jobs? I dont expect that 95 is in addition to the total jobs transferred to Capita in the first place. What is the real increase from staff

Responses received through other means

that transferred in 2007?

Capita would never have flexibility on pricing; these sorts of companies make their money on the "extras". Look at the NHS and the private financing.

Corporate Social responsibility? They pay their staff less and pile on the pressure, anyone I have spoken to that works for Capita say they are unhappy. Capita are keen to support apprenticeships because they want to pay peanuts for their staff. They swap skilled people out for monkeys, there is no development or training. As for developments in IT? I have relations who work at the council and they say the IT Service is the worst its ever been. All the systems are out of date and not fit for purpose. Capita were brought in because they were going to invest and keep IT systems current but in reality there has been no change or investment in IT since 2007.

Its impossible for both parties to work together, Capita are out to make money not do the Council any favours. Anyone who thinks these things are partnerships are deluded.

Morale, opporunities and clarity for Capita staff are words and actions they dont experience staff turnover is very high.

It may cost £2m to re-tender or bring back in house but how much would you save in the long run in real money, improved staff morale and accountability for the services delivered.

In my view I would terminate the contract with Capita in 2017 and re-tender parts of the contract for shorter terms and bring parts back in house.

Anyone who understands business knows that is the way forward. Even the Tory government recommends not signing long term contracts. You lose flexibility and the ability to drive down costs and get rid of them is the service is less that extected.

Listen to Council staff, Capia staff and the citizens of Southampton and get rid of them. No-one wins.

Email was forward onto our team as we have had so many different problems with Capita especially with the switchboard & transferring calls which have left customers on hold for too long & put through to the wrong departments again & again. This is not just external calls but extends to internal calls too where we are on hold and when we finally get through after being annoyed to the point of wanting to hang up with the automated messages, the customer have hung up themselves.

Then all the problems with HR which gets to the point of being ridiculous, I personally feel my team and I could do our job & work on Capita's switchboard & HR department and do a better job.

Part of the proposals is to have customers contacting via on line, what about all the people who do not have the internet at home & do not want to travel to gain access to the internet especially the elderly? What about people who do not speak or read English?

The council's website is not user friendly or updated as frequently as it should be, especially contact telephone numbers.

The contract till 2017 is not good and extending it another 5 years to 2022 is just a really bad idea.

Regards, H

My comment on the extension of the contract arrangement is as follows.

It is difficult to understand that an extension of the contract arrangement with Capita can achieve best value for the Council. Providing the City Council engages a sound management system focussed on efficiencies and effectiveness than it must be able to achieve better value for two reasons.

- Capita is a 'for profit' company – those profits should be set against overall council savings requirements.
- With the service provider (Capita) and the client (SCC) requiring their own management arrangements for their aspects of IT, Procurement and HR service functions, to enable the two parties to talk each other, if these services were reintegrated their must be an opportunity for further management savings.

Responses received through other means

From Cllr McEwing and copied to all Members

Dear all,

Working in a call centre environment, I fully understand the difficulties our elderly and vulnerable will experience when we go automated. Many of our vulnerable and elderly residents are not computer literate or have limited comprehension of technologies and we need our staff to be cognisant of this. Having extended waiting times due to not enough agents available will increase levels of frustrations for both parties, possible abandonment of calls and residents getting into financial difficulties through not having technological capacity and getting frustrated on long phone calls. This needs to be as smooth a transition as possible for the elderly and vulnerable of our city.

Not happy we are moving to more technological systems as I'm concerned we are abandoning those who are not technologically aware amongst our elderly and vulnerable.

Regards

Cllr Catherine McEwing

From Cllr Brian Parnell and copied to all Members

I agree wholeheartedly with Cllr McEwing.

Cllr Brian E Parnell.

From Cllr Les Harris and copied to all Members

Regarding the use of telephone call centres, whilst this is going to be the way forward for many matters, I have some serious concerns over security and fraud.

Where applicants use the internet, firstly there is the problem of ensuring proper identification. There needs to be a security system in place fir this

We need to ensure the applicant is real, and actually resides at the given address. With the internet it is quite possible for someone who lives abroad, to access the system and make out they live in this city, especially where such things such as welfare payments of various types are made.. For example if a person has lived here (having perhaps come from a European country) and claimed a payment of some sort, they could continue to say they here even though they have moved back to their home country, accessing our system using the internet.

Some government schemes work well such as Road tax, but of course they have access to your insurance details and MOT records etc, and they are receiving money not paying it out.

I also think, as mentioned by Cath McEwing, that a lot of people will have difficulty accessing a computer or being able to use it for these purposes.

Consideration should be given to having various centres where the public can go for a training session in how to use the system, and where necessary help to fill out the forms etc for the first few times.

Regards

Les Harris

Cllr Bassett Ward

From Cllr Peter Baillie and copied to all Members

Cllrs McEwing and Harris make good points & this is a consultation. A substantial body of people are still not happy at using the internet to solve problems and they should not be penalised. A body of people are not able to use the internet. A robust, personal service should still exist for those who wish to use it - and that should include 'drop in' rather than having to make an appointment. What should be improved is the simple

Responses received through other means

<p>internet transactions such as topping up the Itchen Bridge Card - it takes a ridiculous amount of time.</p> <p>Kind regards,</p> <p>Peter Baillie</p>
<p>From Cllr Ivan White and copied to all Members</p> <p>I think most points have been covered but on a practical point many people, particularly the old, are very hard of hearing and complex and long discussions on the telephone will be very difficult could prove problematic leading to errors/mistakes.</p> <p>Regards Ivan White</p>
<p>My comment on the extension of the contract arrangement is as follows.</p> <p>It is difficult to understand that an extension of the contract arrangement with Capita can achieve best value for the Council. Providing the City Council engages a sound management system focussed on efficiencies and effectiveness than it must be able to achieve better value for two reasons.</p> <p>Capita is a 'for profit' company – those profits should be set against overall council savings requirements.</p> <p>With the service provider (Capita) and the client (SCC) requiring their own management arrangements for their aspects of IT, Procurement and HR service functions, to enable the two parties to talk each other, if these services were reintegrated their must be an opportunity for further management savings.</p>
<p>I work at the Daycentre in Southampton and I do understand the need to streamline and make cuts . My experience is that most of our clients which represent this cities most vulnerable and chaotic within society cannot cope with this impersonal and automated approach to service. It leads to feelings of frustration , anger and hopelessness. The D.W.P have to some extent tried to adopt this approach and we pick up the devastation thats left in its wake. I think long term its a false economy that causes long term even more problems.</p>

Responses received through other means

Dear Councillor Kaur,

Re: Proposed removal of face-to-face interviews with staff and extension of Capita contract.

I was dismayed to read your proposal to remove many of the opportunities available to interact with Council / Capita staff and re-locate them with on-line users. I saw an statement saying that only some 7% of the population interact with the Council via the on-line service. In my view, once the ability to interact face to face starts to be removed it will gradually also be removed all time from the disabled and the elderly too. Capita will be able to argue that the service is not required because those who need it will be unable to get into Gateway to use it. Many people do not have internet access at home. I earn a living wage but I cannot afford the cost of the equipment. I retire in my local history club gives for those wanting to use a pc to fulfil their JSA requirements; yet history opening times have been reduced. The recent changes to bus services have led to a reduction in buses to get to libraries and in my case, my 'service' has been withdrawn completely. I am sure I am not alone.

An on-line service inevitably becomes a tick-box service and eventually leads to increased costs as there is trying + fringing as questions arise which could often be answered in one interview. The queues at Gateway show how much the face-to-face service is needed. Instead of cutting costs, Capita should be ensuring that they have enough staff to meet demand. They should be reminded that they receive Council tax

payor's money to provide a first class service, not the third rate service the currently provide and which they propose to reduce even further.

