

Written statement of a key decision
Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing

Title	Procurement of Sensory Impairment Service
Decision maker	Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here: http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251
Date of decision	9 September 2026
Report exemption class	Open
Reason for being a key decision	This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant. This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.
A notice was served in accordance with Part 3 (Key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.	
General exception or special urgency (as defined in the constitution)	No
Purpose	The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the procurement of a Sensory Impairment Service and authority to award and enter into a contract with the successful provider. The procurement will ensure continuity of specialist support for people with sensory impairments and support the Council in meeting its statutory duties.
Decision	That: a) the procurement of a Sensory Impairment Service for adults in Herefordshire be approved b) That the Corporate Director Community Wellbeing be authorised to award a contract for the provision of the Sensory Impairment Service for an initial term of five years from 1 February 2027 to 31 January 2032 at a total value of £595,000 (£119,000 per annum), with the option to extend for

	up to a further 24 months from 1 February 2032 to 31 January 2034 at an additional value of £238,000, giving a maximum total contract value of £833,000. c) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director for Community Wellbeing to approve any subsequent operational decisions, extensions, variations and contractual matters within the approved budget and in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
Reason for the decision	As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50055270
Options considered	1. Option 1 – Do not procure a replacement service - This option is not recommended. The current contract will expire and failure to secure ongoing provision would significantly reduce the availability of specialist support for people with sensory impairments. This could lead to increased demand for statutory services, reduced independence for residents and increased risk that the Council would be unable to effectively discharge its duties under the Care Act 2014 and Equality Act 2010. 2. Option 2 – Bring the service in-house - This option has been considered but is not recommended. The current service is delivered by specialist providers with established expertise, networks and knowledge of sensory impairment. Bringing the service in-house would require the Council to recruit and retain specialist staff and establish the necessary operational infrastructure. At this time there is insufficient evidence that an in-house model would provide better outcomes or better value for money than a competitive procurement process. 3. Recommended option - The recommended option is to undertake a competitive procurement process to secure a specialist Sensory Impairment Service that delivers quality, value for money and continuity of support for Herefordshire residents.
Declarations of interest (see below)	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	15 September 2026

Councillor: Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing (Councillor Carole Gandy)	Date 9 September 2026
---	------------------------------

- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;

and

- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted.