CULTURE AND LEISURE POLICY DEVLOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

NEW MODEL OF CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY

REPORT BY HEAD OF AREA SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report advises the Culture and Leisure Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) of plans being progressed through the Delivering Better Outcomes "Modernising services on the frontline" project that will modernise the way frontline customer services are delivered in the future. The report seeks the agreement of the PDSP to recommend that the service progresses the organisational change process required to support front line delivery and hierarchy of service.

B.   RECOMMENDATIONS

The Culture and Leisure PDSP is asked to;

1.   note the progress made with project "Modernising Services on the frontline";
2.   recommend to the Council Executive that Area Services plan to modernise its services based on the hierarchy described in order to achieve the agreed savings;
3.   note that an organisational change programme will be developed to deliver the agreed services;
4.   recommend to the Council Executive that the proposed library opening hours are adopted; and
5.   note that further modernisation of other front line services will be explored as the hierarchy approach develops.

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I.	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs. Being honest, open and accountable. Making best use of our resources.
II.	Policy and Legal	The EQIA relevance assessment concluded that the particular impact on equality issues of this measure will be low to nil given that services will continue to be available locally.
III.	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None

IV.	Impact on performance and performance indicators	Performance within CIS, Community Facilities, Libraries and Registration will be monitored as changes are implemented.
V.	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Enabling activity.
VI.	Resources (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Savings for Customer Services/Community Facilities from DBO project Managing our Relationship with Customers, identifies total savings of £798,000 for 2014-18.
VII.	Consideration at PDSP	Aspects of the project, "Modernising Services on the front line", will need decisions at Council Executive.
VIII.	Details of consultations	Executive Management Team, Housing, Construction and Building Services, Corporate Services (HR) and Finance and Estates Services. Trade unions and staff will be consulted on the proposed new structures within Area Services. Delivering Better Outcomes community consultation feedback has been considered in developing these plans.

D   TERMS OF REPORT

D1   Background

In 2011, following the creation of Area Services, the council brought together a number of frontline customer facing services in the Customer Service Development unit. This included Library, Heritage, Customer Information Services (CIS) and Registration services. The Community Facilities service is also managed as part of Area Services.

The services are currently structured around ten senior managers and a cluster arrangement based on geography. There are six integrated CIS/ branch library clusters, two registration offices and two clusters of community centres. The services are delivered from 56 locations, including, Bathgate, Fauldhouse and Strathbrock Partnership Centres.

Since 2011 the service structure has been refined with the development of generic job roles which, in turn, has streamlined front line services, making them more efficient and focused on the needs of the customer.

The continued modernisation of front line services through proposals within the DBO project, "Modernising services on front line" will bring additional efficiencies, with further service review and modernisation of the Customer Service Development and Community Facilities units.

The success of the DBO project, "Modernising Services on the front line" is reliant on achieving a range of approaches promoted through other DBO projects, which, in turn will mean combined financial savings across front line service provision.

At its meeting on 29 January 2015 the Council agreed its budget for 2015/16 and a range of measures that would ensure the council balanced its budget over the coming three years.

The impact of these measures on the frontline service delivery is detailed in table 1 below. An extract from the budget papers is detailed in appendix 1.

Measure	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £
Maintain cash collection facility in key offices	20,000	40,000	40,000	100,000
Integrating and modernisation of frontline services	186,000	149,000	103,000	438,000
Library book fund/mobile libraries and opening hours	260,000	0	0	246,000
Total	**466,000**	**189,000**	**143,000**	**798,000**

To ensure that the future provision of services meets the needs of communities it is proposed that the council introduces a hierarchy of provision through a staged approach based around the council's Partnership Centre model.

D2 Changing Customer Expectations

A key driver for change is changing customer expectations. Customers want to be treated as individuals and they expect the council to know basic information about them. Our customers are increasingly empowered, connected and informed. The council needs to develop greater insight into our customers' needs and preferences. As part of the development of the Customer Services Strategy 2015-17 customer personas were developed using customer insight to enable services to develop needs led services. The ongoing integration of frontline services has been scrutinised during the Customer Service Excellence inspections over the last three years and found to be fit for purpose.

