

# AGENDA

## Cabinet

Date: **Thursday 19 September 2013**

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Time: **2.00 pm**

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Place: **The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road,  
Hereford**

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Notes: Please note the **time, date** and **venue** of the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

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If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call Heather Donaldson, Governance Services on (01432) 261829 or e-mail [hdonaldson@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:hdonaldson@herefordshire.gov.uk) in advance of the meeting.

# **Agenda for the Meeting of the Cabinet**

## **Membership**

**Chairman**

**Councillor AW Johnson**

**Councillor H Bramer  
Councillor RB Hamilton  
Councillor JW Millar  
Councillor PM Morgan  
Councillor RJ Phillips  
Councillor GJ Powell  
Councillor PD Price**

**AGENDA**

Pages

**HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

Notice has been 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, for the following agenda items:

Item No	Title	Portfolio Responsibility	Scrutiny Committee	28 Day Notice Given
5	Options for Museums, Customer Services and Libraries	Corporate & Assets, and Enterprise and Culture	General Overview and Scrutiny	Yes – on 8/8/13
6	Devolved Services	Corporate and Assets	General Overview and Scrutiny	Yes – on 8/8/13
7	Proposed Buttermarket Refurbishment	Corporate & Assets	General Overview and Scrutiny	Yes – on 8/8/13
9	Post 16 Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD) Review	Children’s Wellbeing	General Overview and Scrutiny	Yes – on 8/8/13
11	West Mercia Adoption Project	Children’s Wellbeing	General Overview and Scrutiny	Yes – on 8/8/13

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.

**3. MINUTES**

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2013.

**4. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT: JULY 2013**

To consider the financial position for both revenue and capital budgets to 31 July 2013, including the treasury management position.

7 - 36

**5. OPTIONS FOR MUSEUMS, CUSTOMER SERVICES AND LIBRARIES**

To consider and determine the options for the future operation of Museums, Customer Services and Libraries, in the light of budget pressures and changing trends in accessing services.

37 - 136

**6. DEVOLVED SERVICES**

To agree the process of local management of services by the town councils/city council (the local councils) through a programme of devolved services, outlining priority areas and related asset transfers.

137 - 146

<b>7. PROPOSED BUTTERMARKE T REFURBISHMENT</b>	147 - 156
To establish the future way forward with regard to the Buttermarket project.	
<b>8. HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN: SIX MONTH REVIEW REPORT FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION</b>	157 - 192
To note the progress made in improvement planning in children's safeguarding, resulting from the self-evaluation undertaken and reported to the Department of Education in July, 2013, in relation to the Herefordshire Safeguarding and Protecting Children Improvement Plan.	
<b>9. POST 16 LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES &amp; DISABILITIES (LLDD) REVIEW</b>	193 - 232
To consider the recent review into young people aged over 16 years with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LDD) and how it addresses the points of a recent petition.	
<b>10. HEREFORDSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD BUSINESS PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORT</b>	233 - 280
To note, consider and comment on Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board's assessment of safeguarding in Herefordshire, and its own effectiveness to enable it to undertake its governance role with regard to the Board.	
<b>11. WEST MERCIA ADOPTION PROJECT</b>	281 - 308
To approve the exploration of the potential of a West Mercia collaboration for the delivery of Adoption Services in Herefordshire.	
<b>12. DATE OF NEXT CABINET MEETING</b>	
To note that the next meeting of Cabinet will be held on Friday 4 October 2013 at 2.30 p.m. in the Assembly Hall at the Town Hall, Hereford.	



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## **HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

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<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>19 SEPTEMBER 2013</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>BUDGET MONITORING REPORT: JULY 2013</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER: FINANCE &amp; COMMERCIAL</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE</b>

## 1 Classification

Open

## 2 Key Decision

This is not a key decision

## 3 Wards Affected

County Wide

## 4 Purpose

To report the financial position for both revenue and capital budgets to 31 July 2013. The treasury management position is also included.

## 5 Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) Cabinet notes the projected outturn for 2013/14 and the potential impact of levels of reserves unless the overall revenue position is balanced at year end; and
- (b) Cabinet supports the continuing action to deliver financial savings.

## 6 Alternative Options

6.1 There are no alternative options.

## 7 Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 To inform Cabinet about the projected revenue and capital out-turn position for 2013/14 including Treasury Management activities.

## 8 Key Considerations

8.1 The key points covering the revenue budget performance are covered in Appendix A.

8.2 The table below shows a summary of projected revenue budget out-turn as at the end of

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Heather Foster, Head of Corporate Finance on (01432) 260284

July 2013;

<b>AREA</b>	<b>Projected (over)/under £000</b>
People's	(4,366)
Places	181
Corporate	102
<b>Directorates</b>	<b>(4,083)</b>
Treasury management	33
<b>Overall position</b>	<b>(4,050)</b>

- 8.3 At this stage of the financial year a cautious view has been taken about savings delivery. Savings requiring either a Cabinet decision or Cabinet Member decision are only included when signed off. The status on savings plans are reported in Appendix A.
- 8.4 Given the significant scale of staffing reductions in councils across the country the Government has operated a scheme to capitalise relevant costs and so take pressure off revenue budgets. Government has just issued the rules and procedures for applying for a capitalisation direction in 2013/14, which have changed significantly compared with their first scheme that covered 2011/12. The guidance states that capitalisation is only likely to be agreed where an extremely strong case can be made that the expenditure is applicable for capitalisation. In part this appears because government has decided to reduce the overall amount that councils can capitalise. The threshold has risen and in the latest arrangements councils will only be entitled to capitalise spend above the threshold (£2.29 million for Herefordshire), whereas in 2011/12 they could capitalise the total amount of approved spend as long as it exceeded the threshold. Applications have to be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government by 31 October 2013. Herefordshire will make a bid, which would mitigate the overall revenue position if approved. Decisions will be issued in January 2014.
- 8.5 The 2013/14 budget includes a transfer to the general fund reserve of £2 million, bringing the balance to £6.6 million (after meeting the 2012/13 overspend), compared to the council's policy of a minimum level of £4.5 million. The projected position assumes no change to the 2012/13 revenue position as a result of the external audit of accounts.
- 8.6 As at the 31 March 2013 the council held £13.9 million of earmarked reserves, which are detailed below.

	<b>31 Mar 2013</b>
	<b>£000</b>
School balances	(5,535)
Industrial Estates	(431)
Schools Insurance	(497)
Schools sickness	(141)
Members	(40)
Community Centre	(10)
Waste Disposal	(2,407)
Contingent liabilities	(306)
Hereford Futures	(213)
Whitecross school PFI	(339)
Economic Development	(127)
Pool car reserve	(10)
Three Elms Ind. Estate	(241)
Community Equipment	(110)
Community Social Care	(116)
Change management	(142)
Unused Grants cfwd	(3,303)
	<b>(13,968)</b>

8.7 Appendix B includes the position on the capital programme for 2013/14. It shows that the projected capital out-turn is £54.2 million funded from capital grants (£30.7 million), borrowing (£19.7 million) and capital receipts (£3.8 million).

8.8 The Treasury Management position is a projected out-turn of £33k underspend on borrowing and investments. Appendix C includes a detailed analysis.

## **9 Community Impact**

9.1 Not applicable

## **10 Equality and Human Rights**

10.1 The recommendations do not have equality implications

## **11 Financial Implications**

11.1 These are contained within the report

## **12 Legal Implications**

12.1 None

## **13 Risk Management**

13.1 Monthly budget control meetings are chaired by the Chief Officer (Finance and Commercial) to give him assurance on the robustness of budget control and monitoring, to highlight key risks and to identify any mitigation to reduce the impact of pressures on the councils overall position.

13.2 Any overspend at year end would need to be funded from reserves. Should this be required it will put further pressure on the 2014/15 financial position in order to maintain a minimum reserve level under the council's policy.

## **14 Consultees**

14.1 None

## **15 Appendices**

15.1 Appendix A – Revenue Budget Monitoring

Appendix B – Capital Monitoring

Appendix C – Treasury Management

## **16 Background Papers**

16.1 None

## REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING – JULY 2013

1. The headline data from the July budget monitoring is set out in this appendix.
2. This month's report reflects the budget movements approved during June and July in respect of those extra savings schemes presented to Full Council on 25th May 2013 which did not require Cabinet decisions. Further budget virements (moving budget into the People's directorate) will be actioned as Cabinet agrees savings proposals. A key message is that budget will only be moved when the savings proposals have been agreed.

### PEOPLE'S DIRECTORATE

#### Current Status – Revenue Budget by Service\*<sup>1</sup>

Service*	Budget Expend	Budget (Income)	Net Budget*	July Forecast Outturn	Projected (Over)/ under spend
<b>Directorate</b>	1,021	(548)	473	473	0
<b>Children's Provider</b>	22,138	(4,552)	17,586	17,746	(160)
<b>Children's Commissioning</b>	20,137	(9,639)	10,498	10,498	0
<b>Adult Social Care</b>	64,394	(13,995)	50,399	54,605	(4,206)
<b>Public Health</b>	7,745	(7,753)	(8)	(8)	0
<b>People's Services Total*</b>	<b>115,435</b>	<b>(36,487)</b>	<b>78,948</b>	<b>83,314</b>	<b>(4,366)</b>

\*<sup>1</sup> Excluding Schools

#### Directorate overview

3. The July position within People's Directorate shows a reduction of £2.859m compared to the May outturn of £7.225m overspend. This is as a result of the completion of budget virements of £1.586m and utilisation of £1m of education support grant to offset pressures in children's provider services. There continue to be a number of current and newly emerging pressures which impact on the outturn, including continuing agency social worker costs, pressure on children's placements, slippage on some adult social care savings schemes and pressures within older people residential and nursing placements.
4. The summary table sets out the projected out turn compared to the current position, and includes the transfer of £1.586m of budget from other directorates. The forecast overspend assumes that the remaining £1.2m of budget virement is not actioned (as not

yet confirmed). If actioned in full the forecast overspend would be reduced to £3.0m in Adult Social Care. Work continues to validate projections.

5. Public Health is currently projected to be on budget, but current trends indicate that the service will underspend. Options are being explored to utilise the funds across services which meet the grant conditions as a way to mitigate council pressures.

### **Children's Provider Services - Key Points**

6. Current pressures within Looked After Children (LAC) relate to additional placements (£387k against current budget). This has been mitigated by the one-off use of the Education Support Grant. There are legislative changes which constrain the ability of the service to manage children and young people into lower cost placements.
7. The service operates with a court costs budget of £200k, but there have recently been a number of cases requiring specialist legal support. This is currently estimated at an additional £200k for 2013/14.
8. There are staffing pressures arising from additional agency staff to cover vacancies and additional case loads totalling £438k across children's Safeguarding, £393k in fieldwork teams, £39k in Children with Disabilities (CWD) and £6k in the LAC team. The Education Support Grant has been used to offset these pressures.

### **Children's Provider Services - Risks**

9. The risks to the financial position are;
  - a. Continued increases in referrals.
  - b. Failure to recruit sufficient high calibre social workers placing additional pressure on staffing budgets.
  - c. Complex needs cases are currently operating at budget capacity and further referrals would put the budget under pressure.

### **Children's Commissioning - Key Points**

10. Significant cuts were made in the Learning and Achievement budgets as part of the initial budget setting process. Savings have been delivered in School Improvement due to the early departure of most of the team, but there are on-going risks relating to having to redesign how this service will operate in future, with implications for income generation.
11. Pressures have been flagged across a number of services due to the on-going reliance on interims, particularly at Head of Service level and the inability to attract permanent staff at the salaries offered. This is currently being modelled to put forward options to reduce agency spend in line with the social work review.
12. The transport budget is due to transfer to Places during the year as part of the creation of an integrated transport hub.

### **Children's Commissioning - Risks**

13. School Improvement budgets include £65k for Service Level Agreement (SLA) income with a further £41k of Governor Services income, which is at risk as staff are no longer retained to provide the support bought by schools. The impact is currently being



evaluated. Further work is required with some budget holders to review and confirm savings delivery, and this will be done in accordance with new forecasting cycle.

## **Adult Social Care - Key Points**

### **Overarching Position**

14. The current projected overspend is £4.206m. £1.204m relates to the remaining budget virements to be actioned where further savings schemes have been identified within other directorates and are subject to Cabinet approval. A key agreed principle is that the transfer of budget will only occur when schemes are approved.

### **Expenditure and Forecasting Pressures**

15. Expenditure - The adult social care budget was subject to a zero basing exercise at the beginning of this financial year. This is now highlighting some key long standing issues. Data quality improvement has brought clarity to a number of cases and confirmed costs from previous years.
16. There is additional pressure as a result of two specific transition cases as individuals move from children's to Adult's services at a total of £256k. Urgent reviews of these cases will be undertaken, and plans implemented to ensure that we are fulfilling out statutory responsibilities.
17. Spend on nursing homes and residential homes increased more than expected during the month, with an unusually high number of admissions. Further analysis is needed to establish whether this is a direct result of some of the pressures in the acute hospital system, which also had an unusually high number of A & E attendances for a summer month.
18. A contingency was established at the beginning of the financial year for additional interim capacity. All of this cost is now included within the adult social care budgets. It is likely that further additional specialist adult social care interim capacity is required. Further transformation capacity is required to deliver changes.
19. The Council has £3.6m within its budget that is received via the NHS. This has conditions attached to it relating to its use, which include enabling the LA to reduce the impact of savings on the wider system. It must also demonstrate to and agree with the CCG that the money will have a positive impact on health outcomes. Whilst negotiations continue with the CCG, some potential pressures are around support for the flow through the acute hospital. For this purpose an additional £300k pressure has been added into the forecast out turn position.
20. KPMG has been engaged to deliver contractual savings and this has a current pressure of £48k.
21. The forecast assumes client growth across all the client groups of £500k for the remainder of the year. This should be sufficient to meet demand but will be subject to further review.
22. Opportunities exist to use some of the current underspend within Public Health to support schemes and services being delivered by Adult social care that meet public health grant conditions.
23. A further £273k of pressure may emerge in month due to an assumption that Winter

Pressures money received in previous years will be received via the NHS. Recent announcements have indicated that this money will now be directed at only certain areas, which does not include Herefordshire.

### **New Pressures Mitigation**

24. The forecasting includes a number of assumptions which will be validated. This includes an overspend of £1.477m based on growth in residential and nursing home placements. On September 14th the operational social work teams will be returned to the council, and we will have the opportunity to set targets for each month, and the new operating model is designed to reduce admissions. A number of initiatives such as social work in A & E during the winter months will offer the opportunity to intervene at an earlier point. Savings on the revision of supporting people contracts has achieved £94k.
25. Setting targets for each team along with operational management of budgets will be a key measure. Reductions in use of home care are already showing positive impacts in terms of the budget. The focus over the next two months is ensuring all operational managers, will be better able to contribute to financial reporting.
26. Mental health clients costs are forecast to underspend by £1.202m, due to a reduction in growth and terminations of packages. Initial activity based client budgets also saw a reduction in demand and cost of care of £263k.
27. Some Supporting People contracts are being under-utilised and these will be further reviewed.
28. Learning Disability client costs are currently forecast to underspend by £553k. This figure takes into account an additional pressure of £260k for the transition of two clients from children's services to adults.
29. There may be an opportunity to capitalise items purchased for the Community Equipment store. This would reduce the revenue overspend. Further work is being carried out to identify eligible expenditure.
30. Disabled Facilities Grant funding will be more effectively used through additional occupational therapy assessments. This work will deliver some reduction in cost of care packages later this year.

### **Adults Social Care Savings Delivery Plans Progress Update**

31. There is currently a projected shortfall in delivery of the savings target (£7.078m) of £2.435m. Key pressures exist in relation to savings delivery are:
  - Home and Community Support procurement will not be completed until March 2014, which creates a £1 million gap within the savings plan.
  - Next Stage Integration Project implementation timescales have been re calculated on some projects. Additional service user and carer consultation has taken place as requested by Cabinet. Worst case scenario on this if not fully implemented until 31<sup>st</sup> March 14 is estimated at a slippage of £550k

- There is non-delivery of £464k of contractual savings by Wye Valley Trust through the Section 75 agreement up to 13<sup>th</sup> September 2013. This will need to be absorbed within the year by the directorate.
- A saving against the Livability contract (£100k) is not deliverable due to the current contract. The contract will require re tendering, and savings will be achieved but not in this financial year.
- Open Book Review (£125k) – further to cabinet decision in June, with a new timescale for implementation this will not be delivered this year. Commissioning Workforce reductions of £300k will deliver only £258k in this financial year.
- £54k slippage is as a result of delays in implementing some small contract changes and Redesign of out of hours and reduction on spend on transition cases has created a further non delivery of £100k

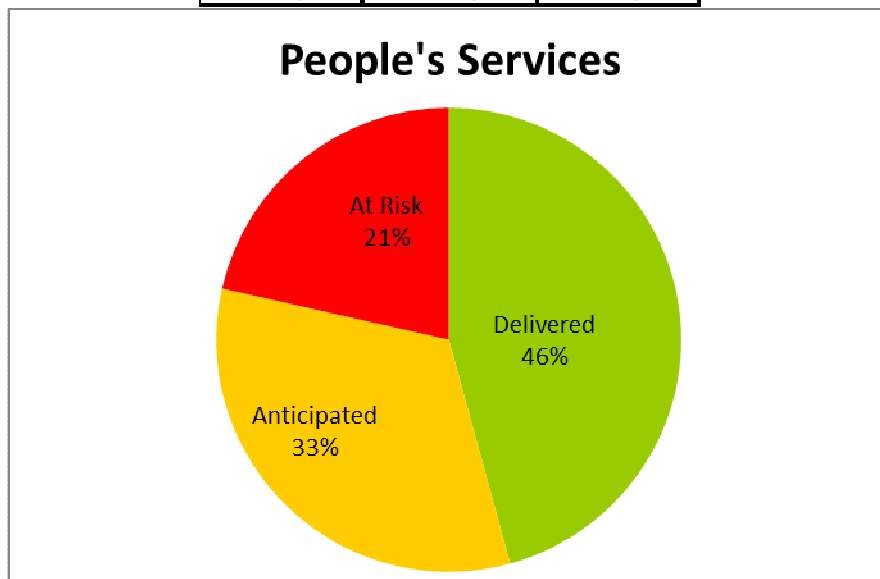
### Public Health

32. The service is funded by a ring-fenced grant with conditions for use. The current indications are that the service will underspend by circa £250k. It is possible to carry this forward under grant conditions but options to legitimately support council services/ provide preventative activities which meet grant conditions must be explored thoroughly given the current council position.

### People’s Savings Plans

33. The People’s Directorate has savings plans of £13.346 million. The chart below shows their status as at 31<sup>st</sup> July. A cautious view has been taken with savings only being classified as delivered if action has been taken to ensure savings will be made.

PEOPLE'S SERVICES		
Delivered	Anticipated	At Risk
6,105	4,378	2,863



## KEY

**Delivered** – action has taken place to ensure saving will be made

**Anticipated** – Further savings included in forecast out-turn

**Uncertain** – Total savings target less delivered and anticipated savings

34. There is also slippage on some schemes the most significant of which relates to the re-procurement of domiciliary care (£1 million).

35. The table below sets out the savings schemes currently RAG rated as RED and a high risk of non-delivery.

\* A= Adults Scheme, P = other Peoples saving, C = Children's scheme

Ref *	Scheme	Target £000	At Risk £000	Risk	Est recover- able
A1	WVT Section 75 10% reduction	500	464	No assurance from WVT to deliver 10% in remainder of contract	TBC
A2	Next Stage integration	756	550	Service redesign still on-going	TBC
A3	Open Book Review	125	125	Pending Cabinet sign off (as at May)	0
A4	Homecare	1,000	1,000	Scheme slippage	TBC
A5	Livability	100	100	Will not deliver -	0
A6	Transitions	50	50		0
A7	Village Wardens	91	37	Contract reduced not ended	0
A8	Talking Book	17	7		0
A9	Primecare EDT/ OoH	60	60		0
A10	Workforce	300	42	Cost of further interim posts	0
P1	Unidentified	105	105		0
P2	Sale of Assets	50	23	Shortfall	0
P3	S256 grant Assumed extra	877	300	Will not deliver due to CCG instruction to deliver additional project	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4,031</b>	<b>2,863</b>		<b>TBC</b>

\* A= Adults Scheme, P = other Peoples saving, C = Children's scheme

### **Details of Risk / Mitigation**

**A1** – Details of how much of the 10% savings on the WVT contract are to be achieved are yet to be finalised. The latest report for July from Wye Valley suggests that there will be a small underspend on the contract, but this will not be confirmed until we receive the final accounts up to 13<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

**A2** The shortfall relates to the extension of Day Opportunities, staff and pending consultation with users on the future design of the services in order to maintain a stable service for vulnerable users.

**A3** – No savings are expected in 2013/14 as the implementation has been delayed until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.

**A4** - Homecare – re-procurement of Homecare (domiciliary care) is now in progress and implementation is planned for April 2014.

**A5** –Livability reduction – alternate scheme now evaluated and not agreed. Action agreed to increase efficiency of use of current block contract by void reduction.

**A6** -Transitions – not expected to deliver savings

**A7** – Village Wardens – contract has been reduced for 2013/14, not terminated as originally assumed. Further work is planned for 2014/15.

**A8** – Talking Book – potential challenge, therefore slippage has been allowed.

**A9** – Primecare /Out of hours service – further work to determine if savings can be delivered.

**A10** – Workforce increased target – partly identified but a shortfall of at least £42k is expected.

**P2** – Sale of youth assets is now complete, which raised £27k of a target £50k.

**P3** – Following discussions with the CCG it has been agreed that £300k of the additional DOH funding will be used for new schemes for the joint benefit of Health and Social care. This had previously all been assumed available for existing activities.

## PLACES AND COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE

### Current Status – Revenue Budget

Service £000	Budget Expend	Budget (Income)	Net Budget	Net Forecast Outturn	Projected Under / (Over) spend
<b>Economic, Environment and Cultural Services</b>	14,217	(5,418)	8,799	8,780	19
<b>Homes and Communities</b>	7,333	(4,765)	2,568	2,518	50
<b>Place Based Commissioning</b>	32,140	(4,720)	27,420	27,344	76
<b>Director and Management</b>	273	(36)	237	201	36
<b>Places &amp; Communities</b>	<b>53,963</b>	<b>(14,939)</b>	<b>39,024</b>	<b>38,843</b>	<b>181</b>

#### Directorate overview

36. The Directorate is currently expected to underspend by £181k for the year.
37. As previously reported, budget adjustments were processed in June to reflect the additional savings and pressures which did not need Cabinet decision. These budgets have been vired to offset the pressures in Procurement and Adult Social Care, highlighted during the Chief Executive's review.
38. On 1 July 2013 Customer Services 2013/14 budgets totalling £1.582 million transferred from the Corporate Services directorate. This virement is net of annual savings already delivered and at risk savings targets transfer to the Directorate.

#### Economic, Environment & Cultural Services

39. There is an underspend for the service of £17k in relation to income received in excess of the budget in Bereavements Services. Income will be closely monitored to assess the potential to increase the annual income budget and contribute to annual savings.
40. There are staff savings in Libraries and Heritage of £50k which relate to the additional savings schemes which are due for Cabinet sign off in September 2013. There are also additional staff savings on the Cultural Services budgets of £15k.
41. There are further one off savings within Environmental Health budgets of £14k from the hold on discretionary spend.
42. There is risk on Planning budgets in relation to the anticipated liability for costs of appeal cases expected. The pressure previously reported is due to be settled in October 2013 and this pressure of £60k has been addressed within Directorate budgets. However there is a further potential liability of £150k expected on another case.
43. On 1 July 2013 Customer Services budgets transferred to Places & Communities

directorate and these included the transfer of all current and future savings targets for that service.

44. There is risk on the Customer Service savings of £77k and schemes are currently being reviewed by the budget holders in the light of the transformation project identified as part of the additional savings targets.

### **Homes & Communities**

45. A saving of £50k has been identified for 2013/14 on the CCTV service through use of grant reserves.

### **Place Based Commissioning**

46. The underspend within the service relates to staff vacancies. This includes £40k which will form part of the Parks & Countryside additional savings scheme target of £300k, profiled over 3 years to 15/16.
47. There is a risk in relation to disputed items in the Amey contract. These disputed items total in excess of £3m and impact on both capital and revenue items, some which will be met within the 2013/14 budgets managed by Amey through the MAC contract. Following the adjudication of sample of disputes earlier in the year, discussions are currently taking place with Amey to evaluate the impact of this ruling. There is currently £885k income expected from Amey for which provision has been made in previous years' outturns, along with an additional income expectation of £166k for the 5 months to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2013. This income mainly represents guaranteed savings and New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) income within the MAC contract.
48. Mobilisation costs in relation to the new Public Realm contract may also put pressure on the current year budgets. These costs are currently being fully quantified along with the funding options, such as capitalisation, available.

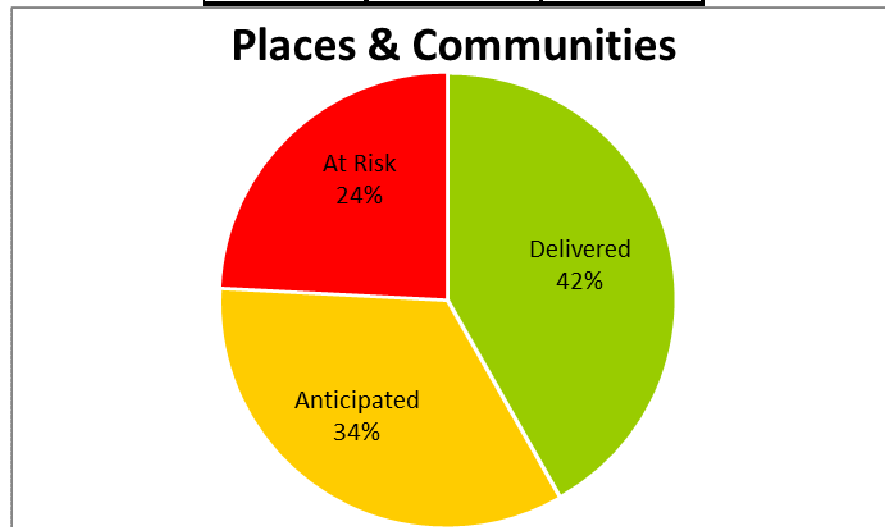
### **Management**

49. There are in year staff savings of £36k relating to project work funded through the capital programmed budgets.

### **Places Savings Plans**

50. The total savings for the Directorate totals £4.849 million made up of the original savings plus additional savings recently identified as part of the Chief Executive Review. The chart below shows their status as at 31st July 2013. The transfer of Customer Services from Corporate Services also included £77k savings target which have not yet been delivered.

PLACES & COMMUNITIES £000		
Delivered	Anticipated	At Risk
2,024	1,653	1,172



**KEY**

**Delivered** – action has taken place to ensure saving will be made

**Anticipated** – Further savings included in forecast out-turn

**Uncertain** – Total savings target less delivered and anticipated savings

51. The table below sets out the savings schemes currently RAG rated as RED. These are schemes which have either not received the necessary Cabinet approval, so nil saving assumed, or are savings schemes which are currently not expected to deliver to target. The following schemes have been identified as at high risk of non delivery.

Scheme	Target £000	At Risk £000	Issue
Customer Services	77	77	Schemes to be identified
Heritage Services Review	194	194	Pending Decision Cabinet
Library Services Review	250	250	Pending Decision Cabinet
Planning Services cost reductions (including Conservation, Archaeology)	291	291	Pending Decision Cabinet
Countryside Services Review	40	40	Pending Decision Cabinet
Closure/Transfer of toilets	187	187	Pending Decision Cabinet



<b>Increase charges for garden waste sacks</b>	80	80	Pending Decision	Cabinet
<b>CCTV Review</b>	50	50	Pending Decision	Cabinet
<b>Community Protection Review</b>	150	150	Pending Decision	Cabinet
<b>Increase car parking/on-street parking income (spend to save)</b>	(195)	(195)	Pending Decision	Cabinet
<b>Community Regeneration</b>	48	48	Pending Decision	Cabinet
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,172</b>	<b>1,172</b>		

## CORPORATE DIRECTORATE

### Current Status – Revenue Budget

Service £000	Budget Expend	Budget (Income )	Net Budget	Net Forecast Outturn	Projected Under / (Over) spend
Customer Services & Communications	829	(163)	666	666	0
People, Policy & Partnership	7,795	(860)	6,935	6,905	30
Law, Governance & Resilience	3,240	(656)	2,584	2,704	(120)
Chief Finance Officer and Commercial	56,956	(52,930)	4,026	4,198	(172)
Corporate Management	1,680	0	1,680	1,366	314
Chief and Deputy Chief Executive	347	0	347	297	50
<b>Corporate Services</b>	<b>70,847</b>	<b>(54,609)</b>	<b>16,238</b>	<b>16,136</b>	<b>102</b>

#### Directorate overview

52. The Directorate is currently expected to underspend by £102k for the year.
53. As previously reported, budget adjustments have been processed to reflect the additional savings and pressures which do not need Cabinet decision. These have been vired to offset the pressures in Procurement and Adult Social Care highlighted during the Chief Executive's review.
54. On 1 July 2013 Customer Services 2013/14 budgets totalling £1.582 million transferred to Places & Communities directorate. This virement is net of annual savings already delivered and at risk savings targets transfer to the Places & Communities Directorate.

#### People, Policy & Partnership

55. There is an additional saving in relation to ICT and Equality Integration Partnership budget relating to the identification of funding from the Public Health grant.

#### Corporate Management

56. The Corporate Management budget includes a base budget of £314k for Non - Discretionary Rate Relief. Further guidance on the rates retention scheme indicates that this is not now required to be paid into the Collection Fund.

## **Law, Governance & Resilience**

57. As previously reported, there is a projected overspend for the year in relation to Legal Services. This has reduced since last reported mainly due to funding identified from Public Health grant. The overspend of £123k reflects the increased cost of additional in house expertise in key areas of planning, childcare and employment law and will lead to reduced outsourcing of legal work to solicitors and counsel which, in previous years, has cost the authority in excess of £400k p.a. across the organisation.
58. There remains a pressure on Resilience of £5k in relation to a saving target as part of the Safer & Stronger Review following the remodelling of the service.
59. There is a net saving on Statutory Services budgets of £8k. This mainly relates to Coroners Service medical costs. This pressure is partly mitigated by increased income for Registrars and Land Charges and will be closely monitored.
60. Legal proceedings were commenced against the Council (and other Councils) by private search companies which could result in this Council having to repay around £200k. The outcome of this claim will have an impact on the way we deliver this service in the future.

## **Chief Finance Officer & Commercial**

61. There is currently a pressure of £172k on Property budgets for 2013/14. This includes the risks to the Property Service budgets in relation to savings schemes held in all Directorates that include closure or transfer of services and have an impact on Council buildings. These schemes will be closely monitored by Property Services through the office moves programme to ensure this impact is managed within the overall savings targets.
62. There is a staff restructure currently in consultation which will help deliver in year savings of £200k. Whilst the full year saving is expected to exceed £200k, these will not be available in 13/14 and the shortfall will be mitigated by the proceeds from the sale of small property assets.
63. The current system of Housing Benefit provides a financial incentive for authorities to recover overpayment of benefits from recipients. The Department for Works and Pensions pays Housing Benefit Subsidy to authorities based on benefits disbursed (including at reduced level for benefit overpayments). Authorities effective in recovering overpayments may therefore receive a level of subsidy that exceeds the net cost of benefits after recovery of overpayments. It is estimated that the subsidy received will result in a net surplus of £209k, as budgeted, although there is some risk around this. The level of overpayments that can be recovered is difficult to estimate at this early stage of the year.

## **Chief & Deputy Chief Executive**

64. The underspend against this budget area reflects the release of the Chief Executive's development fund to help mitigate the overall council budget position.

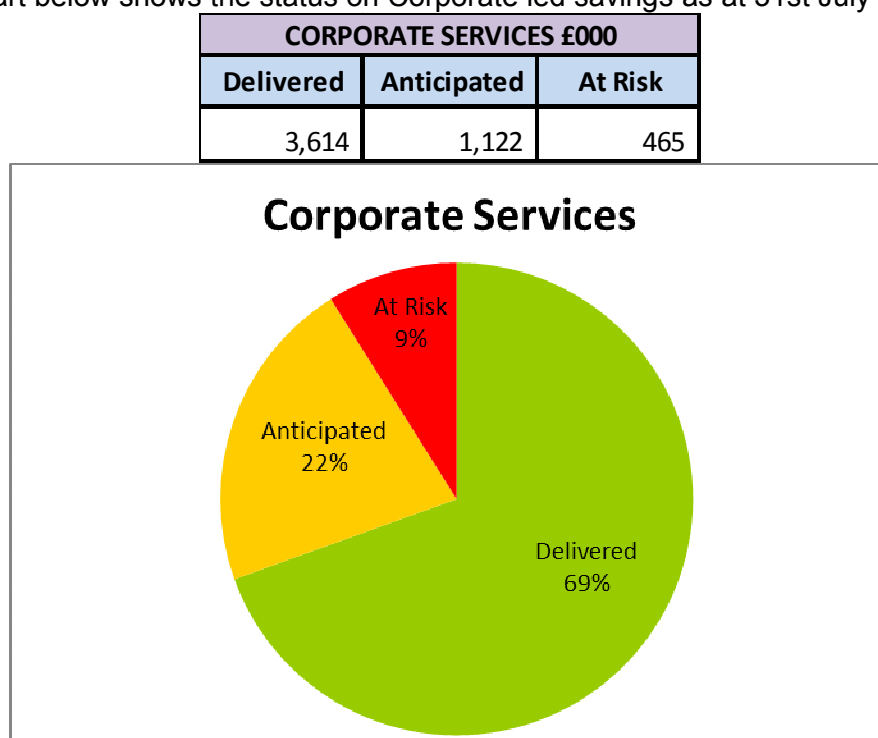
## **Procurement Savings**

65. Whilst £1m of the brought forward procurement savings target was addressed through

the recent additional savings review, the Commercial Board agreed a target of £300k to be achieved through procurement projects in 2013/14. These projects include printing, stationery, cash collection and mail services and this budget is currently held centrally.

### Corporate Savings Plans

66. The total savings for the Directorate totals £5.201 million made up of the original savings plans plus additional savings recently identified as part of the Chief Executive Review. The chart below shows the status on Corporate led savings as at 31st July 2013.



#### KEY

**Delivered** – action has taken place to ensure saving will be made

**Anticipated** – Further savings included in forecast out-turn

**Uncertain** – Total savings target less delivered and anticipated savings

67. The table below sets out the savings schemes currently RAG rated as RED. These are schemes which have either not received the necessary Cabinet approval, so nil saving assumed, or are savings schemes which are currently not expected to deliver to target. The following schemes have been identified as at high risk of non delivery.

Scheme	Target £000	At Risk £00	Issue
Emergency Planning	50	5	Income not achievable
Members allowances	60	60	Pending Council agreement

<b>Customer Services</b>	80	80	Pending Cabinet decision
<b>Reduce Public Notices</b>	10	10	Plan to be developed
<b>Advertising &amp; Publicity (Council wide project)</b>	150	150	Plan to be developed
<b>Unpaid leave</b>	357	160	Reduced from 3 days to 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>465</b>	



## Capital Forecast

1. The capital outturn forecast for 2013/14 as at the end of July totals £54.2 million a decrease of £2.2m from May's projected outturn due to;
  - A decrease in the forecast spend against the new Hereford Archive and Record Centre in 2013/14 of £1.4m. This is a result of a three month delay in the anticipated start date following value engineering, slipping the forecast spend into future years.
  - A decrease in Yazor brook flood alleviation scheme forecast spend of £0.5m in 2013/14. Option work surrounding selecting the preferred solution is underway and once decided upon will be submitted to planning for approval. This expected spend slippage into 2014/15 represents when works on site are expected to commence.
  - A decrease in link road forecast spend of £0.4m in 2013/14 as a result of a five month delay to the anticipated start date as a result of following the legislative process for the release of the statutory instrument surrounding the possible CPO requirements this scheme entails.

A summary by directorate is provided in Table A below.

**Table A – Capital Outturn Forecast & Funding Summary**

Directorate	2013/14 Capital budget £'000	Capital spend to end of July £'000	Profiled budget to end July £'000	Spend variance to budget £'000	Projected outturn £'000
People's Services	10,444	1,962	1,844	(118)	10,523
Places & Communities	34,012	6,431	7,799	1,368	33,306
Corporate Services	11,550	573	235	(338)	10,106
Contingency	242	90	90	-	242
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,248</b>	<b>9,056</b>	<b>9,968</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>54,177</b>
<i>Capital Grants</i>	<i>30,463</i>				<i>30,670</i>
<i>Prudential Borrowing</i>	<i>21,905</i>				<i>19,645</i>
<i>Capital Receipts</i>	<i>3,819</i>				<i>3,801</i>
<i>Reserve funding</i>	<i>61</i>				<i>61</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,248</b>				<b>54,177</b>

## 2. Table B - Schemes with an outturn forecast exceeding £500k in 2013/14

Scheme	Spend to end July £'000	Profiled Budget to July £'000	2013/14 Annual Forecast £'000	Comments
<b>People's Services</b>				
Leominster Primary School	110	79	3,507	Works started on site, new school to open in October 2014
Blackmarstons Special School	1,528	1,381	2,719	The final phase of this scheme will complete in September
Condition property works	55	53	1,634	Annual programme of works at various school sites committed on a highest need first basis
Adult social care	3	3	636	Single capital pot grant funding for capital spend
<b>Places &amp; Communities</b>				
Local Transport Plan including additional maintenance allocation	3,221	3,221	11,376	Annual programme of capital works to highways, footways and bridges
Fastershire broadband pilot	-	1,333	4,000	Survey work underway on providing faster broadband service to rural areas, first funding claim yet to be received
Masters House, Ledbury	273	371	2,076	Refurbishment works have commenced and will continue into next year
Connect 2	1,015	858	1,695	New bridge on site with open public access expected end October
Hereford Enterprise Zone	158	158	1,566	Utilities and public realm works underway to enable plot sales
Marches Redundant Building Grant Scheme	123	123	1,300	Grant funded grant awards following an approval process
Link road	243	165	1,921	Anticipate one year construction programme expected to start in late summer of 2014
Garrick House multi storey	754	754	1,146	Works to complete before Christmas trade
LED street lighting	-	-	1,131	Improvements will generate revenue cost savings
Disabled Facilities Grants	315	315	1,119	Individual grants awarded through an application process, enabling independent living
Car Parking Strategy	2	2	999	Includes works underway at station approach
Solar Photovoltaic panels	-	-	979	Installations will generate energy revenue cost savings
Affordable Housing Grants	-	-	612	Various grants awarded to approved schemes
<b>Corporate Services</b>				
Corporate accommodation	610	226	8,490	Works started at Plough Lane and the new heritage, archive and record centre with



				Civic hub 2 works to start later in the year
Unavoidable backlog maintenance including smallholding estate	-	50	600	Programme of essential property estate improvement works allocated on a highest need basis
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>8,410</b>	<b>9,092</b>	<b>47,506</b>	
<b>Schemes with a budget &lt;£500k in 2013/14</b>	<b>646</b>	<b>876</b>	<b>6,671</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,056</b>	<b>9,968</b>	<b>54,177</b>	

### Capital Receipts Reserve

- The opening capital receipts reserve balance totalled £2.7 million as at 1st April 2013. This has been increased by £0.4m from the sale of a smallholding. The reserve is earmarked to fund 2013/14 capital spend, the bulk of which relates to Hereford Enterprise Zone, which is expected to generate sales receipts in the near future.



This report ensures the council demonstrates best practice in accordance with CIPFA's recommendations in their Code of Practice for Treasury Management, by keeping members informed of treasury management activity.

## **1. The Economy**

1.1. Recent economic events and statistics show the following:

- The outlook for UK growth has improved although it remains subdued. GDP growth in the first quarter was 0.3% with the second estimate of growth in the second quarter being 0.7%. Growth in the foreseeable future is expected to be steady rather than strong.
- The year-on-year Consumer Price Index (CPI) has been fairly stable in recent months (2.7% for May, 2.9% for June and 2.8% in July).
- Recent data suggests a slightly improved economic environment at the aggregate Eurozone level but this could be undone by political risks and uncertainty in Italy, Spain and Portugal (doubts over the longevity of their coalitions) and Germany (due to impending elections in September).
- Relatively good economic data from the US has led to an expectation that there will be a reduction in the Federal Reserve's bond-buying programme towards the end of the year. This has led to an increase in bond yields in America which has had a knock-on effect on other financial markets, including gilt yields which have also risen sharply.

## **2. The Council's Investments**

2.1 At 31<sup>st</sup> July 2013 the council held the following investments:

Investment	Term	Maturity Date	Interest Rate	Amount invested	
				£m	£m
<u>Instant Access Bank Accounts:</u>					
National Westminster	N/A	N/A	0.60%	3.32	
Royal Bank of Scotland	N/A	N/A	0.70%	2.50	5.82
<u>Instant access Money Market Funds:</u>					
Ignis	N/A	N/A	0.43%	3.22	3.22
<u>95 day notice accounts</u>					
Royal Bank of Scotland	N/A	N/A	0.95%	5.00	
Santander	N/A	N/A	1.10%	7.00	12.00
<u>1 month notice account</u>					
Close Bros	N/A	N/A	1.00%	5.00	5.00
<u>Fixed Term Deposits:</u>					
Lloyds	92 days	01/08/13	0.70%	3.00	
Nationwide	273 days	11/09/13	0.76%	2.00	
Bank of Scotland	156 days	25/09/13	0.76%	4.00	
Lloyds	186 days	25/10/13	0.80%	3.00	
Nationwide	107 days	25/10/13	0.45%	3.00	
Barclays	365 days	01/11/13	1.07%	2.00	
Gateshead Council	549 days	18/11/13	1.10%	2.00	
Barclays	364 days	29/11/13	1.00%	1.00	
Barclays	365 days	05/12/13	1.00%	1.00	
Barclays	367 days	21/04/14	0.87%	1.00	22.00

<b>Total</b>			<b>0.81%</b>		<b>48.04</b>
Shaded investments represent term deposits made in the last two months to 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2013					

- 2.2 The council's current eligible UK counterparties, together with the maximum maturity periods (as recommended by the council's treasury advisers, Arlingclose), are as follows:

Counterparty	Maximum maturity period	
	01/04/13	05/07/13
Close Brothers Ltd	100 days	100 days
Santander UK	100 days	100 days
Nat West and RBS	6 mnths	Overnight
Bank of Scotland and Lloyds TSB	6 mnths	6 mnths
Nationwide	12 mnths	12 mnths
Barclays	12 mnths	12 mnths
HSBC and Standard Chartered Bank	12 mnths	12 mnths

- 2.3 The credit rating agency Moody's has placed on review for downgrade the long-term credit ratings of National Westminster Bank and the Royal Bank of Scotland. In accordance with advice from Arlingclose, the council has given notice on its Royal Bank of Scotland 95 day account and will restrict all future investment to instant access accounts.
- 2.4 The council's treasury management advisers, Arlingclose, have issued the following forecast of the Bank Base Rate (forecast issued 30<sup>th</sup> July 2013). As previously reported, Arlingclose believe that it could be 2016 before the first increase in the Bank Base Rate, a view now supported by the forward guidance issued by the MPC not to raise the rate until the unemployment rate has fallen below 7%.

Bank Rate	Sep-13	Dec-13	Mar-14	Jun-14	Sep-14	Dec-14	Mar-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Dec-15
Upside risk			+0.25	+0.25	+0.25	+0.25	+0.25	+0.50	+0.50	+0.50
Central case	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25

There has been no change to Arlingclose's forecast in recent months.

- 2.5 The council has earned interest on its investments as follows:

Month	Amount invested		Average rate of interest earned		Amount of interest earned / Forecast £	Budget £	Actual Surplus / Forecast £
	Actual / Forecast £m	Budget £m	Actual / Forecast %	Budget %			
Apr-13	30.41	30	0.82%	0.70%	20,733	17,500	3,233
May-13	50.50	40	0.83%	0.70%	36,206	23,000	13,206
Jun-13	50.00	40	0.83%	0.70%	35,495	23,000	12,495
Jul-13	50.00	40	0.80%	0.70%	35,845	23,000	12,845
					128,279	<b>86,500</b>	41,779
Aug-13	49.00	35	0.80%	0.70%	34,500	<b>20,000</b>	14,500
Sep-13	40.00	35	0.75%	0.70%	25,000	<b>20,000</b>	5,000

Oct-13	40.00	30	0.70%	0.70%	23,000	17,500	5,500
Nov-13	40.00	25	0.70%	0.70%	23,000	14,500	8,500
Dec-13	35.00	20	0.65%	0.70%	19,000	11,500	7,500
Jan-14	35.00	20	0.65%	0.70%	19,000	11,500	7,500
Feb-14	20.00	15	0.60%	0.70%	10,000	8,820	1,180
Mar-14	20.00	15	0.60%	0.70%	10,000	8,750	1,250
<b>Original budget and outturn</b>					<b>291,779</b>	<b>199,070</b>	<b>92,709</b>
<b>Budget savings already declared and budgeted income increased</b>					-	<b>60,000</b>	<b>(60,000)</b>
<b>Revised budget and outturn</b>					<b>291,779</b>	<b>259,070</b>	<b>32,709</b>

- 2.6 The interest received in the four months to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2013 has exceeded budget due to both the amounts invested and the average interest rates achieved being higher than the budgeted amounts.
- 2.7 In recent months interest rates on the council's instant access bank accounts have fallen sharply. In order to maintain investment income the council is utilising notice accounts and term deposits with an increased reliance on short-term borrowing to provide liquidity. This policy is possible because the rates payable on short-term borrowing are lower than the rates earned on the council's investments. However the policy does result in both short-term investment balances and short-term borrowing being relatively high.
- 2.8 Arlingclose provide quarterly benchmarking information for investments, which show that the council is earning an above average rate of return on its investments. The council only uses those counterparties recommended by Arlingclose.

### **3. The Council's Borrowing**

#### **Short-term borrowing**

- 3.1 The council is continuing its policy of utilising short-term borrowing from other local authorities to fund its capital programme and for short-term liquidity needs. This is good practice as interest rates are significantly below levels available from other sources.
- 3.2 Historically the council has always borrowed for longer periods at fixed interest rates. Whilst achieving stability in the amount of its interest payments, the council has a large cost of carry when comparing its fixed interest debt to current investment rates. Short-term borrowing from other local authorities removes this cost of carry and, assuming the level of short-term debt does not exceed the level of the council's investments, when interest rates rise increased investment income provides a hedge against increased borrowing costs.
- 3.3 The council can only borrow up to its Capital Financing Requirement, which represents the need to borrow for capital spend, and cannot borrow beyond this to finance the revenue budget.
- 3.4 At the end of July 2013 short-term borrowing from other local authorities consisted of eight loans totalling £25 million. These loans were for periods ranging from 115 days to 283 days with interest rates varying from 0.36% to 0.44% (including brokers commission).

**Long-term borrowing**

- 3.5 No long-term loans have been taken out in the period to date.
- 3.6 In recent weeks PWLB rates have risen significantly. This follows a worldwide increase in the yields on government debt, as noted in 1.1 (PWLB rates being set at their equivalent gilt yields plus a margin of around 1%). However, Arlingclose believe that the recent climb in rates is overdone considering the global economic outlook.
- 3.7 Arlingclose have issued the following forecast of the interest rate on a PWLB 10 year maturity loan, which also approximates to a 20 year EIP loan (as the average term and average amount outstanding are the same). An EIP loan is repaid in equal instalments every six months over the period of the loan.

	Sep-13	Dec-13	Mar-14	Jun-14	Sep-14	Dec-14	Mar-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Dec-15
<b>Upside risk</b>	+0.50	+0.50	+0.50	+0.50	+0.65	+0.75	+0.85	+1.00	+1.00	+1.00
<b>Central case</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>3.60</b>	<b>3.70</b>	<b>3.80</b>	<b>3.90</b>
<b>Downside risk</b>	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.55	-0.60	-0.60	-0.60	-0.65

The above table is a forecast of Standard PWLB rates. The council is able to borrow at the “Certainty Rate” which was introduced from November 2012 and is 0.20% less.

- 3.8 The above forecast was issued on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2013 when the PWLB 10 year maturity loan rate stood at 3.44%. The “central case” of Arlingclose’s forecast shows the extent to which they believe that rates are currently over-inflated. However, the upside and downside risk margins reflect the difficulty in making the forecast.
- 3.9 In August the 20 year EIP rate has risen significantly reaching a peak of 3.92% (Standard Rate). In the last few days the interest rate has fallen back slightly and today (28<sup>th</sup> August) stands at 2.75%.
- 3.10 The costs and benefits of longer term borrowing, relative to shorter term borrowing, continue to be monitored and discussed with the council’s treasury adviser Arlingclose. Despite the recent upward trend at present their advice is to continue using short-term loans and delay taking out more expensive longer-term finance.
- 3.11 The Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/14 estimated that additional new loans of £34 million may be needed to cover both borrowing required for the 2013/14 capital programme and the forecast fall in council reserves (which mean that the council has to externalise internal borrowing from previous years). The original budget included higher interest rates associated with PWLB borrowing but the budget has since been reviewed and revised to include further short-term finance. The position is summarised below.

Summary of Borrowing Budget	Budget	Forecast	(Over-spend) / Saving
	£m	£m	£m
Minimum Revenue Provision	9.50	9.58	(0.08)
Interest on existing PWLB and bank loans (January 2013 position)	5.65	5.65	-
<b><u>Variable rate borrowing for 2013/14</u></b> Rollover £12 million of short-term LA loans taken out for 2012/13 Budgeted interest rate: 1.00% Forecast rate: 0.60%	0.12	0.07	0.05
<b><u>Variable rate borrowing for 2013/14</u></b> Budget: Provision for 20 million of PWLB variable rate loans at 1.40% taken out July 2013 or later. Revised forecast: Additional £17 million of short-term LA loans for 2013/14 (at an interest rate of 0.60%)	0.21	0.10	0.11
<b><u>Fixed rate borrowing for 2013/14</u></b> Budget: Provision for £14 million of PWLB 20 year EIP loans at 3.20% taken out mid-year. Revised forecast: £17 million of EIP loans at 3.20% (term may be less than 20 years if PWLB rates remain high)	0.23	0.27	(0.04)
<b>Total MRP and interest payable</b>	<b>15.71</b>	<b>15.67</b>	<b>0.04</b>
<b>Less capitalised interest (see note below)</b>	<b>(0.30)</b>	<b>(0.30)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Forecast budget surplus</b>	<b>15.41</b>	<b>15.37</b>	<b>0.04</b>
<b>Reduction in 2013/14 Budget (Budget savings already declared and budget reduced)</b>	<b>(0.04)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(0.04)</b>
<b>Revised outturn</b>	<b>15.37</b>	<b>15.37</b>	<b>-</b>

- 3.12 The council is able to capitalise interest costs relating to interest paid on borrowing used to fund large capital schemes that take substantial periods of time to get to the point at which the assets may be utilised. Such interest, incurred at the construction or installation phase, may be added to the cost of the associated asset. As can be seen from the table above, capitalised interest of £300,000 has been included in the 2013/14 budget for capital financing costs.

**4. Summary of Outturn Position**

4.1 In view of projected savings, the treasury management budgets have been reduced by £100,000 as part of the recovery plan for addressing shortfalls in adult social care and central procurement targets. The current position is now an underspend of £30,000 calculated as follows:

<b>Summary of Budget underspend</b>	<b>£m</b>
Investment income receivable	0.03
Interest payable on borrowing	-
<b>Total underspend</b>	<b>0.03</b>





<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>19 SEPTEMBER 2013</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>OPTIONS FOR MUSEUMS, CUSTOMER SERVICES AND LIBRARIES</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY, COMMUNITIES AND CORPORATE SERVICES</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>CORPORATE AND ASSESTS; AND ENTERPRISE AND CULTURE</b>

## 1. Classification

Open

## 2. 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 to which the decision relates; and

this is a Key Decision because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the County.

NOTICE has been 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.

## 3. Wards Affected

County-wide.

## 4. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet the options for the future operation of Museums, Customer Services and Libraries and in the light of budget pressures and changing trends in accessing services; and for Cabinet to make a decision based on the options presented.

## 5. Recommendations

**THAT:**

- (a) For Customer Services and Libraries, the Option 2 (Core Service with Top Up) be implemented as a preliminary decision;**
- (b) For the Museum service, that Option 2 (Reduced Service Option) as a preliminary option be implemented whilst Option 3 (discussions with existing trusts) commence; and**

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- (c) **The Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate services, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Enterprise and Community and Corporate and Assets, be delegated to finalise details of the options to be implemented.**

## **6. Alternative Options**

That a decision is delayed until further research and consultation has taken place. This will have an impact on meeting savings targets for 2013/14 and future years.

## **7. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 7.1 To enable actions to be progressed to deliver in year budget savings and ensure that council resources are prioritised to support those in need of services. The recommendation considers the findings from the equalities impact and needs assessment, and specifically the customer feedback via the impact survey and comments from stakeholder focus groups.
- 7.2 For the museum service the chosen option will realise achievable financial savings, satisfies the obligations to the Heritage Lottery Fund, maintains the integrity of the Herefordshire collection and provides the platform for a sustainable future for the service within a model which is delivered by preferred external partner to the council.
- 7.3 The recommendations are seeking approval for preliminary service changes. Further changes to the services will need to be considered in the context of future financial pressures across the local authority, and having due regard to the impact on service users and local people. Therefore whilst the recommended options are immediately instigated, the future level of the services will be evaluated next to wider impacts for residents when setting the budget for the whole authority.

## **8. Key Considerations**

### **Background**

- 8.1 The future operation of museums, customer services and libraries is being considered in light of the budget pressures and changing trends / usage which have shifted over the years.
- 8.2 These trends reflect a combination of factors that include opportunities to access services digitally; availability of books which has broken down many of the old barriers to enabling a range of reading choices; a trend within both the public and private sectors to empower customers to “self-serve”; and growth of community lead schemes such as community libraries.
- 8.3 The growth “self-serve/community delivery” is reflective of the changing nature of local government where services are more relevantly delivered at a very local level with less centralised control. Across the country local authorities are tackling the balance of covering the cost of operating libraries and customer service centres whilst meeting local expectations and needs.
- 8.4 Reflecting of the changing nature of library services the Government made available funding to formulate local library strategy. Herefordshire in partnership with Shropshire was one of ten national projects to review the development of services through sharing approaches to create cost-effective services in a time of financial pressures. This was an independent study conducted in 2011 by Shared Intelligence which involved stakeholder consultation. Recommendations in the study have supported and directed change within the library services with many of the points made still relevant and have contributed to the options of this Cabinet Report.

8.5 Though some of the functions that are delivered are different in nature, customer services and libraries are being considered as one service due to their core purpose of direct customer contact. Also, customer services and front of house library staff have already integrated as one team on joint sites - the front of house library staff joined customer services in 2011 as part of a continuous programme of integrating sites and staff.

8.6 Details of the options for customer services and libraries are outlined in Appendix 1.

The Museums have a different range of customers and requirements. These options are explored in Appendix 2.

### 8.7 **Policy Context**

The proposed options are reflective of the policy framework in which Herefordshire Council is operating:

**Corporate Plan Corporate Plan 2013/14** - specific areas of relevance:

- Public services are prioritised to support those in need of services to maintain their independence or stay safe.
- Ensuring that all council and partner delivery services are responsive to customer needs, engage customers effectively, and enable access to services at as local a level as possible and information through the most appropriate channel.
- Maximising self-help where possible, focussing on prevention and demand management, and diverting unnecessary demand on services.

**Herefordshire Digital Strategy (Cabinet, April 2013)** – outlines the intention of providing excellent online transactions to aid access to a range of services through digital channels.

**Digital County (Cabinet, September 2012)** – ambition for the county in being at the forefront of digital opportunity supported through faster broadband across the county, improved services through the use of technologies, and mobile coverage in “not-spot” areas.

8.8 Based on policy and trend, the principles to the options for museums, customer services and libraries apply:

- Empower communities to be involved in service delivery and encourage customers to access services independently.
- For face to face services to be designed for people who need them most.
- Deal with customer queries one time and first time, ensuring a cross authority approach to effectively dealing with customer requirements.
- Based on value for money, all services are delivered digitally where relevant and possible, supported by a strong internet presence including the need to further develop of the online museum catalogue.
- Continue the journey of integrated services including with other organisations and the community, spreading resources and creating opportunity to access a range of services at the same time.
- The future operation of museum and heritage services considered in the light of budget pressures facing the authority with the objective of securing curatorial

expertise, storage and access to the Herefordshire collection for leisure, research and for the cultural health of Herefordshire whilst achieving quantifiable financial savings.

## **9. Community Impact**

- 9.1 There were 652,530 visits to libraries in 2012/13, with 31.36% of the Herefordshire population classed as active borrowers; this is along with 120,300 queries to customer services between January 2012 and May 2013. For museums there were 134,579 visits during 2012/13; also evidence from the economic impact of museums and heritage indicates that the service generates a wider economic benefit of £5,603,493 (economic tool kit).
- 9.2 Community impact is also considered in Appendix 1: Part 2 of the equalities impact and needs assessment for customer services and libraries.

## **10. Equality and Human Rights**

The equalities impact and needs assessment for customer services and libraries is in Appendix 1: Part 2. The findings of the assessment are based on the impact survey, customer data, national research and stakeholder feedback. As a result of the combined finding equalities considerations need to be given to the following characteristics.

### **Age – Children**

- The evidence suggests that young children benefit from a library service in terms of their reading and education attainment.
- Families in crisis affecting children's prospects and development.

### **Age – Older**

- Impact study found high use of service by 65+.
- Less likely to use the internet to access service.
- At risk of isolation.

### **Disability**

- Less likely to use the internet.
- Isolation and mobility challenges.
- Use of services such as talking books.
- Multiple disabilities need to be considered.

### **Poverty**

- Less likely to afford computer and access to the internet.
- Higher use of public access PCs.
- Less funds available to spend on travel.
- Combined factor of being in crisis.

### **Rural**

- Access to services locally.
- Reduced options for public transport.
- Combined factor with poverty, disability and age to create isolation.

## **11. Financial Implications**

- 11.1 The financial constraints on the Council are also well known and very real, and the Council faces significant continuing reductions in central government funding. By 2015 the Council's government grant will be an estimated 33 per cent lower than it was in 2011. Over the past two years the Council has reduced costs by £21.1 million through efficiency savings and service reductions. This year the Council needs to deliver savings of around £12.9 million and in the next two years a further £23.1 million. Furthermore, inflation has significantly reduced the value of the

Council's income.

The chart below sets out for each year and cumulatively, the costs the Council has taken out and needs to take out, for each of those years, alongside cumulative savings. These savings include savings that are over and above the direct government cuts, as they include a range of cost pressures such as the effect of inflation (which is cumulatively 14 per cent for the four years up to 2014/15) and the rise in demands on our services, most intensively, of course, in adult social care.

Year	Savings made in year	Cumulative savings since April 2010
2011/12	£10.3 million	£10.3 million
2012/13	£10.8 million	£21.1 million
2013/14	£12.9 million	£34.0 million
2014/15	£11.0 million	£45.0 million
2015/16	£12.1 million	£57.1 million

11.2 National data has shown that face to face delivery of services costs more compared to phone and web (ref: SOCITM Insight, Cost to Service Average, 2011):

Average face to face cost: £7.40

Average phone contact cost: £2.90

Average web contact: 32p

### 11.3 Summary Budget

The budgets of customer services and libraries are interdependent with customer services' budgets mainly consist of staffing (covering both customer services and library functions). Other costs cover some premises, printing, stationery, phone, IT, software licences.

### 11.4 Summary Budget Customer Services

Area	Gross Costs	Income	Nett Costs	Corporate	Total
Central	1,098,058	-214,856*	883,202	573,439	1,456,641
South	404,923	-8,850	396,073	99,204	495,277
North	387,899	-548	387,351	164,566	551,917
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,890,880</b>	<b>-224,254</b>	<b>1,666,626</b>	<b>837,209</b>	<b>2,503,835</b>

Note: \*includes specific service level agreements to run services at Franklin House.

11.5 The library service costs cover premises as well as providing the functions of supporting the management of the stock; stock purchasing; reading clubs, delivered services to house bound; developing and enabling community libraries, back office library staff, cost of public access PCs., etc.

### 11.6 Summary Budget for Library Service

Area	Gross Costs £	Income £	Nett Costs £	Corporate Costs £	Total £
Staffing Libraries	383,374		383,374		383,374
Staffing Delivered Services	78,629		78,629		78,629
Premises & Other Running Costs	407,638	-126,075	281,563	128,437	410,000

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Delivered Services	53,663	-90	53,573	40,701	94,274
Stock	238,000		238,000	117,019	355,019
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,161,304</b>	<b>-126,165</b>	<b>1,035,139</b>	<b>286,157</b>	<b>1,321,296</b>

#### 11.7 Summary Budget for Museums

Area	Gross Costs £	Income £	Nett Costs £	Corporate £	Total £
Heritage	487,553	-32,937	454,616	175,278	629,894

11.8 Corporate costs relate to the allocation of support services such as Legal, Finance, HR, ICT and Property. Any savings as a result of these options will be minimal but will be captured within Corporate Services saving schemes. These costs also include other corporate costs that relate to accounting entries required in line with Service Reporting Code of Practice.

11.9 The current savings are based on existing targets, other savings were identified for the May 2013 full Council meeting.

Area	Outstanding savings *	2013/14**	2014/15**	2015/16**	Totals 000's
Customer Services	77,000	80,000	360,000	440,000	957,000
Libraries	0	250,000	500,000	0	750,000
Museums	0	193,500	231,000	37,500	462,000
Totals	77,000	523,500	1,091,000	477,500	2,169,000

\*any savings achieved to meet existing targets not yet delivered the service in the first instance to meet base budget requirements

\*\*to contribute to adult and children well being pressures

11.10 Since April the following savings have been made:  
£60,000 customer services – based on no replacement of staff or renewal of contracts which has led to some reduction in opening hours.  
£55,000 library service on no replacement of staff and reductions in subscriptions.  
£50,000 museums – based on vacancies in year and efficiency savings.

11.11 2012/13 savings were achieved based on:  
£47,000 for customer services  
£38,000 for museums (part of the Cultural Services Review)

#### 11.12 Savings for Customer Services and Libraries

Service Area	Existing Nett budget £	Option 1 savings £	Option 2 savings £	Option 3 savings £	Option 4 saving £
Customer Services	1,666,626	180,000	328,000	737,000	not identified
Libraries	1,035,139	86,000	97,000	825,000	not identified
Totals	2,701,825	266,000	425,000	1,562,000	not identified

### 11.13 Savings for Museums

Service Area	Existing Nett budget £	Option 1 savings £	Option 2 savings £	Option 3 savings £	Option 4 saving £	Option 5 saving £
Museums	454,616	308,829	239,274	220,124	48,013	129,920

11.14 Therefore, the recommendation for customer services and libraries creates a saving of £425,000 – this is short of the target saving presented in May 2013 (combined with the outstanding target saving) of £1,282,000. For museums the recommended option generates a savings of £239,274, which is short of £222,726 of savings target considered at Full Council.

## 12. Legal Implications

12.1 The Libraries and Museums Act 1964 requires the council to provide a ‘comprehensive and efficient’ library service. If the Secretary of State is concerned that a library authority is in breach of this duty s/he may order a Public Inquiry. This has only ever happened once: in Wirral in 2009, where the council abandoned proposals to close 11 of its 24 libraries.

The remodelling of library services has generated several legal challenges in recent years.

These legal challenges have tended to turn on whether the authority has complied with its obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 - the public sector equality duty (PSED). This duty imposes a positive obligation on local authorities to promote equality and to reduce discrimination in relation to any of the nine ‘protected characteristics’ (age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation). In particular, the council must have ‘due regard’ to the PSED when taking any decisions on service changes. However, the courts also recognise that local authorities have a legal duty to set a balanced budget and that council resources are being reduced by central government.

Where a decision is likely to result in detrimental impact on any group with a protected characteristic it must be justified objectively. This means that attempts to mitigate the harm need to be explored. If the harm cannot be avoided, the decision maker must balance this detrimental impact against the strength of legitimate public need to pursue the service remodelling to deliver savings. The more serious the residual detrimental impact, the greater the financial savings must be to justify the decision. The harm can only be justified if it is proportionate to the financial benefit and if there have been reasonable efforts to mitigate the harm.

There are no statutory requirements for the provision of a museum service. There are some legal implications with reference to the council’s responsibilities for the collection which would make any attempt to dismantle the collection very costly.

Herefordshire council has a 25 year contract with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) who provided £1.2 million funding for the Museum Resource and Learning Centre. There is 19 years left of this agreement to run. The HLF have indicated that they would seek to reclaim funding if the facility was closed, if its purpose changed from

its original purpose and if access to the collection was not maintained.

### 13. Risk Management

13.1 Each of the appendix reports for Museums, Customer Services / Libraries address the risk related to the options presented. The risks below are general considerations in the delivery of change and rated after mitigation.

Risk No.	Risk	Mitigation	Likely rating	Impact rating
1	Budget savings are over optimistic.	Confirmation of achievability by the accountants.	2	4
2	Staff capacity and involvement in delivering changes.	Pre and post cabinet involvement of staff.	3	4
4	IT and web capacity to deliver change.	Ensure priority list for web access improvements.	3	4
5	Negative media coverage affecting reputation.	Explain rationale of decisions and work with local user groups and council to explain reasons for the changes.	5	3
6	Decision on options delayed having an impact on delivery of savings.	Consider alternative options for savings within the Directorate.	3	4

**Key**

LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT
5 Certain	5 Catastrophic
4 Likely	4 Major
3 Possible	3 Moderate
2 Unlikely	2 Minor
1 Rare	1 Insignificant

### 14. Consultees

14.1 Consultation is itemised in each of the Appendix reports.

### 15. Appendices

15.1 Appendix one: Options for Customer Services and Libraries  
Appendix two: Options for Museums

### 16. Background Papers

16.1 None identified.



### Options for Customer Services and Libraries

#### 1. Options

1.1 The options as outlined are based on a number of factors and should be read in tandem with the Equalities Impact and Needs Assessment (part 2). In composing the options the following considerations were made:

- Where it is essential for face to face services based on need or service type
- Which sites are used most often
- What are the trends in terms of current customer use, but also future use of technologies and community involvement in operating sites
- Aim to improve quality of customer experience, whilst meeting the financial pressures of the local authority
- The current and future role of customer services and libraries as the front face delivery of a number of public sector functions, not just council services
- The social, demographic, educational impacts of changes to services
- Duty of the local authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient service under section 7 of The Libraries and Museums Act 1964
- The views of stakeholders, results of the impact survey and other research.

1.2 Within each of the options the following principles will apply:

- Face to face services will be designed around people who need them most and currently have no option but to visit sites for services. This will be balanced with a continuous programme of electronic service development making it as easy as possible for customers to access services via the web.
- To continue with the journey of integrating customer services and libraries, as the front facing delivery of local authority services. Whilst respecting the requirements of different services it allows staff to deal with a broad range of customer requirements; it also supports additional use of the library buildings and reduces the overheads in managing sites.
- To continuously improve the relationship between the front office and back office functions, based on the principle of enabling the customer to receive the quickest response direct from people with the skills and knowledge. This will involve cross authority changes in approach and practices to ensure customer queries are dealt with one time and first time.
- To design services that consider local circumstances, that also involve communities in their operation, and that meet the demand for countywide delivery.

#### 1.3 Option 1 – Status Quo

Overview: To retain the opening hours as they currently stand based on the changes which have already been implemented with no more than a future 10% reduction to account for staff leaving. Additional savings through improved processes and practices over time.

The central library functions to remain though explore continued efficiencies supporting the management of the stock; stock purchasing; reading clubs, delivered services for housebound; developing and enabling community libraries, public access PCs., etc.

