

Agenda

Cabinet

Date: Thursday 26 May 2022

Time: 2.30 pm

**Place: The Conference Room, Herefordshire Council Offices,
Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE**

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

For any further information please contact:

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Agenda for the meeting of Cabinet

Membership

Chairperson	Councillor David Hitchiner, Leader of the Council
Vice-Chairperson	Councillor Liz Harvey, Deputy Leader of the Council
	Councillor Ellie Chowns
	Councillor Pauline Crockett
	Councillor Gemma Davies
	Councillor John Harrington
	Councillor Diana Toynbee
	Councillor Ange Tyler

Agenda

	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive any apologies for absence.	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive declarations of interests in respect of Schedule 1, Schedule 2 or Other Interests from members of the committee in respect of items on the agenda.	
3. MINUTES To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2022.	11 - 20
HOW TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS <i>The deadline for submission of questions for this meeting is:</i> 9:30am on Monday 23 May 2022. <i>Questions must be submitted to councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk. Questions sent to any other address may not be accepted.</i> <i>Accepted questions and the response to them will be published as a supplement to the agenda papers prior to the meeting. Further information and guidance is available at https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/getinvolved</i>	
4. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC To receive questions from members of the public.	
5. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS To receive questions from councillors.	
6. CHILDREN IMPROVEMENT PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE To provide an update to cabinet on the children's improvement plan.	21 - 70
7. NUTRIENT CERTAINTY As the competent body under the Habitat and Species Regulations (2017) Cabinet is asked to note the progress being made towards creating Integrated Wetlands phosphate reduction and steps being taken to ensure Nutrient Certainty to the required standard of beyond reasonable scientific doubt.	71 - 76
8. PHOSPHATE CREDIT PRICING AND ALLOCATION POLICY Cabinet are asked to consider the proposed pricing arrangements for Phosphate Credits, an interim allocation policy pending a full allocation policy and to note the proposed Phosphate Credit Allocation Policy.	77 - 84
9. ENERGY REBATE DISCRETIONARY FUND To approve the Energy Rebate Discretionary Fund scheme and the criteria for the allocation of the funding.	85 - 94

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| 10. HEREFORDSHIRE COUNTY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT ADVANCE REQUEST | 95 - 100 |
| To seek approval for an advance loan of up to £210,000 in 2022/23 to the Herefordshire County Business Improvement District (BID) Limited to enable the company to become operational until such time as the council (as the billing authority) can commence collection of the 2% business rates levy. | |
| 11. PROMOTING SAFETY: HEREFORDSHIRE'S STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING DOMESTIC ABUSE 2021-24 | 101 - 192 |
| To approve the final draft of the Domestic Abuse Strategy for Herefordshire 2021-2024, in accordance with the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. | |
| 12. QUARTER 4 BUDGET & PERFORMANCE REPORT | 193 - 256 |
| To review performance for Quarter 4 2021/22 and the final budget outturn for the year. | |

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We will review and update this guidance in line with Government advice and restrictions. Thank you for your help in keeping Herefordshire Council meetings safe.

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- Attend all Council, Cabinet, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings unless the business to be transacted would disclose 'confidential' or 'exempt' information.
- Inspect agenda and public reports at least five clear days before the date of the meeting. Agenda and reports (relating to items to be considered in public) are available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/meetings
- Inspect minutes of the Council and all committees and sub-committees and written statements of decisions taken by the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members for up to six years following a meeting.
- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
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- Have access to a list specifying those powers on which the Council have delegated decision making to their officers identifying the officers concerned by title. Information about councillors is available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/councillors
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The location of the office and details of city bus services can be viewed at:

<http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1597/hereford-city-bus-map-local-services->

Guide to Cabinet

The Executive or Cabinet of the Herefordshire Council consists of a Leader and Deputy Leader and six other Cabinet Members each with their own individual programme area responsibilities. The current Cabinet membership is:

Cllr David Hitchiner (Leader) (Independents for Herefordshire)	Corporate Strategy and Budget
Cllr Liz Harvey (Deputy Leader) (Independents for Herefordshire)	Finance, Corporate Services and Planning
Cllr Diana Toynbee (The Green Party)	Children's and Family Services, and Young People's Attainment
Cllr Gemma Davies (Independents for Herefordshire)	Commissioning, Procurement and assets
Cllr Ellie Chowns (The Green Party)	Environment and Economy
Cllr Pauline Crockett (Independents for Herefordshire)	Health and Adult Wellbeing
Cllr Ange Tyler (Independents for Herefordshire)	Housing, regulatory services, and community
Cllr John Harrington (Independents for Herefordshire)	Infrastructure and Transport

The Cabinet's roles are:

- To consider the overall management and direction of the Council. Directed by the Leader of the Council, it will work with senior managers to ensure the policies of Herefordshire are clear and carried through effectively;
- To propose to Council a strategic policy framework and individual strategic policies;
- To identify priorities and recommend them to Council;
- To propose to Council the Council's budget and levels of Council Tax;
- To give guidance in relation to: policy co-ordination; implementation of policy; management of the Council; senior employees in relation to day to day implementation issues;
- To receive reports from Cabinet Members on significant matters requiring consideration and proposals for new or amended policies and initiatives;
- To consider and determine policy issues within the policy framework covering more than one programme area and issues relating to the implementation of the outcomes of monitoring reviews.

Who attends cabinet meetings?

	Members of the cabinet, including the leader of the council and deputy leader – these are the decision makers, only members of the cabinet can vote on recommendations put to the meeting.
	Officers of the council – attend to present reports and give technical advice to cabinet members
	Chairpersons of scrutiny committees – attend to present the views of their committee if it has considered the item under discussion
	Political group leaders attend to present the views of their political group on the item under discussion. Other councillors may also attend as observers but are not entitled to take part in the discussion.

The Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Herefordshire Council

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at The Conference Room, Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Thursday 28 April 2022 at 2.30 pm

Cabinet Members Physically Present and voting: Councillor David Hitchiner, Leader of the Council (Chairperson)

Councillors Ellie Chowns, Pauline Crockett and Ange Tyler

Cabinet Members in remote attendance Councillors Gemma Davies, John Harrington and Diana Toynbee

Cabinet members attending the meeting remotely, e.g. through video conferencing facilities, may not vote on any decisions taken.

Group leaders / representatives in attendance Councillors Jonathan Lester, Bob Matthews, Toni Fagan and William Wilding

Scrutiny chairpersons in attendance Councillors Jonathan Lester and Phillip Howells

Officers in attendance: Chief Executive, Director of resources and assurance, Director of Public Health, Interim head of legal services, Corporate Director - Economy and Environment and Head of environment, climate emergency and waste services

105. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Liz Harvey.

106. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

107. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

108. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Pages 5 - 8)

Questions received and responses given are attached as appendix 1 to the minutes.

109. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS (Pages 9 - 10)

Questions received and responses given are attached as appendix 2 to the minutes.

110. CITIZENS CLIMATE ASSEMBLY NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The cabinet member environment and economy introduced the report and highlighted the key points. The proposals in the report originated from a range of sources, including the recommendations made by the climate assembly, the existing climate and nature related work at the council and the Nature Strategy. The cabinet member thanked members of the climate assembly and officers for their time and effort in pulling together the information.

Cabinet members discussed the recommendations and proposed projects. Key points were noted as:

- The recent increases in the cost of energy had focussed attention on energy efficiency;
- The projects would have social value and support community wellbeing as well as deliver benefits for the environment;
- Some of the climate assembly recommendations were very ambitious, such as the shift of public transport off fossil fuels, and the council recognised that it might not be able to meet the suggested deadlines but would look at ways to make the transition;
- Skills development was an important element to ensure the local workforce could support future projects;
- The process of the assembly had been useful and interesting and was a demonstration of the council listening and engaging with the community;
- The stop-start nature of government funding was a challenge in delivering projects of this nature;
- The council would continue to lobby central government to take the long term decisions required to address the climate and nature emergency.

The next steps were noted. Officers would produce full business cases for the projects identified as top priorities and in doing so flag those that could not be taken forward. If high priority projects were not able to progress, officers would consult with relevant cabinet members and lower priority projects would be considered in their place. Implementation would take 2 – 4 years.

Group leaders provided the views and queries of their groups. It was noted that:

- The home efficiency grant would be in addition to the work already being done by Keep Herefordshire Warm and there was a dedicated communications resource for climate work to help promote activities and initiatives;
- The amounts suggested against each project were indicative and would be refined through the full business cases;
- The council's focus with regard to tree planting would be on co-ordinating activity, for example working with land owners to identify land that could be planted;
- Strong project and contract management was needed, all projects would be managed by the project management office and the outcomes measured through mechanisms such as the delivery strategy and carbon management plan;
- It was important to respond to the consultation on the local plan to identify the types of development that should be brought forward;
- The council was engaging with local businesses in its response to the climate emergency, including encouraging businesses to make changes that would save on their bottom line while also reducing their environmental impact;
- The funding allocated to support these projects came from additional monies from the government but more support and leadership was needed;
- The council would continue to link up with national and international climate strategy initiatives such as cycle to work week.

The leader of the council summarised the discussion. He highlighted that the whole Council had supported the declaration of a climate emergency and the setting up of the citizens' assembly. The actions proposed would have long term impacts and returns may take decades to show. Value for money in this context would have to be demonstrated over a very long period of time.

It was resolved that cabinet:

- a) **Approve the development of business cases as required for the priority projects listed in Appendix 2;**
- b) **Delegate authority to Corporate Director, Economy and Environment, subject to consultation with relevant Cabinet Members and the s151 officer to:**
 - a. **approve viable projects within an overall budget of £1.33million;**

- b. bring forward business cases for the lower priority projects in appendix 2 should the priority projects prove unviable; and**
- c) Delegate authority to Corporate Director, Economy and Environment, for all operational decisions to deliver the projects following approval of the business cases.**

The meeting ended at 3.47 pm

Chairperson

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 28 APRIL 2022**Question 1****From: Ms S Watkins, Hereford****To: cabinet member, infrastructure and transport**

Although some progress has been made and the Beryl bikes are extremely popular, what will be done to make cycling safer in the city? I live on Kings Acre Road and this route into Hereford is not safe for cyclists. I have experienced many near misses. If I cycle from my house (near Blue Diamond) to the city centre, none of those roads are cycle friendly, culminating in the large roundabout by Tesco. The cycle track from Stretton Sugwas towards the city is fantastic and well used - we need more of these type of cycle tracks to encourage more cycling and less car use.

Response

Thank you very much for your positive comments about the Beryl scheme and I am glad we were able to extend the service after a competitive tender and also that we will soon see more electric bikes, which have been extremely popular, coming into the bays. We are also in the early stages of looking at providing some cargo bikes so people can do their shopping on a Beryl. Beryl tells us, in no short measure due to the support provided by Pedicargo, that their Hereford scheme, although smaller than some, is one of the most successful and well used and are full of praise for the residents of Herefordshire who have taken the scheme to their heart.

Regards current cycle path/route provision, you are right, we simply do not have enough good quality cycle routes in and around the City. And what previous administrations, through different schemes, have provided in the past has not been good enough, particularly in relation to the practice of installing non-segregated cycle lanes, using the shared pavement approach instead and also accepting schemes that gave up when it came to designing safe pathways through junctions. The political focus in the past has been on very large road projects and serious efforts to make Hereford a safe and efficient cycling and walking City has not been pursued with the same vigour (although I must also give credit to the previous Conservative administration for overseeing the introduction of the Beryl scheme).

This Council is strongly committed to improving and extending all active travel options and through the development of our ambitious new Hereford City Masterplan we are looking to improve and design new schemes that make it much easier and safer to travel by bike, foot or bus.

Here our ambition is to sensibly and expediently design as many segregated – and crucially, connected - routes as possible and to also highlight and improve the 'safe routes' that currently exist and go through some of our quieter side streets and roads. We are also looking at slow speed/20mph zones in parts or the whole of the City to enable a safer more friendly road environment where roads must be shared by cyclists and motorists. As always, this is about balance, we need those that use cars through choice or need to still be able to do so but rebalance some of that space and treat cyclists and pedestrians with parity.

This will require a mind-set change in motorists and complementary measures will be introduced to aid that change. Hereford will - in the short to medium term – have a new

safe properly connected network for cycling separate from cars and segregated from pedestrians. This will include the key transport corridors such as the A438 Kings Acre Road and the junctions which we know present real problems for cyclist and pedestrians such as the Whitecross roundabout. The new route designs will be following the latest government guidance set out in Local Transport Note 1:20 and outlined in the government's Gear Change Strategy.

This is supported by the latest research which shows that improved walking and cycling options with reduced traffic creates more attractive, healthier and safer spaces for people and families to shop and spend their leisure time.

In addition to developing new dedicated cycle routes we also offer a range of free support including our adult cycle training sessions, Bikeability and road safety training, school travel plan support, Park and Choose sites and business advice through our Travel for Work Network.

Question 2

From: Dr N Geeson

To: cabinet member, environment and economy

First, many congratulations on this list of so many excellent Recommendations and a great Action Plan from the Citizens Climate Assembly. With regard to Protecting and Enhancing Nature we see there will be a focus on collecting evidence more widely. There may be local knowledge from local residents about wildlife, waterways, flood risk, soil properties, etc. that could add to this evidence. Could there be a specific mechanism to help collect local knowledge so that it can be shared and used easily?

Response

Thank you for your positive comments on the action plan which was developed by bringing together the excellent work from the Citizens Assembly, a review of national best practice, existing activity, the countywide climate & nature action plan and officer recommendations.

Working in partnership is absolutely essential to addressing the climate and ecological emergency and I completely agree that we need to bring together all of our collective knowledge. The mechanism for this will be through the development of the new Nature Recovery Strategy and Nature Recovery Mapping which will bring together, update and

improve all the available datasets available in the county. This will be developed in partnership and will include a consultation process to collate this.

In addition I would also encourage residents to submit any local wildlife data to the Herefordshire Biological Records Centre which collects and collates data about species, designated sites and habitats for the county.

Supplementary question

I thank the Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy very much for her positive answer. I would like to know how we can be informed about the new Nature Recovery Strategy and Nature Recovery Mapping as these develop further.

Response

The cabinet member explained that guidance from the government was still coming through so it was not possible at this time to say what public engagement would take place or when but it was essential that local people were involved. She gave an assurance that public engagement would take place and that she would follow up on this with officers and make a further statement in due course.

COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 28 APRIL 2022

Question 1

From: Cllr Shaw, Bromyard Bringsty ward

To: cabinet member, commissioning, procurement and assets

Does the Cabinet member responsible agree with the Environment Minister Jo Churchill when she says:

“When it comes to fly-tipping, enough is enough. These appalling incidents cost us £392 million a year and it is time to put a stop to them.

I want to make sure that recycling and the correct disposal of rubbish is free, accessible and easy for householders. No one should be tempted to fly tip or turn to waste criminals and rogue operators.”

Is the Cabinet member pleased that households will no longer have to pay to get rid of DIY waste under plans set out by government to change the rules that currently allows some Local Authorities to charge for DIY waste from households. Under the proposals, household DIYers would not be charged to get rid of waste including plasterboards, bricks and bath units.

Response

I strongly agree that enough is enough and that we need to put a stop to fly-tipping which is an irresponsible and illegal activity that costs the taxpayer and causes significant environmental harm.

Here our trading standards team are working closely with the Police Crime Commissioners on a new project to further reduce fly-tipping in the county.

The disposal of any waste costs money and there is a long held principle that the polluter should pay for this. As you may be aware we have a new savings target about the policy choice regarding the cost of disposing non-household waste such as soil, rubble and DIY waste and whether this should be met from general council tax or a specific charge so that the producer pays. To be clear, the consultation outlines the criteria where DIY waste will be acceptable and includes it not being more than 300 litres, so no more than an average car boot load and not delivered to an HRC more frequently than once per week. Currently we do not have these restrictions in place but fly tipping is still an occurrence, indicating that those carrying out the fly-tipping do so because the waste has resulted from a commercial activity for which the HRCs cannot be used to dispose of this waste.

One thing we are very clear about is that the cost of disposal is not an excuse for law breaking and damaging the environment. I’m unclear on your question somewhat as it

infers to me that there is a suggestion that we should provide a free service subsidised by the council tax payer because people might break the law?

Supplementary question

I thank the Cabinet member for her answer.

Page 10 of Appendix A of the Medium Term Financial Strategy as published in February details £345,000 of income in 2024/25 from introducing charges for household DIY waste at Herefordshire's household waste centres.

At the time that this was announced members including myself were concerned that this would lead to more fly-tipping and suggested that enforcement would need additional resources if our country side was not to be blighted. Arguably Herefordshire residents are already paying to dispose of their household waste, the introduction of such charges for home projects would suggest that this administration intends that they should pay twice.

Will the cabinet member explain how they now intend to meet the £345,000 annual black hole in the MTFS as the authority is now likely to be prevented by legislation from making these charges?

Response

The cabinet member explained that the response to the original questions made clear this was a proposal being worked up and that it was not yet certain that this legislation would be approved. A detailed written response would be provided.

The following response was provided after the meeting.

Whilst the current government consultation proposes that local authorities do not charge for DIY waste, it is important to note that this is still under consultation, has not been confirmed and that numerous local authorities already make a charge for this.

We will closely monitor the outcome of the consultation whilst we further develop this proposal, and if this is not possible then alternative saving proposals for 2024/25 will be considered.

Title of report: Children Improvement Plan - Progress Update

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 26 May 2022

Report by: Corporate Director, Children and Young People

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

Children and Families Improvement Plan – Progress Update.

Recommendation(s)

That cabinet:

- a) Reflect on the progress and impact of improvement activity; and**
- b) note the development of version two of the Improvement Plan.**

Alternative options

- 1. Cabinet could choose not to review the progress of the Children's and Families Improvement Plan but this is not recommended as the Children's Improvement Plan is one of the council's priorities.

