

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

12 July 2016

Service Review Programme - West Dorset Tourist Information Centres

For Decision

Portfolio Holder(s):

Councillor Mary Penfold - Enabling

Senior Leadership Team Contact:

M Hamilton, Strategic Director

Report Author: Lindsey Watson, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Statutory Authority

Local Government Act 2000 and Localism Act 2011 sets out the requirement for local authorities to establish overview and scrutiny committees and their functions.

Purpose of Report

- 1 To receive the report of the scrutiny working group following the scrutiny exercise in relation to the Service Review of West Dorset Tourist Information Centres – Bridport Tourist Information Centre, and to agree the formal report of the committee for inclusion within the report to the Executive Committee on 9th August 2016.
- 2 To receive an update in respect of progress with options within the Service Review for the Dorchester, Lyme Regis and Sherborne tourist information centres.

Officer Recommendations

- 3
 - (a) That the report of the scrutiny working group attached at appendix 1 be considered as the formal response of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Bridport Tourist Information Centre part of the West Dorset Tourist Information Centres Service Review, for inclusion within the report to the Executive Committee;
 - (b) That the committee determines whether the completed equality impact assessment for the Bridport Tourist Information Centre part of the service review attached at appendix 3, ensures that equality issues have been fully considered and that any adverse impacts of the proposed changes on different groups have been considered and, where possible, mitigated.

Reason for Decision

- 4 To agree the formal response of the committee in respect of the scrutiny of the Bridport Tourist Information Centre part of the West Dorset Tourist Information Centres Service Review process and viability of the options presented.
- 5 To provide the committee with the opportunity to consider the completed equality impact assessment for this part of the service review.

Service Review of West Dorset Tourist Information Centres

- 6 A scrutiny working group was established by the former Efficiency Scrutiny Committee in order to undertake a scrutiny exercise for the Service Review of West Dorset Tourist Information Centres.
- 7 The role of the scrutiny working group is to check the service review process undertaken by the Project Team and to assess the viability of the options for change to be presented. In order to do this, the scrutiny working group are asked to undertake an assessment of the agreed scrutiny principles as follows:
 - determine whether the review has considered all the stages of the service review process and that these have been effectively carried out
 - ensure the linkages and impacts on other services and partners have been properly explored and accounted for
 - test that the proposed options for change are deliverable, realistic in the timeframe and accurately costed
 - challenge the deliverability of savings proposed and whether these represent value for money
 - assess whether the customer has been placed at the centre of the review process and that all stakeholder requirements have been focussed on appropriately
 - ensure that equality issues have been fully considered and that any adverse impacts of the proposed changes on different groups have been clearly identified and where possible mitigated
 - identify issues in the review that will require further development or research
 - make further suggestions for change that may have been overlooked or discounted
- 8 The scrutiny working group is also invited to provide comment on the options proposed by the service review project team, make further suggestions for change that may have been overlooked or discounted and to report their preferred option to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Bridport Tourist Information Centre

- 9 During the process of the Service Review, it has been agreed that solutions for each tourist information centre at Bridport, Dorchester, Lyme

Regis and Sherborne should be progressed as stand alone projects rather than attempting to maintain the same reporting timescale for each solution.

- 10 The service review in respect of the Bridport Tourist Information Centre has now been progressed and the report of the scrutiny working group is attached at appendix 1. The report indicates the view of the scrutiny working group as to whether they feel that each of the scrutiny principles has been adequately addressed and provides their comments specifically in respect of options for the Bridport Tourist Information Centre.
- 11 The Business Case for the service review is attached at appendix 2 and provides the committee with the necessary background and information on work undertaken and options for change.
- 12 The completed equality impact assessment for the service review is attached at appendix 3. The committee is asked to determine whether the completed equality impact assessment ensures that equality issues have been fully considered and that any adverse impacts of the proposed changes on different groups have been considered and, where possible, mitigated.

Update on progress with other tourist information centres included in the Service Review

- 13 The options for the Dorchester, Lyme Regis and Sherborne Tourist Information Centres are continuing to be investigated and/or developed. Below is an update on progress to date:
- 14 **Dorchester:** A variety of options for Dorchester TIC have been considered to meet the savings required by the service review process, including relocating or integrating the service into the new Shire Hall attraction, relocating to South Walks House (SWH) reception or the Dorchester Library & Learning Centre and taking a more commercial approach within the existing premises.

The business case for Dorchester is being worked up to take account of the benefits and implications associated with these options, including the need to continue to offer a TIC service, at a reduced level and cost to the council, whilst meeting the main elements identified as the most important from the stakeholder survey results.

The Executive Committee on the 9th August 2016 will be asked to consider and agree the most viable options for public consultation.

- 15 **Sherborne:** The District Council has provisionally allocated £500K to the Town Council to support the refurbishment of the Digby Hall on condition that it delivers the outcomes it requires, one of which is the inclusion of a reduced TIC service. However, at the recent Sherborne Town Council meeting members agreed that the Town Council “Does not enter into formal discussions with West Dorset District Council regarding the relocation of the TIC to the Digby Hall”.

An approach has also been made by the Sherborne Community Arts Centre Trust (SCACT) to relocate the TIC service to the proposed Sherborne Community Arts Centre. Officers are awaiting a proposal from the Trust.

- 16 **Lyme Regis:** Lyme Regis Town Council (LRTC) has proposed a holistic approach to linking service reviews with assets and other services' discussions. LRTC has written to the District Council outlining its position. Options are being discussed and will be brought forward to members in the next few months. This includes the future delivery of some form of information service by the Town Council.

The preferred option at this stage is to continue to operate the TIC service in its existing premises until strategic discussions are concluded with the Town Council.

- 17 Officers are aware of the need to progress solutions for these 3 TICs as soon as possible in order to support the District Council's financial plans. It is anticipated that a way forward for Dorchester can be identified in time for a new service to operate from April 2017. Time limits will be set for Sherborne and Lyme Regis to ensure that new ways of working are agreed during 2017/18 or before.

Implications

- 18 All implications are as set out in the business case and equality impact assessment.

Appendices

- 19 Appendix 1 – Report of the scrutiny working group in respect of the Bridport Tourist Information Centre part of the service review.
Appendix 2 – Business Case for the Bridport Tourist Information Centre Service Review
Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment for the Bridport Tourist Information Centre Service Review

Background Papers

- 20 Year 2 Service Review Programme – Scrutiny, Report to Efficiency Scrutiny Committee 17 March 2015
Year 2 Service Review Programme – Membership of scrutiny working groups, Report to Efficiency Scrutiny Committee 19 May 2015

Footnote

- 21 Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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