

Chief Executive's Announcements – 12 July 2019

- Talk Community Hubs – a new project to develop community hubs across the county will start in August. Project coordinators have now been recruited and will work with communities to design and develop the hubs to meet the needs of the local community.
- The new Understanding Herefordshire website is now live making it easier to find key facts and figures about the county's people and places. It provides a source of information covering all of the factors which affect health and well-being including population, lifestyles, housing, the economy and environment. Profiles for every ward can be accessed from the interactive map. www.herefordshire.gov.uk/understandhere
- The children's integrated needs assessment is soon to be published (on the Understanding Herefordshire website). It includes a 'deep dive' into early help as well as an overview of other topics including childhood obesity, oral health, social mobility, special educational needs and disabilities, and hospital admissions. The report highlights the importance of child and parental mental health, as well as the need to consider the whole family when making decisions.
- Adults and Communities has seen a sustained improvement in overall numbers for Delayed Transfer of Care.
- Herefordshire Council's out of hours noise team will be available on Friday and Saturday evenings from 21 June until the end of August, and on August bank holiday Sunday, monitoring noisy summer hot spots and investigating noise complaints.
- Herefordshire Council's Natural Flood Management project received national coverage with the initiative being featured on BBC Radio 4's Farming Today programme on 14 May.
- The construction of new student accommodation at Station Approach, Hereford, was given official approval following a decision taken on 10 June, enabling building work on the 178 bed purpose-built facility to commence. It is planned to be completed ready for students to move in for the academic year starting September 2020.
- Work has started on the £9 million Cyber Quarter - Midlands Centre for Cyber Security in Hereford and was marked by an official ground breaking ceremony on 7 June. This is a joint venture between the University of Wolverhampton and Herefordshire Council and part-funded by the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). It is due to open in summer 2020.
- The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) recently announced a new High Street Community Clean-Up Fund and allocated £33,489 to support community litter groups in Herefordshire. The council used this funding to purchase additional clean-up equipment, training and signage for local community groups. The Great Herefordshire Spring Clean ran from 22 March – 23 April, as part of the Great British Spring Clean, and was a huge success, with over 60 litter picks carried out by parish councils or community groups, and over 825 bags of litter collected.
- Herefordshire Council has partnered with scheme operator Beryl, for a two year contract to provide bike share across Hereford. The scheme will be launched this month, with bikes distributed at key destinations across the city. The bikes will be available for hire via the Beryl App, which lets users find a bike and then easily unlock it, simply using their smartphone.
- Armed Forces Week, a national celebration of the contribution made to our country by those who serve and have served in Her Majesty's Armed Forces, launched on 24 June with flag raising across the county. As part as Armed Forces Day 2019 on 29 June, a Spitfire flypast was held and the Rifles Regiment marched through the city. Hereford commemorations concluded at Suvla Barracks, where dignitaries attended 'Sounding the Retreat'.

- The long awaited new boardwalk around Belmont Pools was officially opened on 22 June and the ribbon cutting ceremony was attended by organisations and others who supported the project. The hardwood boardwalk will hopefully last for years and means that people of all abilities, including those using mobility scooters, wheelchairs, prams and cycles can move safely in a loop around the pool and into the country park.
- Building control are currently experiencing a high volume of applications, due to an Approved Inspector no longer being able to carry out their function. This has meant that the live applications being dealt with by this provider have reverted to the local authority in line with legal requirements. The Building Control service are currently receiving a high level of enquires from concerned house owners and business. The Building Control team are commencing reverting these applications and assessing the status of each before instigating an inspection regime to ensure compliance with the building regulations is achieved.
- Herefordshire Council will have a strong presence at the Herefordshire skills show on Wednesday 3 July at Herefordshire racecourse. The event will be attended by over 50 employers and 400 young people and job seekers and it will help us to promote the diversity of roles within the council. There will be a strong focus on social work roles and we will be taking the opportunity to promote active travel and the opportunities Herefordshire offers young people.
- The revenue and benefits team have been short listed for three national awards by the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuations (IRRV)
- Herefordshire received praise from the DfE for achieving a performance level of 93.7% of Education Health and Care needs assessments completed in 20 weeks in 2018.
- The DfE has also reviewed Herefordshire's progress since the Ofsted inspection of local authority children's services in June 2018 and the focused visit in January 2019 and provided a letter setting out conclusions. The letter notes that "They (*Herefordshire*) are taking the necessary actions through their improvement plan, which is reviewed regularly, but are aware that further challenges will emerge and of the need to continue to drive forward improvement"
- Safeguarding and Family Support now has permanent team managers and heads of service in all positions which is really positive. However, the service is still experiencing significant pressure in terms of recruitment for social workers, particularly in our CP Court teams with a high turnover of agency staff and a real struggle to recruit agency and permanent staff. A range of measures are being taken. We are very aware of the dedication of staff who continue to focus on their work with children, young people and families.
- Herefordshire has agreed to new arrangements in line with Working Together 2018 to replace the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Board.
- We congratulate Caryn Cox in Public Health, who has been honoured as a long-term volunteer for St John Ambulance, at a special Investiture Ceremony in Llandaff Cathedral in Cardiff. Caryn was admitted as an Officer of the Order of St John (OstJ) and presented with the Insignia by the Prior of the Order of St John in Wales.