

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

15 APRIL 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

TELL US ONCE PROGRAMME

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report informs Cabinet of the implementation of the Tell Us Once programme which seeks to reduce the times a person contacts Government and local government bodies about the same issue. Wirral has been selected as an early adopter in advance of the national roll out.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Tell Us Once Programme arose from a recommendation in a report by Sir David Varney – *Service Transformation: a better service for citizens and businesses, a better deal for the taxpayer* – which found that people often had to provide the same information to different Government departments when notifying a change in circumstances. It concluded that citizens, taxpayers and Government could benefit from the provision of a joined up notification service provided through a single point of contact, particularly if those changes were to do with reporting a death, a birth or a change of address.
- 2.2 The Programme was set up to look at whether it would be possible to offer this service, to find out whether citizens would use it, and to identify and quantify any benefits to citizens, central and local government and consequently taxpayers. The work involved local authorities, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC), the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and the Identity and Passport Service (IPS).

3 DEVELOPMENT OF THE TELL US ONCE SCHEME

- 3.1 In 2007 the Programme commissioned research by Price Waterhouse Coopers to establish whether citizens would value such a service. The findings confirmed that there was a demand - almost 100% of people asked said they would value a service which advised them who to notify, and half of those advised that they would welcome a service that notified Government on their behalf. At times of bereavement in particular, people overwhelmingly supported the idea of a service that would help them with the notification process itself.
- 3.2 Following this work the Programme moved to identify and resolve any practical issues, develop a working model that could be trialled in local authorities and quantify benefits and costs. This work consisted of four key phases:

3.3 Phase 1. October/November 2007

- 3.3.1 Work began in four local authorities (Rotherham, Wolverhampton, London Borough of Southwark and Tameside) to gather information on what customers wanted from a birth and bereavement service, the existing processes in place and an understanding of the implications of any changes.
- 3.3.2 The findings indicated that there was a demand from customers to have a service delivered in a face to face setting, over the internet and by telephone, and that there were already processes in place in local authorities and the Government that could be built on to offer this.

3.4 Phase 2. January/October 2008 (Piloting phase)

- 3.4.1 A series of pilots began in these four local authorities. They offered a paper based service to customers to see whether in reality there would be a take up of the service, if it could work what it could look like, and whether it would deliver the anticipated benefits and efficiencies to central and local government.
- 3.4.2 During this period a number of elements of the potential design were tested; an IT interface was developed for use by frontline staff and a call centre was set up to take calls from those people who wanted to notify Government by telephone of a death. The working design was developed with input from staff and customers, and issues were raised and resolved in preparation for larger scale testing in a larger geographical area. The service design principles are attached at Appendix A.

3.5 Phase 3. October 2008/March 2009 (Pathfinder phase)

- 3.5.1 The Programme expanded the testing to involve a number of local authorities who were selected to provide critical mass testing in a live environment. After taking into account issues such as demography, poverty and affluence, 15 local authorities, representing both single and two-tier local government, were selected for trialling the service. These included those local authorities which had been involved in the earlier pilots and had by now a successful and established service in place.
- 3.5.2 An IT system was introduced allowing the bereavement support officer to report the death to 24 core services across central and local government. Details of these core services are attached at Appendix B.
- 3.5.3 Two business process models were developed for the birth service, accessed by the citizen either through a telephone channel delivered by HMRC, or a face to face channel delivered by local authority staff. The findings from this period were measured against a series of critical success factors.

3.6 Phase 4. March/September 2009

- 3.6.1 The Programme developed the case for Tell Us Once using outcomes from the Pathfinders, evaluated against a series of critical success factors.

- 3.6.2 The case for Tell Us Once was agreed on 18 September 2009 and roll out of the service is scheduled to take place from April 2010 – March 2011. The DWP has not yet developed a self-service tool, but anticipates that this will be available within the next year.

4 EARLY IMPLEMENTERS

- 4.1 Local authorities were asked to bid if they were interested in becoming early implementers of the Tell Us Once service. Wirral Council was successful in its application, and has been selected to be an early adopter. This means that the DWP will be working with Council staff, using the implementation period to assure the products and approach.
- 4.2 Implementation planning activities will start in April 2010 and the Council will be able to offer a live Tell Us Once service to customers in July 2010. An implementation plan is attached at Appendix C for information.
- 4.3. The Council intends to implement the Tell Us Once service with a phased approach, most likely implementing the bereavement service initially, and then incorporating births once take-up and capacity is established. Work is in progress by both the Director of Finance and Director of Law, Human Resources and Asset Management to determine the most appropriate service delivery model for Wirral.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Limited funding is available for this project, and a bid has been submitted to finance the purchase of hardware and software to support the service. However there will be some cost to the Authority, which will be met from within existing budgets. These costs would be incurred as part of Tell Us Once whether the Authority is an early adopter or later as part of the national roll out.

6 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 It is proposed that this service will be delivered within existing Registrar and One Stop Shop resources. It will require a level of training which will be undertaken within existing resources.

7 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 It is anticipated that this service will be of particular benefit to older people, those who do not speak English as a first language, and those with lower literacy levels.

8 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no planning implications.

9 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

10 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

11 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

11.1 This service should result in a reduction in paperwork and there is potential to reduce travel to different organisations.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 Service Transformation – A Better Service for Citizens and Businesses, A Better Deal for the Taxpayer – Varney Report – HM Treasury – December 2006.

13 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no specific implications for any Members or wards

14 RECOMMENDATION

14.1 That Cabinet agree to the implementation of Tell Us Once.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

FNCE/63/10

Service Design Principles

Services will be personalised around the needs of the customer:

- The service will be available through all channels.
- The way that a customer receives the service will be geared to his/her individual circumstances.
- All relevant departments and agencies will be part of the delivery chain.

Services will be delivered where the customer is most likely to go; and the existing infrastructure will be utilised wherever possible:

- Local authorities are key – research shows customers are more likely to access face to face services in a local authority environment.
- The service will be built into the Bereavement Reporting System.
- Assets such as DWP's Customer Information System, Government Connect and the Government Gateway will be used to the maximum advantage.
- Remote authentication will enable the customer to have choice which will, in due course, include the Government's National Identity Scheme.

Efficiency opportunities will be maximised:

- The service will not stand alone with its own assets.
- The service will endeavour to render existing costly processes entirely redundant.

Self service will be the primary channel:

- The system will be developed on the Bereavement Reporting System and simple enough to allow for a high level of self service by customers; and also mediated by staff in contact centres; high street outlets and a wide range of intermediaries.
- In time the service should be accessible remotely, for example, by mobile workers in customers' homes.

Design messages underpinning the Service Design Principles

A segmented service delivery model ensures that customers receive the appropriate level of support from Tell Us Once:

- Tailored services and communications mean customers receive the right level of support from Tell Us Once at the right time.
- The segmented service will be supported as appropriate with intelligent scripts and guidance for staff.
- Customer will be treated as an individual and not a number.

The high level process designs focus on delivering “success at the first point of contact” to ensure that customers are able to inform government only once of a change in their circumstances and that the objectives of Tell Us Once are met:

- Delivery is aligned and consistent across all channels.
- Process redesign may require legislative changes that have yet to be articulated.
- Customers will be assured that what they are being told is correct.

Transactions and processing are primarily delivered through self service, with telephone as the second channel and face to face service for vulnerable customers and those with a genuine requirement for the most practical help:

- All transactions can be completed online supported by interactive guidance and a technical support telephone line.
- Contact centre telephone staff will be able to handle all transactions and enquiries and will manage contact with face to face services for those vulnerable customers and those with genuine requirement for the most practical help.

Customer data is secure and the system is robust against internal and external fraud:

- ID authentication processes help prevent fraudulent or malicious changes of circumstances from being reported.
- The system shall be accessed from a range of supported browsers over a secure connection.
- ISSS standards shall be used as a basis for security.

Staff do high value professional tasks, supported by intelligent and robust IT:

- High quality customer-focused problem solving jobs mean staff feel valued.
- Flexible workforce that can be deployed to manage peaks in service demand.

Intermediaries/3rd parties are supported to enable them to access/deliver Tell Us Once services:

- Tell Us Once will provide intermediaries/3rd parties with tailored communications and guidance and appropriate levels of information to enable them to fully support their customers using Tell Us Once services.

24 key services offered by Tell Us Once

DWP

- State Pension
- Pension Credit
- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Carer's Allowance
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Support
- Incapacity Benefit
- Bereavement Benefit

HMRC

- Working Tax Credit
- Child Benefit
- Child Tax Credit

IPS

- UK Passport

Local authority

- Council Tax
- Council Housing
- Library Services
- Electoral Services
- Adult Services
- Children's Services
- Blue Badge
- Owe payment to council

Council benefits (administered on behalf of DWP)

- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit

DVLA

- Driving Licence

High Level Implementation Plan

Project Stage and Key deliverables will be as follows:

February 2010

- Appointment of project manager.
- Engagement of key service areas.
- Project scope agreed.

March 2010

- Development of a project plan.
- Identification of key stakeholders.
- Agree proposals for accommodation and staffing of TUO service.
- Baseline performance indicators.
- Selection of forms package.

April 2010

- Selection of staff to provide TUO service.
- Stakeholder engagement.
- Refurbishment of office area.
- Analysis of avoidable contacts around deaths.
- Agree 'to be' processes within the Council.

May 2010

- Develop marketing and publicity resources.
- Refresh the bereavement guide.
- Develop scripting and training materials.
- Development of in-house TUO communication process.
- Confirm IT requirements are fully met.

June 2010

- Training delivery.
- Testing of IT solutions.
- Promotion of service to stakeholders.

July 2010

- Service go live.
- Monitoring and support of service.

August 2010

- Review of service take-up.
- Customer and staff satisfaction survey.

September 2010

- Collate management information to measure success of project.
- Report to chief officers and Cabinet.