

FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Name of Policy, Decision, Strategy, Service or Function, Other: (please indicate)	Accommodation Rationalisation: The Relocation of the One Stop Shop (OSS) (Building Control Service) from Rawtenstall to Futures Park, Bacup.	
Lead Officer Name(s):	Keith Bell	
Job Title:	Building Control Manager	
Department/Service Area:	Building Control	
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Date Assessment:	Commenced: June 2012	Completed: 15.11.12

We carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) to analyse the effects of our decisions, policies or practices. The EIA should be undertaken/started at the beginning of the policy development process – before any decisions are made.

1. OVERVIEW

The main aims/objectives of this policy¹ are:
As part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Accommodation Strategy aims, this policy decision is concerned exploring the options for the Council to rationalise its accommodation assets – specifically in this case, the review of the Council's One Stop Shop services.
This impact assessment has been carried out with the information available and considers the impact on protected equality groups should the option to 'relocate the One Stop' services for the Building Control Service to Futures Park, Bacup be pursued.

(Refer to "[EIA Guidance](#)" for details)

Is the policy or decision under review (please tick)

New/proposed

Modified/adapted

Existing

The main intended people or groups that will be most affected by this policy are:
Customers of Rossendale Leisure Trust – Efficiencies Update the Building Control Service. This includes general public, in particular architects, builders and contractors.

(Refer to "[EIA Guidance](#)" for details)

¹ Policy refers to any policy, strategy, project, procedure, function, decision or delivery of service.

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2. FINDINGS / EVIDENCE

FINDINGS/EVIDENCE: The following information/data has been considered in developing this policy/decision (including any consultation or engagement):	
Information/data obtained and/or Consultation/engagement carried out (please state who with)	What does this tell us? / What does it say?
Rossendale Borough Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	The Council's MTFS sets out the imperative to make significant financial savings.
Rossendale Borough Council's Accommodation Strategy	<p>The current One Stop Shop in Rawtenstall was only ever meant to be a temporary location.</p> <p>The long term aspiration goal has always been to have one key site for council services to increase the capacity and efficiency. (NB: excluding the Henrietta Street Depot).</p> <p>A review of current operational costs for the One Stop Shop show that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The cost of running the building is c. £50k per year - The relocation of back office staff based at the One Stop Shop would create a saving of £50k per year. - The cost of bringing the One Stop Shop up to both modern building standards and making it disability accessible is estimated to £400,000. To renovate Futures Park to accommodate the relocation of the One Stop Shop would cost c. £160,000. - The One Stop Shop is currently located in a key regeneration area for the borough, freeing up this site would bring more benefit to the potential of the area for attracting sustainable regeneration development investment.
Overview of the nature of the service	<p>Building regulations are legal requirements that apply to building work and are aimed at achieving minimum standards of construction to ensure the health and safety of people in or around buildings. Customers who access this service, do so via the telephone, post and face to face and email.</p> <p>The nature of the service requires building inspection officers to meet with customers on site at the property concerned as well as dealing with application forms and answering any queries.</p> <p>The Building Control Service has previously been located in the Stubblee Council offices at Bacup and only relocated to the OSS on 4.1.2010. No issues for customers has been identified whilst located at Bacup or in Rawtenstall.</p>

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Consultation & Engagement Activity Feedback:

<p>Usage of the One Stop Shop Survey (via face to face questionnaire during visits to the OSS during 1st September – 28th October. In total 107 customers participated.</p>	<p>Building Control was not identified in this survey as a service that was accessed via face to face contact during this period.</p> <p><u>General Usage information in relation to protected groups:</u></p> <p>The majority of disabled customers accessed the OSS by car. The majority said their usage would decrease if relocated but a significant number said it would stay the same if relocated.</p> <p>The majority of BME customers accessed the OSS by car. The majority said their usage would stay the same if relocated.</p> <p>The majority of women who accessed the OSS did so by car but a significant number access by bus. However, the majority said their usage would decrease if relocated.</p> <p>The majority of men accessed the OSS by car, and the majority said that their usage would remain the same if relocated. However a significant number said that their usage would decrease.</p> <p>It is recognised that relocation from west to the east of the borough will have a positive impact on some older people while a negative impact on others – dependent on where they live. This is broadly reflected in responses regarding changes to usage if the OSS moved.</p>
<p>Building Control Customer Satisfaction Data 2011-12</p>	<p>This identified that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the majority of this services users were male (65%). - the majority of service users were aged 50-59 and 40-49 - only 10% of customer during 2011-12 identified as disabled, all of these were female.
<p>Making Ends Meet Survey - (via online and hard copy) a general survey about several areas of possible financial savings. This included one a question in relation to the OSS: “If we did move the One Stop Shop to Bacup, what impact would this have on your usage of the service?” This was undertaken during 28th August – 12th October. This survey went to: Rossendale’s Citizen Panel (768) and was publicised public wide via website & social media. In total 485 people responded.</p>	<p>This survey was not linked specifically to the use/access of a particular service.</p> <p>The survey was not linked specifically to the use/access of a particular service. However this service could be accessed on a general basis by residents. Therefore it is important to consider the general usage of the OSS.</p> <p>Only 7% thought that they would need to contact us monthly or more. Of the people that do use the OSS only 14% visit the OSS at least quarterly. However 62% thought that The Council needs to have a One Stop Shop. 71% of the respondents that use the OSS told us that they would visit the OSS just the same or more often if it moved to Bacup from Rawtenstall. For those whose OSS usage would remain the same, there was a fairly wide geographic spread.</p> <p>Although overall customers said that they would use it less due to distance and cost, the vast majority said they do not or rarely use the OSS as a drop in centre. Evidence suggests that the Council only needs to operate a telephone/ e mail contact centre. By having a telephone/ e mail contact centre, all</p>

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	<p>residents within the borough will be able to use this service without incurring additional travel costs/ difficulties. This also reduces the cost per transaction.</p>
<p>Summary of Consultation with Equality Groups in relation to the possible relocation of the One Stop Shop to Futures Park</p>	<p>Face to face consultation took place with a number of customers representing protected groups as defined by the Equality Act 2010. These groups in general did not access the OSS in relation to building control issues.</p> <p>Families 19.10.2012, St Nicholas Primary School, Family Assembly, Face to Face consultation. 15 women of mixed ages. The majority of women specified that they do not access council services via the One Stop Shop and most prefer to contact by telephone or use the internet. People that commented said: “The current building is ugly and outdated. New modern facilities would be an improvement” “The council is making a positive change to save money.” “An appointment system would be useful to save waiting times.” “Futures Park is on a main bus route and is easily assessable” “You can never please everybody and most people have cars” “The STAN service would be useful if customers had difficulties getting to Futures Park” The majority felt the Council should still provide face to face customer service and did not think the change of location was unreasonable.</p> <p>9.10.2012, Balladen Childrens Centre, Family Centre- St Nicolas School, Maden Centre, Bacup Family Centre, Face to Face consultation. Staff at the Balladen Childrens Centre said; that most of their service users lived in Rawtenstall and single parents without transport may struggle to use the bus service, although it was acknowledged that customers from Bacup and Whitworth had previously had to manage. Also families with low income may not be able to afford the bus fare. It was suggested that more services on line and an improved telephone contact service would benefit customers who chose not to travel to Futures Park. Staff at the Maden Centre & the Bacup Family Centre welcomed the prospect of new customer service facilities in Bacup. It was felt that too much focus was placed on Rawtenstall being the ‘centre of Rossendale’. In general this will be a big improvement for the people of Whitworth and Bacup. Also people with very low income from the area would be able to access the new One Stop Shop by walking. Staff at the Bacup Family Centre said many of their service users were vulnerable low income families and disabled. Most of these customers would prefer face to face support. Many of the people that seek support have problems with reading and writing making front line support essential. Staff at the Bacup Family Centre also said that the new One</p>

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Stop Shop should be “disabled friendly” to ensure that disabled customers could access and utilise the service.

23.10.2012, Lumb Baptist Toddler Group, Face to Face Consultation

20 People

Varied age ranges

Men and Women

Participants confirmed they lived in a variety of locations

All of the people spoke to specified that they do not access council services via the One Stop Shop and most prefer to contact by telephone or use the internet.

People that commented said:

“I’d much rather speak to someone on the phone than go to the One Stop Shop- it isn’t very private and you feel as though everybody is listening to what you are saying”

“It’s inconvenient to have to make a special journey to the One Stop Shop. As a busy working Mum, I do not have time to go to Rawtenstall or Bacup. I’ve always contacted the council by phone and this has always been satisfactory”

“telephoning is easiest- you don’t have to queue”

“I prefer to use the internet for most of the services I use- banking, shopping, contacting people. You can do most things online these days and its 24/7 available not just 9 to 5.

People with Disabilities

19.10.2012, Oakenhead Resource/Day Centre, Face to Face consultation

The consultation was due to be face to face. However the staff at Oakenhead advised that due to the nature of the disability of their service users it was highly unlikely that they would ever contact the council or use the One Stop Shop. The majority of carers have transport and would prefer a location with good parking facilities. The facilities should also be DDA compliant.

Carers

25.10.2012, Carer Contact Team, Face to Face consultation.

The contact Team advised that from the perspective of their service users, the main priority would be flexible working hours. She thought an appointment system would be a good idea, as this would prevent waiting times. The majority of carers they deal with have use of a car to ensure that the people they care for can be transported about. Most of the costs for travel are met from disability living allowance. Most carers prefer to access customer service via other channels, as face to face contact can be difficult because a lot of their time is committed to proving care. It is therefore inconvenient to have to make a special journey with a disabled person. However if face to face contact was unavoidable it is essential that the council provides facilities that are DDA compliant. Many of their service users will usually ask for support from the Carer Contact Team if they need any assistance to deal with problems/enquires that are associated with LCC, the council, DWP, Health Service etc.

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The Team were unaware of the current arrangements at the OSS as they do not access it.

BME Community Consultation

Asian Ladies Group- on the 18th October 2012 an email was sent to all members of the Ladies Asian group.

The email advised about the consultation and asked if they had any comments in relation to any proposals to let us know.

A questionnaire was also attached to the email.

Haslingden Mosque

A staff representative attended the mosque w/c 17th September 2012. The Imam agreed that a poster advising of the consultations currently taking place could be put up and a number of questionnaires could be left for people to take away and complete.

Rawtenstall Mosque

Representatives from the Council attended a Mosque in Rawtenstall on Friday 19th October at 1:45pm. About 20-30 people were seen all of them men. The proposals were discussed. People listened and took away the questionnaires stating that they would complete at home and return.

Only one person made a specific comment he was a Rawtenstall resident and he stated that he wasn't happy about the proposal to move the

One Stop Shop to Futures park in Bacup but he did not elaborate on this.

General Consultation

9. 10.2012, Manager at Bacup Job Centre, Face to Face consultation

The manager at Bacup Job Centre thought that the re-location would be a positive change for the customers that attend Bacup Job Centre. She said that customers often express their frustration at having to travel to Rawtenstall to see the Council.

Although customers can hand documents in at the Greenvale office, the staff there are not sufficiently trained to deal with Housing/Council tax benefit queries or other council matters.

She also felt that Bacup had some areas of deprivation and poverty. It was less likely that customers in these areas would have cars and therefore accessing the OSS at Rawtenstall was expensive by bus and too far to walk for most customers.

Questionnaires and poster were left and these would be handed out to customers.

A proportion of job seekers in Bacup have adult literacy problems and help with filling forms in was often an issue. The DWP offer an over the telephone service support service for customers unable to complete forms in hard copy or online. It was suggested that a similar service could be made available for customers needing help to claim Housing Benefits.

Customers who currently access STAN the Van, Face to Face consultation

Most of the customers using the STAN service in Rossendale have previously used the One Stop Shop and prefer face to

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face customer service.

