

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF A KEY DECISION CABINET

ITEM:	CUSTOMER SERVICES AND LIBRARIES
Members Present:	Councillors: AW Johnson (Leader), H Bramer, J Millar, PM Morgan (Deputy Leader), GJ Powell, PD Price.
Date of Decision:	23 January 2014
Exempt:	No
Confidential	No
<p>This is a key decision because</p> <p>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.</p> <p>And/or</p> <p>It is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on-</p> <p>Two or more Wards or electoral divisions;</p> <p>One Ward (unless the number of those affected is very small or it is impractical to treat this as a key decision).</p>	
<p>A notice was served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in connection with key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.</p>	
Urgency/Special Urgency: (As defined in Constitution)	No
Purpose:	The purpose of this report is to outline options for Customer Services and Libraries in the light of continued budget pressures and for Cabinet to consider future delivery of centres and services for implementation in 2015/16.
Decision:	<p>THAT:</p> <p>(a) authority be delegated to the Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Corporate Services and Contracts and Assets, to implement changes to service delivery (points 17-26) in order to release savings for April 2015;</p> <p>(b) consideration be given to closing the customer services centre at Franklin House and offering a combined customer and library service at the Broad Street site; and</p> <p>(c) should the decision taken in respect of recommendation (b) above be to progress a combined customer and library service at the Broad Street site, the cost of modernising the premises be financed through capital receipts from the disposal</p>

	of selected operational properties to avoid extending the council's borrowing requirements
Reasons for the Decision:	<p>1 The report and corresponding recommendations aim to balance the requirement for savings, with delivery of a countywide library and customer services presence based on contemporary way of accessing services. The proposals also reflect the drive towards greater community involvement and management of services.</p> <p>2 The outline budget saving for customer services and libraries within the budget consultation was £700,000. A proportion of these savings have already been met through the redesign of service implemented as a result of the Cabinet decision on the 19th September 2013. Therefore the recommendation is based on achieving an additional £423,978 (rounded up to £424,000) from customer services (which includes the running front facing library service and contact by phone).</p>
Options Considered:	<p>3 Earlier release of budget savings –recommendation (a) is founded on realising the savings from April 2015 based on the findings of the Impact and Needs Assessment (Appendix 1) to allow for service transformation, establishment of community partnerships and wider cultural change in how services are accessed. The alternative is to achieve the savings earlier through the immediate withdrawal services, with the consequent community impacts.</p> <p>4 Retain current operation – this option would retain the overall current model of service based on the revised opening hours (as of 3rd February 2013). However, a reduced level of savings would be achieved (approx. £100,000) based on the bringing together of operations in Ledbury, reconfiguration of the Bromyard Centre, and efficiencies regarding redesign of face to face and phone contact, requiring commensurate savings to be made in other service budgets.</p>
Conflict of Interest ■ (See below):	
Date the key decision is due to take effect:	29 January 2014

COUNCILLOR AW JOHNSONDate: 23 January 2014
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

■ 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 by the relevant local authority's head of paid service.