During feedback from the Delivering Better Outcomes consultation carried out by the council in 2014, customers clearly expressed a view that they wanted to be able to use technology to access services. They said there should be a cost effective method to allow customers to contact the council including the provision of self-service online solutions. This includes developing the website to provide customer friendly online self-service options, improved website navigation to allow customers to access service information and the increased use and effectiveness of e-mail communication.

Overall there were 1303 comments relating to customer service and the way the council interacts with customers, of these, 1113, were supportive of the approach and 190, were not supportive. The Council is committed to offering a range of access channels across West Lothian, to ensure that customers can use council services in ways that best suit them.

D3 Proposals for new service delivery model

The council has a history of developing integrated service models in a number of key buildings such as Fauldhouse and Bathgate Partnership Centres, and the future commitment to this strategy is clear with new modernised front-line service models planned for an additional six locations: Armadale, Blackburn, East Calder, Linlithgow, Winchburgh, and Whitburn. In addition it is proposed that Broxburn library is moved into Strathbrock to ensure service delivery can be integrated.

The success of this approach is evident. For example, there has been a 30% increase in footfall recorded in Bathgate Partnership Centre beyond that originally anticipated. This has been achieved through the ability to join up services and provide one stop access to services for customers. It is anticipated that future expansion of this approach will continue to promote excellent joined up services and maximise access for increasing numbers of customers.

The project aims to provide both the future vision for front-line service development and a more co-ordinated approach that will explore options for co-located or integrated service provision with partners and others.

The project proposes to implement service change on a phased basis. Initially library opening hours will be altered to reflect demand. The new proposed hours are included in appendix 2. In addition, the mobile library service will be changed to ensure outlying communities are provided with a "pop-up" library service, working with the community to deliver this; primary schools are supported through the school librarians and outreach service from the branch libraries; and elderly or vulnerable customers receive their books through the homebound service. These elements were agreed as part of the Council's budget setting meeting on 29 January 2015.

The models and the structure for delivering the rest of the changes will be developed in a systematic way based on localised customer demand and need, and in accordance with West Lothian Council's Partnership Centre approach. The project scope focuses on the modernisation of services within key towns and villages, reviewing provision where it is already in place; implementing it where it is not already established, with a prioritisation on more deprived communities. The aim is to increase access to services by harnessing the benefits of using technology for front line delivery arrangements.

Working within the council's Partnership Centre approach it is proposed that services will be designed around a Neighbourhood Management Cluster Model consisting of four clusters supported from main locations in Bathgate, Broxburn, Livingston, and Whitburn/Armadale delivering a hierarchy of services from Community Hubs.

Appendix 3 details description of locations and services within each proposed cluster. A worked example of services available in each cluster is in appendix 3a.

D4   Staffing implications of the new delivery model

In order to achieve this new service delivery model a new staffing structure will need to be put in place. This would see new management and cluster based staffing arrangements based on the four neighbourhoods. The new structure would adopt the generic customer service job descriptions. Various professional roles will be required to ensure development and quality across service disciplines such as librarian, systems analyst etc.

There are currently 160FTE staff employed within Area Services that would be affected by this change. This comprises: Customer Information Services (CIS), Libraries, Registration, Community Facilities and Partnership Centres.

The staffing reductions will be managed through the council's organisational change process. It is proposed that the reduction and redistribution of staff will be dealt with through the following steps:

1. Natural turnover of staff.
2. Ending of fixed term contracts and deletion of vacant posts.
3. Opportunities for early retirement/severance.
4. Transfer of staff to alternative posts at the same grade within the service.
5. Transfer of staff to posts at lower grades within the service.

This is a fundamental shift in service structure which is necessary to modernise and deliver services fit for purpose to meet changing needs of customers and communities.

