

# APPENDIX P

## WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 30 NOVEMBER 2010

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**Title:**

**SATURDAY CLOSING OF FARNHAM LOCALITY OFFICE**

**[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Stefan Reynolds]**

**[Wards Affected: All Farnham Wards]**

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**Summary and purpose:**

This report proposes that, following the decline in customer footfall for Waverley services, with effect from 1 January 2011, the Farnham Locality Office should close on Saturdays to bring the service into line with provision elsewhere in the Borough.

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**How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:**

This report relates to the Council's priorities of value for money.

**Equality and Diversity Implications:**

The provision of a face to face service on Saturday's for general enquiries solely at the Farnham Office does not provide a uniform service benefit to the whole borough and with declining visitor numbers for Waverley services and with imminent changes to the some services currently offered, such as concessionary fare permits which from April will be delivered by Surrey County Council, it is appropriate to reassess the cost benefit of the Saturday service currently provided.

**Legal Implications:**

There are no specific legal implications.

**Climate Change Implications:**

There are no climate change implications.

**Resource/Value for Money implications:**

The proposal to close Farnham Locality Office on Saturday's would save £6,500 in a full year. There are likely to be some one-off redundancy costs arising as a result of the closure of the Farnham Office on Saturdays. Every effort will be made to redeploy the two staff affected, however, if this is not possible redundancy payments will need to be made to the two staff as compensation for the reduction in their working hours. Details will be set out in an (Exempt) Annexe (to follow) if necessary.

## **Legal Implications:**

There are no legal issues arising from this report.

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## **Background**

1. Over the last year the Council has increased the choice available to customers, who formerly visited Locality Offices to pay council tax and rents etc. Customers can now pay from home by telephone or the internet or visit any of the 50 payment outlets in the Borough. Improved facilities for viewing plans on line have also been introduced which has reduced the need to visit Council Offices to view planning applications.
2. Following the changes made to the Council's Locality Office service in May 2010 the only Council office that has remained opened on Saturdays is the Farnham Locality Office. The office opens from 9 –12 each Saturday with two staff present at an annual cost of £6,500.
3. Usage statistics of enquiries dealt with at the Farnham Locality Office on Saturdays from May – November 2010 and equivalent figures for 2009 and 2008 are set out in the Annexe to this report.
4. The number of users visiting the Farnham Office on Saturdays with Waverley service enquiries makes it difficult to justify the on-going cost of providing this service with a cost per Waverley visitor/enquiry of £18.59 based on visitor statistics from May – November 2010, see Annexe attached.

## **Conclusion**

5. In the light of the current financial challenges facing the Council and on the basis of the information and cost per customer set out above is proposed that the provision of Saturday opening of the Farnham Locality Office be ceased with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011. Changes in services currently provided are also likely to arise in 2011/12 notably with the transfer of concessionary fares to Surrey County Council and with residents' parking scheme no longer being carried out by Waverley.
6. As part of the review of Waverley's local office provision which is currently underway, officers are examining opportunities to make greater use of libraries as information outlets for Waverley services. The use of libraries would provide information facilities over a greater number of outlets across the Borough with access to information on Saturdays.

## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that with effect from 1 January 2011 that the Farnham Locality Office be closed on Saturdays.

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### Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Roger Standing      **Telephone:** 01483 523221  
**E-mail:** roger.standing@waverley.gov.uk

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## ANNEXE

### Farnham Locality Office Visitors/Enquiries

<b>Waverley Enquiries</b>	<b>May - Nov 2008</b>	<b>May - Nov 2009</b>	<b>May - Nov 2010</b>
Benefits	37	25	34
Parking	8	4	4
Cemeteries	1		
Council Tax	273	78	23
Councillors	1	1	
Elections	7	8	4
Env Services	37	8	9
Hsg Elderly Services		1	3
Hsg Estates	6		2
Hsg Home Choice	41	4	40
Rent	211	72	21
Repairs	12	6	3
Internet	40	4	7
Leisure	4	1	2
Licensing	3	1	
Locality Offices Internal	1		8
Planning	27	11	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>Non Waverley Visitors</b>			
SCC	8	5	51
Tourism	43	17	70
Outside Agencies T&Parishes	8	1	124
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>245</b>
<b>Services Likely to be Transferred (2011/12)</b>			
Bus Permits/Concessionary Fares	97	28	21
Residents Parking	46	22	84
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>105</b>

**Cost per Waverley visitor/enquiry (exclu transferring services) May - November 2010 = £18.59**  
**(29 Saturdays at £125 per week divided by 195 visitors/enquiries)**