

Written statement of a key decision
Cabinet

Title	Better ways of working implementation
Decision maker	Cabinet 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	27 February 2020
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.
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	<p>The report is to outline further delivery of the “better ways of working” initiative that enables employees to work flexibly and to consolidate use of premises. This decision will specifically relate to the future occupancy of the Nelson House building and consider changes to Plough Lane and Elgar House offices to accommodate any increased occupancy of these buildings. The report will include details of any required financial investment and associated savings, details of any required procurement and any guidance to changes to staff working practices that will enable the improved usage of the workspace.</p> <p>As well as consolidating spaces based on cost saving the purpose is the creation of a flexible, modern working environment that can have a positive impact on service delivery and staff morale. Also, open plan and shared spaces support opportunities for collaborative working can aid communication. With reducing the number of sites the on-going use and cost of utilities can lessen and through encouraging the use of multi-agency offices in the market towns and home working reduces employees' carbon</p>

	<p>footprint, including congestion into Hereford.</p> <p>Better ways of working is an initiative that was introduced several years ago and whilst some teams have adopted the approach it has not been consistently applied across the organisation. Due to the proposed reduction in council buildings, associated guidance and policies will need to be more robustly applied with the proposals providing an opportunity to instigate a consistent approach.</p>
Decision	<p>That:</p> <p>(a) notice is served to vacate the Nelson building from 30 September 2020 making an annual saving of £155k;</p> <p>(b) approve spend of up to £850k to deliver the better ways of working project as detailed in this report through delegated authority to the chief finance officer in consultation with the cabinet member for commissioning, procurement and assets; and</p> <p>(c) the principles of better ways of working are adopted by Herefordshire Council (point 21).</p>
Reason for the decision	<p>As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at</p> <p>http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50030748</p>
Options considered	<p>1. That the lease for Nelson House is renewed. This is not recommended as based on effective management of sites going forward Nelson House will no longer be needed. By reducing key office locations in Hereford from 3 to 2 sites an annual saving and reduced energy consumption can be realised. The council is operating at Nelson House on an expired lease and until such time as the lease is renewed the landlord could serve notice to terminate the tenancy, which presently creates uncertainty and risk. If the council decided to renew the lease it is possible the landlord will seek an uplift in rent.</p> <p>2. Find alternative leased premises once tenancy at Nelson House is terminated rather than relocate staff to Plough Lane offices. There are no suitable alternative premises on the open market within Hereford. This is not recommended as this does not proactively plan for future change, limits opportunity for longer term saving and could create uncertainty for a service based on another short term lease.</p> <p>3. That there is no investment in premises or furniture and fittings. This is not recommended as without redesign of Plough Lane to enable reconfiguring the workspace additional staff and flexible working could not be accommodated. The efficient use of space in Plough Lane is restricted by the large existing office furniture, in addition an element of spend would be required to cover replacement furniture that is damaged or worn, specifically at Elgar House.</p> <p>4. That the principles of better ways of working are not formally adopted. This is not recommended as though the principles would be implemented</p>

	through an operational decision (and already in place) having them as part of the decision making supports the implementation and cultural change.
Declarations of interest (see ▪ below)	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	4 March 2020

<p>Councillor:</p> <p>Leader of the Council (Councillor David Hitchiner)</p>	<p>Date 27 February 2020</p>
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- 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.