Buildings such as Partnership Centres and Community Centres will be staffed according to need ensuring services are available at the times to meet public demand.
It is expected that management committees will have a greater role in the overall running of these buildings as we move forward. A separate strand of work is being progressed by the Property Management and Development service. Training and additional support to the management committees will be made available to support this transition.

D5   **Benefits of the new service delivery model**

The benefits of this proposal are:

1. A strategic model including community hubs and a localised neighbourhood approach based on community needs.

2. Identifying key locations to ensure areas of greatest need are resourced appropriately.

3. Identifying new delivery models for shared services in order to deliver a modern, integrated frontline customer service.

4. Identifying how we can work better with partners and others.

5. Reduction in frontline staff numbers linked to an integration of frontline service and minimising duplication with a new staffing structure.

6. Re-provisioning of services through the partnership centre model resulting in the potential for vacated buildings to be disposed of through the asset management process.

7. Reducing operational hours where it can be demonstrated there is less demand.

E   **CONCLUSION**

West Lothian Council's vision is to develop integrated frontline services that are designed to be relevant to communities, connecting with more people and engaging directly with the needs of citizens. In turn the council will deliver an integrated service based on customer need within a reduced resource base.

The timing of decisions and implementation of proposals is crucial to ensure that the significant changes required to deliver the vision can be executed as efficiently and effectively as possible.

F.   **BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Revenue Budget 2015/16 to 2017/18 – West Lothian Council 29 January 2015

Appendices/Attachments: Three

Appendix 1 : Proposed Budget Reduction Measures
Appendix 2 : Proposed revised opening hours for libraries from 1 July 2015
Appendix 3 : Description of locations and services within each proposed cluster

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Appendix 1

Extract from the budget papers agreed by the Council in January 2015.

PROPOSED BUDGET REDUCTION MEASURES 2015/16 TO 2017/18

Area Services

Measure	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	Total £'000	Staffing Reduction (FTE)	Further Consultation / Further Reporting to PDSP and Council Executive / Proposed Delegation to Officers
Maintain cash collection in West Lothian Connected and Bathgate, introduce automated cash payment facilities in other CIS offices and publicise alternative local payment options	20	40	40	100	3	Consultation required with key stakeholders. Officers to deliver as operational measure.
Modernising front line services – rationalising staff and management structures	186	103	103	392	24	Revised service model requires consideration by PDSP and approval by Council Executive. Rationalisation of staff and management structures to be delivered by officers as an operational measure.
Modernised library service – realignment of opening hours at branch libraries to reflect customer demand, reduction of £175,000 in library book fund and re-provisioning of the mobile library service	260	46	0	306	4	Consultation required with stakeholders, customers and building users. Officers to deliver as operational measure.
	466	**189**	**143**	**798**		

Appendix 2

Proposed revised opening hours for libraries from 1 July 2015

Library	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total proposed hours	Current hours
Partnership centres								
Bathgate	8.30am-8pm	8.30am-8pm	8.30am-8pm	8.30am-8pm	8.30am-8pm	9am-5pm	64.5	64.5
Fauldhouse	8.30am- 8pm	8.30am-8pm	8.30am-8pm	8.30am-8pm	8.30am -8pm	9am-5pm	64.5	64.5
Library Branches								
Almondbank	9am – 6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-7pm	9am-6pm	9am-1pm	50	53
Armadale	10am – 3pm	10am – 3pm	10am -3pm	10am – 7pm	10am- 3pm	9am- 1pm	33	50
Blackburn	10am- 3pm	10am- 7pm	10am-3pm	10am- 3pm	10am- 3pm	9am-1pm	33	46
Blackridge	Open as per community centre	2pm-6.30pm	9.30-12.30 and 1.30-4.30	2pm-6.30pm	Open as per community centre	Open as per community centre	15	15
Broxburn	10am-3pm	10am-3pm	10am-3pm	10am-7pm	10am- 3pm	9am-1pm	33	50
Carmondean	10am – 4pm	10am-7pm	10am – 3pm	10am-7pm	10am-4pm	9am-1pm	42	51
East Calder	10am – 3pm	10am – 3pm	10.00 – 3pm	10am- 7pm	10am – 3pm	9am-1pm	33	49.5
Lanthorn	10am – 3pm	10am – 3pm	10.00 – 7pm	10am- 3pm	10am – 3pm	9am-1pm	33	51
Linlithgow	9am- 5.00pm	9am– 8pm	9am- 5.00pm	9am-8pm	9am-5.00pm	9am-1pm	50	54
Pumpherston	2pm-5pm	School library	2.30-4.30pm	2pm-6pm	School library	Closed	9	9
West Calder	10-3pm	10-3pm	10-3pm	10-7pm	10-3pm	9am-1pm	33	49.5
Whitburn	10am – 3pm	10am – 3pm	10am -3pm	10am- 7pm	10am – 3pm	9am-1pm	33	49.5
							526	**656**

Appendix 3

Description of locations and services within each proposed cluster

Community hubs
These service points will have the greatest range of services available in one location and will be based on need. Provision will be as follows;

- Face to face service (CIS, Library, Access2Employment, ABE, Revenues, Advice Shop, CLD) will be available from 8.30am to 5pm.
- Extended opening hours for the community centre and library elements.
- Payment provision – either cash office or via technology.

Connected
These service points will be located in main settlements.

- Opening hours of buildings will be based on community and partner need
- Face to face engagement with council services including the library will be available between 10am – 3pm. Surgeries held by Advice Shop, Revenues, A2E.
- No payments facility.
- Reliance on technology when face to face staff are unavailable – self-help terminals and guided to online provision.

Access points

- No face to face provision.
- Reliance on technology such as public access PCs or phone.

For each level of the hierarchy, the location of these service points will be established in conjunction with Property Management and Development.

In addition there will continue to be a range of properties that will continue to be utilised where there is no enhancement to service.

Neighbourhood Management Cluster : One

Community Hub : Bathgate Partnership Centre

Connected : Blackburn Partnership Centre

Access Point : Boghall, Seafield, Torphichen, Wester Inch

Neighbourhood Management Cluster : Two

Community Hub : Strathbrock Partnership Centre

Connected : Linlithgow Partnership Centre

Access Point : Bridgend, Philpstoun, Uphall, Winchburgh,

Continued service delivery: Dechmont, Ecclesmachen Linlithgow Bridge, Newton, Uphall Station

Neighbourhood Management Cluster : Three

Community Hub : West Lothian Connected

Connected : Almonbank Centre, Carmondean, East Calder, Lanthorn, West Calder

Access Point : Forrestbank, Kirknewton, Livingston Station, Mid Calder, Mosswood. Polbeth,

Continued service delivery: Bellsquarry, Carmondean Community Centre, Crofthead, Murieston, New Yearfield Farm

Neighbourhood Management Cluster : Four

Community Hub : Whitburn Partnership Centre, Armadale Partnership Centre

Connected : Fauldhouse Partnership Centre,

Access Point : Addiewell, Blackridge, Stoneyburn,

Continued service delivery: East Whitburn

Appendix 3a

Worked example of new service delivery Neighbourhood Management Cluster : Three

Tier	Location	Services available
Community hub	WL Connected	CIS Business Gateway Jobcentreplus Access2Employment Advice Shop Registration
Connected	Almondbank Centre	Library CIS Access2Employment CAB Daisy Drop-in WLDAS Craigshill Good Neighbourhood network
	Carmondean	Library CIS Housing Access2Employment CLD-adults MacMillan Cancer Advice shop
	East Calder	Library Registration Access2Employment CLD-adults Advice shop Community centre
	Lanthorn	Library Access2Employment CLD-adults Advice shop Community centre
	West Calder	Library CIS Housing Access2Employment Advice Shop Community Centre
Access Point	Forrestbank Kirknewton Livingston Station Mid Calder Mosswood Polbeth	Community centres with additional technology such as touch screen data points or direct phones to CSC.

Continued service delivery	Bellsquarry Crofthead Murieston New Yearfield Farm Carmondean Community Centre	No change