

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Re-opening of Hereford, Leominster, Ross and Ledbury libraries
Date of decision:	12 April 2021
Decision maker:	Director for Economy & Place
Authority for delegated decision:	Chief Executive Scheme of Delegation – Updated 29 September 2020 SA41
Ward:	Sites in Hereford, Leominster, Ross and Ledbury but the service is countywide
Consultation:	The following have been consulted and are content for this decision to be taken: Health & Safety, Legal services, Finance, and Cabinet Member for Commissioning, Procurement and Assets. Unison have also been consulted to ensure staff have safe working practices in place
Decision made:	To re-open the four library sites mentioned above for public access for the browsing and selection of books and for pre-booked public computer access. Also for the collection of green garden waste sacks that have been pre-ordered and paid for
Reasons for decision:	<p>The above sites delivering a library service on behalf of Herefordshire Council have been closed since March 20th 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak. In recent months they have been offering a click and collect service in line with national regulations. In line with government guidance, libraries are allowed to open to the public again from 12th April. A link to the guidance is below</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do</p> <p>The national professional body, Libraries Connected, has worked with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport as well as Public Health England, to produce a library recovery toolkit. This has been adopted as best practice across England and recommends a phased reintroduction of library services.</p> <p>At this stage, national guidance recommends library use is time limited and restricted to returning, browsing and borrowing items and for pre-booked sessions using the public access computers.</p> <p>In addition, the libraries will be a collection point for green garden waste sacks that have been pre-ordered and paid for via the Herefordshire Council website.</p> <p>At this stage the opening hours for the four sites will be as follows :</p> <p>Hereford : Tuesday – Friday 10.00 – 12.00 and 14.00 – 16.00, Saturday 10.00 – 12.00</p> <p>Leominster, Ledbury and Ross : Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10.00-12.00 and 14.00-16.00, Saturday 10.00 – 12.00</p> <p>Hereford, Leominster and Ross will re-open the week beginning 12th April 2021. Ledbury library will re-open the week beginning 19 April 2021. This is because it is being used as a Lateral Flow Testing venue until Friday 9 April. The following</p>

	<p>week will be required to remove the infrastructure of the testing venue and prepare the library for re-opening.</p> <p>The reintroduction of the service at these four sites will be extended as regulations allow and other library sites will be opened as soon as is safely possible.</p> <p>Herefordshire Library Service has worked with the relevant other Council Departments to ensure due process is followed to provide the service in a manner that is safe for staff and customers.</p>
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<p>A full COVID-19 secure risk assessment has been undertaken to ensure ways of working that will protect both staff and customers. This has been shared with and approved by both Herefordshire Council's Health & Safety team and UNISON.</p> <p>The service's revenue budget includes costs for staff to provide the service. The only financial implication will be for ongoing PPE such as hand sanitizer.</p> <p>Legal advice has been sought. This advice has confirmed that in accordance with current UK Government guidance, published on 29th March 2021 and updated on 6th April 2021, we may reintroduce the library service.</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<p>The option not to reintroduce the service yet was considered. This was rejected as this element of the service can be reintroduced safely and is in line with national guidance</p>
Details of any declarations of interest made:	<p>None</p>

Signed

Richard Ball
 Director fro Economy & Place

Date: 12 April 2021