Customer, male, aged 57, disabled:

Does not have a computer and does not have a car. He prefers to visit STAN as he lives in Haslingden. He does not have enough money to spend on bus fares to Rawtenstall or Bacup. He would only use the OSS if it was in Haslingden. He also stated that he does not like to visit "official" places/ people as they make him feel uncomfortable, which is why he uses STAN as it is a more relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Customer states he needs face to face service as he struggles to complete forms or understand letters, staff on STAN are kind and patient.

Customer, female, aged 46, disabled:

Does not have a computer but does have a car through Motability scheme. Customer has used the OSS and prefers face to face service because she has hearing problems and does not like to use the phone. She lives in Haslingden and would still use the OSS service if it was moved to Bacup. Sometimes the OSS is noisy if it is busy and this affects her hearing disability.

Customer, female, aged 62, disabled:

Customer does not have a computer and does not have a car. Lives in Rawtenstall. She has vision impairment and relies on her daughter to drive her to places as she does not like using the bus and can't afford taxi. Her daughter does have a computer but she prefers to sort out her own affairs by face to face contact. She uses the OSS and would continue to use it if it was moved. Thinks that parking at Futures Park will be easier than it is at Rawtenstall. Staff at the council are always very helpful. She prefers the STAN service as they help with other stuff as well as council stuff- like help with filling in forms.

Customer, female, aged 26, has young children:

Customer does not have a computer and does not have a car; she is a single parent with 3 children under 5. Customer lives in Bacup and finds using public transport very difficult with 3 young children which is why she uses the STAN service instead of visiting the OSS. If the OSS moved to Bacup it would be more convenient for her, so she would probably use it more. Customer prefers face to face service as she is on benefits and cannot afford to telephone.

Customer, male, aged 21, single:

Customer has a computer and uses this to access information and send emails. However he prefers to use the OSS to hand in documents and forms, so they don't get lost in the post. He is unemployed and cannot afford to run a car. He lives in Waterfoot so it would not make much difference to him if the OSS was in Rawtenstall or Bacup.

Customer, female, pension age:

Very rarely uses the OSS or has needed to contact the council. Does not claim any benefits. Used the STAN service because she was curious what it was about. She thinks the STAN service is excellent and found out some useful information about the refuse assisted collection service & Attendance

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	<p>Allowance for her brother. Customer thinks that the council does need to provide face to face service, especially for pensioners as they often don't have computers. She has a car, but thinks that Futures Park might be out of the way for some people. If you had to make a special journey by bus there is nothing else there.</p> <p><u>Customer, male, aged 54, Asian.</u></p> <p>Lives in Rawtenstall, has a car, does not have a computer. Customer not bothered where OSS is, but prefers face to face service as he needs help with forms and letters.</p> <p><u>Customer, female aged 31, Asian</u></p> <p>Customer lives in Haslingden, does not have a computer and relies on her husband or family for transportation. Uses the OSS 2 or 3 times a year to report income changes for her benefit claim, on working tax credits. Prefers face to face as the staff at the OSS photocopy her documents and provide a receipt- stuff has got lost in the post in the past. Would still use the OSS if it moved as it is a good service.</p>
<p>Bus route information and costs</p>	<p>Bus – hours, cost: Futures park is on the main 464 bus route from Accrington to Rochdale so is easy to access by the public transport from Rawtenstall, Waterfoot, Bacup and Whitworth.</p> <p>The 466 run approximately every 15 minutes during the daytime. A single bus ticket from Rawtenstall from to Futures Park, Bacup is £2.20.</p>

