

# Information

for County Councillors

Sheet Number:  
2013-17/278

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| From: | Simon Clifford<br>Director of Customers and Communities |
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| Date: | 22/03/17 |
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| To: | All County Councillors |
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## Saturday Closure - SCC Contact Centre

The Contact Centre (Somerset Direct) provides a first point of contact telephone service for SCC Services from Monday to Friday (8am – 6pm) and on a Saturday (9am–4pm).

On a Saturday, the contact centre does not provide an emergency service and there is no statutory requirement to provide it. For information, the District Councils do not provide a Saturday telephone service.

As part of the Customers and Communities MTFP savings for 17/18 it has been agreed to close the Contact Centre on a Saturday with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 while delivering an improved digital offer for service users.

A full impact assessment, consultation with staff and unions and engagement with all key Services has been undertaken. A press release and messages on the 0300 telephone line will be provided to inform the public of this change. Further detail and rationale is provided below.

- Evidence shows that the call volumes on a Saturday are very low compared to a week day [representing approximately 1% of all contacts].
- The types of calls that are regularly received on a Saturday include: renewing of library books, reporting highway issues and sending out general information. The Contact Centre adds limited value to the calls received where a service response is required as most will need to wait for normal office hours on a Monday; or they require an emergency response which is covered by the Emergency Duty Team/ Services. Other reasons for calling can be resolved via self-service functionality which is available on line and will be further enhanced.
- We continue to review opportunities and to develop self-serve functionality on the internet so that customers can transact or get information 24/7. We also have an automated telephone service on our 0300 number that is available 24/7 and is currently used for payments where a customer cannot access the online method.

- This proposal does not alter staff terms and conditions of employment. The clause on Saturday working will remain and be silent in staff contracts in case it needs to be re-introduced for business reasons at a later date.

Please note that the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) is still available over the weekend for our most vulnerable clients / safeguarding issues so the closure of the Contact Centre on a Saturday does not affect the availability of this service.

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Members Portal - <http://somerset.learningpool.com/>

WWW.SOMERSET.GOV.UK

