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http://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/15629284.Town_hall_information_office_set_to_close_due_to_falling_demand/

Information office at Westhoughton Town Hall set to close due to falling demand



The information office in Westhoughton Town Hall be closed and moved into the library next door

THE information office in **Westhoughton** will be closed and moved into the library because of falling demand.

The service, currently based in the town hall, will be moved next door as **Bolton Council** looks to make changes to the provision across the borough.

It will be based at the counter in the library, which will be moved to a different place in the library to ensure continued privacy for enquiries.

Speaking at tonight's Westhoughton Town Council meeting, Julie Spencer, head of libraries and museums at Bolton Council, said: "Currently council information is provided from the One Stop Shop in the town centre and two area offices based in Farnworth and in Westhoughton.

"The proposal is that we will use the public library network for council information offer. The implication is that the office here in the town hall will close and will be relocated into the library.

"We will make arrangements to move the counter to make it more private. All libraries will be fitted with a direct phone line to the One Stop Shop and enquiries will be dealt in that way.

"We have seen a significant decrease in business, particularly in Westhoughton. People are doing much more business online.

"There is not the demand there was, whereas at the town centre and Farnworth offices the demand is quite high, so they will retain their offices."

The scheme was introduced at libraries in **Horwich** and Blackrod two years ago, both of which also saw falling demand for its information services.

Ms Spencer added: "There has been little customer complaint. It adds to the public library offer and brings more people into the service as well."

Cllr David Wilkinson asked where the counter would go and said: "Obviously the counter is in the centre and sometimes it does get busy. We have a lot of activity in the library, it seems to be more busy every time I get in."

Ms Spencer said it would be moved to the left hand side of the main room and that freeing up the space would allow for more library activities.