Longer term: Open access library and customer service centres across the county, supported by community libraries and digital access to services. To review this approach in 18 months considering the need to meet the budget pressures of the local authority.

**Strengths:**

- Limited impact on existing users at least in the short term.
- Takes account of customer ability to access services at times possible and convenient to them (e.g. dependent of bus time).
- Demonstrably meets the council's legal duty to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service.
- Allows for future consideration and consultation of the other options, and development of the service in future years.

**Weaknesses:**

- Does not release savings to reinvest in essential and core services provided by the local authority in the care and welfare of people.
- Does not address the pressures within the service to create an improved experience for customers.
- Continues to put pressure on staffing, including lone working.
- Does not take into account use of digital or email access that can be more convenient to the customer and more cost effective for the public purse.
- Will still need to prioritise services to people who need face to face functions through a 10% reduction of services.

**Property issues:**

In Ledbury continue with programme of work that brings together customer services and library functions.

**Option 1 - Savings**

Area	Nett Costs £000's	Revised Costs £000's	Savings £000's			
			13/14	14/15	15/16	Total
Library	1,035	949	86	0	0	86
Customer Services	1,667	1,487	70	110	0	180
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,702</b>	<b>2,436</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>266</b>

**1.4 Option 2 - Core Service with Top Up**

To refocus the service on core activity, still creating a universal approach but with reduced hours at all sites for customer services and library functions - based on opening hours in May 2013. The provision of the centres will focus on customers who cannot access services or functions any other way but through face to face contact, with all other customers encouraged to operate a more self-service route. To support this approach by improving availability to the public access PC, but also charging for services to generate income to help sustain the opening hours.

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To have the ability to increase these core hours and services by enabling partners to use the sites. The top-up would be very flexible in nature and respond to opportunities provided by the community, private sector, partnerships with education, integrate with other services, etc. An example of this is Homepoint who have a service level agreement with customer services to provide two dedicated posts at Franklin House.

The reduction in hours to create a core service would be based on use and demand across the county – Hereford library and customer service centre reduced by 20%; Leominster and Ross Centres reduced by 30%; Ledbury, Kington and Bromyard by 50%.

For the smaller libraries (that primarily provide a library function) to become community run with staffing met by volunteers or local fundraising, though supported by the central library functions – this would involve Colwall, Leintwardine and Weobley. If there are insufficient local resources to sustain a community library at these sites, the Cabinet will need to reconsider the options for these libraries, including possible closure. To also explore greater local involvement in the running of Belmont Library, although here due regard must be given to the higher number of users.

To compensate for pressure at centres as a result of reduced hours instigate increased self-serve for return and issue of library stock, and significant drive for web access to services.

The central library function to remain largely in place but with management integration with customer services utilising the skills of both teams under one structure. To also explore partnerships in and out of the county to create efficiencies.

Long Term: Recognise libraries as community spaces that have the potential for a wider range of uses managed locally. That spaces and services are designed to meet the target needs of people based on development needs of children and young people, services accessed by people require face to face contact specifically older people, people with disabilities, vulnerable people and people in crisis. This is balanced with increase in on-line services reflective of modern day local government in providing access to services.

**Strengths:**

- Creates savings.
- Still retains a presence in the market towns as well as Hereford as the areas of highest population / use.
- Provide flexibility to increase hours through partnerships with others.
- Still provides a comprehensive and efficient library service.

**Weaknesses:**

- There will be impact on users of services, especially in the areas covered by the smaller libraries if not established as community libraries.
- Heavy reliance on digital access and cost of awareness campaign for customers to use self-serve functions.
- Redundancy costs for employees leaving the service.
- Potential loss to stock space to accommodate alternative use of spaces.
- Capital spend requirement, specifically at Hereford Library and to purchase self-

- serve system for library stock and improvement to public access PCs.
- The level of service change may result in a legal challenge.
- The top-up relies on in-put from a third party which may not materialise.

**Property issues:**

Continue with the Masters House project at Ledbury to become one integrated site for libraries and customer services. Reconfigure Hereford Library to accommodate other services.

**Option 2 - Savings**

Area	Nett Costs £000's	Revised Costs £000's	Savings £000's			
			13/14	14/15	15/16	Total
Library	1,035	938	86	11	0	97
Customer Services	1,667	1,339	127	201	0	328
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,702</b>	<b>2,277</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>425</b>

1.5 **Option 3 – Centralised Provision**

To retain the library and customer service centre in Hereford at its current hours where there is the biggest demand, with a one day presence in each of the market towns balanced with customers being able to access services at different places within their local area (e.g. via post offices). This to be transitional change over 18 months, starting with the withdrawal of staffing from lowest use centres. During the transformation period instigate increased availability of digital services and a campaign of awareness with customers taking place on how to access services locally.

Local areas, possibly via the collective locality approach, would have the option of running their own libraries or book exchange projects.

This option includes the withdrawal of the central library functions including the delivered services and replacement book stock.

Long term: Clear remit of centralised services based on people who to whom face to face services is essential. All other contact via home visits for house bound and web for all other. Potential community delivery of library centres through the transfer of assets.

**Strengths:**

- Targeted public expenditure to essential and core services, and meets the funding requirement previously identified.
- Targeted provision at the highest volume location, and prioritising people who need the services most.
- Drives change for people using alternative ways of accessing services (e.g. the internet, phone, email).
- Release of capital asset for sale or community transfer.

**Weaknesses:**

- Limited presence in the market towns, and pressure on Hereford facilities.
- Relies on significant change of behaviour in customer use.

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- Secretary of State could order a public inquiry if not satisfied that the remodelled service is a comprehensive and efficient library service.
- Even if the Secretary of State did not order a public Inquiry, the extent of service change would be likely to result in a legal challenge by dissatisfied service users.
- Relies on improved and comprehensive web presence.
- Will take time to implement.

**Property issues:**

For one day service at market towns to be co-located with existing facilities which would release current sites for alternative use, community transfer or sale. Potential improvements needed at facilities in Hereford to cope with demand.

**Option 3 - Savings**

Area	Nett Costs £000's	Revised Costs £000's	Savings £000's			
			13/14	14/15	15/16	Total
Library	1,035	210	86	360	379	825
Customer Services	1,667	930	77	360	300	737
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,702</b>	<b>1,140</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>1,562</b>

1.6 **Option 4 – Outsource and Partnerships**

For the services to be delivered by a third party of either a social enterprise / charitable trust, other public body, private sector or at an individual locality level by the community. It would be likely that different elements will appeal to different bodies with the libraries potentially joining a heritage trust or existing trust arrangement. This would likely mean a split of customer services and libraries though could bring new approaches and collaborations.

Savings on non domestic rates (NNDR) can be made by a charity (savings up to 50% of rate saving to the local authority). The services have high expenditure with little opportunity on income. This might discourage interest in operating the services and result in a continuing need for subsidy by the local authority. This option would need time to develop and tested through procurement and dialogue over an 18 month period.

The other aspect of this option is to establish formal partnerships. For example, the council already purchases the book stock through a consortium of local authorities, which increases buying power. Additionally, joint arrangements across the county could be developed on the use of sites and delivery of services on a site by site basis.

**Strengths:**

- Herefordshire has a tradition of outsourcing major services to trusts (Halo / the Courtyard) or the private sector (public realm contract) from which to build experience. The local authority also has a track record of cross county working (e.g. library stock purchasing; local enterprise partnership, Waste Contract; rural broadband delivery).
- Opportunities for collaboration across different sectors and functions.
- Could provide localised solutions for each site.
- Increase the service offer on the different sites.

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**Weaknesses:**

- Library and customer services do not have a ready and significant stream of income that covers costs, so likely the local authority will still have to make available a subsidy.
- Potential break-up of existing arrangement that has involved the merger of services and co-dependencies (e.g. staff conducting joint functions).
- An unclear market for the services that would take time to test, therefore savings cannot be identified at this stage.

**Property issues:**

Transfer of assets creating potential for NNDR savings if operated by charity.

**1.7 Recommendation of the Options**

The recommendation for customer services and libraries is based on the evaluation of each option, alongside the impact assessment and risks. This recommendation is based on Option 2 (providing core services with reduced opening hours balanced with the opportunity to have additional services and functions on sites from within other public services, voluntary, private and education sectors).

This recommendation recognises the points made by stakeholders, findings from impact survey and national policy in retaining a library presence as public / community spaces, and spaces for accessing learning and reading. In retaining these places as multifunction venues there is opportunity to target services for people that need face to face contact, and play a role in providing preventive services to avoid or delay the need for intense public sector intervention – specifically older people, people with disabilities, vulnerable children and people in crisis.

Option 3 (centralised service) creates additional savings of £1,562,000 (compared to £425,000 for option 2). However, it would have more of a negative effect on people aged 65+ (48% of those over 65 who responded to the impact survey do not know how to use the internet, and/or have problems of transport and mobility); and on people with a disability. Notwithstanding the much greater savings under option 3, the greater adverse impact on two groups with protected characteristics (age and disability) make it highly likely that there would be a legal challenge to option 3. Such a challenge might allege that the council had failed to comply with its obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 (the public sector equality duty). Alternatively, a challenge might allege that the council would fail to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service, as required by the Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

Option 2 provides an opportunity to migrate people who do not need face to face support to self-service mechanisms and increase community involvement in operating services. For this to be complimented by a review of practices and systems across the authority to support a lean approach to customer contact based on "one time and first time". In this way the pressure on services due to reduced opening hours can be addressed.

The option can also give opportunity to explore local contracting opportunities where possibility arises, along with increased cross county arrangements that result in reduced costs and efficiencies. The development or increase of services can be driven through a partnership with user groups and local councils as part of the principle of "topped up services" and establishment of community run libraries.

The recommendation is seeking approval for preliminary service changes. Further changes to the services to be considered in the context of financial pressures across the local authority, and having due regard to the impact of any further service changes on service users and local people. To support any longer term change data on use and customers will be collected to inform future impact assessments in the context of wider local authority change and budget pressure. This will enable a wider understanding of the impact on residents and inform the best allocation of funds to best meet the needs of people who most need support.

## **2 Customer Contact Centre and the Web**

The customer contact centre deals with email and telephone queries and will remain in place though some efficiencies gained through re-arranging back office operations – for example more opportunity to make payments through the phone, customer services delivered within the services, and shared face to face and phone handling.

There are plans to have a more interactive web-presence which will help customers access services at a time suitable to them using personal accounts. However, it is understood that training might be needed to support customers to use the web – though recognising that for some people it may never be an option.

## **3 Adult Well Being Front Door**

As part of Herefordshire Council's focus on core services, priority is given to the needs of people requiring social care and welfare support. This includes prioritising the requirements of adult well being in terms of face to face customer service moving to integrated teams creating a more joined up approach to addressing priority needs.

Over time, this means that the service will cater for people who need face to face interaction which could increase given the predicted demographic, though balanced with a likely overall decrease in customers who need face to face interaction as the options for self-serve become available.

## **4 Naming**

There are a number of issues of naming based on the integrated services with a mixture of labels - Libraries, Customer Service Centres, Info Centres or the name of town followed by Centre, e.g. the Kington Centre.

Based on the option chosen by Cabinet a review of titles takes place to create consistency and reflect services on offer.

## **5 HR issues**

The core cost of running the customer service centres is predominately salaries with some venue costs; for the central library service this is staff but also purchase of book stock and premises. With a reduction in service delivery there will be a reduction in the number of staff needed. Options 2 and 3 will result in consultation for a restructure for libraries, customer services and the contact centre to alignment roles. The restructure will also bring the services within one division and address anomalies within budgets.

## 6 Risk Management

The following risks are based on delivery and achievement of the options. Risk key:

LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT
5 Certain	5 Catastrophic
4 Likely	4 Major
3 Possible	3 Moderate
2 Unlikely	2 Minor
1 Rare	1 Insignificant

### 6.1 Risks for Option 1: Status Quo

Risk No.	Risk	Mitigation	Likely rating	Impact rating
1.1	Capacity to make any improvements considering the strain on current provision.	1. Improvement made on a continuous basis, making use of user group support / volunteers to build capacity.	4	3
1.2	Ability to implement changes in staffing.	1. Base staff changes on turn-over.	3	3

### 6.2 Risks for Option 2: Core Service with Top Up

Risk No.	Risk	Mitigation	Likely rating	Impact rating
2.1	Unable to access capital investment needed.	1. Borrowing set against revenue spend via invest to save.	4	4
2.2	Excludes people from access to services.	1. Link opening times to most popular times. 2. Link opening times to bus times. 3. Increase use of the web. 4. Move to appointment based approach if required.	3	3
2.3	Judicial Review based on reduced hours.	1. Impact assessment to understand customer requirements. 2. Services retained in market towns. 3. Support for community libraries. 4. Increase the number of drop off and collection points. 5. Retain home delivery service.	3	4
2.4	Lack of third party investment, including establishment of community libraries.	1. Provide central support for community libraries. 2. Flexible dialogue on opportunities for third part involvement.	4	3

Further information on the subject of this Report is available from Natalia Silver, Head of Community and Customer Services on Tel (01432) 260732



2.5	Loss of shelving for library stock.	1. Improve electronic digital access to library stock details. 2. Volunteer support to access and understand library stock. 3. Consideration of whole design of sites and use of spaces.	3	3
2.6	Slow progress on website improvements to access services.	1. Planned programme of web improvement based focus on high volume, high impact services.	3	4

### 6.3 Risks for Option 3: Centralised Service

Risk No.	Risk	Mitigation	Likely rating	Impact rating
3.1	Customers unable to access services.	1. Service retained within Hereford as area of greatest population and use. 2. Appointment based on people who need services most. 3. Increase use of digital. 4. Create other outlets to provide services.	4	4
3.2	Secretary of State orders public inquiry if not satisfied service is comprehensive and efficient.	1. More detailed work on Impact Assessment. 2. Appointment based on people who need services most. 3. Increase use of digital. 4. Create other outlets to provide services.	5	4
3.3	No immediate savings due to additional impact assessment, creating alternative channels for service access, behavioural change using digital services.	1. Conduct change over an 18 month period, with start of changes in December 2013.	4	3

### 6.4 Risks for Option 4: Outsourcing and Partnerships

Risk No.	Risk	Mitigation	Likely rating	Impact rating
4.1	Unclear on savings, market interest and model.	1. Engage with the market of costs and models.	4	4
4.2	Different approach between services delivery.	1. Break down the services in to manageable parts for tendering.	4	3
4.3	Dependent on partnership approach, and capacity for established partnerships that benefit the county.	1. Open dialogue with potential partners.	4	3

Further information on the subject of this Report is available from Natalia Silver, Head of Community and Customer Services on Tel (01432) 260732

## 7 Consultees

Engagement in shaping the options has taken several forms.

### 7.1 Focus Groups

Focus groups were organised with staff to understand how options would have an effect on customers. Focus Groups also took place with stakeholders consisting of representatives of established user groups and town / parish councils that have a library in their area. These sessions were again aimed to gather impact on customers using the insight of people representative of users and to contribute to shaping the options. Attendees also provided written comments.

The original options and the recurring comments made at the focus groups are collected together in the equalities impact and needs assessment. To note the original options shared at the focus groups have subsequently changed based on comments made.

### 7.2 Staff Focus Groups

- Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July, covering central area (held in Hereford)
- Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> August south area (held in Ross on Wye)
- Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> August north area (held in Leominster)

### 7.3 Stakeholder Focus Groups

- Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> August – south area (held in Ross on Wye)
- Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> August – north area (held in Leominster)
- Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August – central area (held in Hereford)

### 7.4 Impact Survey

An impact survey was available in customer service centres and libraries from 4<sup>th</sup> July to 8<sup>th</sup> August 2013, with 3,457 responses. The survey's purpose was to capture customers experience who use the sites over a five week period (across both school term time and school holidays). This was to gain an understanding of use and impact of changes on people who use the centres within the period (therefore regular visitors of at least once a month). This included facilitated sessions with customers encouraging and helping people to complete the form who would otherwise not have participated. The findings are reflected in the equalities impact and needs assessment and within a separate report published by the council.

### 7.5 Budget Consultation, February 2013

As part of the budget consultation process 2,817 responses were received - 2,174 were submitted online, 634 paper survey responses and 9 letters/e-mails. Key results for library and customers services included:

- 80% of respondees agree to bringing together customer service centres, libraries and other facilities where these are duplicated in a particular area, 10% neither agree or disagree, 10% disagree.
- 28% of respondees agreed to reducing opening hours for customer service centres / libraries, 21% neither agree or disagree, 51% disagree

There were 1,416 comments in the "community" section, relevant to libraries and customer services were:

- Very strong support for libraries as a valuable/essential community resource.
- Concern about moving toward reliance on online info in a county with an ageing population and poor broadband service.
- Info. Centres / libraries etc. need to be open at times when people need them –

reducing hours will deny access.

## 7.6 Petitions

Two petitions are known by the local authority based on keeping libraries open. The 38 Degree website with 9,393 signatures (as of 3.9.13), which incorporates 8,500 signed petition submitted to Herefordshire Council. The petition headed "Save Herefordshire's Libraries", calls on Herefordshire Council to reconsider cutting Herefordshire's library and museum budget, reducing opening hours and replacing staff with volunteers. In accordance with the council's petition scheme the subject of the petition was debated at Full Council when submitted on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2013 in the context of the overall budget position.

Love Leintwardine Library with 300 signatures for the facility to remain open.

## 8 Background Information

The library function has been in operation for over a hundred years (Hereford Library at its current location was opened in 1874) to enable access to a range of books that many people could not afford.

The Library service offers the following services: loan of stock (books, DVDs, CDs, Computer Games); purchase and management of stock (e.g. pre-booking); reference / research books; interlibrary loans (from different libraries); newspapers and magazines; specialist loans e.g. book clubs; school library service; delivered service to the housebound

### 8.1

#### Use of Library sites

Library sites	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
<b>Hereford</b>					
<i>Visits</i>	262,042	254,803	236,182	232,817	227,240
<i>Issues</i>	273,715	263,550	251,849	241,398	212,577
<i>Reservations</i>	5,753	5,872	6,204	6,265	5,245
<i>PC Sessions</i>	39,304	47,660	38,166	37,355	35,868
<b>Leominster</b>					
<i>Visits</i>	131,928	122,478	112,540	111,954	105,283
<i>Issues</i>	173,699	163,101	151,497	156,528	142,058
<i>Reservations</i>	4,334	3,980	3,864	3,804	3,632
<i>PC Sessions</i>	17,513	22,203	17,957	17,455	16,604
<b>Ross</b>					
<i>Visits</i>	114,982	112,022	109,916	108,275	115,219
<i>Issues</i>	138,747	137,886	132,998	132,493	130,241
<i>Reservations</i>	3,431	4,187	4,333	4,329	3,462
<i>PC Sessions</i>	15,266	21,885	14,655	12,334	18,888
<b>Ledbury</b>					
<i>Visits</i>	91,355	88,666	82,655	77,948	72,583
<i>Issues</i>	85,755	85,472	83,111	78,349	68,517
<i>Reservations</i>	3,137	3,203	3,732	3,672	2,808
<i>PC Sessions</i>	8,201	9,435	8,014	6,415	7,313
<b>Bromyard</b>					
<i>Visits</i>	64,564	60,909	59,193	55,125	50,916
<i>Issues</i>	53,117	49,460	44,887	41,724	38,993
<i>Reservations</i>	931	1,062	1,029	989	1,033
<i>PC Sessions</i>	4,618	4,580	11,076	12,201	11,333
<b>Kington</b>					
<i>Visits</i>	38,242	35,096	35,434	34,435	36,227
<i>Issues</i>	42,368	39,567	37,301	35,687	33,223

Further information on the subject of this Report is available from  
Natalia Silver, Head of Community and Customer Services on Tel (01432) 260732

<i>Reservations</i>	1,202	1,497	1,379	1,567	1,296
<i>PC Sessions</i>	3,064	4,747	5,381	5,619	5,472
<b>Belmont</b>					
<i>Visits</i>	23,671	29,815	29,235	27,714	25,020
<i>Issues</i>	33,058	34,747	30,437	29,654	26,497
<i>Reservations</i>	931	1,190	1,209	1,216	1,153
<i>PC Sessions</i>	761	1,468	1,133	1,084	1,027
<b>Colwall</b>					
<i>Visits</i>	16,662	16,229	16,230	16,886	14,685
<i>Issues</i>	21,504	21,871	21,574	21,539	18,687
<i>Reservations</i>	1,223	1,181	1,216	1,424	1,266
<i>PC Sessions</i>	4,419	5,906	3,824	3,526	3,362
<b>Weobley</b>					
<i>Visits</i>	3,780	3,499	3,040	3,167	2,930
<i>Issues</i>	9,264	9,579	7,669	7,699	7,039
<i>Reservations</i>	546	550	531	671	522
<i>PC Sessions</i>	425	404	223	128	113
<b>Leintwardine</b>					
<i>Visits</i>	2,590	2,359	2,079	2,703	2,427
<i>Issues</i>	6,669	5,998	4,699	5,673	5,324
<i>Reservations</i>	465	545	348	440	456
<i>PC Sessions</i>	131	114	52	81	101

Note: Ross become an intergrated customer services and library sites in 2011; Bromyard intergrated site in 2005; Kington 2009; Leominster 2013.

## 8.2

Face to Face Customer Service enquiries recorded on CRM January 2012 to May 2013:

<b>Site</b>	<b>Volume</b>	<b>%</b>
Bromyard CSC	5,081	4.2
Colwall Library	1	0.0
Hereford CSC	51,966	43.2
Hereford Library	36	0.0
Kington CSC	5,940	4.9
Ledbury CSC	8,991	7.5
Ledbury Library	3	0.0
Leintwardine Library	2	0.0
Leominster CSC	29,256	24.3
Leominster Library	18	0.0
Peterchurch Library	4	0.0
Ross CSC	19,002	15.8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>120,300</b>	

### 8.3 Overview of the services

Customer services are the first point of contact for a number of services provided by the local authority or its partners. As a broad summary this can be broken down into the following areas (January to December 2012):

Service	calls	%	In person	%	email	%
Amey	14,948	9%	1,459	1%	2,436	30%
Housing Benefits	29,062	17%	22,744	24%	54	1%
Blue badges	5,844	3%	3,609	4%	20	0%
Council tax	46,499	26%	7,321	8%	131	2%
EHTS	13,856	8%	2,698	3%	835	11%
General	22,425	13%	49,737	51%	3,337	42%
Homepoint/ Housing Solutions	10,006	6%	5,066	5%	25	0%
Planning	16,173	9%	2,341	2%	524	7%
Waste	15,233	9%	1,719	2%	520	7%
Special projects	439	0%	54	0%	14	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>174,485</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>96,748</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>7,896</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: These figures do not show how long a query will take with staff supporting people to complete forms etc. The figures do not include complaints/compliments which are dealt with by another team.



### Equalities Impact and Needs Assessment Options for Libraries and Customers Services

1. Introduction and Methodology
2. Protected Characteristics and Service Use
3. Customer Use
4. Electronic Delivery of Services
5. Compounded Factor
6. Service Change
7. Options and Impacts

Supporting papers:

1. Focus Group Findings
2. Summary report of Impact Study

#### **1. Introduction and Methodology**

There were 652,530 visits to libraries in 2012/13, with 31.36% of the Herefordshire population classed as active borrowers; this is along with 120,300 queries to customer services between January 2012 and May 2013. Any change to these services needs to be considered next to the impact they will have on the people who use them. This does not stop local authorities making difficult decisions but those decisions need to be made in the context of the needs and rights of different members of the community.

An impact assessment is one tool that may assist decision makers comply with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The duty relates to different groups who share any of the “protective characteristic” of age, sex, pregnancy and maternity, disability, race, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

The Equality Act outlines that due regard involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Geography in terms of access to services is not a protective characteristic, but is considered in this report due to the rural nature of the county and the sparseness of the population. Poverty is also not listed as a protective characteristic but treated as one in this report due to Herefordshire’s low wage economy and the multiplier effect poverty has on disadvantage.

The services of libraries and customers services are co-dependent and integrated – the centres are staffed by the same teams from the same budget from customer services. This budget largely consists of staffing, so any reduction in expenditure means people who operate the libraries also operate customer service functions. There is a central library service which has the role of ensuring the libraries can function across the county in supporting the delivered services to the housebound,

schools library service, the management and purchase of stock, cost of public access PCs and reading groups.

The assessment needs to be mindful of wider pressures on public service pressure to meet core and priority services and the 1964 Libraries Act in that local authorities are required to provide a “comprehensive and efficient” service.

## 1.1 Methodology

For the impact assessment it is important to know who uses the service, what for and what would be the impact of possible changes on customers.

Customer service and libraries are “universal” services – that means they are open to anyone to use. Therefore this impact assessment includes a review of general demographics in the county.

These demographics are reviewed next to understanding the customer base for services, or where there are specific functions that impact on a specific group. There is also consideration of electronic delivery of service for two reasons – firstly there is the provision of public access PC’s at facilities; and secondly current and future opportunity of accessing services via the internet.

To support this equalities impact and needs assessment an impact survey ran from 4th July to 8th August 2013 to specifically understand real and current usage of centres over a sample five week period (across school and non-school holiday time); and know from customers how possible change would affect them.

## 2. Protected Characteristics and Service Users

### 2.1 Age

The table below illustrates the age profile of the county.

**Table 1: Age profile of Herefordshire**

Age Group	Male		Female		Total	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
0-15	16,200	17.8%	15,400	16.4%	31,500	17.0%
16-24	9,200	10.1%	8,600	9.2%	17,800	9.6%
25-44	21,200	23.3%	20,800	22.2%	42,100	22.8%
45-64	25,900	28.4%	26,800	28.5%	52,700	28.5%
65-74	10,600	11.6%	11,200	11.9%	21,800	11.8%
75+	8,000	8.8%	11,100	11.8%	19,000	10.3%
All ages	91,100	100.0%	93,900	100.0%	184,900	100.0%

*Source: Office for National Statistics 2012 mid-year estimates*

As well as current population numbers it is worth considering long term age profile when planning service change. Table 2 shows how numbers of people in three broad age groups are expected to change in nine and 19 years time, compared to changes observed since 2001.



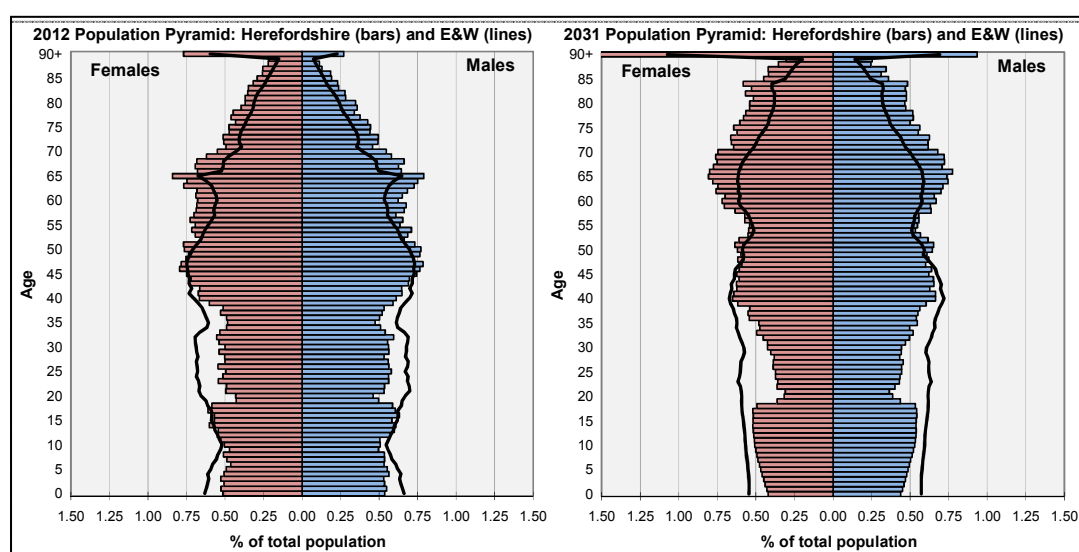
**Table 2: Mid-year estimates and 2011-based forecasts**

	Mid-year estimates			2011-based forecasts	
	2001	2011	2012	2021	2031
<b>Under 16</b>	34,000	31,400	31,500	32,400	32,300
<b>16 to 64</b>	107,200	112,900	112,600	110,600	110,300
<b>65 and over</b>	33,700	39,400	40,800	50,700	62,600
<b>Total population</b>	175,800	183,600	184,900	193,700	205,300

Source: Office for National Statistics mid-year estimates; 2011-based forecasts, GL Hearn Property Consultants

The population pyramids in chart 1 below show a more detailed age structure of Herefordshire and how it compares with England and Wales, compared with how it is forecast to look in 2031.

**Chart 1: Change in age profile**



Source: Office for National Statistics mid-year estimates; 2011-based forecasts, GL Hearn Property Consultants

### 2.1.1 Children

High birth rates occurred in the early to mid-1990s that peaked in 1994. This was followed by a steady fall. However, Herefordshire birth rates have been higher since 2007, driven by women of child-bearing age migrating to the county; eight per cent of births in 2011 were to mothers born in countries that joined the EU during the last decade (one per cent prior to their joining). Levels over the last four years (2009 - 2012) have been between 1,800 and 1,900 births per year.

The latest forecasts suggest that this will lead to a slight increase in the number of **under 16s** between 2016 and 2026, peaking at 32,800 before starting to fall again. This peak is four per cent higher than currently (31,500) but still lower than in any year prior to 2005.

The number of **under-5s** in Herefordshire is forecast to remain between 9,800 and 9,900 up until 2023 prior to falling to 9,300 in 2031. The number of **5 to 15-year olds** is forecast to increase by around seven per cent (from 21,700 to 23,200) between 2012 and 2026 prior to levelling off.

### **2.1.2 Young adults**

In 2012 there were 17,800 16-24 year olds in Herefordshire, which was 10 per cent of the total population. Young adults, particularly those aged 18 and 19, are a relatively mobile group; this may be explained by Herefordshire not having a major centre of higher education, coupled with the fact that young people leaving home to start university are counted at their term-time address. On average around 500 more 16-24 year-olds leave the county each year than move into it (to/from other parts of the UK). However, it is worth noting that although there is an average annual net loss of around 400 16-24 year-olds, this only represents around 3 per cent of the county's population of these ages.

The number of 16-24 year olds had been increasing prior to 2009; levels are however forecast to fall between 2012 and 2023 by 21 per cent reaching a minimum of 14,100 people. Levels are then forecast to rise steadily up to 15,800 people in 2031 (12 per cent fewer than in 2012).

### **2.1.3 25 to 64 year olds**

In 2012 there were 42,100 25-44 year olds and 52,700 45-64 year olds in Herefordshire, representing 23 per cent and 28 per cent of the total population. It can be seen from chart 1 that Herefordshire has a higher proportion than nationally of residents of all ages from about 50.

The proportion of the population in the older age-group (45-64) has increased by 12% over the last 11 years, whilst the proportions of the younger age-group (25-44) decreased by 8%. Both of these age groups are not forecast to change by more than 2% by 2031. The number of 25-44 year olds is forecast to increase slightly, peaking at 43,800 in 2023 before starting to fall again; whereas the number of 45-64 year olds is forecast to remain relatively stable.

### **2.1.4 Over 65 age group**

Herefordshire has an older age profile than both the region and England and Wales, with a noticeably higher proportion of its population in the older age groups. Just over a fifth of Herefordshire's population is aged 65 and over (22 per cent), compared 16 per cent nationally<sup>1</sup>. The numbers of older people have grown more rapidly locally than nationally, a trend which is expected to continue as the post-war 'baby-boom' generation moves into old age. The number of people aged 65+ forecasted to be living in Herefordshire by 2031 will be 62,600. In particular, the number of people aged 85+ is expected to more than double, from 5,500 in 2012 to 12,200 in 2031.

Enabling older people to stay in their homes rather than residential care can enable people to have more control over their lives and is more cost effective than residential care (for the public sector or individual). However, isolation can be a key factor - 3.1m people in the UK over 65 years of age don't see family, friend or neighbour even once a week<sup>2</sup> and 51 per cent over 75 years live alone, with just over 1 million (11 per cent) aged 65+ say they always or often feel lonely<sup>3</sup>.

So the population of Herefordshire is likely to grow, but the age profile will change dramatically. Chart 1 shows predicted changes in the percentage of each age group between 2012 and 2031.

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<sup>1</sup> Understanding Herefordshire, 2013

<sup>2</sup> Participle.net

<sup>3</sup> Agenda for Later Life, Age UK

## 2.2 Service Users by Age

The “active borrowers” data gives a good indication of the age group who use the library service. This data is based on the type and avenue the stock was accessed over the last two years.

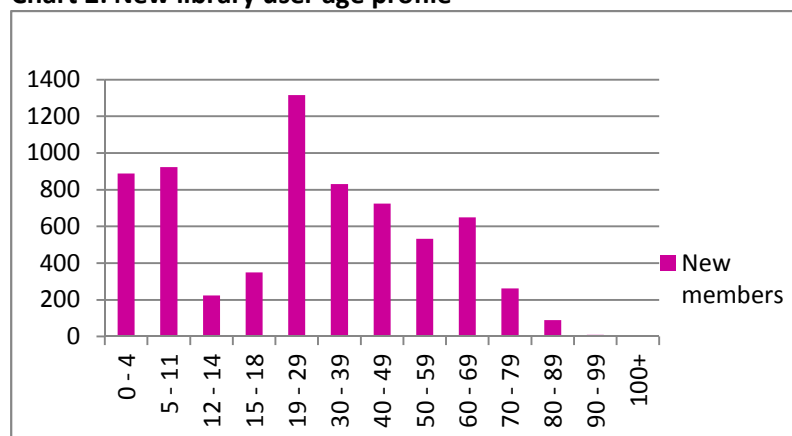
**Table 3: Active borrowers** (borrowers with active status who have loaned items or used public computers in the last 2 years)

<b>Borrower type</b>	<b>Number of borrowers</b>
Access Adult	1,271
Access Junior	61
Access Teenage	46
Access Teenplus	59
Access Under Five	12
Adult	41,301
After Schools Club - Primary	17
After Schools Club - Secondary	3
Childminder	63
Community Libraries	11
Foster Carer	32
High School	16
Home Delivery	362
Institution	92
Inter Library Loan	66
Junior	6,433
Library Staff	12
Playgroup	63
Primary Project	440
Primary Van	578
Reader Group	106
Teenage	2,378
TeenPlus	1,602
Under Five	2559
Active borrowers total	57,583
Population of Herefordshire	183,600
Borrowers as percentage	31.36

**Source: Herefordshire Council**

Another form of understanding age profile of users, the below chart outlines the profile of new users from April 2012 to March 2013 (excluding home delivery service).

**Chart 2: New library user age profile**



Source: Herefordshire Council

The impact survey showed an age profile of respondents skewed towards the older ages: 48% were aged 65+ compared to 22% of the population.

**Table 4: Impact survey age profile**

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents	Per cent of population
0-15 years	91	3%	17%
16-24 years	116	3%	10%
25-44 years	526	16%	23%
45-64 years	1,021	31%	29%
65-74 years	935	28%	12%
75+ years	657	20%	10%
All ages	3,346	100%	100%

Source: Herefordshire Council

Age was by far the most common characteristic mentioned in the responses to the impact survey. Over a third (35%) of answers to the question of which groups would be particularly affected by the proposals mentioned the elderly or older people. However, 21% mentioned children (and their families) and 7% young people / students. (NB. One response could have mentioned all three so percentages aren't additive).

## 2.3 Sex

Herefordshire has a similar percentage split between men and women to England and Wales as a whole, with women outnumbering men in all age groups but only noticeable in older age (75+) reflecting the fact that women tend to live longer.

**Table 5: Population split between male and female**

Residential population	Numbers	Percentage
Male	91,100	49%
Female	93,900	51%

Source: ONS 2012 mid-year estimate population Crown Copyright

## 2.4 Service Use by Sex

The majority (67%) of responses to the impact survey were from females, and this was the case across all age groups. The distinction was most stark in the 25-44 year-old age group, where 78% of responses were from women. This may be related to the use of libraries by parents (mothers) with young children.

**Table 6: Impact survey gender profile**

Age	Female	Male
0-15 years	69%	31%
16-24 years	66%	34%
25-44 years	78%	22%
45-64 years	71%	29%
65-74 years	62%	38%
75+ years	61%	39%
All ages	67%	33%

*Source: Herefordshire Council*

## 2.5 Pregnancy and Maternity

The protected characteristic definition is based on pregnant women or women who are in the first 26 weeks after giving birth.

Every year there are 1,800-1,900 live births to mothers living in Herefordshire, and relevant to age characteristic as the vast majority of births are to women aged 15-44. There is also some relation to race in that increasing number of births in Herefordshire are to women born overseas – 8% of births in 2011 were to mothers born in countries that joined the EU during the last decade with two thirds of these women either Polish or Lithuanian.

## 2.6 Service by Pregnancy and Maternity

Pregnancy and maternity wasn't specifically referred to by many respondents to the impact survey (2% of comments analysed), although a couple of comments mentioned libraries being a safe place for breast-feeding. However, many comments (9% of comments about impact and 20% of comments about particular groups affected) referred to the importance of libraries for children and families, including children's development and the social aspect for new parents.

## 2.7 Disability

This characteristic is based on a person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

In the 2011 Census 18.7% of people said they had some form of limiting long term health problem or disability. This is similar to the national percentage and to the 2001 Census - this can include problems related to old age.

The 2012 Herefordshire Quality of Life survey asked the 22% of adults (aged 18+) respondents who said they had a limiting long-term illness what was the nature.

**Table 7: Limiting long term illness**

Nature of limiting long term illness	% of adults respondents who had an LLTI
Deaf / hard of hearing / acute hearing	12%
Blind / partially sighted / sensitive to light	4%
Learning disability or difficulty	4%
Mental health	10%
Progressive / chronic illness (e.g. MS, cancer)	16%
Mobility difficulties	41%
Other	42%

*Source: 2012 Herefordshire Quality of Life Survey (people can have more than one disability)*

## 2.8 Service Use by Disability

It can be assumed that audio books will be accessed by blind and partially sighted people. The table below shows 1,648 adult talking books issued – lower than the average compared to other similar authorities.

**Table 8: Talking books use with average compared to nearest like neighbouring county:**

	Number	/1000 pop	Average
Sound recordings	4,048	22.0	31.6
Music	13,991	76.2	108.5
Adult Talking Books	1,648	9.0	25.1
Children's Talking Books	17,224	93.8	108.9
Video & DVDs	550	3.0	2.1
Multimedia & Open Learning CD-ROMs & Software	1,399	7.6	5.3
Electronic Products	0	0	4.9
eBooks	0	0	10.4
eAudio	0	0	0
eAudiovisuals			
Total Audio Visual Issues	38,860	211.7	297.0

*Source: CIPFA, 2012*

Over the course of 2012 3,233 blue badges were issued – this includes an assessment of how far someone can walk (50 yards) along with consideration of other mobility issues.

Responses to the impact survey were broadly representative of the population, with 19% of respondents saying they had a disability, long-term illness or health problem (12 months or more) which limits their daily activities or the work they can do.

Disability was one of the most common characteristics mentioned in the responses to the question about whether the proposals would particularly affect any group of people - 25% of comments analysed. Comments ranged from people with mental disabilities needing face-to-face help, to the social aspect of talking to people (staff and others). From the transport difficulties that having to travel further would pose for those with mobility problems, to the positive effects of the library service on the mental well-being of housebound people.

## 2.9 Race

The protected characteristic of race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

The information below taken from the 2011 Census shows that 93.7% of the population is white English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British. However, the county's make up has changed significantly as a result of the expansion of the European Union in 2004. Of the 12,250 residents who were born outside the UK, 53% arrived after the expansion of the EU. Nationally this figure was 40% which highlights how much more of an impact recent migration has had locally.

**Table 9: Ethnic group of Herefordshire residents**

Ethnic Groups	Number	%
White English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British	171,922	93.7
Black, Asian and minority ethnic (i.e. not 'White British, etc')	11,555	6.4
- White: Irish	709	0.4
- White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	363	0.2
- White: Other White	7,175	3.9
Non-white	3,308	1.8
- Mixed/multiple ethnic group	1,270	0.7
- Asian/Asian British (inc. Chinese)	1,439	0.8
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	331	0.2
- Other ethnic group	268	0.1
All residents	183,477	100.0%

Source: 2011 Census

## 2.10 Service Use by Race

As a public access service it is likely that the same profile will access libraries and customer services.

96% of responses to the impact survey were from people who said they were White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British, slightly higher than the proportion of the resident population (93%).

The impact survey found that non 'white British' respondents were more likely to have visited a centre on the day they completed the survey to use the public access computers (33% compared to 12% of 'white British'), which correlates with anecdotal evidence from staff that the public access PCs are an important form of communication for people to family and friends out of the UK. It should be noted however that the most common reasons for visiting were to borrow, return or renew a book, regardless of ethnicity.

**Table 10: Reason for visit by ethnic group**

Reason for visiting library / customer service centre	White British /English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish	Other ethnic group
Pay a bill or pay for a council service (e.g. query on Council Tax, bus pass, blue badge, etc)	9%	10%

Use the public access computers	12%	33%
Borrow a book or another item	69%	67%
Renew or return a book, or another item	56%	46%
Order a book	13%	11%
Research	15%	17%
Obtain information	6%	10%
Speak to a customer adviser	6%	10%
Other	11%	17%

*Source: Herefordshire Council*

Race was only mentioned in 1.4% of the comments about whether any groups would be particularly affected by the proposals. Most of these were in relation to migrant workers who use the computers, although others mentioned services for residents who don't speak English very well.

### **2.11 Marriage and Civil Partnership**

Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships', and they must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters. The equality duty only covers marriage and civil partnership in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination.

According to the 2011 Census over half (52%) of the population were married or in a civil partnership – this consists of 0.2% were registered same-sex civil partnerships and 51.8% married. The overall percentage is slightly higher than the national figure (England and Wales: 47%).

The impact survey did not highlight any particular issues of marriage and civil partnership.

### **2.12 Gender Reassignment**

This characteristic relates to transsexual people who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. There is no official estimate of the number of transsexual people either nationally or locally.

The impact survey did not highlight any particular issues of gender reassignment.

### **2.13 Religion or Belief**

Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

The 2011 Census asked people "what is your religion" and the results for Herefordshire (as below) shows that Christianity remains the largest religion. This is reflective of the national picture – although numbers fell from 79% of the population in 2001 to 68% to 2011 nationally. The proportion reporting they have no religion increased from 13% to 23%, just slightly lower than the proportion nationally (25%).



**Table 11: Religion of Herefordshire residents**

Religion of Herefordshire residents	number	%
Christian	124,403	67.8%
Buddhist	562	0.3%
Hindu	228	0.1%
Jewish	131	0.1%
Muslim	364	0.2%
Sikh	80	0.0%
Other religion	893	0.5%
<i>Mixed Religion</i>	276	0.2%
<i>Pagan</i>	235	0.1%
<i>Spiritualist</i>	101	0.1%
<i>Other</i>	281	0.2%
No religion	41,766	22.8%
Religion not stated	15,050	8.2%
All residents	183,477	100.0%

**Source: 2011 Census**

No respondents to the impact survey mentioned that the proposals would have any impact on people of different religions.

## 2.14 Sexual Orientation

This characteristic is based on whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

The estimate of lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) in the UK, range from 0.3% to 10%, depending on the measure and source. Work conducted by the Department of Trade in 2005 attempted to bring together different data sources which estimated that 5-7% of the population aged 16+ were considered LGB – this would equate to between 7,700 and 10,700 people in Herefordshire.

The largest scale survey in the last 3 years (ONS' Integrated Household Survey, 2011-12) found that 1.5% of adults living in UK households identified themselves as LGB. Taking account of different age, this could equate to 2,100 people in Herefordshire. In the 2008 Herefordshire Quality of Life Survey, 1.1% of respondents identified as LGB.

As a minimum indication, about 300 people in the county were in a registered same sex civil partnership in 2011.

The impact survey did not highlight any particular issues of marriage and civil partnership.

## 2.15 Poverty and Low Income

Poverty is a lack of income (or material possessions) to such a level that it is not considered acceptable by society. Officially a household is considered to be in poverty if its income (after taxes and housing costs) is less than 60% of the average (median) income nationally. In 2007-08 (the latest date for which local authority estimates are available) this was equal to £199 per week for a

couple with no children. In the same year an estimated 19% of households (14,500 households) in Herefordshire had income below this level<sup>4</sup>.

Nationally, of those people classed as living in poverty:

- 22% are married families
- 22% are working age adults (16-59 years)
- 46% are lone parent households
- 29% are under 16 years old
- 16% are older people

Poverty can be a symptom of several circumstances – low wages (Herefordshire weekly wage is £384 compared to £512 nationally); unemployment which has increased as a result of the recession; under employment with the proportion of people working part-time. In Herefordshire 15% work part-time compared to 14% nationally<sup>5</sup>.

Also, there are links between poverty and health risks, poverty and education attainment for the most deprived neighbourhoods in Herefordshire<sup>6</sup>.

Whilst the greatest numbers of households in poverty live in urban areas, some households in rural areas also live in poverty. There are also other financial pressures associated with living in rural areas that, whilst not relevant to the official definition of poverty, do make it harder for residents of rural areas. Additional costs associated with transport and domestic heating mean some rural households have to spend more to achieve the same standards of living as equivalent households living in urban areas<sup>7</sup>.

## **2.16 Service Use by Low Income**

The concept of a library service was based on ensuring books were available to the masses to support education – it is part of the 1964 Act that books cannot be charged for at libraries. The education system has altered dramatically over the last 150 years and ability of reading material is much more readily available.

However, the stakeholder focus groups made the point that people on low incomes will go to the library for the latest releases (which tend not to be discounted), specialist books that may be out of print, and audio books that tend to be much more expensive.

This was also one of the most common themes in the responses to the impact survey: 13.6% of comments to the question about whether anyone would be particularly mentioned people with low incomes, dependent on benefits or unemployed. Comments ranged from not being able to afford to buy books to using the computers to help find a job.

There are a number of services that tend to be accessed by people who are on low income. These include:

- Homepoint services of people in need of affordable housing

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<sup>4</sup> Poverty in Herefordshire (2012): <http://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/1975.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> 2011 Census, Annual Population Survey, Annual Business Inquiry, Herefordshire Employers' Survey 2010 and the UK competitiveness index

<sup>6</sup> Herefordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2010

<sup>7</sup> A Minimum Income Standard for Rural Households, Rowntree Foundations, 2010

- Monthly Council tax payment not exclusively people on low income but will assess people who need to spread payments and are keen to know their status with payments
- Ability to pay by cash – in some instances people on low income may not have a bank account
- The administration of welfare payments will increasingly be done online e.g. Universal Credit, as will mandatory job searches.

## 2.17 Geography and Travel

54% of Herefordshire’s population live in rural areas, of which 44% live in the most rural locations. Providing services to a scattered population across a large geographic area is a challenge and often additional resources are required to service a spread and sparse population. Access to services particularly some health services such as the dentist, GP and hospital were felt to be difficult to access by Herefordshire residents, along with other services such as post office and public transport <sup>8</sup>.

Bus Routes are obviously based on servicing the highest areas of population with private sector operators able to generate an income to cover their expenditure. Therefore the number of bus journeys between market towns and within the city and its boundaries are more frequent than in rural areas. Government grant/Herefordshire Council enable free travel for people of pension age (based on women’s retirement age).

## 2.18 Service Use by Geography

49% of responses to the impact survey drove to a centre (41% “drove myself”, and 8% via a lift). 44% people walked to a site showing that there was very local use (though a high number of responses came from the use of Hereford facilities reflecting the higher population use). Public transport was relatively low use at 10% of respondees.

However, transport accessibility issues were a common theme in the comments made in response to the questions about the impact of closing services or reducing hours (10% of responses analysed) and about whether any groups would be particularly affected (11%).

## 3. Customer Use

### 3.1 Customer Service Use by Functions

When a person accesses a customer service centre or library their protective characteristics are not asked for – that would be intrusive and un-necessary in dealing with their query quickly. Also, the services are universal therefore not restricted or targeted at a certain group of people. The table below gives an overview of customer service queries via email, phone and in person.

**Table 12: Customer service use by function**

Service	calls	%	In person	%	email	%
Amey	14,948	9%	1,459	1%	2,436	30%
Housing	2,9062	17%	22,744	24%	54	1%

<sup>8</sup> Understanding Herefordshire, 2013

<b>Benefits</b>						
<b>Blue badges</b>	5,844	3%	3,609	4%	20	0%
<b>Council tax</b>	46,499	26%	7,321	8%	131	2%
<b>EHTS</b>	13,856	8%	2,698	3%	835	11%
<b>General</b>	22,425	13%	49,737	51%	3,337	42%
<b>Homepoint/ Housing Solutions</b>	10,006	6%	5,066	5%	25	0%
<b>Planning</b>	16,173	9%	2,341	2%	524	7%
<b>Waste</b>	15,233	9%	1,719	2%	520	7%
<b>Special projects</b>	439	0%	54	0%	14	0%
<b>Total</b>	174,485	100%	96,748	100%	7,896	100%

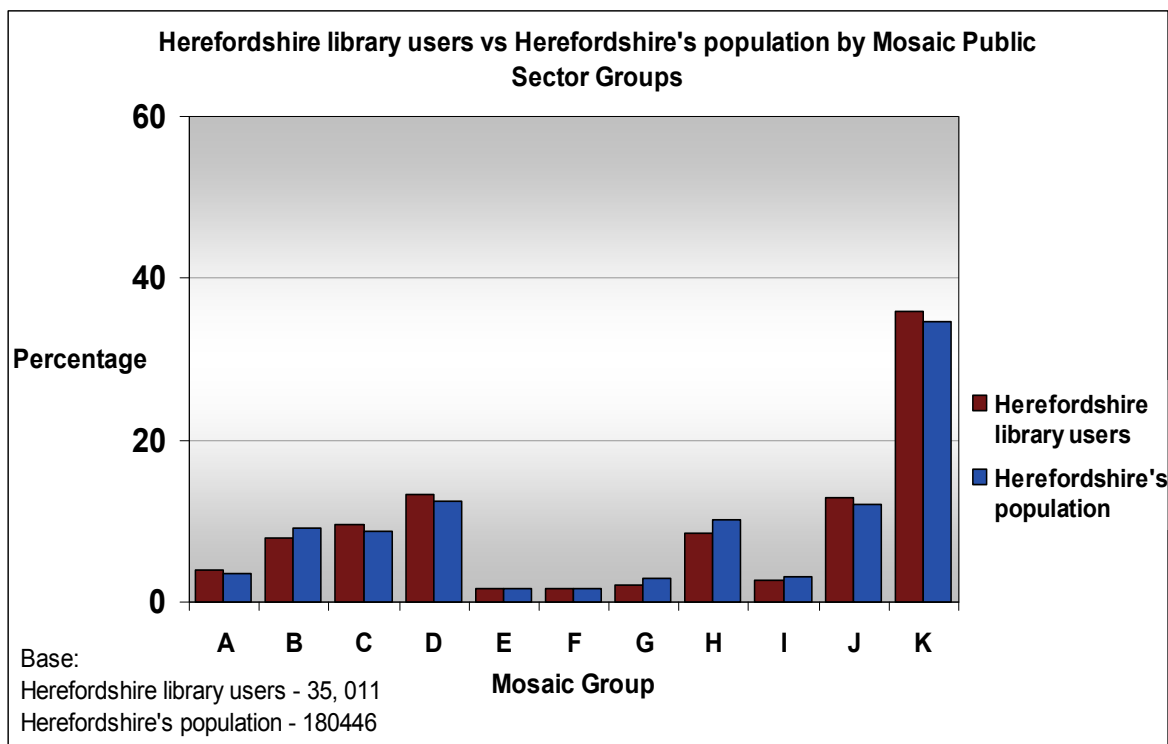
It should also be noted that some customer services will be accessed by people with very specific requirements or people in crisis.

From QMATIC data held by Herefordshire Council there were 4,414 face to face Homepoint queries and 3,744 Housing Solutions queries between August 2012 and July 2013; along with 4,527 Homepoint calls between February 2013 and July 2013 and 877 quick queries handled at reception desk for homepoint / homeless between the same period.

### 3.2 Mosaic Data

Mosaic Data is a useful tool in understanding likely customer types. It pulls together a range of information to profile people who access services. In 2009 analysis using this tool was used to profile library users.

**Chart 3: The Mosaic analysis groups library users into nationally defined social groups**



Herefordshire’s library users have a similar Mosaic profile to Herefordshire’s population as a whole. Not surprisingly, the biggest libraries have the largest range of users. The most prevalent groups are, in order:

K	People living in rural areas far from urbanisation
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By far the biggest group overall: over 30% of both library users and the population of Herefordshire as a whole are grouped into category K.

Over 80% of the active users of Leintwardine fall into this group and group K also dominates the library user profiles of Bromyard and Kington.

It is also the largest group of library users, although to a lesser extent, in Leominster, Ross, Hereford and Ledbury.

The next two most prevalent groups are D and J. Both make up just over 10% of the population.

D	Close-knit, inner city and manufacturing town communities
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The only two libraries with significant numbers of group D are Hereford and Leominster, although there are also small groups in Ross, Belmont, Ledbury and Bromyard.

J	Independent older people with relatively active lifestyles
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Group J is more widely represented. Over 50% of the active adult users at Weobley fall into this group. They are also well represented in Hereford, Colwall and Kington and to a lesser extent Ledbury, Leominster, Ross and Bromyard.

At the other end of the extreme, the number of library users from group J in Belmont is noticeably small.

The other significant groups are:

B	Younger families living in newer homes
C	Older families living in suburbia
H	Upwardly mobile families living in homes bought from social landlords

Group B is the dominant group in Belmont, followed by Group H.

Group B is also well represented in Ledbury.

Group H is also found in Bromyard, Kington and Weobley.

Group C is significant in Colwall and Ross.

All three groups are present at Hereford.

The following groups are least well represented overall, but there are some individual pockets:

A	Career professionals living in sought after locations
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Group A has a significant presence in Colwall. Here groups A, J and K make up three-quarters of the adult active users.

There are also small numbers from group A in Ledbury, Ross and Hereford.

E	Educated young single people living in areas of transient populations
F	People living in social housing with uncertain employment in deprived areas
G	Low income families living in estate based social housing
I	Older people living in social housing with high care needs

For E, F, G and I none of these is statistically significant in the library user profile as a whole, although there are above average numbers of users from group G in Weobley and of group I in Colwall.

### 3.3 CIPFA Stats Comparative Profile for Public Library Services (CIPFA), 2012

CIPFA is the comparison of performance of libraries compared to each other. The data used below is from 2012, with 2013 estimates. Comparisons are made to the similar neighbours (called nearest neighbours) when looking at demographics and population<sup>9</sup>.

The report tells us user numbers rather than the make up of people and the type of stock accessed. Therefore it is primarily a tool for managing stock but also provides an understanding of how well the library service is doing compared to others. The report illustrates:

- Herefordshire has one of the lowest number of libraries but also one of the lowest populations
- Herefordshire is in the top quartile of use next to population
- The total number of static points in Herefordshire are 5.5 for 100,000 population compared to 7.1 for the nearest neighbours
- Herefordshire comes out as being at the middle of the comparison on total revenue expenditure per 1,000 population, which suggests that its costs are similar to the group as a whole – though this expenditure has decreased more dramatically than the average
- Active borrowers (issues within the last 2 years) where high compared to the nearest neighbour authorities, 55,401 which is 302 per 100,000 population compared to the average of 194.
- Housebound readers of 342 which was 1.9 per 100,000 populations compared to 1.3 averages.
- Physical visits to the libraries have reduced over four years with all libraries though more significantly for Herefordshire

**Table 13: Physical visits over time and compared to average of nearest neighbour**

Physical Visits	Number	per 1,000 population	Average
2007-08	770,248	4,318	4,695
2008-09	763,743	4,260	2,487
2009-10	736,655	4,113	4,694
2010-11	696,886	3,887	4,509
2011-12	674,895	3,676	4,392

**Source: CIPFA**

- Net expenditure just below average £12,045 spent on 100,000 of the population with an average of £13,039.
- Herefordshire is about average of cost of acquisitions (books) at £7.37 compared to the average of £7.45.

<sup>9</sup> Nearest neighbours are Shropshire, Wiltshire, Rutland, East Riding of Yorkshire, Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Cornwall, Bath & North East, Somerset, Northumberland, North Somerset, Isle of Wight, Solihull, North Lincolnshire, Central Bedfordshire, York.

- The cost per visit is just higher than the average at £3.45 with an average of £3.20.

**Table 14: Stock issues by per 1,000 population and compared to average of nearest neighbour**

Physical Visits	Number	per 1,000 population	Average
Adult Fiction	404,720	2,204	2,379
Adult non-fiction	164,804	898	1,019
Children's fiction	174,706	952	1,442
Children's non fiction	25,006	136	214
Total books issued	769,236	4,190	5,053

**Source: CIPFA**

**Table 15: Public library users survey (over 16) compared to nearest neighbour**

Public Library Users Survey (over 16) 2009-10	Authority	Average
Proportion who view their library opening hours as 'very good' or 'good'	89%	86%
Proportion who find the library easily accessible	96%	97%
Proportion who find the choice of books as 'very good' or 'good'	70%	76%
Proportion who view their library as 'very good' or 'good'	87%	91%

**Source: CIPFA**

**Table 16: Public library users survey (under 16) compared to nearest neighbour**

Public Library Users Survey (under 16) 2009-10	Authority	Average
Proportion who view their library opening hours as 'very good' or 'good'	90%	85%
Proportion who find the library easily accessible	95%	95%
Proportion who find the choice of books as 'very good' or 'good'	82%	82%
Proportion who view their library as 'very good' or 'good'	86%	87%

**Source: CIPFA**

**Table 17: Portion who view their library to have helped them (public library user survey – under 16) compared to nearest neighbour**

	Authority	Average
Read better	55%	58%
Do better at school	32%	35%
Use computers better	12%	12%
Make friends	22%	18%
Join in and try new things	35%	30%
Learn and find things out	53%	57%

**Source: CIPFA**

#### **4. Electronic Delivery of Service**

The delivery of services through digital channels provides an opportunity for people to access services quickly and at a time to suit them. Not all transactions can be delivered electronically, though money saved on digital delivery can be spent elsewhere on highest areas of need.

**Table 18: Percentage of internet users and non-users, by low level geographical location, UK (Persons aged 16 years and over)**

	Ever used %		Never used%	
	2012 Q2	2013 Q2	2012 Q2	2013 Q2
UK	84.3	85.9	15.5	13.9
West Midlands	81.8	84.1	18.0	15.7
<b>County of Herefordshire</b>	<b>85.0</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>11.7</b>
Worcestershire	80.3	89.3	19.7	10.7
Warwickshire	81.1	83.9	18.8	15.8
Telford and Wrekin	78.8	79.5	20.3	20.5
Shropshire CC	86.3	87.5	13.7	12.0
Stoke-on-Trent	84.5	79.5	15.2	20.5

*Source: Office of National Statistics*

Internet use has increased significantly over time, more frequently and through a range of devices which make connection much more flexible and available. For example in 2013, 36 million adults (73%) in Great Britain accessed the Internet every day, 20 million more than in 2006; using a mobile phone to access the internet has more than doubled between 2010 and 2013, from 24% to 53%<sup>10</sup>.

By using the English Local Authority Digital and Social Exclusions Statistics Dashboard it is estimated that 21% of the adult population in Herefordshire have never accessed the internet<sup>11</sup>. Information from the Office for National Statistics also shows that certain protected characteristics are less likely to use the internet<sup>12</sup>:

- Almost all adults aged 16 to 24 years (99%) had ever used the Internet (7.1 million people). In contrast, only 33% of adults aged 75 years and over had ever used the Internet.
- Individuals with a disability are approximately four times more likely to have never used the Internet than individuals without a disability.
- At Q2 2013, there were 3.8 million disabled adults, as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), who had never used the Internet. This represents 33% of those who were disabled and over half (54%) of the 7.1 million adults who had never used the Internet. Of those adults who reported no disability or a work limiting disability, 9% had never used the Internet.
- Non-use was relatively similar for males and females aged 16 to 64 years, however, internet non-use differed for adults aged 65 years and over. Where 28% of males aged 65 to 74 years had never used the Internet, the corresponding total for females was 36%. This difference grows to 14 percentage points for males and females aged 75 years and over.
- Of those adults in employment whose gross weekly pay was less than £200 per week, 6% (315,000) had never used the Internet. Internet use has almost reached full coverage for those earning in excess of £500 a week, with Internet use at 99% or above for all adults with weekly pay rates above this level.
- Internet use has, however, increased over time for those individuals earning less than £200 per week. At Q2 2011 approximately 9% (511,000) had never used the Internet, this compares with 6% (315,000) at Q2 2013.
- In terms of frequently adults aged over 75 years were the most likely to have last used the Internet more than 3 months ago. While 14% of Internet users aged over 75 years last used the Internet more than three months ago, in contrast, less than 1% of Internet users aged 16 to 24 years had last used it more than three months ago.

<sup>10</sup> Statistic Bulletin: internet access, households and individuals, 8 August 2013

<sup>11</sup> Information produced using the City of London Digital Inclusion Dashboard Tool, 2011

<sup>12</sup> Office for National Statistics Quarterly Update on Internet Access, August 2013

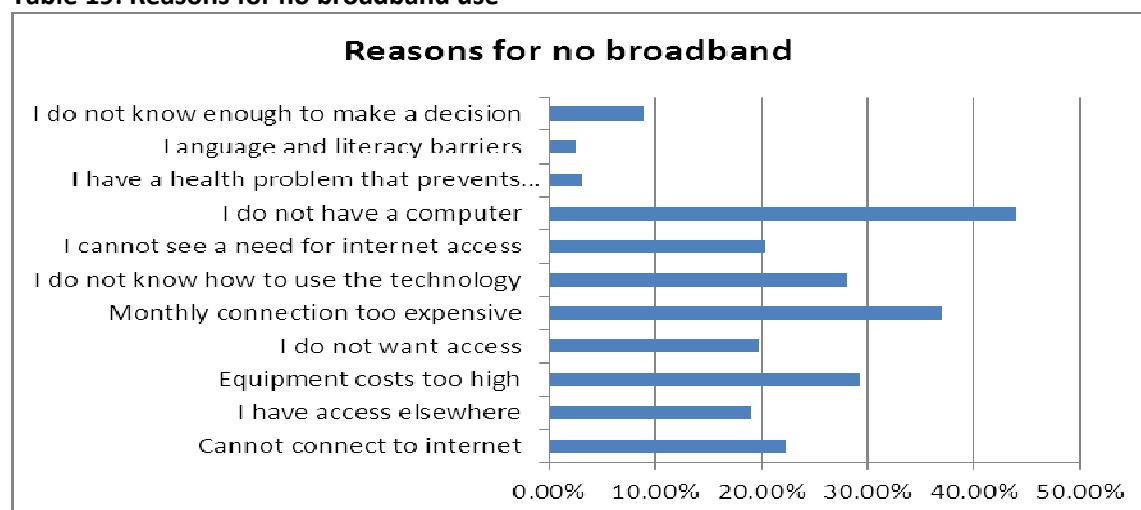


A sizable increase in daily computer use, by age, in the past seven years has been for adults aged 65 and over. In 2006, just 9% reported that they used a computer every day, this compares to 37% in 2013<sup>13</sup>. Also 18% of pensioners are now signed up to one social networking site<sup>14</sup> and 2% of UK Facebook visitors were over the age of 65<sup>15</sup>.

Of the 4 million households without Internet access, the majority (59%) said that they didn't have a connection because they 'did not need it'. Approximately (20%) indicated that they did not have the Internet in their household due to a lack of computer skills, with equipment costs (13%) and access costs (12%) being barriers to use<sup>16</sup>.

These findings reflect research regarding Herefordshire residents' internet use through a survey that ran from September 2011 to February 2012 and generated 5,057 responses from the county. 157 responses were from residents without the Internet. The main features of non-use are highlighted below - respondents were able to tick all reasons for not having broadband that applied, so the percentages do not accumulate to 100%, but costs and lack of knowledge are raised more often than being unable to connect.

**Table 19: Reasons for no broadband use**



**Source: Borders Broadband Equalities Impact and Needs Assessment for Herefordshire, 2012**

This work was conducted for the Fastershire project (formerly Borders Broadband) that combines local authority, national government and private sector funds to invest in rural broadband infrastructure. Through a partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, funding from national government and a contract with BT the provider predicts 90% of premises in Herefordshire will have access to fibre broadband and 100% of premises in the project area to access 2Mbps by 2016 – with an overall ambition of 100% NGA for everyone who needs it by 2018.<sup>17</sup>

Herefordshire Council is committed to providing services digitally which means an intensive programme of services on-line (ref: Herefordshire Council Digital Communication Strategy – Cabinet,

<sup>13</sup> Statistic Bulletin: internet access, households and individuals, 8 August 2013

<sup>14</sup> WeLoveLocalGov Blog, What Can Change in Five Years, 2011, From Housing and Litter to Facebook and Twitter Updating your Status, BDO Local Government, March 2012

<sup>15</sup> From Housing and Litter to Facebook and Twitter Updating your Status, BDO Local Government, March 2012

<sup>16</sup> Internet Access - Households and Individuals, 2013, 8 August 2013

<sup>17</sup> ref: www.fastershire.com

18 April 2013). This follows the trend that more than 80% of public services in the EU are now available online<sup>18</sup> with 41% of the EU population using government services electronically.<sup>19</sup>

CIPFA recorded the number of web visits to the Herefordshire library website that can be used to search reserve and renew stock. As the table shows there has been a significant increase in the last year reflecting increased internet use generally but also improve website.

**Table 20: Web visits for Herefordshire library site**

Web Visits	Number	per 1,000 population	Average compared*
2007-08	60,788	341	1,512
2008-09	52,651	294	1,256
2009-10	41,098	229	2,094
2010-11	63,514	354	1,254
2011-12	132,438	721	889

*Source: CIPFA, 2012*

CIPFA also showed that Herefordshire has below average for number of electronic terminals per 100k population, however slightly above average for hours available (bottom quartile for wifi access).

The table below shows the number of sessions at each of the sites. The usage varies and has reduced in some instances which are against the trend of increased IT use generally. This could be due to more people purchasing their own equipment to access the internet (including mobile devices).

**Table 21: Number of public access PC use per sites**

Library sites	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Hereford P.C. Sessions	39,304	47,660	38,166	37,355	35,868
Leominster P.C. Sessions	17,513	22,203	17,957	17,455	16,604
Ross P.C. Sessions	15,266	21,885	14,655	12,334	18,888
Ledbury P.C. Sessions	8,201	9,435	8,014	6,415	7,313
Bromyard P.C. Sessions	4,618	4,580	11,076	12,201	11,333
Kington P.C. Sessions	3,064	4,747	5,381	5,619	5,472
Belmont P.C. Sessions	761	1,468	1,133	1,084	1,027
Colwall P.C. Sessions	4,419	5,906	3,824	3,526	3,362
Weobley P.C. Sessions	425	404	223	128	113
Leintwardine P.C. Sessions	131	114	52	81	101

*Source: Herefordshire Council, 2013*

A Cross-European survey to measure users' perceptions of the benefits of ICT in public libraries<sup>20</sup> illustrates that access to public access PCs are important as a first step into internet use and important for certain groups. Findings included:

<sup>18</sup> Eurostat, 2010. Referenced: Cross European survey to measure users' perceptions of the benefits of ICT in public libraries, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013

<sup>19</sup> Eurostat, 2010. Referenced: Cross European survey to measure users' perceptions of the benefits of ICT in public libraries, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013

<sup>20</sup> Cross-European survey to measure users' perceptions of the benefits of ICT in public libraries, March 2013, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

- Around 1% of all adults had first used a computer to access the internet in a public library (44% at home; 9% at friend's / family's house; 8% at work; 7% school or university).
- The primary motivations for public access computer (PAC) users are the free nature of the service together with no other option to access the internet. Those who tend to have no other options include Roma, people with disabilities, older people aged 55 and over, those not employed and people completing full time education at a relatively early age.
- 92% of PAC users believe the library's computer and internet connection services as valuable (for the UK medium use, medium / high value compared to other countries).
- 83% of PAC users indicated that their PAC use had delivered at least one impact – the most common impact was saving time and money, but also impact around education, access to government services and access to resources and skills necessary to find work.
- 20% of PAC users made use of PACs at least once a week and 27% once to three times a month – this implies the major of use is for adhoc requirements.