Key considerations

2. On 18 May 2021, the Department for Education (DfE) issued Herefordshire Council with a [non-statutory notice to improve](#).
3. On 28 October 2021, [Cabinet endorsed](#) version 1 of the Children and Families Strategic Improvement Plan. This plan was largely transactional and focused on activity rather than on outcomes. As we have progressed version 1 of the plan we have refined our approach and this has resulted in the development of draft version 2 of the Children's Improvement Plan which has outcomes at its centre (Appendix 1). This will allow us to report more accurately on the impact of our improvements on the lives of children and young people.
4. At the time of writing (April 2022), Members, staff and partners have been invited to comment version 2 of the Children's Improvement plan. All comments will be reviewed and carefully considered and incorporated where they clearly develop the plan further.
5. A draft copy of version 2 of the plan was taken to the Herefordshire Improvement Board, chaired by our DfE Advisor, and will be using this as a working document from the end of April 2022.
6. Once finalised, version 2 of the plan will include a series of "Measures that Matter" that are a distinct set of indicators which together will provide evidence of ongoing improvement and impact. These are local indicators and are in addition to the wide range of established key performance indicators that are traditionally available to the service.
7. The revised plan and Measures that matter are expected to be approved at meeting of the Operational Board on 16 May 2022.
8. On 31 March 2022, [Cabinet approved](#) £11.49m Resilience Reserve funding for transformation of Children's Services. This will enable us to better resource Children's Social Care services and deliver improvement.
9. The Department for Education (DfE) conducted a further 6-month review on 25 April. Progress in a number of key areas of performance was noted, as was the significant rise in demand experienced by the service in recent months. The services remains the focus of a non-statutory improvement notice and will do at least until the outcome of a future inspection by Ofsted is known.
10. 99.89% of the £1.7m grant from the DfE, which had to be utilised by 31 March 2022, was used leaving an underspent of just £2,376 (0.14%) The grant was to support and accelerate improvement activity, and in particular supported increased capacity and work to develop our Early Help offer and integration with Talk Community.
11. The Director of Children's Services maintains regular communication with local Ofsted officials and the 'Annual Conversation' a meeting between senior officers and senior Ofsted officials takes place on 9 June 2022. The focus of this meeting, which Ofsted conducts with each local authority children's services across the country, is on schools, early years, SEND, post 16 provision, and children's social care provision. Formal feedback from this meeting will be included in a future report to Cabinet.
12. The service is due an ILACS (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services) by Ofsted, expected later this year and themes emerging from the Annual Conversation will likely inform the inspectors' key lines of enquiry.
13. Recruitment of experienced workers remains a challenge, a national topic being discussed by the DfE and the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS).

14. A career progression scheme for social workers has been developed and its implementation will begin at the end of May 2022.
15. Recruitment of the first group of Newly Qualified Social Workers, supported by the additional investment agreed by Cabinet on 31 March 2022 is underway.
16. Provisional offers have been made to two permanent Service Directors, appointed following an assessment day on 27 April 2022 and plans for their arrival and induction are being developed.
17. Improved performance is now becoming evident in a number of key areas despite having seen considerable rises in demand in recent months, the focus in recent months being on those areas that have been identified by Ofsted as priority action such as caseloads, and supervision. Progress and impact is summarised in Appendix 2.
18. The Corporate Parenting Board met on 27 April 2022 with a smaller group of nominated Councillors and officers to participate in a workshop facilitated by the Local Government Association. A self-evaluation activity was commenced and when completed will contribute to further developmental activity and peer-led review in the coming months.
19. The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee met on 26 April and considered the Transformation paper presented to Cabinet on 31 March 2022 and the revised Improvement Plan. The Scrutiny Committee propose to resume bi-monthly meetings after the next meeting in May and are considering the establishment of a Task and Finish group to consider workforce-related topics such as retention and recruitment, learning and development, and workloads.

Community impact

20. The notice requiring improvement has a direct and indirect effect on the lives of both current and future children and families in Herefordshire.
21. Keeping children safe is one of the most important things this council does and the details in this report support whatever action is required to ensure children and families receive the services they deserve.
22. The County Plan 2020–2024 includes the ambition to ‘strengthen communities to ensure everyone lives well and safely together’. Specifically, the council aims to:
 - a. Ensure all children are healthy, safe, and inspired to achieve;
 - b. Ensure that children in care, and moving on from care, are well supported and make good life choices; and
 - c. Protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people.

Environmental Impact

23. There are no specific environmental impacts arising from this report.
24. The transformation activity will be undertaken with consideration to minimise waste and resource in line with the Council’s Environmental Policy.

Equality duty

25. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

26. The Equality Act 2010 established a positive obligation on local authorities to promote equality and to reduce discrimination in relation to any of the nine protected characteristics:

- a. Age;
- b. disability;
- c. gender reassignment;
- d. pregnancy and maternity;
- e. marriage and civil partnership;
- f. race;
- g. religion or belief; sex; and
- h. sexual orientation.

27. In particular, the council must have due regard to the public sector equality duty when taking any decisions on service changes.

28. As our projects and service delivery progresses, and changes are designed, equality impact assessment will be undertaken where necessary.

Resource implications

29. There are significant additional revenue implications for the improvement work required. There are no expected capital resource implications.
30. The resource implications for 2022-2023 are not included in the base budget and were considered by Cabinet on 31 March 2022.

Legal implications

31. The Council was issued with a non-statutory improvement notice by the Department for Education on 18 May 2021. To comply with this notice, the Council must work with the DfE Adviser for a minimum of 12 months, and until such time that the Secretary of State is satisfied this is no longer required.
32. The notice sets out that the council should aim for actions included in the Improvement Plan to be delivered by the end of April 2022 or sooner, where appropriate. If there is a failure to comply with this notice or should ministers not be satisfied with the Council's progress at any stage, ministers may choose to invoke their statutory powers of intervention (s497A Education Act 1996) to direct the council to enter into an appropriate arrangement to secure the improvements required in children's services, potentially resulting in the establishment of a Trust.

Risk management

33. The improvement notice is clear that, should the council be unwilling or unable to comply with this improvement notice, or should ministers not be satisfied with the Council's progress at any stage, ministers may choose to invoke their statutory powers of intervention (s497A Education Act 1996) to direct the council to enter into an appropriate arrangement to secure the improvements required in children's services.
34. Statutory improvement notices could be issued and more critical or enduring under-performance may necessitate the use of Statutory Directions compelling the Council to take certain actions.
35. In extreme cases the DfE can direct partial or complete outsourcing of Children Services to a third party or the establishment of a Children's Trust.

Consultees

36. None.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Final Draft Improvement Plan v2
Appendix 2 – Performance and Impact summary

Background papers

None.

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Governance	Sarah Buffrey, Democratic Services Officer	Date 11/05/2022
Finance	Louise Devlin	Date 11/05/2022
Legal	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 10/05/2022
Equality Duty	Carol Trachonitis	Date 11/05/2022
Procurement	Lee Robertson	Date 11/05/2022
Risk	Bart Popelier	Date 12/05/2022
Approved by	Darryl Freeman	Date 10/05/2022

Children and Young People Directorate

Children's Social Care and Early Help Improvement Plan 2022-2024

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Introduction

Most important to us is the effectiveness of the work that we do and the difference we make to the lives of our children and young people in Herefordshire. This is why it is vital that we put children, young people and families at the heart of everything we do.

We want our county to be a place where children are supported to remain with their families wherever possible, through to stability and success in adulthood and in the future to be considered a *Child-Friendly county*.

More than this, we are determined to improve our services for our most vulnerable children, young people and families and are committed to ensuring that all children have the best start in life. We believe that children should grow and achieve within their own families when it is safe for them to do so and are committed to working with other agencies to make sure that our children and young people are safe and able to reach their full potential.

2

The High Court Judgement in 2021 and the finding of the Ofsted Inspection (2018) and subsequent Focused Visits do not demonstrate the quality of services we strive to deliver or that our children and families expect and deserve. Ensuring our children's services are the best they can be has been the council's number one priority since 2021.

This revised Improvement Plan goes into more detail than the previous version, published in November 2021, and is informed by a clear set of outcomes to be achieved. It sets out our priorities to improve, how we will do this, and what can be expected from improved activity. This plan has been developed with collaborative ownership from across our leadership team, partners, and elected Members to ensure the needs of the most vulnerable children, young people and families are everyone's responsibility.

We have already taken immediate steps since the High Court Judgement in 2021 of increasing capacity across the service and to start to build a new permanent senior leadership team. Additional funding from the Council has been received to resource our improvement activity and we have received support from the Department for Education (DfE) by way of a grant to support increased improvement activity during 2021-22. Delivery against the ambitions in the Plan are continuously reviewed by the Children's Improvement Board and reported regularly to the Chief Executive's Management Board, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet, and full Council..

This Improvement Plan is led by the Corporate Director for Children and Young People and is supported by key staff across the Council and other agencies.

Transformation of services

This is a three-year programme to 2024 aimed at:

- Improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- Making working in Herefordshire an attractive and rewarding career choice.
- Embedding systemic partnership approaches and exploring alternative models of delivery.
- Making the service financially viable for the future across a range of services the Council delivers.
- All underpinned and driven by improvement across the system of practice, management and leadership.

Approach to delivery

This Improvement Plan aims to bring together the various strands of project work and service improvement into a single change programme to deliver the required improvements and outcomes set out within the County Plan (2020-24) and the commitments contained within this plan.

There is a strong corporate commitment and ownership by the council for improvement and this plan has been developed through a collaborative approach with elected members, staff, partners, and children and families. The Chief Executive will personally sponsor the programme and have a clear line of sight on progress of the plan alongside regular oversight and reports on progress to the Improvement Board and the council's public facing committees.

The programme will need to respond to changes if things are not working or circumstances change so this plan should be seen as a proposed outline of the planned high level activity which will be underpinned by detailed action plans and project plans set out as part of each phase. The Improvement Plan will be refreshed at least annually to reflect any amendments and provide a report on how the transformation is progressing against the outcomes and commitments set out in this plan.

Our improvement programme will follow a structured programme and project management approach under the guidance of a dedicated Improvement Lead working alongside the services responsible for supporting children and families.

Our Values Statements for how we will work with children, young people, and families

1. We will try our very best to make sure that children and young people get the right help at the right time, spending time getting to know the children and young people we support, and doing activities with them that help us understand more about their lives and how we can best support them. Being honest about what we can and can't do, and working to earn their trust by doing what we say we will do.
2. We will keep our working relationships with children, young people and families at the heart of everything we do. Having clear and simple conversations, being honest about what we are worried about and listening to families' strengths, best hopes and worries in order to help create a better and safer home environment. When we make decisions we will be sure that children, young people and their parents will understand why we did so, even if they don't always agree with us.
3. We will work together with families' wider network of support and our partner agencies to create the best possible support that builds upon the family's own ability to help themselves. Using clear language and making sure families know what information we will share with others, whenever possible seeking their consent or telling them when there are times we cannot.
4. We will support parents and carers to make sure children and young people are safe at home if at all possible, and nurtured by others if not. Taking the time to listen to families' views, and trusting their ability to find their own solutions and make positive changes. We will work hard to provide children and young people who cannot live with their families with a stable home with people who understand the effect that difficulties experienced in childhood can have on children and young people later on.
5. We will make sure we take into account the diverse backgrounds and needs of children, young people and families, recognising that not everyone's journey is the same as we all have different roots. Supporting children and young people to understand and own their individual journeys and listening when they tell us about them in their own words. Listening to their choices and supporting them to own their plans for making positive change.

6. We will keep written information about children and young people in a way that recognises that the information belongs to them and will best enable them to fully understand their journey if they ask to see their records. Listening carefully to what children, young people and parents tell us and writing it down so they know that what they say matters, and writing in a way that would help a young person understand what we have done and why.
7. We will work hard to have positive endings when we move on, when children and young people journey through the care and support we offer, or when children and families no longer need our help. Doing our best to make sure that workers are involved with children and young people for long enough to build up trust, and managing any changes of worker by introducing their new workers.
8. We will create a supportive working culture that recognises the importance of critical reflection and shared learning of our good practice in order to help each other provide the best outcomes for children and families. Working in a supportive way with colleagues, sharing our learning, and working together to offer good quality services. Although we won't always get it right, we will always strive to improve, acknowledge our mistakes, take responsibility for our own actions, and learn from our mistakes to help get it right next time.
9. We will keep a focus on making a difference to improving outcomes for children and young people. Valuing children, young people, and young adults and encouraging them to tell us about their own life goals so we can advise and help them to achieve them where possible, and gathering and learning from feedback from children, young people and families in order to improve our practice - we will know when we have done well when our children, young people, young adults, families, carers and other partners tell us!

Our vision; our ambition; and our practice priorities

Our vision: **All children and young people in Herefordshire feel safe, loved, and valued, and grow up with the confidence and skills to be the best they can be.**

Our ambition: **Creating a child-centred county where children and young people are at the heart of everything we do.**

Our practice priorities:

Priorities and enablers	Practice priorities		Partnership priorities		Enablers	
	Good quality child-focused assessment and planning		Embedding learning from reviews and multi-agency audits		Developing a skilled and stable workforce	
	Effective interventions and direct work with children, young people and families		Proactive effective interventions with a practice focus		<div>Systems and support services:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commissioning• Business Support• Finance• Case management system• Digital	
	Supervision and management oversight		Effective, responsive, and reflective partnership arrangements			
	Cultural change					
Cross cutting activity	<div>Service transformation and development</div>					
Measures of success	What children and their families tell us	What our staff tell us	What our partners tell us	Quantity measures	Quality measures	Outcomes

Measures that Matter (performance and management information – what difference have we made?)

We know that our progress to being a children's services regarded as at least good will require significant investment and cultural change to ensure we can achieve and embed system-wide change.

We are further developing a suite of management information and performance reports that will be used by the service to drive improvement and service delivery. These are built around the considerable number of key performance indicators that the service is required to report against as well as a number of Measures that Matter developed to indicate the progress and impact of this plan. See [Appendix B](#) for a summary of the Measures that Matter.

Evidencing Impact.

In order to evaluate the quality of practice and the impact of improvement activity the Board will apply 4 levels of assurance.

Level 1:	The first level will be to quality assure practice and to track progress against the actions identified within the Improvement Plan, which will provide a level of assurance that activity is happening, and progress is being made. This will be through a Highlight Report to the Board.
Level 2	The second test of assurance will be the monitoring of a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be reviewed at the Children Improvement Board and provide a level of assurance in terms of progress. This will be through the Performance Dashboard .
Level 3:	The third level test will be the monitoring of risks and issues that have the potential to derail delivery of activity and performance. This will be reviewed by the Children's Improvement Board via the Risk Register and a high level heat map (to be developed).
Level 4:	The final test of assurance is impact. Children and families tell us that what we have done has made a difference. Where a task has been completed the related areas of work will be evaluated; the type of evaluation will depend on the related area. This final level of assurance will be governed and monitored by the board and linked to future Ofsted activity.

The RAG ratings will be updated on a monthly basis in preparation for the board.

Key: RAG ratings	Blue - Complete	Red - Off track	Amber - Behind	Green – On track	Grey – Not started

Appendix A: Improvement Plan

Our workforce

Accountable Lead: Corporate Director for Children and Young People

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
W1	The stability, capacity and skill mix of our workforce.	1.1 Managers and practitioners are experienced, effectively trained and supervised and the quality of practice improves the lives of vulnerable children, young people, and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence recruitment campaign with a focus on recruiting experienced workers. Ensure that managers promote Continuing Professional Development opportunities and know their staff (PDR and Supervisions). Practitioners to identify gaps in their knowledge and experience Manager Development Programme to be introduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of our workforce have completed their PDR (July 22) 100% of our workforce will have a completed PDR (July 2023) Quality Assurance activity demonstrates that supervision is improving in quality (July 22 and ongoing). Manager Development Programme in place (September 2022) 	Service Director (EH & S)
		1.2 All case holding practitioners have a manageable workload, dependent upon their skills, experience, and job role and this supports effective relationships with children and young people, and good practice. (<i>Ofsted Priority Action 2021</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure robust monitoring of caseloads by Service and Directorate leaders. Take necessary action to identify and address shortfalls in case-holding capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management information provides evidence of manageable caseloads. (July 22 onwards) Our workforce tell us that they have a manageable workload (Sept 22 and March 23 - survey) Average caseload in social work assessment teams is reducing (each quarter) until agreed levels are reached and then maintained. 	Service Director (EH & S)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
W1	The stability, capacity and skill mix of our workforce.	1.3 Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs) have a well-supported Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) with manageable caseloads throughout. (Ofsted Priority Action 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and introduce proposal to bring NQSWs who are undertaking their ASYE out of the establishment. Develop the Academy offer of support for NQSWs and students Introduce initiatives to increase the number of Practice Educators in the service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NQSWs are outside the core establishment (May 2022) Management information provides ongoing evidence of manageable caseloads. (May 2022) Refreshed Academy offer is published (May 2022) NQSWs report that they are well supported (Survey Sept 2022 and March 2023). 	Principal Social Worker
		1.4 The service has a clear workforce strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement Workforce Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Strategy in place (May 2022) 	Corporate Director (C & YP)
		1.5 The service uses workforce data to inform the learning and development programmes, and service development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and introduce workforce data reporting framework. Ensure that information from PDR cycle informs the learning and development programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers have access to accurate and frequently updated workforce profile information (July 2022) 	Principal Social Worker
		1.6 Children have positive and stable relationships with professionals and carers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and introduce a new performance management report. Monitor frequency and impact of changes in allocated worker. Further develop existing good practice re short-term and long term placement stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer than 10% of children in our care have experienced a change in their social worker in the past 12 months. Short and long-term placement stability is consistently above the England and statistical neighbour average rates. 	Service Director (EH & S)
W2	Opportunities for career progression	2.1 A career progression scheme is in place for social workers and effectively supports personal and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Career Development Scheme Implement Career Development Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career Development Scheme for social workers is in place (May 2022) Social workers report that they have personal and 	Principal Social Worker

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
W2	Opportunities for career progression			professional development opportunities. (Sept 2022 Survey)	
		2.2 A career progression scheme is in place for staff with alternative qualifications, skills and experience, and effectively supports personal and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Career Development Scheme Implement career development scheme (s) for various job role types Explore opportunities for career development and progression in partnership with other organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career development scheme(s) for non-social worker roles are in place (September 2022) Relevant staff report that they have personal and professional development opportunities (Jan 23 Survey) 	Principal Social Worker
		2.3 All interim and permanent management and leadership roles are open to internal candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all advertised roles are open to suitably experienced and qualified internal candidates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff report that they feel supported to apply for management and leadership roles (Survey) 	Service Director (EH & S)
		2.4 The service makes the best use of available resources to maximise the uptake of Social Work Apprenticeships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a 5-year approach to increased availability of apprenticeships. Survey current cohort of apprentices and incorporate the learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five-year strategy in place (September 2022) 	Service Director (S, QA, & I)
W3	Access to high-quality learning and development opportunities	3.1 Our workforce has access to a comprehensive learning and development programme that is informed by performance and management information; feedback from staff; feedback from service users; quality assurance; and personal development plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable training courses to be developed or commissioned Produce and publish a Learning and Development Programme / Training Calendar for the year 2022-23, linked to feedback from PDR process. 		Principal Social Worker
		3.2 Management information evidences appropriate uptake of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandatory training to be promoted and attendance /completion to be monitored 		Principal Social Worker

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
W3	Access to high-quality learning and development opportunities	learning and development opportunities			
		3.3 Our workforce has access to a multi-agency training and development framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable training courses to be developed or commissioned that support career development and progression and take into account learning from PDR process, local and national reviews, and resource evidence. • Publish and monitor the update of a multi-agency training offer. 		Business Manager (HSCP)
		3.4 Practice should be informed by feedback, research and intelligence about the quality of services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that learning from research, legislation and practice issues are shared. • Support our staff to participate in forum where they can share their experiences and ensure that there is a mechanism for feedback from these forum to DLT. • Ensure that all staff have access to <i>CareKnowledge</i> and know how to use the resource. • Develop ways of routinely obtaining feedback from children, young people and their families as part of the Quality Assurance Framework. • Regular reports in respect of complaints and compliments to be presented to DLT / QAPIB 		Principal Social Worker
W4	The morale and wellbeing of our workforce.	4.1 A range of wellbeing support initiatives are in place that support our workforce, recognising that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support colleagues to participate in drop-in and communication sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness rates are reduced • Staff survey shows that staff are informed and engaged 	Corporate Director (C & YP)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
		the work that they do may have an emotional and physical impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote range of support and counselling services available through the Employee Assistance Scheme. Conduct a staff survey (baseline and ongoing) Maintain the 'open door' options for access to the Corporate Director, Service Directors, and the Chief Executive. Develop and support the new Staff Reference Group so that it is representative of the whole service Undertake Annual SW Health Check 	<p>and there is improved staff wellbeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an increase in the Social Workers completing the annual health check in 2022/3 (need baseline for 2021/2) 	
		4.2 The morale and motivation of our staff is high.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support regular forums for staff to share their experiences and there is a mechanism for feedback from such forums to DLT Undertake survey to measure staff engagement, morale and wellbeing (baseline and ongoing) Undertake Annual SW Health Check 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff survey shows that staff are informed and engaged and there is improved morale. There is an increase in the Social Workers completing the annual health check in 2022/3 (need baseline for 2021/2) 	Corporate Director (C & YP)

Evidence of Impact (Workforce) *(Where we want to be)*

- Children and young people will not experience frequent changes of allocated worker.
- We have clear progression routes for all staff in Children's Services.
- Case holding workers report that they have manageable caseloads.
- Newly Qualified Social Workers have caseloads commensurate with the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) programme
- The morale and motivation of our staff is demonstrably improved.

Measures that Matter	Baseline	Target end of Q1	Target end of Q2	Target end of Q3	Target end of Q4
Average caseload in social work assessment teams is reducing	TBD	24	22	20	18
Number of social workers across the service with a caseload more than 24 children.	TBD	<20	<20	<15	<15
The number of children in our care for 12 months or more who have experienced a change in social worker in the past 12 months	TBD				
% of permanent Social Workers who have been in post for more than 12 Months	TBD%				
Proportion of the established social worker workforce that is permanent					

DRAFT

Service and Practice Development

Accountable Lead: Service Director (Early Help and Safeguarding)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
S1	The effectiveness and frequency of supervision <i>(Ofsted Priority Action 2021)</i>	<p>1.1 We have sufficient management and supervisory capacity across the Directorate.</p> <p>1.2 Children and young people's plans are driven by effective and regular case supervision and management oversight.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacant Management positions are filled and when necessary, temporary arrangements are in place to ensure all staff have access to managers and receive regular supervision. Ensure that case supervision is held on a regular basis and that this is recorded appropriately on the child's file. Ensure that all open cases are supervised in line with the supervision policy. Introduce and effectively use performance and management information reports to monitor supervision. Ensure clear escalation mechanisms are in place where drift or delay are identified that incorporate performance and management information, quality assurance activity, supervision, and management oversight. Managers to take necessary and immediate action where drift or delay is identified Ensure that the rationale for case decisions are promptly and clearly recorded by managers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate at which monthly case supervisions are completed is 75% by June 2022 and 95% by September 2022 Monthly case supervisions across the Directorate are 75% by June 2022 and 95% by September 2022 Quality assurance activity indicates that increasingly plans are being driven by effective and regular supervision and management oversight (Oct 22) 	<p>Service Director (EH & S)</p> <p>Service Director (EH & S)</p>
S1	The effectiveness				

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
	and frequency of supervision (Ofsted Priority Action 2021)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
		1.3 All staff receive high-quality supervision at a frequency appropriate to their job role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce revised supervision policy. • Revise and simplify supervision recording. • Monitor frequency and quality of supervision. • Introduce regular practice observation of supervision activity. • Explore opportunities for multi-agency supervision linked to appreciative enquiry, learning reviews, and case escalations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance activity indicates improving quality of supervision (from July 22) 	Service Director (EH & S)
		1.4 Training is available to support the effective use of high-quality supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervising managers to attend supervision training. • Supervision training is available to all supervisees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Managers in the service have completed supervision training (Oct 22) 	Principal Social Worker
		1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
S2	The multi-agency Early Help (EH) offer needs to be further developed so that families do get the right help at the right time	2.1 Children and families have access to the right help at the right time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take necessary action to reduce the time on waiting lists before accessing services. • Prepare, publish, and implement an Early Help Strategy. • Increase collaborative working with the community sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no longer a waiting list to receive Early Help support. 	HoS (EH)
		2.2 Families and communities are involved in the development of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake Needs Analysis and Review (including feedback from families) of existing provision to fully understand the community prevention offer and early help support • Co-design with families a Universal and Community Offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings of "Let's Talk Children and Families" to be published by June 22 • Publication of Universal Youth and Community Offer (Dec 22) 	HoS (EH)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
S2	Our Early Help (EH) offer needs to be further developed so that families do get the right help at the right time		for children and families, building on existing assets and services		
		2.3 A broad range of community based prevention and early intervention services are available to children and their families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a multi-agency Early Help Offer in which where ever possible, families as much are supported at the appropriate level, local to where they live and by a lead professional they already have a relationship with Develop and utilise Talk Community Hubs to coordinate early intervention activity closer to home – to support self-help and maximise use of community sector. Engage with community groups to develop specific work with children and young people in their communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families report that they have access to a broad range of community based services 	Service Director (EH & S)
		2.4 Children & Families are offered the Right Help at the Right Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a multi-agency Prevention & Early Help Strategy Early Help Practice Framework to be published. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	HoS (EH)
		2.5 The interface between EH and statutory work is clearly and effectively differentiated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake review of a sample of cases which have stepped up or down, and repeat each quarter during 2022-23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance activity indicates that the interface between EH and statutory service is understood and clear. 	Service Director (EH & S)
		2.6 The interface between prevention and EH services and <i>Talk Community</i> is well developed and is accessible to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Universal Youth and Community Offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of Universal and Community Offer 	HoS (EH)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
		families and communities across Herefordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs Analysis and Review (including feedback from families) of existing provision to fully understand the community prevention offer and early help support Consideration to be given for the implementation of Family Hubs across Herefordshire Engage with youth and community groups to seek young people's input in the development of services. 		
		2.7 The approach to Early Help assessment of need is proportionate and assessments are of good quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular audit activity of Early Help Assessments Develop a quality assurance and feedback mechanism for assessments completed by partner agencies 		HoS (EH)
S3	We need to be more consistent in identifying and responding to children's needs in a timely manner whilst applying appropriate thresholds	3.1 Referrers know and understand levels of need and thresholds for referral, and the quality and timeliness of referrals is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right Help Right Time to be reviewed annually Feedback to referrers to be provided by relevant partners within MASH (i.e. education MASH representative will feedback to schools about the quality of their referral etc.) 		Service Director (EH & S)
		3.2 The quality of referrals is good, and consent is routinely sought.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least quarterly multi-agency audit activity in respect of partner referrals and the effective use of the MARF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audits show that consent is consistently sought by partner agencies (unless threshold to override consent has been met) 	HoS (MASH, Assessment, CiN, CP & Court)
		3.3 Assessments identify needs and risk and are clear in what	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that a child is seen within 5 working days from the start of 		HoS (MASH, Assessment,

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
S3	We need to be more consistent in identifying and responding to children's needs in a timely manner whilst applying appropriate thresholds	needs to happen. Assessments are child focussed and the voice of the child, including direct work, is evident within the assessment. Information from multi-agency partners is routinely sought, and included. (Ofsted Priority Action 2021)	<p>a Social Care Assessment and within 10 working days from the start of an Early Help Assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that direct work (age appropriately) is completed as a standard in assessments. • Authorising managers will not sign off an assessment where the voice of the child is not evident or where the child is not at the centre of the assessment. 		CiN, CP & Court)
		3.4 The timeliness and quality of response from the MASH is consistently high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MASH to be relocated and co-located to ensure there is more efficient communication, screening and timeliness • Service leaders to routinely monitor timeliness and quality of activities within the MASH / Early Help Hub and take any necessary action to address any identified concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MASH is co-located 	HoS (MASH, Assessment, CiN, CP & Court)
		3.5 The service is working effectively with other agencies to identify, assess, and support Private Fostering arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and re-launch Private Fostering guidance and procedures. • Raise awareness with partner agencies and with communities in Herefordshire • Undertake an audit of Private Fostering activity. 		HoS for Care Experienced C & YP
		3.6 There is a multi-agency Neglect Strategy in place that includes a focus on prevention and Early Help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) to update and publish a Neglect Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-agency Neglect Strategy is published. • Multi-agency audit activity evidences increased 	Service Director (S, QA, & I)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produced a dedicated Neglect Action Plan to address key areas of development including mandatory tools for Neglect. Publish practice guidance and protocols to be followed, linked to the partnership strategy. Undertake a multi-agency audit of neglect cases to result in an agreed range of actions across the partnership 	effectiveness in identifying and working with neglect and the use of the Graded Care Profile and other tools identified in the strategy.	
		3.8 Child in Need Plans are outcomes-focussed, regularly reviewed and progressed. Children are regularly visited and are placed at the centre of interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Workers will always visit children at least as frequently as stated in our practice standards. Managers will routinely monitor the frequency and quality of visits, plans, a duration of CIN episodes. 		HoS (MASH, Assessment, CiN, CP & Court)
S4	Our support for children subject of a child protection plan.	4.1 Strategy meetings and s47 enquiries always maintain a focus on the child and are conducted in line with current best practice and statutory guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that children are routinely seen alone and spoken to in the course of s47 enquiries. Ensure that S47 enquiries are completed in a timely manner and that information from other agencies inform the assessment. 		Service Director (EH & S)
		4.2 Families and professionals have timely and appropriate access to good quality reports ahead of conferences. This supports active engagement and participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Workers will ensure that reports for Child Protection Conferences are completed in a timely manner and are shared with families at least 48 hours before CP Conferences Referrals to advocacy services are routinely devised (and 		Service Director (EH & S)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
			evidenced in case recording) where appropriate		
		4.3 Plans are outcomes-focused and address identified risks, keeping the child at the centre of the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the Core Group meet on a regular basis and ensure the CP Plan is SMART and tracks progress Child Protection Conference Chairs to provide effective and timely scrutiny and challenge where CP Plans are not SMART or do not progress sufficiently. 		Service Director (EH & S)
		4.4 Children are not left at risk following the convening of a strategy meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPCs) take place within 15 working days of strategy meetings. Interim safety plans are to be routinely considered as part of strategy meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of ICPCs that are held within 15 working days is consistently not less than 85% 	Service Director (EH & S)
		4.5 A multi-agency Contextual Safeguarding Strategy has been developed and interventions are effective at managing and reducing risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will with partner agencies develop and implement a contextual safeguarding model (as an alternative to child protection) for adolescents facing risks outside the home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextual Safeguarding Model is launched 	Service Director (EH & S)
S5	The quality and timeliness of our court work.	5.1 The Public Law Outline (PLO) pre-proceedings process is used appropriately and effectively, and is robustly monitored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review pre-proceedings process and documentation (including letters) Implement identified improvements to achieve consistency Ensure PLO tracker is in place and updated 		Service Director (EH & S)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
		5.2 Alternative family arrangements are always considered, and are considered early where we have concerns that may go to court.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Family Group Conferences are routinely considered in all cases before the case enters proceedings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Family Group Conferences increases (need benchmark) 	Service Director (EH & S)
		5.3 Social workers who undertake court work are confident and have access to court skills training. They are well supported by their manager and by the legal team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that social workers attending court are trained in court skills and writing effective statements and plans. Ensure regular and effective liaison between social care and legal services teams that contributes to improved practice. 		Service Director (EH & S)
S6	Our support for, and the creation of opportunities for children in our care and our care experienced young people.	6.1 There is sufficiency and choice of placements for children in our care and care leavers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update Sufficiency Strategy and commissioning arrangements to ensure options and availability for care placements. Each year, increase the number of foster carers and other types of carers, including those who have the skills to care for children with complex needs Recruit a Clinical Psychologist to support foster carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A net increase of at least 30 foster carers (by end of March 23). All-age commissioning strategy developed and introduced (July 22) 	Service Director (EH & S)
		6.2 Children in our care and care experienced children are able to contribute to their plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and develop a participation delivery model that ensures children's engagement and participation Ensure all children and young people actively participate in their assessments and plans, through purposeful and creative direct work, including life story work (where age appropriate). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase of the number of young people who attend or participate in their Child Looked After Review (benchmark needed) 	Service Director (EH & S)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
S6	Our support for, and the creation of opportunities for children in our care and our care experienced young people.	6.3 Children in our care will have fewer placement disruptions and increased placement stability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that placement moves for Children Looked after are kept to a minimum and routinely monitored. The reasons for placement breakdowns should be understood and inform future planning. Recruitment of Clinical Psychologist to support Foster Carers 		Service Director (EH & S)
		6.4 Permanency will be achieved more effectively through timely planning and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all children in our care have a Permanency Plan by the time of their second Looked After Children's Review Meeting. Ensure that permanency plans are tracked and that delay is minimised. 		Service Director (EH & S)
		6.5 Learning and employment opportunities are maximised for all Children in our care and care experienced children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and implementation of strategy to reduced numbers of children and young people Not in Education, Employment, or training (NEET). Ensure that all children in care have regular and high quality PEP meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in numbers of NEET (benchmark needed) Narrowing of the attainment gap between children in care and their peers 	Service Director (E, S & L)
		6.6 All care experienced young people are supported and prepared for adulthood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All care experienced young people have a good quality pathway plan in place Review, revise, and re-publish the Leaving Care offer. All care experienced young people are aware of our Leaving 		Service Director (EH & S)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
			Care Offer and know what they are entitled to		
		6.7 For children on the edge of care, we will maximise opportunities to enable them to remain within their families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Family Group Conferences are offered to families before the case enters proceedings. Ensure that referrals to EChO are made as early as possible where it is identified that without intensive support a child may come into our care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on the strengths of families, the number of children coming into our care is reducing (rate per 10,000) 	Service Director (EH & S)
S7	Our services and support for children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND)	7.1 All children whose SEN meet threshold for EHCP are assessed in a timely manner and have a SMART plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement SEND Review EHCP assessment are completed and updated to meet need in statutory timescales Ensure that Social Workers contribute to EHCP plans 		Service Director (E, S & L)
		7.2 There is sufficient local provision to meet the assessed needs of all children who require a short break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update Sufficiency Strategy and commissioning arrangements to ensure options and availability for short breaks placements. Commission a Peer Review of the SEND service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer review completed and findings inform action plan. 	Service Director (E, S & L)
		7.3 Young people experience a smooth transition into adulthood and do not experience a “cliff edge”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that young people have a good quality and timely transition plan in place Ensure that adult services teams are fully sighted on young people moving into the adults system at the earliest possibility. Routinely monitor the timeliness and quality of transition plans. 		Service Director (E, S & L)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
		7.4 There are sufficient specialist educational places within Herefordshire settings that offer high quality provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update Sufficiency Strategy and commissioning arrangements. 		Service Director (E, S & L)
		7.5 Improve the Inclusion and wellbeing of SEND pupils' in schools and settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement SEND Review EHCP assessment are completed and updated to meet need in statutory timescales 		Service Director (E, S & L)
S8	The voice of children is listened to and contributes effectively to practice and service planning and delivery.	8.1 Effective participation and engagement activity is evident across the service. It informs service and practice development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and develop a participation delivery model that ensures children's engagement and participation Ensure that children are consulted and that their views inform service plans and decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audits show children and young people are routinely involved in the creation assessments and plans. 	Service Director (EH & S)
		8.2 Plans are SMART (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) and capture the voice of the child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Workers and their managers will ensure plans are SMART and capture the voice of the child Team Managers, Child Protection Chairs and Independent Reviewing Officers will provide constructive challenge when plans are not SMART and/or do not capture the voice of the child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance activity indicates that an increasing proportion of plans are SMART and capture the voice of the child (from July 22 onwards) 	Service Director (EH & S)
		8.3 There is Independent Advocacy provision for all Children and Young People who require it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business case to be developed for increased provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No waiting lists for Advocacy Services 	Service Director (S, QA, & I)

Evidence of Impact (Service and Practice Development) (Where we want to be)

- Managers evidence clear oversight and grip, with practitioners well supported and benefiting from frequent, effective case supervision.
- We will have an increased range of Early Help services, provided by a broad range of partnership agencies and communities.
- Thresholds are clearly defined, understood and applied consistently and appropriately.
- Assessment of children, young people and their families are consistently of good quality, are well analysed, and show an understanding of the lived experiences of the child, their needs and any risks.
- Children, young people and their families have SMART plans which are informed by the needs and risks identified through assessments and which are progressed without undue drift or delay.
- Children and young people are routinely listened to and their voice and experience contributes to service and practice development, across the whole service.

Measures that Matter	Baseline	Target end of Q1	Target end of Q2	Target end of Q3	Target end of Q4
The number of unallocated cases in the service		0	0	0	0
% of case-holding staff receiving monthly Personal Supervision	TBD			95%	95%
% of children's cases having supervision recorded within the month.	TBD			95%	95%

Performance and Quality Assurance

Accountable Lead: Service Director (Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Improvement)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
P1	We have a Quality Assurance Framework and the learning is used to inform our practice development.	1.1 There is an established cycle of quality assurance activity in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and publish a revised QA framework Schedule of audit activity to be developed and published QA activity to be monitored through the Directorate Leadership Team 		Service Director (S, QA, & I)
		1.2 Learning from audits is routinely used to improve practice and service development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overarching/thematic audit reports are produced and shared There is a process in place which effectively tracks recommended actions from individual audits. Audit findings inform the development or commissioning of training 		Service Director (S, QA, & I)
P2	The footprint and scrutiny of CP Chairs and IROs	2.1 IRO's and CP chairs have a clear and well-understood role in overall quality assurance and their footprint is evident on children's files.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise and re-publish the Dispute Resolution Protocol (DRP) and add data to management information dashboards. 		Service Director (S, QA, & I)
		2.2 IROs have a good understanding of the needs of the children and young people for whom they are the reviewing officer and ensure that plans meet their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that IRO visits are completed on a regular basis and that these are recorded on Mosaic in a timely manner. Ensure that Midpoint Reviews are evidence and these assist in driving the plan and preventing drift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance reporting consistently indicates that at least 85% of children and young people have been visited by their IRO in the last 6 Months. 	Service Director (S, QA, & I)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
P3	We need an agreed multi-agency dataset that is used to drive performance and improve outcomes.	3.1 Agencies effectively use the data to drive improvement and practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to ensure a multi-agency dataset is developed, and implemented. Include the dataset in future PowerBi dashboard reporting (internally) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-agency dataset is agreed and reports are available. 	Service Director (S, QA, & I)
P4	Use of accurate data to understand effectiveness and to drive improvement.	4.1 A comprehensive framework for monitoring performance and progress is in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop an accessible online performance management framework. 	Dashboards reflect the full range of activity across the whole Directorate. (end Dec 22)	Improvement Lead
		4.2 Quality Assurance activity is a part of everybody's daily business and informs service and practice development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise and publish a QA framework Ensure that regular audit activity informs practice development, training and service development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Assurance Framework is signed off and launched 	Service Director (S,QA & I)
		4.3 Our case management system supports effective and efficient case recording and data collection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review (with Adults' Services) the current system to ensure fit-for-purpose going forward. 	Review completed and decision about future procurement options made. (October 2022)	Improvement Lead
		4.4 Children's intranet solution is modernised and fit-for-purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and develop current intranet presence. Work within corporate transformation programme to develop a modern, accessible solution. 		Improvement Lead

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
P4	Use of accurate data to understand effectiveness and to drive improvement.	4.5 Arrangements for resolving, reporting and follow-up on complaints are effective and learning from complaints informs practice development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish refreshed practice guidance – responding to complaints. Ensure feedback from complaints is routinely considered by leaders and managers. Ensure learning from complaints is embedded in wider QA feedback and practice development. 	The proportion of complaints that are resolved at stage 1 increases.	Service Director (S,QA & I)
		4.6 We have an accurate self-evaluation of social work practice, refreshed every six months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and publish self-evaluation Develop mechanism to test accuracy and ensure 6-monthly refresh. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-evaluation produced and shared with Children's Scrutiny Committee (May 2022) 	Improvement Lead
P4	Use of accurate data to understand effectiveness and to drive improvement.	4.7 The service knows its local communities, and uses this knowledge effectively to meet their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of data to provide an overview of the strengths, needs and risks of our local communities Further develop and utilise Talk Community Hubs to coordinate provision of information, advice and guidance and early intervention activity closer to home – to support self-help and maximise use of community sector Consideration to be given for local commissioning where appropriate 		Corporate Director (C & YP)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
		4.8 Leaders know their strengths and weaknesses well and both respond to and are resilient to new challenges.	•		Corporate Director (C & YP)
P5	Performance and management information needs to be embedded within day-to-day practice and management.	5.1 Managers and practitioners have easy access to a range of data relevant to their job roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop use of PowerBI as an active tool for Managers and Leaders to review past performance and to pro-actively manage information Managers will receive training in the use of PowerBI 		Service Director (S, QA, & I)
		5.2 We understand our data and we can use this to improve our practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers attend regular Performance Clinics 		Service Director (S, QA, & I)
		5.3 Improved performance is measured in impact and in outcomes for children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular performance clinics take place to scrutinise performance Performance forms part of supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Workers and Managers are aware and can articulate the impact of poor performance on outcomes for children. 	Service Director (S, QA, & I)

Evidence of Impact (Performance and Quality Assurance) *(Where we want to be)*

- Our Managers will have a manageable span of control and know what is expected of them
- There is a clear footprint by Independent Reviewing Officers and Child Protection Chairs and their involvement actively contributes to the timely progression of plans
- Together with our partners, we will have a multi-agency data-set which allows the partnership to drive improvement and practice.
- Performance data is used to pro-actively manage and prevent drift and delay and drive improvement using systems such as PowerBI
- There is a clear mechanism in place to ensure learning from quality assurance improves practice and outcomes for children, young people and their families
- Independence Advocacy is available to all children and young people who request this
- Our recording is timely, concise and accurate

Measures that Matter	Baseline	Target end of Q1	Target end of Q2	Target end of Q3	Target end of Q4
% of Plans graded as Requires Improvement, Good or Outstanding	58% (CEO Audit)				
[quality]					
% of assessments completed within timescales	53.7% (March 2022)	60%	70%	80%	85%
% of plans which are updated at least every 6 months	%TBD				

DRAFT

The impact of leaders on practice with children and families

Lead: Corporate Director for Children and Young People

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
L1	The stability of leadership and management	1.1 Service Director posts are permanent appointments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise job descriptions Complete recruitment process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Directors recruited and in post (Aug 2022) 	Corporate Director (C&YP)
		1.2 The majority of Heads of Service and Service Manager posts are permanent appointments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise job descriptions Complete recruitment process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 50% of Head of Service and Service Manager appointments are permanent (September 2022) 	Service Director (EH & S)
		1.3 The majority of Team Manager posts are permanent appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise job descriptions Complete recruitment process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 75% of Team Manager appointments are permanent. (Sept 2022) 	Service Director (EH & S)
L2	We will build a culture that enables good practice to flourish	2.1 Our vision, values and principles for children and young people are clearly communicated within the local authority and across the Partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce consistent branding for the service Refresh the external website Further develop the Directorate Communications Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service has a brand and identity that is recognised. (July 2022) The external website has been refreshed and users report positively about its accessibility and value. (Sept 2022) 	Corporate Director (C & YP)
		2.2 Leaders will be strong, visible and demonstrably engaged with practice and practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expectations of managers returning to the offices will be made clear. A framework of practice observations by managers and senior leaders and activities such as team visits and practice weeks will be introduced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 70% of the workforce report that leaders are visible and engaged by Sept 2022. Framework for practice observation, floor walking and QA assurance activity in place by end of May 2022. 	Service Director (S, QA & I)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
L2	We will build a culture that enables good practice to flourish	2.3 We will be clear about our practice standards and the principles that underpin them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice standards to be revised and published. Prepare and publish a range of relevant practice guidance notes and management action notes to make clear the responsibilities and accountabilities for better practice. Re-launch the Signs of Safety Values Statement and Leadership Pledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice standards formally launched (May 2022) Signs of Safety Values Statement and Leadership Pledge formally launched (May 2022) 	Service Director (S,QA & I)
		2.4 Leaders promote distributed leadership, building a culture of appreciative enquiry and fostering a safe environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore and promote the concept of distributed leadership and appreciative enquiry with managers across the service. Promote the use of appreciative enquiry across the service and safeguarding partnership. Introduce framework for encouraging 'Safe to Fail' experiments. Lead by example in terms of supporting colleagues to speak up and engage, sharing a wide range of views and opinion. 		Corporate Director (C&YP)
		2.5 Staff and partners recognise us as a learning organisation with a strong capacity to absorb, assimilate and disseminate information to support cultural and practice change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure open and honest participation in partnership QA activity. Ensure that learning from local and national reviews, research, and partnership QA activity is routinely shared and the learning embedded in practice development activity. 		Service Director (S,QA & I)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
		2.6 We celebrate our successes and achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase activity across the Directorate to recognise and share good practice. Organise a workforce celebration event later in the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebration event held (Autumn 22) 	Principal Social Worker
L3	The effectiveness and impact of relationships with key partners	3.1 Children's services are appropriately represented at relevant partnership boards and their sub groups and are actively participate and contribute.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review membership and attendance. Report to DLT with proposals for representation. 		Service Director (S,QA & I)
		3.2 The Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) is active and contributing to more effective partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review/revise Terms of reference and CYPP Plan. Organise workshop for CYPP Members to refresh its purpose and forward plan (May 2022) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CYPP meets and agrees refreshed purpose and forward plan (May 2022) 	Service Director (EH & S)
		3.3 We engage with partners to improve our practice and performance within care proceedings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there is effective liaison with CAFCASS and the Local Family Justice Board on matters related to court proceedings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are regular meetings with CAFCASS and the Local Family Justice Board that demonstrably contribute to improved practice and performance (Sept 2022) 	Service Director (EH & S)
		3.4 We engage with partners to improve our practice and performance in respect of adoption.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there is effective liaison with Adoption Central England (ACE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are regular meetings with Adoption Central England Improvement in data regarding adoption 	Head of Service (Corporate Parenting)
L3	The effectiveness and impact of relationships	3.5 We actively engage with partners in our communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there is effective liaison with our communities' i.e. voluntary sector, faith groups, military bases. 		Service Director (S,QA & I)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
	with key partners		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide twice-yearly community partner briefings 		
		3.6 The effectiveness and impact of safeguarding partnership arrangements is improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	Service Director (S, QA, & I)
L4	Our Corporate Parenting responsibilities are effectively discharged	4.1 The Corporate Parenting Board has an agreed core membership, meets regularly, and has clarity of purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a new Corporate Parenting Strategy Revise and refresh the Terms of Reference for CPB Ensure that there is a work programme in place for the year ahead. Develop through the work of the board, stronger links to voice of children and young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Parenting Strategy in place (May 2022) Revised and refreshed Terms of Reference in place (May 2022) Work programme in place (May 2022) 	Service Director (EH & S)
		4.2 Members and officers across the council are aware of their corporate parenting responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness raising to take place across the council workforce. Create dedicated resource on Council intranet. Training programme for all Members and staff in respect of corporate parenting is developed and delivered, including for new starters as a part of their induction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training programme designed by April 2022 Intranet site/page in place Training programme incorporated into mandatory training programme by June 2022 Messages regarding Corporate Parenting from CEO 	Corporate Director (C & YP)
		4.3 There is a corporate sense of responsibility for children in our care and care leavers and Herefordshire Council recognises and prioritises the needs of children in all aspects, such as housing, career opportunities, education and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that consideration of how best to support children and young people in our care is evidenced across the council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full Council renews it's Corporate Parenting commitment annually 	Chief Executive

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
L5	Members are able to effectively discharge their scrutiny function.	5.1 A Member engagement schedule is in place and Members are supported to actively participate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and introduce a Member engagement schedule (e.g. opportunities to shadow a social worker, observe a meeting etc.) Ensure that the programme of Member induction and development activity includes safeguarding, corporate parenting, and opportunities for Member engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members have had the opportunity to visit all parts of the service, meet with staff, and observe practice. (Sept 2022) Staff report that they have access to Members (Sept 2022) Members report that they feel supported and informed and are better able to scrutinise the service. (Sept 2022) 	Service Director (S,QA & I)
		5.2 Members are supported to work in a pro-active manner across the broad spectrum of education, early help, and social care activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there is a Scrutiny forward plan for the municipal year that focuses on relevant topics across education, early help, and social care and is flexible enough to respond to change and emerging concerns. 		Service Director (S,QA & I)
		5.3 Members provide effective challenge and support to the improvement of practice in children's services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop the workshop model for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee members to enable a better understanding of the work of children's services so that effective scrutiny can happen. 		Service Director (S,QA & I)
L7	Clear lines of communication with staff, children, young people, families and partner agencies to ensure that we	7.1 We communicate effectively with our workforce, our service users, with external agencies, and with Herefordshire citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a Communications Strategy that is focused both on internal and external stakeholders. 		Improvement Lead
		7.2 Senior leaders are visible and engaged with the wider partnership and service users.	Develop a schedule of visits by senior leaders to community settings (e.g. Children's Centres,		Service Director (S,QA & I)

Ref	What needs to improve?	Outcomes	Actions	Milestones to be achieved	Lead
	remain transparent and collaborative in everything that we do.		schools, voluntary organisations etc.)		
		7.3 There are a range of different ways for the workforce to communicate with service leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and publish details for staff forum, briefings, and drop-ins six-months in advance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff confirm they received clear communications from senior leaders and can feedback (survey) 	Improvement Lead
		7.4 Service leaders routinely engage with service users and use their experience of services to inform service development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there is clear engagement by senior leaders with children, young people and their families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service users' report that that have access to senior leaders and are listened to. 	Improvement Lead

Evidence of Impact *(Where we want to be)*

We will have a permanent Middle and Senior Leadership Team in place who are visible, and engaged with practice.

We will have created an environment where good and outstanding practice can thrive

Our relationships with partner agencies will be open, honest, and strong and there will be evidence of constructive challenge and feedback.

The corporate parenting principle and role is embedded across the Council and its partners, and clearly understood and applied in decision making for children in care and care leavers.

There is evidence of effective challenge and scrutiny by Members, Officers, DfE and the Improvement Board

We will use data to enable us to make informed decisions which will drive improvement

We communicate effectively with children, young people and their families, our workforce and partner agencies

Measures that Matter	Baseline	Target end of Q1	Target end of Q2	Target end of Q3	Target end of Q4
Proportion of Service Directors, Heads of Service and Service Managers who are permanent (x of y)	%TBD				
% of respondents who say we communicate with them effectively (Quarterly questionnaire - e.g. at Your Voice Matters, Parent Carer Voice, Improvement Board etc.)	%TBD				

Appendix B: Measures that Matter (compiled)

	Measures that Matter	Baseline	Target end of Q1	Target end of Q2	Target end of Q3	Target end of Q4
1	<i>This table to be populated once Measures that matter finalised</i>					
2						
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Appendix C: Glossary

Abbreviation	Term
CAFCASS	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
Corporate Director (C & YP)	Corporate Director for Children and Young People
DLT	Directorate Leadership Team
EH	Early Help
EHCP	Education, Health, and Care Plan
HSCP	Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
MARF	Multi-Agency Referral Form
PEP	Personal Education Plan
PSW	Principal Social Worker
Service Director (E, S & L)	Service Director (Education, Skills and Learning)
Service Director (EH & S)	Service Director (Early Help and Safeguarding)
Service Director (S, QA & I)	Service Director (Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Improvement)
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
QA	Quality Assurance

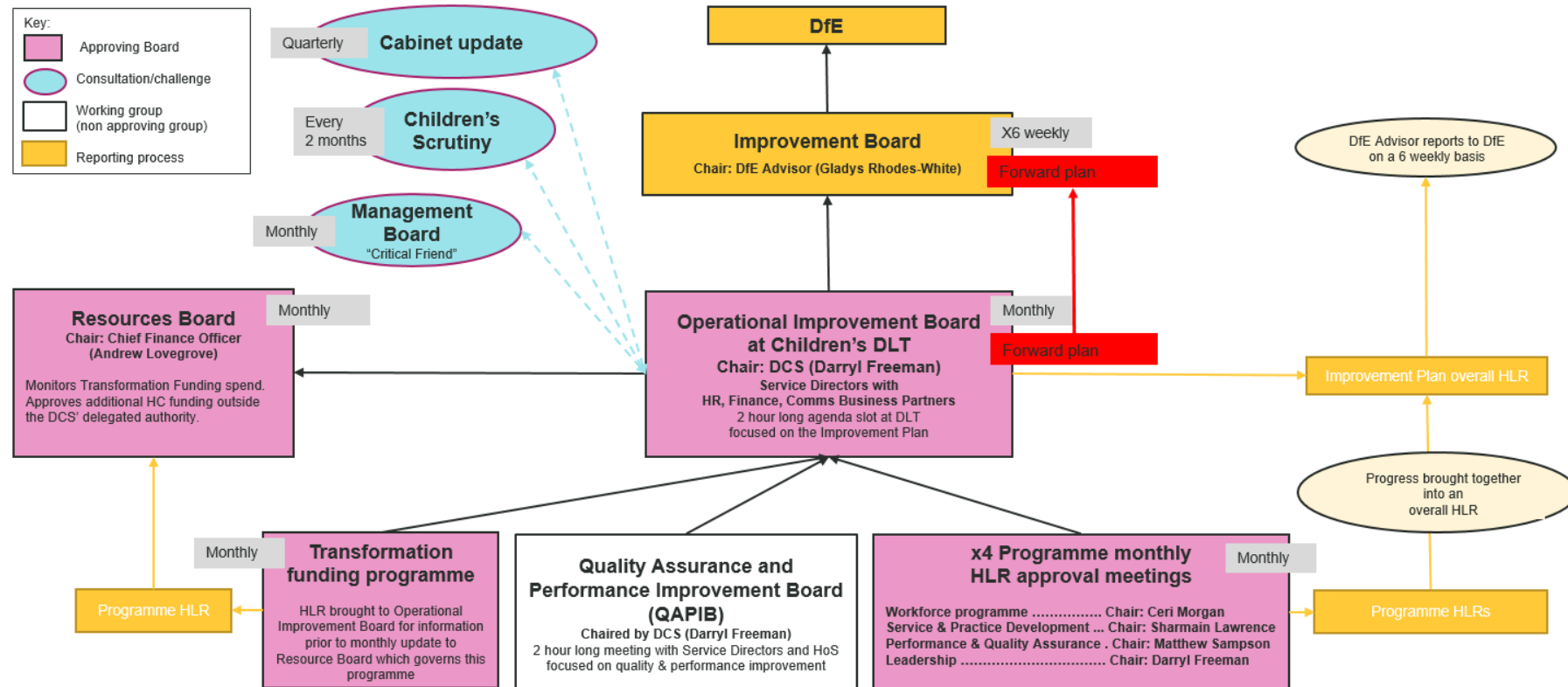
Appendix D: Key sources of information to secure a whole system approach

Key sources of information to secure a whole system approach to quality assurance and performance management to be presented and scrutinised will include:

Case audits	Practice Observations
Learning from complaints and compliments	Feedback from partner agencies
Voice of the children, young people and their families	Feedback from frontline practitioners
Self-evaluation and peer challenge	Learning from serious child safeguarding incidents
Performance and data reports	Appreciative inquiry

Appendix E: Revised Governance arrangements.

Children's Improvement Plan V2 Governance



PROGRESS AND IMPACT

1. Caseloads

- 1.1. The average caseload for our Social Workers has reduced from 20 in December 2021 to 17.5 in March 2022.
- 1.2. Caseload pressures have been most significant on the Assessment Teams. In December 2021, 14 social workers had a caseload of in excess of 25 allocated children; the average caseload for assessment team 1-4 was 27.3. The average caseload across these teams has since reduced to 21.4 with 7 workers holding a caseload in excess of 25 children

Team	Average Caseload		Caseload Range		Workers with a caseload > 25	
	December 2021	March 2022	December 2021	March 2022	December 2021	March 2022
Assessment Team 1	24	30	12 – 40	16 - 34	2	4
Assessment Team 2	44	24	34 – 39	17 - 29	6	3
Assessment Team 3	16	15	14 – 27	9 – 23	1	0
Assessment Team 4	33	20	27 – 38	17 – 24	5	0
Total	27.3	21.4	14 - 40	9 - 34	14	7

- 1.3. **Impact:** Reduced caseloads enables the promotion of better social work practice. A reduced caseload allows managers to have better management oversight resulting in increased throughput of work; there is a more manageable span of control.
- 1.4. High caseloads have been raised by Ofsted in the Children's Services Inspections in May 2014 and June 2018 and during Ofsted Focussed Visits in December 2019 and July 2021

2. Supervisions

- 2.1 Monthly "Worker Supervision" (where the workers meets with the supervisor) has increased from 62% in December 2021 to 82% in March 2022.
- 2.2 Monthly "Case Supervision" (where each specific child is discussed and this is recorded on the child's file) increased from 46% in December 2021 to 72% in March 2022.

Supervision Type	December 2021	March 2022
Worker Supervision	62%	82%
Case Supervision	46%	72%

- 2.3 **Impact:** Regular supervision ensures that staff feel confident to do their role and can access the support that they need to manage difficult situations. Supervision is part of wider management oversight which ensures cases are progressed and drift is avoided.
- 2.4 Frequency of supervisions have been raised by Ofsted in the Children's Services Inspections in July 2012, May 2014 and June 2018 and during Ofsted Focussed Visits in January 2019, December 2019 and July 2021

3. Initial Child Protection Conferences

- 3.1 An Initial Child Protection conference (ICPC) needs to take place within 15 working days of a Strategy Meeting having been held. It is the ICPC where it is decided whether a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan. The timeliness of ICPCs has increased from 33% completed within 15 working days in December 2021 to 71% in March 2022.

Type	December 2021	March 2022
Initial Child Protection Conference	33%	71%

- 3.2 **Impact:** A timely Initial Child Protection Conference allows for a multi-agency child protection plan to be implemented without delay and thus mitigating the identified safeguarding risks.
- 3.3 Initial Child Protection Conferences are part of the statutory duties Children's Services undertake.

4. Statutory Visits

- 4.1 Visits to a child subject to a Child Protection (CP) Plan need to take place every 15 working days; visits to a child looked after (CLA) who is looked after need to take place every 6 or 12 weeks (depending on the placement and the child's permanency plan). The timeliness of CP and CLA visits has increased from 72% and 85% in December 2021 to 94% and 96% respectively in March 2022.

Type	December 2021	March 2022
Child Protection visits	72%	94%
Child Looked After visits	85%	96%

- 4.2 **Impact:** Regular and timely visits allow the child to build up a good working relationship with their social worker; direct work is often undertaken during visits and the voice of the child is captured during visits to inform assessments and plans for the child.
- 4.3 Visits to children subject to a Child Protection plan and to children looked after are part of the statutory duties Children's Services undertake.

Title of report: Nutrient Certainty

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 26 May 2022

Report by: Cabinet member Infrastructure and transport;

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

As the competent body under the Habitat and Species Regulations (2017) Cabinet is asked to note the progress being made towards creating Integrated Wetlands phosphate reduction and steps being taken to ensure Nutrient Certainty to the required standard of beyond reasonable scientific doubt.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **To note the progress being made to create Integrated Wetlands and to determine Nutrient Certainty**
- b) **To receive a further report as soon as is practicable and when all reasonable due diligence has been completed to consider whether Nutrient Certainty has actually been achieved.**

Alternative options

1. The options to purchase and build Integrated Wetlands were determined in the August 2020 Executive Member decision. This is an update report following that decision and no options are presented.

Key considerations

2. Herefordshire Council has chosen to voluntarily exercise its well-being powers to build constructed integrated wetlands in the Lugg Catchment to provide development headroom and some improvement called "river betterment" to provide phosphate credits to developers in the

catchment who are unable to otherwise demonstrate nutrient certainty. Through its work to support the Wye Catchment Nutrient Management Board the Council is also actively supporting efforts to improve water quality in the Wye and Lugg catchment.

3. The River Lugg Special Area of Conservations (SAC) covers the last nine mile stretch of the river before it enters the River Wye. Under the Habitat's directive, SACs require the highest level of protection, appropriate management, enhancement and where necessary, restoration. In July 2019, Natural England advised Herefordshire Council of the need to seek legal advice pertaining to the ruling made by the Court of Justice of the European Union (the CJEU) on the interpretation of the Habitats Directive in the case of Coöperatie Mobilisatie (AKA the Dutch Case12) (Joined Cases C-293/17 and C-294/17).
4. The Council took Counsel's advice and concluded that to protect the Lugg SAC, it was not possible to permit any development on the Lugg, Frome or Arrow catchments unless a Habitats Regulations assessment concluded that the proposed development was "nutrient neutral" there being no likely significant effects on the Lugg SAC. This immediately prevented most development proposals across the north of the county from proceeding.
5. In August 2020, the Cabinet Member for infrastructure took a [decision](#) to approve the design, land acquisition, construction and management of integrated wetlands, providing tertiary treatment to waste water treatment works in order to reduce phosphate levels within the River Lugg catchment area. The Wye and Usk Foundation (WUF) were commissioned by the council to undertake an assessment of the whole of the catchment to identify locations where the introduction of an Integrated Wetland could be progressed.
6. The Council has purchased a site close to the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) plant at Luston and obtained planning permission to create an Integrated Wetland. WUF were commissioned to undertake the design of the site. They calculated the level of Phosphates leaving the plant and have modelled the likely Phosphate reduction against a number of scenarios. A new standard for assessing Wetlands has recently been developed by Rob McInnis on behalf of the Rivers Trust UK in conjunction with the Constructed Wetland Association which is due for publication in 2022. WUFs design for the Luston Wetland is undergoing a peer reviewed by Rob McInnis against this standard and appropriate design changes have been made to conform to the standard.
7. As a further step to assuring certainty Ricardo Consulting have undertaken an assurance review to ensure a robust validation. Ricardo's findings have confirmed the WUF approach. Counsel legal opinion has been provided on the work done to date and the advice is that further validation work is done over the coming weeks to ensure a robust process.
8. A legal agreement is being entered into with DCWW to receive waste water from their Luston Plant into the integrated Wetland. The scope of DCWW's own Environment Agency Permit will end at Herefordshire Council's intake point. This will include weekly monitoring of Phosphate load entering and leaving the Integrated Wetland.
9. An application for an Environmental Agency Permit to cover the intake from Welsh Water as it flows through the Wetland and out into the Lugg catchment has been made. The Environment Agency have indicated that a bespoke waste permit will be required, such a permit has never been issued for an integrated wetland before and should be in place before planting commences, in the event that the permitting process is not complete in time, the Environment Agency are giving active consideration to a temporary permit known as a Local Environment Protocol to allow planting to commence. The operational site will be fenced with no unfettered public access and operated to under the ISO14001 Environmental Standards.
10. Bentley, a specialist environmental construction company, have been commissioned, through the Council's procurement processes, to build the wetland chambers and plant the Wetland with

a mixture of plants which have been selected to maximise the sequestration of phosphate. They will build this in accordance with the validated WUF design.

11. An application has been made to the Environment Agency for the necessary Waste Permit. The Permit will need to be in place before planting takes place at the Luston site. As this is the first time such a permit has been issued it has proved challenging for the Environment Agency and representations have been made to accelerate the process for this. Upon project completion the site will be handed over to the Herefordshire Estates team within Hoople, who will manage the maintenance of the site in accordance with the maintenance schedule.
12. Herefordshire Council indicated to WUF that they should reserve 20% of the potential Phosphate reduction to act as reserve should the modelling results differ to a fully grown Integrated Wetland. The reserve will if unused provide a benefit to the condition of the Lugg catchment known as River Betterment. River Betterment is a technical improvement to river quality under the polluters pay principle, it is to others to address the underlying issues of River Quality. Herefordshire Council have held regular discussions with Natural England. Natural England advise that mitigation must be provided upstream of the SAC. The Luston Credits will therefore enable developments to be approved anywhere in the Lugg Catchment.
13. Herefordshire Council is actively pursuing further sites to bring forward further credits for development and river betterment. A site has been purchased located close by Titley DCWW plant. Heads of terms have been agreed at a third site which will yield further Phosphate Credits.
14. A separate report at this cabinet meeting will consider the policy and process of Phosphate credit allocation.

Community impact

15. The development of integrated wetlands and the trading of credits will positively contribute to the following ambitions within the County Plan 2020-2024.
 - a. Seek strong stewardship of the county's natural resources.
 - b. Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity, value nature and uphold environmental standards through "River Betterment."
16. The removal of the current development moratorium in the River Lugg catchment area will enable future economic development in a significant proportion of North Herefordshire.

Environmental Impact

17. Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.
18. The Integrated Wetlands project has been designed to enable Nutrient Neutral Development in the River Lugg SAC by enabling nutrient neutral development and to provide a net river betterment. The net improvement to the river quality will be delivered through the reservation of 20% of the phosphate credits for the river betterment.
19. In addition to improving water quality in the River Lugg, the wetlands will also support the Council's commitment to address the climate and ecological emergency as the wetlands will also become excellent wildlife habitats and will help to sequester local carbon emissions.

20. The site surrounding some wetlands in partnership with other council biodiversity projects will be planted with local native species to increase biodiversity and the local habitat.

Equality duty

21. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:
A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –
- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
22. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. As this is a decision on back office functions, we do not believe that it will have an impact on our equality duty.
23. The certification of the phosphate credits from the Integrated Wetland sites will enable the Council to support sustainable housing growth in the north of the county which will benefit all sections of the community. This will include affordable housing in line with the Herefordshire's Planning Policy.

Resource implications

24. The Integrated Wetlands project and a £2m capital budget was approved by Full Council on 14 February 2020. This capital budget is funded through use of the Council's New Homes Bonus to enable future housing development within the Lugg catchment area.
25. This is supplemented by a £1m capital grant allocation from Marches Local Enterprise Partnership through the Getting Building Fund, increasing the total capital budget available to £3m.
26. Revenue income from the sale of credits will be set aside in a specific reserve to finance the ongoing maintenance costs of the sites and to seed corn further Wetlands sites, as set out in the accompanying cabinet report – Phosphate Credit Pricing and Allocation Policy.

Legal implications

27. This is an Executive function under the Council's Constitution Part 3 Section 3 as it is a key decision and which in the opinion of the monitoring officer is likely to be significant having regard to the strategic nature of the decision and/or whether the outcome will have an impact for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards in Herefordshire) affected. It is also likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making or savings which are significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function concerned.

28. This report is for Cabinet to note the works undertaken to date on the project and identifies the further works at paragraph 7, following Counsel's advice, required to ascertain whether Nutrient Certainty has been achieved. A subsequent update report on those further works will be provided at a later date.
29. This accords with the Cabinet decision on 10 August 2020 and there are no other legal considerations or problems with Cabinet or the portfolio holder doing what is proposed.

Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Achieving the required phosphate reduction	<p>The wetland design undertaken by WUF is being peer reviewed by Rob McInnis who recently developed the new national standard for assessing wetlands on behalf of Natural England.</p> <p>A further assurance review is also been undertaken by Ricardo Consulting to ensure a robust validation</p>
Maintaining the wetland sites in perpetuity	<p>An 80yr management plan has been developed which will be resourced through the proposed ring fenced credit sale income as set out in the accompanying report.</p>

30. In addition a live project risk register is maintained and regularly reviewed by the Integrated Wetland project team and is regularly reported to the Integrated Wetland Project Board.

Consultees

31. Political groups have been consulted and comments were received from Cllr Milln, Central Ward, and Cllr Hewitt, Golden Valley North. Both expressed support for the development of integrated wetlands to reduce phosphate pollution, however are not supportive of the creation of phosphate credits to offset local development. These comments have been considered and the recommendation is to allocate 20% of the phosphate reduction for river betterment.
32. The final decision to determine Nutrient Certainty lies with Herefordshire Council who are the competent authority. Whilst not a statutory consultee for this scheme Herefordshire Council have engaged in discussions with Natural England and is taking account of their most recent published guidance in reviewing whether the Council holds certainty. Natural England are supportive of the project. They are encouraged by the approach taken to validation including the work done by Rob McInnes and are pleased to see that a buffer has been included in scope which will provide "river betterment."

Background papers

- None

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	Sarah Buffrey, Democratic Services Officer	Date 11/05/2022
Finance	Louise Devlin, Karen Morris	Date 11/05/2022
Legal	Dawn Evans	Date 17/05/2022
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 18/05/22
Equality Duty	Carol Trachonitis	Date 25/03/2022
Procurement	Mark Cage	Date 25/03/2022
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 29/03/2022
Approved by	Ross Cook	Date 18/05/2022

[Note: Please remember to overwrite or delete the guidance highlighted in grey]

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.



Title of report: Phosphate Credit Pricing and Allocation Policy

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 26 May 2022

Report by: Cabinet member Infrastructure and transport;

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.

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.

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

Cabinet are asked to consider the proposed pricing arrangements for Phosphate Credits, an interim allocation policy pending a full allocation policy and to note the proposed Phosphate Credit Allocation Policy.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **To continue with all further necessary preparations to the point of commencing trading of credits but not to proceed with the sale of credits until a further report has been provided to Cabinet updating on Nutrient Certainty of the integrated wetlands**

- b) To approve the pricing of Phosphate Credits at £14,000 + VAT per kilogram of offset required per year.
- c) To allocate and ring fence the Phosphate Credit income into the specific Wetland Revenue Reserve to fund the ongoing wetland maintenance, Phosphate Credit administration and investment in further phosphate reduction initiatives across the County;
- d) To approve an interim 'First Come First Served' policy in validation order allocation of Phosphate Credits for housing development applications received and validated on or prior to 31st October 2021 as outlined in this report;
- e) To note the Phosphate Credit Allocation Procedure as set out in this report;
- f) To agree that, where a planning application lapses or a developer chooses not to proceed to build, all unused Phosphate Credits will be forfeited and the fee paid for them returned to the developer less an administration fee, as part of the Section 106 agreement Process.
- g) To receive a report at a future date to agree a permanent Phosphate Credit allocation policy for applications received on or after 1st November 2021; and
- h) To delegate to the Corporate Director of Economy and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport minor clarifications and amendments to the interim Phosphate Credit allocation policy as may be needed from time to time and to review and update the Phosphate Credit price as required.
- i) To review the price of phosphate credits in March 2026 based on actual final build and three years actual operating costs.

Alternative options

1. Do nothing – not recommended.
 - a. Without a credit pricing and allocation policy credits cannot be traded. As phosphate levels remain in exceedance of conservation targets within the River Lugg catchment area any planning permissions unable to achieve onsite nutrient neutrality within the River Lugg catchment area and development would be unable proceed in the north of the county.
 - b. The council would have to return the £1m Getting Building Fund grant to the Marches LEP as it would be unable to meet the LEP output targets and the wetlands project cost would have to be further mitigated by the council.

Key considerations

2. The River Lugg Special Area of Conservations (SAC) covers the last nine mile stretch of the river before it enters the River Wye. Under the Habitat's directive, SACs require the highest level of protection, appropriate management, enhancement and where necessary, restoration. In July 2019, Natural England advised Herefordshire Council of the need to seek legal advice pertaining to the ruling made by the Court of Justice of the European Union (the CJEU) on the interpretation of the Habitats Directive in the case of Coöperatie Mobilisation (AKA the Dutch Case12) (Joined Cases C-293/17 and C-294/17).
3. The Council took Counsel's advice and concluded that to protect the Lugg SAC, it was not possible to permit any development on the Lugg, Frome or Arrow catchments unless a Habitats Regulations appropriate assessment concluded in accordance with Regulation 63(5) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 that the proposed development would

not adversely affect the integrity of the site, ie that the development was “nutrient neutral” there being no likely significant effects on the Lugg SAC. This immediately prevented most development proposals across the north of the county from proceeding.

4. There are currently 147 planning applications in the planning system which are unable to progress for a positive determination as they are unable to demonstrate nutrient neutrality. These applications represent 1,965 homes in the River Lugg catchment area as at the 31st October 2021, the cut-off date for this policy.
5. A further approximate 52 applications, totalling around 252 have been received since the cut-off date for the first come first served policy and, in the event that they are unable to find other satisfactory private mitigation, they will be the subject of a new policy when sufficient credits become available. Ricardo have been commissioned to work with the Council and Developers to develop this policy. The total waiting list at the moment stands at applications for 2217 homes in the Lugg Catchment. We understand that other developers have chosen not to submit applications until credits become available and therefore the unmet demand for credits may well be higher than this.
6. Cabinet has today considered an update report on steps being taken by the Integrated Wetlands Project Team to ensure a robust determination of Nutrient Certainty in the very near future. In the meantime, this report will assist in setting the policy framework and provide clarity to developers to allow necessary preparations and updating of Planning Applications to proceed. However, the sale of credits cannot commence until such time as Cabinet is completely satisfied that Nutrient Certainty has indeed been achieved.

Proposed Pricing of Phosphate Credits

7. In line with the Council's charging policy the proposal is to recharge the cost of phosphate credits on a full cost recovery basis. This is also in accordance with the polluter pays principle where the full cost of offsetting the resulting phosphate load from a development is to be met within the costs of the development.
8. Some new developments are unable to connect to mains drainage and must connect to a Package Treatment Plant (PTP). As new developments connected to PTPs some have a significantly lower phosphate load than those connected to mains sewage, the proposal is to fairly reflect this in the cost of Phosphate Credits for these homes where such reductions are certified.
9. Some water treatment plants in the Lugg are fitted with Phosphate strippers. There is complex advice from Natural England about how each plant is treated. This advice has been built into the new NE calculator and an appropriate percentage reduction to the cost of the credit will be applied.
10. Typical prices will depend on the many variables in a four stage phosphate credit calculator provided by Natural England which produces very similar results to the Council's own previously used phosphate credit calculator.

Type of development	Typical offset needed	Price*
Connects to a plant with a Phosphate Stripper	0.25kg per annum	£ 3,500
Connects to a plant without a Phosphate Stripper	0.74kg per annum	£ 10,360
Non Mains PTP Uncertified	1.31kg per annum	£ 18,340
Non Mains PTP certified to 80% reduction	0.26kg per annum	£ 3,640

*Illustrative only price is dependent upon individual circumstances of each development which may increase or reduce the amount of offset needed.

*A further £500 per Application will apply per development to cover the cost of entering into the section 106 Agreement with the Council where there are no other Section 106 planning obligations.

Proposed Interim Allocation Policy - First Come First Served

11. In order to potentially qualify for a Phosphate Credit or Credits and have them reserved developers must have a planning application validated by 31st October 2021.
12. A developer's place in the queue will be ranked according to the date applications were validated with the earliest validation dates being first in the queue and the newest the last in the queue.
13. In order to receive Phosphate Credits a developer must have a valid Planning Application awaiting a positive determination subject to receipt of Phosphate Credits and have entered into a Section 106 legal agreement with the Council. Developers will also be asked to confirm that they are ready, willing and able to proceed with their development if approved to reduce the risk of credits being "banked" and not used.
14. In the event that a planning application subsequently lapses or the developer informs us that they will not be proceeding with development after receiving credits, then the credits will be forfeited and returned to the council and the developer will be reimbursed their credit cost subject to a 5% administration fee.
15. Any developer no longer requiring the obtained credits may seek a reimbursement from Herefordshire Council through the section 106 agreement process. Unused credits cannot be sold onwards to a 3rd party and must always be returned to the Council.
16. Phased developments:
 - a. For major developments the council has the right to reserve credits and allocate credits in a phased approach. This will be done by a variant of the Section 106 agreement. As there are likely to be further planning obligations the £500 legal fee will not apply and the Council's legal fees will be charged on an hourly rate.
17. Planning refused by the Herefordshire Council Planning Committee:
 - a. Where an Officer Recommends approval of a Planning application, credits will be held until the appeal has been heard, if the appeal is allowed developers will be able to purchase the credits. Where an Officer recommends approval of a planning application and there is no subsequent appeal to the Planning Inspectorate within the set time criteria for lodging an appeal the credits will be held until the time period has lapsed.
 - b. Where an Officer Recommends refusal of planning permission - Credits will no longer be reserved and the developer will no longer be in the queue for Phosphate Credits.

The Phosphate Credit Allocation Process:

18. The Phosphate Credit Allocation Process is a staged process setting out how Phosphate credits that are generated by Herefordshire Council Integrated Wetlands can be secured by developers to offset the phosphate load of their development. The process necessitates a number of steps which can be run in tandem simultaneously. This process is monitored throughout and will span several services as well as requiring engagement with, statutory consultees, and developers themselves. Credits will only be released as they become available.
19. The process starts with developers working out the number of credits needed using the Council's Phosphate Calculator Budget Tool supplied by Natural England. The developers are then kept on a list according to 'first come first served' policy as stated above. As credits become available

and when applications are ready for determination, case officers will contact developers and provide them with an invitation to apply for credits. The developer submits this alongside their phosphate calculations, a S106 legal agreement and an online payment for their allocated credits. Their application is reviewed internally by Legal and Ecology and in consultation with Natural England.

20. Permission can then be granted or refused. If refused, developers have a set amount of time to go through the planning appeals procedure, credits will be held as stated above. Where permission is granted, HRA conditions are applied and they have a set amount of time and requirements they must fulfil otherwise the credits are returned to Herefordshire Council and payment is reimbursed to developers as stated above.

Community impact

21. The creation and allocation of phosphate credits to facilitate nutrient neutral developments in the River Lugg catchment area will positively contribute to the following ambitions within the County Plan 2020-2024.
 - a. Seek strong stewardship of the county's natural resources.
 - b. Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity, value nature and uphold environmental standards.
22. The allocation of the phosphate credits will unlock significant economic development in a significant proportion of North Herefordshire.

Environmental Impact

23. The Integrated Wetlands project has been designed to both mitigate the phosphate levels in the River Lugg SAC by enabling nutrient neutral development and to provide River Betterment described in the Nutrient Certainty report at this Cabinet.

Equality duty

24. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

 - a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
25. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. As this is a decision on back office functions, we do not believe that it will have an impact on our equality duty.
26. The certification of the phosphate credits from the Integrated Wetland sites will enable the Council to support sustainable housing growth in the north of the county which will benefit all

sections of the community. In addition to this the council will seek to provide education opportunities and the provision of public access for the enjoyment of all.

Resource implications

27. There are no financial implications from this report in the £3m Capital Budget as the cost of building the Integrated Wetlands has been funded by capital grants as detailed in the nutrient report. Any income generated from the sale of Phosphate Credits will be ring fenced into the specific Wetland Revenue Reserve to fund the ongoing wetland maintenance costs, Phosphate Credit administration and investment in further phosphate reduction initiatives across the County.
28. The below table shows the current breakdown of the costs associated with the creation of the phosphate credits on a price per home basis

Item Estimate	
Design, land acquisition build, permitting	£2,220,128
Programme Administration	£251,095
Maintenance in Perpetuity	£2,074,600
Contingency and Risk	£327,000
Total	£4,872,823
Estimated mid-level yield from three Integrated Wetland Sites. Phosphate KG	348kg
Cost of credits per KG	£14,000

Legal implications

29. This is an Executive function under the Council's Constitution Part 3 Section 3 as it is a key decision and which in the opinion of the monitoring officer is likely to be significant having regard to the strategic nature of the decision and/or whether the outcome will have an impact for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards in Herefordshire) affected. It is also likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making or savings which are significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function concerned.
30. This report is for Cabinet to note the works undertaken to date on the proposed pricing arrangements for Phosphate Credits, the interim allocation policy pending a full allocation policy and the proposed Phosphate Credit Allocation Policy.
31. This is in line with the Cabinet decision on 10 August 2020 and there are no other legal considerations or problems with Cabinet or the portfolio holder doing what is proposed.

Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Achieving the required phosphate reduction	A robust and externally verified assessment of nutrient certainty has been undertaken and peer reviewed as set out in the accompanying Cabinet report – Nutrient Certainty.
Maintaining the wetland sites in perpetuity	An 80yr management plan has been developed which will be resourced through the proposed ring fenced credit sale income.

32. In addition a live project risk register is maintained and regularly reviewed by the Integrated Wetland project team and is regularly reported to the Integrated Wetland Project Board.

Consultees

33. Political groups have been consulted and comments were received from Cllr Milln, Central Ward, and Cllr Hewitt, Golden Valley North. Both expressed support for the development of integrated wetlands to reduce phosphate pollution, however are not supportive of the creation of phosphate credits to offset local development. These comments have been considered and the recommendation is to allocate 20% of the phosphate reduction for river betterment.
34. The Integrated Wetlands project has been developed in discussion with the Nutrient Management Board comprising Natural England, Wye & Usk Foundation, Welsh Water and the Environment Agency.

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- None

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	Sarah Buffrey, Democratic Services Officer	Date 11/05/2022
Finance	Louise Devlin, Karen Morris	Date 11/05/2022
Legal	Dawn Evans	Date 17/05/2022
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 18/05/2022

Equality Duty	Carol Trachonitis	Date 29/03/2022
Procurement	Mark Cage	Date 25/03/2022
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 29/03/2022

Approved by	Ross Cook	Date 18/05/2022
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Title of report: Energy Rebate Discretionary Fund

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 26 May 2022

Report by: Cabinet member finance, corporate services and planning;

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.

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.

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To approve the Energy Rebate Discretionary Fund scheme and the criteria for the allocation of the funding.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **The Energy Rebate Discretionary Fund scheme and the criteria for the allocation of the funding is approved; and**
- b) **That all operational and budgetary decisions regarding this scheme be delegated to the director of resources and assurance.**

Alternative options

1. Not to approve criteria for the Energy Rebate Discretionary Fund scheme. This is not recommended. If the allocation criteria were not approved and published then the discretionary funds would not be able to be distributed and the funds would need to be returned to government.
2. To target households in fuel poverty and living in low energy efficient properties. This was considered but rejected, as it would require an application process with potentially at least 14,000 households eligible. Feedback from similar schemes indicates that an online application process is not straightforward, and may not benefit the most disadvantaged. It is also more costly to administer. If payments are made of £150 per household these would need to be made on a first come first serve basis which again raises concerns that those who are more disadvantaged may not benefit. If it was felt to be more equitable to make awards on the basis of the number of potential households which fall into this category, awards would need to be capped initially at £25.
3. To target low-income households (residents on universal credit with income below free school meal entitlement / free prescription level). This was considered but rejected, as again it would require an application process with the same issues as above. It is also reliant on data from Department of Works and Pensions, which has some limitations in practice, which adds to the complexity of the application process. Therefore, whilst approximately 6,000 households would meet the qualifying criteria, there is a high administrative burden and may not benefit the most disadvantaged.

Key considerations

4. At the end of February 2022, the government formally launched its Energy Rebate Grant Scheme for 2022/23 publishing its initial details of the guidance on 23 February, which has since been updated. Details can be found here: [Support for energy bills - the council tax rebate 2022-23: billing authority guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-energy-bills-the-council-tax-rebate-2022-23-billing-authority-guidance). The scheme includes a statutory element, for which the government has provided clear criteria for distribution of the grant, and a discretionary element which is to be distributed based on a local, political decision.
5. Herefordshire Council has received a total of £9,892,200 of which £9,410,850 is for the statutory element (for households in council tax bands A-D) and £481,350 is for the Discretionary Fund. Government has calculated allocations for the Discretionary Fund based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation and the estimated number of local council tax support claimants in council tax bands E to H.
6. An outline of the statutory element and its distribution criteria is available on the Council's website: [Council Tax Rebate](#).
7. The government has recognised that local authorities may wish to provide support to other energy payers who are not eligible under the terms of the core element. They may also wish to provide carefully targeted 'top-up' payments to the most vulnerable households in bands A to D (supported through the statutory scheme).

8. Councils can determine locally how best to make use of this funding to support those suffering financial hardship as a result of the rising cost of living. Government has advised that this could include households living in property in council tax bands E to H that are on income related benefits or those where the energy bills payers are not liable for council tax. It could also include using the Discretionary Fund to offer carefully targeted 'top-up' payments to the most vulnerable households in bands A to D (for example, those on means tested benefits), or to offer discretionary support exceeding £150 per household.
9. There are certain exemption classes which are specifically excluded from eligibility for the Discretionary Fund such as armed forces accommodation as the government will provide separate support. There are other classes e.g. student halls which are unlikely to be eligible unless they are exposed to rising energy prices in the same way as other households.
10. Once allocation criteria have been determined and approved by local, elected Members, Councils must publish their agreed guidelines setting out eligibility for the Discretionary Fund.
11. Allocations from the Discretionary Fund should be spent by 30 November 2022. Any remaining funding will be required to be repaid to government.
12. All payments made under either the core or discretionary element of the scheme can be disregarded for any income-related means-tested and benefits and are non-taxable.
13. The government recognises that the implementation of this policy will place an additional burden on local authorities. In accordance with the New Burdens doctrine, the government will conduct an assessment of the expected reasonable additional costs associated with the implementation of the policy, working closely with local government in doing so.
14. Officers have reviewed the support for energy bills - the council tax rebate 2022-23: billing authority guidance and considered the options for allocating the Discretionary Fund and at Appendix A are the recommended allocation criteria which are considered to assist those in most financial need and who are affected by rising energy costs. The two main criteria will provide:
 - (a) financial support (£150) to households living in property in council tax bands E to H who are in receipt of Council Tax Reduction and specific exempt categories;
 - and
 - (b) provide an additional top up (estimated as c £55) to all households who are the most financially disadvantaged. The top up will be provided to all eligible households in receipt of 100% Council Tax Reduction as at 1 April 2022.
15. It is estimated that the number of households benefitting from criteria (a) will be c. 750 households and in criteria (b) c.6750 households. There will be an initial closing date of 30 September 2022 for the Discretionary Fund scheme. Should there be any residual funding remaining after 30 September 2022, it will be at the discretion of the Council how it allocates the remainder, a decision delegated to the director of resources and assurance.
16. The Discretionary Fund will be administered through the Revenue and Benefits Service of the Council and any operational issues will be delegated to the Director of Resources and Assurance. It is anticipated that payments to households under the Discretionary Fund will be made using the same options as the statutory Energy Rebate Scheme.

17. The Council will work with partners in the advice sector to ensure that any household which is not eligible for the Energy Rebate Scheme receives relevant advice.

Community impact

18. Across the county there were an estimated 13,902 households (16.5% of all households) in fuel poverty in 2019 (the most recent data available), Consumer prices, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), were 7.0% higher in March 2022 than a year before, so the figure of households in fuel poverty is likely to be an underestimate. The Herefordshire Community Wellbeing Survey 2021 reported that 14% of respondents found it difficult to pay for their basic living needs which was particularly linked to the impact of Covid 19 on their household income.
19. The Energy Rebate Scheme (statutory and discretionary) will provide additional financial support to eligible households, many of which will be the most financially disadvantaged. By fully utilising the funding from government, this will have a positive impact on the community by minimising the debt burden on those that struggle to pay essential bills. There is also other help which has been put in place by government, energy suppliers as well as locally available advice and support.

Environmental Impact

20. The council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.
21. Whilst this is a decision on back office functions and will have minimal environmental impacts, consideration has been made to minimise waste and resource use in line with the council's Environmental Policy, for example by directing claimants to claim online.

Equality duty

22. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

22. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. There is likely be a positive impact for people with protected characteristics who are financially disadvantaged and the fund will be managed in a fair manner, using only those criteria shown at Appendix A.

Resource implications

23. Herefordshire Council has been awarded £481,350 by government for the Discretionary Fund element of the Energy Rebate Scheme to provide direct payments to households. This decision is seeking approval for the key criteria to allocate the Discretionary Fund and gives an indication of the potential payments which will be made using these criteria.
24. It is anticipated that using the criteria set out in this report, that there may be a residual element which would be available for further allocation. However, it will be important to ensure that appropriate reconciliations are carried out before any further awards are made to ensure that payments made are within the £481,350 allocation.
25. Should payments be made beyond the funding made available then this would be an additional cost to the council for which there is currently no revenue budget.
26. There are no capital implications arising from this decision.
27. Herefordshire Council will incur additional costs in implementing and administering this scheme. The Government recognises that the implementation of the scheme will place an additional burden on local authorities. In accordance with the New Burdens doctrine the government will conduct an assessment of the expected reasonable additional costs associated with the implementation of the policy.
28. Officers will need to ensure that these costs are appropriately identified to facilitate recovery of these costs. Any non-recovery of these costs would potentially be an additional cost to the Council. This is currently considered to be low risk.
29. The proposed criteria are recommended as the most efficient and effective way of reaching the target population (those in most financial need and who are affected by rising energy costs). By making direct awards, using the same payment options as the statutory element, the administrative burden and costs should be minimised.

Legal implications

30. The requirements of a discretionary scheme are set out in the Government guidance to local authorities.
31. The Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities Guidance –Support for Energy Bills – The Council Tax Rebate 2022-2023 Billing Authority Guidance dated 16th March 2022 provides guidance to Billing Authorities in England on the administration of the Council Tax Rebate and associated discretionary fund for households as part of a government package of support for rising energy costs.
32. The Council is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Guidance in the implementation of the Discretionary Energy Rebate Fund.

Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Capacity to administer the scheme	The implementation of the recommended criteria will use existing information and payment methods. There may be a need for additional temporary staffing resources. Government recognises that there may be an additional administrative burden, so there is an implication that it will provide additional resource.
Overspend of the Discretionary Fund Allocation	This is unlikely. As the criteria is based on eligibility of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, figures for qualifying households are known.
Underspend of the Discretionary Fund Allocation	It is possible that not all eligible households will take up their award. This will be minimised, by providing a choice of different payment options. The Council will review take up monthly and push messages out to increase take up if needed. It will also set a closing date of 30 September 2022 for take up of the payment. Should there be any residual funding remaining after 30 September 2022, it will be at the discretion of the Council how it allocates the remainder, a decision delegated to the director of resources and assurance.

34. Risks will be managed at directorate level.

Consultees

35. A political party consultation took place from 21 April to 29 April 2022. Three comments were received which were neutral or supportive of the scheme, with additional suggestions of further funding from Herefordshire Council as well as an option for households which didn't want the extra funding to be able to donate it to local groups. Herefordshire Council has made a decision to provide support to households which are struggling financially and this will be subject to a further decision report. If households wish to donate the funding they receive, it is their choice as to how they do this.

Appendices

Appendix A - Energy Rebate Scheme – Discretionary Fund

Background papers

None

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	Sarah Buffrey, Democratic Services Officer	Date 27/04/2022
Finance	Joanne Moore	Date 06/05/2022
Legal	Sharon Bennett-Matthews	Date 04/05/2022
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 29/04/2022
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 06/05/2022
Procurement	Mark Cage	Date 29/04/2022
Risk	Jo Needs	Date 05/05/2022
Approved by	Andrew Lovegrove	Date 16/05/2022

Energy Rebate Scheme – Discretionary Fund**Eligibility Criteria**

The Council has decided the following:

1. a single one-off payment of £150 will be awarded to any household which resides in a dwelling with a council tax band E-H and which is in receipt of any amount of Council Tax Reduction and has not already received £150 in a Band E property that is receiving Disabled relief;

AND

- it is someone's main and sole residence as at 1 April 2022;
 - the Council Tax liable person is not a local authority, a corporate body or other body such as a housing association, the government or governmental body;
 - it is a chargeable dwelling or in exemption classes N (students), S (students under 18) or U (people with severe mental impairment).
2. a single top up payment shall be made to each household which resides in a dwelling with a council tax band A-H where the household receives 100% Council Tax Reduction (exact amount of top up payment to be determined).

AND

- it is someone's main and sole residence as at 1 April 2022;
- the Council Tax liable person is not a local authority, a corporate body or other body such as a housing association, the government or governmental body;
- it is a chargeable dwelling or in exemption classes N (students), S (students under 18) or U (people with severe mental impairment).

Should there be any residual funding remaining after 30 September 2022, it will be at the discretion of the Council how it allocates the remainder, a decision delegated to the director of resources and assurance.

Payment Methods

If a household is eligible and pays Council Tax via Direct Debit, payment will be made into their bank account after their first Council Tax instalment has been successfully paid.

If a household is eligible and does not pay Council Tax by direct debit, they will be contacted to complete an application form to select how they would like the payment from the following options:

- have the payment made into your bank account (you will need to provide proof of your bank account upon application)

- apply for a Post Office Pay Out voucher where you will receive a voucher which you can take to any Post Office and exchange for £150 cash (you will need to provide identification to the Post Office to obtain the payment)
- request the £150 is credited to your Council Tax account (if you have Council Tax arrears, this will be offset against the arrears rather than against current liability)

These energy rebate payments must be claimed by 30 September 2022 in order for the applicant to receive a payment by 30 November 2022.

Eligibility Disputes

The decision of the Council on any eligibility matters will be final. Should any tax payer feel aggrieved by any decision then they should make an official complaint through the Council's complaints procedure. Full details are available on the Council's website.



Herefordshire County Business Improvement District Advance Request

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 26 May 2022

Report by: Cabinet member environment and economy;

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To seek approval for an advance loan of up to £210,000 in 2022/23 to the Herefordshire County Business Improvement District (BID) Limited to enable the company to become operational until such time as the council (as the billing authority) can commence collection of the 2% business rates levy.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **To approve a short term 0% loan of up to £210,000 in 2022/23 to the Herefordshire County BID Limited, to be repaid within the financial year through collection of the levy by the council as the billing authority; and**
- b) **To delegate to the Section 151 Officer following consultation with the cabinet member environment and economy all operational decisions in relation to the payment and recovery of the loan.**

Alternative options

1. The council could choose not to provide a loan to the Herefordshire County BID Limited in advance of the collection of the levy. This is not recommended as it would lead to significant delay of the Herefordshire County Business Improvement District (County BID) becoming operational, and would fail to deliver the Herefordshire County Plan 2020-2024 commitment to support tourism. The County Plan states '*We will... Protect and promote our heritage, culture and natural beauty to enhance quality of life and support tourism*'. The County BID will also

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Roger Allonby, Tel: 01432 260330, email: Roger.Allonby@herefordshire.gov.uk

support visitor economy businesses and independent retailers, the sectors worst affected by Covid 19 and the related lockdown periods. The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership and the council have funded a range of support to enable the soonest possible recovery from the pandemic, including the redevelopment of the visitor website and a wide range of marketing and PR which is now coming to an end. The County BID will now lead and fund this and other activity going forward. Any delay in the commencement of the County BID would result in the loss of these critical services ahead of peak visitor season.

Key considerations

2. Herefordshire County BID Ltd have requested a loan of up to £210,000 over a six month period from the council to enable the commencement of services in the County BID until such time as the council (as the billing authority) can collect the levy from businesses that are liable to pay. Herefordshire County BID Ltd is a company limited by guarantee which has been formed to implement the County BID. The company has a private sector led Board. The requested loan would be paid in instalments to the company over a six month period and be repaid by the end of 2022/23 through the levies collected by the council.
3. A BID is developed and run by businesses and is an arrangement where they and other contributing partners get together, and decide what improvements they want to make in their destination. This goes into a business plan which is voted on by all those who would have to pay a contribution to the delivery of the business plan (i.e. all business rate paying businesses over an identified threshold defined in the plan).
4. Eligible tourism and independent retail businesses with a rateable value of over £12,000 were invited to vote in a ballot regarding the development of the County BID. The ballot was held in November 2021 in accordance with the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 ("the 2004 Regulations"). The outcome of the ballot was published on 1 December 2021, and can be found here: [Business Improvement District for Herefordshire County](#). Of those that voted in the ballot 83% by number and 89% by rateable value voted in favour of creating the County BID.
5. Under Regulation 9 of the 2004 Regulations there is a 28 day period immediately after the ballot result announcement where a request may be made in writing to the Secretary of State to declare ballot void on the grounds specified in the regulations. Any such request must set out the basis of the challenge which must be a perceived material irregularity in the ballot process.
6. Following the declaration of the ballot outcome on the 1st December 2022, the 28 day period passed without any challenge to the bid ballot or the business plan prepared by the private sector led Task Group having been made. The BID Proposal also incorporates the Business Plan for the current County Bid in a single document. The County BID was approved by Cabinet on the 15 November 2021: [Decision - Herefordshire Destination Business Improvement District - Herefordshire Council](#)
7. The Hereford County Business District Improvement Plan 2022-2027 ("the County BID and Business Plan"), can be found here: [Herefordshire County BID – The digital home of Herefordshire County BID](#). The Business Plan identifies that through a 2% levy on business rates of eligible businesses a budget of £431,000 per annum will be generated. As the billing authority, the council will be responsible for collecting the levy for onward payment to Herefordshire County BID Ltd. The terms of the levy collection and the related charges for this service are defined in an Operating Agreement between Herefordshire County BID Ltd and the council.

8. As it will take some time for the council to be in a position to collect the levy, which will be backdated to the date upon which the Operating Agreement commences, Herefordshire County BID Ltd has requested an advance loan of up to £210,000 to enable operations over the first six months secured against the levy due to be collected in 2022/23. The loan will be repaid via the collection of the levy, with the council retaining the levy income until such point as it has been repaid in full.
9. The loan represents 49% of the annual levy income. Nationally, only 4% of businesses fail to pay the levy. As the billing authority the council would also be responsible for recovering levies from those that refuse to pay.
10. The loan will be utilised by Herefordshire County BID Ltd to enable the BID to become operational, for example: continuation of marketing and PR campaigns as the council led activities come to an end; maintenance and further development of the www.visitherefordshire.co.uk website as the primary information portal for visitors to the county; commencement of the development of a centralised procurement programme for interested businesses; and for staffing, office space, IT costs and initial business engagement events.

Environmental Impact

11. This decision relates to providing a short term loan to Herefordshire County BID Ltd to enable them to become operational, so there are limited direct environmental impacts or benefits.
12. The County BID are committed to reducing their environmental impact wherever possible, and the development of sustainable tourism in the county is a key focus of their future activities.

Equality duty

13. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
14. The decision relates to a short term loan to Herefordshire County BID Ltd who are committed to inclusion, and the development of accessible tourism opportunities in the county. The County BID will work with tourism businesses and independent retailers to enhance the accessibility of the county's offer for visitors and residents, and to promote visits to the county to disabled people.

Resource implications

15. Herefordshire County BID Ltd have requested a loan of up to £210,000 for a six month period in 2022/23, to be repaid from the levy collected by the council (as the billing authority). The loan will be made in monthly instalments up to a maximum value of £210,000.
16. Any advance loan if agreed would sit on the council's balance sheet as a debtor to be repaid by Herefordshire County BID Ltd from the year one BID levies collected by the council.

Revenue or Capital cost of project (indicate R or C)	2022/23	Future Years	Total
Revenue Loan	£210,000	£000	£210,000
TOTAL	£210,000		£210,000

Funding streams (indicate whether base budget / external / grant / capital borrowing)	2022/23	Future Years	Total
<i>Herefordshire County BID Limited identified as a debtor to the council until the loan is repaid.</i>	£210,000	£000	£210,000
TOTAL	£210,000	£000	£210,000

Revenue budget implications	2022/23	Future Years	Total
	£210,000	£000	£210,000
<i>Herefordshire County BID Limited identified as a debtor to the council until the loan is repaid.</i>			
TOTAL	£210,000	£000	£210,000

Legal implications

17. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) were introduced by Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2003* (LGA 2003). Their establishment, enforcement and operation is regulated by the framework set out in the LGA 2003 and the *Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended)* ("2004 Regulations").

18. Guidance on BIDs can be found in Department for Communities and Local Government - Business Improvement District Technical Guide for Local Authorities 2015 and Technical Guidance for Local Authorities 2015. The key provisions relating to the operation and implementation of BIDs are set out below.
19. Under Regulation 15 of the 2004 Regulations the relevant billing authority shall, by the commencement date, provide for the imposition, administration, collection, recovery and application of the BID levy and Schedule 4 shall have effect with respect to those matters.
20. Under Section 53 of the LGA 2003 the council must ensure that the BID arrangements are in place which give effect to the BID proposals prior to the BID arrangements coming into effect. The BID arrangements are to come into force on such day as may be provided under the BID Business Plan (the Bid Proposals).
21. Section 45(1) Local Government Act 2003: The BID levy is to be imposed in a business improvement district only for periods which fall within the period in which the BID arrangements are in force in respect of the business district (known as the chargeable period).
22. The council has legal powers to provide a loan to the Business Improvement District, though s1-4 of the Localism Act 2011 (General Power of Competence). In exercising these powers and providing the requested loan, the council must have regard to its general fiduciary duty in the management of public finances, as well as its specific duty to obtain best value in the delivery of all of its functions, under s3 of the Local Government Act 1999. The terms of the loan will be detailed in a loan agreement to be entered into between the council and Herefordshire County BID Ltd. As the loan repayments will be made from collection from the County BID levy which is the responsibility of council there are no legal issues arising from the proposed loan.

Risk management

23. The following are considered to be the key risks;

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Levy paying businesses refuse to pay, putting at risk the repayment of the loan.	Following the outcome of the ballot, eligible businesses are now legally required to pay the levy. As the billing authority the council would be responsible for seeking recovery of any unpaid funds. Nationally only 4% of businesses (on average) don't pay the levy, and the BID company is seeking a 49% advance of the first year levy income.
The BID company decides not to repay the loan.	The council will directly collect the levy from businesses (as the billing authority) and will retain the income until the loan is repaid.
The loan fund is used for activities not identified in the business plan.	The BID company are legally required to implement the business plan that was subject to the ballot. A BID company Board has been formed to oversee the implementation of the business plan. The BID have provided a breakdown of activities the funds it will be spent on.

Consultees

24. As a Key Decision the political groups have been consulted. Cllr Louis Stark and Cllr David Summers sought clarification as to what the loan funds would be used for and the risk of non recovery. Further information on both of these areas included in the decision paper.

Appendices

None.

Background papers

None

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	John Coleman	Date 04/05/2022
Finance	Louise Devlin	Date 03/05/2022
Legal	Sharon Bennett-Williams & Alice McAlpine	Date 05/05/2022
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 29/04/2022
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 05/05/2022
Procurement	Mark Cage	Date 29/04/2022
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 02/05/2022
Approved by	Ross Cook	Date 06/05/2022

[Note: Please remember to overtype or delete the guidance highlighted in grey]

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.



Title of report: Promoting Safety: Herefordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 26 May 2022

Report by: Cabinet member health and adult wellbeing;

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.

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.

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To approve the final draft of the Domestic Abuse Strategy for Herefordshire 2021-2024, in accordance with the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **The final draft of Promoting Safety: Herefordshire's Strategy for Addressing Domestic Abuse 2021 – 2024 be approved for implementation;**
- b) **The responses to the recommendations made by Scrutiny Committee in appendix 4 of this report are approved.**
- c) **Approval of updates to the strategy and the associated needs assessment, be delegated to the Director for Community Wellbeing in consultation with cabinet members during the lifetime of the strategy.**

Alternative options

- 1. Not to approve the final draft Domestic Abuse Strategy for implementation. This option is not recommended, as it is a statutory duty under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, for local authorities to have a robust strategy in place for tackling domestic abuse. Local authorities are required to deliver an up to date strategy and report back to the Government annually.

Key considerations

- 2. Domestic abuse has a huge impact on society and is one of the most pervasive of all social problems. It causes pain and suffering for those affected and their families, and has a significant cost to public services and the local community. It is often a hidden crime, with people experiencing domestic abuse reluctant to report their situation.
- 3. The Crime Survey for England and Wales suggests that:
 - a. An estimated 2.3 million adults aged 16 to 74 years experienced domestic abuse in 2019/20.
 - b. There is an estimated 4,900 women and 2,400 men in Herefordshire who were victims of domestic abuse in 2019/20.
 - c. More than one in ten of all offences recorded by the police are domestic abuse related
- 4. West Mercia Police recorded 2168 domestic abuse offences in Herefordshire during 2020/21.
- 5. People who have experienced, or are experiencing domestic abuse may be affected in a number of ways, including significant and lasting impact on their physical and mental health, homelessness, loss of income or work and isolation from families and friends. Children can experience both short and long-term cognitive, behavioural and emotional effects as a result of witnessing domestic abuse.
- 6. The impact on individuals and families results in a variety of needs arising across a wide-range of public services, from police and health care through to education, housing support and criminal justice. The council recognise that a collaborative approach to developing and delivering services is fundamental to preventing and responding to domestic abuse.
- 7. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed new duties on local authorities. These duties include, but are not limited to the following;
 - a. Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, which will be consulted in the implementation of the new Act.
 - b. Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their area for all victim or their children, including those who come from outside the area.