I am strongly opposed to any move which would extend the contract with Capita. All Council services should be provided by directly employed Council employees whose mission is to serve the public not to provide a cheap service so that the shareholders' dividends increase.

Whilst you are in discussion with Capita, you may wish to raise the issue of their probationary staff who receive less pay and never seem able to pass the probationary period so they can receive the correct wage for the job. This is just another undervalued way of maximising profits whilst splashing employees.

Responses received through other means**Notes from a meeting with Jeff Downing, Spectrum Centre for Independent Living.****Proposals for changes to Customer Contact Arrangements and Capita Contract Extension****16th July 2013.**

I explained to Jeff the main proposals for changes to customer contact as set out in the consultation.

Gateway

Jeff outlined some of the problems that people with disabilities can face when using Gateway. Generally, good support is given to individuals who make contact with a member of staff, but strangers could just stand inside Gateway and not know what to do (especially if they have problems with vision or learning difficulties). No-one is likely to approach them in these circumstances.

The “chicane” to see someone on the reception desk is difficult for some people. Guide dogs do not understand these queuing arrangements.

The cash office screens present a real difficulty for people with hearing or vision impairments.

Reducing or removing human contact could be a problem for many people. The floorwalker system (before the move to One Guildhall Square) was better as there was someone there to meet people entering Gateway. I explained that floorwalkers may return under this proposal as they would be assisting people with the self-service terminals. Jeff commented that they must be easily identifiable.

Jeff asked about screen reading software on the self-service terminals. He said it is not easy to use for a lot of people and so still creates a barrier.

Jeff suggested that there should be an easily identifiable area (perhaps highlighted by being a different colour to the rest of Gateway and which can be identified tactilely) where people can go and stand if they need assistance. He said airports and stations often had facilities like this. I promised to enquire about that possibility.

Jeff suggested that self service terminals should have large screens and that the display should have large text as a default. Hearing loops would be required for the screen reading software. He suggested that the design should include good colour contrast for buttons – e.g. “press red button to pay”. Terminals will have to be at a range of heights to allow for individuals’ needs.

Jeff mentioned that he had been involved in the original design for Gateway (when in the Civic Centre) through the Southampton Access group and thought this led to a good result.

Responses received through other means**Switchboard**

I outlined how the automated switchboard would work. Jeff feels this would be a barrier for many people. People are generally ok with menu systems (“press 1 for ...”) but many people find interactive systems difficult – particularly if they have a speech impediment. He would want a way to bypass the speech recognition, so that people having difficulty can press a key to talk to an operator.

Capita contract extension

Jeff has strong feelings that this is undesirable as he believes too much public work is undertaken by the private sector. He believes this leads to a lower standard of customer service.

Paul Medland
Project Manager

Subsequent email from Jeff Downing

Thanks for this and on the whole it is fine.

However my concerns about Capita are a little more complex.

1 I believe that for local authorities to take up a cheap option with any provider that is based on a profit system, is a fundamental mistake and will result in the community having to pick up the bill in the end. As in my opinion they will reduce the service to maintain profit, until it is no longer a profitable option and then hand it back to the local authority.

2. Local authority services should be the primary responsibility of the local authority and NOT shared with an organization that was not elected and the community have no say in whom a contract is awarded too.

3. In my experience as a Disabled Person, I find the standard of customer care provided by all aspects of the local authority in general to be far superior than, what is offered by Capita.

4. There is already evidence that these Capitalist ventures will cost us dearly and provide a sub-standard service. G4S for example,

5. Please ensure my total opposition to this plan is made known to the individual responsible.

Jeff .

Responses received through other means

Extract from minutes of Southampton Learning Disability Partnership Board, 10th September 2013.

5. Gateway and the Call Centre Changes

Paul Medland came to talk to us about changes to Gateway.

A lot more is going to be done on the Internet. This will make it easier to access services and fill in forms at all times. However, this may not be better for everyone and the Council wants to make sure it does not make things more difficult for some people.