## **6. Compounded Factors**

The protected characteristics and aspects of rural isolation and poverty also need be considered as combined factors – a person might face several characteristics that will have an impact on ability to access services. Also, characteristics will change during people's life time, for example poverty may be a temporary factor when employment is found. Considering the options for customer services and libraries the impact will focus on the following profiles mindful of the combined factors.

### **6.1 Age – Children**

- The evidence suggests that young children benefit from a library service in terms of their reading and education attainment.
- Families in crisis affecting children's prospects and development.

### **6.2 Age – Older**

- Impact study found high use of service by 65+
- Less likely to use the internet to access service.
- At risk of isolation.

### **6.3 Disability**

- Less likely to use the internet.
- Isolation and mobility challenges.
- Use of services such as talking books.
- Multiple disabilities need to be considered.

### **6.4 Poverty**

- Less likely to afford computer and access to the internet.
- Higher use of public access PCs.
- Less funds available to spend on travel.
- Combined factor of being in crisis.

### **6.5 Rural**

- Access to services locally.
- Reduced options for public transport.
- Combined factor with poverty, disability and age to create isolation.

## 7. Service Change

Herefordshire has introduced new ways of reaching customers and has implemented change in the library service based on recommendations of the Future Library Programme report (2011).

Local authorities have to face considerable pressure to meet local priorities of social care needs for adults and vulnerable children, along with reduction in national government spending. This means examining spend on services including customer and library services to ensure resources are meeting the needs of people within the community.

Additional future year savings made through customer services and libraries will support the reallocation of services to direct care.

CIPFA findings show that there has been a decline in the use of libraries in Herefordshire and elsewhere. Whilst attendees at Stakeholder Focus Group<sup>21</sup> pointed out this could be down to the quality of the libraries and the quality of the stock, it will also be down to alternative ways of accessing books and services.

Chief Executive Arts Council England Alan Davey states “Public libraries are at a pivotal point. They are much loved and expected to continue offering the same services as they have for many years, but they are also expected to respond to big changes in how people live their lives”<sup>22</sup>. Mr Davey continues “We expect to see a shift from a service provided to a community, to one in which local people are more active and involved in its design and delivery. People will be creating new content, having conversations and using new technology for their own benefit, for their community or their business”.

Mr Davey’s comments are in response to a report produced by Ipsos MORI and Shared Intelligence, 2012<sup>23</sup> points out “number of major changes in society over the next 10 years are likely to impact on libraries. The UK’s population is growing, ageing and becoming increasingly diverse. The outlook for the economy is uncertain and there are serious concerns about poverty and inequality. The reductions in public expenditure look set to continue and public sector reform is likely to accelerate with a conscious drive towards localism, co-production, and the development of new and diverging forms of service delivery”.

When putting data together more people who use libraries value their contribution to meeting community needs. Whilst 31.36% of the Herefordshire population are active borrowers (which is slightly above the national average) 48% of people in the UK felt libraries of very effective or effective in meeting community needs<sup>24</sup>. An EU survey found 74% of public felt that public libraries merited more financial support or funding should continue at present – 5% felt that libraries should receive less funding<sup>25</sup>.

Considering changing trends, the development of technology, the public interest in services and budget pressures any new approach to customer services and libraries should include an

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<sup>21</sup> Sessions held with representatives of user groups and local councils to express views on options.

<sup>22</sup> A response to Envisioning the library of the future by Arts Council England Chief Executive Alan Davey

<sup>23</sup> Envisioning the library of the future Phases 1 and 2: full report, Research by Ipsos MORI and Shared Intelligence, this document is an independent report, part of Envisioning the library of the future, commissioned by Arts Council England.

<sup>24</sup> Cross-European survey to measure users’ perceptions of the benefits of ICT in public libraries, March 2013, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

<sup>25</sup> Cross-European survey to measure users’ perceptions of the benefits of ICT in public libraries, March 2013, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

examination of core purpose. For the core purpose to focus on creating shared and safe spaces with community involvement in their operation; to provide services that do not duplication what is already provided, and uses public sector resources on intervention that addresses key needs, whilst enabling people to manage how they access services through a self-serve route.

## **8. Options and Impact**

### **8.1 Option 1 - Status Quo**

#### **8.1.1 Characteristic of the option**

- Retain current opening hours with no more than a reduction of 10% opening over time.
- Additional opportune savings over time through back office practices and processes.
- Central library function to remain in place.
- Review in 18 months as will not meet the wider budget pressures.

#### **8.1.2 Impact on protective characteristics**

**Age:** this will not allow for the release of resources to direct care needs of older people or children. It also does not see change that would provide more targeted services to support people who would benefit most from the services. It does retain a universal approach that will enable every age to benefit and considering age is transient it means people will be familiar with customer services and libraries and use the services at different times in their life.

**Disability:** as the services will not change significantly there is no negative or additional positive effects on people with disabilities. The sites will continue to offer some specific services (e.g. Blue Badges and Talking Books). The central library function will support reading groups, some of which are to specific groups with a disability.

**Poverty:** it is likely there will need to be some increases charging for services to balance increased expenditure (though books are not charged for). However, as the service will be largely unchanged there will be limited negative or positive effect on people on a low income. People who work but on low income the library service is important to upgrade skills and use the public access PC.

**Rural:** the central library function will remain in place which will enable the continued support of community libraries and more localised drop-off points. The customer services function will continue to operate in the market towns, though this obviously does not have deep rural reach and customers will still need to travel to market towns, use the phone, email or web.

#### **8.1.3 Summary and recommendations**

This option will have the minimum impact on current users. However, it does not give chance to recognise the bigger demands to deliver services where they are needed most. Generally the service will remain static and misses an opportunity for more targeted provision.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Customer services develop additional point of contact for adult social care clients.
- Redesign libraries to target needs of children, disabled people and older people including the type of stock purchased.
- Continue to support community libraries to enable greater access in rural areas.

## 8.2 Option 2 – Core Service with Top Up

### 8.2.1 Characteristic of the option

- Reduce the hours of library opening to create realigned expenditure.
- Refocus the service on core activity and target groups whilst still creating a universal approach.
- Introduce self-service route via the web, phone or email, or library stock check in and check out.
- Work with other groups and organisations to boost hours of opening providing additional functions, services and opportunities.
- Small libraries become community libraries.
- Retain central library function.

### 8.2.2 Impact on protected characteristics

**Age** – this option suggests a refocus of services which could potentially mean catering for age groups that need the service most. The reduction in hours means that some people will need to change their patterns of behaviour.

**Disability** – research has shown that the internet is less used by people with disabilities (though that is a very generalised statement and the web will be a life-line for many people with disabilities). Getting to a customer service centre or library open at reduced times would curtail the freedom of some disabled people. However, the option does mean that centres will still be open and used as “safe” place to visit, with the potential of additional functions that could present a wider benefit.

**Poverty** – This should not have a negative impact on people in poverty (in work or unemployed). Again there could be a need to change behaviour if opening times change, which should consider opening times that capture people not at work to use recourse on site to improve their employment prospects. Some services from customer services are essential for people in poverty and reduction in their availability will have an impact.

**Rural** – this option could have an impact on people in rural areas who travel to their market town customer service centre or library when they use public transport. This option retains support for community libraries and the potential to create more drop-off and collection points as part of rural services.

### 8.2.3 Summary and recommendation

This option seems to follow the wider shift to greater community involvement and recognising libraries as places for a wide range of activity and function. It also creates some savings, but to work does require investment to web development, self-service systems, redesign of spaces to cater for other functions.

#### Recommendations:

- Explore a partnership with agencies and services to gain or improve learning and employment opportunities through the use of centres; use customer services as the adult social care “front door”; and integrate other functions that provide an early intervention approach that supports the protective characteristics.
- Improve and extend the public access PCs for children to complete homework, communication opportunities and employment prospects.
- Instigate a programme of internet awareness along with improved web services.

- Investment in self-service systems which will free up support for people whose only option is face to face interaction.
- Retain services that are targeted at protective characteristics or look at alternative service providers, especially in the market towns where face to face services will be less available.
- Any redesign of services to involve the protective characteristics, and also work closely with user groups / representatives to shape services.
- The establishment of community libraries supported by central library provision including training for volunteers (incorporating diversity training).
- To design times that are reflective of the use by the protective characteristic, which might mean an increase in hours, in some instances, where justifiable and evidenced.
- Bus routes to be considered along with unique local circumstances when setting opening times for market town sites.
- Explore the option of an appointments based service in the market towns.

### 8.3 Option 3 – Centralised Provision

#### 8.3.1 Characteristic of the option

- Retain the library and customer service centre in Hereford, with a one day a week service in the market towns.
- To target resources at people who need them most.
- To reinvest savings in priority areas of adult well being and child protection.
- To have a strong web presence to enable self service.
- Support the awareness of current providers of services and develop new markets where people can access services.
- That the change takes place over 18 months starting from the withdrawal from the lowest use centres.
- Withdrawal of a central library function that includes book stock, delivered services to the housebound and book clubs.

#### 8.3.2 Impact on the protective characteristics

**Age** – Hereford will retain its provision, though in terms of current service this has a significant impact on age where services in the market towns will be down to one day a week. However, the reinvestment in priority services will have a positive impact in meeting people’s direct care needs – this will mean very targeted use of resources to people who have been assessed as in most need. However, this option does impact on delivered services of books to housebound, and emphasis on internet access could affect older people.

**Disability** – Hereford will retain a customer service and library presence, though the nature of the one day provision in market towns will need to be different from the current “universal” provision, specially the library function.

**Poverty** – services will still be available in Herefordshire for people in crisis, along with phone and web channels. However, if the one day service in market towns is not suitable for people there may be a need to travel into Hereford which has a cost. The reliance on web due to cost of equipment, subscription and the limited availability of public access PCs could have an impact on people on low incomes.

**Rural** – out of all the options this will have the greatest impact on rural areas due to reduction of services in the market towns and withdrawal of the smaller libraries in the larger villages / wards.

The reduction of central library functions that supports community libraries will also be withdrawn with the provision of book stock and advice. Increased web provision will provide an opportunity to actually improve access to services for people who live in rural areas.

### **8.3.3 Summary and recommendations**

This option will direct change in behaviour rather than a gentler enabling approach with people who can access services themselves having to do so, whilst targeting resource in catering for people who face to face is essential. The concept on a countywide library service will be redefined to a retained Hereford service.

- That additional assessment takes place to understand and address the impact on customers of significant change.
- The awareness, training and potentially financial support for the protective characteristics to access the internet, complimented by public sector web programmes.
- Improvements made to the Hereford sites to meet increased demands, with possible additional hours and additional public access PCs.
- Introduction of appointment based systems in the market towns to ensure customers of greatest need receive the services they need.
- Overhaul of back-office functions for customer contact to be operated by services.

## **8.4 Option 4 – Outsource and Partnerships**

### **8.4.1 Characteristics of the options**

- Outsource services to the private or voluntary sector.
- Consider local partnerships or cross county arrangements to deliver services.
- Potential split between libraries and customer services.
- The option tested through procurement and dialogue over an 18 month period.
- Potential for additional services to be delivered alongside other functions.

### **8.4.2 Impact on the protected characteristics**

**Age** – the specifications to tender services could take account of customer requirements linked to age (along with disability). Also the potential to link to other outsourced services as part of multi-service function.

**Disability** – as above, consideration would be needed to be given to impact on people with disabilities.

**Poverty** – for services to be sustained in the voluntary or private sector there could be some additional charging, including access to PC use which supports people finding employment.

**Rural** – this option could sustain services at their current level which would reduce the impact on people in rural areas to be able to access customer services and libraries.

### **8.4.3 Summary and recommendations**

This is the least developed option with uncertainty as to what the services would look like if tendered. Further assessment would be needed on separate options for outsourcing.



**Recommendations:**

- Additional assessment of customer requirements related to the protected characteristics for priorities of services to meet priority needs.
- For any tender specification to consider needs of people of different ages, disability, in poverty or isolated due to rurality.
- Impact assessment completed on tender submissions.

## Stakeholder Focus Group - Common comments

### Representatives of user groups and local councils

#### General Comments

- There has been continued under investment in the library stock which has had an effect on people using the services. Also, from the data the “better” libraries have had consistent numbers of visitors whilst reduction in numbers considering the poor quality of the building.
- Do not understand the value of merging customer services and libraries – as two different services with different requirements.
- There does not seem to be any professional / trained librarians operating at the centres and this has had an effect on the quality of the library service.
- Communities and local councils could be more involved but need to be careful in the use of volunteers in replacing professional staff.
- Herefordshire libraries need to catch up with other areas that operate self-service system.
- The proposals do not mention enough the benefits of libraries or a focus on “reading”.
- There should be an emphasis on children and young people in helping their learning and experience contributing to the education and employment prospects (and support Herefordshire’s economy in the long run).
- The proposals do not give any financial details of savings, so hard to compare, and does not give the long term prospects of services based on each option.
- There is an emphasis on digital but not an option of many people because of speed of broadband, the website not user friendly and older people not wanting to use it.
- Important to retain a universal service so people will be familiar with the services throughout their lives and know to come back to it when really need it – “whole life service”.
- Libraries are lifeline for many isolated people, therefore providing a prevention service.
- The reduction of libraries in communities is seen as undermining local services in market towns and smaller communities.
- Libraries are used as safe spaces especially in market towns where there is little other community venues with open access.
- Herefordshire Council needs to cut their management and overhead costs before services that are valued by many people.
- An increased cross county working could create efficiencies or even amalgamation of services to create economies of scale.
- More opportunity to find sponsorship and commercial activity to let buildings.
- Libraries should have a strong link to the creation of a University of Herefordshire.
- Need to understand the core purpose of the service before making changes.

### Option One – Status Quo with reductions over time

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The approach is already happening with reduced opening hours this year.</li> <li>• This is closure by stealth – there needs to be a cap on how much reduced.</li> <li>• Need opening hours that accommodate people who work (what about Sunday opening?)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Has the least impact on service change. Retains focus on services for everyone. Gradual change enabling staff and customers to adapt.</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Not realistic – there is going to need to be some change to meet budget pressures. There is concern over increased number of lone workers. Likely to have less professional library staff as people leave. Drip, drip effect means constant tinkering.</p>

### Option two – Core Service

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question over this is it contravenes the 1964 Act by the level of reductions.</li> <li>• Would need investment in the web and self-service to work.</li> <li>• Change in hours needs to take into consideration working people’s access to services.</li> <li>• What is meant by “core” service – bit confusing with central services.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Retains a presence in the market towns. Is a half-way house for cuts.</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Reduces the opportunity for people in the market towns to access services creating rural isolation. There would be pressure on Hereford which would need investment. Creating a “post code lottery” for accessing customer service and libraries.</p>

### Option three – Top-Up

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very similar to the option above (should they be considered as one?).</li> <li>• Recognises libraries as part of the wider community and community benefit.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Positive collaborative approach. Could use volunteers more (for certain things). Would enable the service to be redeveloped over time. In-line with much of the national thinking of libraries as safe / community spaces. Opportunity to let premises to raise income. Variety and diversity would reinforce the service. Gives option for town councils to pay and become involved in services.</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Emphasis on others to “prop up” the service and which might not be there. Reduces the book stock space. Looks like replacing professional staff with volunteers and a number of risks around that (eg skills and reliability).</p>

### Option four – Centralised Provision

- Would be subject to judicial review.
- Looks like a plan to sell off the buildings to raise income.
- Emphasis on electronic delivery of service but failings in the internet and web presence, with many people not having the money or skills to use the web.
- This would stop a lot of people using the service as would not be able to travel.
- Another example of eroding services in the market towns and rural areas.

#### Strengths

Nets savings that can be used within care pressures in the local authority.

Opportunity to merge Hereford sites in a bigger and better location.

#### Weaknesses

Too much strain on Hereford at the library and Franklin House – both of which would need work on them to cope with the change.

The assets would not be used for the purpose they were intended.

There would be no library presence in the market towns (a mobile service would not be able to carry the book stock).

High reliance on web / internet which is not available.

There would be limited access for public access PCs which are a life line for people.

### Option Five – Outsourcing

- It has happened elsewhere – but not seen how this has worked well.
- There are number things that could go wrong creating high risk and uncertainty.
- This should include merging with other counties.
- Too vague and not sure anyone would take up the service.

#### Strengths

Link libraries and heritage through a trust (mirror the Arts Council set up).

Potential to separate libraries and customer services.

Can apply for other sources of funding not open to the local authority.

Can link to existing trusts.

#### Weaknesses

Would not meet many savings because still have to pay a private company/trust.

Would take time to implement through a tender or discussion process.

Question over security and sustainability of an outsourced arrangement (especially if council decides to withdraw its funding).

## Staff Focus Group - common comments

### Library, customer services, customer contact and union representatives

#### General Comments

- Concerns over increased lone working and how it will affect customers.
- The demands on the service seem to be increasing rather than decreasing, and struggling to cope in some instances.
- Digital services not the answer for everything – some people need very intensive support and need to come into the office.
- It would reduce time and money if there were better systems in place – letters regarding council tax confuse people so they come in or phone up regarding queries that could have been clearer in the first place.
- Other parts of the organisation are “making business” for the front of house service – litter fines have to be paid in person at a customer service centre.
- Considerations given to staff that have a disability such as sight impairment as system introduced actually hinders not helps.
- Staff to be more involved in shaping services.
- Rather than cutting services, could there be more opportunity for charging.
- We need a co-ordinated countywide customer service and library with a clear strategic vision, service targets etc. to maximise efficiencies and ensure equality of service.
- Need to support people who can't read and write.
- Why not stop out of hours service to reduce costs.

#### Option One – Status Quo with reductions over time

- This will end up in a lack of cohesive strategy and co-ordinated countywide service.
- Increased and increasing pressure on staff to deliver the same service with less resource.
- Seems like “death by a thousand cuts” which has been going on for years.

#### Strengths

Less immediate impact on staff and customers.  
Would not need a restructure which would tie up people's time to get the real work done.

#### Weaknesses

Does not recognise need for change.  
Does not create the savings which are required.  
Reduced and reducing capacity for delivering service.  
Loss of expertise, across the board, as people get fed up and leave.  
Will continue to create uncertainty because the reductions will still be required.  
Stress placed upon staff.  
Responsive rather than proactive approach.  
Likely to be asked for more savings in years to come, so short term.

### Option Two – Core Service

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seems to go against council priorities - reducing library opening hours when children’s issues and demand from elderly and vulnerable is increasing; reducing access to public computers at the same time as promoting digital channels.</li> <li>• Running community libraries takes a lot of resources.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Retains a co-ordinated county-wide customer service and library function.</p> <p>Retains a market towns presence.</p> <p>Services could grow again when demand and resources increase.</p> <p>Impact on customers less negative than option 4.</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>50% reduction in main library opening hours could breach statutory requirement for “comprehensive and efficient” library service.</p> <p>Decreased provision for in-depth customer service enquiries locally means increased pressure on call centre / Franklin House.</p> <p>Loss of local expertise in staffing.</p> <p>Leaves community libraries vulnerable to failure.</p> <p>Inefficient use of buildings whilst still retaining most of their cost.</p> <p>No investment in development or income generation – need to reinvest to get web and email right.</p> <p>Danger of fragmented service.</p>

### Option Three – Top Up

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites developed to accommodate additional services from private and third sector, e.g. educational courses, job clubs, literacy projects, coffee shops, friends groups, outreach work with local schools.</li> <li>• Some sites will need investment to redesign counter areas. Could mean further investment in development of buildings and services, e.g. e-books, self-service, coffee shop, meeting rooms for hire.</li> <li>• Partners using sites would need to fit with strategic plan for services.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Co-ordinated county-wide customer service and library function.</p> <p>Retains market towns presence and Services could grow again when demand and resources increase. Improved use of buildings.</p> <p>Improved access to local services through partnership.</p> <p>Builds locality role for sites as community hubs.</p> <p>Transformation project enables reduction in face-to-face provision by growing infrastructure and digital access.</p> <p>Delivers immediate savings, with further savings over time.</p> <p>Increased capacity for future development and income generation.</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Still negative impact on customers, particularly outside Hereford.</p> <p>Reducing hours when they are needed more due to recession.</p> <p>Reduced opening hour’s means less access to public computers at the same time as promoting digital channels.</p> <p>Decreased provision for in-depth enquiries locally means increased pressure on call centre / Franklin House.</p> <p>Gradual loss of local expertise and flexibility with staffing.</p> <p>Less immediate savings, although possibly more over time.</p> <p>Need to invest in sites.</p>

## Option four – Centralised Provision

- Too much pressure on Hereford venues – would need to extend the opening hours.
- Can see considerable impact on the reputation of the council – which will be felt by the front line staff.
- If withdraw from the market towns customer service provision in one quick hit the current back office and digital solutions simply will not cope. They need a proper transformation programme and a phased withdrawal.
- Seems to go against current council’s policies – these services provide a preventative service for people getting into crisis; addresses isolation for older people; against sustaining rural areas.
- Not sure this option would meet the council’s equality duty as specifically discriminates against older people in rural areas who do not have access to their own transport.
- Would work in a less sparse county with good public transport networks, but not Herefordshire.
- Customer Service Centres/libraries the only front facing service provided by the local authority in market towns.
- Centres really important to people – especially vulnerable people who need face to face services.
- Contradicts the public commitment from former Leader that the market town libraries will not close.
- Raises questions over the continuation of Masters House project relating to external funding.
- Feels like throwing out the “baby with the bath rather”.

### Strengths

Drives change in behaviour of customers.

### Weaknesses

Mass redundancies with loss of expertise.

Back office functions and digital channels couldn’t cope with increased demand.

Rural population disenfranchised - highly negative impact on market towns.

Impacts most on vulnerable customers and those with poor mobility.

One day in market town insufficient to cope with local demand.

No time or resources to develop alternative provision.

Concern whether achievable – also politically high risk with elections in May 2015 (would not be supported by MPs).

Closing market town libraries would breach statutory requirement to provide “comprehensive and efficient library service for local people”.

What about impact on people who rely on bus services?

## Option Five – Outsourcing

- The private sector will make the saving by stripping out process that the local authority could do if it had a collaborative approach across the whole organisation.
- It could enable the School Library service to reduce red tape and operate out-of-county.
- Part of the service could be outsourced linked to relevant services, e.g. it was suggested that the Blue Badge service could potentially be separated and outsourced independently, or that it could merge with Shopmobility onto one site.
- An outsourced provider would not have the same level of sensitivity to the situation, as keeping costs down in order to make a profit would be the priority.
- Risk of data protection being compromised if customer services outsourced.
- TUPE requirement.
- If outsourced, HC would need to improve contract management practices to ensure that standard and quality of service were maintained, and to embed better communication.
- Could create fractured services and seen by the customer as such.
- Not clear where the savings are.
- Questions of sustainability. What happens if it fails?

### Strengths

With a trust opportunity to access different sorts of funding.

With a charity there would be the same staff ethos of “doing something for the community”.

### Weaknesses

A private company will be in the business to make money and strip the assets.

Outsourcing would result in fractured /insufficient communication between organisations.

Likely to see rural / market town sites closed.

The full life procurement costs are likely to be high.

No obvious savings for some time.

Few libraries have gone down this route with no track record of working.



## **Stakeholder Consultation on the future of Libraries and Customer Service Centres**

### **Introduction**

This document outlines some first thoughts on the options for libraries and customer service centres operated across Herefordshire. This document complements an impact survey available for people who use libraries and customer service centres to comment on how changes to the facilities could affect them.

A combination of information will be used to create a set of options for operating facilities in the future, which would include existing data regarding usage and range of services accessed, results from the impact survey, previous consultation and comments made regarding the outline options. Also to be taken into account will be the county's demographics and geography.

There is no doubt that Herefordshire Council's budget is under pressure and all services require a degree of scrutiny to create a sound financial footing for the future. However, also driving change are the trends regarding the use of libraries and customer services which have shifted over the years, with declining in person visits next to different opportunities to access services especially via the internet and growing trend for self-serve increasingly being operated by the private and public sectors.

Additionally, the availability of books at no or low cost has broken down many of the old barriers to enabling a range of reading choices and growth of community lead schemes such as community libraries. The growth "self-serve/community delivery" is reflective of the changing nature of local government where services are more relevantly delivered at a very local level with less centralised control. Across the country local authorities are tackling the balance of covering the cost of operating libraries and customer service centres whilst meeting local expectations and needs.

Within this document a range of options that need to be explored and exposed, enabling cabinet members to make an informed decision at committee in September 2013.

### **Option 1 - Status Quo with reductions over time**

To retain the current arrangements regarding services on offer and opening times based on a "universal service" approach. To reduce cost, by non-recruitment of staff when people leave, increasing lone working and changing opening hours over time. Additional savings are to be implemented on processes and practices again over time. This will not create significant change and/or release funds to be deployed elsewhere or investment in other delivery mechanisms such as digital or targeted services for older people and the most vulnerable.

### **Option 2 - Core Service**

To refocus the service on core activity, still creating a universal approach but with reduced hours (eg up to 50% reduced and withdrawal from smaller libraries). Customers will be re-directed to other ways of accessing the services, eg payment at different facilities, better digital access, email and phone. The provision of the centres will be for customers who genuinely need face-to-face services, with all other customers encouraged to operate a self-service route learning from how this has worked well in the private sector and local authority services. There may need some capital investment and a campaign to raise awareness with customers of the different options. This also means there needs to be effective digital access.

### **Option 3 - Top Up**

This is based on the local authority providing a core service but "topped up" by a range of opportunities by the community, private sector, partnerships with education, merger with other

services, etc. The “top up” would cover the cost of additional services or opening hours and can be very flexible in its nature. This may involve some capital improvements to sites where services are co-located or where the community wish to use the space. This could also mean a reduction in space for library stock, though compensated by more options for reviewing library stock digitally (on and off site) or using volunteer “book advisors” who can help people find the right book for them.

The small libraries to possibly become community run with back-up from local authority services – this would mean bodies like local councils and user group resourcing the facilities and taking local control. The delivered service to the housebound to remain in place, though schools library/book clubs be self-financing.

#### **Option 4 – Centralised Provision**

To retain a central service for libraries and customer service centres in Hereford, with a one day presence in each of the market towns. This change to take place over an 18 month period whilst the digital services and self-service opportunities become available and a campaign of awareness with customers takes place on how to access services locally (eg existing pay points). The service in Hereford will mainly be appointment based and available to the most needed. This will net the largest savings and the opportunity to release some of the sites for sale or community transfer.

Local areas would have the option of running their own libraries or book exchange projects; and there could be local drop / off and collection points for library stock.

#### **Options 5 – Outsourcing**

For the services to be delivered by a third party of either a social enterprise/charitable trust, other public body, private sector or at an individual locality level by the community. It would be likely that different elements will appeal to different bodies with the libraries potentially joining a heritage trust, existing trust or individual arrangement in each locality which enables local control. This would potentially mean split of the service functions, though could bring new approaches and collaborations which enables the services to be sustainable.

Savings on non domestic rates (NNDR) can be made by a charity (50% savings on rates). The functions do have high expenditure with little opportunity of income which might have an influence on likely bodies interested in operating the services and have continuing need for subsidy by the local authority. This option would need time to develop and tested through procurement and dialogue over an 18 month period.

#### **Customer Contact Centre and the Web**

The customer contact centre deals with email and phone queries and will remain in place though some savings may be gained through re-arranging back office operations – for example more opportunity to make payments through the phone.

There will also be a more interactive web-presence which will help customers’ access services at a time suitable to them using personal accounts. However, it is understood that training might be needed to support customers to use the web – though recognising that for some people it may never be an option.

Understanding these are early thoughts on the options, what are your views on the strengths and weaknesses of each option, and how do you think this could affect people who need these services most? Email comments to (in the Subject box please use “library and customer services options”): [measuringtheimpact@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:measuringtheimpact@herefordshire.gov.uk).

# Survey report: assessing the impact of changes to libraries and customer service centres

Version 1.2

Herefordshire Council Research Team

August 2013

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If you need help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call the Research Team on 01432 260442 or e-mail [researchteam@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:researchteam@herefordshire.gov.uk)

## Introduction

At a time of significant budget cuts facing Herefordshire Council, this consultation formed part of an impact assessment for a review of customer and library services. It was designed to help understand the impact on users of bringing together customer service centres, libraries and other facilities, closing some facilities, or reducing opening hours.

The results were to be used alongside data already held on the frequency of use and type of services that are accessed at libraries and customer service centres. Proposed changes to the services were due to be presented to the council's Cabinet in mid-September 2013; [click here](#) for public Cabinet papers.

## Methodology

### Survey

The aim of the survey was to gather the views of users of the services, so the questionnaire was only available in hard copy format from all libraries and customer service centres. Questionnaires could be completed there and then, or taken away and returned on another visit. Herefordshire Council officers (not library or customer services staff) were based at Hereford, Leominster and Ledbury centres on occasion to encourage visitors to complete a questionnaire and offer help if needed.

The questionnaire itself was anonymous, but respondents could give their name and address if they wanted to find out more about any of the different ways of accessing service. The analysis presented here is completely independent of those names and addresses.

Respondents were asked to complete only one form, although the anonymity of the questionnaire means it is impossible to check whether this instruction was followed. There were no obvious 'bulk' responses however. Several respondents completed one form for two or more people (ticking different categories in the 'about you' section – e.g. male and female); in these cases the response was duplicated so that both people's views were counted.

The survey was open from 6<sup>th</sup> July until 8<sup>th</sup> August 2013. Since completed forms had to make their way from centres across the county to the council's Plough Lane offices for data entry, they were accepted by the research team for a fortnight after this date. A total of 3,457 responses were received and inputted for analysis, one of the largest responses ever received for a Herefordshire Council questionnaire.

### Analysis

Where percentages are used, they are rounded to the nearest whole number. The "base" is the sample base from which the percentages are calculated. In all questions, the sample base is all respondents to that particular question. Any variation from this is noted and explained in the main body of the report. It should be noted that in some cases a sizeable number of respondents did not answer the question and this should be taken into account when interpreting these results – these numbers are shown in the 'not answered' column of the tables.

Answers to questions requiring a free text answer are not included in this basic report, only the number of respondents who made a comment and a basic analysis of the most common words in the comments and themes emerging from those comments that it was possible to analyse in the time available.

## Results

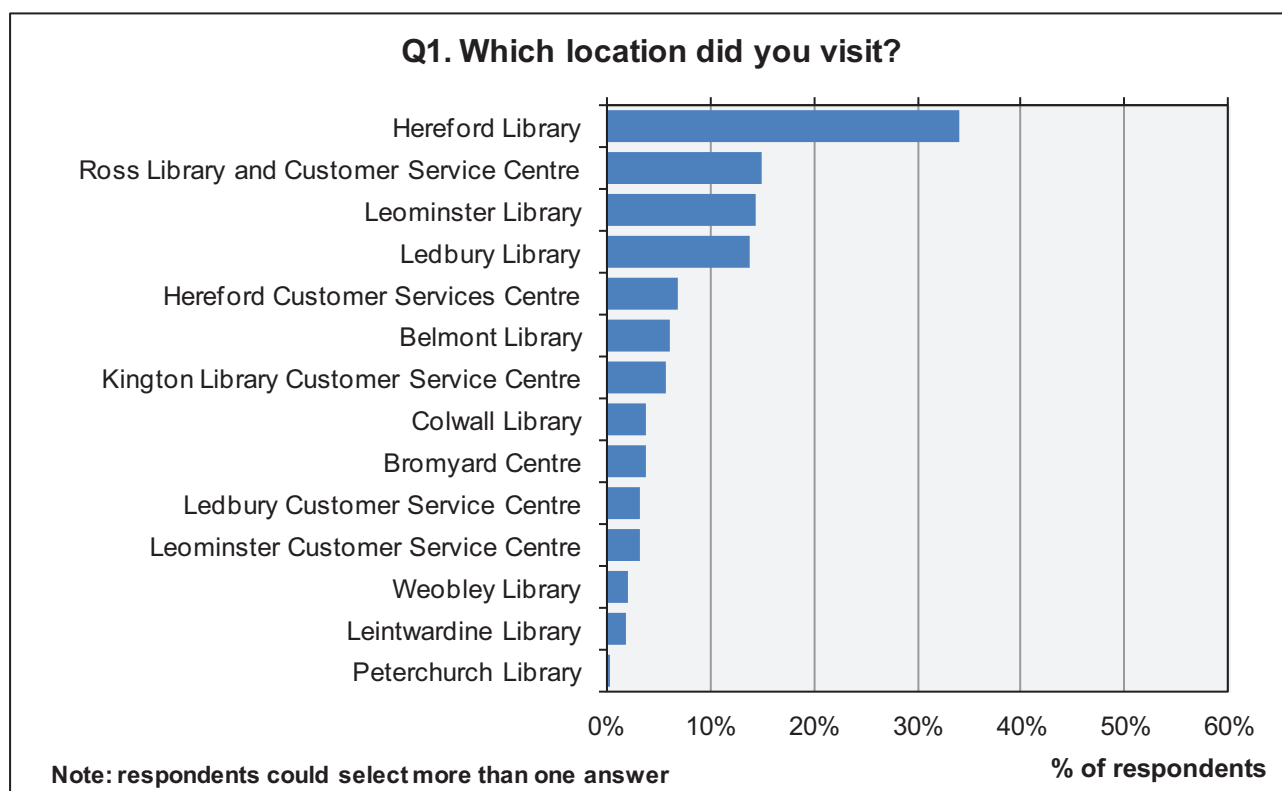
This section presents a basic analysis of the 3,457 responses received to each of the questions in the questionnaire, mainly in the form of a table and chart for each question. Some questions have been cross-tabulated with others to provide a better understanding of what the results say; in this case the detailed results are shown in the appendices with a reference from the relevant section of the main report. It would be possible to extend this analysis, for example to look at the response to all questions by each location.

### Your visit

#### Q1. Which location did you visit?

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Hereford Library	1,170	34%
Ross Library and Customer Service Centre	515	15%
Leominster Library	494	14%
Ledbury Library	475	14%
Hereford Customer Services Centre	235	7%
Belmont Library	211	6%
Kington Library Customer Service Centre	195	6%
Colwall Library	131	4%
Bromyard Centre	129	4%
Ledbury Customer Service Centre	107	3%
Leominster Customer Service Centre	107	3%
Weobley Library	69	2%
Leintwardine Library	63	2%
Peterchurch Library	9	<1%
Total respondents	3,446	100%
Not answered	11	

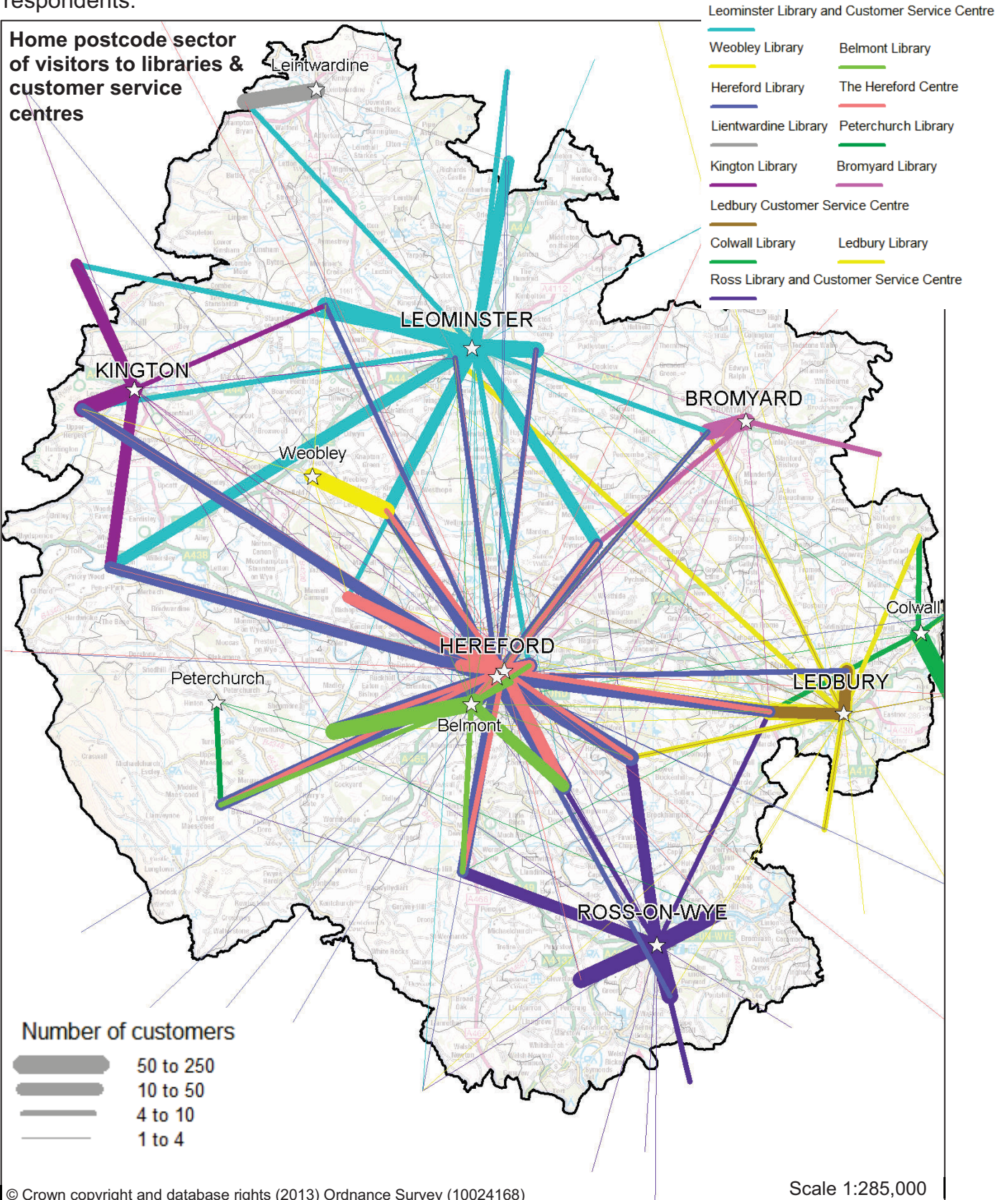
Note: respondents could select more than one answer.





## Q2. What is your post code?

3,187 respondents provided at least part of their postcode in order to help understand where users travel from. The map shows the postcode sectors (four digits, e.g. HR4 0) that respondents travelled to each library or customer service centre from – the thicker the line, the more respondents.

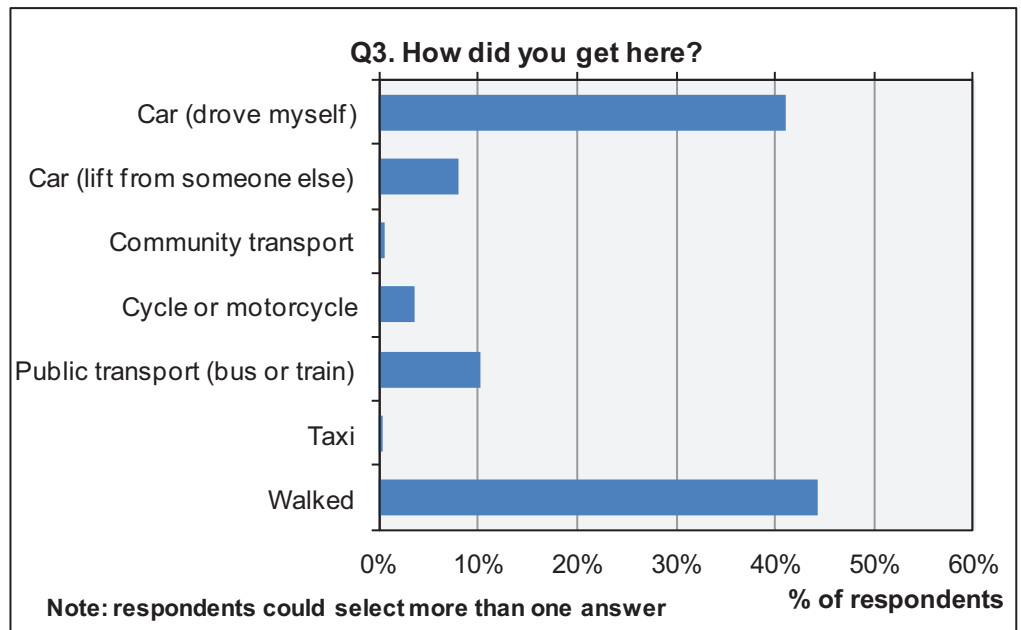


Note that because full postcodes have been used for the destinations (centres), but four-digit centroids have been used for the respondents' origins, someone from the same postcode going to a centre may appear to have travelled on the map. Respondents who selected more than one centre have been counted for all centres selected.

### Q3. How did you get here?

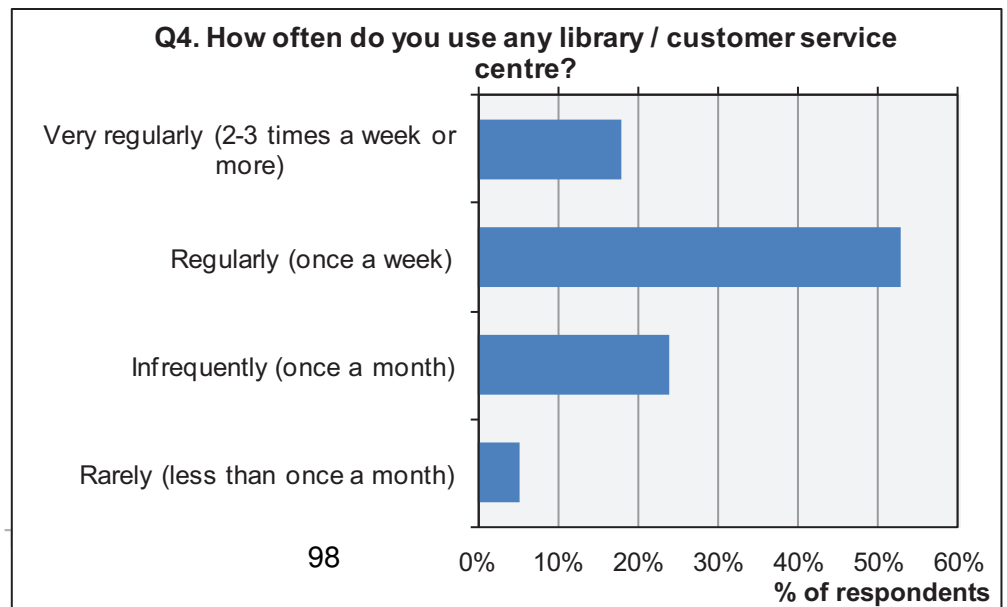
	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Car (drove myself)	1,407	41%
Car (lift from someone else)	271	8%
Community transport	20	1%
Cycle or motorcycle	122	4%
Public transport (bus or train)	351	10%
Taxi	9	<1%
Walked	1,519	44%
Total respondents	3,432	100%
Not answered	25	

Note: respondents could select more than one answer.



### Q4. How often do you use any library / customer service centre?

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Very regularly (2-3 times a week or more)	607	18%
Regularly (once a week)	1,786	53%
Infrequently (once a month)	804	24%
Rarely (less than once a month)	179	5%
Total respondents	3,376	100%
Not answered	81	





**Q5. Which days and times do you usually use this library / customer service centre?**

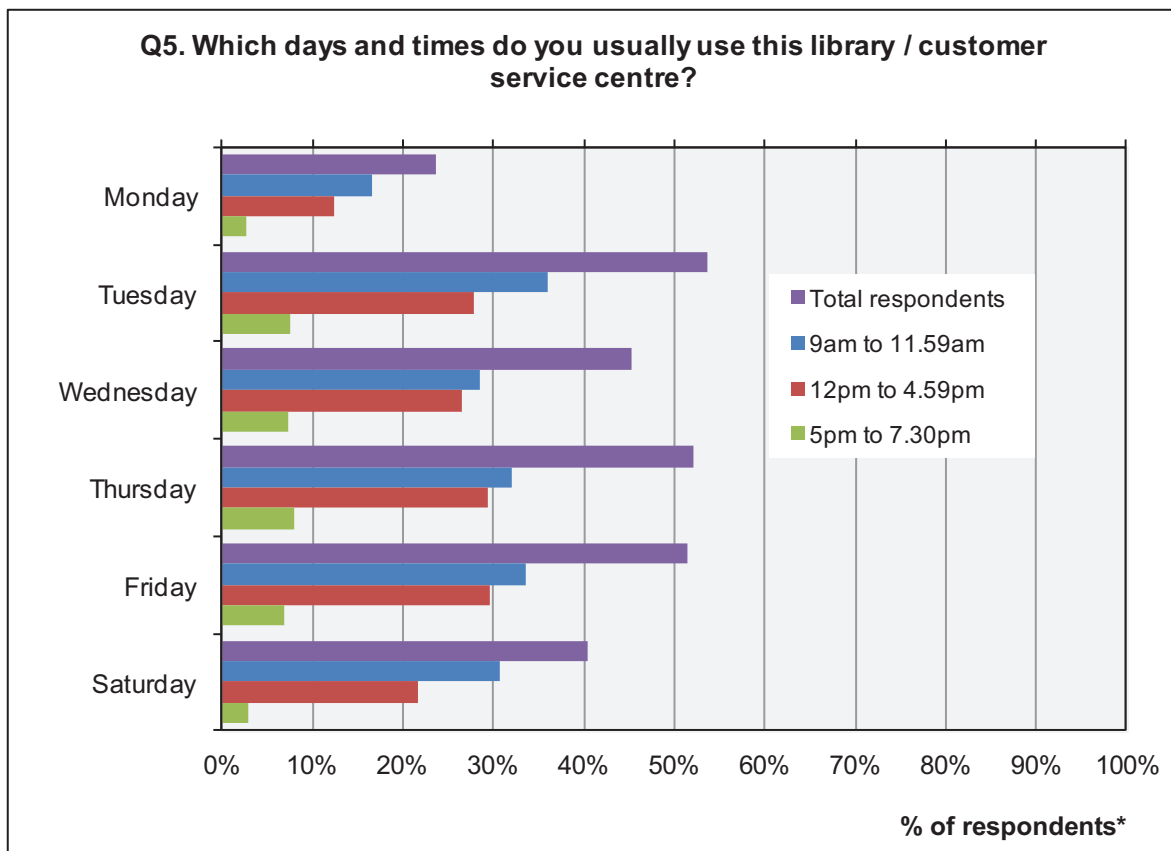
(please tick all that apply)

Number of respondents	9am to 11.59am	12pm to 4.59pm	5pm to 7.30pm	Any time	Base*
Monday	576	425	89	817	3,457
Tuesday	1,241	962	258	1,856	3,457
Wednesday	983	919	256	1,563	3,457
Thursday	1,107	1,014	275	1,798	3,457
Friday	1,162	1,027	238	1,779	3,457
Saturday	1,061	745	102	1,401	3,457

Percentage of respondents	9am to 11.59am	12pm to 4.59pm	5pm to 7.30pm	Any time	Base*
Monday	17%	12%	3%	24%	100%
Tuesday	36%	28%	7%	54%	100%
Wednesday	28%	27%	7%	45%	100%
Thursday	32%	29%	8%	52%	100%
Friday	34%	30%	7%	51%	100%
Saturday	31%	22%	3%	41%	100%

\*Base=total survey respondents (3,457)

Note: respondents could select more than one time slot per day.

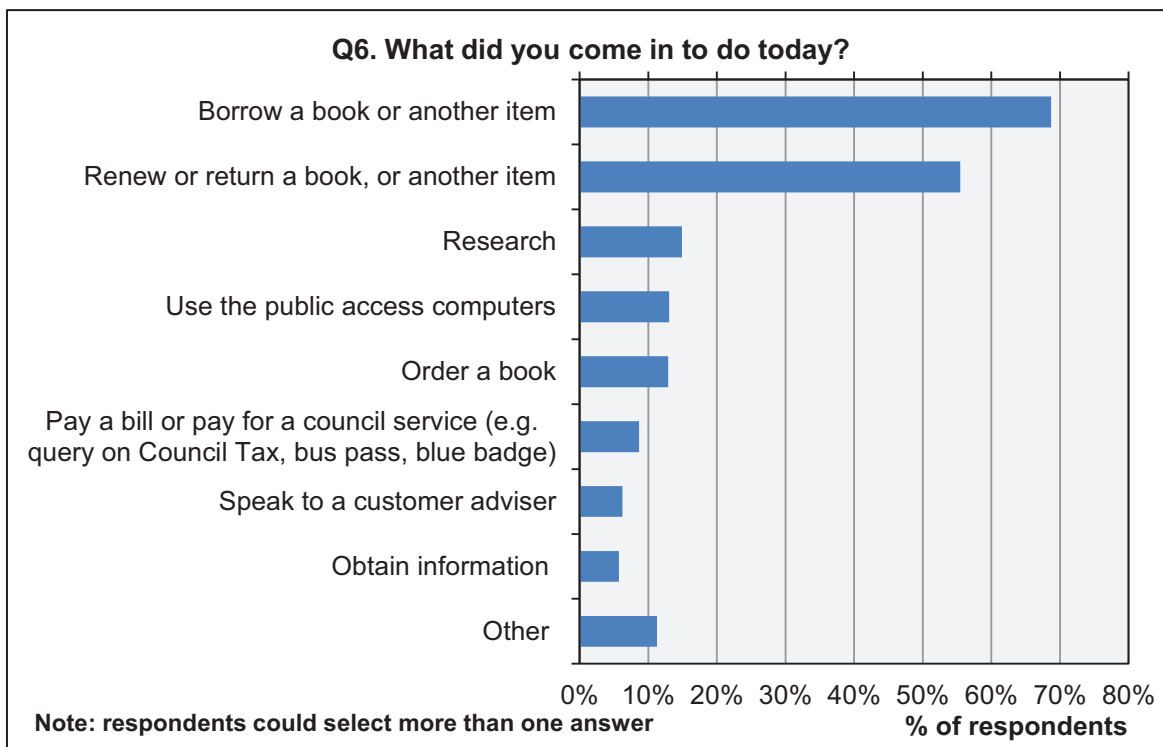


Clearly the responses to this question would vary depending on the centre visited and its opening times. The responses to this question for each centre are shown in Appendix A, and these should be considered alongside the opening times for the centres in July/August 2013.

### Q6. What did you come in to do today?

Reason for visiting	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Borrow a book or another item	2,318	69%
Renew or return a book, or another item	1,871	55%
Research	504	15%
Use the public access computers	440	13%
Order a book	435	13%
Pay a bill or pay for a council service (e.g. query on Council Tax, bus pass, blue badge, etc)	293	9%
Speak to a customer adviser*	210	6%
Obtain information*	193	6%
Other*	381	11%
Total respondents	3,374	100%
Not answered	83	

Note: respondents could select more than one option



It was considered probable that reasons for visiting may vary by age and disability, so this question was analysed by these characteristics – see Appendix A. Results did vary by age, but not very much by disability.

\* Respondents to these options were asked to specify more detail. 784 comments were made in total, and the results are shown in the word cloud below.



## Alternative Use

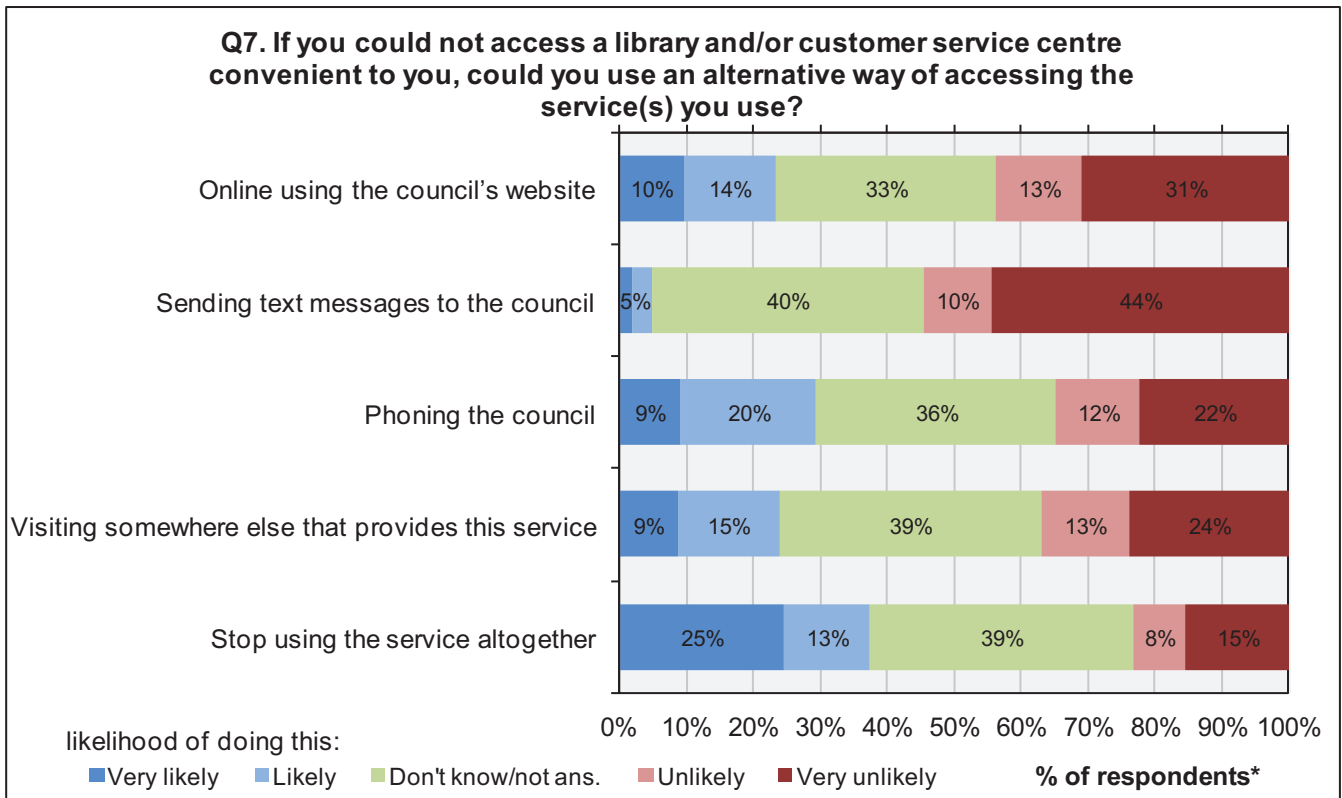
### Q7. If you could not access a library and/or customer service centre convenient to you, could you use an alternative way of accessing the service(s) you use?

(please tick one box only per row)

Number of respondents	Very likely to do this	Likely to do this	Unlikely to do this	Very unlikely to do this	Don't know	Total resp.	Not ans.	Base*
Online using the council's website	330	477	441	1,070	119	2,437	1,020	3,457
Sending text messages to the council	69	102	355	1,536	103	2,165	1,292	3,457
Phoning the council	318	701	432	770	115	2,336	1,121	3,457
Visiting somewhere else that provides this service	299	527	455	827	269	2,377	1,080	3,457
Stop using the service altogether	853	440	275	533	377	2,478	979	3,457

Percentage of respondents	Very likely to do this	Likely to do this	Unlikely to do this	Very unlikely to do this	Don't know	Total resp.	Not ans.	Base*
Online using the council's website	10%	14%	13%	31%	3%	70%	30%	100%
Sending text messages to the council	2%	3%	10%	44%	3%	63%	37%	100%
Phoning the council	9%	20%	12%	22%	3%	68%	32%	100%
Visiting somewhere else that provides this service	9%	15%	13%	24%	8%	69%	31%	100%
Stop using the service altogether	25%	13%	8%	15%	11%	72%	28%	100%

\*Base=total survey respondents (3,457)



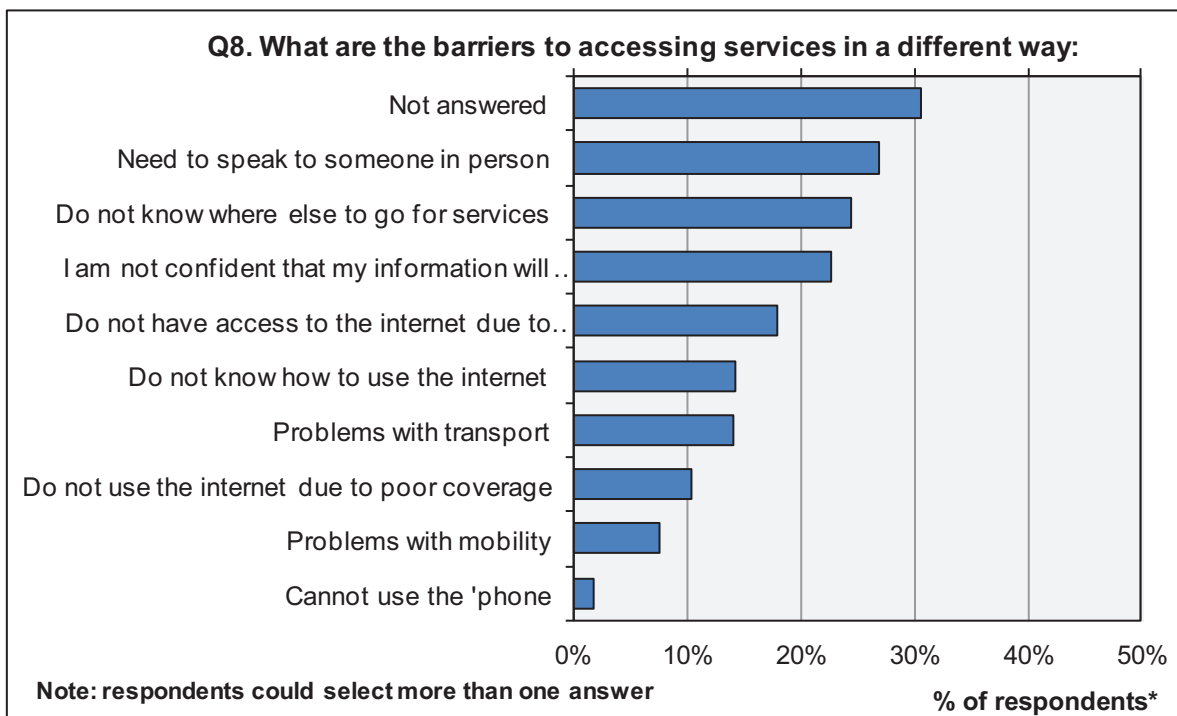
**Q8. What are the barriers to accessing services in a different way?**

(please tick all that apply)

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Need to speak to someone in person	928	27%
Do not know where else to go for services	843	24%
I am not confident that my information will be safe on-line	785	23%
Do not have access to the internet due to cost	622	18%
Do not know how to use the internet	491	14%
Problems with transport	487	14%
Do not use the internet due to poor coverage	357	10%
Problems with mobility	262	8%
Cannot use the 'phone	58	2%
Total respondents who gave an answer	2,403	70%
Not answered	1,054	30%
Base*	3,457	100%

\*Base=total survey respondents

Note: respondents could select more than one answer.



It is likely that the barriers to accessing services would vary by age and disability, so responses to this question have also been analysed by these characteristics – see Appendix A.



Impacts of reduced / closed services; how these can be addressed; any special needs		No. of comments related to this theme	% of all comments analysed
Impacts: Specific services	Loss of books for borrowing (inc. range)	126	15.2%
	Research / reference library / study area	50	6.0%
	Would lose access to computers/internet	40	4.8%
	Advice/ help with form filling	14	1.7%
	Large print / audio books	9	1.1%
	Scanning/printing/copying	7	0.8%
Transport	Accessibility	81	9.8%
	Cost	17	2.1%
	Environmental impact	4	0.5%
Impacts: general	Would miss face-to-face contact / positive comments about staff	89	10.7%
	Cost of buying books instead	59	7.1%
	Would stop using service - wouldn't travel	30	3.6%
	Quality of life / isolation	24	2.9%
	Knock-on effects on other social/cultural activities (e.g. museum, book groups)	16	1.9%
	Reduction in opening hours would be a problem	14	1.7%
	Increased unemployment	7	0.8%
	Would stop visiting county towns / go out of county	6	0.7%
General comments	Library important for children / families	75	9.0%
	Library is a meeting place / community hub / social interaction	56	6.8%
	Don't close	46	5.5%
	Can't/don't want to use a computer / not got access to internet (cost or coverage)	31	3.7%
	General importance of having books to read - education / quality of life / well-being	25	3.0%
	Library important for disabled people (including housebound)	21	2.5%
	Library important for older people	19	2.3%
	Can't browse for / read / pick up books on internet	13	1.6%
	Importance of rural services	11	1.3%
	Already lost mobile service	8	1.0%
Mitigations / suggestions for addressing impacts	Reduced hours	15	1.8%
	Use building for more / co-locate services	4	0.5%
	Charges (internet / library)	7	0.8%
	Centralise service & deliver out / mobile unit	4	0.5%
	Schemes for donating / swapping books	2	0.2%
	Other suggestions	5	0.6%
Negative comment about Council / Council Tax		8	1.0%
Other comment		10	1.2%
Comment unrelated to question		73	8.8%
<b>Total comments analysed</b>		<b>829</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Question marked but no answer		19	
Total responses analysed		848	





Will the proposals particularly affect any group of people?		No. of comments related to this theme	% of all comments analysed
Everyone		85	19.2%
Protected characteristics	Age-elderly / pensioners	156	35.3%
	Disability	104	23.5%
	Age-children & families	91	20.6%
	Age-general	35	7.9%
	Age-young people / students	30	6.8%
	Pregnancy / maternity	7	1.6%
	Race	6	1.4%
	Religion	0	-
	Sex	0	-
Other characteristics	Sexual orientation	0	-
	People on low incomes / benefit reliant / unemployed	60	13.6%
	Those not confident using/don't have internet / other methods of communication	43	9.7%
Travel-related comments	Working people	9	2.0%
	Travel-accessibility	47	10.6%
Those who use specific services	Travel-cost	10	2.3%
	Read/borrow books	30	6.8%
	People who need computer access	24	5.4%
	Research / reference library	8	1.8%
	Large print/audio books	6	1.4%
	Doing transactions with Council	5	1.1%
	Print/copy/scan	2	0.5%
Other aspects affected	Newspapers	1	0.2%
	Library: means of education	26	5.9%
	Social impact of closing libraries / social isolation	27	6.1%
	Value of face-to-face contact	14	3.2%
There aren't any proposals	Rurality	11	2.5%
	Library: positive effect on health (mental or physical)	4	0.9%
There aren't any proposals		13	2.9%
Comment unrelated to question		34	7.7%
<b>Total comments analysed</b>		442	100.0%
Question marked but no answer		26	
Total responses analysed		468	

### Q11. Any other comments?

Just over half of the responses (1,800) included some kind of comment in this section, although many related to other questions in the survey. The 'word cloud' illustrates the most common words across all of the comments (the bigger the words the more frequently they appear in the comments). It was possible to analyse 933 of the comments (52%); the themes emerging are presented in the table below.



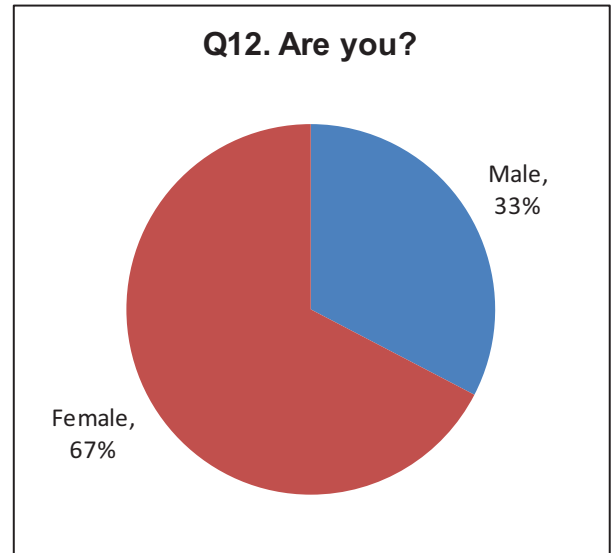
Any other comments?		No. of comments related to this theme	% of all comments analysed
General statements	Don't close library	120	13.4%
	Negative comment about council management/decisions / Council Tax	80	8.9%
	Negative about survey	54	6.0%
	Don't close service (general)	33	3.7%
	Keep customer services	7	0.8%
	Don't make people redundant	4	0.4%
Compliments about current service	Positive about staff	41	4.6%
	Positive about library service	35	3.9%
	Positive about customer service	12	1.3%
General comments in relation to proposals to change the service	Importance of libraries (education, sense of community, interaction)	218	24.3%
	Can't provide library service online / phone	55	6.1%
	Travel-related comment	44	4.9%
	Library good for child development	35	3.9%
	Need / prefer face-to-face interaction	32	3.6%
	Rural / small town sustainability	24	2.7%
	Financial comment	24	2.7%
	Technological barriers	21	2.3%
	Closing would be short-sighted / irreversible	14	1.6%
	Would stop using library / other service - wouldn't travel	11	1.2%
Impacts on specific groups	Need out of work hours	11	1.2%
	Impact on elderly	19	2.1%
	Would affect everyone	18	2.0%
Comments about specific services currently available	Impact on other specific groups	5	0.6%
	Computer / internet	19	2.1%
	Printing / scanning / copying	7	0.8%
	Help in job hunting	5	0.6%
	Mobile library	4	0.4%
Suggestions about alternatives	Advice	3	0.3%
	Make better / more use of buildings	26	2.9%
	Introduce fees	14	1.6%
	Use community / volunteers	6	0.7%
	It wouldn't work to use volunteers	5	0.6%
	Reduce opening of larger libraries to enable smaller ones to open	3	0.3%
	Negative about council service via phone	3	0.3%
Other suggestion to save money	12	1.3%	
Other - general	8	0.9%	
Comment related to non-comment questions in survey	99	11.0%	
<b>Total comments analysed</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Question marked but no answer (e.g. stated 'none')	35		
Total responses analysed	933		

## About you

Respondents were asked to provide some demographic information so that a profile of respondents could be produced, and also so that responses could be analysed by different characteristics to see if they vary, for example by age.

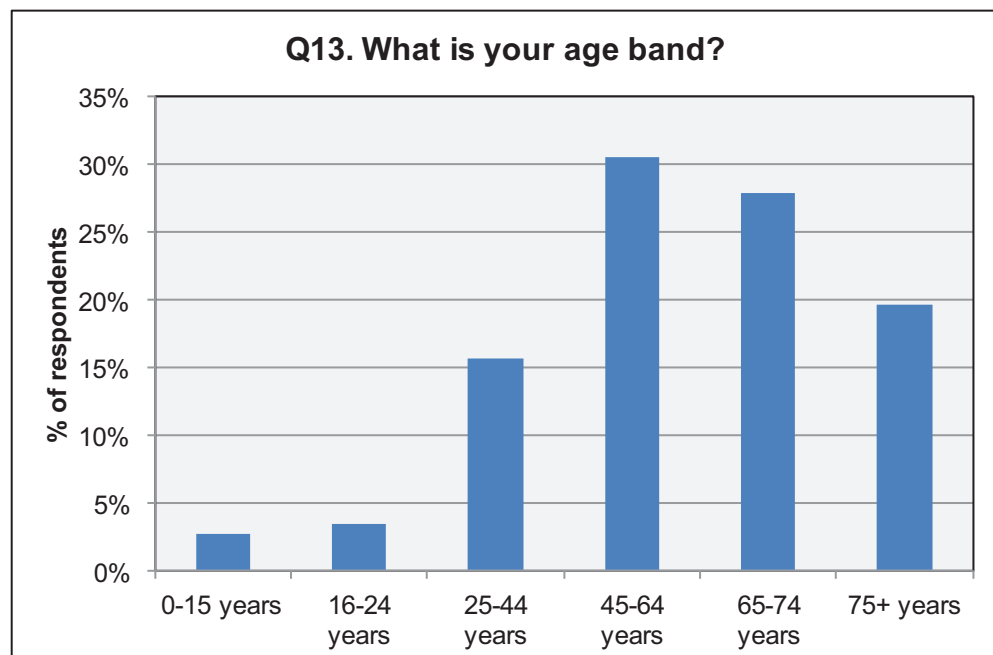
### Q12. Sex - Are you?

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Male	1,093	33%
Female	2,254	67%
Total respondents	3,347	100%
Not answered	110	



### Q13. What is your age band?

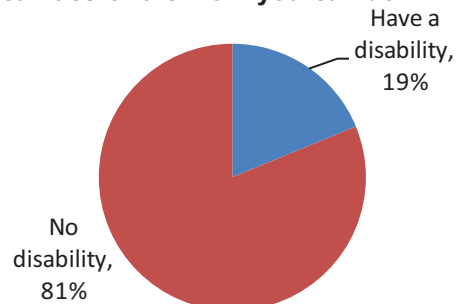
	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
0-15 years	91	3%
16-24 years	116	3%
25-44 years	526	16%
45-64 years	1,021	31%
65-74 years	935	28%
75+ years	657	20%
Total respondents	3,346	100%
Not answered	111	



**Q14. Do you have a disability, long-term illness or health problem (12 months or more) which limits daily activities or the work you can do?**

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Yes	602	19%
No	2,599	81%
Total respondents	3,201	100%
Not answered	256	

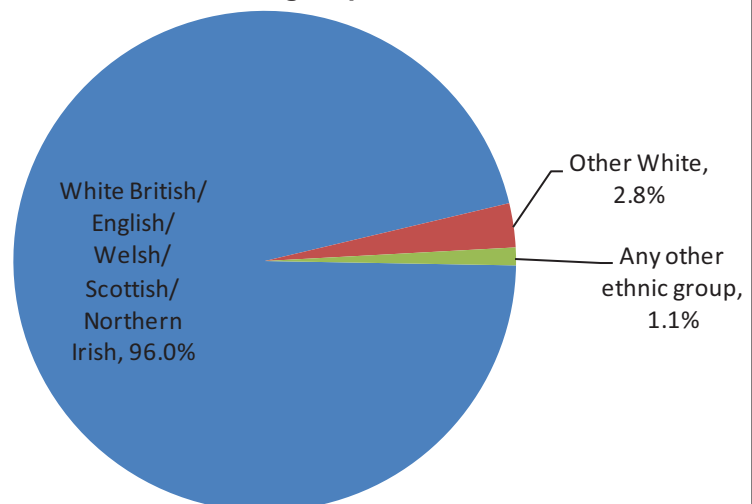
**Q14. Do you have a disability, long-term illness or health problem (12 months or more) which limits daily activities or the work you can do?**



**Q15. How would you describe your ethnic group? (Please tick one box only)**

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
White British/English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish	3,111	96.0%
Other White	92	2.8%
<i>Irish</i>	8	0.2%
<i>Eastern European (Polish / Lithuanian / Romanian / Bulgarian)</i>	18	0.5%
<i>Other European (inc. Spanish, German &amp; unspecified)</i>	25	0.7%
<i>Mixed white</i>	9	0.3%
<i>Australian / NZ / USA / S. African</i>	9	0.3%
<i>Other</i>	9	0.3%
<i>Not specified</i>	14	0.4%
Any other ethnic group	37	1.1%
<i>Asian or Asian British</i>	12	0.3%
<i>Black or Black British</i>	7	0.2%
<i>Mixed</i>	7	0.2%
<i>Other/not specified</i>	8	0.2%
Total respondents	3,239	100%
Not answered	218	

**Q15. How would you describe your ethnic group?**



## Did you know?

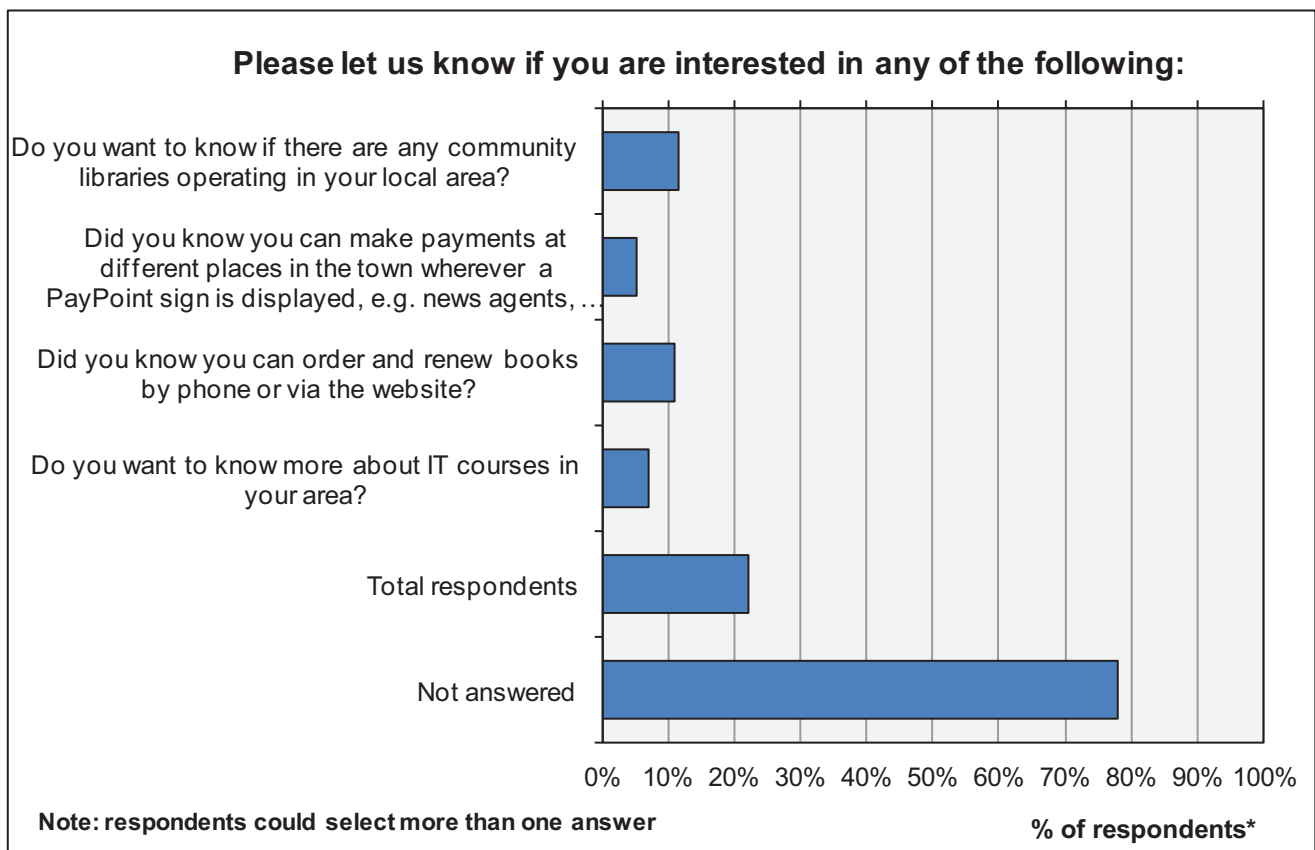
If you provide your email or postal address below we can tell you different ways to help access services. We will not use this information for any other purpose or share it with anyone else. Please let us know if you are interested in any of the following.

The table below shows the number of respondents who indicated they would like to know more about the options provided. A total of 765 respondents said they would like to be contacted about at least one of the options, and all but 39 of these provided either an e-mail or postal address.

Tell me more about...	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Do you want to know if there are any community libraries operating in your local area?	397	11%
Did you know you can make payments at different places in the town wherever a PayPoint sign is displayed, e.g. news agents, post offices and garages?	176	5%
Did you know you can order and renew books by phone or via the website?	373	11%
Do you want to know more about IT courses in your area?	242	7%
Total respondents	765	22%
Not answered	2,692	78%
Base*	3,457	100%

\*Base=total survey respondents

Note: respondents could select more than one answer



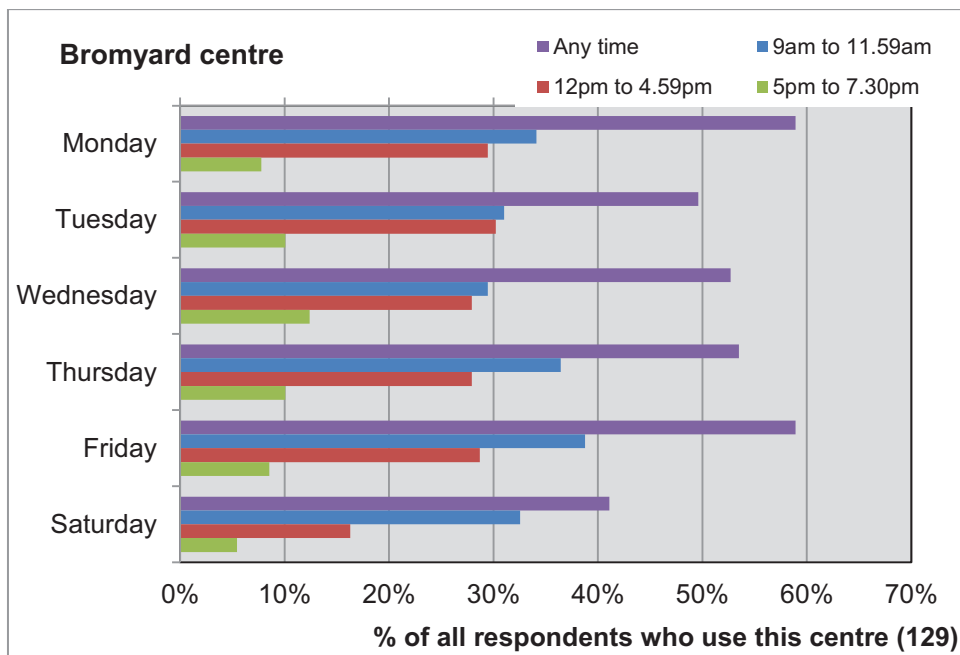
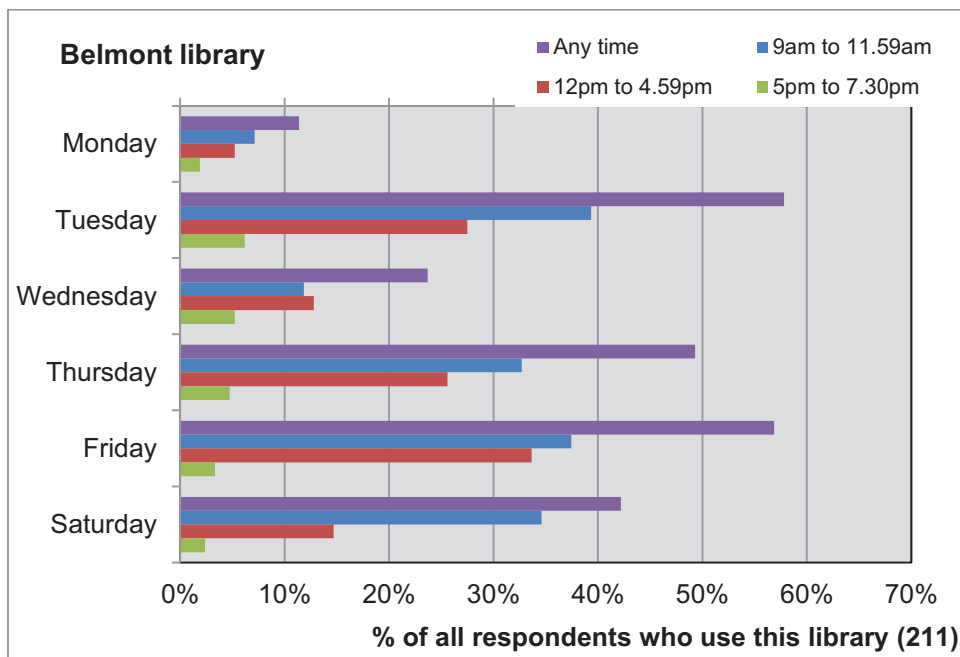
## Appendix A: Cross-tabulations

### Days and times visited by centre (Q5 by Q1)

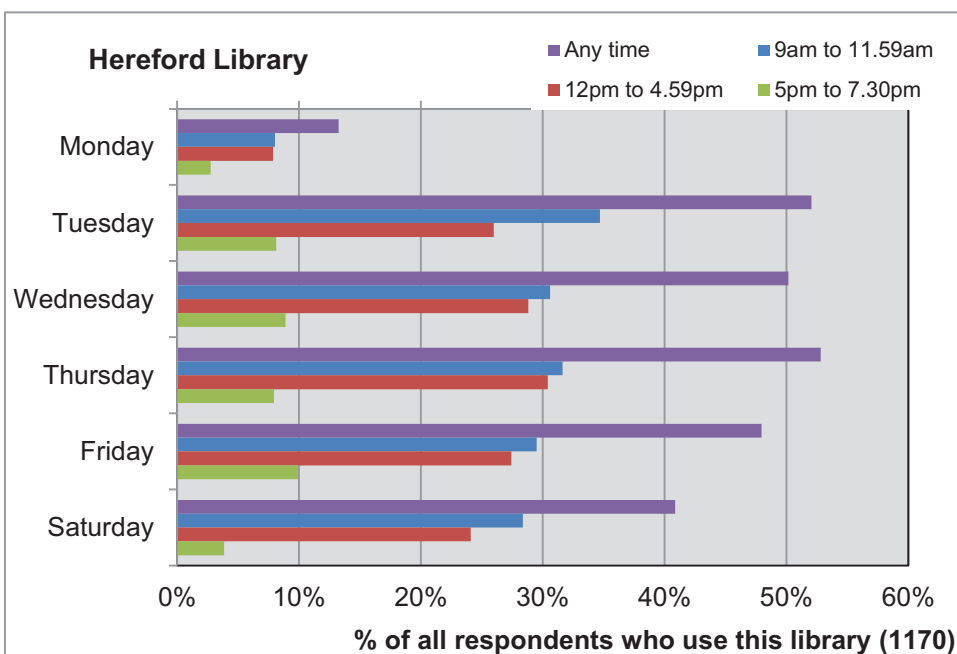
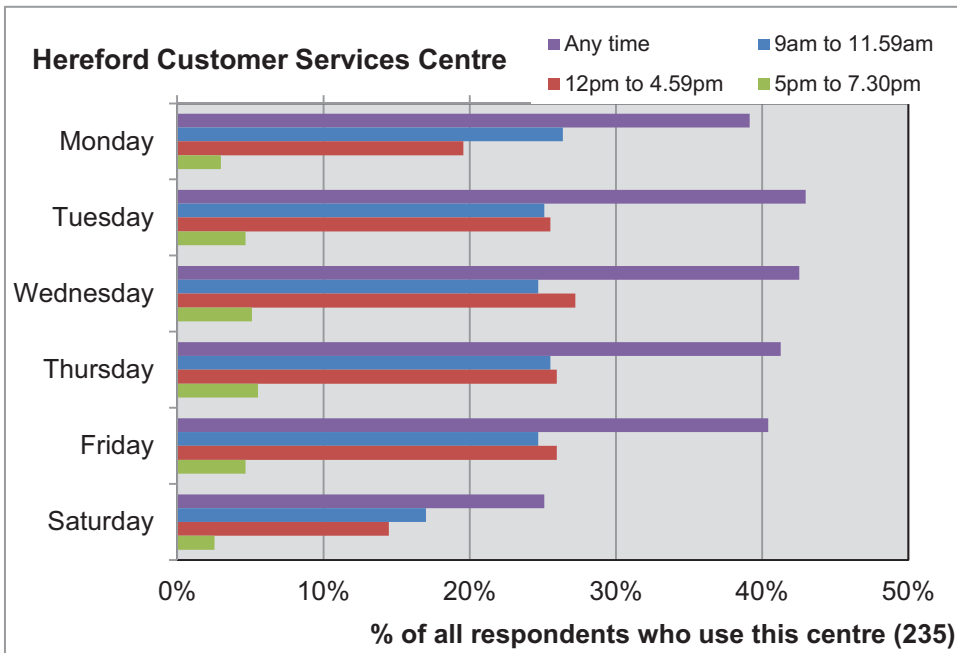
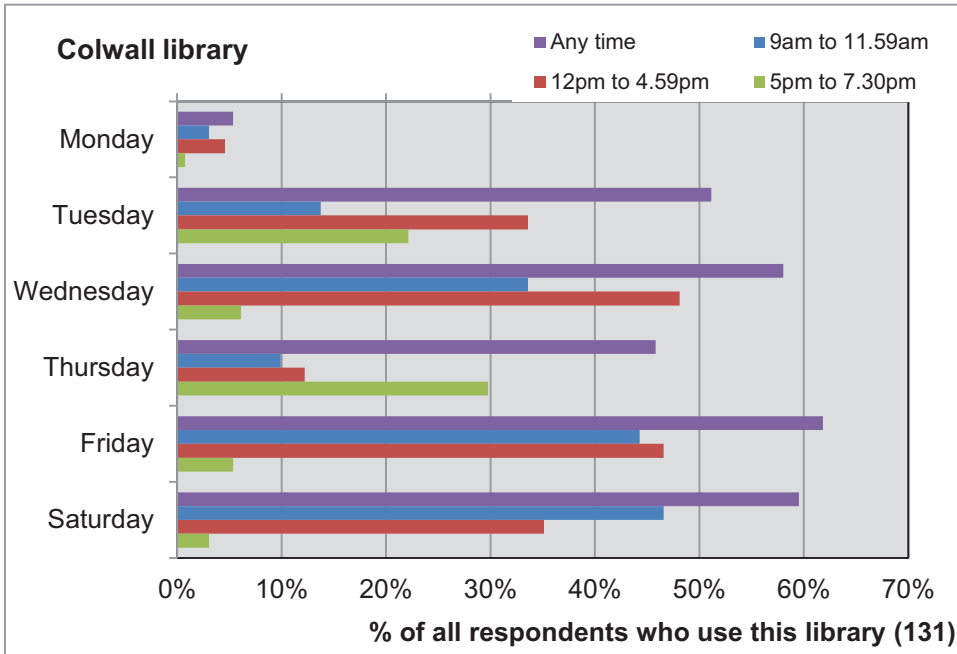
Each of the charts below shows the days and times that respondents said that they usually use each of the libraries or customer service centres. Percentages are based on the total number of respondents who said they use each centre.

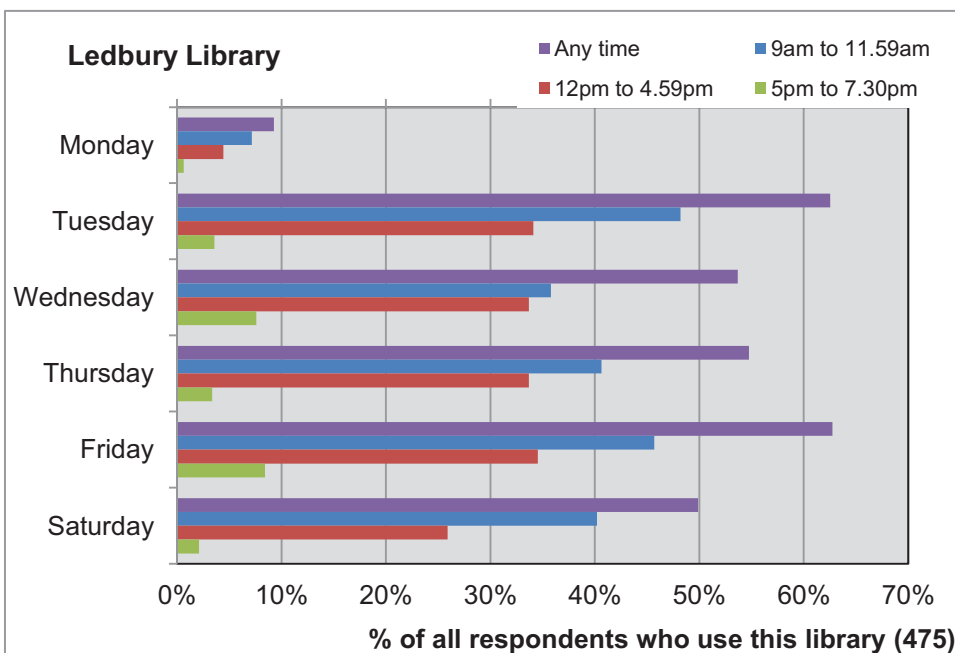
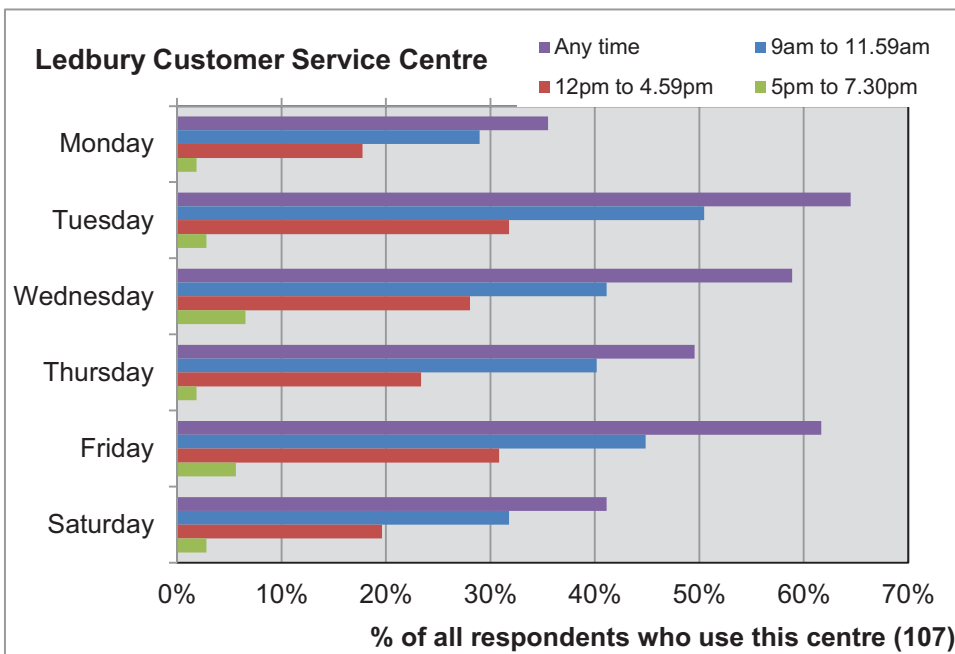
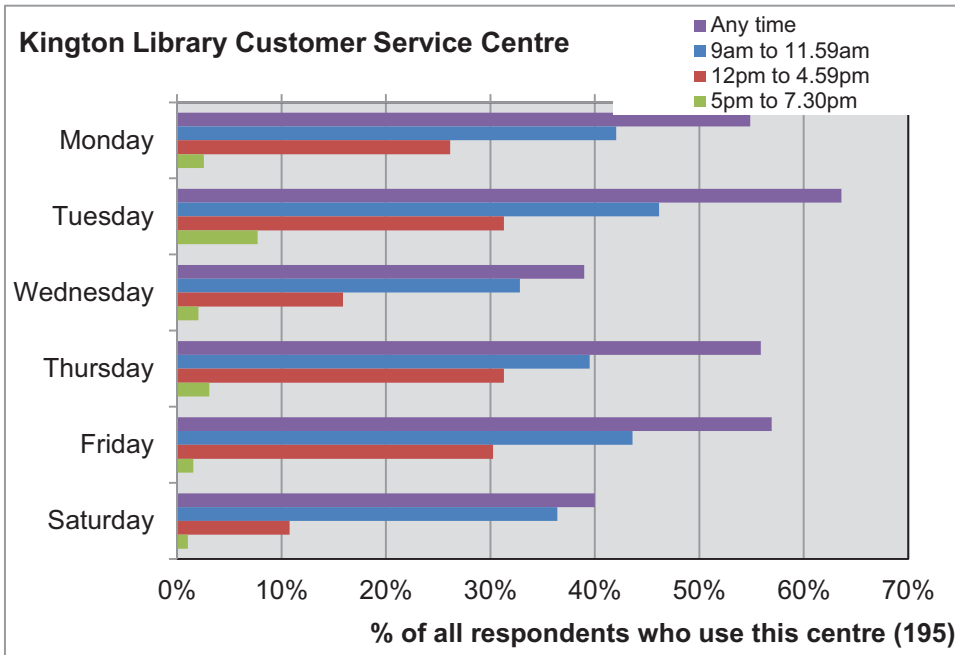
Please note that responses have not been validated against actual opening times. Also some respondents ticked more than one library or customer service centre; their responses have been counted for all the centres they ticked which could have resulted in ticks against times when a particular centre isn't open.

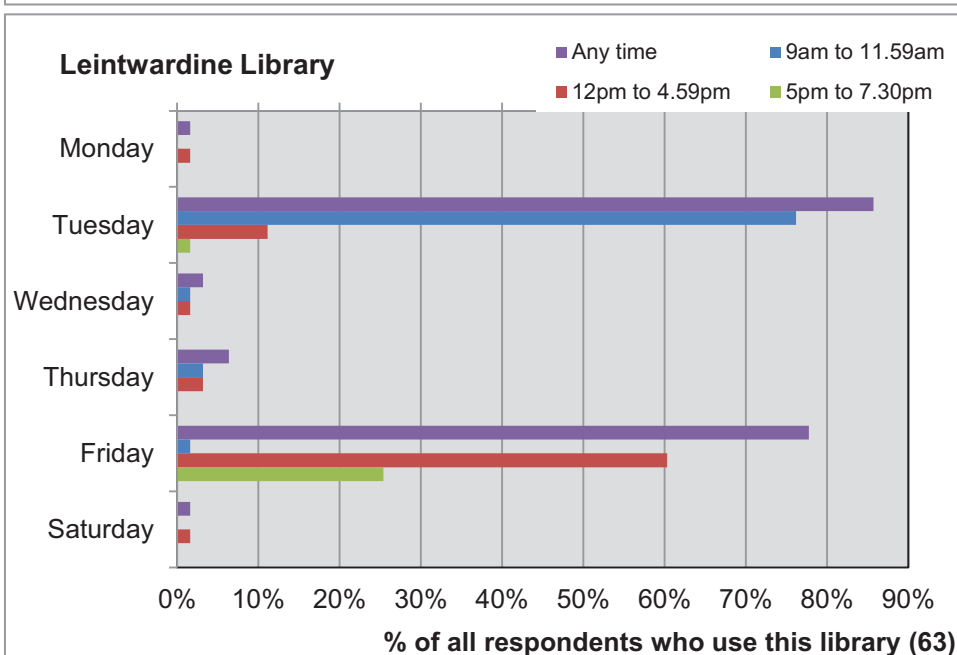
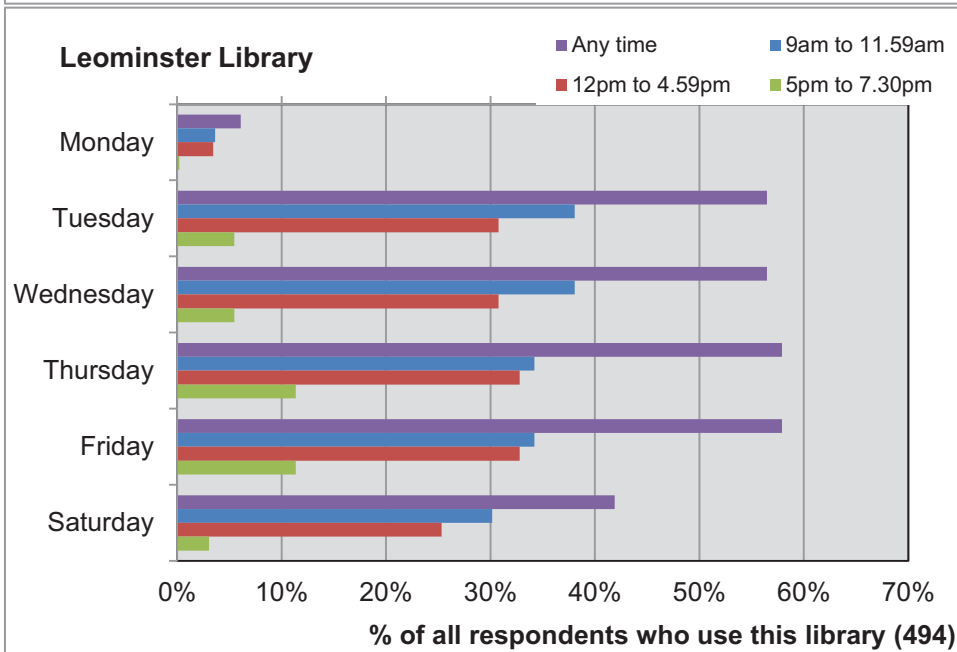
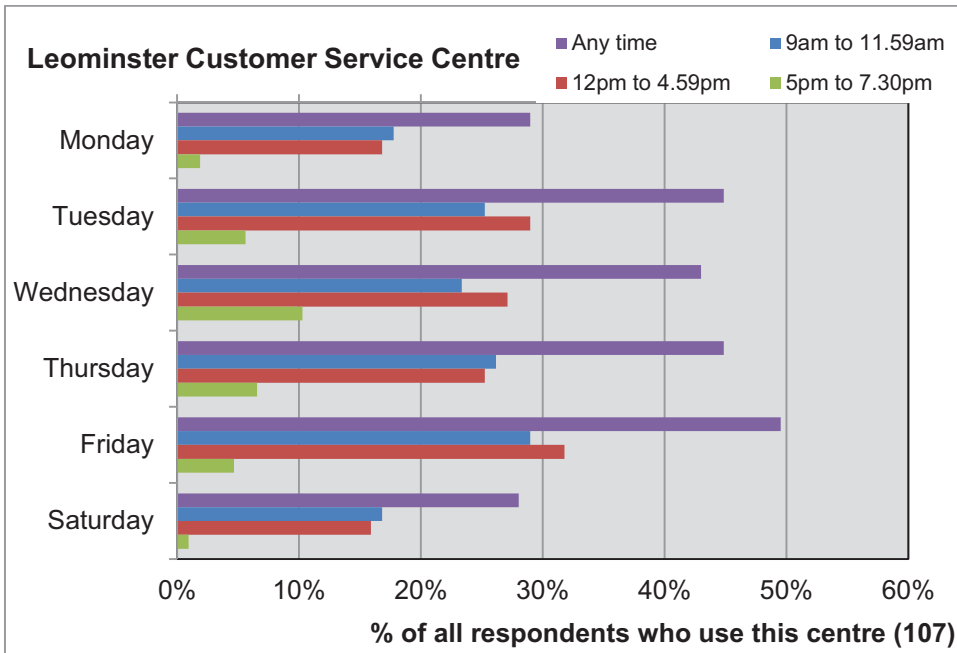
Only nine respondents said they visited Peterchurch library, so a chart has not been produced. Only one of these nine only ticked Peterchurch; the rest ticked Hereford, Belmont or Kington as well.

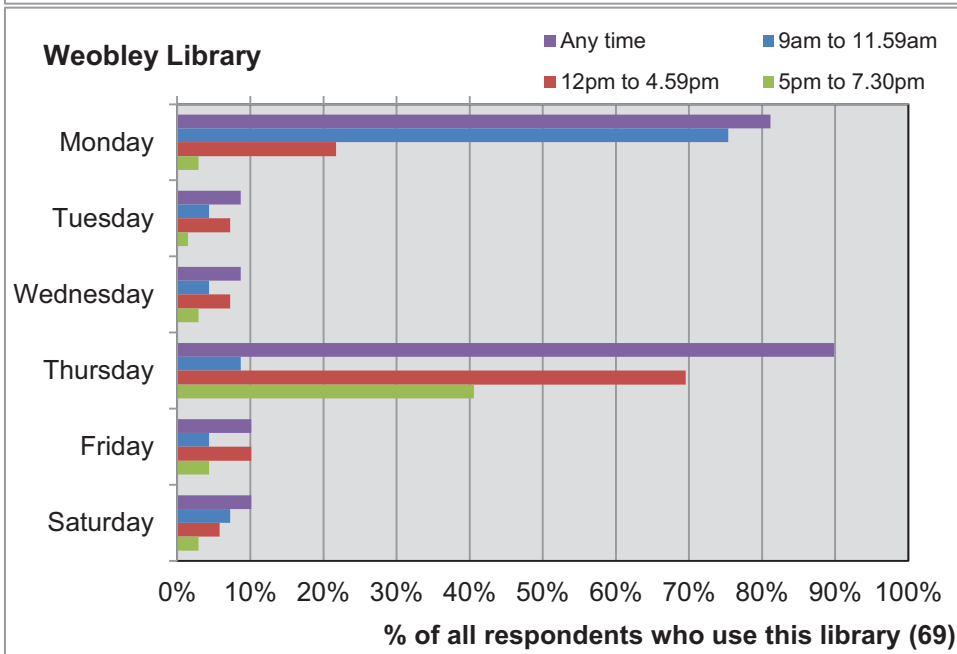
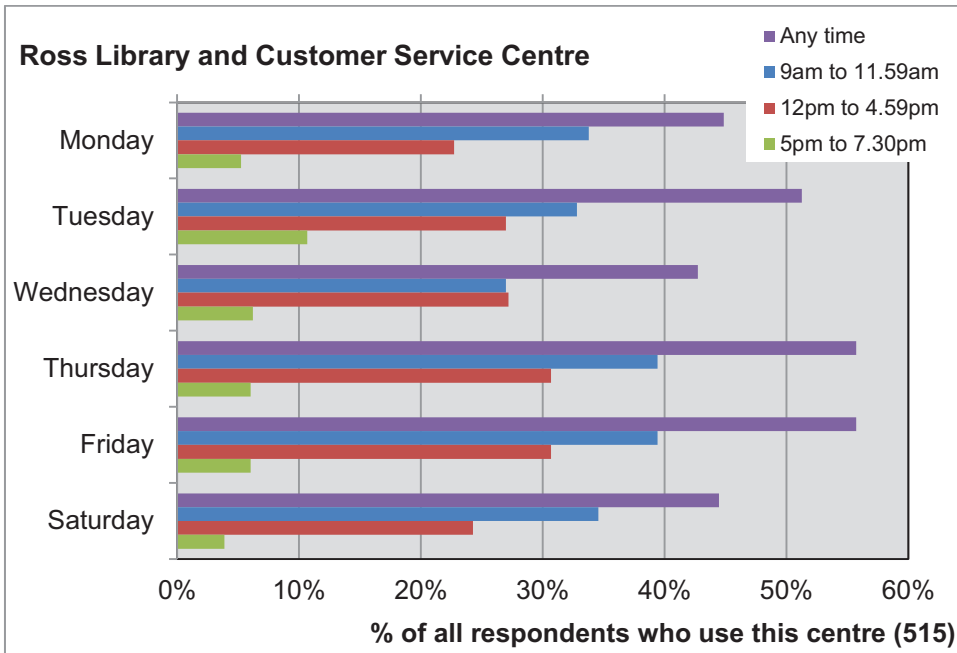




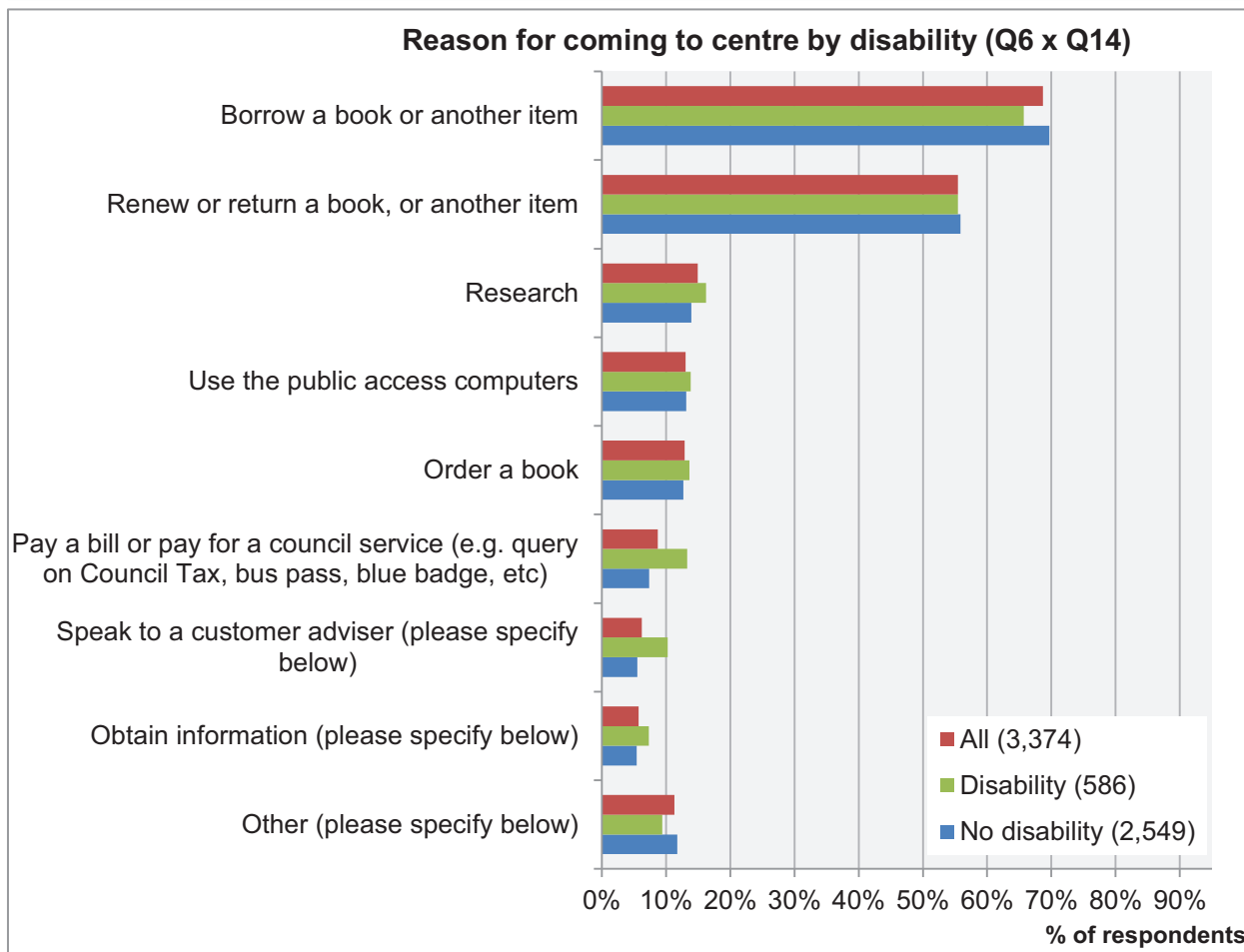
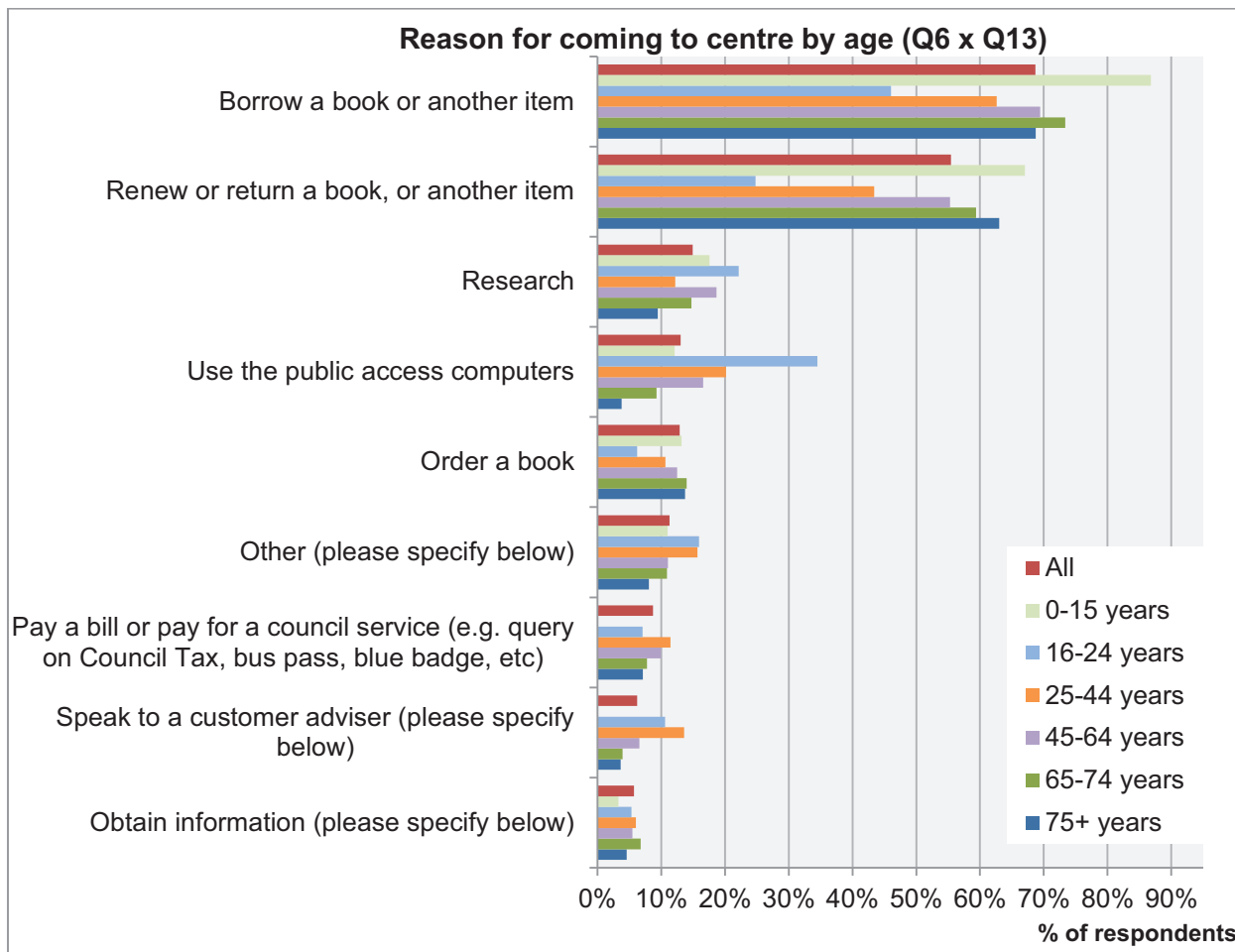




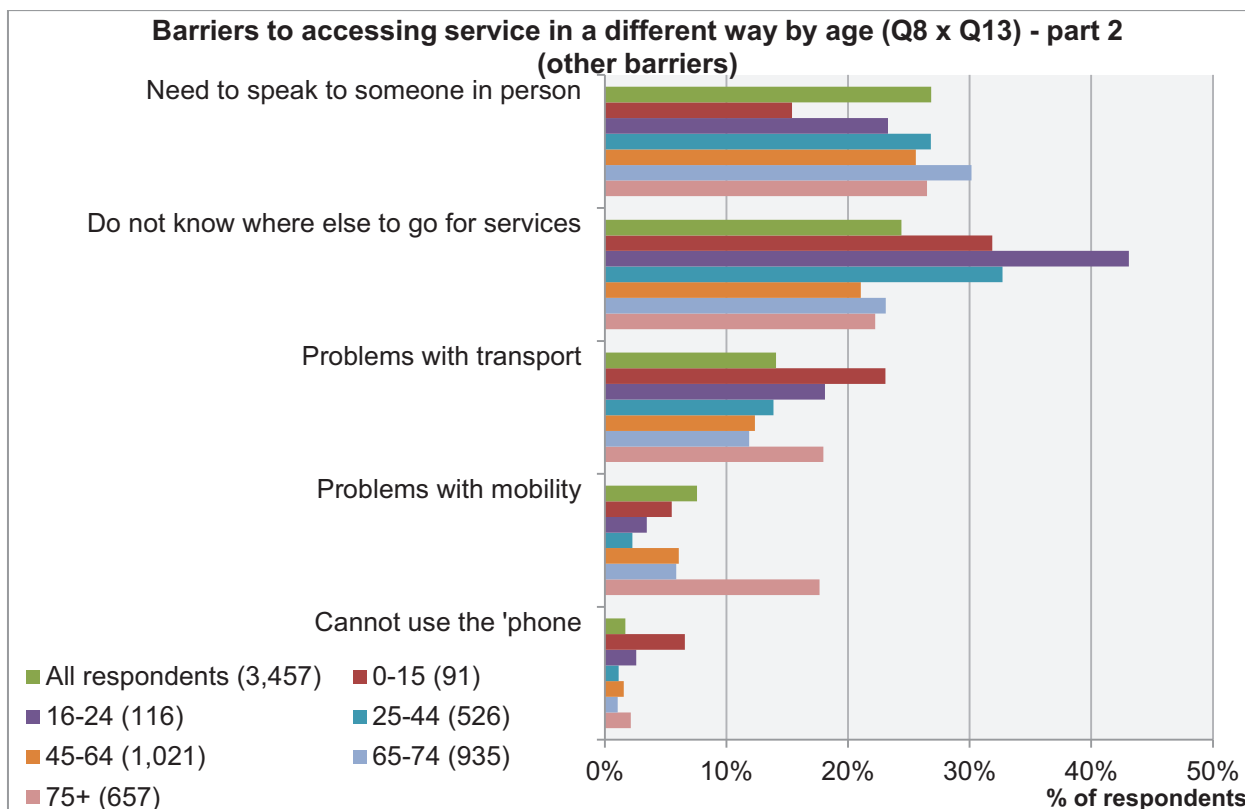
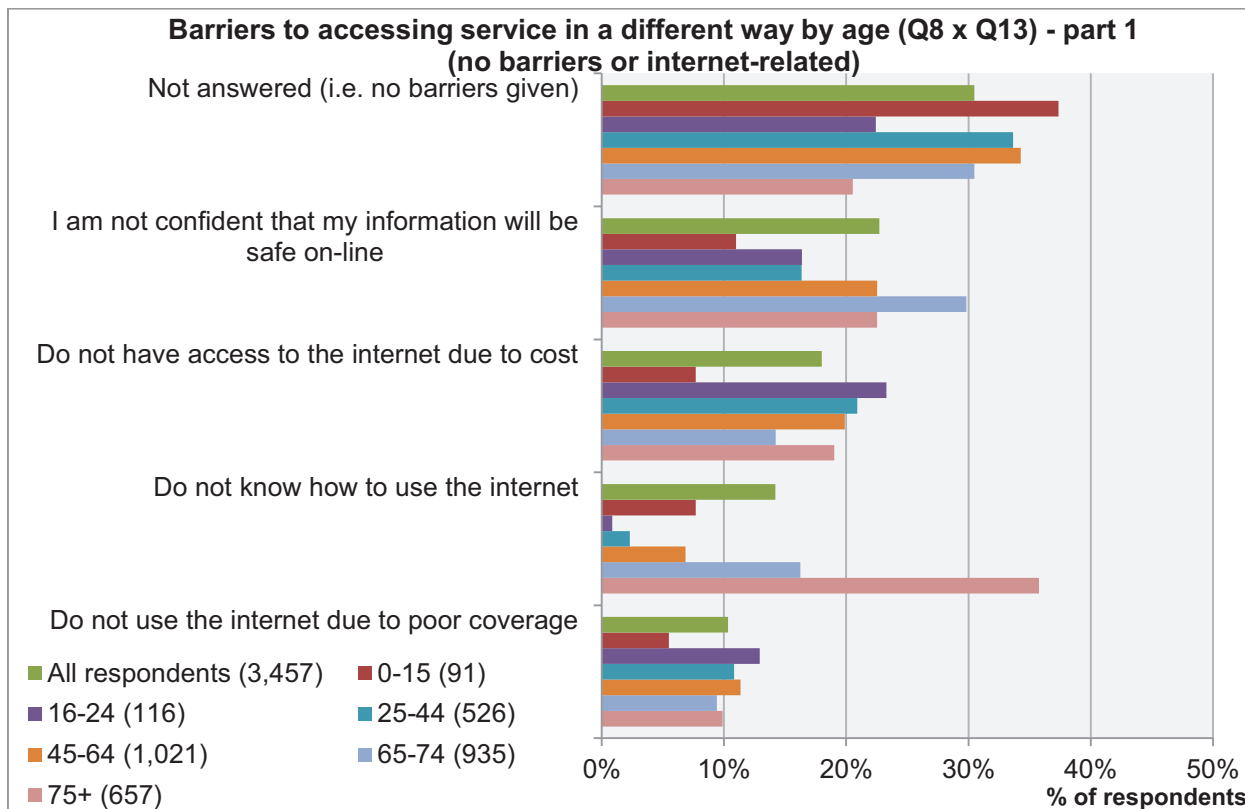




**What did you come in to do by age and disability (Q6 by Q13 and Q14)**

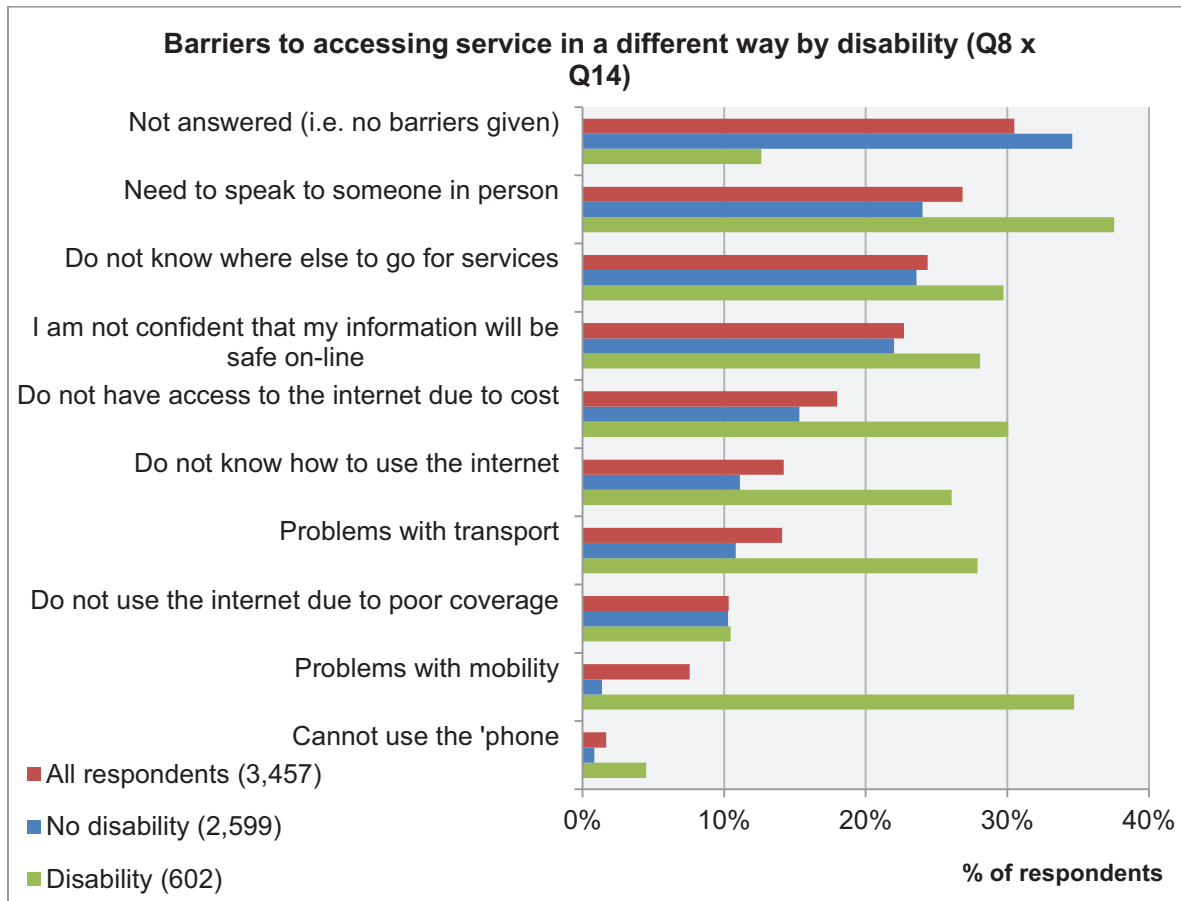


**Barriers to accessing services in a different way by age (Q8 by Q13)**



Barrier to accessing service in a different way (number of respondents)	Age-group (years)						
	All	0-15	16-24	25-44	45-64	65-74	75+
Need to speak to someone in person	928	14	27	141	261	282	174
Do not know where else to go for services	843	29	50	172	215	216	146
I am not confident that my information will be safe on-line	785	10	19	86	230	279	148
Do not have access to the internet due to cost	622	7	27	110	203	133	125
Do not know how to use the internet	491	7	1	12	70	152	235
Problems with transport	487	21	21	73	126	111	118
Do not use the internet due to poor coverage	357	5	15	57	116	88	65
Problems with mobility	262	5	4	12	62	55	116
Cannot use the 'phone	58	6	3	6	16	10	14
<b>Total respondents who gave an answer</b>	<b>2,403</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>522</b>
Not answered (i.e. no barriers given)	1,054	34	26	177	350	285	135
Base (total respondents)	3,457	91	116	526	1021	935	657

## Barriers to accessing services in a different way by disability (Q8 by Q14)



Barrier to accessing service in a different way	Number of respondents			Per cent of respondents		
	All	Disability	No disability	All	Disability	No disability
Need to speak to someone in person	928	226	624	27%	38%	24%
Do not know where else to go for services	843	179	613	24%	30%	24%
I am not confident that my information will be safe on-line	785	169	572	23%	28%	22%
Do not have access to the internet due to cost	622	181	398	18%	30%	15%
Do not know how to use the internet	491	157	289	14%	26%	11%
Problems with transport	487	168	281	14%	28%	11%
Do not use the internet due to poor coverage	357	63	267	10%	10%	10%
Problems with mobility	262	209	36	8%	35%	1%
Cannot use the 'phone	58	27	22	2%	4%	1%
<b>Total respondents who gave an answer</b>	<b>2,403</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>65%</b>
Not answered (i.e. no barriers given)	1,054	76	899	30%	13%	35%
Base	3,457	602	2,599	100%	100%	100%

## Appendix B: The questionnaire



### Options for Museums and Heritage Service

#### Contents

- 1. Description of current services**
- 2. Strategic view of services**
- 3. Service Options**

#### 1. Description of current service

Hereford Museum and Art Gallery has been collecting and exhibiting artefacts and works of fine and decorative art connected with the local area since 1874. The annual exhibition programme provides a show case for local, national and international artists and craft workers.

Collections include a nationally important Costume and Textile collection dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Fine Art collection has a rich selection of work by artists with local connections such as Brian Hatton, as well as a significant number of early English watercolours. Within the Natural History collection, the geology, herbarium and areas of the invertebrate collections are most important. There are also good local entomological specimens and a local collection of vertebrates. The Archaeological collections are primarily of Herefordshire origin and are particularly strong in the Iron Age and Roman periods, with Stone Age material being of national significance. The Social History collection is large and diverse, largely of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, but some 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century material including an important group of ironwork. The Alfred Watkins collection is of local and national relevance.

The Museum Resource and Learning Centre is the central storage facility for the county's museum collections, with climate controlled stores and a lecture/learning room that is available for hire to external groups. The Museum Resource and Learning Centre is also open to the public for curatorial advice and identifications, research, learning and training and for engagement with the volunteers who are supported by and work with the curatorial team.

The Old House is a 17<sup>th</sup> Century timber-framed building, which is an iconic landmark in the Hereford street scene. Since 1929 it has been a museum giving an insight into daily life in Jacobean times. It is furnished in period style with an important collection of English Oak furniture.

Ross on Wye Market House and Visitor Centre provides a focal point for local history and heritage with a display for both visitors and the local community and also acts as a Visitor Centre for Ross on Wye and the local area.

Ledbury Heritage Centre provides a focal point for local history and heritage with a display for both visitors and the local community.

The Museum on the Move is a mobile exhibition space, shared with Staffordshire County Council which combines education and learning with interaction with the themed exhibition objects.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056

Staffing currently comprises 9.67 FTE of which 3.5 FTE are curatorial, based at Museum Resource and Learning Centre. The remaining 6.17 FTE cover front of house at all sites across the county. Museum on the Move is staffed separate to this from external funding.

The service engages in an extensive outreach programme within the community with schools, care homes, community groups; via a range of outreach activities including holiday activities, lectures and tours.

The service also provides opportunities for work placements and volunteers.

The service works in partnership with Shropshire Museum Service, Birmingham Museums Trust and the British Museum to support the Portable Antiquities in the county.

The service works in partnership on a regional scale with the Birmingham Museums Trust and the Marches Network to develop the impact of museum services across the West Midlands.

Three sites (MRLC, Hereford Museum and Old House) are Accredited museums. The UK Accreditation scheme is the mark of a professional museum service which also enables access to funding for project and development work and supports the county-wide network of independent museums for curatorial advice and mentoring.

Visitor and user numbers 2012-13 to the service were:

Hereford Museum	28,726
Old House Hereford	34,762
Ross Market House	37,570
Ledbury Heritage Centre	28,706
Friar Street Resource Centre	2,719
Outreach visits	452
Schools	1,644
<b>Total use of the service</b>	<b>134,579</b>

## 2. Strategic view of the service

Heritage tourism is worth £26.4bn to the UK economy, according to research by the Heritage Lottery Fund. A new report reveals that the new figure is £5.8bn higher than previously estimated in 2010. The increase is mainly due to a 13% rise in international visits and overnight holidays made by UK residents between 2007 and 2011.

In Herefordshire the analysis of the economic impact of the museum service has been assessed by applying the Economic Toolkit. This indicates that the service generates a wider income of £5,603,493, or a spend of £8.24 into the local economy for every pound invested in the service. For the Old House in Hereford there is a return of £41 for every pound spent on running the service in that facility. Within the community, museums support local businesses and the visitor attractions they provide engage visitors and encourage tourism. The museums help to make Herefordshire a vibrant place to visit, live and work.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056

The museum service holds a collection of objects which tell the story of the people and the life of Herefordshire. It is there to record history, for current and future enjoyment and stimulation, for learning, research and pleasure.

The service has a moral and legal responsibility for the collection which is held in trust by the council on behalf of the donors.

There is a universal market for the service including local people, national and international visitors, including research visitors, also schools, the cared for community and the voluntary sector.

The wider service and professional staff also support the work of the independent museums around the county, including supporting their accreditation applications. In the future this would hope to include the proposed heritage centre at the Munitions Factory at Rotherwas.

The opportunities afforded by any development of a higher education establishment in Herefordshire need to be considered building on the proven role and contribution that the museum and its collections already make to the academic work of the county. The collections act as a primary source of intellectual stimulation and research for local educational establishments, from primary schools to the Art College and the Royal National College for the Blind.

The Museum Service currently has an excellent reputation within the communities that it serves. However, the proposals of May 2013 have already caused some concern amongst various stakeholders, including national institutions such as the British Museum, the V and A and the Arts Council, and also donors of artefacts who are questioning what will happen to the collections if the museum closes. The impact of the reputational damage this process will have locally and nationally will need to be considered as this may have long-term effects on aspects such as accessing external funding, acquisition of collections, visitor numbers and ability to attract high quality staff.

### **3. Service Options**

**3.1** The options as outlined below are based on a number of factors. In composing the options the following considerations were made:

- Sustaining service and quality, whilst meeting the pressure of the local authority budget.
- The views of stakeholders.
- Community Asset Transfers are being explored for Ross Market House Heritage Centre, Ledbury Heritage Centre and the Old House, Hereford, therefore most of the options do not include provision for these sites. It should also be noted that the contents of these buildings cannot automatically be part of this transfer as they are part of the museum collections.
- All options presuppose that a strategy for increasing income generation is developed, but this is unlikely to raise sufficient income to fully support the service independently.
- Costs associated with each of the options are indicative at this stage and will require further development once a preferred option has been identified, but it should be noted that each option will result in some staff redundancy.
- It has not been possible to develop an option to provide the 0% funding within 2 years as originally proposed in May 2013. This is because the agreement with

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056

the Heritage Lottery Fund (see below) requires a continued heritage presence in the Museum Resource and Learning Centre. Also, to close all the facilities would further require the dispersal of the collections which requires considerable legal involvement and would take a number of years to complete.

- Under the agreement with the Heritage Lottery Fund, there remains an obligation to pay back the grant monies (£1,223,000) if the Museum Resource and Learning Centre is no longer used for caring for and storage of museum collections. Therefore the core funding for this element needs to be sustained for the remaining 19 years of this agreement, or a clause must be agreed to retain liability for this repayment with Herefordshire Council if an external body (such as a trust) finds that the continued operation of the Museum Resource and Learning Centre is unsustainable.
- The service in its current form is already under stress due to the non-replacement of staff and a legacy of commitments to externally funded projects for which there is no longer capacity. All of the options will require an assessment of what can no longer be delivered to enable resources to be more appropriately reassigned to the agreed core offer.

### **3.2 Option 1 – Minimum service provision**

To run a minimum service from the Museum Resource and Learning Centre, with some curatorial input to oversee the collections, and allow access via appointment, with an administration role to enable letting of the Learning Room. All other sites would be closed and there would be no temporary exhibition programme in the Gallery at the Hereford Museum Broad Street site.

#### ***Strengths:***

- Makes greatest savings of all options.
- Allows for minimum curation of the Herefordshire collections.

#### ***Weaknesses and impacts:***

- Does not meet original target of 100% savings target within two years.
- Will reduce visitor spend locally as the closure of heritage sites decreases the tourist offer. See above for the value of the extra spend the service generates in the local economy.
- Even by maintaining this minimal service at the Museum Resource and Learning Centre it will jeopardise future relationships with the Heritage Lottery Fund, potentially for all Herefordshire Council sponsored bids.
- Will likely result in the loss of Accreditation status for the Service, affecting the ability of the remaining service to attract external funding for future projects or development.
- Limited ability for growth in the future without a permanent site for exhibition and interpretation of the collections.
- Greatly reduced access to the collection for education, learning and research and completely for the tourist visitor.
- Loss of curatorial expertise impacting on the potential input to programmes of work within the service and to other projects within the council and elsewhere in the cultural sector, locally and nationally.
- Loss of exhibition programme, with an associated impact on regional partnerships and projects including the Museum on the Move service. This will also impact greatly on the delivery of the planned WW1 centenary exhibition.
- The loss of display space for the Herefordshire collections.
- The cost of mothballing the collection would be considerable.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056

- Curatorial expertise cannot be replaced by voluntary sector and further curatorial loss will also reduce the total sum of volunteering opportunities in the service.
- Redundancy costs for employees leaving the service.
- Would be challenged by the Hatton supporters as the lack of display space will be breaking the previously made agreement to display the Hatton Collection and an agreement to hold an exhibition at the centenary of Hatton's death in 2016. This agreement was made following the closure of Churchill House Museum and the Hatton Gallery – a closure which continues to impact on the reputation of the service and the Council.

**Property issues:**

The refurbishment of Museum Resource and Learning Centre was carried out with Heritage Lottery funding. The condition of this funding means that the building must be used for heritage/museum collections for a period of 25 years or the funding (£1,233,000) would need to be repaid. 19 years remain of this 25 year term.

The emptying and removal of objects from Broad Street Museum and the Old House would be expensive and create severe challenges with regard to storage capacity.

**Option 1 savings**

<b>Current nett costs £000s*</b>	<b>Option 1 costs £000s</b>	<b>Savings 13/14 £000s</b>	<b>Savings 14/15 £000s</b>	<b>Total savings £000s</b>
£455	£146	£50	£258	£309

Note: excluding back office costs

**3.3 Option 2 – reduced service**

To maintain the provision at the Museum Resource and Learning Centre, and reduce opening hours of the Museum and Gallery at the Broad Street site and the Old House (if it has not been community asset transferred).

**Strengths:**

- Outreach could be delivered at MRLC, and across the community.
- Provides continued curation of and wider access to the Herefordshire collections.
- Retains level of volunteer involvement.
- Allows for Accreditation status for the service to continue.

**Weaknesses and impacts:**

- Limited exhibition programme – leading to public perception of a static service, leading to a drop in visitor numbers.
- Redundancy costs for employees leaving the service.

**Property issues:**

The refurbishment of the Museum Resource and Learning Centre was carried out with Heritage Lottery funding. The condition of this funding means that the building must be used for heritage/museum collections for a period of 25 years or the funding (£1,233,000) would need to be repaid. 19 years remain of this 25 year term.

Capital investment and on-going maintenance is required for the Grade 2 listed Broad Street site and Old House.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O’Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056

## Option 2 savings

Current nett costs £000s*	Option 2 costs £000s	Savings 13/14 £000s	Savings 14/15 £000s	Total Savings £000s
£455	£215	£48	£191	£239

Note: excluding back office costs

### 3.4 Option 3 – Engage and associate with existing trusts

To commence discussions with existing local trusts regarding the possibility of bringing the Museum Resource and Learning Centre, the Broad Street Museum and possibly Old House into their trust structure as a museum partner.

To explore opportunities for engaging with the emerging dialogue around a future higher education establishment in Herefordshire as a key resource for a new academic institution and the funding possibilities that it may bring. However, this may not be contingent with the current timescales for decision making around savings.

This option could be considered in association with Option 2 or 5.

Savings on non-domestic rates (NNDR) can be made by a charity (savings up to 50% of rate saving). The museum service has limited opportunity for income generation which might have an impact on interest in operating the service, meaning that a continued need for subsidy by the local authority is necessary as core funding.

#### **Strengths:**

- Greater speed and lower expense required than to set up a new trust.
- NNDR savings can be achieved more quickly.
- A staffing/opening hours review could present further savings.
- Will enable joining up of contiguous offers which will improve the visitor experience.
- Some cost efficiencies may be found through linking with existing trust infrastructure.
- Provides continued curation of and wider access to the Herefordshire collections.
- With investment could present further income generation opportunities.
- By externalising the service, a saving of £175K can be made to central corporate costs from the Hoople budget.
- Allows for Accreditation status for the service to continue.

#### **Weaknesses and impacts:**

- Redundancy costs for employees leaving the service.
- Core funding for MRLC would need to be guaranteed for 19 years. Status of an asset transfer of the museum buildings to the trust partner will need to be resolved.
- Limited income generation possibilities mean that this museum partner could never be fully self-financing.
- Potential difficulties in retracting from this arrangement to form alternative arrangement i.e. standalone trust in the future.
- Discussions so far with existing trusts have indicated that sustained core funding is a critical factor, as is the status of any asset transfers.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O’Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056

**Property issues:**

The refurbishment of the Museum Resource and Learning Centre was carried out with Heritage Lottery funding. The condition of this funding means that the building must be used for heritage/museum collections for a period of 25 years or the funding (£1,233,000) would need to be repaid. 19 years remain of this 25 year term.

External trust would be co-existing at the Broad Street and Old House sites with Council run library/customer services, and this may result in a request to pay a greater share of building charges than at present (currently the rates and the majority of the utilities are paid for from the Libraries budget), therefore increasing the base costs of the museum service.

Also capital investment and on-going maintenance is required for the Grade 2 listed Broad Street site and the Old House.

**Option 3 savings**

<b>Current nett Costs £000s*</b>	<b>Option 3 costs £000s**</b>	<b>Savings 13/14 £000s</b>	<b>Savings 14/15 £000s</b>	<b>Total Savings £000s</b>
£455	£234	£48	£172	£220

\* Note: excluding back office costs

\*\*includes back office costs

**3.5 Option 4 – Establishment of a new trust**

To maintain the current service provision whilst exploring the establishment of a new trust including sustainable funding sources, therefore maintaining current staffing budget, but making some immediate savings to the non-staffing budgets. Also undertake a service review in the next 6 months, to explore further savings and increase income generation.

This option could be considered in association with Option 2 or 5.

Savings on non-domestic rates (NNDR) can be made by a charity (savings up to 50% of rate saving). The museum service has limited opportunity for income generation which would create a continued need for subsidy by the local authority. This option would need time to develop over an 18 month to two year period.

**Strengths:**

- Ensures a viable service base to form a new trust.
- More likely to attract benevolent funding as an independent trust and provides ability to access independent finance.
- Provides potential for other services e.g. Archives to join this trust in the future.
- Provides an opportunity for creating a new identity for Herefordshire Museums Service with a separate brand.
- Provides continued curation of and wider access to the Herefordshire collections.
- Through strong branding would enhance the visitor and tourism profile of Herefordshire.
- Allows for Accreditation status for the service to continue.

**Weaknesses and impacts:**

- Costs of setting up a new trust have yet to be established.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O’Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056

- Redundancy costs for employees leaving the service.
- Core funding for Museum Resource and Learning Centre would need to be guaranteed for 19 years.
- Limited income generation possibilities mean that a museum only trust could not be fully self-financing.
- Funding for central/core costs would also need to be found, including salary for a Chief Executive.
- We have been advised that the museum service alone does not provide adequate critical mass for a standalone trust.

**Property issues:**

The refurbishment of the Museum Resource and Learning Centre was carried out with Heritage Lottery funding. The condition of this funding means that the building must be used for heritage/museum collections for a period of 25 years or the funding (£1,233,000) would need to be repaid. 19 years remain of this 25 year term.

External trust would be co-existing at the Broad Street and Old House sites with Council run library/customer services, and this may result in a request to pay a greater share of building charges than at present (currently the rates and the majority of the utilities are paid for from the Libraries budget), therefore increasing the base costs of the museum service.

Also capital investment and on-going maintenance is required for the Grade 2 listed Broad Street site and Old House.

**Option 4 savings**

<b>Current nett costs £000s</b>	<b>Option 4 Costs £000s**</b>	<b>Savings 13/14 £000s</b>	<b>Savings 14/15 £000s</b>	<b>Total Savings £000s</b>
£455	£407	£48	£0	£48

Note:\*excluding back office costs  
\*\*Includes back office costs, but not set up costs

**3.6 Option 5 – Broad Street Museum as focal point of offer**

For the Broad Street Museum site to be the focus of the service offer, along with the Old House as they are in the best locations for attracting visitors and showcasing the collections. A reduced curatorial resource would be maintained at the Museum Resource and Learning Centre, with an administration role to enable letting of the Learning Room.

The Broad Street site would need considerable development and funding to maximise its space and potential. In fact, it was always envisaged that the development of the Broad Street site would be Phase 4 of the Museum Resource and Learning Centre development, and this had backing from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This would need to be in co-ordination with the chosen option for libraries and customer services and would also need to be informed by the recently completed Building Conservation Management Plan.

This service offer could be the basis of that managed by a trust from either option 3 or 4.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O’Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056



**Strengths:**

- Provides the greatest focus for attracting visitors, thus maintaining the economic contribution of the service to the city and county.
- Old House and Broad Street Museum have “kerb appeal” and are sited in the main thoroughfares of the city enabling the service to maximise this contribution to the local offer.
- Provides continued curation of and wider access to the Herefordshire collections.
- Builds on current perceptions of where and how to access heritage locally.
- Would support an investment option for any future development of Hereford City as a tourism destination centre linked to its historical riches.
- Allows for Accreditation status for the service to continue.

**Weaknesses and impacts:**

- Loss of curatorial expertise with a number of impacts across the exhibition, outreach and volunteer work programmes.
- Redundancy costs for employees leaving the service.
- With fewer curators, would only be able to provide a limited exhibition programme, and make limited involvement in projects from other teams or cultural organisations.

**Property issues:**

The refurbishment of the Museum Resource and Learning Centre was carried out with Heritage Lottery funding. The condition of this funding means that the building must be used for heritage/museum collections for a period of 25 years or the funding (£1,233,000) would need to be repaid. 19 years remain of this 25 year term.

The Broad Street site would need considerable development and funding to maximise its space and potential. This would need to be in co-ordination with the chosen option for libraries and customer services and would also need to be informed by the recently completed Building Conservation Management Plan.

The Old House would also need continual maintenance appropriate to its listed status.

**Option 5 savings**

Current nett costs £000s*	Option 5 costs £000s	Savings 13/14 £000s	Savings 14/15 £000s	Total savings £000s
£455	£325	£48	£82	£130

Note: \*excluding back office costs

**3.7 HR issues**

The core cost of running the museum service is predominately salaries and venue costs, plus the costs of central services. All options will entail a reduction in the number of staff. Depending on the option progressed a restructure of services will take place with staff consultation over a 45 day period resulting in redundancies.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O’Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056

## 4. Risk Management

### 4.1 Option 1: Minimum Service Provision

Risk no	Risk	Likely rating	Impact rating	Mitigation	Residual risk rating
1	Lack of display space will lead to poor public perception of the service	5	3	Small displays in the cases at MRLC and alternative temporary exhibition space sought in external venues	9

### Option 2: Reduced Service

Risk no	Risk	Likely rating	Impact rating	Mitigation	Residual risk rating
2	Loss of the iconic Old House (through CAT) reduces the visitor offer and potential for income generation, leaving a service that would be less attractive for a trust to take on	3	4	Do not community asset transfer Old House	4

### Option 3: Engage and associate with existing trusts

Risk no	Risk	Likely rating	Impact rating	Mitigation	Residual risk rating
3	Potential sustainability issues if core funding is reduced or removed in the future	5	5	Robust agreement re core funding	16

### Option 4: Establishment of a new trust

Risk no	Risk	Likely rating	Impact rating	Mitigation	Residual risk rating
4a	NNDR savings may not be available for newly established trusts. This lack of saving will affect the financial viability of a standalone trust	3	5	Seek legal advice	9

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056

4b	Potential sustainability issues if core funding is reduced or removed in the future	5	5	Robust agreement re core funding	16
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#### Option 5: Broad St Museum as focal point of offer

Risk no	Risk	Likely rating	Impact rating	Mitigation	Residual risk rating
5a	Inability to source council funding to enable development of the Broad St site	5	5	External funding bid	20
5b	With limited front of house staffing in the gallery, it would be difficult to attract high quality touring exhibitions as we will not be providing the level of security and supervision that they require.	4	3	Hire temporary staff	9
5c	Loss of the iconic Old House (through CAT) reduces the visitor offer and potential for income generation.	3	4	Do not community asset transfer Old House	4

## 5. Consultees

Stakeholder meeting held 8 July 2013 (including representatives from staff)

Staff meeting held 14 August 2013

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mick Ligema, Cultural Services Manager on tel (01432) 260631 or Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe, Collections and Archive Manager on tel (01432) 260056





<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>19 SEPTEMBER 2013</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>DEVOLVED SERVICES</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY, COMMUNITIES AND CORPORATE SERVICES PROJECT DIRECTOR</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>CORPORATE AND ASSETS</b>

### 1. Classification

Open

### 2. 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 to which the decision relates.

NOTICE has been 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.

### 3. Wards Affected

County wide but with particular effect on wards encompassing the following urban areas: Bromyard, Ledbury, Leominster, Kington, Hereford, Ross-on-Wye.

### 4. Purpose

For Cabinet to agree the process of local management of services by town councils / city council (the local councils) through a programme of devolved services, outlining priority areas and related asset transfers.

### 5. Recommendations

THAT:

- (a) **the Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Assets, Enterprise and Culture and relevant portfolio leads as appropriate, be authorised to conclude negotiations with the town councils and city council on priority areas for the first phase of devolved services within a three month period.**

### 6. Alternative Options

That the devolved services programme focuses on community asset transfer. This would create a concentrated effort on progressing capital transfer, but would limit the potential for increasing local delivery of services and for generating budget efficiencies.

## **7. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 7.1 A three month period of negotiations is suggested to enable opportunities and risks to be assessed by the town councils. This approach sets a time scale whilst giving local councils first opportunities on services and assets in accordance with existing powers to operate services. As part of a wider approach to devolved services if after the three month period negotiations are inconclusive opportunities for services management and asset transfer to be pursued with community groups or private sector where relevant.

## **8 Key Considerations**

### **Background**

- 8.1 The approach to devolve services is reflective of the new way of working within local authorities - specifically more localised delivery of services where relevant to that community. The approach also enables the local authority to focus on core services in meeting the needs of residents who most need public sector intervention / support. Local councils are a route for devolved services because of their existing powers, current operation of some services and part of the democratic structure with representatives elected from residents. Notwithstanding community groups / organisations are also other routes for devolved services.
- 8.2 A number of focus groups were held with local councils during the winter of 2012/13 to discuss two issues: 1) support for local councils and 2) devolved services.
- 8.3 Both of these issues were raised considering the changing nature of local delivery of services (with reference to the Localism Act 2011), but also in the context of pressure on Herefordshire Councils budgets.
- 8.4 The notes from those sessions are available from the parish council pages of Herefordshire Council's website <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/government-citizens-and-rights/democracy/council-parish-town-council-and-councillors/>
- 8.5 In terms of devolved services there was generally a difference in view between the more rural parish councils and the town councils.
- 8.6 Whilst the rural parish councils were generally keen on schemes such as lengthsman and "added" services, the town councils expressed an interest in directly managing services and assets.
- 8.7 Consequently a series of packages have been developed with each of the town councils and the city council that reflect areas of interest. These areas tend to be considered "place" based services and services that can net an income. Also part of the consideration was services at risk of budget reduction, such as museums and public toilets, which are valued by the community.
- 8.8 The package concept is based on local councils operating services that have a cost, balanced with services that generate an income. When this was looked at for each area the opportunity for income generation was not high compared with expenditure with the potential for councils needing to increase their precept.
- 8.9 In terms of devolved services, this would mean that local councils have responsibility for running services, including for liabilities and risks. This is in exchange for local control and potential for income. How services have been operated by Herefordshire Council in the past does mean that the local councils need to operate in the same way – alternative ways of working can include re-contracting, partnership with a third partner, or increased charging.

8.10 Areas of focus have been:

**Markets** – income generation opportunity adding to the vibrancy of a town.

**Open spaces** – additional events and income potential, though expenditure in maintenance. The open spaces are currently managed through the Public Realm contract and would need to be extracted through negotiation.

**Cemeteries** – Ledbury cemetery is already in control of the town council, and other sites in the county could be locally managed - though the sites do have liabilities.

**Public Toilets** – Herefordshire Council has introduced a Community Toilet Scheme which has been implemented in parts of the county and will roll out to other areas. The local areas have been very keen to retain the current level of service. An option for the WCs is to be operated on the “Pembridge model” where the amenity is run by a trust with costs met by the parish council.

**Museums** – Asset transfer and transfer of the operation of the Old House in Hereford; and the Market Hall Museum in Ross reflecting existing discussions to operate the venue.

**Car Parks** – car parking earns income for the local authority which is then used to sustain services. However, there is opportunity to transfer the car parks in cases where the local council is compensated for loss of income or where there is no existing charge.

**Asset Transfer** – Herefordshire Council has an existing programme of asset transfer and has seen schemes successfully materialise.

#### 8.11 **Local Response**

Each market town and the city council have entered into discussions with Herefordshire Council on likely devolved services. The councils have identified priority areas for which more information can be formed and gathered and shared.

8.12 It will be up to the local councils to manage their respective governance and levels of local engagement.

8.13 The local councils have a range of existing powers which means they already have the ability to directly run services – and many do (see Appendix 1 for Powers of Local Councils). For example Ledbury runs their own markets; Ross pays for additional street cleaning; Bromyard operates their own car park; Leominster contributes to the running of the tourist information centre; Kington has joint arrangements on running markets with the local Chamber of Commerce; and Hereford contributes to additional community protection.

8.14 Each area will have its own motivation for operating services, and each package is emerging as different.

8.15 In terms of individual packages, in principle and subject to further information, the authorities are interested in pursuing devolvement of the following services.

#### **Hereford**

The Buttermarket – transfer of the asset and management of the market as a going concern, including responsibility for development of the site.

The Old House – asset transfer and continued management of the site as a museum subject to clarification of staffing, property management, on-going works and operational details before a final decision is made.

A second phase of devolved services to explore a range of options which include the service areas mentioned in point 8.10.

### **Ross-on-Wye**

Subject to feasibility study commissioned by the Town Council, areas of interest are the following:

Market Hall – transfer of asset and operation of the Visitor Centre / Heritage Centre.

Market – transfer of asset of ground floor of market hall (linked to Heritage Centre transfer) and operation of the market and market curtilage occupying pedestrianized area.

Old Chapel – community transfer of asset for public benefit.

Brook End Red Meadow Public Toilets – transfer of asset and operation of the WC.

Open space (Cross Fields, Rope Walk, Long Acre, Caroline Symonds Gardens, Wye Street Gardens) – interest in asset transfer and management.

Car parks - possible transfer as part of total asset transfer package or subject to compensation for loss of income.

### **Ledbury**

Asset transfers - there are existing arrangements in place for a Multi Asset transfer including the Heritage centre and Burgage Hall.

Public Toilets Church Lane and Bye Street – transfer of the asset with management arrangements (Church Lane linked to existing multi asset transfer).

Market service – possible additional market management subject to confirmation on legal requirements to transfer licence to operate and practical and viability consideration around disaggregating markets i.e. European, currently managed on a county basis.

Open space – as a future consideration in asset transfer and management.

Car parks - possible transfer as part of total asset transfer package or subject to compensation for loss of income.

### **Bromyard and Winslow**

Joining the Lengthsman scheme.

Car parks - possible transfer as part of total asset transfer package or subject to compensation for loss of income.

Public Toilets Church Street and Tenbury Road – a future consideration in transfer of the asset with management arrangements.

### **Kington**

Old Police Station – transfer of the asset with tenants.

Market Hall, Place Des Marines and Coach House (incorporating Public Toilets) – transfer of the asset and management of the market as a going concern (Town Council currently run Saturday markets through local Chamber of Trade, Tuesday markets run by Herefordshire Council).

Public Toilets Mill Street – transfer of the asset to operate locally (see above).

Museum (currently on long lease to Museum Trust) – transfer asset to Town Council with tenants.

Car parks - possible transfer as part of total asset transfer package.



Open Spaces - interest in asset transfer and management, alongside general green-up of town.

Cemetery – as a future consideration of transfer of asset and management.

### **Leominster**

Markets – transfer management and operation of the markets as a going concern.

Public Toilets - Central Area and Broad Street - transfer of the asset with management arrangements.

Open space – The Grange and play area, interest in asset transfer and management.

Remaining open space –asset transfer and operation of services as a future phase

Cemetery – asset transfer and operation of services as a future phase

## **8.17 Policy Context**

The Localism Act 2011 contains a wide range of measures to devolve more powers to councils and neighbourhoods, giving local communities greater control over local decisions.

Devolvement of services is consistent with Herefordshire’s Sustainable Community Strategy (June 2010) which states that across the county: “We will develop stronger, vibrant, more inclusive communities in which people enjoy a good quality of life and feel they have influence over decisions that affect them”.

The Herefordshire Charter of 2011 sets out a framework on how Herefordshire Council and local councils work together to deliver better and more effective services for communities.

## **9. Community Impact**

9.1 The town councils and city council have been approached in terms of devolved services as a tier of local government based on democratic principles. The councils also have existing powers to operate a wide range of services. The councils will consider the operation of services based on balancing community need with available resources and consideration of the liabilities / risks.

If local councils do not wish to pursue devolved services then community groups / organisations may wish to consider the operation of services. In terms of asset transfer the process will follow a similar process in being first offered to local councils and then the wider community for buildings no longer needed by the local authority that could be subject to community asset transfer.

## **10. Equality and Human Rights**

Where a service will see a reduction in operation an impact assessment will be produced for each case. Any public authority is liable for equalities duties.

In the case of devolved services the discussions with local councils have been based on transfer of services as is or with minor impact on people who use the services.

## **11. Financial Implications**

11.1 During the course of the final negotiations the financial implications for each party will be established. The principle is that overall Herefordshire Council cannot be “out of pocket” considering the existing pressure on the local authority’s finances. Similarly, the local councils will not want to be in the same position.

The devolve service approach does not involve the transfer of operational / revenue

budgets from the local authority. Also, a cost benefit consideration will need to be part of the decision making process demonstrating a financial saving to Herefordshire Council. For this assessment to include an understanding of the loss of income and the value of potential asset transfers. For savings to be reinvested in core services to meet budget pressures facing the local authority.

## 12. Legal Implications

- 12.1 The powers of town and parish councils to accept transfer of assets from the council and undertake services currently delivered by the council are set out in Appendix 1.

## 13. Risk Management

- 13.1 The below table is based on risks to Herefordshire Council, the local councils will establish their own risks. The rating is after mitigation.

Risk No.	Risk	Mitigation	Likely rating	Impact rating
DS.1.	Loss of revenue income for Herefordshire Council.	1. To be balanced with services that require a subsidy as part of a "package of services" or compensated by the local councils.	3	3
DS.2.	Loss of future income or potential savings.	1. These need to be considered in terms of services in the packages to local councils.	4	3
DS.3.	Loss of income via transfer of asset with assets sold on the open market.	1. Asset transfer is part of Herefordshire Council's policy approach to sustainable communities. 2. A three month deadline after this report for local councils to decide on asset transfer.	4	3
DS.4.	Cost of implementation including legal considerations and staff requirements to see through the transfers.	1. Understand the benefits to balance with the initial resource investment.	4	3
DS.5.	Non progression of transfer with local councils deciding not to proceed.	1. Support the local councils to make an informed decision. 2. A three month deadline after this report on the first phase on setting up of transfers.	3	4

### Key:

LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT
5 Certain	5 Catastrophic
4 Likely	4 Major

3 Possible	3 Moderate
2 Unlikely	2 Minor
1 Rare	1 Insignificant

## 14. Consultees

14.1 The original set of focus groups consisted of:

- 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012 clerks focus group (23 parish clerks representing 39 parish councils)
- 4<sup>th</sup> December 2012, rural parish councillors attended a focus group (38 attendees)
- 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012, town council focus group (9 attendees)
- Local Council questionnaire to clerks (57 Questionnaires were returned from 102 parish clerks mailed, a 56% response rate)

Ross discussions: 10 June 2013

Ledbury discussions: 4 June, 18 July 2013

Kington discussions: 18 June, 19 August 2013

Bromyard discussions: 8 July 2013

Leominster discussions: 17 June 2013

Hereford City discussions: 17 July 2013

### Herefordshire Quality of Life Survey 2012

Field work for the 2012 survey took place between May and July 2012 in which time 1,346 responses were received, giving a responses rate of 33%. Regarding devolved services, the point was made: “The most common suggestion for how things could be done differently centred around devolving power, responsibility and resources to parish and town councils, to enable them to deliver local services more efficiently. The range of services that it was felt could be delivered in this way were public toilets, car parks, hedge cutting, parks maintenance, road repairs and ditch clearing through an extension to the lengthsman service, street cleaning, dog wardens, libraries and in some cases the provision of affordable decent housing.”

## 15. Appendices

15.1 Appendix 1 - Powers of local councils

## 16. Background Papers

16.1 None identified.

## Appendix 1 – Powers of Local Councils

<b>Powers and duties of parish councils Function</b>	<b>Powers &amp; Duties</b>	<b>Statutory Provisions</b>
Access land	Power to enforce byelaws made by another authority	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, s. 17
Allotments	Duty to provide allotments. Power to improve and adapt land for allotments, and to let grazing rights	Small Holdings & Allotments Act 1908, ss. 23, 26, and 42
Baths and washhouses	Powers relating to provision of public baths, washhouses and bathing huts	Public Health Act 1936, ss. 221 - 223 and 225 - 227
Burial grounds, cemeteries and crematoria	Power to acquire and maintain Power to provide Power to agree to maintain monuments and memorials Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries	Open Spaces Act 1906, Ss 9 and 10; Local Government Act 1972, s. 214; Parish Councils and Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970, s. 1 Local Government Act 1972, s. 214(6)
Bus shelters	Power to provide and maintain shelters	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953, s. 4
Bye-laws	Power to make bye-laws in regard to pleasure grounds Cycle parks Baths and washhouses Open spaces and burial grounds Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms Public Conveniences	Public Health Act 1875, s. 164 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57(7) Public Health Act 1936, s.223 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss. 15 and 12 Public Health Act 1936, s.198 Public Health Act 1936, s. 87
Clocks	Power to provide public clocks	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2
Closed churchyards	Powers as to maintenance	Local Government Act 1972, s.215
Commons	Power for parish council to contribute to expense relating to scheme for the regulation and management of a common	Commons Act 1899, s.5
Common pastures	Powers in relation to providing common pasture	Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908, s.34
Conference facilities	Power to provide and encourage the use of facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Community centres	Power to provide and equip buildings for use of clubs having athletic, social or recreational objectives	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19
Crime prevention	Powers to install and maintain equipment and establish and maintain a scheme for detection or prevention of crime	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.31
Drainage	Power to deal with ponds and ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s.260
Entertainment and the arts	Provision of entertainment and support of the arts	Local Government Act 1972, s.145
Financial assistance	Duty to require information	Local Government Act 1972, s.137A
General powers	Power to incur expenditure for certain purposes	Local Government Act 1972, s.137
Gifts	Power to accept	Local Government Act 1972, s.139

Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Natalia Silver, Project Director on Tel (01432) 260732

Highways	<p>Power to maintain footpaths and bridle-ways</p> <p>Power to light roads and public places</p> <p>Provision of litter bins</p> <p>Powers to provide parking places for bicycles and motor-cycles, and other vehicles</p> <p>Power to enter into agreement as to dedication and widening</p> <p>Power to provide roadside seats and shelters</p> <p>Consent of parish council required for ending maintenance of highway at public expense, or for stopping up or diversion of highway</p> <p>Power to complain to highway authority as to unlawful stopping up or obstruction of highway or unlawful encroachment on roadside wastes</p> <p>Power to provide traffic signs and other objects or devices warning of danger</p> <p>Power to plant trees and lay out grass verges etc. and to maintain them</p>	<p>Highways Act 1980, ss.43,50</p> <p>Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3;</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s.301</p> <p>Litter Act 1983, ss.5,6</p> <p>Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, ss.57,63</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, ss.30,72</p> <p>Parish Councils Act 1957, s.1</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, ss.47,116</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s.130</p> <p>Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s.96</p>
Investments	Power to participate in schemes of collective investment	Trustee Investments Act 1961, s.11
Land	<p>Power to acquire by agreement, to appropriate, to dispose of</p> <p>Power to accept gifts of land</p>	<p>Local Government Act 1972, ss.124, 126, 127</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972, s.139</p>
Litter	Provision of receptacles	Litter Act 1983, ss.5,6
Lotteries	Powers to promote	Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976, s.7
Mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Powers to provide mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Open spaces	Power to acquire land and maintain	<p>Public Health Act 1875, s.164</p> <p>Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10</p>
Parish documents	Powers to direct as to their custody	Local Government Act 1972, s.226
Public buildings and village hall	Power to provide buildings for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government Act 1972, s.133
Public conveniences	Powers relating to provision of public conveniences	Public Health Act 1936, s.87
Recreation	<p>Power to acquire land for or to provide public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces and to manage and control them</p> <p>Power to provide gymnasiums, playing fields, holiday camps</p> <p>Provision of boating pools</p>	<p>(see Local Government Act 1972, Sched.14 para.27)</p> <p>Public Health Act 1875, s.164</p> <p>Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890 s.44</p> <p>Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10</p> <p>Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19</p> <p>Public Health Act 1961, s.54</p>
Town and country planning	Right to be notified of planning applications	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Sched.1, para.8
Tourism	Power to encourage visitors and provide conference and other facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Traffic calming	Powers to contribute financially to traffic calming schemes	Highways Act 1980, s.274A
Transport	Powers in relation to car-sharing schemes, taxi fare concessions and	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.26, 28 and 29

Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Natalia Silver, Project Director on Tel (01432) 260732

	information about transport Powers to make grants for bus services	Transport Act 1985, s.106A
War memorials	Power to maintain, repair, protect and alter war memorials	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, s.1; as extended by Local Government Act 1948, s.133
Water supply	Power to utilise well, spring or stream and to provide facilities for obtaining water from them	Public Health Act 1936, s.125



<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>19 SEPTEMBER 2013</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>PROPOSED BUTTERMARKE REFURBISHMENT</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>CORPORATE AND ASSETS</b>

### 1. Classification

Open

### 2. 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 to which the decision relates.

NOTICE has been 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.

### 3. Wards Affected

Principally Hereford City, but visitors to the Buttermarket come from the wider County, and beyond.

### 4. Purpose

To establish the future way forward with regard to the Buttermarket project.

### 5. Recommendations

**THAT:**

- (a) Herefordshire Council actively negotiates to transfer the ownership, operation and future redevelopment of the Buttermarket to Hereford City Council and other interested parties;
- (b) In the event that the basis of an asset transfer is not agreed by 19 December 2013 the redevelopment of the market hall is implemented by Herefordshire Council;

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Chris Jenner, Environmental Services Manager on Tel (01432) 261941

- (c) Prudential borrowing is pursued to finance a redevelopment carried out by Herefordshire Council and is recommended for inclusion in the Capital Programme;
- (d) The procurement process for a Development Partner to deliver the project is commenced this would be a capital cost;
- (e) Permission is sought from HMRC to elect the Buttermarket for VAT; and
- (f) Further work is carried out on the options for an interim market location whilst refurbishment works are taking place.

## **6. Alternative Options**

- 6.1 The Hereford Buttermarket Preliminary Business Plan details a number of alternative options. The alternative options considered are;
- Market Closure
  - Do Nothing Scenario - continuing with limited investment for essential repairs
  - Market Relocation
- 6.2 The alternative post development management options are similarly considered within the Preliminary Business Plan.

## **7. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 7.1 The proposed asset transfer reflects the desire to work closely with town and parish councils to devolve appropriate services.
- 7.2 The proposed redevelopment of the Buttermarket will secure its longer-term future.
- 7.3 A refurbished Buttermarket will help to safeguard the vibrancy and viability of High Town both in its own right and once the Stanhope, Old Livestock Market site opens in 2014.

## **8. Key Considerations**

- 8.1 The Hereford Buttermarket was built in 1860 when there was a need to ensure the provision and distribution of healthy food for the city's growing population. The market is well positioned within the retail core of the city centre and enjoys frontage to both High Town and Maylord Street. The market has suffered from limited capital investment over recent years and the building now requires substantial investment to allow continuation of operation.
- 8.2 In 2011 Hereford Futures were asked to bring forward a financially viable scheme which would deliver the refurbishment of the Buttermarket. Cabinet Member for Highways, Transportation and Waste approved the appointment of Wrenbridge-Trebor LLP as the preferred developer for the redevelopment. Hereford Futures working with Wrenbridge-Trebor completed a feasibility study which presented a number of recommendations for consideration. Hereford Futures indicated that a recommendation to finance the proposed redevelopment through Prudential borrowing



- would mean Wrenbridge-Trebor could not be appointed as development manager for the project as it would fall foul of the OJEU procurement process procedures specified for this project.
- 8.3 The Council is sustaining annual losses against its budgeted income stream from the Buttermarket. The 2013/14 income budget for the Buttermarket is £273k. The expenditure budget including those staff specifically associated with the Buttermarket is circa £150k. Further annual costs associated with maintenance and repairs are circa £25k - £35k based on average spending over recent years.
  - 8.4 The freehold valuation of the Buttermarket is estimated at approximately £1 million. Freehold disposal will require an amount equal to the value of the dilapidation schedule, estimated at £1.25 Million, to be deducted from this valuation. Although it is difficult to estimate the future valuation of the Buttermarket following refurbishment the net receipt might be as much as £4m.
  - 8.5 As part of the Devolved Services programme with local councils interest has been expressed by Hereford City Council in the future operation of the Buttermarket, including redevelopment of the site retained as a market. This would enable localised management of the site as part of the city centre offer. The City Council would need to know the full risks and liabilities, balanced with the current and future opportunity for income generation. These discussions are on-going.
  - 8.6 Any proposed asset transfer must support the aims and priorities of the Council. Critical to the success of any transfer is having a clear rationale demonstrating the ability of the recipient to manage the asset effectively, including an assessment of the financial and organisational capacity of the organisation.
  - 8.7 Quarterbridge Project Management Ltd, one of the UK's leading independent consultancies dealing with market improvement projects, has been commissioned to help evaluate the various future scenarios. A preliminary business plan outlining these scenarios for the future viability of the Buttermarket has been produced.
  - 8.8 A redeveloped Buttermarket will help to create a vibrant centre for independent retailers and caterers. It will also provide new business start-up opportunities and create employment providing Hereford's largest centrally located trading opportunity for local and regional independent businesses.
  - 8.9 The recommendation involves significant works to the market's shop-floor, creation of a new entrance feature to the Maylord Street entrance, new retail and catering units, a demonstration area as well as ceiling treatment and mechanical and electrical services. Also, the basement will be decommissioned and the Guildhall, situated within the Buttermarket, refurbished for back-of-house facilities.
  - 8.10 An estimated investment of £3.3m is required expected to be financed through Prudential borrowing. This scheme is currently not included in the capital programme.
  - 8.11 Following an assessment of the financial risk involved and further discussions with Quarterbridge it was suggested that to provide sufficient security for the Council to appoint a main contractor it should commence work pre-letting 50% of lettable space with conditional agreement for leases before appointing the contractor. Following the

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appointment of the contractor the period of the construction programme, assumed to be twelve months, will allow the pre-letting agent time to increase occupancy to an opening rate target of 80%.

- 8.12 A full team of pre-contract professionals; architect, quantity surveyor, M&E consultant and structural engineer will be required to advance the project pre-tender stage. To reduce risk and limit fees, in event of pre-contract exit, conditional agreement with the various professionals to limit fees at pre-contract tender stage should be sought. Using this form of risk lay off the Council will be in a position to exit the contract development at a cost of circa £230k in the event that circumstances change for whatever reason. This will be included as a capital cost but in the unlikely event of the project being aborted it would become a revenue cost. To enable these pre construction works to be undertaken promptly, the Council would be able to utilise the West Midlands Construction Framework which should not only produce procurement savings but also surety of cost and substantial reductions in mobilisation timescales.
- 8.13 The appointment of a Development Partner to deliver the project on behalf of the Council is recommended. The Development Partner will be a multi-disciplined organisation or consortium which includes or is headed by a market specialist organisation and will be responsible for delivering pre-letting, obtaining the necessary professional input and delivering the proposed scheme on budget.
- 8.14 Post-development options have been explored and it is recommended that either the City Council or this Council retain ownership with external market management assistance for a period of time suitable to allow the establishment of a profitable and worthwhile market.
- 8.15 In order to secure the recovery of associated value added tax, the building will need to be elected to be registered with HMRC for VAT. Refurbishing the market would result in the Council incurring exempt input tax of approximately £700k. The Council is only able to recover exempt input tax when this totals less than 5% of the total input tax recovered, the higher the exempt input tax incurred the more likely this 5% limit is breached, resulting in a VAT repayment bill of approximately £1 million. To overcome this additional cost the Council can elect to tax the building securing VAT recovery. Quarterbridge have advised us that tenants are used to paying VAT on rental charges and this VAT is usually recoverable by them therefore opting to tax should have no impact on attracting tenants.
- 8.16 An on-going 'do-nothing' scenario would require essential repairs to be factored in particularly with regard to the current state of the fabric of the building as well as health & safety issues in particular the poor state of repair to the Guildhall and continued use of the basement as trader storage and preparation areas. A dedicated on-going maintenance budget of £25k - £35k p.a. will be required following an initial investment of £1.25 million in the current dilapidation schedule in order to cover essential backlog maintenance and health & safety obligations. The options appraisal has assessed this and considers that there is a significant risk of the market generating trading losses.
- 8.17 Full closure of the Buttermarket during any refurbishment is recommended on health and safety grounds. Phasing the redevelopment will increase the capital budget by

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approximately 15%-20%. It is estimated the building will be closed for eight months during the refurbishment.

- 8.18 Legal advice indicates that the Council can temporarily close the Buttermarket without an obligation to provide an alternative. This is subject to business tenancies being successfully terminated, by agreement, by way of a break clause in their lease, or their lease coming to the end of its term. In any event, those tenants that are business tenants would receive the relevant statutory compensation under Part II of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.
- 8.19 A compensation budget will be required for eligible traders. Quarterbridge suggests that it is rare to pay the full amount as traders wishing to take space within the redeveloped market waive compensation claims. They also indicate that the majority of successful, existing traders will wish to secure space in the redeveloped scheme.
- 8.20 A key element of a wider refurbishment project will be the need to identify an interim trader location for the market traders who would eventually be relocated in the refurbished building; further work will be required in this regard.

## **9. Community Impact**

- 9.1 A reinvigorated Buttermarket will support the Community Strategy by helping to create an environment for enterprise to thrive and business to grow and help provide a flourishing and diverse local economy for the residents of the County.
- 9.2 In addition, the market will support the priority of the Corporate Plan 2013/2015 by helping to create and maintain a successful economy that has vibrant town centres with shops, that keep people spending locally and makes Herefordshire more attractive to younger age groups.

## **10. Equality and Human Rights**

- 10.1 No specific issues arise at this stage.

## **11. Financial Implications**

- 11.1 The detailed financial impacts of devolving the operation of the Buttermarket to the City Council remain to be determined.
- 11.2 Quarterbridge has provided an assessment of the financial implications of the various options available to the council including a detailed assessment of the cost of the redevelopment option. The continued preferred option is to refurbish the market through Prudential borrowing and the utilisation of grants where available, to generate an expected net operating surplus per annum. The expected surplus per annum is a reduction in the current base budget position initially but expectations are the position will continue to improve year on year.

A summary of the financial implications detailed in the options appendix is given below:-

	Redevelop market	Close market	Do nothing	Relocate market
Cumulative expected cash position at year 5	242,766	(390,000)	(119,405)	(94,768)
Cumulative expected cash position if asset sold in year 5	1,268,277	No impact as dilapidation liability exceeds asset value	No impact as dilapidation loan balance would exceed asset value	No impact as dilapidation loan balance would exceed current asset value and new base would be leased

11.3 The figures represented in the table above compare the expected cumulative cash flow position for the five years following the option decision.

- Refurbishment Option; the calculations take account of income based on expected annual occupancy rates for the period starting at a 80% occupancy rate in year one following redevelopment. There would be an approximate loss of rental income of £200k whilst the site is closed for refurbishment – this will be a revenue budget pressure and is not included in the table above as this does not represent a cash expense. Deductions are made for; service charges, establishment costs in years one and two and annual loan re-payments. The annual loan repayments are based on a capital budget of £3.3m expected to fund all capital work costs, services, fees and includes a 10% contingency sum. To negate the risk of under occupancy in the refurbished site it is recommended to achieve a pre-letting target of 50% prior to letting the works contract. Using the assumptions above an approximate 75% pa occupancy rate is required to achieve break even during the first five years post development. There is an expected positive cash position after year one which increases annually.
- Close Option; this option considers the maximum trader compensation claim in year one and the expected annual rates payment. It excludes the receipt of income that will be lost from the cessation of the market. This loss of income

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will result in a revenue budget pressure. Therefore an expected negative cash outflow position is expected over this period.

- Do-nothing Option; the income total is based on a best case scenario and could be significantly lower. Deductions consider the expected service charge, an annual maintenance budget and loan repayment required to deal with the current dilapidation schedule. There is an expected negative cash position over this period.
- Option to re-site the market; this is based on a notional 15,000 sq. ft. city centre location yet to be identified and considers income based on expected income based on net lettable area. Deductions are required for service charges including occupational rent and loan re-payments required for the building fit out. There is an expected negative cash position over this period. If this option was selected as the preferred option a site would need to be identified along with a decision on what to do with the current site which may result in incurring the close market liabilities stated under the close option.

## **12. Legal Implications**

- 12.1 A right exists, under a Royal Charter of 1597, and under the Hereford Markets Act 2003, to hold a market at the Buttermarket. If the market is not held there is a risk that the charter right could be taken back by the Crown, or that the Council will not be able to enforce those rights against a rival market.
- 12.2 However the Buttermarket can be closed temporarily as, by implication, the Hereford Markets Act 2003 gives the right to improve the markets. This should be subject to consultation with the market traders and any other interest parties the Council believe are likely to be affected by the temporary closure, or relocation. Such temporary closure will also be dependent on those that have business tenancies being successfully terminated, by agreement, by virtue of a break clause in their lease, or their lease coming to the end of its term.
- 12.3 A review and advice upon the current tenancies in place at the Buttermarket will need to be provided by Legal in-house. Consideration can also be given to agreements to surrender with payments reflecting statutory compensation amounts in the case of leases with security of tenure.

Operation of break clauses in leases with protection of the 1954 Act will serve to bring forward the end of their term but the appropriate statutory procedure will still need to be followed. Herefordshire Council would need to rely on the landlord's right to oppose the renewal of a business tenancy on the ground the landlord intends to demolish or reconstruct the premises (section 30(1) (f), Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 (LTA 1954)).

Section 30(1)(f) (Ground (f)) of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 (LTA 1954), states that the landlord can oppose a lease renewal if:

"... on the termination of the current tenancy the landlord intends to demolish or reconstruct the premises comprised in the holding or a substantial part of those premises or to carry out substantial work of construction on the holding or part thereof

that he could not reasonably do so without obtaining possession of the holding." (Section 30(1) (f), LTA 1954 (Ground (f)).)

To satisfy this ground there must be a genuine firm and settled intention to carry out the works and a reasonable prospect of them being carried out within a reasonable time from the end of the tenancies and it is for the Landlord to prove that it has the requisite intention. The more that a redevelopment plan is progressed the better. The more pre-requisites for the development that have been obtained the better i.e. planning permission for the development and third party consents, a building contract and arrangements for financing.

Statutory compensation is calculated as a multiplier of the rateable value of the property. Where the tenant and any predecessor that carried on the same business have been in occupation for business purposes for 14 years or more, the compensation is calculated as a multiplier of twice the rateable value.

Redevelopment must take place by the actual Landlord that issues the notices and terminations of tenancies. Either these are dealt with by Herefordshire Council before it commences redevelopment or if there is to be a freehold transfer to Hereford City Council it would be for that organisation to carry out both the redevelopment and notices/terminations.

### **13. Risk Management**

13.1 The on-going issue of the Buttermarket income is already on the Environment, Economy and Culture Services risk register (RSK.EEC.04). A refurbishment project will initiate a separate entry being made on the service's risk register with regard to this regeneration proposal.

13.2 In summary the risk associated with this project will be as follows;

- The potential of the City Council to manage both the Buttermarket in its current condition, and its future proposed redevelopment.
- Agreement of a suitable alternative trading location for traders wishing to return to the refurbished Buttermarket.
- The reputation of the Council's management of the market will come under scrutiny as part of this project. This will be mitigated by close project management and regular updates to the traders and press.
- Officer capacity to oversee the project. This will be mitigated by appointing specialist project management capacity and knowledge to oversee the project.
- The financial risk of exiting the contract development prior to appointing a main contractor. This is mitigated by industry experts considering a 50% pre-letting target prior to appointment of the main contractor being a very achievable target.

## **14. Consultees**

- 14.1 Hereford Futures, Quarterbridge Project Management Ltd and the Buttermarket Traders via a series of meetings.

## **15. Appendices**

None.

## **16. Background Papers**

- 16.1 None. However, Quarterbridge Hereford Buttermarket Preliminary Business Plan is relevant to this report. This document is classified as Exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Constitution, pursuant to Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, as amended. Paragraph 3, the reason for the exemption, states that it is because the document contains “information relating to financial or business affairs of any particular person”. The exemption means that the document cannot be made publically available.







<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>19 SEPTEMBER 2013</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL, SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN:  SIX MONTH REVIEW REPORT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>INTERIM HEAD OF IMPROVEMENT</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>CHILDREN'S WELLBEING</b>

**1. Classification**

Open

**2. Key Decision**

This is not a key decision

**3. Wards Affected**

County-wide

**4. Purpose**

- 4.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members on the progress of improvement planning in children's safeguarding resulting from the self-evaluation undertaken and reported to the Department of Education in July, 2013 in relation to the Herefordshire Safeguarding and Protecting Children Improvement Plan.

**5. Recommendation(s)**

**THAT:**

- (a) the report be noted; and
- (b) a further update report be provided in three months' time.

**6. Alternative Options**

There are no relevant alternative options.

## **7. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 7.1 To ensure that Cabinet are fully informed and able to challenge the progress of improvement planning in line with the Department of Education expectations and requirements, in relation to arrangements for safeguarding children.

## **8. Key Considerations**

- 8.1 Immediately following the September, 2012 Ofsted inspection of arrangements to Safeguard Children in Herefordshire, the Council established a multi-agency Improvement Board. An Improvement Plan was developed in October, 2012 and updated and published, following receipt of the Improvement Notice in March, 2013.
- 8.2 The Herefordshire Safeguarding and Protection Children Improvement Board (HSPCIB) has been chaired by an independent Chair, Paul Curran, since November 2012. The Board has been attended consistently by a purposeful multi-agency group of partners, leading the implementation of the Improvement Plan.
- 8.3 An evaluation of progress to date is contained within the attached document. In summary however, the following areas highlight specific progress and areas for development:

### **Leadership and Governance**

- 8.4 Ofsted drew attention to the quality and effectiveness of leadership and management arrangements. The Council has strengthened the political and corporate leadership and governance arrangements. The new Leader was elected in May 2013, and he has created a dedicated Lead Member for Children, Youth and Education Services. New Scrutiny arrangements are in place with a dedicated Health and Social Care Overview Committee; the vice-chair of that Committee leads the Scrutiny task and finish sub-group dedicated to developing member knowledge, understanding and challenge of children's safeguarding. Safeguarding Seminars have been undertaken with good engagement by elected members. Whilst these developments mark significant action, it is too early to fully evaluate the impact as yet.
- 8.5 The new Chief Executive started in March 2013. He has reviewed the Directorate structures with a particular aim to place renewed organisational focus on Children's Safeguarding. Assistant Director capacity was also enhanced in January 2013 which has ensured two full time permanent and experienced Assistant Directors are in place for Children's Services.
- 8.6 The Council's Cabinet has published a clear statement of Expectations for Safeguarding for further development with children and young people. Our Children in Care Council have supported this, making some specific changes. This will be used to guide the improvement and development of services. Advocacy services for children and young people have been enhanced through additional commissioned capacity although there is likely to be a need to enhance this capacity further.
- 8.7 There has been a strong multi-agency response by the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board. It has been restructured with enhanced quality assurance, training and case review arrangements in place. Case auditing in children's social care is now part of a systematic process linked in to the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

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Julie Rzezniczek, Interim Head of Improvement on Tel (01432) 260801

8.8 The immediate action required of the Council, to undertake an audit of all cases was undertaken by external auditors. By January, 2013 all 1440 cases had been audited.

No children were deemed to be at immediate risk. The quality of case work ranged from outstanding to inadequate, reflecting the same issues found by OFSTED. Robust follow up action was taken on all cases found to be inadequate.

8.9 The Advanced Practitioner service has been redesigned and is now fully staffed. Their focus is on supporting and improving frontline practice and management practice including assessment improvements, recording, care planning and ensuring the voice of the child is used and embedded into social work practice. Very well received multi-agency Risk and Resilience training is currently being rolled out.

8.10 The new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has been operational from 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2013, and as it develops will address a number of improvement requirements in the Improvement Plan.

8.11 Performance management arrangements are being enhanced through the implementation of a new Frameworki reporting and alerts tool, CORIUS.

8.12 The first phase analysis of a 'child's journey' approach to early help and safeguarding has taken place to secure a more effective, targeted and efficient service. All staff will be engaged in finalising the model.

### **Challenges**

8.13 The focus of the past nine months has been on establishing the basic building blocks for effective safeguarding practice. Whilst there is evidence of significant commitment and hard work from very many, there remain some fundamental challenges for us to address:

### **Recruitment and Retention**

8.14 During the past six months, there has been significant turnover in front line and middle agency managers. The Council has recruited one new permanent Head of Service and one new permanent Service Manager, as well as four new agency service managers.

8.15 The MASH has 75% permanent staff, that is, three out of four; the current FAST has only one permanent member of staff and the Safeguarding and Review service has a 50% ratio of permanent staff to agency staff.

8.16 This is impacting on our ability to secure stable relationships with children, families and other organisations, and to see a sustained and embedded improvement in practice. This remains an issue both for timeliness and for quality. However, we are also clear that we will only recruit staff of the appropriate calibre.

8.17 Following initial recruitment and retention activity, the Council has provided additional strategic Human Resources capacity. This has led to an in-depth analysis of workforce issues, informed by staff, which was reported to Committee in July 2013. A stronger recruitment strategy is well in development, to be delivered in partnership with national recruitment specialists. We are also currently recruiting practice educators and some more newly qualified staff to ensure we build capacity in the longer term.

8.18 A retention plan is also nearing completion which will address issues such as pay, progression and the total reward offer.

8.19 Good agency staff have been taken on for longer contractual periods and there have been a small number of conversions of high quality agency staff to permanent posts. Recruitment of experienced staff and managers in social care remains our most fundamental challenge.

#### **Practice**

8.20 Evidence from Council and Safeguarding Board quality assurance shows there is still some way to go in securing consistently effective and high quality practice.

8.21 Following Ofsted, there was a significant growth in workload in all child protection teams, including the Looked After Children Teams. This was caused by new referrals and re-referrals, addressing some long-standing drift in cases and the work on audited cases. Teams have taken on additional staff to keep workloads manageable. However, the combination of volume of work, practice changes and training, 'clunky' technology and lag with permanent staff commencing has meant that improvements in practice overall are not being seen at the rate we would wish and in some teams such as FAST, performance is highly variable.

8.22 In the light of this, the service is in the process of refocusing and slimming down the Improvement Plan so that every member of staff understands it and is clear about milestones and expectations; refocusing the work of the Advanced Practitioners and, using learning from other good authorities, taking a more disciplined approach to the structure, pace and prioritisation of the work undertaken by the social care teams.

8.23 Now that Core Logic, the Frameworki software supplier, has delivered on the Corius upgrade to the performance information available for staff and managers, the shortcomings in the functionality of the casework system in relation to its usability for chronologies, and other fundamental practice issues, can be addressed.

#### **Workload and morale**

8.24 Despite additional resources, the social care teams are reporting significant challenges with workload. This is also reflected in some partner agencies. Since the Ofsted inspection there have been morale issues within the front line child protection teams. There has been a robust approach to performance management in teams which has increased pressure.

8.25 Some of the solutions to these issues relate to more efficient and effective working practices and tools, which are not yet fully rolled out. There is also a review of business support underway to ensure social care teams have the right support.

8.26 The Children and Young People's Partnership Forum (Children's Trust) has also acknowledged the need to be more ambitious for the collective approach to early help, to manage down the demand for specialised child protection services. This will be the focus of work for the Partnership in Quarter Two.

8.27 It is evident that there is a significant commitment being made by all staff and partners to achieve excellence in safeguarding in Herefordshire. There remains,

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however, much to do.

8.28 Feedback from the Department of Education would indicate that we are appropriately on track with our Improvement Plan and taking this forward at a pace which is in line with their expectations. Our current expectation is that we could achieve an adequate inspection rating during 2014/15.

8.29 Ofsted have announced that they will be publishing their new inspection framework in September, 2013 and will not be carrying out any inspections until November, 2013. Meanwhile a peer review of children's safeguarding arrangements has been commissioned which will take place during the first week of October, 2013. This will act as a supportive but challenging 'critical friend' approach to assist us and our partners in celebrating strengths and identifying areas for improvement.

## **9. Community Impact**

9.1 The improvements planned will lead to a positive impact on the most vulnerable children and families in Herefordshire.

## **10. Equality and Human Rights**

10.1 By the nature of its work Children's social care services, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to -

10.1.1 eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under this Act;

10.1.2 advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

10.1.3 foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it."

## **11. Financial Implications**

11.1 There are no specific financial implications to this report. However, the turnover in staff and increased reliance on agency staff have created financial pressures in year. The planned recruitment campaign will cost from £65k to £127k depending on the numbers of experienced qualified social workers successfully recruited.

## **12. Legal Implications**

The Department for Education issued an Improvement Notice in respect of improving the Council's arrangements for safeguarding children. Failure to comply with the notice could lead to the Secretary of State for Education using statutory powers of intervention under s.497A Education Act 1996, directing the Council to enter into an appropriate arrangement to secure the necessary and rapid improvements required in Children's Wellbeing Services.

## **13. Risk Management**

13.1 Risks related to the Improvement Plan are recorded on a risk register and the recruitment and retention of a stable workforce is a critical area related to the necessary improvements required in the Improvement plan and notice.

## **14. Consultees**

14.1 Staff, health and school partners were consulted as a part of the formulation of this report.

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Further information on the subject of this Report is available from  
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## **15. Appendices**

- 15.1 Appendix 1 – Six month review, self-evaluation report.  
Appendix 2 – DFE feedback letter.

## **16. Background Papers**

- 16.1 None identified.

**Herefordshire Council Improvement Notice: Six month review of progress**Purpose

This document provides a summary of progress made against the requirements of the Improvement Notice issued to Herefordshire Council in February 2013.

Assessment of progress against the measures set out in the Improvement Notice:

**Improvements required by 31 March 2013:**

2. Ensure the Council sets out a statement of their vision and ambition and plan, including targets and timescales for children's safeguarding services regarding the improvements planned as a result of this Notice by 31 March 2013. Ensure this statement is communicated to and implemented by staff and partners such that they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are held to account in delivering this vision, ambition and improvements expected by the Council.

Status	Green
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## Achievements to date:

- Cabinet has approved Statement of Expectations and Improvement Plan.
- Improvement plan has been published, has clear timescales and accountabilities. This has been published on HSCB website and shared with staff through staff briefings.
- Statement of Expectations has been developed with Children in Care Council.
- People are being held to account through the monitoring and challenge by HSCB and HSPICB.

**Evidence**

Statement of Expectations

Website

Minutes of meetings

## Key areas for development:

- Ensuring the statement of expectations is shared widely and used to guide development.
- Sharpening the focus of the improvement plan following self-evaluation.

**Timescale**

Quarter 2

Quarter 2

3. Review the membership, structure and operation of HSCB by 31 March 2013 to ensure the Board provides rigorous scrutiny, monitoring and challenge of services and outcomes for vulnerable children, and meets all statutory requirements and statutory guidance requirements as set out in 'Working Together'.

Status	Green
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Achievements to date:

- The HSCB and its sub-groups have been restructured, with new chairs in place where required. The membership of the HSCB and groups has been reviewed and necessary changes made. SET Case Review Group established and new Procedures Sub-group being considered.
- Enhanced Quality Assurance regime introduced with improved performance information reporting and regularised case and thematic auditing. Some developmental issues have been identified and referred for action.
- New case review system introduced and has been completed or planned on 4 cases. This could be used as a SCR model for West Mercia.
- Major SET Conference organised to launch SET Strategy involving 70 organisations and 250 attendees.
- Three Year Plan developed.

**Evidence**

Structure chart/Business Plan

Commenced April 2013  
– 2 thematic audits and 1 case audits (AC)

1 completed, 3 underway

June 2013

Business Plan

Key areas for development:

- Resolve method of engagement with schools, lay members and children and young people.
- Further develop engagement with frontline staff.
- Review and refinement of new systems and arrangements.

**Timescale**

Quarter 2

On going

Quarter 3/ 4



20. Conduct within one month of this Notice an audit of all cases closed in the last three months and risk assess all current cases within children’s social care services, to assess whether children and young people are at risk and whether any further action is required. If action is required take the appropriate action to safeguard the child.

Status	Green
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Achievements to date:

- The audit has taken place and all inadequate cases referred back to operational teams for corrective action. Outstanding cases are being used as exemplars of good practice.
- Overall analysis has been shared with operational staff, HSCB members, the Board and members, including Overview and Scrutiny Committee..
- Action points from the audit are similar to those from the Ofsted Inspection and have been cross-referenced and amalgamated with the Improvement Plan.
- The audit has informed the development of our QA framework, which is now in place.

**Evidence**

1440 cases audited of which: 18 outstanding, 315 good, 658 adequate, 449 inadequate

Minutes of meetings

New plan

Key areas for development:

- Continue to ensure learning is embedded within operational practice.

**Timescale**

On going

**Leadership and Governance**

1. In line with ‘Working Together’, ensure that across the partnership and within the Council assurance arrangements are in place to assess that the Lead Member and the DCS and senior leaders have the capacity to give Children’s Services sufficient priority and focus

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- New Lead Member dedicated to Children’s, Youth and Education Services in place since end May, in line with

**Evidence**

Council governance structure

Statutory Guidance.

- New Chief Executive in place since March.
- Additional capacity was brought in by the council in January 2013 to ensure two full time Assistant Directors focused on Children’s Services.
- Peer mentoring has been in place this year, for the DCS, AD, children’s services, the lead member, and the task and finish group

<p><b>Evidence</b></p> <p>Senior Management structure</p> <p>Capacity increased from 1.5 to 2.0 ADs</p>
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Key areas for development:

- A members task and finish group is underway to develop the scrutiny function in relation to safeguarding children.
- Further work to be undertaken to build on assurances across the partnership that senior leaders in the organisations have the capacity to prioritise children’s services

<p><b>Timescale</b></p> <p>Quarter 2</p>
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4. Ensure that individual children, families and staff are engaged and provide regular feedback to improve the quality of service and shape practice

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- Work has been undertaken to identify the range of consultation and participation work undertaken with children and families, both individually and collectively.
- Participation and engagement resource reviewed and plan in place to strengthen and focus our approach, including the possibility of an internship for a young person.
- The New QA System includes arrangements to receive feedback from families via structured interviews or focus groups.
- Meetings with Children in Care Council (CiCC) about what needs improving.

<p><b>Evidence</b></p> <p>Proposal for participation and engagement</p> <p>Minutes of corporate parenting panel</p>
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- Consultation on Centre 18 and re-provisioning of Number 4 Blackfriars. The young people are currently designing Nos 4 Blackfriars which will be used as a multi-agency hub for CICC and 16+.
- A consultation event was held in June this year, between children, young people and elected members, on the subject of safeguarding and children’s experiences of services related to their safeguarding needs.

Areas for development:

- Departmental staff surveys are being planned which will supplement the arrangements which operate across the Council.
- The next stage is to put in place a systematic process to engage children and young people to provide structured feedback on safeguarding systems utilising existing participation services and staff.

<b>Timescale</b>
Quarter 2
Quarter 2

5. Ensure that the views of staff are considered in relation to their work and workplace using appropriate feedback mechanisms. To support this, consideration should be given to the Children’s Safeguarding Performance Information Framework

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- We have established new arrangements for staff briefings and act on their feedback.

<b>Evidence</b>
Briefings held 10/12, 12/12, 03/13, 04/13, 05/13
Monthly newsletters from AD

Areas for development:

- Information from staff feedback is used to inform recruitment and retention strategy.
- More systematic feedback arrangements in place at a team level and across the partnership.
- Staff surveys are also being planned.

<b>Timescale</b>
Quarter 2

<b>Timescale</b>
In place
October 2013

**Decision making, escalation, management oversight and supervision**

6. Ensure that all management oversight and decision-making by the Council is conducted in line with standards set out in 'Working Together' and the Framework for Assessment and in local standards, and that evidence of such management oversight and decision making is set out in detail on each case file. Action must be taken to address areas of practice where performance does not meet standards.

Status	Amber
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## Achievements to date:

- Completely new web based procedures have been established clearly outlining operational requirements.
- The new department QA Framework includes systematic case auditing by managers across the department which is centrally managed and assured. This checks on compliance and management oversight in line with Ofsted requirements.
- Practice Lunch Time Seminars have assisted in embedding the learning.
- A new procedure for undertaking case reviews has been undertaken using the Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP) which has high staff engagement and is assisting in creating a learning culture.

**Evidence**

Intranet

QA framework  
No. of cases audited as at 1.7.13 =41 of which 0 outstanding, 16 good, 13 adequate, 12 inadequate

## Areas for development:

- The development of a Single Assessment procedure in line with the requirements WT2013.
- A Learning Framework to undertake serious case reviews is being developed with partner agencies in the West Mercia area.
- Robustness of evidence of IRO/CP Conference Chair scrutiny and reported – revised QA Alert processes for LAC and CP, IRO Case Notes on Child's File
- Embed learning from audit consistently
- Further develop QA Framework to include peer observations etc.

**Timescale**

Quarter 2

Quarter 3

On going

On going

Quarter 3

7. Ensure professionals from all agencies understand their responsibilities with regard to child protection and make use of escalation procedures if they believe that children are not receiving appropriate services from any agency or organisation

Status	Amber
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#### Achievements to date:

- One of the key strands of the HSCB training strategy and plan is based on Herefordshire's Levels of Need and ensuring professionals understand their responsibilities with regards to it.
- Organisations have worked to publicise the Levels of Need document.
- HSCB's escalation procedures were refreshed and reissued in February 2013 with quarterly monitoring of significant escalations by the HSCB Quality Assurance and Evaluation sub group.
- New QA Alerts linked to Ofsted Grade Descriptors being undertaken by IROs.
- HSCB has undertaken thematic and case specific Audit activity

#### Evidence

Training Strategy

On-going publicity of the Levels of Need

Escalation procedures

3 reports of escalations above level 4

Themes covered to date = Referrals into CSC via the multi-agency referral form, decision making and process in strategy meetings

#### Areas for development:

- Reflect on analysis of use of escalation procedure and take further steps to embed in practice. Further work will be done across agencies to highlight the case escalation procedures.
- The MASH will also provide additional ability to drive consistent adherence through better multi-agency coordination, and this will be monitored through the MASH performance framework

#### Timescales

Quarter 3

Quarter 2 and on going

8. Ensure those with responsibility for supervising social workers and other social care staff have relevant experience and the opportunity to access training and support to fulfil this responsibility.

Status Amber

Achievements to date:

- A programme of training and continuous development for all staff in place, supported by the fully staffed Advanced Practitioner service and the Principal Social Worker role.
- Recruitment of some high calibre permanent and temporary managers.

**Evidence**

1 x Head of Service commences July 2013  
 1 x Service Manager commenced June 2013  
 4 x Agency Service Managers in post

Areas for development:

- Key training programmes are being rolled out. These include Risk and Resilience model training and the Barnado's model for working with Domestic Violence in September 2013.
- Recruitment of permanent staff in supervising and leadership roles.
- Induction training.
- All staff with identified practice development needs will be offered mentoring through the Advanced Practitioner service.
- An updated Supervision Policy is being developed and will be included in the Children's Services Procedures Manual.

**Timescales**

Quarter 2

**Timescales**

Quarter 4  
 Quarter 2 and 3  
 Quarter 3  
 Quarter 4

9. Ensure that supervision is regular, reflective, comprehensive and up to date, and robustly identifies any needs, risks or protective factors so that supervision is effective and leads to managers taking appropriate and timely action. Ensure that the Improvement Board receive management information to confirm that this is achieved and sustained.

Status Amber

Achievements to date:

- Audit activity has evidenced case supervision is taking place more regularly.
- Frequency of supervision sessions is recorded and monitored on an electronic template.
- Management information provided for members of the Improvement Board on a monthly basis.
- Key messages regarding quality and regularity of supervision set out with staff.

**Evidence:**

Audit reports

Minutes

Areas for development:

- Head of Service will lead on further work around reflective supervision and its recording on case files, to embed in practice
- Management information systems being developed with a new reporting suite that is due to go live in July 2013.
- A specific themed audit to assess the extent, regularity and quality of reflective/developmental supervision is being planned.

**Timescales**

Quarter 2

Quarter 1

Quarter 2

**Effectiveness of practice and risk assessment**

10. Develop and implement a whole systems framework to manage family pathways from early help to statutory intervention. This should include the thresholds and referral mechanisms to step up to and down from specialist safeguarding services; and the criteria to assess whether a child is in need under S17 (10) of the Children Act 1989. The framework should be communicated, understood and applied consistently across all partners working together to safeguard children. This will ensure that children, young people and their families receive support at the earliest opportunity and get the right help at the right time.

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- The Child's Journey project has been undertaken and has mapped pathways. Lean Systems thinking methodology applied to develop a new service model.

**Evidence**

Model proposal

This model is aligned to the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) currently in development.

Areas for development:

- The MASH will be launched in July 2013.
- Revised service model to be further developed, including staff engagement, and put in place.
- During this, current performance concerns will be addressed.

<p><b>Timescales</b></p> <p>w/c 22 July 2013</p> <p>Quarter 3</p> <p>Quarter 2</p>
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11. Develop and implement a system of risk assessment that informs the development of all child protection and children in need plans to ensure consistent judgments are made about the levels of risk, following the “Conceptual Framework”. Ensure that all relevant staff apply this Framework in their practice and that management information and the audit of the case files provide evidence that this is being done and the quality of social work practice is improving.

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- The Advanced Practitioner service has been developing ‘specialist’ assessment models around sex offender risk assessment and domestic violence.
- The risk and resilience assessment tool has been developed and put in place following engagement with multi-agency staff. Developed by ETC (Effective Training and Consultancy Limited), it is based on their experience of working with other local authorities to develop and support effective risk assessment processes. It is an evidenced based model designed to aid understanding and analysis of risk, particularly applicable in child protection cases, but with wider application across the multi-agency workforce.
- The risk and resilience assessment tool has been adopted by the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) for inclusion in child protection processes and procedures.

<p><b>Evidence</b></p> <p>Model</p> <p>Risk and resilience tool, training and rollout plan</p> <p>Minutes</p>
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Areas for development:

- Risk and Resilience training to be further rolled out to practitioners from all agencies.
- Further training for social workers will take place in September to embed use of R&R tool and assess learning thus far, supported by an external evaluation process which is in the process of being set up.

<b>Timescales</b>
Quarter 3
Quarter 2

12. Ensure improvement in the timeliness of decision making on all referrals, that they are appropriately risk assessed and prioritised within the appropriate referral and assessment team.

Status	Red
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Achievements to date:

- Interim FAST arrangements approved for additional staff, and have been implemented, resulting in smaller teams with a 1:4 manager to worker ratio and increased capacity at the contact desk.
- A specific contact manager role has been created to provide consistent frontline decision-making.
- Prior to the full implementation of the MASH, the social workers who will be going to the new unit have already started to operate as a permanent duty team. These workers now handle all initial contacts and section 47 enquiries. This has led to a more rapid response to initial contacts and allows the other FAST workers to focus on completing assessments within timescales.

<b>Evidence</b>
Additional staff in place

<b>Evidence</b>
Temporary arrangements only

Areas for development:

- Improvements in timeliness of Initial and Core Assessments. After promising progress, the service experienced a significant turnover of staff (5 out of 12 and 3 out of 4 team leaders leaving the service). Posts now all recruited to, however, there is only 1 permanent member of staff and all of the rest are

<b>Timescales</b>
Quarter 3
Timeliness of IA.s performance = 23.7% as at May, 2013.
Timeliness of CAs as at May, 2013 = 48.6%

agency. Recruitment campaign is being developed to address this.

- The MASH development will be implemented w/c 22 July 2013. This will lead to more effective multi-agency risk assessment and prioritisation.

**Assessment quality and timeliness**

13. Ensure all assessments are analytical, timely, comprehensive, regularly updated and are in line with the statutory guidance 'Working Together' and the 'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families'. Assessments must identify needs, risks and protective factors and lead to appropriate and timely action and take account of and record the views, experience and needs of children and families. New information or concerns must lead to a review of the current plan for the child and when required, additional action taken.

Status	Red
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Achievements to date:

- Risk and resilience assessment model introduced and supported by training.
- Assessments evaluated by case audits
- New QA Alerts linked to Ofsted Grade Descriptors being undertaken by IROs.
- The risk and resilience model has already been successfully used as a way of reviewing and analysing our most complex cases.

**Evidence**

Roll out plan  
Audit report

Areas for development:

- Quality and consistency of practice embedded in the service.
- Induction programme for new staff, whether agency or permanent to ensure approach in line with expectations.
- Using the audit programme to test whether assessments are analytical and comprehensive.
- Ensuring that our social work assessments meet the new PLO requirements i.e. they are of sufficient quality to act as the sole "expert" report on family functioning.

**Timescales**

Quarter 4  
Quarter 2  
  
Quarters 2 and 3

**Care planning**

14. Improve the quality, delivery and management of child protection and children in need plans by ensuring that all plans comply with 'Working Together' and the Assessment Framework including setting out the actions that must be taken and by whom and the outcomes to be achieved with timescales.

Status	Amber
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## Achievements to date:

- The training programme referred to above started February 2013 and is a focus area for new Advanced Practitioner group. Good practice from other local authorities will be used to complete a new child protection plan format, which is more focussed and will make more sense for families. This links into the Strengthening Families approach and will be operational from August 2013.
- There has been a review and revision of end to end practice and processes within Safeguarding and Review Service, to include 'benchmarking' for increased consistency of practice across the Team and improved 'process' to better evidence quality.
- Workshops on how to hold effective core group meetings have been delivered and will happen again.
- A standard script and written guidance on how to chair core groups is also being rolled out.
- Timeliness of Child Protection conferences as at June, 2013 = 96.7%
- Timeliness of Looked After Children Reviews as at June, 2013 = 93.1%

**Evidence**

AP work plans

Script

## Areas for development:

- We need to monitor progress in this area via the audit programme and address any shortcomings which arise.

**Timescales**

On-going

15. Ensure that children in need and those subject to child protection plans are visited regularly by social workers in line with 'Working Together' and local policy

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- Frontline managers now have information alerting them to when visits are due. Visits are a key area of focus for frontline managers and performance is reviewed weekly at performance meeting chaired by DCS.
- Improvements in Child Protection visits evidenced through performance information.

**Evidence**

Minutes of weekly meeting

Number of visits completed within the past 6 weeks  
LAC 74.89% January 2013  
LAC 71.00% May 2013

Number of visits completed with the past 12 weeks  
LAC 94.98% January 2013  
LAC 91.9% May 2013

Number of CP Visits in last 6 weeks  
72.9% January 2013

Areas for development:

- Achieving 100% compliance with expectations.
- Clarification of policy within the West Mercia procedures.
- A Frameworki mechanism for monitoring how often children are seen between the initiation of a child protection concern and a child protection conference taking place, is in development, with manual systems being used currently.
- Frameworki performance reporting suite is scheduled to be in place from July 2013.

**Timescales**

Quarter 3

Quarter 2

Quarter 2

Quarter 2

16. Ensure that legal advice is consistently sought in a timely way, and that this leads to timely legal planning meetings and legal intervention where necessary.

Status	Green
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Achievements to date:

- Robust approach now in place - senior lawyer is leading on work with senior managers.
- Regular meetings with legal chaired by Head of Service, ensuring that the Public Law Outline (PLO) is operating effectively. As necessary, legal proceedings are carried out in a timely and effective manner.
- When necessary emergency Legal Planning Meetings are convened to ensure that legal advice and authorisation is delivered in a timely way.
- Our current performance in meeting the legal proceedings 26 week deadline is in the top quartile.

**Evidence**

Minutes of meetings

Adoption scorecard

Areas for development:

- The regional Family Justice Board and regional partners to devise and implement a PLO strategy to enable social workers to meet the 26 week deadline re court timeframes.
- Staff to receive regular training on key legal issues such as the new PLO framework.
- New procedures for the revised PLO have been established and are out for consultation and training has been provided
- Ensure all relevant agencies receive training in Care Proceedings

**Timescales**

Quarter 1/2

Quarter 3

Quarter 2

Quarter 1/2

17. Ensure that assessments and child protection case conferences effectively involve parents and children and ensure that parents are able to understand the purpose of children in need and child protection plans.

Status Amber

Achievements to date:

- Attendance of parents and young people at conferences regularly collected and reviewed.
- Chairs routinely meet with children and parents.
- Investment made to enhance advocacy service.

#### Evidence

ICPC/RCPC data request form

£25,000 additional investment since April 2013

Areas for development:

- Ensure that parents and, where appropriate, children are shown conference reports well in advance of the conference so that they have time to consider and challenge the contents of the report.
- Revised Parents Report to CPCs in development.
- Revised Parents Feedback Form from CPCs in development.
- Revised Children's Information to Conference in development

#### Timescales

Quarter 2

Quarter 2

Quarter 2

Quarter 2

18. Ensure sustained improvement of the quality of core group meetings by holding them on a regular basis and effectively developing and implementing the child protection plan, which must be monitored by child protection conferences.

Status Amber

Achievements to date:

- Workshops to develop approach to core groups held.
- New model of Core Group co-ordinators established
- Management information on core group meetings developed and being reported on.

#### Evidence

December 2012

Proposal paper

Corius tool

Areas for development:

- Build on review work by service manager to continue improvement of practice.
- Guidance notes and an agreed script for the meetings to be rolled out.
- Revised Child Protection QA Alerts system being introduced on 1st July which will enhance monitoring of this.

Timescales
Quarter 2 onwards
Quarter 2
Quarter 2

19. When making plans for offenders who have significant contact with children and other young people who are known to them, ensure effective communication takes place between all partners, but in particular relevant probation services and children's social care services

Status	Green
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Achievements to date:

- Arrangements have been strengthened through:
  - Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee (MARAC) and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) arrangements have been clarified in November, 2012.
  - Learning from Probation Audit
  - Use of Frameworki checks and other alerting mechanisms between the Probation Trust and Children's Services
  - regular safeguarding improvements sessions between the Chief Probation officer and the DCS, along with the three other West Mercia DCSs commenced June 2013

Evidence
Minutes
Audit
Audit

Areas for development:

- Continue to build on the improvements made in the notifications and response between probation and children’s services.
- Ensure similar robust arrangements are in place with other Probation Trusts, including audit of PPRC arrangements
- Implementation of the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- Future proofing against changes in organisational arrangements in the Probation Trusts

Timescales
Quarter 2
Quarter 2
Quarter 2
Quarter 2

**Quality Assurance, LSCB and Audit**

21. Ensure the Council’s quality assurance systems are prepared in line with the Children’s Safeguarding Performance Information Framework[1] and the quality assurance processes that are referred to in ‘Working Together’. Alongside any quantitative information, an understanding of qualitative evidence should be demonstrated including the experience of the child and family.

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- Quality assurance framework developed and put in place, with regular audit programme within the Council and also through the HSCB.
- Review of performance and analysis of thematic issues.

Evidence
QA Framework
Minutes

Areas for development:

- Establish a formalised process for identifying learning from case audits to feed into training and AP service

Timescale
Quarter 2



22. Ensure regular qualitative auditing arrangements of case files, with periodic independent oversight and challenge to ensure the quality and timeliness of recording and compliance with the guidance on recording in individual case records (as set out in 'Working Together') and that an assessment of risk to the child is recorded in the case file.

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- Audit programme taking place in line with the requirements of Working Together. HSCB QA sub-group manages quarterly comprehensive case audits and monthly themed audits of multi-agency safeguarding processes to check and test effectiveness.
- Independent audit of all cases carried out in December 2012 and January 2013.

**Evidence:**

Audit programme  
 No.s of cases audited this year = 3 audit programmes, 12 cases  
 Audit report to HSPCIB

Areas for development:

- This will be further supported by the regional agreement around the process for managing serious case reviews which will be in place by August 2013.
- Independent oversight and challenge session to be scheduled for October 2013.
- Peer review scheduled to take place September 2013.

**Timescales**

Quarter 2  
  
 Quarter 3  
 Quarter 2

23. Ensure the performance information and evidence from the audits are analysed and reported to the Improvement Board in accordance with the report published by Ofsted 'Good practice by LSCB children boards'[1]. Analysis of the audits must be used to inform action taken by the Council and partners to bring about improvements in safeguarding social work practice and casework

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- Report on independent audit programme provided to Improvement Board and actions included in our development plan.

**Evidence**

Report

Areas for development:

- HSCB thematic audit findings will be fed back to July's Improvement Board.

**Timescale**

Quarter 2

24. Ensure effective assurance arrangements are in place within the Council and across the partnership in line with 'Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services.

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- A dedicated Lead Member role for Children's, Youth and Education Services has been created since May 2013
- Chair of HSCB now accountable to Chief Executive in line with Working Together

**Evidence**

See point 1

Areas for development:

- Put in place assurance arrangements regarding the statutory roles.

**Timescale**

Quarter 2

25. Ensure that multi-agency audits are undertaken by the Hereford Safeguarding Children's Board and reported to the Improvement Board outlining the key lessons to be learnt and improvements to be made.

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- A comprehensive audit programme has been agreed and commenced in February 2013.

**Evidence**

Audit programme

3 audit programmes involving 12 cases

- Quarterly case audits by the QA group of HSCB begun and monthly themed audits examining the working of multi-agency safeguarding process from a qualitative point of view.

Areas for development:

- The examples of good practice being reported to HSCB Steering group to oversee and lead necessary development.
- HSCB Audit findings will be fed back to July's Improvement Board.

<b>Timescales</b>
On-going
Quarter 2

**Workforce, training and workloads**

26. Implement a programme of induction, training, mentoring and continuous professional development for all social care staff including managers to improve the quality of front line social work. In particular, ensure that this programme includes training for staff and first line managers on risk analysis. The Council should report the impact of the training on improving outcomes for children to the Improvement Board.

Status	Amber
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Achievements to date:

- Advanced Practitioner roles recruited to and training programme in place to develop management and practice.
- Risk and resilience tool developed. Staff trained and in place.
- Programme for continuous professional development in place, but is yet to be implemented
- Staff and management mentoring programmes available and used.
- Risk and resilience tool training

<b>Evidence</b>
Training programme
Roll out plan

Areas for development:

- Embed use of risk and resilience tool and review outcomes. Report to be provided to the Improvement Board.
- Implement Induction programmes

<b>Timescales</b>
Quarter 2
Quarter 2
Quarter 4

- Impact analysis of training programmes to be reported to Improvement Board - at the end of the financial year.

27. Following an analysis of the needs of the service, develop and implement an overall workforce strategy. The strategy should provide clear evidence of impact in creating a capable, stable and sustainable workforce which requires fewer agency staff and which includes clear recruitment and retention plans. The aim should be to improve the quality and continuity of social care staff experienced by children and families.

Status	Amber
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**Achievements to date:**

- Extensive diagnosis and analysis of service needs has been completed.
- Regular MI report implemented to provide necessary recruitment and retention data
- Reward structure and the linkage to the SW career path has been assessed to tackle career blockages and the competitiveness of our recruitment and retention activity
- First recruitment campaign has taken place. Some vacancies filled with permanent appointments, including at head of service and service manager level.
- NQSW recruitment underway to fill 8 posts – assessments planned for July
- External recruitment / advertising partners engaged
- Phase 2 recruitment activity planned

**Evidence**

Analysis presentation  
 Workforce report to HSPCIB March 2013

**Areas for development:**

- Creation of a 'Virtual Academy' training programme for NQSWs and years 2/3 SWs and the recruitment of 2 Practice Educators
- NQSW recruitment activity for Q2 and Q3 intakes
- Phase 2 recruitment campaign for experienced / managerial SWs – partnering with an external specialist agency; underpinned by a more flexible career and competitive reward workforce strategy

**Timescale**

Quarters 2 and 3

Quarters 2 and 3

- Reviewing recruitment and selection methodology and induction process
- Develop workforce plans to tackle the ‘people landscape’ and create an environment where development is valued and tackles issues regarding how SWs are recruited, inducted, managed, developed, supported, recognised and rewarded

28. Review and monitor social workers’ responsibilities and workloads to ensure staff have a manageable range of work and a caseload consistent with their level of experience and competence. Ensure that the Improvement Board receives workforce management information to confirm that this is achieved and sustained.

Status	Amber
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**Achievements to date:**

- Improvement Board receives regular workforce information.
- Social work responsibilities and workloads regularly reviewed by management and director.

**Evidence**

Performance reports

**Areas for development:**

- Revise service model, including the MASH, to streamline workflow.
- Develop more sophisticated approach to case mix and caseload management.
- Workloads to be reviewed in the context of the new structure

**Timescale**

Quarter 2

Quarter 2 and 3





Department  
for Education

Department for Education  
Local Authority Improvement  
& Interventions Unit  
Ground Floor  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Westminster  
SW1P 3BT

[www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus)

Jo Davidson  
Director of People's Services  
Herefordshire Council  
Brockington  
35 Hafod Road  
Hereford  
HR1 1SH

14<sup>th</sup> August 2013

Dear Jo

Angela Windle and I would like to thank you, Councillor Johnson, Councillor Millar, Councillor Morgan, Councillor Robertson, Alastair Neill and others for attending the six month review meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July to discuss the Council's progress since the Improvement Notice was issued in February 2013.

Please pass on our thanks to those who organised the day and all the staff and partner agencies who took the time to meet us during our visit. These conversations were extremely valuable in reinforcing our understanding of progress and it was good to see first-hand what a committed workforce you have. We promised to share with the people we met a written summary of the review findings and this is attached as an annex to this letter. I would be grateful if you would arrange for this to be shared with the staff and partners who gave us their views.

Angela and I felt that it was a very productive meeting and appreciated your open and honest assessment of progress. It is clear that a great deal of work had been done over the past nine months since the inspection to address issues raised by Ofsted and to put in place firm foundations. It was clear that partners and the HSCB are on board with the improvement plans. However, as we discussed there is still much to be done before the service is operating at the appropriate level.

The independent Chair of the Improvement Board, Paul Curran, was unable to attend the review but confirmed in his report that the improvement board had been well attended with the right seniority and that partners were committed to the improvement process. The leadership team has put in place systems and processes to address the weaknesses found by Ofsted, some very recent, and these will rightly take time to embed. He cautioned that the

biggest risk to progress was staff recruitment and retention and that the improvement plan remains very ambitious and recognised that it would be a challenge to deliver it.

Having held focus groups with a number of staff and partners, I gave a factual report of our main findings (please see annex). I covered a number of areas where we had heard very positive messages including: the new MASH; multi-agency training; staff feeling committed to doing a good job and welcoming being part of the improvement process. We also learned that staff have welcomed the improved visibility of the Lead Member, other Councillors and senior staff and would like this to continue.

As is to be expected a number of key issues were raised during the focus groups which we discussed in detail. The most pressing issue was the need to address the significant over reliance on agency staff and interim workers. We also discussed the issue of management consistency throughout the teams. It was clear from the focus groups that further work needs to be done to achieve a consistent management approach and oversight amongst the various teams. Whilst it was recognised that supervision was effectively working in some teams this was not the case across the whole service. The consistency (both within the Council and with partner agencies) of the application of thresholds was also highlighted as an area of concern. During the discussion you outlined that this was an issue the Council were aware of and were taking steps to address it. It is vital to the improvement process that thresholds are understood and consistently applied across the whole partnership. Finally we discussed that it was important to understand the effect that apparently small changes to working areas can have on the moral of staff.

Partners were also mainly positive of the improvements made to date, valuing the improvement measures that had been put in place and the engagement with you and the rest of the leadership team. In particular they welcomed the opportunity to be part of the Improvement Board and the opportunity to shape the improvement process and challenge where necessary. They were also pleased with the new ways in which the HSCB was working, with clearer performance indicators, new case audit processes and a robust training programme.

You gave a presentation about the improvement journey and shared your aspirations. Whilst recognising that there is still much to be done, to improve current practice, the timeliness of assessments and a reliance on agency and interim staff in key posts you outlined the key improvements which have happened during the last six months including:

- Improved corporate support from the council and strong member commitment;
- Strengthened case audit processes;
- Redesign of the Advanced Practitioner Service;
- The launch of the MASH. It was also pleasing to note that the MASH would include a new post funded by schools to address and coordination issues identified in the focus group with partners.



- New performance management arrangements.

You then outlined your key priorities for the next six months:

- Phase 2 recruitment campaign including plans for a Social Work academy (grow your own);
- Focussing the priorities of the Advanced Practitioner Service on improving the quality of case work;
- Ensuring that the voice of the child is heard; and
- The establishment of the MASH which you hope will address the issues of inconsistently applied thresholds and the timeliness we discussed.

It was pleasing to note during the discussion that the political leadership were committed to taking all the necessary steps to secure improvement. Alistair Neill outlined that as a result of this desire to address the short comings that a decision had recently been made to split the Director of People's Services role into two posts, so that you would be responsible solely for children's services.

Overall, we concluded that progress has been satisfactory over the first six months of the Improvement Notice. However, the scale of your plans to improve the basic quality of practice whilst relying on a high level of agency and interim staff remains a great challenge.

Over the next phase it should be a priority for the Council and partner agencies to continually test the impact of the changes through audits of frontline practice – something of which you are starting to do. We have noted the progress of the HSCB and expect it to pick up pace in order to deliver the necessary training and to have an unrelenting focus on the quality of frontline inter-agency practice.

The Council will need to maintain the pace and provide evidence of the impact on outcomes for children and young people. The evidence base which you are building should form a strong foundation upon which to do this. The next formal DfE review will take place in six months' time. In particular we will be looking at examining improvements in the quality of practice, consistency across the service and the impact of the MASH. The Department will continue to observe progress through attendance at the Improvement Board and looks forward to seeing evidence of the continuing improvements being delivered in Herefordshire.

I am copying this letter to Councillor Tony Johnson, Councillor Jeremy Millar, Councillor Patricia Morgan, Councillor Sally Robertson, Alistair Neill, Kathy O'Mahony, Julie Rzezniczek and Paul Curran.

Yours sincerely



**DUNCAN WALLS**

## Herefordshire 6 month review – emerging themes

### Positives

- Both staff and partners said that they are focussed on better outcomes for children. They could see signs of early progress and held a belief that real change is possible.
- Staff and managers acknowledge there is a very skilled and committed workforce in Herefordshire including interim staff and managers. The general feeling is that they work very hard and need to know they are valued.
- Recent multi agency training on CSE and Risk and Resilience was welcomed. The multi agency aspect was felt to be particularly helpful for networking purposes and understanding others roles and pressures.
- Staff said they welcomed improved visibility of the Chief Executive, Lead Member and Councillors, Jo and Heads of Service and would appreciate this continuing but on an informal basis (pop in for a cuppa) rather than “formal” meetings which take up too much time.
- Staff generally felt listened to and able to approach management and the leadership team.
- Staff said they were aware of the role of the Improvement Board and the Improvement Plan. They felt the right areas were being addressed and could feel a general “push” for change taking place, which was welcomed.
- There was a lot of positive energy around the new MASH.
- Managers are now getting decent performance data and the IT system has improved slightly.
- Communications were deemed to be generally good.
- A culture of celebrating “good” is developing.

### Remaining issues

- High levels of agency staff churn were evidently having an impact on fellow permanent staff, partners and ultimately children and families.
- Lack of permanent managers was causing morale issues in some of the teams.
- Caseloads were reported as unmanageable across all teams (with the exception of NQSW case loads).
- Many staff work more than their contracted hours, including weekends.

- IRO caseloads are too high.
- Supervision was said to be inconsistent across teams and focussed on cases rather than being reflective and tailored around personal needs.
- Staff asked for more focus on training and development and a proper induction process.
- It was important to staff to feel valued and sometimes the "small things" make a difference, ie. ability to park at/near to work, having a desk of your own and access to water in the office.
- Although case audit procedures are now underway as part of the HSCB role, staff are not engaged in the process or getting feedback.
- Thresholds are still not understood within the council and across all agencies.
- There is no longer a co-ordination point for Education making communications difficult and the agency vulnerable.





<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>19 SEPTEMBER 2013</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>POST 16 LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES (LLDD) REVIEW</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>INTERIM HEAD OF SUFFICIENCY &amp; CAPITAL COMMISSIONING</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>CHILDREN'S WELLBEING</b>

## 1. Classification

Open

## 2. Key Decision

This is a Key Decision because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the County.

NOTICE has been 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.

## 3. Wards Affected

3.1 County wide.

## 4. Purpose

4.1 For Cabinet to consider the recent review into young people aged over 16 years with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LDD) and how it addresses the points of the recent petition.

## 5. Recommendation(s)

5.1 THAT:

(a) the findings of the review, which includes the implementation of a revised Transitions Protocol for Children and Young People with

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Andy Hough,  
Interim Head of Sufficiency and Capital Commissioning on 01432 260920

**Learning Difficulties and Disabilities to improve the experience of young and their families making the transition to adult services be approved;**

- (b) to test and develop multi-agency joint commissioning and provider collaboration, a small pilot for further education, independent living and therapeutic services for up to 4 young people aged 19-25 who have learning difficulties and disabilities of a profound, multiple or severely complex nature be undertaken from September 2013.**
- (c) the Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing receives monitoring reports and the conclusions of the pilot in July 2014 with a view to agreeing future provision.**

## **6. Alternative Options**

- 6.1 Do nothing and maintain the status quo. This would lead to increased dissatisfaction from families about support and options available. This could lead to further instances of family breakdown and legal challenge. This would not improve outcomes for young people.
- 6.2 Revise the Transitions Protocol only. This would only partially support better outcomes. This alone does not ensure that suitable and sufficient provision is available to meet the need.
- 6.3 Do not test and develop multi-agency joint commissioning, including ending the Pilot. The alternative would be to send increasing numbers of young people out of county rather than investing in local provision. Many young people want to live, work and play in their local communities but find opportunities limited.

## **7. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 7.1 The report and recommendations are a result of analysis and consultation and offer the best opportunity to substantially improve the educational offer for 16-25 year olds with a learning disability assessment. This can be achieved within the funding already available and will enable more successful transition to adulthood for this group. It enables the council and partners to test whether an alternative approach will also be more cost effective than the current pattern of provision. The recommendations also support the local authority to fulfil its current statutory duties and those likely to be required through the Children and Families Bill 2013.

## **8. Key Considerations**

- 8.1 The review of Post 16 Provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) was carried out in response to the recommendations and associated action plan from the Review of support for children with disabilities and their families (2011). The strategic priorities guiding our approach are:
  - 1. Developing Choice
  - 2. Professionals working in partnership with families
  - 3. Young people with disabilities living ordinary lives

The purpose of this Post 16 review was to ensure that:

- There is a choice of high quality post 16 provision in Herefordshire to meet the individual learning and support needs of young people 16-25 with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities and individual requirements;
- The provision offers the appropriate environment, curriculum and support to enable learners to achieve their full potential and move onto their adult lives within their own communities.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Andy Hough,  
Interim Head of Sufficiency and Capital Commissioning on 01432 260920

- 8.2 More recently, the Coalition Government's green paper and subsequent draft legislation, identified the need to strengthen the educational offer for young people with disabilities aged 16-25. The highlighting of this nationally prompted a group of local parents to press for an improved offer at the age of 19 at the earliest opportunity. The Council received a petition to this effect earlier this year.
- 8.3 Findings in the report have highlighted the urgent need for change to enable young people and their families to plan and prepare early, to make informed decisions and enable a smooth transition into adulthood, enabling the best possible outcomes.
- 8.4 The recommendations seek to maximise the best use of existing and future diminishing resources and value for money.
- 8.5 The recommendations and actions contribute to the priorities set out in Herefordshire Council's Corporate Plan 2013/2015, Child Poverty Strategy, Health and Wellbeing strategy and the Yes We Can Plan and lead to improvement of services, commissioning and performance.
- 8.6 If the proposals were not implemented, the local authority would not be meeting its statutory duties. There would be an increase in dissatisfaction, complaints and likelihood of legal challenge from young people and parents.

## **9. Community Impact**

- 9.1 The recommendations support the most vulnerable members of the community. The recommendations and actions contribute to the priorities set out in Herefordshire Council's Corporate Plan 2013/2015, Child Poverty Strategy, Health and Well-being strategy and the Yes We Can Plan.
- 9.2 The approach described in the attached paper is intended to ensure that:
- Young people with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) are able to develop the knowledge, skills and capabilities they will need to lead fulfilling lives, to be able to live as independently as possible and maximise their potential on their transition into adulthood. Thus reducing longer term support needs;
  - Young people with LDD are active in their communities;
  - Young People with LDD are physically and mentally healthy and stay healthy for longer;
  - More young people with LDD in employment, supported employment and enterprise and Herefordshire Council setting an example;
  - There is a spectrum of supported living opportunities to enable young people to live as independently as possible;
- Targets to reduce the number of young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) are met.

## **10. Equality and Human Rights**

- 10.1 This report pays due regard to the Human Rights Act, Equality Act 2010 including section 149, the 'General Duty' on public authorities.
- 10.2 The recommendations and actions if implemented will have a significant positive effect on young people with disabilities lives. The review took into consideration the needs and views of young people with LDD and their families and makes recommendations that will enable them to have greater choice and control over local services and provision. The aim is for young people to be able to participate and have an active role in their communities and be valued for their contribution.
- 10.3 The review takes into consideration the 'general duties' on Public bodies:

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Andy Hough,  
Interim Head of Sufficiency and Capital Commissioning on 01432 260920

- As an employer it seeks for the council to review its own working practices and opportunities and lead by example;
- The pilot will test a multi-agency approach to the design and delivery of provision and the procurement of that provision;
- It asks for the council to review its procurement policies in particular the use of social clauses.

## **11. Financial Implications**

- 11.1 Delivery of the report's recommendations and actions will be undertaken within the constraints of reducing local authority and partnership funded budgets such as the education funding agency allocations, adult social care personal budgets and clinical commissioning group, therefore no additional funding is being sought.
- 11.2 A joint commissioning framework will be in place through the development of the education, health and care plan and resource allocation system to ensure better forward planning, reduce budget pressures and maximise value for money.
- 11.3 Successful outcomes have the potential to reduce longer term costs.
- 11.4 The pilot has is projected to cost £176,000 a year for 4 young people. Funding comes from money allocated to the Local Authority by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) Expenditure on out of county placements for these young people could be circa £76,000 per person. The full profile is attached as Appendix 1

## **12. Legal Implications**

- 12.1 Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 imposes a duty on the Council to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (disability being one such characteristic) and persons who do not share it. If implemented, the recommendations will advance equality of opportunity.

## **13. Risk Management**

- 13.1 The risks to Herefordshire Council if the proposals in the report are agreed:
- (a) Demand outstrips resources available – the implementation of the transition protocol and the education, health and care plan will ensure robust forward planning and inform resource allocation, mitigating this risk;
  - (b) Budget withdrawal from any one contributor – the transitions protocol details each contributors responsibilities and will mitigate against this risk;
  - (c) The local authority would not be meeting its statutory duties There would be an increase in dissatisfaction, complaints and likelihood of legal challenge by young people and their families/carers;
  - (d) Families will continue to feel unsupported and the potential for safeguarding issues to arise. Disabled adults are more likely to live in poverty, have poor physical and mental health, and be socially isolated and economically inactive;
  - (e) Poor transition leads to disruption in the continuity of care, disengagement from services and is likely to lead to poorer outcomes. With many young people running the risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are twice as likely as their peers to be NEET resulting in more dependency on services. A lack of provision to meet assessed need could lead to more young people becoming NEET;
  - (f) Lack of employment opportunities could lead to a dependency culture;



(g) Lack of housing options could lead to a dependency culture and family breakdown;

(h) Reputational risk created by adverse publicity.

## **14. Consultees**

14.1 A task group was set up to oversee the review membership includes Parents/Carers, young people, Parent Partnership, Herefordshire Carers, Post 16 Education and Training providers, Herefordshire Council SEN team, Children's Commissioning, Adult Social Care Commissioning, Wye Valley Trust.

14.2 Workshops were held with parents/carers and young people.

14.3 Meetings were held and views were sought from post 16 education and training providers, housing, health professionals, adult social care providers, Herefordshire Carers, Department for Work and Pensions, Education Funding Agency.

## **15. Appendices**

15.1 Appendix 1 - Increasing Choice, Improving Outcomes – Post 16 Learners with Learning Difficulties (LLDD) Review August 2013.

15.2 Appendix 2 - Funding for Pilot project.

## **16. Background Papers**

16.1 None identified.



## **INCREASING CHOICE, IMPROVING OUTCOMES**

# **POST 16 LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES (LLDD) REVIEW HEREFORDSHIRE**

**The report and recommendations arising from the research undertaken will be considered by cabinet in September 2013 and will inform the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan for the Herefordshire Children with Disabilities Re-design Group.**

Report prepared by: Alexia Heath and Les Knight

August 2013

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## Executive Summary

The transition to adulthood for young people with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, often referred to in the post 16 context as learners with learning difficulties and disabilities (LLDD), is known to be difficult and not always entirely successful (Sloper et al., 2010:2011).

This review set out to see if current provision offers the appropriate environment, curriculum and support to enable Herefordshire young people aged 16 -25 with LDD to achieve their full potential and move onto their adult lives within their own communities. The main findings and key recommendations from this work are set out in this executive summary.

### The main findings:

- A general lack of good and timely information, advice and guidance about how to plan for transition to adulthood and about the opportunities and provision available.
- There is much good education and training provision already available in the county to support learners' needs and aspirations. However, there are gaps in educational provision locally for some young people. In particular, there is a gap for those aged 19 -25 with complex learning difficulties who want to continue their education in Herefordshire and continue to develop their independent living skills.
- Many young people want to enter employment but there is insufficient employment/supported employment and sheltered employment opportunities available.
- There is also a particular need to address the capacity of post 16 providers to meet the needs of young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD).
- Further work is needed to explore the choice available for those learners with autistic spectrum condition.
- Even though Adult Social Day Centres are valued as being necessary for some young adults, many negative comments about the quality of those activities and concerns about the fact that young people are in same groups as elderly adults
- A lack of suitable housing options and forward planning with respect to housing also needs to be addressed.
- There is a need for a named key worker (or a similar co-ordination/facilitation role) to support young people and their families through transition.
- Many organisations and staff working in the sector are highly motivated and have a desire to improve provision and services.

### Key Recommendations:

1. Enable each individual to make a successful transition to adult life:  
Improve joint planning, commissioning, funding, development and monitoring of services and provision.
2. Increase communication and knowledge of the provision and services available Post 16 for young people with LDD, managing expectations and avoiding the 'cliff edge effect'.
3. Plan and develop a range of provision and the capacity of providers to meet the identified needs and aspirations of young people with LDD.
4. Ensure that post 16 learning opportunities meet needs and prepare young people with LDD for adult life.
5. To continue to develop and maintain a system of data capture and analysis in order to plan projected future needs and ensure provision is available to meet those needs.
6. Through the introduction of the National Funding Formula for High Needs Students, put in place an open, transparent and fair funding system that is driven by the needs of the young person and not the designation of the provision.

**The main recommendation is that the children with disabilities re-design group should:** review and adopt the detailed recommendations from this report and develop an action plan to implement these. Over a five year period the group should think ambitiously but realistically about the changes expected to be achieved through partnership and what success looks like.

## 1. Introduction

The review of Post 16 Provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) was carried out on behalf of the Children with Disabilities Re-Design Group in response to the recommendations and associated action plan from the Review of support for children with disabilities and their families (2011) to ensure that:

- There is a choice of high quality post 16 provision in Herefordshire to meet the individual learning and support needs of young people 16-25 with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities and individual requirements.
- The provision offers the appropriate environment, curriculum and support to enable learners to achieve their full potential and move onto their adult lives within their own communities.

More recently, the Coalition Government's green paper and subsequent draft legislation, identified the need to strengthen the educational offer for young people with disabilities aged 19-25. The highlighting of this nationally prompted a group of local parents to press for an improved offer at the earliest opportunity.

As the commissioner of this provision for young people in Herefordshire aged 16.25 LLDD, Herefordshire Council is also committed to commissioning provision that meets the needs of these young people to enable them to develop skills and capabilities to live as independently as possible and maximise their potential on their transition into adulthood. The Council is committed to increasing choice, giving more control to young people and their families in planning for their future and improving outcomes for young people.

This review was setup primarily to look at the post 16 education and training provision available and identify any barriers to accessing that provision and services. However, this cannot be done without taking into consideration adult social care, housing, health and employment.

**Acknowledgements:** The review was informed by parents, families and young people. Information was gathered with the cooperation of colleagues in Special Schools, FE Colleges, Training/Work-based Learning Providers, Independent Specialist providers, Parent Partnership, Herefordshire Carers, SEN team, data team, children's commissioning, health, adult social care and the Department for Work and Pensions.

The key findings and recommendations are intended to bring about change, promote further discussion, encourage reflection and to support providers to work collaboratively to improve the local offer to this cohort of young people.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Review

- To review the current 'local offer' for Herefordshire young people aged 16-25 with a learning difficulty and or disability. The 'local offer' includes education and training, adult social care, health, housing and supported employment.
- To determine a strategic approach that will:-
  - ensure suitable and sufficient education and training provision is available to meet the needs of Herefordshire young people aged 16-25 with a learning difficulty and or disability;
  - improve provision and outcomes for young people; and,
  - improve joint multi-agency planning, commissioning, delivery and monitoring of services and provision.
  - enable young people to be able to participate and have an active role in their communities and be valued for their contribution.

The findings from this review will feed into the work of the development of the education, health and care plan, Personalised Budgets, the autism strategy development, and short breaks commissioning.

The purpose of this report is to present the findings and recommendations of the review.

## 1.3 Definition

For the purposes of this review we are using the definitions of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Learning Difficulties and or Disabilities as defined in the Education Act 1996 and the Equalities Act 2010.

## 1.4 Methodology

The approach to the review was influenced by parent/carers and providers stating that they had participated in many reviews, surveys and questionnaires and did not see anything happen and that what they wanted was action not another report.

Primary research was carried out through focus group meetings with 45 parents of Children and Young People with Special Education Needs (SEN), speaking with students with SEN/LDD, visiting a number of specialist and mainstream providers, meeting with professionals including adult social care, housing and health.

Desktop research was used to provide context and to evidence approaches, issues, and best practice, this included policy documentation, previous reports and surveys, exploration of research, qualitative and quantitative data and online information.

**Timescales:** See separate review Timeline

## 1.5 Governance:

This work is governed by the Multi-Agency Children with Disability Re-Design Group which reports to the Children and Families Commissioning group.

A specific task group was set up for purpose of this review in order to:

- consider the provision currently available for Herefordshire young people aged 16-25 with a learning difficulty and or disability
- Take account of feedback from key stakeholders

- Develop recommendations for ensuring suitable and sufficient education and training provision is available to meet the needs of young people with LDD, improving provision and outcomes for young people, which will contribute towards improving the commissioning, delivery and monitoring of services in the short and longer terms.
- Identify issues that have an impact on meeting needs of young people.

Membership includes parent/carers, Parent Partnership, Herefordshire Carers, children's and adult commissioners, education and training Providers, Wye Valley Trust, SEN team, Department for Work and Pensions.

### **1.6 Critical Success Factors:**

- Work must take account of national policy and legislative development e.g. Education Funding Agency Funding Reforms implementation timescales, criteria, funding settlement and guidance, and 16-19 study programmes development.
- It must take account of any changes to legislation as the Children's and Families Bill (2013) goes through parliamentary process.
- Support from the senior Management of the local authority who are able to re-assign resources to the project.
- Must also take into consideration adult social services commissioning and reviews e.g. Day opportunities.
- Multi-agency transitions protocol agreed and adopted.

This is a complex and rapidly changing environment. This has to be taken into consideration in respect of undertaking the review and has made it difficult at times to come to any enduring conclusions. This will need to be understood and taken into consideration when implementing recommendations as things will continue to change going forward. However, the key drivers nationally and locally do put young people at the heart, to enable them and their families to have greater control in planning for their future and fulfilling their potential.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Key National Drivers for Change underpinning the Review**

There is a range of national legislation and policy that affects and will affect this group of young people and presents the biggest reform to SEN provision in over 30 years. The following key documents have been taken into consideration in the review and have informed the recommendations:

#### **Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability**

The Green Paper was published in March 2011 and sets the agenda for change with regard to young people in this country who are disabled or identified as having a special educational need. The report states that 'Children and young people with SEN don't achieve as they could'.

#### **Children and Families Bill 2013 - Draft SEN legislation**

The Bill will extend the Special Educational Needs (SEN) system from birth to 25, giving children, young people and their parents greater control and choice in decisions and ensuring needs are properly met. Key priorities include:

- New 0-25 Education, Health and Care Plan, replacing the current system of SEN Statements and Learning Difficulty Assessments
- Requires local authorities and health authorities to work together and commission services jointly



- New statutory protections for young people aged 16-25 in Further Education and a stronger focus on preparing for adulthood.
- A requirement on local authorities to publish a local offer of services for disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs. Parents and young people should play a stronger role in the design of local offers.
- Giving parents or young people with Education, Health and Care Plans the right to a personal budget for their support.

### **Draft Care and Support Bill 2012**

The draft Care and Support Bill was published on 11 July 2012. This is the most comprehensive reform of social care legislation for more than 60 years. It aims to transform the social care system to focus on prevention and the needs and goals of people requiring care.

### **Department for Work and Pensions**

Offer specialist advice and assistance for disabled people. Disabled people on traineeships, supported internships, work trials and work academies can now get additional help through the Access to Work scheme (July 2013) – which provides funding towards the extra costs disabled people face in work, such as travel costs, specially adapted equipment or support workers.

### **National Audit Office report - Oversight of special education for young people aged 16-25**

This report published in November 2011 examines how effectively 16-25 special education in England benefits individuals and reduces longer term support needs.

### **Ofsted Report - Progression Post 16 for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (2011)**

The report findings state that too few young people with learning difficulties and or disabilities progress from school to complete programmes of learning in post 16 settings which develop greater independence; lead to further study, supported or open employment; or provide skills for independent living.

### **Raising of the Participation Age**

From 2013, young people will be required to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17. From 2015 they will be required to continue until their 18th birthday. Young people will be able to choose how they participate, which could be through full-time education, an apprenticeship or part-time education or training if they are employed, self employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week.

### **What is the Local Authority responsible for?**

Under the Education Act 1996 and clauses inserted by the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 local authorities have a duty to secure sufficient and suitable education and training provision to meet the reasonable needs of 16-19 year olds as well as those aged 19-25 with a learning difficulty assessment in their areas, by influencing and shaping provision through local partnerships and identifying gaps, enabling new provision and developing the market.

### **National Education Funding Reforms for 16-19 year olds**

From 2013/2014 there will be new education funding arrangements for students with high needs (those that have support needs in excess of £6,000).

### **Full-time**

Post 16 Students must participate for 540 hours or more per academic year to be deemed full time. Programmes should be planned to be around 600 hours per academic year typically 16 to 18 hours per week.

### **16-19 Study Programmes**

From September 2013, all 16-19 year olds (and 16-24 year olds with a Learning disability assessment (LDA/S139a) or EHC Plan) will be expected to be following a study programme in order to draw down Education Funding Agency (EFA) funding. They should be engaged on programmes that offer them breadth, depth and progression into higher education, further study, training, employment, supported employment and greater independence.

Where a student has profound and/or complex learning difficulties or disabilities, the Study Programme may contain no qualifications at all and either be focused on work experience or on non-qualification activity that will contribute to a young person's preparation for adult life.

Providers must demonstrate that the curriculum is leading to positive progression for the learners and demonstrate rigorous quality assurance procedures.

The detaching of funding from qualifications and the freedom to design study programmes that support the individual progression needs of learners together should give an excellent opportunity to explore new approaches to curriculum design and delivery.

### **Supported Internships and Traineeships**

From September 2013 Young people aged 16-24 who are disabled will be given help to find sustainable paid employment through a new supported internship programme and a new traineeship programme.

Supported Internships will offer specialised employment-focused study programmes for young people with complex learning difficulties and disabilities. The new traineeships programme will give workplace experience and job skills that employers require and will be open to disabled young people with less complex needs.

Employers will also receive support from coaches, increasing their confidence of working with disabled young people and helping them to understand the business case for employing a diverse workforce.

### **Human Rights Act and Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 protects employees, pupils/students, and people who access education and training provider's goods, services and facilities, from discrimination. The main new provisions of the Act include new disability discrimination provisions and a new single public sector equality duty. The recommendations and actions of this review if implemented will have a significant positive effect on young people with disabilities lives.

## **3. Herefordshire Context**

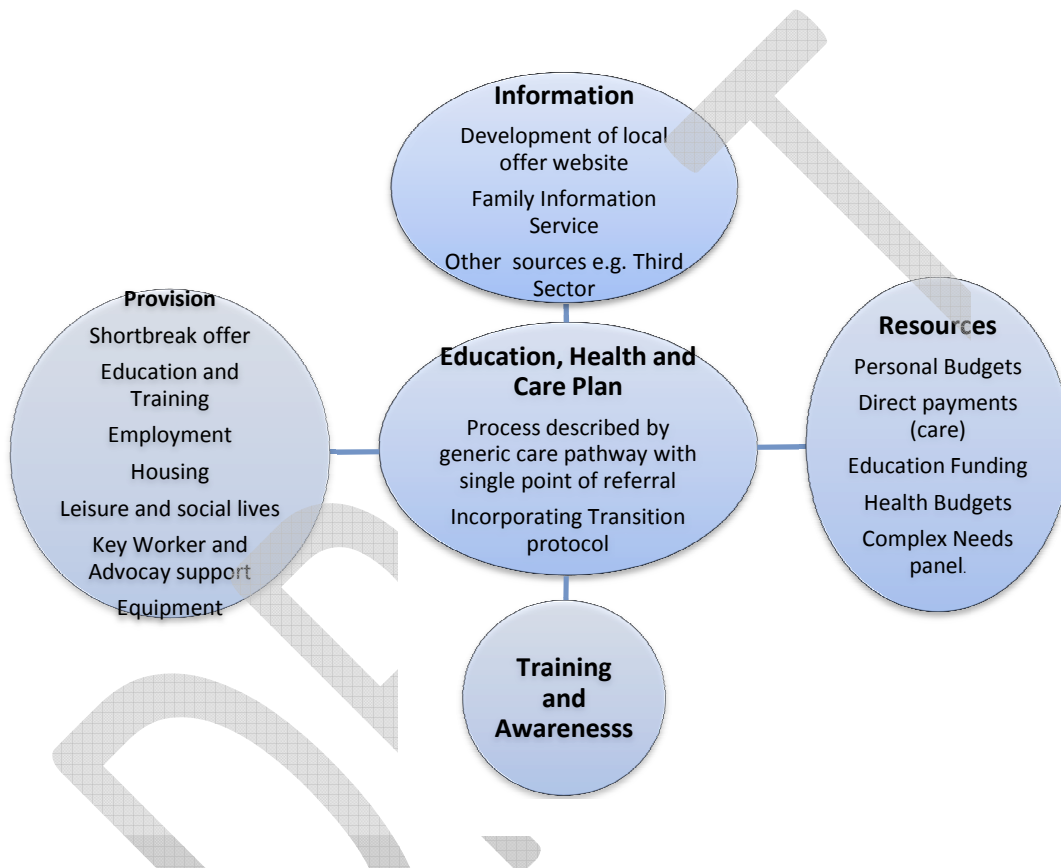
**The Children and Young People Partnership Forum**, a multi-agency partnership of statutory and voluntary partners agreed priorities for action through the development of the 'Yes We Can Plan'. This plan supports Herefordshire young people aged from 0-19 and up to 25 for those young people with LDD and their families to ensure they have the best education and opportunities.

The review supports the priorities and aspirations identified in the 'Yes We Can Plan' through its recommendations.

**Review of support for Children with Disabilities and their families November 2010 – 2<sup>nd</sup> revision September 2011**

This was a comprehensive review carried out on behalf of Herefordshire Children’s Trust to look at the needs of children with disabilities living in Herefordshire and the services that support those children and young people. This review does not replicate this but builds on the education and training recommendation and associated action. Action: Identify and develop the key supportive factors that allow young people with disabilities to achieve fulfilling lives including access to employment.

The following illustration shows the interacting strands of work that have started in Herefordshire during the review and will take forward some of the recommendations:



**Adult Social Care**

Herefordshire Council is planning to change the way adult social care is provided to give residents more choice and control over how they use the services they need.

The vision for Adult Social Care in Herefordshire 2013/14 key priorities:

- Encourage independence by promoting individual responsibility
- Help people stay safe in their own homes for as long as possible
- Provide efficient services designed to meet people’s changing and individual needs
- Help people make choices through self-directed support
- Make sure carers have access to good quality information and advice

**Health**

Health service personnel were not interviewed as part of this review, but the views of parent/carers and other professionals seem to mirror the findings by the Department of Health in 2010, which suggests that transition to adult health services is difficult, disjointed and

stressful. There is a need for more work to be undertaken locally with the clinical commissioning group in the development of joint planning and commissioning post 18.

## **Housing**

Local authorities are required under the Equality Act to take into account the needs of disabled people when considering housing provision. These requirements relate to both new housing as well as alterations to existing stock. Herefordshire, together with Shropshire County Council, has a joint Housing Strategy that focuses on improving services and providing a range of housing, both market and affordable to meet current and future needs.

## **Herefordshire Learning Disabilities Transition Study (March 2013)**

Alongside the work on reviewing the local offer there has also been a study of the Transition into Adulthood for young people with learning disabilities in Herefordshire. The recommendations from this study are as follows and feed into this review:

- Greater investment in employers who can offer supported employment
- Use the money allocated to education (for extended education) to provide supported employment.
- Jointly funded transitions team.
- A key worker identified for all students who exit from a special school or mainstream students identified with a special need to work with children from age 15 onwards.
- Provide a single plan
- Supported housing needs to provide employment opportunities
- Free accessible advocacy for transitions age range.
- Locally published literature to assist transitions professionals, parents and carers to offer information to students enabling them to make informed choices about their future.
- Healthwatch should continue to monitor the progress of commissioning services for transitions.

## **Learning and Skills Improvement Service - Improving progression into employment through collaboration in Herefordshire Project (July 2013)**

This project's aim was to improve progression into employment for young people with LDD through collaboration between education, voluntary and supported employment organisations. The core partners are Herefordshire and Ludlow College and Hereford College of Arts; Aspire and Echo, two voluntary organisations which provide 'stepping stones' for young people towards independence and employment; and Mencap a supported employment organisation. The legacy actions have been used to inform this review.

## **Getting a Life pilot**

This was a national 3 year programme set up to discover why young people who have a learning difficulty and are eligible for adult social care support do not go into work when they leave school or college. Herefordshire was one of 12 local authorities involved in the project with Westfield School and Mi-enterprise Leominster.

With the main focus on paid work, the programme sought to:

- . Raise aspirations.
- . Look at what system changes need to happen.
- . Create a clear pathway to paid work.

The evaluation has been taken into consideration in the Green paper and the development of Supported Internships and highlights the need for employment opportunities in Herefordshire.

## **Transport**

Herefordshire Council will be undertaking a consultation of Post 16 SEN transport in September 2013. Families are anxious about this but understand the financial pressures for the local authority. Families need to be involved and given time to plan for any changes to provision.

#### 4. Herefordshire 2013- Facts and Figures Key Messages

The following key messages are issues highlighted from data analysis. A data pack will be made available separately on the Herefordshire Council website: [www.herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk).

##### Demographics

The changing demographics of county children will continue to pose challenges for delivering services for them and their families as it leads to higher numbers eligible for pre-school services, but a continued surplus of school places across the county – albeit with excess demand in some areas. Births remain at the higher level seen since 2007 (1,800-1,900 a year). The latest forecasts suggest that there will be a slight increase in the number of children between 2016 and 2025, peaking at 32,800 before starting to fall again. This peak is 4 per cent higher than currently (31,500) but still lower than in any year prior to 2005.

##### Primary SEN Need

All children identified in the School Census as having a SEN Provision of School Action Plus or Statement of SEN will also have a primary need (and possibly a secondary need) identified. Analysis of SEN need gives further insight to the characteristics of the disabled cohort. This report concentrates solely on primary need, which is described for the whole cohort.

In the January 2013 Census, a total of 2360 a decrease of 84 from 2012 (2444) children were recorded with SEN Provision which represents 10.4% of all pupils on roll.

Table 1: Pupils with Statements and on School Action Plus as a percentage of the total of all pupils on roll.

	January 2011	January 2012	January 2013
All pupils on roll	22,666	22,759	22,770
School Action Plus and 'Statemented' pupils	2,518	2,436	2,360
% of all pupils on roll	10.7%	10.7%	10.4%

However, the number of children and young people with a Statement of Educational Needs rose from 511 in 2011 to 559 in 2012 and rose again to 580 in 2013.

Table 2: January 2013 census Primary Need of pupils/students with a Statement or on School Action Plus

	Primary Need	No. pupils/students	% of those with a primary SEN need
BESD	Behaviour, Emotional & Social Difficulties	531	22.50%
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs	452	19.15%
SPLD	Specific Learning Difficulty	434	18.39%
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty	287	12.16%
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulty	186	7.88%
OTH	Other Difficulty / Disability	181	7.67%
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	124	5.25%
PD	Physical Disability	60	2.54%
HI	Hearing Impairment	52	2.20%
PMLD	Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty	30	1.27%
VI	Visual Impairment	20	0.85%
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment	3	0.13%
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2360</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Behaviour, Emotional & Social Difficulties (BESD) (22.5%, 531), Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and Specific Learning Difficulty (SPLD) account for over 60% of the total identified primary need. Boys count for 70% of the number of young people with a statement or on school action plus.

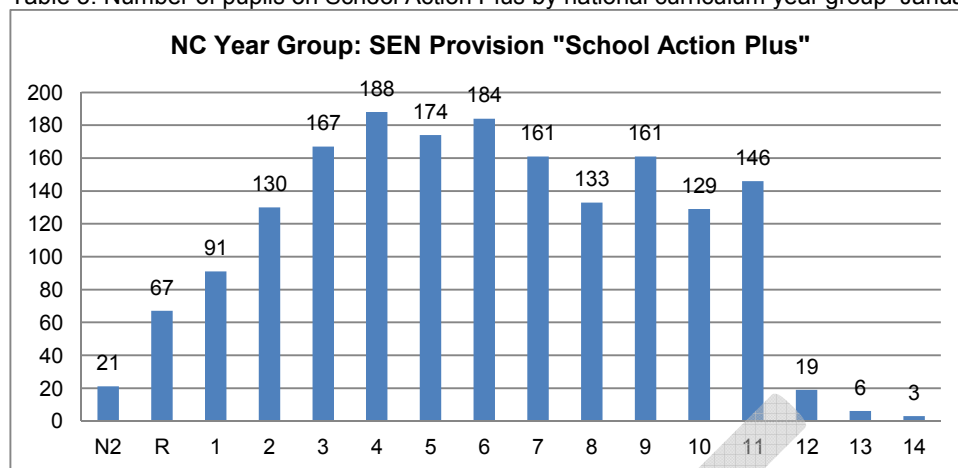
### Future Demand

There are a range of variables that make it difficult to precisely estimate future demand for learning. However, we have looked at current data trends, policy and taken a pragmatic approach to make future planning assumptions as follows:

- Post 16 High Need student numbers are predicted to rise again to 112 in 2014/2015 academic year from 104 in 2013/2014 having have increased significantly from 74 in 2010/2011.  
Against a back drop of declining numbers in the overall cohort of student/pupils Herefordshire is facing a growth in special school placements from 24 in 2010/2011 to 66 in 2013/2012 and predicted 66 in 2013/2014.
- At the same time the nature and complexity of the children and young people is growing in severity requiring high levels of expertise and specialist resources to support them effectively which is placing growing pressure on existing finances and resources.
- Many more children with severe learning difficulties (often together with severe physical disabilities) are surviving into adulthood. As a result, the number of adults with learning disabilities is expected to increase.
- There will be increasing numbers of young people leaving special schools at age 19 from 11 in 2013 to 18 in 2015 and 21 in 2016. The numbers leaving with PMLD are small 1 in 2014, 3 in 2015 and 2 in 2016. There will be 13 in 2014, 15 in 2015 and 16 in 2016 with SLD. 5 with MLD in 2014 and 3 in 2016.

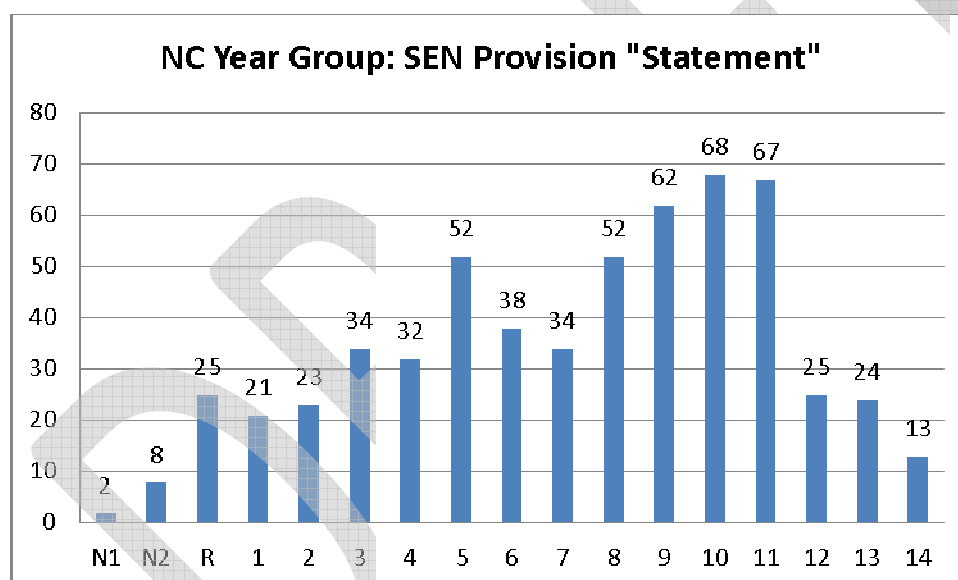
Current and future provision is always difficult to determine from headline data without detailed knowledge of individual cases. However, current data shows an increase in the number of young people leaving year 11 in 2014 and 2015.

Table 3: Number of pupils on School Action Plus by national curriculum year group January 2013 census



- The number of young people on school action plus leaving school in year 11 in 2014 will be 129 (BESD 36, SLD 31, MLD 20) and will rise to 161 in 2015 (BESD 53, SLD 46).

Table 4: number of pupils with a statement by national curriculum group January 2013 census



- The number of young people with a Statement leaving year 11 in 2014 will be 68 (BESD 25, SLD 14) and in 2015 62 (BESD 14, ASD 14, SLD 12).
- While numbers of young people coming through the system may, to some extent be predicted, what cannot be easily forecast is the demand for different types of institution or course. The demand for institution or course is dependent on the choices made during transition usually year 11 onwards.

## Participation in Education and Training

For the majority of young people who have additional needs, education and training provision is delivered at local colleges and special schools with additional learning support provided in order for the young person to achieve their learning goals.

There is a separate table that will be available on the Herefordshire Council website that shows the Herefordshire education and training provider map for 2012/2013 academic year. It highlights a gap in provision locally for young people aged 19 -25 with profound and complex needs.

### Further Education

- Having seen numbers of students with LDD aged 16-19 participating in further education increase from 719 (21.5%) in 2010/2011 to 740 (22.1%) 2011/2012 there has now been a significant drop in 2012/2013 to 545 (16.7%). It could be that the young person does not consider themselves to have a learning difficulty and or disability and have therefore not declared this or the information has not been captured. This requires further investigation.
- The number of high needs young people in further education needing support cost above £6,000 per academic year reduced from 25 in 2010/2011 to 18 in 2011/2012 and has increased slightly again to 21 in 2012/2013.
- School sixth forms have seen no change.

The above information does not include special schools or independent specialist college provision. It does however include all other further education institutions that Herefordshire resident young people attend in and out of the county of Herefordshire.

### Post 19

The Skills Funding Agency is responsible for funding education and training provision for people aged 19+ in England. Data has only recently become available at national and regional level for numbers of people with disabilities participating and success rates split by age. This data is not available at local authority level yet.

A number of young people with LDD aged 19 – 25 do attend Herefordshire and Ludlow College and Hereford College of Arts. This provision is typically 2 to 3 days per week and some young people use their personal budgets where applicable to access other services and provision on the other days.

### Apprenticeships

There has been an increase in the percentage and number of young people aged 16-25 who have self-declared having a learning difficulty and or disability starting an apprenticeship from 2009/2010 academic year to 2011/2012 (last full year data) academic year from 69 (7.57%) to 128 (11.18%).

There has been an increase in the number of young people with LDD aged 19-25 undertaking an advanced level 3 apprenticeship from 9 in 2009/2010 to 23 in 2011/2012. For 16-18 year olds this has increased from 10 to 12 in the same period.

### Independent Specialist Providers

There are a small number of Herefordshire young people, in receipt of a learning difficulty assessment (LDA/S139a), where the local funding panel have agreed that their education and training needs can only be met by an independent specialist provider.



Provision is typically for two years, although an application for a third year can be made in exceptional circumstances. Funding is applied for each academic year following receipt of an annual review that shows progression against objectives.

The following table 5 shows the number of young people with LDD at out of County Independent Specialist Providers and associated funding from the Education Funding Agency allocation:

Independent Specialist Providers	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Starts	5	7	5	6
Continuers	10	8	10	10
Total	15	15	15	16
Funding	£772,108	£865,018	£796,123	£895,270.00

- Majority of these young people access provision in the surrounding counties. This year there will be 4 attending specialised courses and provision further afield. Of those attending provision in 2012/2013 5 out of the 15 were aged 17 the rest were over 19.
- Of the 2012/2013 academic year cohort: all bar one young person specifically cited independence and self-sufficiency as a goal and reason for attending; 6 young people have visual and or hearing impairment, 6 Severe Learning Difficulties and 3 Moderate Learning Difficulties; The programmes young people are studying in 2012/2013 are 1 studying A levels, 4 level 2 qualifications, 3 level 1, 1 entry level 3 and 4 pre-vocational.

#### **Barrs Court School and Westfield School combined (Census Spring 2013)**

- There has been a significant increase in student numbers in the maintained special schools sixth forms in Herefordshire where numbers have risen from 24 in 2010/2011 to 55 in 2012/2013 and will continue to rise again to 66 in 2013/2014 academic year (175% increase).
- 84% of post 16 students in the special schools in 2012/2013 have a primary need of SLD or PMLD set to continue at 85% in 2013/2014 and 2014/2015. There are further compounding conditions alongside such as complex medical, specialized syndromes and Autism Spectrum condition.

#### **Community Learning and Employability**

The Informal Adult Community Learning (IACL) budget, funded through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) is used to support the design and delivery of a wide range of learning provision to people with disabilities aged over 19. Herefordshire Council work in partnership with Aspire, Echo, Herefordshire Headway and Project Link. The number of people with disabilities all ages 19+ accessing this provision has increased from 986 (26.5%) 2009/2010 to 1151 (35%) last year. The courses are on average 90 hours per academic year.

#### **Quality**

- Majority of Herefordshire young people aged 16 -25 with LDD are in Outstanding or Good education and training provision according to OfSTED.
- The two Special School Sixth Forms, Barrs Court Special School and College, Hereford and Westfield School, Leominster are Outstanding according to OfSTED judgements.
- Hereford Sixth Form College has developed support for young people with Aspergers to study AS and A levels and is Outstanding according to OfSTED judgements.

## .Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 Destination Measure

Table 6: percentage of pupils in key stage 4 in 2009/2010 who sustained education or employment/training in 2010/2011

	Pupils with no SEN	Pupils with a Statement	Pupils on School Action	Pupils on School Action Plus
Herefordshire	91%	88%	88%	80%
England	91%	85%	84%	75%

Herefordshire is above the national averages however there is an approximate 6% difference between those with no Special Educational Needs and those with.

Please note that this does not capture special schools information. Herefordshire Special Schools, the majority (over 98%) of key stage 4 pupils from Barrs Court and Westfield progress into the sixth form of these schools to continue their education.

Table 7: number of pupils in key stage 4 in 2009/2010 who did not sustain a destination or were categorised as being NEET in 2010/2011

	Pupils with no SEN	Pupils with a Statement	Pupils on School Action	Pupils on School Action Plus
Herefordshire	6%	11%	11%	18%
England	7%	13%	14%	22%

National key Stage 5 destination data for SEN is not available to inform this report, and there is currently no local process in place that systematically tracks young people with LDD once they leave college. Information is available for the destination of those young people who left independent specialist college provision and Barrs Court Special School and College and Westfield School as follows.

### Destinations from Independent Specialist College provision

- Of the 15 young people who have left independent specialist college provision from 2010 to 2012, 53.3% (8) returned to Herefordshire and accessed adult social care and as part of their adult social care package 1 also attended Herefordshire and Ludlow College and 1 Hereford College of Arts.
- 2 (13.3%) went to University, 2 stayed out of county (1 of which went to Bath College), 2 came back and went to Herefordshire and Ludlow College, 1 accessed a continuing health care package.

### Barrs Court School and College Key Stage 5 destinations

Of the 9 young people who left year 14 in 2013, 2 have applied to go to independent specialist college, 4 Herefordshire and Ludlow College, 1 Hereford College of Arts and 2 will participate in the proposed pilot.

### Westfield School Key Stage 5 destinations

Of the 2 young people who left year 14 in 2013, 1 has applied to go to out of county independent specialist college and 1 is being supported through a continuing health care package.

## **NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training)**

Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 16-19 are twice as likely as their peers to be NEET according to national statistics. In Herefordshire January 2012 12.4% 56 young people aged 16-19 recorded as NEET and LDD against 7.6% all 16-19 year olds recorded as NEET 4.8% recorded as not known – Jan 2013 10.2% 34 recorded as NEET and LDD against 6.1% all 16-19 year olds recorded as NEET 5.9% (10.4%) not known. Not as high as the national average but higher than the rest of the cohort.

### **4.1 Education Funding**

The majority of young people post 16 who had a statement or school action plus at school and move into post 16 education and training will be funded by the education funding agency or skills funding agency in the case of apprenticeships.

For those young people with high needs (support costs above £6,000) from 2013 local authorities will receive an allocation from the Education Funding Agency based currently on historical data to fund the educational places for these young people.

For 2013/2014 academic year there will be 104 High Needs Students (HNS) including 15 at independent specialist providers (ISPs) at a total cost of approximately £2.5 million. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) allocation 2013/2014 academic year is £1.9 million. And Dedicated Schools Grant contribution £600k.

Individual placements at Independent Specialist Providers average cost £56k per year – Total £850k for 2013/2014.

Successful outcomes have the potential to reduce longer term costs. It is imperative therefore that early transition planning is undertaken jointly with all agencies.

### **4.2 Petition of 7,600 signatures presented to the Prime Minister on 16<sup>th</sup> April.**

Families campaigned for Herefordshire Council to work in partnership with Barrs Court Special School to offer suitable full time educational and training provision for learning difficulty and learning disability students aged between 19-25; or enable Barrs Court Special School to offer suitable provision for these students with like minded partners and this provision to be in place by September 2013.

Advice received from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) confirmed that schools are not able to enrol pupils over the age of 19. A school must establish a separate FE unit, which meets the published criteria.

Concerns have been expressed over the confusing picture emerging nationally over responsibility and rights for 19-25 year olds. Edward Timpson MP's response to the Education Select Committee in February 2013 was that the provisions of the Children and Families Bill do not create a new guarantee, or expectation that young people with special educational needs should stay in education until they are 25. Further education and training can continue up to the age of 25 for those young people who, as is already recognised now, need to take longer to complete education or training.

### **4.3 Outcomes**

The task group considered that the 'offer' for young people with LDD should have clarity of purpose i.e. provision should deliver optimal standards of progression against outcomes identified to meet the needs of the young person. Therefore a list of outcomes was agreed and can be found at Appendix A.

#### **4.4 Models of Practice for Provision for LLDD aged 19 -25 – Evaluation**

The Task Group evaluated national models of practice against curriculum design and student outcome for students in the profound disability range (PMLD). These were New Bridge Horizons, pathways beyond 19, Oldham, Leicestershire County Council's Go Learn, Transitions programme, Oxfordshire Independent Living project, St Martin's Centre, Stroud.

- St Martin's Centre, Stroud and New Bridge Horizons, Oldham described provision that corresponded to the criteria agreed by the group when considered from a PMLD perspective.
- The multi-agency funding approach of the Leicestershire model could be replicated locally.
- The use of Hereward college of FE in the Oxfordshire example for providing intensive residential experiences could be replicated locally with RNC.
- A draft suggestion for a 'local offer' for these young people was produced for consideration and it was agreed to further develop and evaluate through a pilot starting in September 2013 for up to 4 young people – 3 young people with profound complex needs have been identified and have agreed to work in partnership with providers and Herefordshire Council to shape this provision.

#### **5. What young people and their parents said?**

Workshops were held with over 60 Students, Parents/Carers and Staff from Barrs Court School and College, Hereford and Westfield School, Leominster in March and April 2013. The findings from these workshops have informed the recommendations and actions for this review. The following is a summary from those workshops of what people said further detail will be available on the Herefordshire Council website:

- Families felt that there is a lot of consultation but nothing seems to happen.
- Would welcome more opportunities to meet together as parent/carers and with local authority officers.

#### **Education and Training**

- Suitable further education provision should be available locally for all with the option of some residential provision to support transition into independence.
- Provision should be full-time, 5 days per week and holistic in scope i.e. combination of academic, vocational, socialisation and therapeutic.
- Clear progression pathways need to be in place.
- Social context is difficult at college because of supervision and structured need outside of study times.

#### **Information and advice**

- Significant issues highlighted with many not knowing what services and provision is available when a young person leaves school or where to find the information.
- Parents/Carers often find things out in a time of crises.
- Some felt that transition planning starts too late and is focused on short term goals.
- Some parent/carers have received confusing and conflicting information i.e. some were told that they have an unqualified right to publicly funded education for their child through to the age of 25. Education Funding Agency and provider staff state that conditions of funding mean that providers are only able to offer provision where there is clear academic progress.
- There is a lack of information and some confusion about eligibility and the use of personal budgets.

### **Information Sharing**

- Professionals don't share information enough and families have to tell their stories too many times.
- .Not all providers know what each other is offering – need for partnership working and further collaboration building on specialisms and strengths of different organisations.

### **Employment and Supported Employment Opportunities**

- Many young people want to work.
- A lack of suitable employment opportunities was identified as a barrier.
- Help is needed to support young people into employment and develop their skills.
- Comments were made that Herefordshire Council should employ learning disabled people and offer work experience to set an example to employers.
- Even though Adult Social Day Centres are valued as being necessary for some young adults, many negative comments about the quality and relevance of activities on offer which were described as just being “passive” and “time filling”. Also concerns about the fact that young people are in same groups as elderly adults.

### **Housing and Independent Living**

- There is a lack of suitable housing options available. Housing needs to also be available in Market Towns not just Hereford City. Ideas were put forward for families to come together and offer solutions. Young people do not want to move out of their community to live somewhere else. They want to stay part of their community.
- More preparatory work is needed to help young people prepare to leave home.
- Transition housing should be available with 24 hour support to prepare young people to live independently. This could be available for 2 to 3 years alongside education and training provision.
- There needs to be more clearly defined earlier forward planning about the kind of housing required in response to differing levels of needs.
- Families need reliable and high quality support to be able to continue to care at home
- Travel training is highly valued but there needs to be more available.

### **Well-being & health**

- Lack of forward planning, poor assessments and delays in securing funding increases anxiety levels for young people and their families, which has an impact on their health and well-being.
- Dis-satisfaction about referral criteria for Children with Disabilities team and Adults with Disabilities teams because learning disability is not always recognised. Parents want to know how a young person can have a Statement of SEN and attend a special school for learning disabilities, but then social care and health do not recognise their child's disability.

### **Social Inclusion**

- Concerns were raised by young people and their families about a lack of a social life and loneliness once they leave school. There needs to be opportunities for young people to engage in leisure activities and develop and keep friendships.

### **Key workers**

- A key worker was viewed as being important to empower young people and their families by providing support and information tailored to meet their individual needs. A key worker should be available to support transition from children to adult services.

## Students at Westfield School

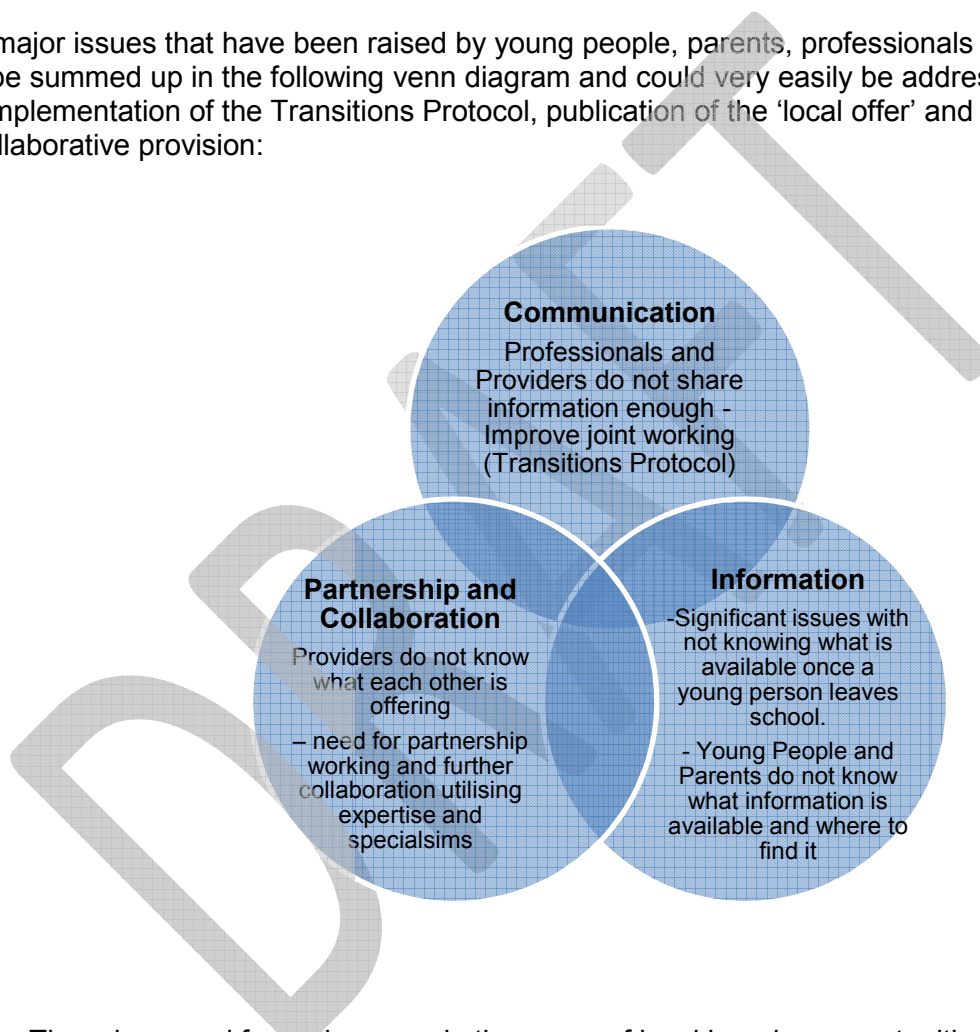
Students have a wide range of aspirations for further education and employment for example in arts & entertainment, photography, cooking, gardening, building, office work.

The students recognized they need to learn skills such as travel training, money skills, vocational and practical experiences. Many of the students aspire to live an independent life away from home, have friends and relationships. They have a real desire to contribute to their communities, get a job and live an independent life as autonomous as possible.