Add more/delete rows as required - See **EIA Guidance**

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3. EQUALITY IMPACT

Equality		Positive Impact (It could benefit)	Negative Impact (It could disadvantage)	Reason and any mitigating actions already in place (to reduce any adverse /negative impacts <u>or</u> reasons why it will be of positive benefit or contribution)	No Impact
Age	Older people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Younger people and children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability	Physical/learning/mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender Reassignment	Transsexual people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and Maternity		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Race (Ethnicity or Nationality)	Asian or Asian British people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Black or black British people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Irish people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	White British	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Chinese people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Gypsies & Travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Other minority communities not listed above (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Belief or Religion		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender	Women	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Equality		Positive Impact (It could benefit)	Negative Impact (It could disadvantage)	Reason and any mitigating actions already in place (to reduce any adverse /negative impacts or reasons why it will be of positive benefit or contribution)	No Impact
	Men	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian women , gay men and bisexual people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and Civil Partnership (in employment only)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Contribution to equality of opportunity		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers have accessed the service whilst the service has been delivered from Bacup and from Rawtenstall no impact has been identified for protected groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Contribution to fostering good relations between different groups (people getting on well together – valuing one another, respect and understanding)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Human Rights http://intranet/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=86&documentID=251		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any Council decisions will be undertaken in line with the Human Rights Act 1998.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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4. OUTCOME OF EIA – COURSE OF ACTION TO BE TAKEN

What course of action does this EIA suggest you take? More than one of the following may apply	Please indicate
<p>Outcome 1: No major change required. The EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>General mitigating action the council will pursue should services be relocated are detailed in the Action Plan in Section 5</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Adjust the policy to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better promote equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers identified? If there is a negative impact identified, you must consider (and evidence/record) what mitigating actions you have or will put in place to reduce the negative impact where/if possible, and to enhance the positive impact. This might include any partnership discussions/working that needs to be undertaken. Complete EIA Action Plan as appropriate.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Outcome 3: Continue the policy despite potential for negative impact or missed opportunities to promote equality identified. You will need to ensure that the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and/or plans to monitor the actual impact. This might include any partnership discussions/working that needs to be undertaken. Complete EIA Action Plan as appropriate.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Outcome 4: Stop and rethink the policy when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination or significant negative impact that can not be justified or mitigated against. <u>You must speak to Liz Sandiford (2452) or Emma Hussain (2451) immediately.</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>

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5 . EIA ACTION PLAN & REVIEW

Based on the impact assessment, findings/evidence and outcomes identified above, please complete the Action Plan below – these should be actions arising as a result of undertaking the EIA.

The Action Plan should address (not exhaustively):-

- Any gaps in findings/evidence research including any consultation or engagement regarding the policy and its actual/potential affects.
- How you will address any gaps.
- What practical changes/action will help reduce any negative impacts that you have identified.
- What practical changes/action will help enhance any positive contributions to equality.

Further Actions Required: Yes No

EIA Action Plan

Issue	Action required	Lead officer	Timescale
Transport and signage	Work with Lancashire County Council to explore improvements to Bus shelters opposite the new location of the OSS and possible OSS signage following feedback during consultation.	P Seddon	
Lack of knowledge of location of new OSS	Raise awareness of the new location with Rossendale Bus drivers so that they are aware of the new potential location of the OSS to ensure that they are fully able to provide advice /guidance to public transport users of the OSS location on the Bus routes. And provide a link/signposting to bus time table information to the bus routes that service the new proposed location at Futures Park.	P Seddon	
Access to services in neighbourhoods	Explore the use of STAN offering a service in neighbourhoods	F Meechan	

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Lack of knowledge and understanding of how to access the council in other ways other than face to face.	Promote and raise awareness with current customers of how they can access services in a different way. Increase the amount / type of transactions / functions that can be carried out via the councils website	F Meechan	
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information on the website / social media - Press release - Letter to stakeholders, partners and voluntary and community groups - Letters to businesses 	Service areas L Sandiford	

Monitoring & Reviewing the Effect of the Policy

Please state how you will monitor the impact and effect of this policy and where this will be reported:

Capita would undertake as part of their annual monitoring and report if customer satisfaction at the One Stop Shop, this would also include reporting on usage levels.

Building Control would also undertake their own service monitoring.

Date of Review²:As required – annual review via Capita and Service Area.

² This date will be set on an annual basis as default for review unless otherwise specified by you.

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