The call centre switchboard would be answered by a machine which will put the caller through to the department they want.

We were worried about how the machine telephone service would work for people with certain disabilities. For example, the machine might not understand people with speech difficulties.

The telephone service will be voice activated, but if the machine gets it wrong after two tries it will go through to a person.

Simon offered to put Paul in contact with someone who has helped the police with their enhanced line for vulnerable people. This is a special number that people give information to so the person answering the call knows about them.

Gateway drop-in is also changing. There are going to be more computers in Gateway with someone to help people use them.

People can still ask to speak to a member of staff but they will need to book an appointment. They should be able to make the appointment for the next day. This would mean they would have to come back

We had concerns about safety at Gateway. Paul said there will always be someone there.

Matt asked about renewing bus passes because proof of ID is required. Paul said that people may be able to renew their bus passes online at a later stage. When they have a way of making this possible

Matt also pointed out that some people may only have their support worker to help them on certain days. This would make it difficult to make an appointment. Paul said the Council needs to think about this.

There is a survey to find out what people think. There is a leaflet and the survey can also be done online but it is not in Easy Read. The survey needs to be done by 1st November.

Responses received through other means

Brian asked if these changes are a political decision. Paul confirmed that it will be a Cabinet and Council decision.

Paul is going to send Hilary the leaflet when it comes back from the printers so she can send it on.

APPENDIX 4

Annex 9

Results of survey undertaken in Gateway

1. Why did you come into Gateway	2. Would you have preferred to deal with it on the phone or online? Why/why not	3. The Council is trying to do more online in the future, will you find that helpful? Why/why not	4. We are thinking of having a larger self service area with computers that you can use. Would you use them	4b. If there was someone there to help you, would you consider using them? Why/ why not	5. What stops you doing more online?	6. We are considering making Gateway appointment only. This means you would not be able to just drop in. What do you think of that approach?	7. If you did have to make an appointment do you think it would make you more likely to do things online or on the phone rather than come in?	8. Are you happy to use automated phone services? If no why	9. Do you ever call into Gateway just to pick up a form?
Housing	No Easier to do face to face	Yes	Yes	Yes	I am homeless	Harder	No	Yes	No
Housing	No I don't use computers, haven't got the money to waste on phone calls	No	No Better this way hands on.	No	Haven't got a computer, old fashioned	Not sure, its better like this.	No	No	Yes Spend ages on hold, you get put through to incorrect departments or cut off, it costs me money
Council Tax	No It is easier face to face. I got told lots on information I didn't know	No	Yes Same reasons as question 2	Yes	Prefer to see someone	Crap service	No	No	Yes Prefer face to face
Parking	Yes I would use the phone but hate online	No	Yes But only if someone was there to help me	Yes	You cant ask questions, not always as quick	I would rather do what happens now	Don't know	No	No Because you cannot ask questions
Housing bens	No I prefer face to face, you get more information	Don't know	Don't know I needed to do	Yes	I haven't got the internet, information is not always up to date or very helpful	Don't agree, I work and have a child so it is difficult to make an appointment. I would rather pop in when I am free.	Don't know	No	Yes It is a real pain you wait ages then get cut off
Benefits and Blue badge	No Face to face is clearer	No	No I don't like doing stuff online, like face to face	No	Registered blind	Depends on waiting time i.e. same day or four week wait like doctors	Yes	Yes	Yes I have done
Benefits	No I needed to come in as I am awaiting an urgent cheque payment	No	Yes I like the one to one service	Yes	No reason to	It might work save queues	No	Yes	No
Housing bens	No I prefer face to face	No	No I prefer face to face	Yes	Don't know	I thinks its fine	No	No	Yes Endless options
Benefit	No I needed to provide proofs	Yes	No	Yes	Nothing	Just easier to walk in, I never know when I am free	No	No	Yes You never get the answer you want and end up on a loop.

Results of survey undertaken in Gateway

Benefit	No	I am a large landlord. I work closely with street prevention who call me and I meet tenants in Gateway to fill in forms	No	I need to come in meet tenants and fill in forms at Gateway. I house vulnerable people who no one else will house.	No	I fill in these forms regularly but I still make mistakes which the Gateway staff pick up on and correct prior to them going up stairs this helps prevent delays in benefit claims.	No	Because they wouldn't check the forms and pick up errors like they do now	Not good with computers	Never work a disaster, The nature of my clients as they are referrals from street prevention	No	No	I don't like waiting and it takes to long.	No
Council Tax	Don't know	I prefer face to face	Yes	No	No	Not here for six months of the year	Yes it would be ok.	Yes	No	Not if you have to pay a premium, it takes to long, repeats details, costs money and provides no better customer service.	No	No	Not if you have to pay a premium, it takes to long, repeats details, costs money and provides no better customer service.	No
Council Tax and pay rent	No	When you talk on the phone you cannot always get your point across its better face to face	No	Not good with computers, no patience	Yes	But only if there was no other choice	Yes	Awful to busy to make an appointment. We have always had a service we can pop into.	No	Takes ages and costs too much	No	No	Takes ages and costs too much	Yes
Council Tax	No	I don't like using phones, security issue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Confidence using computers	I think it would be ok.	No	No	Takes too long and costs money	No	No	Takes too long and costs money	No
Benefits	No	I have a hearing aid and using the phone I get feedback. I like face to face its personal, good knowledge on the phone there is no	No	See question 2	No	I would need constant help	I would need constant help	this would not work for me as I would need to ring to make an appointment I cannot use the phones as they do not support my hearing aids	No	Please refer to other questions	No	No	Please refer to other questions	Yes
Council Tax and benefits	No	I needed to hand in proofs	No	Old fashioned	Yes	No although it is the future	Yes	I don't like this idea I like face to face contact.	Yes	I like direct human contact and find it costs too much to ring although I would be happy to use it if it was a free phone	No	No	I like direct human contact and find it costs too much to ring although I would be happy to use it if it was a free phone	Yes

Results of survey undertaken in Gateway

Benefits	No	I like one to one and staff check paperwork its more personal	No	Online systems do not talk to each other and it has gone wrong and I am being held responsible	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	lack of communication . you get a different type of service face to face one to one i.e. eye contact.	It would be ok as long as you could see someone within 48hrs and you didn't have to wait a month	No	Depends on nature of my query	Yes	The councils are good	No
Housing	No	Its easier to explain it face to face	No	See question 2	Yes	But only if someone was there to help me	Yes	Yes	I have more confidence face to face, feedback with staff is instant. They provide reassurance and I know my query is dealt with.	It depends on waiting time	No		No	English is not my first language	No
Parking	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes	Do most things online, but Itchen Bridge top-up doesn't work with some browsers	There would be a lot of wasted appointments. Will make people angry. Like it the way it is.	Yes		Yes	Some are better than others	No
Council Tax and Benefits	No	Want answer right away. Online chat would be ok. Emails get lost.	Yes	Already do quite a bit online. Just moved - so no telephone line for 2	Yes		Yes	Yes	Nothing, except I don't get an immediate answer. Online chat would be good	Not good. Life is too busy. Perhaps half and half is an option?	Yes		No	They don't understand accents	No
Benefits	No	Like coming in	No	Can ask questions	Yes		Yes	Yes	Need translation	Not good as sometimes in a hurry	No		Yes		No
Waste	No	Waste calendar should be delivered	No	Don't have a computer, don't want to use libraries	No	Want to talk to someone, don't do stuff online	No	No	Don't feel I should have to	Don't like it, but don't often come in	No		No		No
Pay a bill	No	Like to come in when there is enough in bank account to meet bill	No	Can't read or write and no computer	No	Can't read or write	No	No	Can't read or write. People in Gateway very helpful	Wouldn't like it. Would find it hard to make an appointment	No		No	Don't like them	No
Buss pass	No	Learning difficulties (was accompanied)	No	Learning difficulties	No		Yes	Yes	Understanding it. Have a computer but just for YouTube etc.	Sometimes need to drop in - can't plan.	No		No	Cost and difficulty understanding	Yes
Benefit	Yes	Would have been easier	Yes	Because I work	Yes		Yes	Yes	Nothing	Don't like it - find it hard to get appointments that will fit in with work	Yes		No	Prefer to talk to a person, not a computer	No

Results of survey undertaken in Gateway

Housing	No	Prefer face to face	No	No computer	Yes				No computer, but does use libraries. There is normally a computer free	Would prefer that	Yes			No	They never have the option I'm looking for	No
Benefits	Yes	Would rather not have to come in	Yes		No	Can do it at home	No	Can do it at home	Nothing, except what can be done online. Like getting a receipt in Gateway	Don't like it - when working it is difficult to fit appointments in.	Yes			No	Would rather speak to a person	No
Benefits	No	Prefer to see someone. Work in town, so can go straight from	No	Only just bought a tablet	Yes				New to it	Would like that	No			Yes		No
Benefits	No	Tried on phone, but couldn't get it sorted. Phone staff not helpful	No	Don't understand online access	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not always guaranteed to get an answer. In Gateway can ask questions to clarify and you get a receipt.	If you're worried you just want to get it sorted, don't want to wait.	No			No	Don't like being in a queue with messages. Costs money.	No
Homeless	No	Prefer to see someone.	Yes		Yes				Nothing	Not a good idea. People going through rough times need to be seen.	Yes			Yes		No
Benefits	Yes	I have children	Yes		Yes				Better to be sure the council have received the info - get a receipt	Good, less time waiting	No			Yes		Yes
Bus Pass	No	Not computer literate and no access	No	Prefer to see someone personally	No	Yes	Yes	Need help. Would still rather see someone.	No computer and no access	Prefer to be able to drop in	No			No	Don't have a phone	Yes
Housing	No	Like to get out of the house - noisy neighbours	No	Same reason	Yes				My neighbours	OK	No			Yes		No
Bus Pass	Yes		Yes	Work with clients with health difficulties	Yes				Not much is available. Would be good to cut out paper	It would be difficult. Work doesn't allow for appointments - it isn't that type of work.	Yes			No	Rather talk to a person	Yes
Benefits	Yes		Yes		Yes				Time, it is easier to call in sometimes	Prefer dropping in, easier than making an appointment	No			No	Difficulty understanding accent. Prefer to drop in	Yes
Parking	Yes		Yes		Yes				Nothing	Easier to drop in	Yes			Yes		Yes

APPENDIX 4

Annex 9

Results of survey undertaken in Gateway

Parking	No	Wanted to come into town anyway	No	Like to see people	No	Yes	Like the personal touch	Making a mistake. Don't want to do things online unless have to.	Appointments too difficult with travel times. Nice to be able to just walk in.	No	Yes	No	
Bridge card	No	Don't like paying online	Yes		Yes			My son using the computer	Good, it will avoid queues. Will get more privacy and be less rushed.	No	Yes	No	
Benefits	Yes	Phone is quicker	No	Would rather phone	Yes			Nothing	Don't like it . Not people friendly	No	No	Yes	
Housing	No	Not good at English	No	Language. Have computer, but not very good on it.	No	Yes		Language	Makes it more difficult, especially if short of time	No	No	Yes	
Benefits	No	Because my English isn't good. I prefer to see someone face-to-face	No	Prefer to come in	No	Yes		Hate using computers - get frustrated	No view	No	No	No	
Yes	23%		35%		55%	69%				28%	33%		43%
No	75%		63%		43%	31%				68%	68%		58%
Don't know	3%		3%		3%	0%				5%	0%		0%

DELIVERY TO DATE UNDER THE SSP

PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

The original partnership objectives set out to:

- Deliver excellent services
- Drive efficiency within the Partnership services and across the Council
- Focus on our Customers at all times
- Drive transformation across the Council
- Keep jobs in Southampton
- Grow a local business to deliver to provide a shared service centre for the delivery of services to other clients

KEY PARTNERSHIP FACTS

- 10 year strategic partnership signed October 2007
- 650 staff transferred
- Planned investment of c. £25m– including major ICT programme
- Cultural shift supported through new HR Pay delivery
- New Regional Business Centre
- Enhanced customer services
- Increased performance across services

Performance:

- 80 Key Performance Indicators
- 158 Performance Indicators
- 2011/12 – 87% KPI's achieved
- 2012/13 – 91% KPI's achieved
- 2011/12 – 95% PI's achieved
- 2012/13 – 96% PI's achieved
- External growth has brought 90.5 FTE into Southampton

Key service achievements:

Customer Services Achievements

- Developed the Gateway one stop shop serving 114,000 customers each year
- Implemented a corporate contact centre currently taking 900,000 customer contacts each year covering 28 services
- Good relationships with all service areas, working together to resolve issues and develop the service
- Implemented quality assurance procedures

- Recent customer satisfaction levels recorded at 96%
- Developing the OGS call centre as the call centre of choice for new Capita Business – bring new employment possibilities to Southampton

Local Taxation & Benefits Achievements

- Performance improvements over the 6 years

Description	2006/07	2012/13
Processing New Claims (days)	33	15
New claims decided within 14 days	81%	98.5%
Claims paid on time or within 7 days	79%	96%
Processing Change in circs (days)	15	12
CTAX in year collection	94.5%	96.2%

- Regular single person discount reviews which have brought income to the council year on year
- Issuing text reminders so saving on postage – this is steadily growing - 39% of those sent paid as a result
- Documentation sent out is encouraging Council Tax self service and pin number requests are regular each month at around 200. This is due to be automated soon and customers will be able to log in straight away
- Maintained Local Authority Error rate below government lower threshold, no financial loss
- Administer subsidy of £130 million per year without any financial loss
- Benefit caseload 22,681 on transfer, risen by 23% whilst service has demonstrated improved performance

I.T Services Achievements

- Improved IT infrastructure including a new VoIP telephony system, successful desktop refresh programme, server consolidation and virtualisation
- IT Disaster Recovery in place and tested for critical systems
- Major Upgrades to Key systems e.g. Agresso, Leisure Management and implementation of ResourceLink HR self service
- Call Volumes have reduced from an average in of 5,246 in 2008 to 3,772 in 2013
- Incident Volumes have reduced from an average in of 4,265 in 2008 to 2,892 in 2013
- Priority 1 fault volumes have reduced by 45% since the start of the contract

- The introduction of Service Desk On-Line has enabled customers to self serve and log incidents and requests “out of hours”
- Provided robust 24/7 home working and remote access solution
- Key projects delivered
 - Introduced both Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Electronic Document Records Management Systems (EDRMS) to enable a streamlined customer focused service to the general public
 - Implementation of The Council’s Blackberry Mobile solution
 - Implemented encryption across all laptop/tablet devices and added security features to protect critical data
 - Deployment of a Desktop, Network and Server refresh programme across the Council
 - A programme of IT delivery services to support The Council’s ASAP accommodation programme
 - Supported the transition of Council services to 3rd parties
 - Deployment of a new RSA (remote secure authentication) infrastructure
 - Supported the highly successful introduction of Public Health staff to Civic Centre accommodation including critical NHS communications links

HR & Payroll Services Achievements

- Implementation of the HR Shared Service Centre, HR helpdesk and online access to resources and HR support, Online HR pay & FAQ’s
- Use of CRM and document management technology to improve work flow between front and back office
- Recruitment portal (Hampshire wide)
- HR Portal – easy access to all HR procedures and information
- Self Service – individuals with access to the HR Portal ‘my view’ can access their pay slip electronically, book annual leave and change their personal details on line.
- Introduction of:-
 - Risk Model against Employee Relation cases
 - Management Academy to Level 1,2,3 managers in SCC
 - Course Booker to record all training available and completed
 - Introduction of E-bulk to reduce processing time for CRB
 - 2011 T&C’s Project was delivered below the forecasted project budget
 - 2011 T&C’s 613 Queries & Changes were successfully processed, 413 Contracts were reprinted and delivered to employees. The helpdesk responded to 2,922 e-mails & 1,591 calls

Procurement Services Achievements

- £33.6M procurement “savings” declared to date
- Increased the Council’s contract coverage from 28% to 70%
- Sourcing decisions are now being focussed on reducing total cost of ownership and minimising risk.

- Worked with the Procurement client to develop the Council's 3 year Procurement Strategy
- Introduced e-tendering - reduced the procurement times by 30%

SSP LOWLIGHTS

- Relationship in the early years very client contractor and not a Partnership – lack of mutual trust, openness and honesty
- Lack of communication with stakeholders across the organisation
- Blame culture in parts of the organisation – Capita often an excuse for internal SCC issues (no one ever got fired for blaming Capita syndrome)
- Perceptions that the IT Service was too expensive
- Inflexible commercial model
- Persistent service issues within parts of the Property Service – Improvement plan now in place
- Complaints regarding the Occupational Health Service – which is now in much better shape
- Lack of recognition that the HR service was delivering what the Council asked it to IE self serve, central help desk

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Capita has included a number of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities in its SSP Relaunch price. This Appendix describes how Capita will deliver its CSR obligations under the new contract and the commitments it is making in this area.

1. Purpose of the Schedule

- 1.1. This Schedule sets out the corporate social responsibility (CSR) obligations which the Provider will observe and perform without charge to the City Council from 1 December 2013 until the end of the Service Period (unless otherwise stated).

2. Local Business, Employees and Customers

The Provider shall:

- 2.1. Pay the Living Wage to its employees based in Southampton and working on the Southampton contract . This will mean that all of this staff group staff employed in OGS are paid at least the Living Wage which currently stands at £7.65 an hour outside London from November 2013.
- 2.2. Introduce new business to the Regional Business Centre (One Guildhall Square, "OGS"), which will ensure that from and including Contract Year 2015/16 to the end of the Service Period there will be overall no reduction in the number of Full Time Equivalents (FTE) employed by the Provider to work in OGS in comparison with the number so employed before the implementation of savings initiatives within the SSP following the approval of CCN155 (SSP Relaunch: Overriding Commercial Provisions). New roles will be publicised to at risk Provider employees as part of the redeployment process and also to displaced City Council employees.
- 2.3. Undertake a targeted promotion of apprenticeship, summer internship, and work placement opportunities with the Provider within Schools, colleges, universities and organisations supporting adults back into employment, within the administrative district of the City Council and provide a minimum of:-
 - (a) 40 apprenticeships; and
 - (b) 100 summer internships or work placements of no less than 4 weeks in duration.
- 2.4. Allow its employees working on the SSP 519 volunteering days per Contract Year to work in the Southampton community via the Provider's employee volunteering programme.
- 2.5. Run two free of charge workshops per Contract Year for local businesses to assist them in developing their businesses.
- 2.6. Run an IT innovation fair for local businesses during Contract Year 7, (planned for 2014) and also Contract Year 9 (in 2016).

- 2.7. Run one event per quarter in support of the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) programme and employability skills initiatives in schools.
- 2.8. Capita has implemented a new policy to support reservists for the armed forces, where any individual undertaking this role would be entitled to ten days paid leave per year for training.
- 2.9. Support the City Council's CSR commitments (including the 'Dragon's Den' initiative in place for local Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by providing two days IT Consultancy per Contract Year from the start of Contract Year 2014/15 to the end of the Service Period to support the set-up of up to 15 new SME-scale businesses.