## 6. Overall Conclusions

The main conclusions drawn from this review are as follows:

The major issues that have been raised by young people, parents, professionals and providers can be summed up in the following venn diagram and could very easily be addressed through the implementation of the Transitions Protocol, publication of the 'local offer' and development of collaborative provision:



- There is a need for an increase in the range of local learning opportunities especially for young people aged 19-25 with most complex needs. Majority of young people want to Learn, Live and Work (as appropriate) in Herefordshire.
- There are low expectations and lack of job opportunities especially in current economic climate. There is a need for more opportunities to obtain and keep employment. Comments were made that Herefordshire Council should employ learning disabled people to set an example to employers
- Even though Adult Social Day Centres are valued as being necessary for some young adults, many negative comments about the quality of those activities and concerns about the fact that young people are in same groups as elderly adults

- More preparatory work and earlier forward planning should be done to help young people prepare for a successful transition into adulthood.
- There is a need to address the capacity of post 16 providers to meet the needs of young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD).
- There is a lack of suitable housing options and forward planning of need.
- Further work is needed to explore the choice available for those learners with autistic spectrum condition.
- There is a need for a key worker (or a similar/co-ordination/facilitation role) to support young people and their families through transition.
- Many organisations and staff working in the sector are highly motivated and have a desire to improve provision and services

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## 7. Key Recommendations

In light of these conclusions the following recommendations have been made:

**1. Enable each individual to make a successful transition to adult life: Improve joint planning, commissioning, funding, development and monitoring of services and provision.**

### **Actions**

- Develop and publish a countywide strategy and action plan with clear governance arrangements.
- Improve the arrangements for transition from school by implementing the revised Transitions Protocol for Children and Young People with LDD (minimise the 'cliff' i.e. plan more effectively for 14-25 age range and minimise a 'cliff edge effect' the steep drop in resources as children make the transition to adult services ).
- Produce a children, young people and families Transitions pathways guide.
- Establish an agreed joint commissioning framework between education, health and care to include decision making process, communication plan, development of provision, practice, quality assurance and a resource allocation system. To maximise resources available, meet future needs and improve outcomes.
- Develop structures and methods to facilitate families and young peoples' involvement and participation in developing and reviewing provision and services.
- Provide opportunities for providers to offer intelligence to commissioners to support the development of commissioning strategies and priorities
- Pilot from September 2013 new local provision, individual holistic packages of provision requiring joint planning, funding and provider collaboration.
- Develop systems to share information about good practice across Herefordshire.
- Actively encourage existing further education providers to adapt facilities/offer to accommodate this group of young people, including through reminding providers of their equality duty.
- Build capacity amongst staff through for example multi-agency training events
- Develop Herefordshire's approach to Personalised Budgets.

### **Impact on young people and their families:**

- Young people and their families have more control in planning for their future



## **2. Increase communication and knowledge of the provision and services available Post 16 for young people with LDD, managing expectations and avoiding the 'cliff edge effect'.**

### **Actions**

- Publish information about the local offer to young people and their families – The Local Offer is vital in improving accountability and transparency in the system.
- Ensure that information on the 'Local Offer' is accessible to young people and their families by:
  - Consulting and gathering opinions on the most appropriate ways of presenting information about the 'Local Offer'
  - Working with communication team to design an appropriate web- based information portal including the use of video clips, case studies etc.
  - Exploring the interface of this work with other service directories and portals under-development, to minimise confusion and ensure information is current and not contradictory.
  - Creating effective channels for letting all relevant people know where information about the 'Local Offer' is available e.g. through schools and colleges, use of media.
- Develop a system and process to keep the 'local offer' under review involving parents and young people. The 'voice' of young people needs to be developed.
- Introduce quality indicators to continue to improve services and provision, such as: 'I knew where to get information from', 'It was helpful advice when I got it'.
- Explore other ways of raising awareness of provision available and ensure that all opportunities are maximised e.g. careers events, jobs fairs
- Explore further the role of a 'key worker' (or similar/co-ordination/facilitation role) to provide information and support to young people and their families and how this could be put in place in Herefordshire.
- Improve communications through the development of LLDD provider network.
- Improve communication between agencies through the implementation of the Transition protocol, development of a joint commissioning framework and the introduction of the Education, Health and Care Plan.

### **Impact on young people and families:**

- Young people and families have information about the options available and can plan more effectively, earlier, ensuring a smooth transition.
- Families and young people do not have to repeat their story so many times.

### **3. Plan and develop a range of provision and the capacity of providers to meet the identified needs and aspirations of young people with LDD.**

#### **Actions**

- Future provision must be able to meet the needs of all young people.
- Through the Children with Disability Re-Design Group keep under review and identify the gaps in post 16 provision for young people with LDD.
- Plan and coordinate the development of existing and new post 16 provision for LLDD to meet identified need. Taking into consideration affordability and sustainability
- From September 2013 undertake a small pilot to test a new approach to delivering individual holistic packages of provision and support requiring joint planning and funding for young people who have learning difficulties and disabilities of a profound, multiple or severely complex nature. Delivered in partnership and collaboration utilising providers' specialist knowledge and expertise.
- Encourage and enable opportunities for providers to work together collaboratively to build capacity and share expertise and delivery arrangements.
- Develop progression pathways.
- Develop transition accommodation (2-3 years) for young people aged under 25 with 24 hour support available on site. Education and training to be delivered alongside to maximise potential and support young people into independent living.
- Review the capacity and quality of housing options including support to stay at home and ensure families have this information from year 9 onwards.

#### **Impact for young people and families:**

- Improve the lives of young people and their families, to enable young people to develop the knowledge, skills and capabilities they will need to lead fulfilling lives.
- To be able to live as independently as possible
- Able to maximise their potential on transition into adulthood.
- There will be sufficient appropriate multi-agency provision for this particularly vulnerable group both in the short and longer term.
- Spectrum of housing options including support to live at home.

#### **4. Ensure that post 16 learning opportunities meet needs and prepare young people with LDD for adult life.**

##### **Actions**

- Ensure that the development of the Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan clearly articulates the needs of the young person, provision needed to meet those needs and the expected outcomes.
- Clearly identify the resources and responsibility for providing information, developing and writing up the EHC plan. Also for sourcing services and provision to implement the EHC plan and keep it under review to ensure it meets the needs of the young person.
- Develop staff training programme on how to write an effective EHC plan.
- Ensure that programmes and courses focus on preparation for adult life and evidence clear progression
- Ensure that all Post 16 LLDD have an individual learning plan clearly focused on relevant and realistic goals incorporating measurable outcomes.
- Work in partnership with adult education, adult social care and the voluntary sector to increase participation in personalised engagement in community activities.
- Develop quality assurance process as part of the joint commissioning framework.
- Ensure that where appropriate learning prepares learners for work, supported employment or volunteering.
- Work with providers to maximise the potential of the flexibilities presented by the 16 -19 Study programme including Supported Internships to strengthen the preparation for adult life.
- Improve progression into employment through collaboration between education, voluntary and supported employment organisations.
- Work with the local businesses, Marches LEP and DWP to increase employer engagement and job opportunities including the development of social enterprises, supported internships, work placements and opportunities through Access to Work.
- Along with Apprenticeships and work experience placements Herefordshire Council procurement social clauses to include supported internship opportunities.
- Herefordshire Council should look to improve its own record of employing people with learning disabilities; a report on this issue should be brought forward in the autumn 2013.

##### **Impact on young people and families:**

- Increased choice.
- Develop skills, gain qualifications, raise aspirations and ambitions.
- More young people with LDD in employment, supported employment and enterprise.
- With the right support and opportunities almost all young disabled people are capable of some level of paid, supported employment
- Make a positive contribution and enable regular interaction between disabled and non-disabled people in the workforce and wider community.
- Gain in confidence.
- Greatly improved long-term outcomes.
- Make a positive contribution to their communities.
- Improved long term physical and mental health.

**5. To continue to develop and maintain a system of data capture and analysis in order to plan projected future needs and ensure provision is available to meet those needs.**

**Actions**

- Continue to develop and maintain the current system (transitions register) of collecting data about young people with a statement of SEN/Section 139a learning disability assessment/Education, Health and Care plan ensuring young people can be tracked up to the age of 25. Information to be used by all agencies to improve planning, provision, information, advice and guidance and outcomes.
- Analyse data and transition plans on a termly basis.
- Review and improve information sharing protocols and practice.
- Use information to inform forward planning about the kind of housing required to meet differing needs.
- Use trends and needs analysis to commission effective provision
- Collect and analyse data from post 16 providers with regard to retention, achievements, qualifications and destination annually.
- Use data to set base lines and implement key performance indicators

**Impact on young people and families:**

- Robust forward planning ensures that provision meets future needs
- Information supports young people and families to make decisions earlier and plan pathways enabling a successful transition into adult life.
- Families know what is available and can help shape provision.

**6. Through the introduction of the National Funding Formula for High Needs Students, put in place an open, transparent and fair funding system that is driven by the needs of the young person and not the designation of the provision.**

- Ensure that there is equity of funding for young people with similar needs irrespective of where their needs are being met in different provision by agreeing “top up” rates based on descriptors of need within a number of bands.
- Further develop the post 16 LLDD offer through the implementation of the new post 16 funding arrangements for High Need Students.
- In response to demand further reduce the dependence on out of county provision and by doing this reinvest the revenue funding locally.
- Through the development of a joint commissioning framework maximise the opportunity for pooled funding to reduce budget pressures and maximise resources.
- Potential contributing budgets and grants for young people with LDD – Dedicated Schools Grant, Education Funding Agency, Skills Funding Agency, Adult Social Care, Health.
- Successful outcomes have the potential to reduce longer term costs.

**Impact for children and young people**

- The needs of the individual young person will drive the funding.
- The reduction in out of county placements and the reinvestment of this revenue will enable more young people to have their needs met locally.
- Equity in funding at 16 will ensure that young people will have access to appropriate provision be it in a school, college, independent specialist provider.

For these Recommendations to be successfully implemented it will require colleges, special schools, mainstream schools, independent specialist colleges, independent training providers, voluntary and community providers, Children's Services, Adult Social Care and health to play a full role in the development and delivery of a coherent offer of a range of planned provision across the county to meet the diverse needs and aspirations of young people aged 16-25 with a learning difficulty and or disability. This will be augmented by the use of residential out of county provision which will remain an option in meeting the individual needs of young adults between the ages of 16 – 25 years.

## 7.1 Risks and Challenges:

- The risk of not doing anything will lead to families continuing to feel unsupported and the potential for safeguarding issues to arise. Disabled adults are more likely to live in poverty, have poor physical and mental health, and be socially isolated and economically inactive.
- Poor transition leads to disruption in the continuity of care, disengagement from services and is likely to lead to poorer outcomes. With many young people running the risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are twice as likely as their peers to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) especially at age 17.
- Provisions do not create a new guarantee, or expectation that young people with special educational needs should stay in education until they are 25. To do so would not be in the interests of many young people, who will want to complete their education and progress into adult life and work. Earlier planning and expected outcomes clearly articulated should enable a smoother and successful transition into adulthood.
- Rural areas face distinct challenges in developing education provision, including:
  - low population density;
  - lack of transport infrastructure;
  - long distances between homes, schools, and colleges

Lack of employment opportunities and securing sufficient employer engagement could lead to dependency culture and impact on health and well-being:

- lower proportion of larger employers, high percentage of micro businesses; and lack of employers in some sectors
- Unemployment and under-employment 16-25 year olds in current economic climate

Lack of housing options could lead to a dependency culture and family breakdown

All leading to social isolation

## 8. Next Steps

- Agree report and recommendations with Cabinet members.
- Recommendations to form the revised Action Plan for the Children with Disability Re-Design Group.
- Implement a pilot for up to 4 young people with the most complex needs from September 2013. To test and develop multi-agency joint commissioning and provider collaboration.
- Explore the potential to develop employment opportunities for young people at the newly opened Grange Court, Leominster working with Mi-enterprise.

DRAFT

## Appendix A:

### Herefordshire Learners with Learning Difficulties and or Disabilities aged 16-25 Task Group – Outcomes Paper

The “offer” should have clarity of purpose, ie., provision that is organised to deliver optimal standards of progression against anticipated outcomes that are already prescribed for the young people concerned. Although there will also be outcomes that accrue to different service providers, these outcomes should be secondary to those accruing to the young people concerned. .

#### 1. Outcomes for young people:

1.1 As a consequence of the Herefordshire 16-25 LDD offer, young people will be better able to:

- Apply functional skills (including literacy, language, numeracy, independent living skills) in a range of practical contexts to help facilitate their social inclusion and the completion of everyday living tasks;
- Sustain relatively good standards of physical, mental and emotional well-being and be as fit as possible to participate in society (including therapeutic pathways);
- Reflect on new experiences, make positive contributions to society, take responsibility for their personal actions and influence decisions related directly to their future (preparation for adult life);
- Be a successful learner who wants to continue to gain the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to improve their life prospects (ie. secure and retain employment).

1.2.1 As a consequence of the Herefordshire 16-25 LDD offer, young people will be better able to:

1. Spend increasing amounts of leisure time outside of their family unit, safely engaged in social inclusion activities and living as independently as possible;
2. Access health related services on a regular basis, manage health related and medication regimes safely and also sustain high attendance at college or work;
3. Have friendships/relationships and function effectively as part of a group;
4. Be purposefully employed, have a sense of vocation and earn an income.

#### 2. Suggested outcomes for service providers

As a consequence of the Herefordshire 16-25 LDD offer, service providers will be better able to facilitate:

- Developmental learning to minimise, or overcome barriers to learning and so enable young people to achieve personal milestones in the acquisition of functional and independent living skills;
- Therapeutic learning in which young people can engage in strategies to bring about demonstrable improvements in their “fitness” to participate;
- Creative, social learning to ensure young people develop personality, respect for others, self-determination and a sense of self-esteem;
- Differentiated, vocational learning that leads to nationally benchmarked attainments, qualifications and awards relevant to the world of work.

As a consequence of the Herefordshire 16-25 LDD offer, service providers will be better able to undertake:

1. Procedures to empower personalised learning and ensure that the rights and aspirations of young people can be empowered (Person Centred Planning);
2. Continuous assessment procedures that provide formative, evidence based data about the progress young people are making and which can be moderated and benchmarked against established criteria for accreditation purposes (RARPA);

As a consequence of the Herefordshire 16-25 LDD offer, service providers will employ:

A trans-disciplinary, flexible workforce with quality assured competencies that include distinctive specialist approaches and positive attitudes about disability;

As a consequence of the Herefordshire 16-25 LDD offer, service providers will better able to sustain:

1. A family orientated, person centred ethos;
2. A physical environment that is safe and empathetic to the personal learning styles and needs of young people who have a diverse range of disabilities;
3. Partnerships with other providers to help enable holistic, extended provision in a range of full year settings with a minimum of "down time".

## **Annex B:**

### **Pilot for further education, independent living and therapeutic services for students aged 19 -25 who have learning difficulties and disabilities of a profound, multiple or severely complex nature.**

The Pilot will develop innovative practice bringing together schools, mainstream and specialist further education, 3rd sector and the local authority to design and deliver programmes which meet need and develop choice and aspiration. The pilot is in response to the unmet need for local provision to meet the needs of people with severe learning difficulties and / or profound and complex disabilities post 19.

The pilot will be governed by a management group including Parent/Carers, Herefordshire Council, HOOPLE Ltd, RNC, Westfield School, Barrs Court School and College, Herefordshire Disability Learning Trust and the Clinical Commissioning group.

The programmes curriculum / aims is based on improving learners' community participation, increasing their autonomy and enabling them to take a more active part in the delivery of their care and support.

Although initially based in Hereford, the service is intended to be county wide, with the potential for being used to develop provision in Market Towns.

This provision will be funded through existing budget resources, the high needs funding budget (new 2013/14) as part of local commissioning arrangements and also through arrangements with local health and adult social care. Testing a joint commissioning and funding model which maximise value for money and improve outcomes.

## **Outcomes**

We intend to develop new provision which:

- Combines the skills, expertise, facilities and services of local providers to deliver individual holistic packages to meet need
- Combines funding streams to enhance the learner experience and improves outcomes for young people



- Develops effective partnerships to enable post 19 learners to have their needs met effectively in their local communities as part of a successful transition.
- Ensure there is a local offer for people with profound and multiple disabilities
- Builds closer relationships and improves communication between all providers and stakeholders
- Sharing of knowledge, expertise and effective practice between providers
- Learning outcomes: appropriate skills & qualifications for the learner. Destination outcomes: moving on to supported employment in the local community
- Forecast and plan for the future number of young people that may require this provision
- Develops partnership working and new approaches to best meet the needs of the young people. Outcomes for learners to include improved choice and decision making, reduced support levels and greater community participation.

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## **Glossary of Acronyms and definitions relating to Learners with Learning Difficulties and or Disabilities**

**ADD – Attention Deficit Disorder**

**ADHD – Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder**

**ASD – Autistic Spectrum Disorder**

**BESD - Behaviour, Emotional and Social Needs**

**HI – Hearing Impairment**

**MLD – Moderate Learning Difficulties**

**MSI – Multi-Sensory Impairment**

**PD – Physical Disabilities**

**PMLD – Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties**

**SLCN – Speech, Language and Communication Needs**

**SLD – Severe Learning Difficulties**

**SpLD – Specific Learning Difficulties**

**VI – visual Impairment**

**OFSTED** - is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, who report directly to Parliament and are independent and impartial. It inspects and regulates services which care for children and young people, and those providing education and skills for learners of all ages.

**Personalisation** - is the process by which services are tailored to the needs and preferences of individuals rather than individual fitting into existing services.

**Resource Allocation System** - A system that allows people with social care needs to know early and up front how much money they might reasonably expect in their individual budget.

**School Action Plus** - used where 'School Action' (aka; 'Early Years Action in Early Years Settings') has not been able to help the child make adequate progress. School Action Plus can include speech and language therapy, the involvement of advisory services dealing with autism or behavioural needs. It may also include one-to-one support and the involvement of an educational psychologist

**Statemented** - Statements of special educational needs say what a child's needs are. They are reviewed every year. Parents or Carers must be consulted before a statement can be changed.

**Learning Difficulty Assessment (S139a)** -A Learning Difficulty Assessment is the legal term used in the Education Act 1996 (as amended by the ASCL Act 2009) and equates to assessments conducted under section 139A of the LSA 2000 assessment specifically. Local authorities have a duty to arrange for a Learning Difficulty Assessment to be conducted of all persons in respect of whom they maintain a statement of Special Educational Needs and who they expect to leave school to receive post 16 education, training or higher education. Local authorities also have the power to undertake a Learning Difficulty Assessment for those young people who would benefit by one.

## Financial Business Case

<b>Service Area</b>	Children's Wellbeing	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Andy Hough
<b>Accountant</b>	Malcolm Green		
<p><b>1. Project Description</b></p> <p>A small local pilot for further education, independent living and therapeutic services for up to 4 young people aged 19-25 who have learning difficulties and disabilities of a profound, multiple or severely complex nature.</p> <p>The pilot will test and develop multi-agency joint commissioning and provider collaboration. It will develop innovative practice bringing together schools, mainstream and specialist further education, the third sector, adult social care providers and the local authority to design and deliver programmes which meet need and develop choice and aspiration.</p> <p>The pilot will be governed by a management group including Herefordshire Council, HOOPLE, RNC, Westfield School, Barrs Court School and College, Herefordshire Disability Learning Trust and the Clinical Commissioning Group.</p>			
<p><b>2. Project Aims and Benefits</b></p> <p>The programme aim is to improve learners' community participation, increase their autonomy and enable them to take a more active part in the delivery of their care and support.</p> <p>Although initially based in Hereford, it is intended to be county wide, with the potential for being used to develop provision in Market Towns.</p> <p><b>Intended Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• combine the skills, expertise, facilities and services of local providers to deliver individual holistic packages to meet identified need;</li> <li>• Combine funding streams to enhance the learner experience and improve outcomes for young people;</li> <li>• Develop effective partnerships to enable post 19 learners to have their needs met effectively in their local communities as part of a successful transition;</li> <li>• Ensure there is a local offer for people with profound and multiple disabilities;</li> <li>• Build closer relationships and improve communication between all providers and stakeholders;</li> <li>• Share knowledge, expertise and effective practice between providers;</li> <li>• Appropriate skills &amp; qualifications for the learner to be able to move on to supported employment in the local community;</li> <li>• Forecast and plan for the future number of young people that may require this provision.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>3. Delivery</b></p> <p>HOOPLE Ltd will be funded to deliver the pilot. Staff with specialist knowledge and expertise will be assigned from Barrs Court School and College to the pilot.</p> <p>The pilot will be delivered over 5 days per week for 38 weeks. The programme will include functional skills in literacy and numeracy, ICT, community involvement and therapeutic sessions.</p> <p>The pilot will be based at Canal Road, Hereford.</p>			

**4. Consequence of not undertaking the project (both in terms of qualitative and quantitative factors)**

The consequences of not undertaking the project would be to send increasing numbers of young people to out of county independent specialist provision rather than investing in local provision. Young people want to live, work and play in their local communities. Some young people who have gone to residential provision out of county have not utilised what they have learnt on returning to Herefordshire

**5. Finances – Indicative Costs**

This pilot will be funded through the local authority’s high needs funding allocation as part of local commissioning arrangements and also through arrangements with local health and adult social care. Testing a joint commissioning and funding model.

Three young people will be participating in the pilot with potential for one more. Proposed education provision approx. 18 hours per week (3 days) including 1:1 support, High Needs funding estimated £33k each, transport approx. £6k including escorts, adult social care direct payment personal assistant estimated £6k (£12 per hour for 38 weeks) for 2 days. Total cost approx. £45k per learner for 38 week provision.

Staffing and curriculum costs £93,000

Personal Assistants staffing costs £16,848

ICT including telephone line rental, broadband, call & maintenance costs per annum - £1,000

Transport including escorts £16,200

Premises – per annum £5,000

	<b>Indicative Revenue Required Academic Year 2013/2014</b>	<b>Indicative Revenue Required per Learner Academic Year 2013/2014</b>
Education Funding Agency allocation for High Needs students – 3 young people	£99,000	£33,000
Adult Social Care – Personalised Budgets	£16,848	£5,616
Clinical Commissioning Group – Health	As appropriate to the needs of the individual young person	
Transport includes escorts	£16,200	£5,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>£132,048</b>	<b>£44,016</b>

**6. Efficiencies Delivered**

Out of County residential provision at an independent specialist college would be at least £68k and more likely to be £85k per annum each due to the complex needs of the young people participating in the pilot. A difference of £23k to £40k per learner.

Relieves pressures on adult social care budget.

Funding would be invested in the local economy.

**7. Overall Financial Effect**

The pilot explores the opportunity for pooled funding to reduce budget pressures and maximise resources.

Signed..... Date.....



<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>19 SEPTEMBER 2013</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>HEREFORDSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD (HSCB) BUSINESS PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORT</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>HSAB/HSCB JOINT INDEPENDENT CHAIR</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>CHILDREN'S WELLBEING</b>

## 1. Classification

Open

## 2. Key Decision

This is not a key decision

## 3. Wards Affected

County-wide

## 4. Purpose

- 4.1 To inform Cabinet of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board's assessment of safeguarding in Herefordshire and of its own effectiveness to enable it to undertake its governance role with regard to the Board.

## 5. Recommendation(s)

**THAT:**

- (a) the views on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Herefordshire as assessed by HSCB, be noted;
- (b) the priorities of HSCB in relation to specific safeguarding issues in Herefordshire be acknowledged;
- (c) Consideration be given to how Herefordshire Council is contributing to service improvement through commissioning within Herefordshire with regard to these safeguarding issues; and
- (d) Comments be made as appropriate to HSCB about its future work programme.

## 6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 It is a statutory requirement for a local authority area to establish a local safeguarding children board. It is open to Cabinet to suggest to the Board areas where it may wish to focus greater or lesser attention.

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Further information on the subject of this Report is available from  
Andy Churcher, HSAB/HSCB Business Manager on Tel (01432) 260278

## **7. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 7.1 Cabinet members should assure themselves that Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Board is meeting its statutory functions to ensure the safeguarding needs of children and young people in Herefordshire.
- 7.2 Cabinet must be sighted on the effectiveness of safeguarding in Herefordshire to adequately fulfil its governance role. Ofsted are currently changing their arrangements for the inspection of safeguarding and protection services for children which will in future have additional focus on Local Safeguarding Children Boards and multi-agency partnership working.

## **8. Key Considerations**

- 8.1 The Business Plan of the Board sets out the agreed priorities for the year and provides measurable actions to enable the Board to hold each partner agency to account in delivering them.
- 8.2 They are supported by the context of safeguarding in Herefordshire laid out in the HSCB Annual Report which includes assessment and analysis of the effectiveness of our local arrangements for safeguarding children. The annual report compares how we are performing all our functions required by the statutory guidance, Working Together. Working Together sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004.
- 8.3 Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board's Annual Report notes the close working relationships it has with Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board and Herefordshire Supporting and Protecting Children Improvement Board. One element of the work of the Improvement Board, set up following the Ofsted Inspection, is to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the Safeguarding Board is improved, along with safeguarding practice across the organisations. While focussed improvement work has followed the Ofsted Inspection, it is important to note that partners of the Board were developing their work to improve local safeguarding arrangements throughout 2012-13.
- 8.4 The annual report of the Safeguarding Board enables Cabinet to understand assess, and challenge Herefordshire's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- 8.5 Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board has set four strategic priorities for the next three years with specific actions for 2013-14 within those as follows:
- A. Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care)
    - Every HSCB member organisation to ensure the voice of children, young people and their families is captured and used to improve services.
    - Improve the quality of reflective supervision and the involvement of management in case decision making.
    - Implement changes in safeguarding practices and HSCB functioning to meet the statutory changes within Working Together.
  - B. Improving multi-agency case work.
    - Improving multi-agency case decision making.
    - Improving multi-agency case assessments within children's social care.
  - C. Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.
    - Domestic Abuse.
    - Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking.
    - Children Missing from Care.
    - Children Placed in Herefordshire by Other Local Authorities.

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Further information on the subject of this Report is available from  
Andy Churcher, HSAB/HSCB Business Manager on Tel (01432) 260278

- D. Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.
- Develop the culture of constructive challenge within the Board.
  - Develop an evidence base of safeguarding casework across all agencies to demonstrate and learn from our good practice and show how we are meeting and exceeding our statutory responsibilities.
  - Agree a model of SCRs and significant case reviews within Herefordshire.
  - Develop and review our knowledge of the children's workforce and its development needs

8.6 Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board structures its work to ensure that it meets its statutory responsibilities, therefore ensuring that the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across its partners continues to increase. It is currently reviewing its membership and functioning.

## **9. Community Impact**

9.1 The work of the Board contributes to achievement of the following Corporate Plan 2013/15 priorities:

- People stay safe
- Outcomes for children and young people improve

The Annual Report and Business Plan are available from the HSCB website at <http://hscb.herefordshire.gov.uk/44.htm>.

## **10. Equality and Human Rights**

10.1 Protecting children enables the Council to meet some of the requirements of the public sector equality duty.

## **11. Financial Implications**

11.1 HSCB are funded through the contributions member agencies. Details of these contributions and a summary of how the Board uses its budget are included within the appendices of the Annual Report.

## **12. Legal Implications**

12.1 Local authority areas are required by law to have a Local Safeguarding Children Board, funded by a range of statutory agencies.

## **13. Risk Management**

13.1 The Safeguarding Board and Cabinet, in its role to exercise effective governance, must understand the causes of safeguarding issues for in Herefordshire and ensure appropriate systems are in place to reduce the effect of these issues and meet the needs of those subject to them. Failure to ensure appropriate action will place people at risk.

## **14. Consultees**

14.1 Members of the strategic board Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board are consulted on the Annual Report and Business Plan before publication.

## **15. Appendices**

- 15.1 HSCB Annual Report 2012-13
- 15.2 HSCB Business Plan 2013-14

## **16. Background Papers**

- 16.1 None identified.





# Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board





## The Board's Vision, Mission and Values

The Board works to the following shared vision, mission and values developed during 2012-13.

### Our Vision

Children and young people in Herefordshire grow up in an environment in which their well being needs are met and they are safe from harm.

### Our Mission

To work together effectively, as organisations and with children and families, to ensure that local services and arrangements are effective in promoting the well being of children and young people in Herefordshire and keeping them safe from harm.

### Our values

- 🧵 The impact on the well being and safety of children and young people in Herefordshire will be at the centre of all HSCB activity.
- 🧵 We will learn and be willing to develop, responding to evidence and best practice.
- 🧵 We will work in an open and honest manner with children, young people, their families and with each other.
- 🧵 We will address the well being needs of children and young people at the earliest opportunity and prevent the need for later child protection intervention whenever possible.
- 🧵 We will challenge each other and be ready to receive challenge as we work together in a spirit of mutual respect.



challenging area with huge dedication and that, on a daily basis, children are successfully protected from abuse. Recruitment and retention of skilled workers is itself a challenge in an environment in which good work can be largely unnoticed but when things go wrong, staff can face vilification. I must also pay tribute to the accepting and reflective response that there has been within Herefordshire Council and across all HSCB member organisations to the criticism within the OFSTED report and to the determination to accelerate and sustain the necessary changes.

Following the OFSTED inspection, Herefordshire Supporting and Protecting Children Improvement Board was established to oversee the necessary improvements both within the local authority and HSCB. Since then the pace of improvement has accelerated markedly. Children's social care have instigated a range of Measures to improve the quality of work with vulnerable children and those at risk, to supervise front line work with young people and to monitor performance and quality of practice. HSCB has established a rigorous programme of case audits, both looking at specific children and families and how their circumstances are managed and also how child protection and safeguarding processes are managed across member organisations. A performance report which informs HSCB members of key performance information across organisations including direction of travel and comparison with local neighbours is scrutinised on a regular basis. A multi-agency safeguarding hub will start work in July and this will undoubtedly improve the ability of the key organisations to effectively share information, assess the situation of children and families and make well informed decisions. The way in which multi-agency training is organised and delivered is being changed to improve awareness of what is good child protection practice across those who work with children locally.

The challenges ahead are many and it must be recognised that we are improving from a relatively long standing low base in terms of our safeguarding practice. HSCB and its member organisations must focus on developing consistently high standards in child protection practice before we widen our ambitions. We must continue to foster a mature culture of challenging and welcoming challenge. We must work harder to ask for and listen to the voices of children and families in the process of developing Services. HSCB does not have a high profile in Herefordshire and, as a result, the safeguarding children agenda does not. All HSCB member organisations have prioritised child protection but the extent of financial cuts being endured will unavoidably have an adverse effect on the ability of organisations to resource safeguarding activity to the required level. A peer review process will take place in September and that will provide invaluable feedback concerning what is being successful and what areas of further development needs to be pursued. A follow up OFSTED inspection is expected in the second half of 2013.

With the benefit of hindsight, the issues identified as requiring focus in last year's business plans were about right. However, the Board fell some way short of exerting the required energy, tenacity and mutually questioning and challenging approach to drive development activity with the speed and determination to deliver our plans successfully. I have seen evidence of a much more questioning and challenging approach in recent months and a deep resolve to make the step change that we seek. I am optimistic that the improvement that has been achieved to date can be built on and sustained and that we can achieve our objectives.

**Dave McCallum, Independent Chair**



## How effective are our local Safeguarding arrangements?

The Board's last Annual Report, for 2011-12, cited a range of reasons why it felt that local safeguarding arrangements are generally effective. Evidence laid out in this report suggests that this is still the case, however, the Board is aware, following Ofsted's Inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children<sup>2</sup>, that its own effectiveness and its ability to identify and act on areas for concern is not as robust as it had previously thought.

Therefore, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board is working closely with Herefordshire Supporting and Protecting Children Improvement Board, set up following the Ofsted Inspection, to ensure its processes are improved, along with safeguarding practice across the organisations. While focussed improvement work has followed the Ofsted Inspection, it is important to note that partners of the Board have been developing their work to improve local safeguarding arrangements throughout 2012-13.

This Annual Report highlights areas where the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements has improved through the Board's work during 2012-13, as well as areas in which progress has not been made as quickly as expected. The Board has been successful in implementing new services for victims of sexual assault which include the ability to collate evidence from which it is possible to secure convictions, as well as in the development of policies and procedures and of the Board's quality assurance processes.

The Board is aware that further work is also needed in:

- ✎ Embedding the Levels of Need Guidance in practice across organisations working with children and young people
- ✎ Improving the process of communicating analysis of performance data to the Strategic Board
- ✎ Using the voice of children and families to be used to improve services.
- ✎ Developing an agreed process across West Mercia LSCBs for multi-agency significant case reviews

The increased number of referrals made to Children's Social Care are an indication of the increased amount of work that Children's Social Care is having to manage currently. This is of concern to the Board, and the Board is monitoring Social Care practice through performance data and through audit work to assure itself that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

However, following Ofsted's Inspection, Children's Social Care undertook an audit of all cases open to it, as well as those recently closed. It reported to Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board that a small number of cases needed further assessment to ensure the correct action was taken, but in the vast majority of cases, the correct supportive action had been taken.

Through this evidence and through the intelligence gained from our child death reviews and significant case reviews, the Board is assured that arrangements to safeguard children in Herefordshire are effective.

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<sup>2</sup> The full report is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/herefordshire](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/herefordshire)

## The context of safeguarding children in Herefordshire

Herefordshire is a rural county with a population of 183,600<sup>3</sup>, with approximately 36,000 of those being under 18 years old.

The County's Integrated Strategic Needs Assessment, Understanding Herefordshire<sup>4</sup>, provides an evidence base to inform commissioning decisions, particularly those relating to priority setting and resource allocation. Using a wide range of data, Understanding Herefordshire identifies the most significant concerns for the county as well as noting performance against historical issues of concern.

Overall, there are few concerns being highlighted by Understanding Herefordshire around the safety and well-being of children indicating that Herefordshire continues to be a safe and supportive place for children to grow and develop. Furthermore, the assessment shows that there have been improvements within the following areas of concern which affect the lives of children:

- 🎗 There have been significant increases in the standard of housing in Herefordshire since 2005 as the rate of substandard housing across all housing types is now in line with national rates.
- 🎗 The number of deaths on Herefordshire's roads has been decreasing over the past fifteen years.
- 🎗 Herefordshire is now above the national average for the proportion of children reaching expected levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in primary schools.

Understanding Herefordshire does however highlight the following areas of concern around the safeguarding and wellbeing of children:

- 🎗 The rate of child protection referrals is above national average.
- 🎗 The rate of children in poverty in Herefordshire has increased slightly although it is significantly below the national average.
- 🎗 The rate of repeat instances of domestic abuse is high compared to the national average.

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board is also aware of these issues and is working with partners to appropriately reduce the number of referrals. Where appropriate they have been included within the Board's Business Plan priorities or Risk Register for action and monitoring.

The Board's understanding of the context of safeguarding in Herefordshire is developed through its [Learning and Improvement](#)<sup>5</sup> processes including its quality assurance programme. The programme includes regular submissions of data about safeguarding themes for a range of agencies as well as themed and case audits throughout the year. The Board developed this program towards the end of the financial year and has used the initial findings to inform the development of its 2013-14 Business Plan.

During the year, the corporate knowledge of member organisations of the Board highlighted further priorities for improvement and responded to those identified by Ofsted in its inspection of our arrangements for child protection<sup>6</sup>. The Board has taken its responsibility for improvement

<sup>3</sup> 2012 Population & household estimates for Herefordshire (<http://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/1847.aspx>)

<sup>4</sup> Understanding Herefordshire is available at <http://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/1922.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> More information is available from the [Learning and Improvement](#) page at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).

<sup>6</sup> Ofsted's full report is available at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/herefordshire>



very seriously and has been fully engaged in the wider work of the Herefordshire Supporting and Protecting Children Improvement Board.

### Levels of Need, Co-ordinated Early Help and Referrals to Social Care

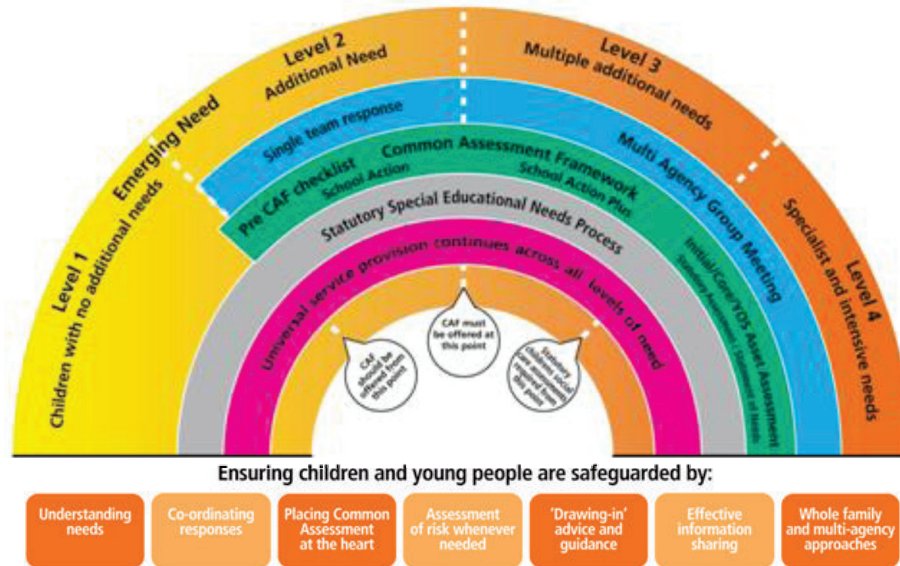
Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board, in cooperation with its regional partners, maintains multi-agency procedures<sup>7</sup> to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and with the aim of encouraging close working between agencies to facilitate early intervention and support to meet the needs of children, young people and their families.

These are supplemented locally by The Herefordshire Levels of Need and Service Response Guidance<sup>8</sup> which gives all practitioners across partner agencies clear guidance as to when they should be providing appropriate responses on their own; engaging the services of a range of other providers through use of the Common Assessment Framework and when it is appropriate to make a referral to Social Care.

The guidance provides the following useful diagram to help practitioners make decisions about the appropriate response to a child, family or young person's needs and further detail is available in the guidance document.

Ofsted noted that The Herefordshire Levels of Need and Service Response Guidance is a clear document which should be very effective. However, they stated also that thresholds were not being effectively applied by professionals. The Board therefore has begun to promote the guidance more purposefully through its publications and will continue this work during 2013-14. It will also be focussing on thresholds through some of its auditing work in order to assure itself that the guidance is being embedded in practice across agencies.

Embedding the Levels of Need Guidance  
Further work needed



Herefordshire has strong engagement across organisations working with children and young people in the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). CAF is a standardised assessment process that enables a child, young person or family to tell their story once, to one professional

<sup>7</sup> <http://westmerciaconsortium.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Available for download from the [Policies and Procedures page](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk) at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).





## What have we done to improve the effectiveness of child safeguarding in Herefordshire?

### a. Evaluating the effectiveness of Child Safeguarding through performance monitoring.

During 2012-13, a significant quantity of performance information has been made available to the Board through its Quality Assurance and Evaluation sub-group, from Children's Social Care as well as across partner organisations (through quarterly single agency performance reports).

This information has been used by member organisations to develop their services and to develop an understanding across relevant organisations of how other organisations discharge their safeguarding responsibilities. There has also been a process of thematic analysis of multi-agency management of a range of issues from children reported missing to child sexual exploitation and allegations made against professionals.

This work has resulted in some significant strategic improvements (e.g. in how children who repeatedly go missing are safeguarded and recognising and responding to childhood sexual exploitation). The sub-group also considered how other relevant multi-agency processes, such as Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (managing the risks posed by dangerous offenders) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (safety planning for the highest risk victims of domestic abuse and their children) were working in terms of safeguarding children.

A concern highlighted following Ofsted's inspection was that the Board has not always identified and focussed on the most significant information and that analysis of performance data has not been strong. This has hampered the ability of the Board to draw and act on clear conclusions reached through that evaluation. A revised Board performance report was completed in December 2012 and this is being further refined in order to ensure that HSCB and Herefordshire Supporting and Protecting Children Improvement Board have access to the same performance information.

Improve the process of communicating analysis of performance data

Further work needed

An area that has not been developed as it should have been is how organisations listen to the voice of the child and staff as part of the quality assurance arrangements. Prior to the Ofsted inspection in September, there were few processes in place to seek the views of children and families. Since then, a strategy has been formulated by Children's Social Care to seek and use the views of service users but the sampling of such information has yet to be implemented. The new quality assurance regime includes an expectation from each member organisation concerning how they seek and take account of children and families in their service delivery. HSCB has developed a link with Herefordshire Children and Young People's Partnership Forum Shadow Board. They receive notes of meetings and have the opportunity to comment on and contribute to plans.

Voice of children and families to be used to improve services.

Further work needed

The joint strategic needs assessment, Understanding Herefordshire, has been considered by HSCB through the year. It was through this that the need to develop services to support victims and children affected by domestic abuse was recognised and the Community Safety Partnership held to account in leading this. However, the document does not include a significant focus on safeguarding issues. This is something that is being addressed for the future. An example is the dearth of information on domestic abuse. This was highlighted by HSCB and a further scoping exercise has been commissioned to examine how services to respond to domestic abuse need to develop.



significant improvement in this area has been recognised but the necessary improvements have needed to be driven in a period of considerable change in personnel and structure and some contraction within HSCB member organisations.

Since the Ofsted Inspection, the Board has formulated a robust process for enquiring into the effectiveness of HSCB member organisations' arrangements for safeguarding and multi-agency audits designed to test how effectively they co-ordinate to safeguard children.



The primary concern for the Quality Assurance and Evaluation sub-group is developing a culture across HSCB member organisations of complete openness in the implementation of a searching and challenging approach to performance management and quality assurance in safeguarding children, both within their own organisations and working with others. Each organisation must examine the effectiveness of their own activity and the impact of what they do on the safety of children in Herefordshire. The audit framework will be onerous for Quality Assurance and Evaluation sub-group

members in the coming year with many members being required for two meetings per month and significant additional associated reading and research. This is coming during a period of significant pressure on all member organisations. However, this work is critical to the ability of HSCB to effectively quality assure activity across organisations to safeguard children in Herefordshire.



## b. Learning and Improvement through Case Reviews.

The sub group of the Board that oversees learning and improvement through case reviews started the year as the Serious Case Review (SCR) Sub Group providing advice and management of SCRs for both Adult and Children's Safeguarding Boards. The group makes initial decisions about case reviews and makes a recommendation to the Independent Chair of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board who will make a final decision on the review process in each case.

During 2011-12 it developed to take on a similar role for Domestic Homicide Reviews on behalf of the Community Safety Partnership as well as the management of cases which do not meet the criteria for an SCR but which do merit review. The sub group is now known as the Joint Case Review group.

The meeting had seven cases referred during the year as follows. In addition, a domestic homicide review was commissioned by the group.

Outcome of Referral	Children	Adults
Independently chaired multi-agency review	1	1
Internally chaired multi-agency review	0	1
Single Agency Review	2	1
Did not meet criteria for review.	1	0

During 2012-13 no case met the criteria under Working

Together 2010 (the relevant statutory guidance that was in place during the year) for a Serious Case Review to be commissioned. Under Working Together 2010, Serious Case Reviews were large scale reviews following a set process which were independently chaired. As detailed in the table above, the Joint Case Review sub group decided that two cases were of significant concern to warrant independent facilitation, but were not appropriate to be the subject of a Serious Case Review.

Following the Government's response to the Munro review of child protection<sup>10</sup>, in which there is a spirit to move away from the traditional Serious Case Review methodology, to a more systems approach, the Joint Case Review group commissioned Review Consulting to facilitate a review through their Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP). One case review has been undertaken using this methodology and initial feedback has been very encouraging and a structured evaluation is underway.

It is worth noting that the small number of cases makes it difficult to identify any particular themes which have emerged during the period. Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board, mindful of the requirement to look wider than those cases where the threshold for a formal review is met, undertake a larger number of multi-agency case reviews some through independent facilitation, of cases. For this to be possible, the Board is working during the first half of 2012-13 with other Boards in the West Midlands to develop a shared process for such reviews.

Develop an agreed process across West Mercia LSCBs for multi-agency case reviews.  
Further work needed

In order to improve the effectiveness of learning from case reviews, during 2012-13 a more robust system for monitoring the progress and outcome of cases and reviews has been introduced. This is enabling greater scrutiny of review processes and reducing the possibility of any drift in the timeliness of decision-making around referred cases and the management of

<sup>10</sup> A Child-Centred System: The Government's response to the Munro review of child protection, July 2011 is available for download from [www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguardingchildren/protection/b00219296/munro](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguardingchildren/protection/b00219296/munro)

reviews. It is also providing enhanced feedback from all types of reviews making it much easier to analysis outcomes and emerging themes.

The Board now maintains a composite learning and improvement action plan, overseen by its Steering Group, which includes all the agreed actions arising from the recommendations made through case reviews alongside those which have resulted from the Board's thematic and case audit programme. Themes for development that the Board have identified through its learning and improvement processes are described below.

**Improve the effectiveness of Strategy Meetings.**  
Procedures are being updated and guidance on input from other involved agencies is being developed.  
*Identified through our SILP & thematic audits.*

**Practitioners need to be able to discuss case concerns with safeguarding experts if unsure of appropriate action.**  
This is being included in the Board's communication.  
*Identified through our SILP & thematic audits.*

**The central CAF monitoring system is not effectively supporting dynamic multi-agency work.**  
HSCB is currently influencing decisions about system developments.  
*Identified through our SILP & thematic audits.*

**CAF Lead Professionals need to have training to deliver their role.**  
HSCB will develop and deliver multi-agency training on the role of Lead Professional.  
*Identified through our SILP.*

**Professionals across agencies need to receive clear messages about the age of consent.**  
This is included in training and targeted communications.  
*Identified through our SILP.*

**HSCB's Escalation Procedures are not effective or well used.**  
The Board has refreshed its escalation procedures and is widely promoting its use.  
*Identified through our SILP & thematic audits.*

**Practitioners need to be able to recognise signs of grooming.**  
Training and guidance is being developed through HSCB's Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking Strategy  
*Identified through our SILP & thematic audits.*

**Step down processes from Social Care should be reviewed to ensure multi-agency involvement.**  
The Board is reviewing involvement.  
*Identified through our thematic audits.*

**GPs are not engaged enough in the statutory SEN process.**  
Board members are looking at how GPs can be more comprehensively involved.  
*Identified through our SILP.*

### c. Workforce Development: Training and Communication.

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board communicates with organisations across Herefordshire through it's:

- 🔗 Membership from partner organisations
- 🔗 Business Plan
- 🔗 Training
- 🔗 Events
- 🔗 Website

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board progresses the County's joined-up approach to safeguarding in Herefordshire by bringing together directors and strategic leaders across organisations working with children. Organisations represented include:

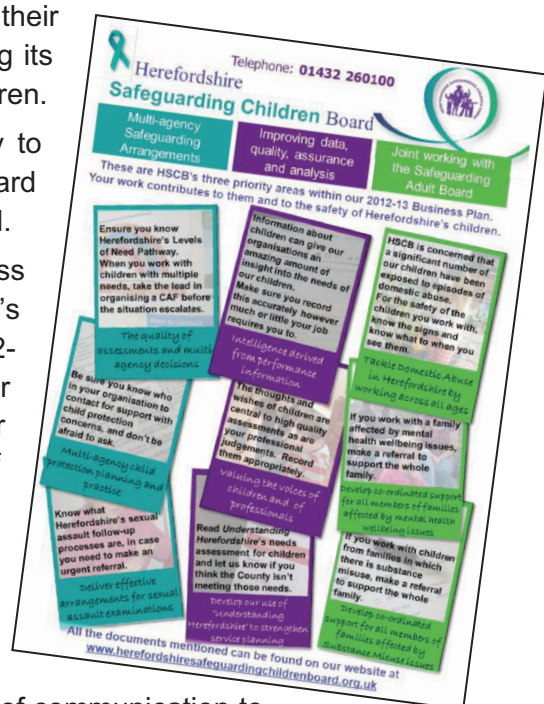
- 🔗 Herefordshire Council, incorporating Children's Social Care, Education Services, Housing and the Community Safety Partnership
- 🔗 NHS Herefordshire
- 🔗 Herefordshire and Worcestershire Youth Offending Service
- 🔗 Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service
- 🔗 Hoople
- 🔗 Wye Valley Trust
- 🔗 2gether NHS Foundation Trust
- 🔗 Education establishments
- 🔗 West Mercia Police
- 🔗 West Mercia Probation
- 🔗 CAF/CASS
- 🔗 Strategic Health Authority

Further third sector organisations are represented as appropriate within the Board's sub groups. Members of the Board and its sub groups have a range of responsibilities as laid out in its Constitution<sup>11</sup> including representing the HSCB within their organisation; and ensure that the organisation is meeting its obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Therefore, members of the Board have a responsibility to ensure that their organisations understand what the Board is doing and is working towards the priorities of the Board.

The development and publishing of the Board's Business Plan also supports members in ensuring the Board's priorities are promoted among partner agencies. In 2012-13 the Board produced its poster of priorities for practitioners working in Herefordshire as an aide memoir to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Through meeting its statutory responsibility to ensure the availability of inter-agency safeguarding training, and through providing additional training and e-learning to meet the needs of Herefordshire, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board maintains an on-going line of communication to



<sup>11</sup> Available for download from the [Policies and Procedures page](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk) at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).







Whilst it is positive that the county has few child deaths, it is not possible to draw any meaningful analysis or conclusions to determine emerging themes in relation to causes of death. The four West Mercia Local Safeguarding Boards of which Herefordshire is one are working together to develop processes for sharing learning and identifying potential themes from deaths across our region.





## 2012/13 Strategic Priorities

The HSCB Business Plan 2012/13 set out the Board's strategic aims and specific objectives. The strategic priorities were based on the Board's analysis of priority areas for development and improvement. This section describes the progress made against these specific priorities.

### Priority Improvement Area 1

We said we would improve multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

How we said we would achieve this:

- ✎ Improve the quality of assessment of need
- ✎ Improve multi-agency decision making
- ✎ Improve multi-agency child protection planning and practice
- ✎ Deliver effective arrangements for sexual assault examinations

What did we do?

- ✎ Undertook an audit of over 100 cases to understand the quality of assessments of children with safeguarding needs at level 3 (CAF) and level (referral to social care).
- ✎ Implemented all the recommendations of the audit.
- ✎ Made all the necessary agreements between partners and arrangements to support the creation of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub in 2013-14.
- ✎ Implement the Child Protection Conference Hub.
- ✎ Ensured that all schools have at least one teacher on staff who is trained to level 5 (now specialist).
- ✎ Oversaw the contractual arrangements and implementation of the Herefordshire Child Sexual Assault processes ensuring they became operational in line with planned timescales.

What difference has this made?

- ✎ The majority of these actions will have effects that can be measured during 2013-14.
- ✎ Victims of child sexual assault are supported in an appropriate comfortable environment which also facilitates the collection of forensic evidence that can enable criminal justice procedures to be successful.

### Priority Improvement Area 2:

We said we would improve data quality, assurance and analysis

How we said we would achieve this:

- ✎ Improve interrogation of performance information at the Strategic Board
- ✎ Listen to the voice of the child and staff as part of the quality assurance arrangements
- ✎ Develop the use of Understanding Herefordshire to identify needs and strengthen service planning across agencies

What did we do?

- ✎ The Board's data dashboard and dataset have been developed to ensure the right information is raised at Strategic Board level so that concerns can be dealt with through the challenge processes of the Board.
- ✎ A strategy has been formulated by Children's Social Care to seek and use the views of service users.
- ✎ The Board's new Learning and Improvement programme includes an expectation from each member organisation to explain to the Board how they seek and take account of children and families in their service delivery.
- ✎ A link has been developed with Herefordshire Children and Young People's Partnership Forum Shadow Board, made up of young people, who now receive notes of HSCB's meetings and have the opportunity to comment on and contribute to plans.

What difference has this made?

- ✎ Members of the Strategic Board are more aware of the state of safeguarding in Herefordshire and are more able to hold each other to account over safeguarding practice in Herefordshire.

### Priority Improvement Area 3:

We said we would improve joint safeguarding arrangements with Herefordshire Safeguarding Adult Board

How we said we would achieve this:

- ✎ Implement joint priorities with the Safeguarding Children Board to tackle domestic abuse.
- ✎ Develop coordinated support for adults and children in families affected by mental health wellbeing issues and adults and children in families affected by substance misuse issues.

What did we do?

- ✎ The Board support the development of a group of senior officers from agencies working across Herefordshire which began a comprehensive needs assessment based on quantitative and qualitative information to assess the current scale of domestic abuse and violence and to understand the current services available.

What difference has this made?

- ✎ Developments in services to tackle domestic abuse are a longer term priority for the Board and improvements in existing services and the commissioning of new services will make a difference in future years.
- ✎ The recommendations from the Hidden Harm work of 2011 were fully implemented and services improved for families affected by mental health issues.

## Appendix 1: HSCB Membership at March 2013

Role/Job Title	Agency
Lay Members (x2)	HSCB
Independent Chair	HSCB
Director of Quality	<sup>2</sup> gether NHS Foundation Trust
Head teacher, Representing Special Schools	Blackmarston School
Head teacher, Representing High Schools	Fairfield High School
Head teacher, Representing Primary Schools	Marlbrook Primary & Little Dewchurch Primary
Director of Personnel, Representing FE Colleges	Herefordshire College of Technology
General Practitioner	NHS Herefordshire
Lead Member for Safeguarding	Herefordshire Council
Assistant Director of Public Health	People's Services, Herefordshire Council
Director of People's Services	People's Services, Herefordshire Council
Head of Safeguarding and Review	People's Services, Herefordshire Council
Secondary School Improvement Advisor	People's Services, Herefordshire Council
Head of Locality Services	People's Services, Herefordshire Council
Assistant Director, Children and Young People Provider Services	People's Services, Herefordshire Council
Head of Additional Needs	People's Services, Herefordshire Council
Assistant Director, Homes and Communities	Strategic Housing, Herefordshire Council
Housing Solutions Manager	Strategic Housing, Herefordshire Council
HR Manager	Ministry of Defence
Head of Safeguarding	NHS Herefordshire
Programme Consultant – Children's Services	Strategic Health Authority
Head of Public Protection	West Mercia Police
DI, Public Protection Unit	West Mercia Police
Head of Service	West Mercia Probation Trust
Chief Executive, Representing 3rd sector	West Mercia Women's Aid
Regional Safeguarding Manager, 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector	West Mercia Women's Aid
Head of Quality & Safety (Adults)	Herefordshire Wye Valley Trust
Named Nurse, Safeguarding Children	Herefordshire Wye Valley Trust
Director of Nursing and Transformation	Herefordshire Wye Valley Trust
Designated Doctor, Child Protection	NHS Herefordshire
Head of Service	Youth Offending Service

Membership Key	Strategic Board	Steering Group	Both
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## Appendix 2: Structure and Attendance

	Strategic Board	Steering Group	QA Sub Group	T&WD Sub Group	Joint Case Review Sub Group	Child Death Overview Panel	SET Task and Finish Group
HSCB (Chair and/or Lay Members)							
2gether NHS Foundation Trust							
Education Establishments							
GPs							
Herefordshire Council (Elected Member)							
People's Services, Herefordshire Council	Education						
	Social Care						
	Localities and Early Help						
	Public Health						
Strategic Housing, Herefordshire Council							
Ministry of Defence							
NHS Herefordshire							
Strategic Health Authority <sup>14</sup>							
West Mercia Police							
West Mercia Probation Trust							
Third Sector							
Herefordshire Wye Valley Trust							
Youth Offending Service							
CAFCASS <sup>14</sup>							
Attendance Key	Not attended 30% or more meetings	Apologies sent and rep attended 30% or more meetings		Attended more than 70%		Not on group membership	

<sup>14</sup> The agencies are not expected to attend all Strategic Board meetings and attendance rating is calculated on their agreed attendance.



## Appendix 3: HSCB Budget Summary

Working Together states that all LSCB member organisations have an obligation to provide LSCBs with reliable resources (including finance) that enable the LSCB to be strong and effective. Members should share the financial responsibility for the LSCB in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies.

The following table states how our member organisations contribute financially to the work of the Board.

<b>Agency contributions</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
Herefordshire Council	£124,835
NHS Herefordshire	£45,203
West Mercia Police	£30,165
Youth Offending Service	£645
West Mercia Probation	£4,612
CAFCASS	£550
Funding Carried Forward	£12,685
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£218,695</b>

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
Independent Chair	£27,295
Business Unit Staff and Costs (Manager and Development Officer)	£67,866
Training and development (including HSCB Trainer)	£62,274
Independent Case Review and Auditing	£6,000
Meeting expenses	£1,942
Publicity, information provision and participation	£1,396
Funding Carried Forward	£38,306
Accounting Processes: unassigned expenditure <sup>15</sup>	£13,616
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£218,695</b>

<sup>15</sup> As at July 1<sup>st</sup> 2013, the Business Unit is working with the Boards' accountant in Hoople to understand and assign this spending.





# **Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board**

## **Business Plan 2013-2014 and Development Priorities 2013-2016**

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## Foreword by the Independent Chair

The last year has been a challenging one from which everyone involved in safeguarding activity in Herefordshire has learned a great deal. We learned that we need to be very clear about what beneficial difference the organisations that make up HSCB are making to the safety and welfare of our children. We need to be sure that all professionals involved in safeguarding are able to work to the highest standards at all time and how effective the processes are that are used to co-ordinate their work. We need to listen carefully to the voices of children and families and act on them to constantly improve the way we work, individually and together.

Many organisations that make up the membership of HSCB are having to change the way they structure themselves to be more lean and efficient because of the current financial situation. Some will have to make hard decisions about work that they will no longer be able to do. All those organisations have prioritised the need to keep children safe and promote and safeguard their welfare; HSCB members now need to hold their own and other member organisations to account in doing so.

Many real improvements have been made in the way that HSCB member organisations work together to safeguard children since the Ofsted Inspection of September 2012, in which serious shortcomings were identified in some local safeguarding work. It has been impressive to see the energy and commitment that has secured that improvement. This HSCB plan will require that energy and commitment to be sustained over the coming months and years if the rate of improvement is to continue and become embedded. Herefordshire Supporting and Protecting Children Improvement Board (established after the Ofsted Inspection) will also oversee this work and hold us to account for delivering the sustained improvement that we need. By working to this plan within the values that HSCB members have adopted, I have no doubt that we can make significant and positive strides towards achieving our vision that children and young people in Herefordshire grow up in an environment in which their well being needs are met and they are safe from harm.



**David McCallum, Independent Chair**  
**Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board**



**Endorsed by Jo Davidson, Director of People's Services**

## Introduction

It is the mission of both the HSAB and the HSCB to work together effectively, as organisations and with children and families, to ensure that local services and arrangements are effective in promoting the well being of children, young people and people at risk in Herefordshire and keeping them safe from harm.

2012-2013 has been a year of development and change for Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board as the member organisations of the Board have identified further priorities for improvement and responded to those identified by Ofsted in its inspection of our arrangements for child protection. The Board is taking its responsibility for improvement very seriously and has been fully engaged in the wider work of the Herefordshire Supporting and Protecting Children Improvement Board

The Board's Business Plan for 2013-14 builds upon the following agreed development areas for 2013-2016 for the Board in meeting its statutory objectives and functions<sup>1</sup> and identifies the necessary actions that the Board and its members agree to undertake during the year:

- ✚ Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care)
- ✚ Improving multi-agency case work.
- ✚ Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.
- ✚ Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board progresses the County's joined-up approach to safeguarding in Herefordshire by bringing together directors and strategic leaders across organisations working with children. Organisations represented include:

- ✚ Herefordshire Council
- ✚ Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- ✚ 2gether NHS Trust
- ✚ CAFCASS
- ✚ West Mercia Probation
- ✚ West Mercia Police
- ✚ Education establishments
- ✚ Wye Valley NHS Trust
- ✚ Herefordshire and Worcestershire Youth Offending Service
- ✚ Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service

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<sup>1</sup> The statutory objectives and functions of Local Safeguarding Boards are outlined in Section 3 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) and described in detail in Section 14 of the [Children Act 2004](#) in Regulation 5 of the [Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006](#) respectively.

## **HSCB's Vision, Mission and Values**

During 2012-13 Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Board developed its statement of purpose outlining its vision for children and young people in Herefordshire, its mission as it works together to bring about that vision and the values that it works to as it works together.

### **Our Vision**

Children and young people in Herefordshire grow up in an environment in which their well being needs are met and they are safe from harm.

### **Our Mission**

To work together effectively, as organisations and with children and families, to ensure that local services and arrangements are effective in promoting the well being of children and young people in Herefordshire and keeping them safe from harm.

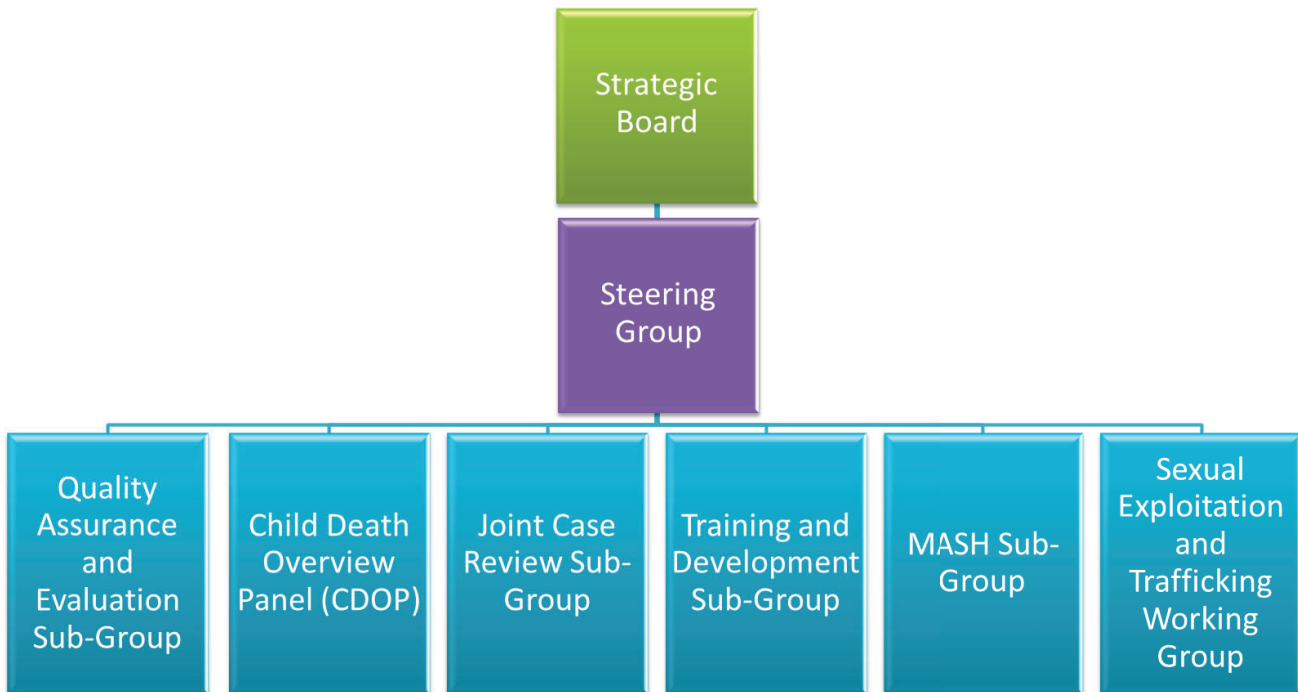
### **Our values**

- 🧵 The impact on the well being and safety of children and young people in Herefordshire will be at the centre of all HSCB activity.
- 🧵 We will learn and be willing to develop, responding to evidence and best practice.
- 🧵 We will work in an open and honest manner with children, young people, their families and with each other.
- 🧵 We will address the well being needs of children and young people at the earliest opportunity and prevent the need for later child protection intervention whenever possible.
- 🧵 We will challenge each other and be ready to receive challenge as we work together in a spirit of mutual respect.

## Structural Arrangements

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board works in close collaboration with Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board and arrangements have been made to ensure they support each other's work and respond appropriately to their work and findings. These arrangements include the shared Independent Chair and Business Unit, Joint Case Review sub group, joint Risk Register and aligned development priorities.

The structure of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board is as follows:



### Strategic Board

The Strategic Board, sets the performance, policy and strategic priorities for Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board and is responsible for ensuring that statutory requirements are met and the quality of safeguarding practice is maintained and developed across its partners. Its membership comprises directors and senior managers with strategic and resource oversight of relevant agencies in Herefordshire who are therefore able to commit resources and enable change within their agencies.

### Steering Group

As the operational arm of the Board, the Steering Group ensures work is planned and progressed to meet the priorities set and monitored by the Strategic Board. As such, it is responsible for ensuring that the business plan for the Board is delivered. It tasks individual agencies and lead officers with responsibility for delivering key activities, in line with the overall aims of the Business Plan, and holds them to account for effective delivery of agreed actions.

### Quality Assurance and Evaluation Sub-Group

This group is responsible for providing assurance to the Strategic Board that all organisations, individually and collectively, are meeting their requirements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It has oversight of all multi-agency and single agency



audits and audits to ensure that all HSCB member organisations are working with the need to safeguard the welfare of children at the forefront of their activity. This group also provides analysis of performance data about safeguarding within and between relevant agencies in Herefordshire and undertakes thematic and case audits to gather further learning and drive improvement.

### **Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)**

CDOP reviews all child deaths within Herefordshire, identifies necessary learning and disseminates that learning to all agencies as appropriate in order to take all action necessary to avoid such tragedies in the future. As Herefordshire is too small an area for further analysis of child deaths to be statistically significant, Herefordshire's CDOP works in partnership with the regional Child Death Overview Panels to identify further learning. CDOP also ensures that local rapid responses to sudden and unexpected child deaths are appropriate and in accordance with national guidance.

### **Joint Case Review Sub-Group**

Local Safeguarding Children Boards have a statutory responsibility to undertake significant, multi-agency reviews of cases where a child has died, or it is thought that work between agencies was not effective and didn't prevent a child suffering considerable harm. The Joint Case Review sub-group receives nominated cases by professionals which might meet the threshold, and decides, in a multi-agency forum, whether a review is necessary and what kind of review is appropriate. The group then makes a recommendation to the Independent Chair who, after reviewing the evidence himself, makes a final decision. The group is then responsible for monitoring reviews as they are undertaken and the implementation of learning from them.

In Herefordshire, a similar process has been agreed for learning from cases of concern involving adults at risk and the Joint Case Review sub group oversees this. It also functions as a sub group of the community safety partnership (which is incorporated into the work of Herefordshire Partnership Executive Group - HPEG) to review incidences of domestic homicide and make recommendation to HPEG upon whether to commission a domestic homicide review.

### **Training and Development Sub-Group**

Responsible for ensuring that there is appropriate safeguarding training to meet the need the Herefordshire's needs identified through the training strategy and the Board's on-going work.

### **Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking Working Group**

Responsible for the implementation of HSCB's Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking Action Plan.

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Sub-Group**

Overseeing the implementation of the MASH in Herefordshire, this group will develop into a governance group once the MASH is fully operational from September 2013. More information about the MASH can be found by searching for "Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub" at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk).

## HSCB Development Priorities 2013-2016

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board has identified the following development priorities for the next 3 years and highlighted action areas within those. Future years will be added to as the safeguarding agenda develops.

<b>DEVELOPMENT AREA 1: Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care)</b>			
Every HSCB member organisation to ensure the voice of children, young people and their families is captured and used to improve services.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Improve the quality of reflective supervision and the involvement of management in case decision making.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Implement changes in safeguarding practices and HSCB functioning to meet the statutory changes within Working Together.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Ensure HSCB member organisations work together to meet safeguarding needs as the workforce for children, young people and families changes due to reduced funding.	13-14	14-15	15-16
<b>DEVELOPMENT AREA 2: Improving multi-agency case work.</b>			
Improving multi-agency case decision making.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Improving multi-agency case assessments within children's social care.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Improving multi-agency case assessments across agencies	13-14	14-15	15-16
<b>DEVELOPMENT AREA 3: Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.</b>			
Domestic Abuse.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Children Missing from Care.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Children Placed in Herefordshire by Other Local Authorities.	13-14	14-15	15-16
<b>DEVELOPMENT AREA 4: Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.</b>			
Develop the culture of constructive challenge within the Board.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Develop an evidence base of safeguarding casework across all agencies to demonstrate and learn from our good practice and show how we are meeting and exceeding our statutory responsibilities.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Agree a model of SCRs and significant case reviews within Herefordshire.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Develop and review our knowledge of the children's workforce and its development needs.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Undertake a peer learning process with an 'Outstanding' Board to identify areas for further Board development.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Write and implement an Action Plan to embed learning from peer learning process.	13-14	14-15	15-16



HSCB Business Plan 2013-14				RAG			
DEVELOPMENT AREA 1: Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care)				Process	Completion	Impact	
Lead Org & Officer	How progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency				Progress Update and Planned Future Actions
Action area: <b>Every agency to ensure the voice of children, young people and their families is captured and used to improve services.</b>				Linked to HSPCIB Priority 1.2; 1.6; 1.10; 1.11; 4.7			Monitored by: <b>HSCB Quality Assurance and Evaluation Sub Group</b>
HSCB, Chair of QA Damian Barratt	All member agencies report the mechanisms they are using for capturing the views of children, young people and their families at all stages of their work to the QA sub group within their quarterly reports delivered in Q2.	Sept 2013	Through QA Sub Group's reports to Steering Group.				
HSCB, Chair of QA Damian Barratt	All members report to HSCB learning from their analysis of the views of children, young people and their families to the QA sub group within their quarterly reports delivered in Q3 onwards.	Dec 2013	Through QA Sub Group's reports to Steering Group.				
HSCB, Chair of QA Damian Barratt	HSCB monitors the implementation of actions arising from analysis of views of children, young people and their families. This will be reported to the QA sub group within agency quarterly reports delivered in from Q4.	Mar 2014	Through QA Sub Group's reports to Steering Group.				
HSCB, Business Manager Andy Churcher	HSCB analyses and reports on common themes arising from agencies' collection of the views of children, young people and their families, proposing development actions.	Mar 2014	Report to be presented to April 2014's Steering Group meeting.				
Action area: <b>Improve the quality of reflective supervision and the involvement of management in case decision making.</b>				Linked to HSPCIB Priority 4.22; 4.24; 4.25			Monitored by: <b>HSCB Training and Workforce Development Sub Group</b>

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RAG Code	Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Plans In Place To Develop Process But Not Yet Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
	Completion to Timescale	Fully Completed	Risk Won't Be Completed Within Timescale	Failure To Complete
	Impact	Judgement will be made through an appropriate assessment of impact as part of <a href="#">HSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework</a> .		



HSCB Business Plan 2013-14					RAG			
DEVELOPMENT AREA 1: Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care)					Process	Completion	Impact	Progress Update and Planned Future Actions
Lead Org & Officer	How progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency					
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	An agreed set of minimum standards for case management and professional supervision will have been established.  Impact will be measured in the longer term through processes for listening to the experiences of children, young people and families involved with safeguarding systems.	July 2013  March 2014	To be reported to July's Steering Group Meeting.					
HSCB, Chair of QA Damian Barratt	An agreed set of processes for monitoring compliance with the supervision of minimum standards across agencies will have been developed and implemented.  Impact will be measured in the longer term through processes for listening to the experiences of children, young people and families involved with safeguarding systems.	Sept 2013  March 2014	Inclusion within quarterly reports from agencies to the QA Sub Group.					
Action area: <b>Implement changes in safeguarding practices and HSCB functioning to meet the statutory changes within Working Together 2013.</b>				Linked to HSPCIB Priority 3.2			Monitored by: <b>HSCB Steering Group</b>	
Herefordshire Council, Head of Safeguarding and Review Paul Meredith	The areas of practice which must change will have been identified and a multi-agency action plan to outline how this will be done will have been agreed.	July 2013	Bimonthly reporting to Steering Group on progress.					
HSCB, Chair of Steering Group Dave McCallum	The action plan will have been fully implemented.	Oct 2013	Bimonthly reporting to Steering Group on progress.					

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RAG Code	Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Plans In Place To Develop Process But Not Yet Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
	Completion to Timescale	Fully Completed	Risk Won't Be Completed Within Timescale	Failure To Complete
	Impact	Judgement will be made through an appropriate assessment of impact as part of <a href="#">HSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework</a> .		



HSCB Business Plan 2013-14				RAG		
DEVELOPMENT AREA 2: Improving multi-agency case work.				Process	Completion	Impact
Lead Org & Officer	How progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency			
Action area: <b>Improving multi-agency case decision making.</b>		Linked to HSPCIB Priority 1.5; 2.5; 2.11; 2.13; 3.1; 3.21; 3.27; 3.36; 4.26			Monitored by: <b>HSCB Steering Group</b>	
HSCB, Chair of Steering Group Dave McCallum	A process for agencies not in on-going support relationships with children and families (e.g. Police) to instigate and input into a CAF will have been developed.	Sept 2013	Bi-monthly reports from nominated agencies to Steering Group.			
Herefordshire Council, Head of Locality Services Tina McGrath	A baseline of CAF timeliness and effectiveness will have been established; an action plan to increase timeliness and effectiveness reporting within children's social care's quarterly reports to QA Sub Group will have been developed and implemented.	Sept 2013	Through QA Sub Group's monthly reports to Steering Group.			
Herefordshire Council, Assistant Director CYP Provider Services Kathy O'Mahony	A baseline of multi-agency involvement in strategy decisions will have been established; an action plan to increase involvement reporting within children's social care's quarterly reports to QA Sub Group, triangulated with reports from other agencies will have been developed and implemented.	July 2013 Sept 2013	Through QA Sub Group's monthly reports to Steering Group.			
HSCB, Chair of MASH sub group Jon Roberts	Herefordshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub will be implemented in line with the MASH Implementation Plan.	Sept 2013	Through MASH Sub Group's quarterly reports to Steering Group.			
Action area: <b>Improving multi-agency case assessments within Children's Social Care.</b>		Linked to HSPCIB Priority 3.28; 3.33; 3.34			Monitored by: <b>HSCB Steering Group</b>	

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RAG Code	Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Plans In Place To Develop Process But Not Yet Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
	Completion to Timescale	Fully Completed	Risk Won't Be Completed Within Timescale	Failure To Complete
	Impact	Judgement will be made through an appropriate assessment of impact as part of <a href="#">HSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework</a> .		

**HSCB Business Plan 2013-14**

**DEVELOPMENT AREA 2: Improving multi-agency case work.**



Lead Org & Officer	How progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency	RAG			Progress Update and Planned Future Actions
				Process	Completion	Impact	
Herefordshire Council, Assistant Director CYP Provider Services Kathy O'Mahony	A baseline of multi-agency involvement in ICPCs will have been established; an action plan to increase involvement reporting within children's social care's quarterly reports to QA Sub Group, triangulated with reports from other agencies will have been developed and implemented.	July 2013 Sept 2013	Through QA Sub Group's monthly reports to Steering Group.				
Herefordshire Council, Head of Children & Families Casework Jon Roughton	Herefordshire's Risk and Resilience Assessment Tool will be rolled out across the social work and multi-agency workforce and used with 100% of children entering the social care system.	Sept 2013	Quarterly updates to Steering Group.				
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	Appropriate levels of training and support will be available for practitioners involved in ICPCs.	Sept 2013	Through T&WD Sub Group's quarterly reports to Steering Group.				

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	Completion to Timescale	Fully Completed	Risk Won't Be Completed Within Timescale	Failure To Complete
	Impact	Judgement will be made through an appropriate assessment of impact as part of <a href="#">HSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework</a> .		





HSCB Business Plan 2013-14					RAG			
DEVELOPMENT AREA 3: Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.					Process	Completion	Impact	Progress Update and Planned Future Actions
Lead Org & Officer	How progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency					
Action area: <b>Domestic Abuse.</b>			Linked to HSPCIB Priority 5.2; 5.3			Monitored by: <b>HSCB Steering Group</b>		
CCG, Safeguarding Lead Lynne Renton	HSCB will have intelligence about DA as a factor in cases for concern as a result of the development of additional DA questions for the Board's on-going audit program focussing. Report to July's Strategic Board.	July 2013	Bi-monthly updates to HSCB Steering Group.					
CCG, Safeguarding Lead Lynne Renton	Working in conjunction with the DA Forum, recommendations have been identified to increase the service offered for prevention and support services and presented to October's Strategic Board with identified resources from partners and, if appropriate, HSCB.	Oct 2013	Bi-monthly updates to HSCB Steering Group.					
CCG, Safeguarding Lead Lynne Renton	Influence the Commissioning of required DA prevention services through partner agencies and/or appropriate commissioning bodies.	April 2014	Bi-monthly updates to HSCB Steering Group.					
Action area: <b>Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking.</b>						Monitored by: <b>HSCB Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking Working Group</b>		
HSCB, Chair SET Working Group Paul Meredith	The HSCB SET Action Plan 2013-14 to raise awareness and develop processes for the management of SET cases will have been implemented.	March 2014	Through SET Working Group's monthly reports to Steering Group.					

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	Impact	Judgement will be made through an appropriate assessment of impact as part of <a href="#">HSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework</a> .		



HSCB Business Plan 2013-14				RAG			Progress Update and Planned Future Actions
DEVELOPMENT AREA 3: Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.				Process	Completion	Impact	
Lead Org & Officer	How progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency				
HSCB, Chair SET Working Group Paul Meredith	HSCB's SET Working Group will evolve into a SET Case Evaluation Panel.	July 2013	Through SET Working Group's monthly reports to Steering Group.				
Action area: <b>Children Missing from Care.</b>		Linked to HSPCIB Priority 2.14			Monitored by: <b>HSCB Steering Group</b>		
Herefordshire Council, Head of Safeguarding and Review Paul Meredith	There are clear and effective multi-agency process to support other local authorities and accommodation providers in notifying agencies of children placed within Herefordshire by other local authorities.	June 2013	Through quarterly themed reports to Steering Group.				
HSCB, Business Manager Andy Churcher	Following the presentation of the Missing Children Annual Report to the QA Sub Group (June 2013) the Business Unit will have developed an action plan for the Board to improve multi-agency responses to incidences of missing children.	Aug 2013	Presented to September's meeting of the Steering Group.				
Action area: <b>Children Placed in Herefordshire by Other Local Authorities.</b>		Linked to HSPCIB Priority 2.14			Monitored by: <b>HSCB Steering Group</b>		
Herefordshire Council, Head of Safeguarding and Review Paul Meredith	There are clear and effective multi-agency process to support other local authorities and accommodation providers in notifying agencies of children placed within Herefordshire by other local authorities.	June 2013	Through quarterly themed reports to Steering Group.				

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HSCB Business Plan 2013-14				RAG			
DEVELOPMENT AREA 3: Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.				Process	Completion	Impact	Progress Update and Planned Future Actions
Lead Org & Officer	How progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency				
HSCB, Business Manager Andy Churcher	A baseline of engagement of accommodation providers with HSCB through the Accommodation Providers Safeguarding Forum will have been established.	July 2013	Through quarterly themed reports to Steering Group.				
HSCB, Business Manager Andy Churcher	Engagement through the wider implementation of the Contract of Expectations and targeted communications will have increased.	Sept 2013	Through quarterly themed reports to Steering Group.				

RAG Code	Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Plans In Place To Develop Process But Not Yet Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
	Completion to Timescale	Fully Completed	Risk Won't Be Completed Within Timescale	Failure To Complete
	Impact	Judgement will be made through an appropriate assessment of impact as part of <a href="#">HSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework</a> .		



HSCB Business Plan 2013-14				RAG			Progress Update and Planned Future Actions
DEVELOPMENT AREA 4: Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.				Process	Completion	Impact	
Lead Org & Officer	How progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency				
Action area: <b>Develop the culture of constructive challenge within the Board.</b>		Linked to HSPCIB Priority 3.9; 3.10; 3.12; 3.24; 3.30; 3.43			Monitored by: <b>HSCB Strategic Board</b>		
HSCB, Business Manager Andy Churcher	An effective system for documenting challenge across the Board to capture learning and good practice will be developed and maintained.	Sept 2013	Synopsis to be included in Steering Group's quarterly report to Strategic Board.				
HSCB, Business Manager Andy Churcher	A robust system of communicating qualitative and quantitative safeguarding performance information and analysis is established from the sub groups to the Strategic Board so that it can effectively monitor and challenge the effectiveness of child protection practice	July 2013	Monthly reports to be presented to Strategic Board members.				
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	A training needs assessment with Board members will have been undertaken to ensure all members have appropriate training and development opportunities to support their role.	July 2013	Synopsis to be included in Steering Group's quarterly report to Strategic Board.				
HSCB, Chair of Steering Group Dave McCallum	All Board members will have undertaken training identified through the TNA.	Dec 2013	Synopsis to be included in Steering Group's quarterly report to Strategic Board.				
HSCB, Chair of Steering Group Dave McCallum	Attendance at all Board meetings will be monitored; an action plan to increase level and consistency of attendance of member agencies will have been developed and implemented.	Sept 2013	Synopsis to be included in Steering Group's quarterly report to Strategic Board.				

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RAG Code	Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Plans In Place To Develop Process But Not Yet Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
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	Impact	Judgement will be made through an appropriate assessment of impact as part of <a href="#">HSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework</a> .		



HSCB Business Plan 2013-14				RAG			
DEVELOPMENT AREA 4: Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.				Process	Completion	Impact	Progress Update and Planned Future Actions
Lead Org & Officer	How progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency				
HSCB Training Commissioner Eve Johnston	The Board's Induction Pack will have been refreshed and re-launched to support new (and existing) members at all levels of Board business.	Dec 2013	Synopsis to be included in Steering Group's quarterly report to Strategic Board.				
Action area: <b>Develop an evidence base of safeguarding casework across all agencies to demonstrate and learn from our good practice and show how we are meeting and exceeding our statutory responsibilities.</b>							Monitored by: <b>HSCB Steering Group</b>
HSCB, Business Manager Andy Churcher	A system for documenting cases of good practice and excellent outcomes across agencies will be developed and maintained, and where appropriate anonymous case studies will be published on HSCB website.	Sept 2013	Business Unit to provide quarterly update to the Steering Group.				
HSCB, Independent Chair Dave McCallum	All agencies will have submitted appropriate cases and highlighted learning within their good practice.	July 2013	Business Unit to provide quarterly update to the Steering Group.				
Action area: <b>Agree a model of SCRs and significant case reviews within Herefordshire.</b>							Monitored by: <b>HSCB Joint Case Review Sub Group</b>
HSCB, Chair of JCR Sub Group Paul Meredith	Case reviews using alternative formats will have been evaluated by those involved in the processes and reported to Steering Group.	Sept 2013	Report and proposal to be presented to Sept's Steering Group.				
HSCB, Chair of Steering Group Dave McCallum	The most appropriate format for reviews within Herefordshire will have been decided upon.	Sept 2013	Steering Group to report their recommendation to October's Strategic Board.				

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	Impact	Judgement will be made through an appropriate assessment of impact as part of <a href="#">HSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework</a> .		



HSCB Business Plan 2013-14				RAG		
DEVELOPMENT AREA 4: Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.				Process	Completion	Impact
Lead Org & Officer	How progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency			
Action area: <b>Develop our knowledge of the children's workforce and its development needs.</b>		Linked to HSPCIB Priority 4.6; 4.15; 4.16			Monitored by: <b>HSCB Training and Workforce Development Sub Group</b>	
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	TNA will have been undertaken across agencies and training needs catered for through the further development of the Board's Training Strategy.	Sept 2013	Findings to be included in the T&WD sub group's quarterly report to November's Steering Group.			

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RAG Code	Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Plans In Place To Develop Process But Not Yet Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
	Completion to Timescale	Fully Completed	Risk Won't Be Completed Within Timescale	Failure To Complete
	Impact	Judgement will be made through an appropriate assessment of impact as part of <a href="#">HSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework</a> .		



<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>19 SEPTEMBER 2013</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>WEST MERCIA ADOPTION PROJECT</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROVIDER SERVICES</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>CHILDREN'S WELLBEING</b>

## 1. Classification

Open

## 2. 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 to which the decision relates.

NOTICE has been 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

## 3. Wards Affected

County-wide

## 4. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet to explore the potential of a West Mercia collaboration for the delivery of Adoption Services in Herefordshire.

## 5. Recommendation(s)

**THAT:**

- (a) the key objectives and outcomes of the project be approved;
- (b) the potential options for the new service be noted; and
- (c) delegated authority be given to the Director for Children's Wellbeing to explore the opportunity to establish a shared adoption service across Herefordshire, Telford and Wrekin, Worcestershire and Shropshire

## 6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 Herefordshire could continue to operate their own Herefordshire Council Adoption Service. The service is currently operating well and delivering good outcomes for children. Its last inspection judged the service to be good with outstanding features. However, this is a very small service with limited opportunity to make efficiency savings due to the scale of the operation. There is a need to develop more innovative approaches for hard to place children which may be more fruitfully pursued regionally.

## 7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 The overall aim of the project is to develop a single West Mercia Adoption Service which delivers a more efficient and effective service to a wider range of children. The recommendation at this stage is to agree that Herefordshire pursue this, working collaboratively to reach consensus about the best option to deliver the services across the region.

## 8. Key Considerations

- 8.1 The Government is committed to improving adoption services across the country, reducing the number of Adoption Agencies, increasing the number of adoptions and reducing delay for children in being adopted. In addition, there is a longer term proposal in the Government's 'Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay' which proposes as a default position that the recruitment and training of adopters will be transferred to voluntary organisations. Whilst Adoption Services are currently strong in Herefordshire there is increasing pressure on the timeliness of Adoptions, and as with most local authorities there are challenges in Herefordshire in adopting older children and larger sibling groups, which need innovative approaches to truly tackle harder to place children.
- 8.2 Current performance in Adoption services in Herefordshire is good. Below is a 5 year comparison of activity.

Year	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Children for adoption	3	18	19	18	23
Children matched	8	11	9	16	14
Adopters approved	10	13	15	7	17

- 8.3 To understand the scale of the service, there are currently 26 children with a plan for adoption currently not yet placed, 18 assessments of adopters on going, and 3 approved adopters waiting for placements.
- 8.4 Comparator information is being gathered on all 4 local authorities as part of the work preparing for the outline business case. Each authority has examined the last ten cases where a child was placed with adopters (pre dating 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013 when the new processes came into effect) and the journey times from the initial enquiry to a child being placed were calculated for the adopter, and the date from a child

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Kathy O'Mahony, Assistant Director Children and Young People Provider Services  
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becoming LAC to being placed were calculated for the child.

- 8.5 This information confirms that each Local Authority has areas of strength in adoption work and areas for development. In terms of time to approve potential adopters, Herefordshire has the strongest performance at 459 days from initial enquiry to approval, compared to 561 for Worcestershire and 617 for Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin which has a shared adoption service already. However, when examining the child's journey to placement, including care proceedings and matching with adopters, Herefordshire and Worcestershire at 459 and 429 days respectively are slower than Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire at 303 days for these 10 placements. It is worth noting however, that among those 10 children placed in Herefordshire 3 children were placed with foster carers who came forward wishing to adopt the children, and the adoption approval process had to start at that point whilst the children were in placement. Therefore whilst the outcome was good for the children, it affects the timeliness figure shown here.
- 8.6 A new process has been agreed for adoptions, in place from July 1st 2013 which is provided with the background papers. Whilst it demonstrates the complexity of the process, this is a more streamlined process than the one which was in place when the above measurements were taken.
- 8.7 Of the last 10 children placed, 7 were placed with adopters approved by Herefordshire, though not all lived within the county. None of the 3 placed externally were placed within the West Midlands region as no suitable placements were identified more locally. The government agenda of 'levelling the playing field' in respect of the standardising the fees for interagency placements is to encourage agencies to find the right placement wherever it is, though it is acknowledged that distance from the placing agency does affect the level/availability of support provided from the home authority. There is potential through these proposals to expand the pool of adopters available regionally.
- 8.8 The four local authorities in the West Mercia region - Herefordshire Council, Worcestershire County Council, Telford & Wrekin Council and Shropshire Council - recognise that working collaboratively provides a genuine opportunity to respond to the national agenda and, following the success of a similar approach to establish a West Mercia Youth Offending Service, are exploring the possibility of joining forces to provide a single adoption service.
- 8.9 By delivering a single service whilst maintaining functions at a regional and local level, partners envisage achieving economies of scale and delivering a faster and more cost efficient process of providing alternative permanent homes for children across the West Mercia region. The potential to draw from a wider pool of adopters could open up for each authority, with the potential for the new service to include best practice from each of the authorities, so enhancing quality and performance of all.
- 8.10 The key objectives of the project are:
- To retain local accountability and service delivery based on local need.
  - To maintain or improve outcomes for children, young people and adopters, building on the strengths of existing services.
  - To improve efficiency through:
    - Streamlining management costs by creating a single service.
    - Streamlining service delivery via processes and pathways.

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- Ensuring better value from commissioning non-core functions.
- To identify the most appropriate delivery arrangements for the single service.
- To support the establishment of the single service by September 2014.

8.11 The scope of the project is as follows:

- Explore the opportunity to establish a shared adoption service covering West Mercia.
- To look at how the four authorities might best organise recruitment and training of adopters which would be compliant with government targets over the next three or four years.
- To look at the organisation of panels in West Mercia and determine the appropriate number of these.
- To review existing post adoption support arrangements and how these might best be organised to meet future need including the level of financial support provided.
- To review existing adoption counselling and support arrangements for birth family members and how these might be developed to meet future need.
- Consider under these arrangements how particular groups are targeted and adoptive homes located e.g. older children, children with disabilities, sibling groups, BME groups.
- Explore arrangements for overseas adoption and how these might be delivered more effectively.
- To assess the feasibility of different models of working, including joint working with a voluntary adoption agency/not for profit groups or a mutual and how this might be achieved.
- To look at the relationship with the West Midlands Adoption Consortium in order to ensure that any development is complementary.
- To think about relationships between the adoption team and field work teams and the way in which children and young people needing permanent alternative homes are identified and tracked.
- To assess the impact of change on our relationships with local courts and how this would be managed.
- To consider how this body will relate to regional and national bodies.
- To look at the governance arrangements of such an organisation and how this might be managed.
- To determine options as to who might run such an organisation.
- To consider arrangements for prospective adopters wishing to consider the Fostering to Adopt scheme.
- To consider arrangements for foster carers wishing to adopt children already placed with them.

8.12 The key outcomes for the project are:

- Retained local accountability and services based on local need.
- A reduction in the length of time taken in the 'end-to-end' adoption process, ie, from initial inquiry to a child being placed.
- A reduction in the overall cost of adoption for the four authorities across a number of different budgets.
- Children waiting for adoption will be matched more quickly and placed with adoptive families sooner, particularly 'hard to place' children.
- Children's social workers will have increased choice of potential adopters to enable the successful matching of children.

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- The four authorities will be assisted to meet new Government requirements on timescales.
- Swifter and more effective assessment, training, approval and support for adopters.

8.13 The project has a clear governance structure (See attached governance chart). Overseeing the project is a management board comprising the Director of Children's Services from the 4 Authorities which Director for Children's Wellbeing is a member of. The Assistant Director Children and Young People Provider Services is a member of the Steering Board, which is driving the project. There is also a working group and 6 work stream groups and Herefordshire is represented on all groups. Herefordshire is leading on Finance. The representation and commitment is good across the board and Herefordshire is a strong partner in this process. This project will contribute to the overall improvements being made in Children's Services, by delivering increasingly more effective adoption services locally, whilst benefitting from the efficiencies of scale from working regionally.

## **9. Community Impact**

9.1 At time of writing, consultations are being organised to talk to adopters about these plans. The authority wants to understand what improvements adopters and potential adopters would like to see. The kinds of benefits anticipated may be for example, more choice about the location and timing of training for adopters as there could be access to training in any of the 4 authorities. Similarly, access to more panels may speed up the approval process for some adopters. New approaches to recruit adopters for hard to place children would benefit looked after children in the county. A wider range of interventions to support adoptive families post adoption would be of immense benefit in preventing family breakdown, particularly during adolescence when issues of identity and separation are prevalent for adopted young people, which would contribute to achievement of the Herefordshire Council Corporate Plan 2013/15 priority to improve outcomes for children and young people.

## **10. Equality and Human Rights**

Section 5 of the Outline business case attached outlines the initial equality impact assessment screening.

One of the planned outcomes of this project, as set out above, is that children waiting to be adopted will be placed more quickly, and placed with adoptive families sooner, and the aim is that in particular the needs of those children who are harder to place – often older children, children with specific needs and sibling groups are placed more successfully.

## **11. Financial Implications**

11.1 The current budget for Adoption Services in Herefordshire is £747k. This budget covers the adoption team who recruit, train and assess adopters, match and support children and adoptive parents, adoption panel expenses, adoption support and adoption allowances paid to adoptive parents, support to birth parents, counselling adopted adults wishing to access their adoption records, step-parent adoptions and inter country adoptions are also undertaken by the adoption service.,

11.2 The project aims to reduce the costs of providing adoption services by up to 20% through this project. The savings for Herefordshire would amount to £149k. This is a deliberately ambitious target and will challenge all authorities to consider all the ways in which a collaborative approach will deliver this scale of saving. The two key areas of spend relate to staff costs (approximately 44%) and adopters allowances

(38% of total budget) significant reductions will be required in both budgets if a 20% reduction is to be achieved from the collaborative approach. To fully reconfigure services by March 2014 in order to deliver the savings target will be very challenging.

## **12. Legal Implications**

12.1 Given that the options listed in the Outline Business Case are very much at the formative stage it is difficult to set out the full legal implications of each, other than in very general terms. There is also the possibility that the Children and Families Bill might be further amended before being implemented. The Outline Business Case observes that depending on the option finally recommended there might be TUPE implications and the need for LAs to delegate their adoption functions to another LA or even a separate body. In the latter case it would be necessary to examine in some detail the extent to which such functions can legally be discharged other than by a LA.

## **13. Risk Management**

13.1 The key high level risks associated with this project are:

- Conflict between the project's vision/objectives and the strategic direction of each individual adoption service or authority.
- Change in leadership in any of the authorities could lead to buy-in to the project being lost.
- Lack of stakeholder support.
- Lack of resources to deliver the project effectively and within timescale.
- Ability to resolve complex issues such as IT within timescale.
- Loss of key quality staff through the change process.
- Under the Children and Families Bill, the Secretary of State will have the power to direct Local Authorities to arrange for the recruitment, assessment and approval of prospective adopters to be carried out by one or more other adoption agencies
- Target savings may not be achievable across the board

13.2 For Herefordshire the key risks are:

- That the good quality service in place now will be diminished by the changes
- That the local delivery of aspects of the service will be lost
- That we are the smallest of the Local Authorities so may be perceived or treated as a more junior partner in all of this
- That Herefordshire loses key post holders through the change process that will follow.

13.3 These risks will be mitigated by strong leadership within all 4 local authorities and commitment to ensuring that the service will be as good as, if not better than current provision whilst delivering the efficiency savings. The project fully considers the position of each local authority and given that Herefordshire's performance in adoption is as strong or stronger than all the partners, there is a great deal to bring to the table. There is good communication and consultation going on with the services locally and arrangements are already in hand to hold regional events with staff to explore the best route forward. The project is being well managed, and there is no pre-conceived solution – there is a genuine will to work through the issues and reach a shared decision about what is the best route forward that will deliver as good or improved outcomes and deliver the efficiencies.

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## **14. Consultees**

14.1 Thus far:

- Lead Member for Children's Services
- Council Management Board
- Adoption Team
- Children's Social Care teams
- Adoptive parents and prospective adopters

## **15. Appendices**

15.1 Appendix 1 – Governance Chart

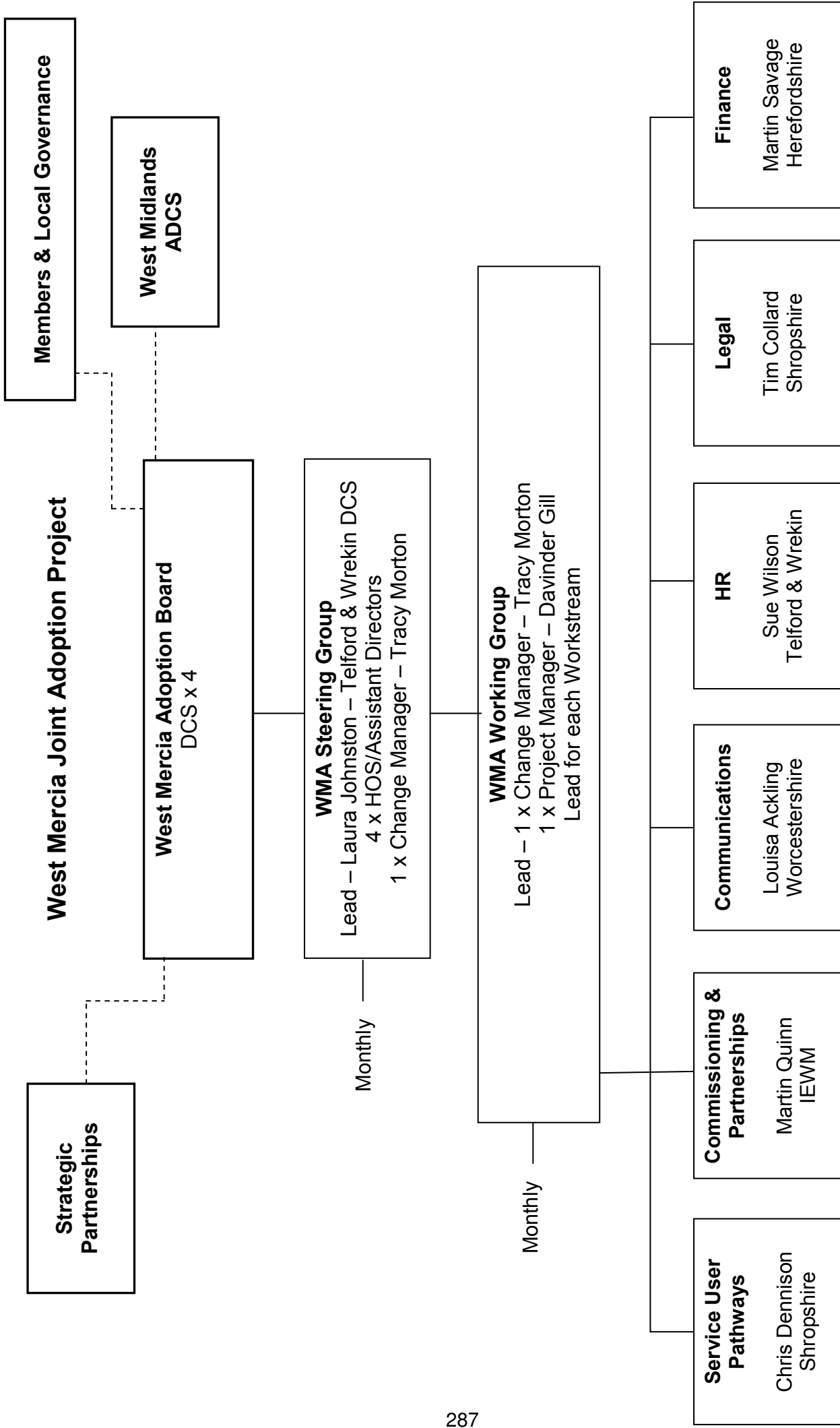
Appendix 2 – Draft Outline Business Case

Appendix 3 – Adoption Process

## **16. Background Papers**

16.1 None identified.







# WEST MERCIA ADOPTION PROJECT

## OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

Document Purpose	
To provide an initial outline of the project sufficient to identify why it is being proposed and what it seeks to achieve.	
Document Details	
Version	0.3
Version Date	19.8.13

### 1. PROJECT DEFINITION

#### 1.1 Project Aim

The overall aim of the project is to develop a single West Mercia Adoption Service which delivers a more efficient and effective service to a wider range of children.

#### 1.2 Project Description

The project will develop a single West Mercia Adoption Service across Worcestershire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Herefordshire which delivers a more efficient and effective service to a wider range of children, with particular emphasis on improving the timeliness of placing children and young people for adoption.

The new service will at least maintain the quality of current provision, improve outcomes, deliver savings based on lower service costs arising from a more efficient staffing structure and economies of scale arising from aggregated workloads. It is anticipated that cashable savings up to 20% in 2014/15 for each authority will be made through the project.

#### Project Scope

- Explore the opportunity to establish a shared adoption service covering West Mercia.
- To look at how we might best organise recruitment and training of adopters which would be compliant with government targets over the next three or four years.
- To look at the organisation of panels in West Mercia and determine the appropriate number of these.
- To review existing post adoption support arrangements and how these might best be organised to meet future need including the level of financial support provided.
- To review existing post adoption counselling arrangements for birth family members and how these might be developed to meet future need.
- Consider under these arrangements how particular groups are targeted and adoptive homes located e.g. older children, children with disabilities, sibling groups, BME groups.
- Explore arrangements for overseas adoption and how these might be delivered more effectively.
- To assess the feasibility of different models of working, including joint working with a voluntary adoption agency/not for profit groups or a mutual and how this might be achieved.
- To look at the relationship with the West Midlands Adoption Consortium in order to ensure that any development is complementary.

- To think about relationships between the adoption team and field work teams and the way in which children and young people needing permanent alternative homes are identified and tracked.
- To assess the impact of change on our relationships with local courts and how this would be managed.
- To consider how this body will relate to regional and national bodies.
- To look at the governance arrangements of such an organisation and how this might be managed.
- To determine options as to who might run such an organisation.
- To consider arrangements for prospective adopters wishing to consider the Fostering to Adopt scheme.
- To consider arrangements for foster carers wishing to adopt children already placed with them.

### **1.3 Project Background**

Under new powers provided to the Government under the Children and Families Bill 2013, local authorities that are not performing appropriately will have their role as adoption agencies withdrawn. In addition, there is a longer term proposal in the Government's 'Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay' which proposes as a default position that the recruitment and training of adopters will be transferred to voluntary organisations.

The four local authorities in the West Mercia region - Herefordshire Council, Worcestershire County Council, Telford & Wrekin Council and Shropshire Council - recognise that working collaboratively provides a genuine opportunity to respond to the national agenda and, following the success of a similar approach to establish a West Mercia Youth offending Service, are exploring the possibility of joining forces to provide a single adoption service.

By delivering a single service whilst maintaining functions at a regional and local level, partners envisage achieving economies of scale and delivering a faster and more cost efficient process of providing alternative permanent homes for children across the West Mercia region.

### **1.4 Project Objectives**

The key objectives of the project are:

- To retain local accountability and service delivery based on local need.
- To maintain or improve outcomes for children, young people and adopters, building on the strengths of existing services.
- To improve efficiency through:
  - Streamlining management costs by creating a single service.
  - Streamlining service delivery via processes and pathways.
  - Ensuring better value from commissioning non-core functions.
- To identify the most appropriate delivery arrangements for the single service.
- To support the establishment of the single service by September 2014.

### **1.5 Project Outcomes**

The key outcomes for the project are:

- Retained local accountability and services based on local need.



- A reduction in the length of time taken in the 'end-to-end' adoption process, ie, from initial inquiry to a child being placed.
- A reduction in the overall cost of adoption for the four authorities across a number of different budgets.
- Children waiting for adoption will be matched more quickly and placed with adoptive families sooner, particularly 'hard to place' children.
- Children's social workers will have increased choice of potential adopters to enable the successful matching of children.
- The four authorities will be assisted to meet new Government requirements on timescales.
- Swifter and more effective assessment, training, approval and support for adopters.

## **1.6 Innovation**

Many local authorities have embarked on or are looking at joint ventures, such as WWiSH (Wigan, Warrington and St Helen's joint adoption service), Adoption in the Black Country (joint venture between Wolverhampton, Dudley, Walsall and Sandwell) and indeed Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin's existing joint adoption service. This project's intention is to learn from and build on such models and combine adoption services over the West Mercia footprint, which covers a much larger geographical area and demographic sector. We are not aware of any other authority/group of authorities looking at adoption service delivery on this scale.

## **2. CURRENT SERVICE PROVISION**

Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin councils have had a joint adoption service since 1998. This service came out of LGR with Telford separating from Shropshire, but keeping some joint services. The joint service has 31 posts and a combined adoption budget of £835k (Shropshire £488k / Telford £347k). The majority of functions are delivered in-house with the exception of marketing for the recruitment of prospective adopters, birth parent support and counselling, and access to records from other LAs for adopted adults, which are commissioned.

Worcestershire's adoption service has 24 posts and a £1m budget. All its functions are delivered in-house with the exception of adopter support groups which are commissioned.

Herefordshire's adoption service is the smallest with 14 posts and a budget of £331k. All of its functions are delivered in-house.

## **3. OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE**

### **3.1 Options**

The following delivery options for the new service are being considered:

#### **Option 1**

Do nothing and stay 'as is', with each service maintaining its existing service set up, using 3<sup>rd</sup> parties independently procured.

#### **Option 2**

Deliver some key functions together and maintain delivery of other functions within individual authorities.

- Partnership arrangement involving a number of SLAs for certain tasks/duties.
- Sharing of some costs and collaboration on 'placement 'selling' and 'purchasing'.
- Joint activity days.
- Share training opportunities.
- Occasional use of voluntary sector as and when required.
- Co-located teams.

### **Option 3**

Deliver a core adoption service across West Mercia, with commissioned non-core services based on local needs.

- West Mercia 'union' of LAs.
- Pooling some budgets to deliver efficiencies.
- Host authority arrangement.
- One management structure but reporting from/to the 4 LAs.
- Joint activity days.
- One training procedure but shared.

### **Option 4**

Deliver a single adoption service, incorporating all core and non-core services, delivered by a lead West Mercia authority.

- Combined governance arrangements – single entity, fully integrated service (social enterprise?)
- Voluntary organisation fully integrated into arrangement – for hard to place children/birth ties/BRC work.
- One 'brand' and one set of common procedures.
- One marketing partner providing front door services.
- One IT system.
- Joint activity days.
- One route (funnel) from marketing partner into the agency then two or four consistent allocation streams.
- Core staff groups supported by a pool of bank staff to assist at times of high demand.
- Flexible and mobile adoption panels.
- Central training team.

### **Option 5**

Contract out all core and non-core services (on a not for profit basis), eg, by going into partnership with a voluntary organisation or establishing a staff mutual.

### Options Appraisal

There are five main options, with benefits from Option 1 being negligible and benefits from Option 2 being minimal. It is possible that a model mixing elements of Options 3, 4 and 5 may be feasible based on a cost/benefit analysis. None of the options preclude going into partnership with a voluntary organisation.

To achieve the desired project outcomes it is recommended that by working together the four West Mercia authorities will be able to carry out a more in-depth appraisal of Options 3-

5 in the first instance to the benefit of all authorities and which maintain local accountability and service delivery based on local need.

In doing so, the areas that would need to be considered and explored further include our legal obligations and boundaries (if we go into partnership with a voluntary organisation what functions can be legally discharged), the governance and audit framework around adoption and human resource implications (TUPE arrangements, etc).

### **3.2 Project Costs**

The bulk of the work in designing the overall structure, including developing the management and staffing structure, determining the core and non-core offer of the new service, pathways to/from the service, the transfer of staff and any redundancies, etc, is likely to fall to existing staff across the four authorities. During this period costs will, therefore, include the backfill of posts to do this work and project management.

Each authority has an Adoption Reform Grant which can specifically be used for adoption transformation, therefore, each authority has contributed £12,500 of this grant into a pooled budget to support the project.

### **3.3 Return on Investment**

#### Cashable Savings

The overall aim of the project is to maintain and improve the quality of current provision and improve outcomes whilst making financial efficiencies. The new service will deliver savings based on lower service costs arising from a more efficient staffing structure and economies of scale arising from aggregated workloads. This is expected to be up to 20% in 2014/15 for each authority.

#### Non Cashable Benefits

The primary focus of this project is to deliver an improved adoption service to a wider range of children. Reducing the length of time taken in the “end to end” process of the adoption journey, ie, from initial inquiry to a child being placed for adoption, will minimise the impact of delays for both the children and adopters. Whilst operational efficiencies will be achieved through the pooling of resources, the organisational changes expect to improve on the quality of the current provision across the region.

### **3.4 Risks**

The key high level risks associated with this project are:

- Conflict between the project's vision/objectives and the strategic direction of each individual adoption service or authority.
- Change in leadership in any of the authorities could lead to buy-in to the project being lost.
- Lack of stakeholder support.
- Lack of resources to deliver the project effectively and within timescale.
- Ability to resolve complex issues such as IT within timescale.
- Loss of key quality staff through the change process.
- Under the Children and Families Bill, the Secretary of State will have the power to direct Local Authorities to arrange for the recruitment, assessment and approval of prospective adopters to be carried out by one or more other adoption agencies.

- Target savings may not be achievable across the board.

### 3.5 Stakeholders

The main stakeholders associated with this project are:

- Children and young people in the LAC system at all stages of the adoption process.
- Adopters at all stages of the assessment/approval process.
- Approved adopters waiting for placements.
- Adopters with placements pre adoption order.
- Adoptive families in receipt of adoption support services.
- Birth families.
- Adopted adults.
- Adoption Service staff in each authority.
- Children's Social Workers and Fostering Social Workers in each authority.
- Adoption Panel chairs and members in each authority.
- Elected Members with responsibility for children and families in each authority.
- Providers.
- West Mercia Adoption Project Working Group.
- West Mercia Adoption Project Steering Group.
- West Mercia Adoption Project Board.

## 4. HIGH LEVEL PROJECT PLAN

### 4.1 Timescales

Key Milestone	Date
Produce Outline Business Case	September 2013
Produce Detailed Business Case	December 2013
Produce Detailed Implementation Plan for approval	February 2014
Implementation	April - August 2014
New Service Operational	September 2014

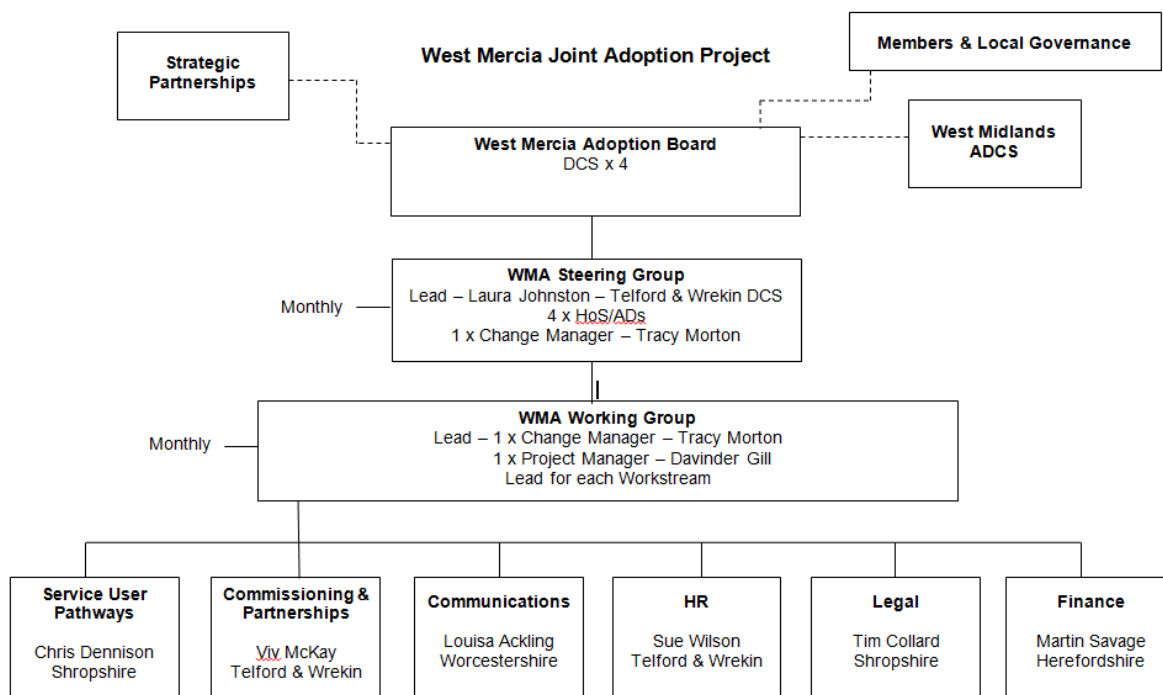
### 4.2 People Resources

Refer to paragraph 3.2 and 4.3.

### 4.3 Project Structure and Governance

A West Mercia Adoption Board, Steering Group, Working Group and Project Teams have been established to deliver the project, as illustrated in the structure chart below. A Project Lead and Project Manager have also been assigned to the project.

The Board, Steering Group and Working Group each meet monthly and have met regularly since May 2013.



## 5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	Comments
Age	X			The project aims to improve outcomes for children aged 0-18 and adopters over the age of 21.
Disability	X			The project aims to improve outcomes for children/young people and adopters regardless of disability.
Gender	X			The project aims to improve outcomes for children/young people and adopters regardless of gender.
Race	X			The project aims to improve outcomes for children/young people and adopters regardless of race.
Religion/Belief	X			The project aims to improve outcomes for children/young people and adopters regardless of religion/belief.
Sexual Orientation	X			The project aims to improve outcomes for young people and adopters regardless of their sexual orientation.
Gender Reassignment	X			The project aims to improve outcomes for adopters regardless of gender reassignment.
Pregnancy and maternity	X			The project aims to improve outcomes for birth parents.

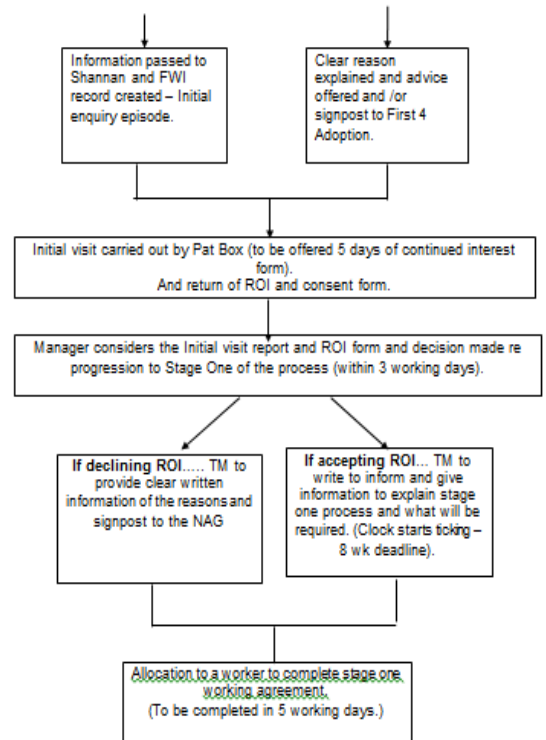
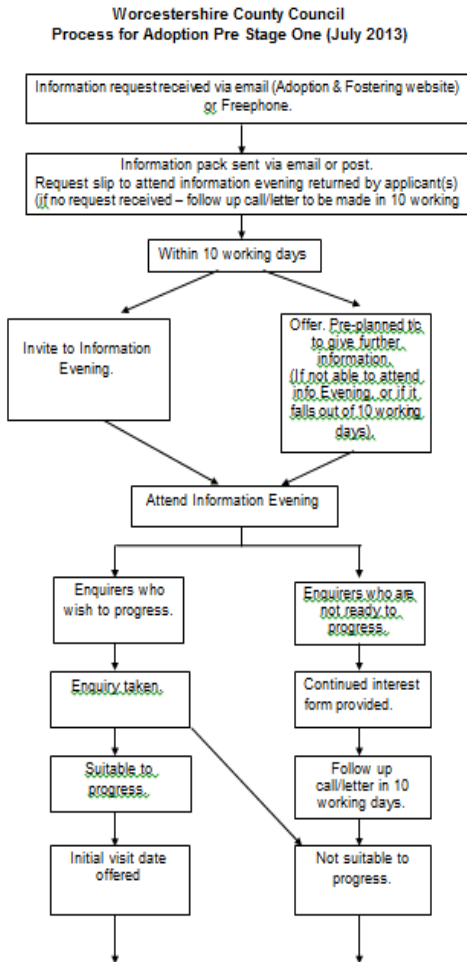
<b>Amendment History</b>		
<b>Document Owner:</b> Davinder Gill		
<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reason for Amendment</b>
0.1	14.8.13	-
0.2	15.8.13	Comments by WM Adoption Steering Group 14.8.13
0.3	19.8.13	Final comments by WM Adoption Steering Group

<b>Approvals</b>		
<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>
WM Adoption Steering Group	19.8.13	0.3

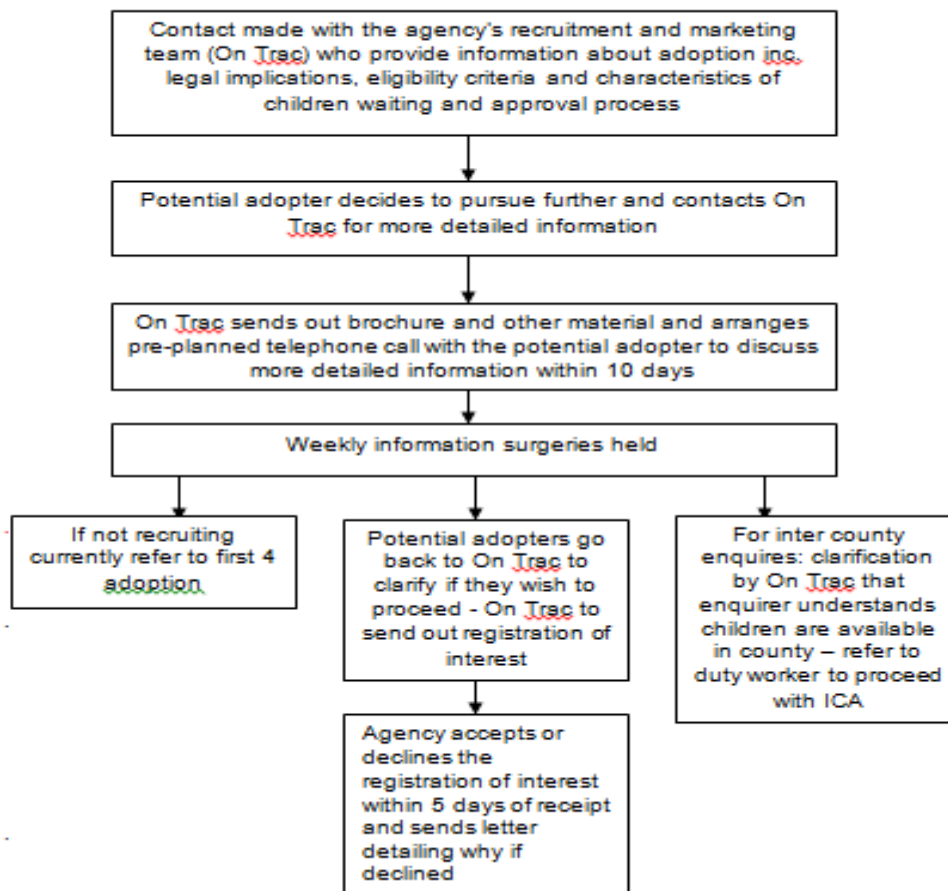
ADOPTION ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Eligibility to Adopt

Worcestershire

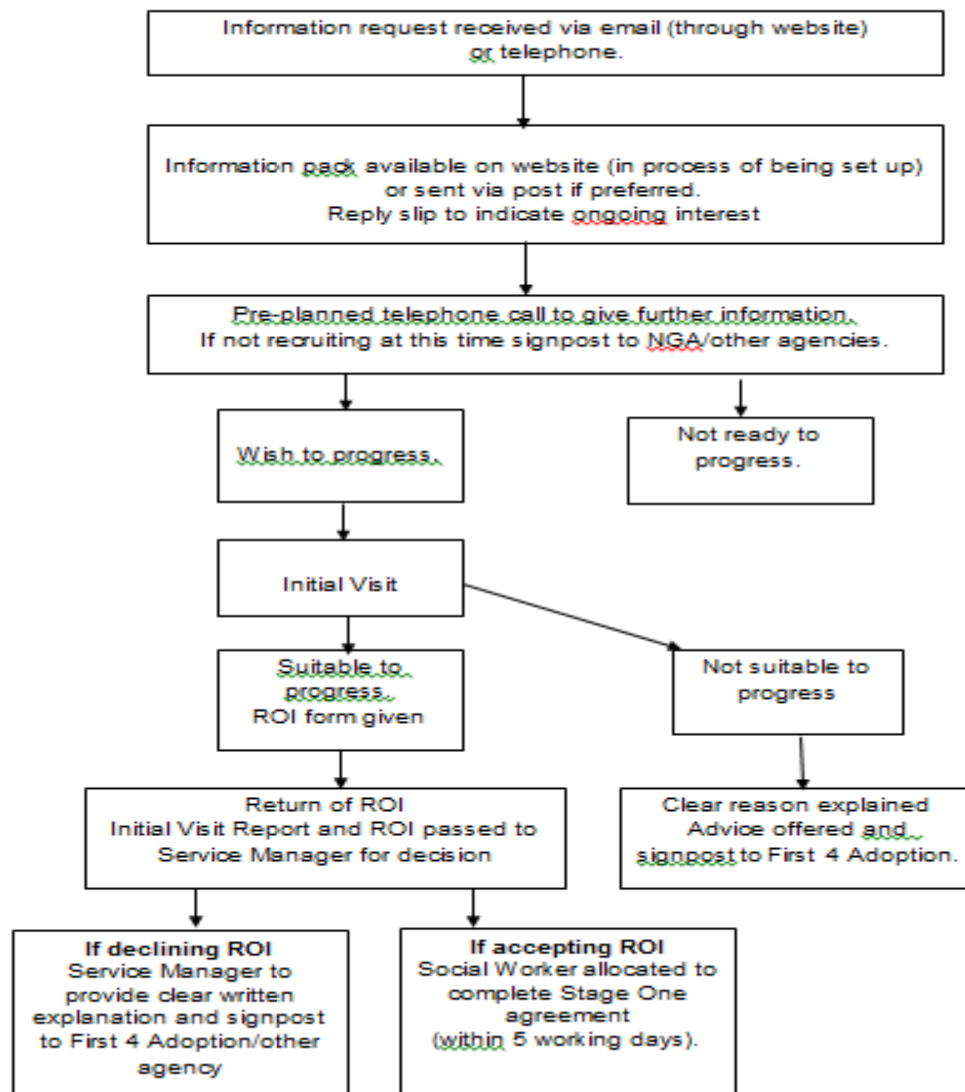


**Shropshire/Telford Councils  
Process for Adoption Eligibility to Adopt**





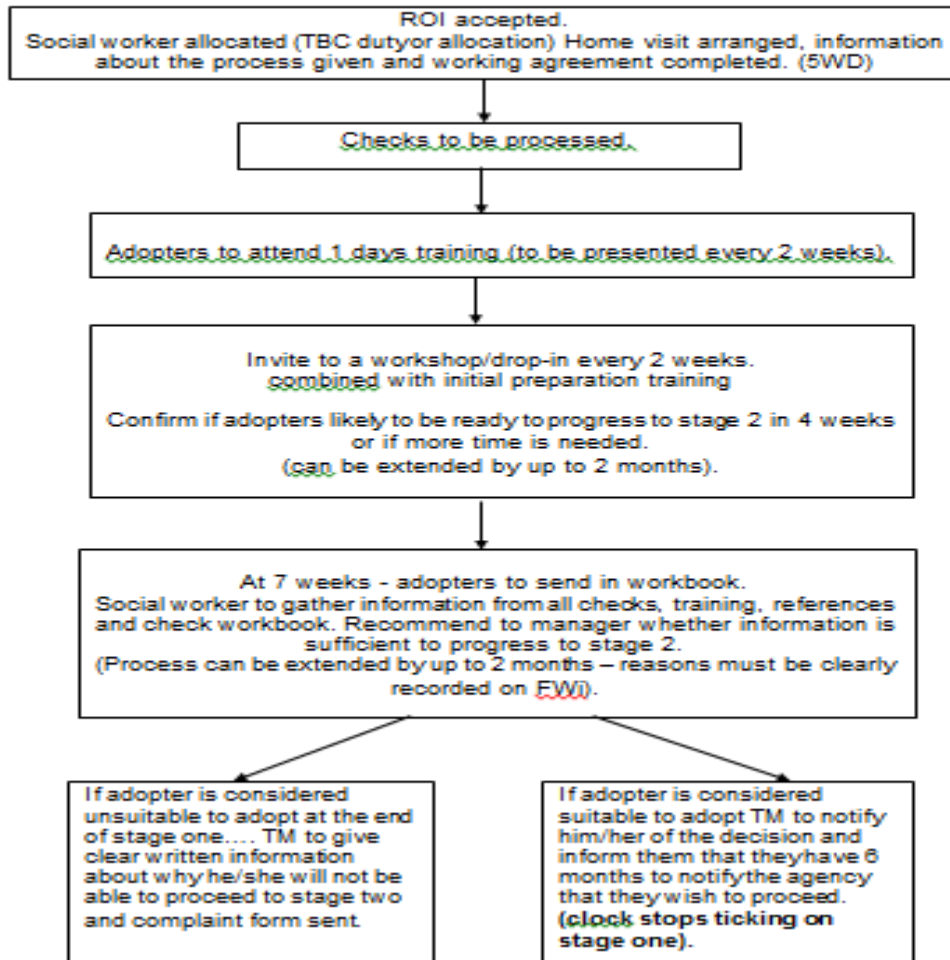
**Herefordshire Council  
Process for Adoption Pre Stage 1**



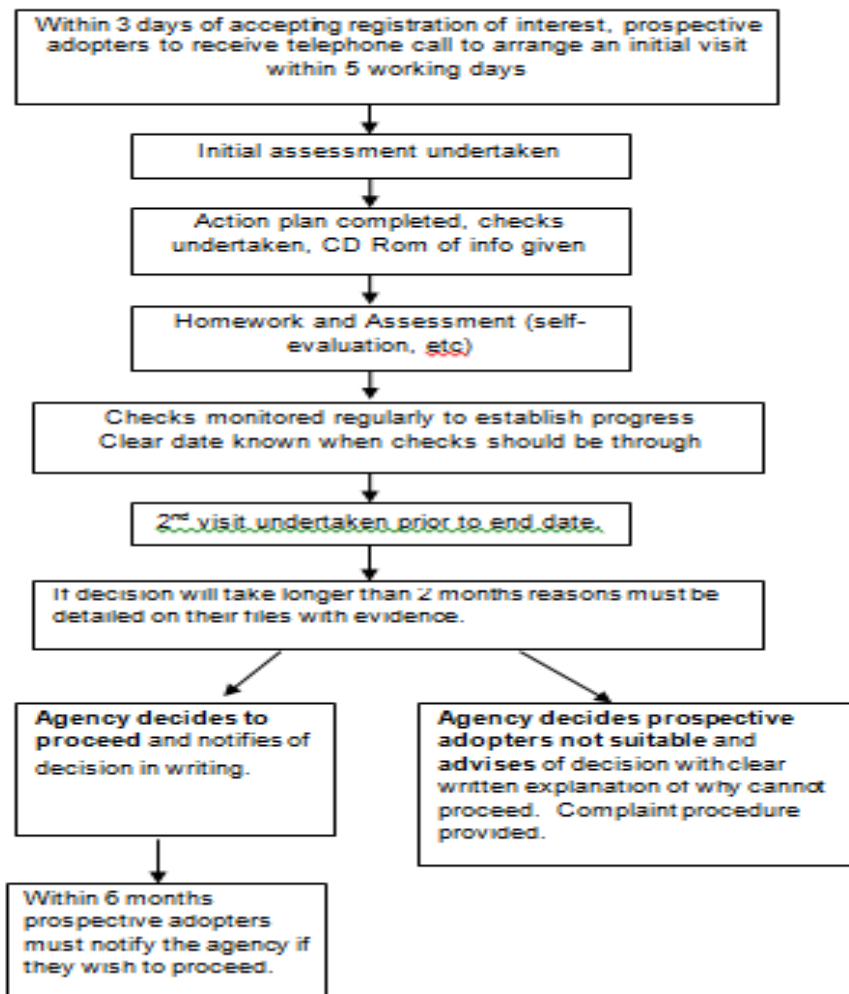
## Assessment (Stage 1)

### Worcestershire

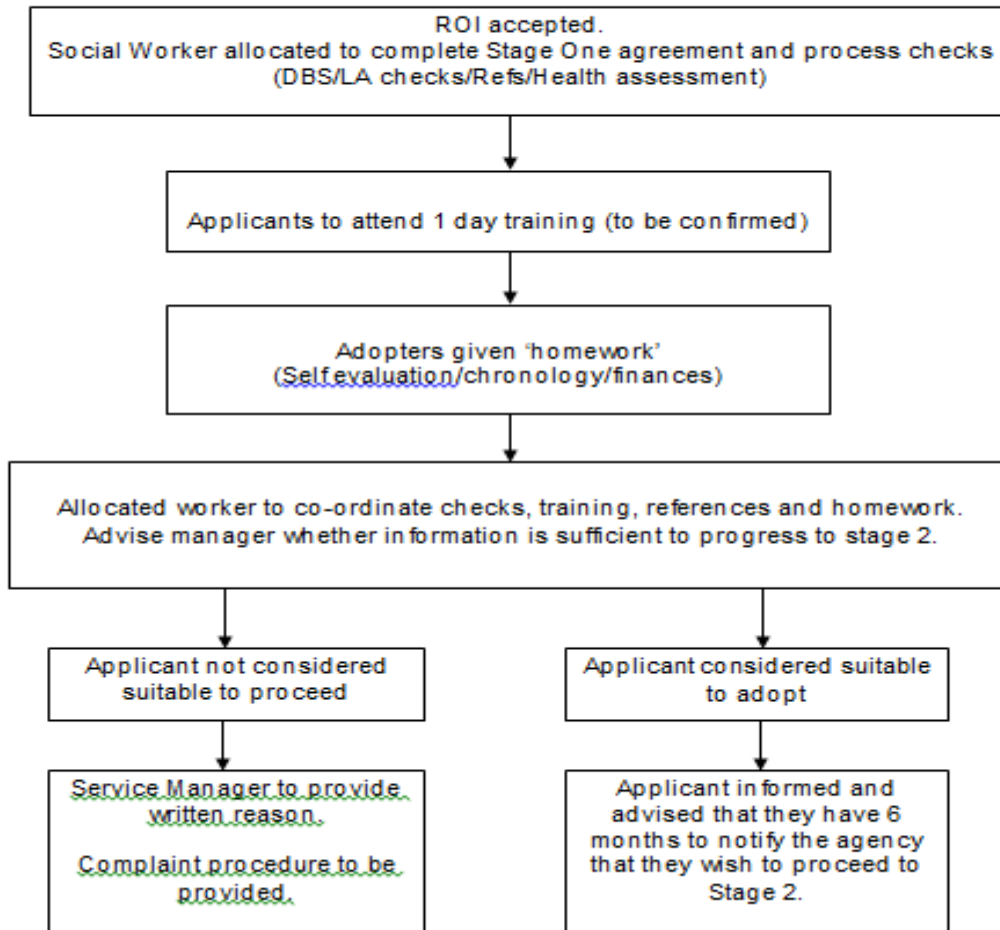
#### Worcestershire County Council Process for Adoption - Assessment Stage One (Two months)



**Shropshire/Telford Councils  
Process for Adoption - Pre Assessment Stage 1**



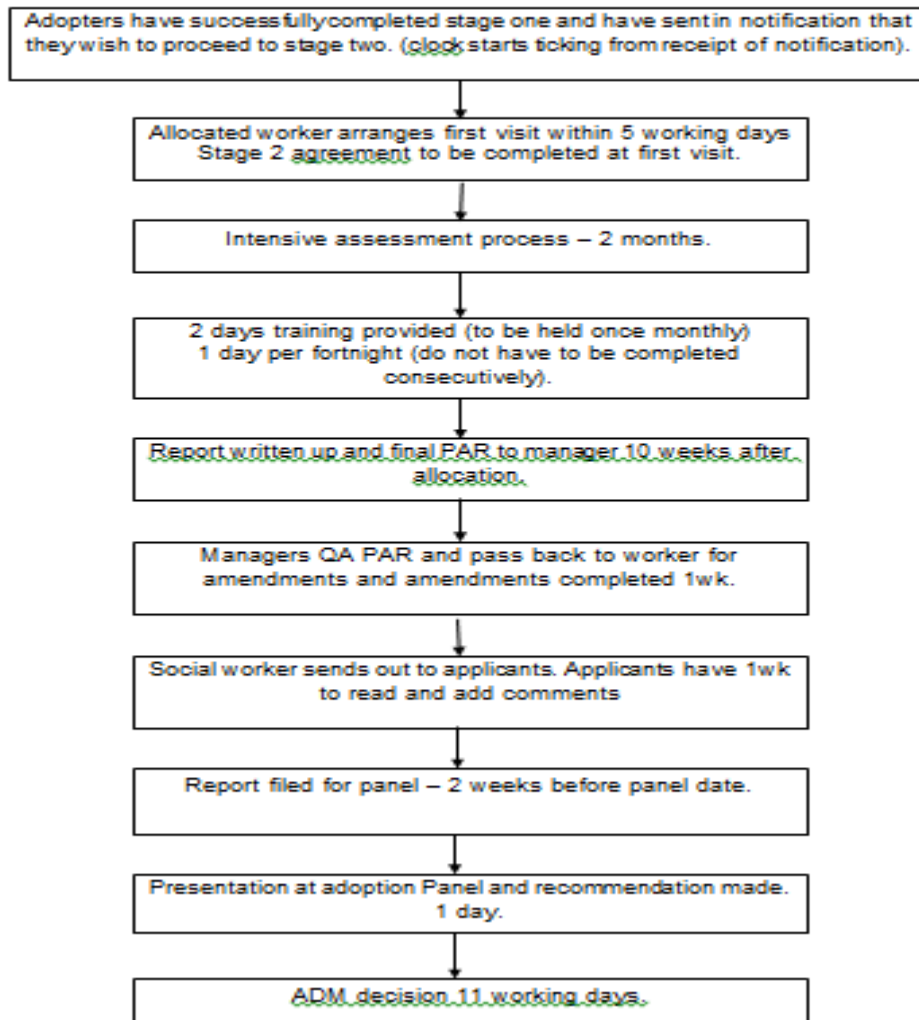
**Herefordshire Council  
Process for Adoption - Assessment Stage 1**



## Assessment (Stage 2)

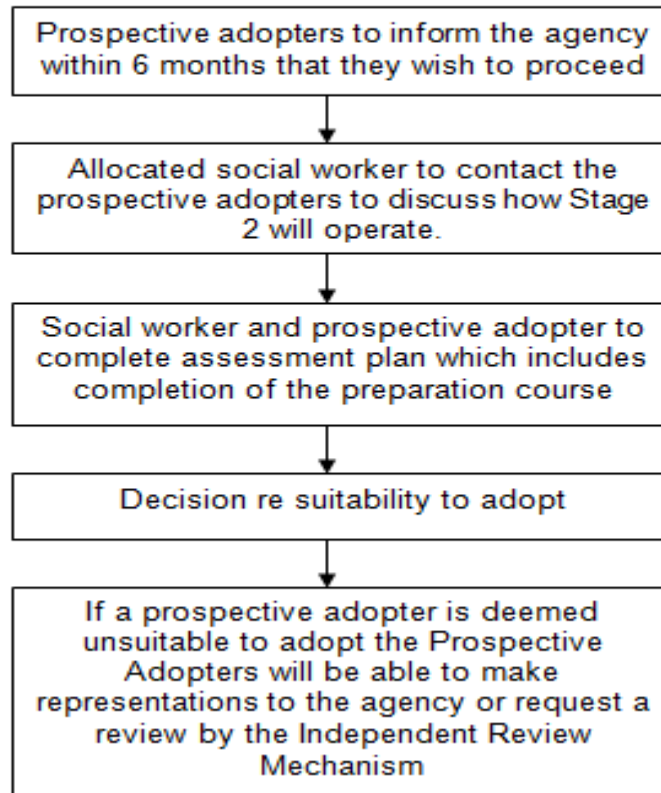
### Worcestershire

#### Worcestershire County Council Process for Adoption Assessment Stage Two (Four months)



**Shropshire/Telford Councils  
Process for Adoption - Assessment Stage 2**

In exceptional circumstances another agency can complete Stage 2.



**Herefordshire Council  
Process for Adoption Assessment Stage 2**