- c. Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover the local authority locality, having regard to the needs assessment.
 - d. Give effect to the strategy (through commissioning or de-commissioning decisions) including the provision of safe accommodation.
 - e. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy, reviewing it every three years.
8. The first draft of this strategy, along with the needs assessment that informed the strategy, was approved for consultation by the Leader of the Council in a [decision](#) taken on 22 October 2021. The draft strategy went to Scrutiny Committee in November 2021.
 9. An online stakeholder consultation was carried out during December 2021. This was followed up with a stakeholder workshop in March 2022. West Mercia Women's Aid were commissioned to carry out a more detailed consultation process with service users and people with lived experience of domestic abuse during March 2022. The feedback from this process is outlined in the consultees section of this report and has been used to update the strategy.
 10. The strategy will be implemented and monitored via a work plan held by the Local Partnership Board. The Board includes representatives from the following organisations / groups:
 - a. Herefordshire Council including Public Health
 - b. West Mercia Women's Aid
 - c. Local NHS organisations, including the Integrated Care System (ICS)
 - d. West Mercia Police
 - e. Registered Landlords of Social Housing
 - f. People with lived experience of domestic abuse
 - g. The perspective of people with "protected characteristics", who are often under represented among people seeking support.
 11. In addition to the work plan, the community commissioning team are required to complete an annual monitoring report for DLUHC. The first of these will be submitted in June 2022.

Community impact

12. By adopting and working in partnership to deliver the Domestic Abuse Strategy, the work is directly contributing to the County Plan's ambition of 'strengthening communities to ensure that everyone lives well and safely together
13. More generally, this strategy positively impacts on priorities within the County Plan including the provision of affordable housing, the use of technology and supporting local children and young people, particularly those most vulnerable and disadvantaged. There are also links to the Talk Community approach and network of hubs as part of the wider prevention work and awareness raising.
14. The council's Children's and Young People's Plan (2019-24) reported that professionals in Herefordshire who work with children and young people highlighted safety in the home environment as an area for attention. They have consistently emphasised the need for a stronger approach to early identification and early help, including better intervention around domestic abuse.
15. The revised strategy is directly relevant to the council's corporate parenting responsibilities, as nationally, incidence of domestic abuse is reported to be highest amongst 16 to 25 year olds.

Care experienced young people not infrequently experience domestic abuse and may also have witnessed it in their childhood.

16. The requirement set out in the Act to undertake and regularly update the needs assessment will ensure that commissioning activity, policies and action plans reflect both current data and the feedback from stakeholders.
17. West Mercia Women's Aid are the commissioned specialist provider of domestic abuse support services in Herefordshire and work with a wide range of partners to deliver this work, including registered housing providers to offer safe accommodation. West Mercia Women's Aid support female and male victim-survivors of domestic abuse.
18. Whilst there is some potential cross over, it is useful to clarify that West Midlands Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre offer a support service to victims (female and male) of rape and sexual abuse.

Environmental Impact

19. The council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the benefit of people living in Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.
20. Whilst this decision will have minimal direct environmental impact, consideration has been made to minimise waste and resource use in line with the council's Environmental Policy such as sustainable approach to the Local Partnership Board meetings etc.

Equality duty

21. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:
A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to-
 - a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
22. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. Domestic Abuse is experienced by people across all parts of the population including those with protected characteristics, and they are a particular focus of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
23. The statutory guidance for the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires that all Local Authorities have to ensure the following:
 - a) Dedicated support to victims with relevant protected characteristics
 - b) Views are represented at the Local Partnership Board

- c) Local needs assessment should take into account support and services for all victims regardless of protected characteristics
 - d) The partnership board must take steps to understand the barriers that prevent victims from certain relevant protected characteristics or multiple complex needs from accessing and using support
 - e) Commissioned support must reflect the support needs of victims with particular protected characteristics
 - f) Provide relevant safe accommodation for victims and their children with relevant protected characteristics
24. Research for the strategy, reflected in the domestic abuse needs assessment undertaken in 2021, included specific demographic data around those affected by domestic abuse and perpetrators of abuse, including those with protected characteristics. Services have been commissioned to increase investment in those groups that are under-represented.
25. The strategy considers how all partner organisations can respond to the needs of those affected by domestic abuse with protected characteristics based upon the specific demography of Herefordshire.
26. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the strategy.

Resource implications

27. There are no direct financial implications for the council arising from the strategy. However, the Domestic Abuse Strategy requires the council to take action in collaboration with partner organisations including those actions which are mandatory under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. This has and will be achieved through the established service commissioned by the council and additional grant resources provided by the Government.

Revenue or Capital cost of project (indicate R or C)	2021/22	2022/23	Future Years	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cost of existing commissioned service – Refuge and support (R). Runs until 2024 – Total value is £1.295m	259	259	259	777
DA Co-ordinator (R) – 2021/22 only.	50	0	0	50
Additional commissioned activities related to new duties in Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (R)	361	362	0	723
TOTAL	670	621	259	1,550m

Funding streams (indicate whether base budget / external / grant / capital borrowing)	2021/22	2022/23	Future Years	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Base Budget	259	259	259	777
One off grant from MHCLG for implementation of Domestic Abuse Act 2021	50	0	0	50
Annual Grant from DLUHC for implementation of Domestic Abuse Act 2021 additional duties – not confirmed beyond current financial year	361	362	0	723
TOTAL	670	621	259	1,550m

Revenue budget implications	2021/22	2022/23	Future Years	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000
There are no immediate implications on the revenue budget. Activity commissioned using the annual grant is only commissioned for one year. If not further grant is made available, no activity would be commissioned.	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	0

28. Domestic abuse provision in Herefordshire is supported by funding from other public bodies, notably the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). That funding supports Independent Domestic Violence Advisers and the perpetrator intervention programmes, Drive and Men and Masculinity. The PCC commissions these services directly.

Legal implications

29. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a number of legal and statutory duties which must be complied with. Tier one local authorities (which Herefordshire as a Unitary Authority falls within) are required to convene a Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, assess the need for and prepare and publish strategies, and commission support to victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation services in their areas. Local Authorities also are required to report back to central government that they have met these obligations.

Risk management

30. There are few risks associated with the decision to approve the final draft of the strategy:

<p>Risk / opportunity Strategy priorities need to be embedded across all partner organisations and progress needs to be measurable.</p>	<p>Mitigation A clear work plan is needed to deliver the priorities of the strategy. This will be developed using information from the needs assesment, the strategy and feedback from people with lived experience of domestic abuse. Partner organisations will be accountable through the Local Partnership Board.</p>
<p>Lack of good quality data for needs assessment to inform strategy, action plan and subsequent commissioning of services.</p>	<p>The recent needs assessment has revealed some gaps in the complete picture of domestic abuse across Herefordshire. A clearer picture of need will be developed over the life time of this strategy with a particular emphasis on the experiences of hard to reach groups. This will be achieved through a collaborative approach and improved data sharing across the Local Partnership Board agencies.</p>
<p>Whilst the additional funding from DLUHC is hugely welcome, the annual funding cycle makes it challenging to deploy it to its greatest benefit and to maintain meaningful change.</p>	<p>The community commissioning team will feed this concern back to DLUHC and are part of a Domestic Abuse LGA group that also provides regular feedback to DLUHC. Due regard to the sustainability of any commissioned projects will be given consideration.</p>

Consultees

31. A stakeholder engagement process was undertaken via an online survey in December 2021, 15 responses were received through this process. A stakeholder focus group was convened in March 2022 to follow this up. The following feedback was received from a range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations; please also see corresponding responses:
 - a. Need to embed quality standards; this has already started through the commissioning and improved partnership working e.g. co-location with MASH. This will be further developed by the Local Partnership Board via their work plan.
 - b. How can we help people to understand what domestic abuse is e.g. much more than physical violence? This will be achieved through training and education. WMWA and WMRSASC deliver training to a wide range of partners and in local schools to help professionals and young people to develop an understanding of positive relationships and behaviours that are abusive.

- c. Ensure that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is addressed in the strategy; the impact of the pandemic has been highlighted in the strategy. Data suggests that there was not a significant increase in the prevalence of domestic abuse during the pandemic. There was however, an increase in demand for IDVAS, which may indicate that survivors of domestic abuse were being assessed as being higher risk during this period.
- d. How can the VCS add value to existing commissioned services? By increasing awareness of domestic abuse within their organisations and customer, by attending training events, by identifying gaps in service provision and by sign posting to services.
- e. How can we identify gaps in service provision? The domestic abuse needs assessment will be updated annually. Feedback from service users, people with lived experience and wider VCS / statutory service providers will help us identify gaps and shape future service provision.
- f. The definition of domestic abuse is welcomed, but it does not strongly underline the power and control element of domestic abuse; this has been acknowledged in the strategy.

32. West Mercia Women's Aid were commissioned to undertake detailed engagement work with service users and people with lived experience of Domestic Abuse in March 2022. The main themes arising from this engagement process were:

- a. There should be more education around domestic abuse available to young people.
- b. Need to improve access to services, remove barriers to coming forward to sharing experience of domestic abuse,
- c. A need for greater understanding of the signs, symptoms of, and response to, domestic abuse amongst professionals.
- d. Partnership working is fundamental to supporting people with lived experience of domestic abuse.
- e. More tools are needed for the Police and Court systems to deter perpetrators of domestic abuse.

These key themes are picked up in the strategy under the priorities of prevention, provision, partnership and perpetrators. The feedback from this process has led to some minor changes in the strategy including removing the reference to improving the resilience of survivors. This has been replaced with a more empowering statement about enabling survivors to rebuild their lives. Survivors also emphasised the need for improved education around domestic abuse for young people and the need for improved partnership working.

33. The draft strategy was taken to Scrutiny Committee in November 2021. The recommendations from this and associated responses are set out in appendix 4. A members briefing was held in February 2022 and a political group consultation has also been completed. Feedback from the political group consultation was supportive of the strategy.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Promoting Safety: Herefordshire's Strategy for Addressing Domestic Abuse 2021 - 2024

Appendix 2 – Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment for Herefordshire June 2021

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 4 – Recommendations from Scrutiny Committee and associated responses.

Background papers

None

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	Sarah Buffrey	Date 25/04/2022
Finance	Kim Wratten	Date 25/04/2022
Legal	Samantha Evans	Date 13/04/2022
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 12/04/2022
Equality Duty	Carol Trachonitis	Date 14/04/2022
Procurement	Mark Cage	Date 14/04/2022
Risk	Paul Harris	Date 12/04/2022
Approved by	Paul Smith	Date 09/05/2022

[Note: Please remember to overwrite or delete the guidance highlighted in grey]

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Promoting Safety: Herefordshire's Strategy for Addressing Domestic Abuse 2021-2024

May 2022

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1. Executive summary
2. Introduction
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6. Domestic abuse in Herefordshire (Needs Assessment)
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11. Representing victim-survivor's
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13. Measuring Progress

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Domestic Abuse Act summary

Appendix 2 – Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment Herefordshire

Glossary of terms

DA	Domestic Abuse
WMWA	West Mercia Women's Aid
LPB	Local Partnership Board
HBV	Honour Based Violence
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
CSEW	Crime Survey of England and Wales
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisors
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer
BAME	Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
GP	General Practitioner
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
DLUHC	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (previously Ministry of Housing and Local Government)
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls

Social Media	Website and computers programmes including apps that allow people to communication and share information on the internet using a computer or mobile phone.
Remote/Tech Abuse	The use of technology (including remote technology) to perpetrate domestic abuse.

1. Executive Summary

Domestic abuse has a huge impact on society and is one of the most pervasive of all social problems. It causes pain and suffering for those affected and their family, and has a significant cost to public services and the local community. It is often a hidden crime, with people experiencing domestic abuse reluctant to report their situation and friends, neighbours or family hesitant to get involved.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales indicates that an estimated 2.3 million adults aged 16 to 74 years experienced domestic abuse in 2019/20. More than one in ten of all offences recorded by the police are domestic abuse related.

People who have experienced, or are experiencing domestic abuse may be affected in a number of ways, including significant and lasting impact on physical and mental health, homelessness, loss of income or work and isolation from families and friends. Children can experience both short and long-term cognitive, behavioural and emotional effects as a result of witnessing domestic abuse.

1.1 Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 has established a definition of domestic abuse and given Local Authorities new statutory duties:

- Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board that it will consult as it performs certain specified functions.
- Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their area for all victim-survivors or their children, including those who come from outside the area.
- Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover their locality, having regard to the needs assessment.
- Give effect to the strategy (through commissioning / de-commissioning decisions) including the provision of safe accommodation.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy, reviewing it every three years.

Building on existing work, this strategy outlines what Herefordshire Council and our partners are doing to deliver these new duties.

1.2 Needs Assessment

A domestic abuse needs assessment was carried out in June 2021 to refresh the needs assessment completed in 2018. This tells us that in Herefordshire between April 2020 and March 2021, the police recorded 1,354 domestic abuse incidents and 2,168 domestic abuse offences, this is roughly 4 incidents and 6 offences per day. It is widely understood that domestic abuse is

under reported, data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales indicates that there were likely to be an estimated 4,900 women and 2,400 men in Herefordshire who were victim-survivors of domestic abuse in 2019/20. As well as Police data, the needs assessment considered a wide range of other data sources in order to build a full picture of domestic abuse across Herefordshire.

1.3 Priorities

The priorities of the strategy period are:

- Prevention
- Provision
- Partnership
- Perpetrators

A thorough consultation and engagement process has been undertaken in order to gain feedback on these priorities including a public consultation via an online survey, stakeholder focus groups and focus groups with service users and people with lived experience of domestic abuse.

These priorities will inform commissioned services and the work of the Local Partnership Board.

1.4 Measuring Progress

A work programme will be developed in order to enable the monitoring and evaluation of progress against the outcomes detailed in the strategy. This will be further backed up by performance indicators in commissioned contracts and via an annual performance monitoring update for DLUHC.

The strategy will be reviewed in full during 2024.

2. Introduction

Domestic abuse has a huge impact on society and is one of the most pervasive of all social problems. It causes pain and suffering for those affected and their family, and has a significant cost to public services and the local community. It is often a hidden crime, with people experiencing domestic abuse reluctant to report their situation and friends, neighbours or family hesitant to get involved.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales indicates that an estimated 2.3 million adults aged 16 to 74 years experienced domestic abuse in 2019/20. More than one in ten of all offences recorded by the police are domestic abuse related.

People who have experienced, or are experiencing domestic abuse may be affected in a number of ways, including significant and lasting impact on physical and mental health, homelessness, loss of income or work and isolation from families and friends. Children can experience both short and long-term cognitive, behavioural and emotional effects as a result of witnessing domestic abuse.

The breadth of the impact on individuals and families results in needs arising across a wide-range of public services, from police and health care through to education, housing support and criminal justice. We recognise that a collaborative approach to developing and delivering services is fundamental to preventing and responding to domestic abuse in the most effective way.

Since the publication of our current strategy in 2019, the Government have given royal assent to the Domestic Abuse Act in April 2021. In Herefordshire, we have considered the new act requirements, the evidence from our needs assessment, existing strategy priorities and have outlined our future direction in this draft strategy.

3. Our Shared Vision

Domestic abuse is unacceptable to residents and our wider communities. All victim-survivors of domestic abuse, regardless of their situation, are able to have equal access to help when they need it, including access to safe accommodation and the wider specialist support services required.

The strategy, through its implementation will enable people and communities to;

- Recognise and reject all forms of domestic abuse
- Understand where to access help
- Seek, be offered and receive effective help and support as early as possible
- Understand and have the skills to establish healthy relationships

The overall aim is to reduce the harm caused by, and the number of incidents of, domestic abuse in Herefordshire.

4. Progress against priorities 2019 - 2021

Since the publication of our current strategy in 2019, a number of the actions have been progressed, although the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns has impacted on the delivery of some activities. Below is a summary of the key achievements.

4.1 Prevention

- Using data effectively - Enhanced data capture during COVID-19 pandemic. Creation of a domestic abuse hub for level 2 and 3 cases which is now embedded in practice.
- Collaboration to support culture change across the population - All Domestic Abuse Strategic Group partners are undertaking awareness raising and promotion. Safelives review of Domestic Abuse in Herefordshire has commenced and will provide a review of our existing approach and recommendations for improvements. The review will be completed in 2022.
- Universal services supporting early disclosure - West Mercia Women's Aid (WMWA) have created a community ambassador scheme. Community ambassador's work alongside communities to support them in identifying the key issues that affect people locally and offer the opportunity for local voices to influence and shape the response of local services.
- Supporting young people to recognise and understand harm of domestic abuse – The council and the Police and Crime Commissioner commission West Mercia Women's Aid to provide information, advice, tools and support to education professionals. Training for children and family workers within the council's Early Help team has been delivered. [Operation Encompass](#) ensures information about domestic abuse involving children is shared in a timely way with schools.

4.2 Provision

In addition to 9 units of refuge accommodation, funding has been secured for 7 units of dispersed accommodation with outreach support. During the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020 and 2021, additional ways were established for victim-survivors to access support including covert means through various media.

Work as a partnership to respond to funding bids - Successful funding bids or additional funding from the council and partners was secured to deliver:

- Additional staff capacity to support 7 units of dispersed refuge accommodation

- [The Drive perpetrator programme](#) delivered through Cranstoun
- Increased 'chat' hours through the WMWA website
- Additional capacity around messaging and accessing support through the WMWA website and working with Rural Media to promote specific campaigns.
- Healthy relationships work through WMWA
- Safelives review of Domestic Abuse in Herefordshire
- Multiagency domestic violence training
- [Men and masculinity project](#) delivered through Cranstoun (and WMWA for the victim-survivor support element)

4.3 Partnership

Ensure strong leadership across organisations – The Local Partnership Board (formally the Domestic Abuse Strategic group) provides strong leadership, with wide ranging representation and commitment to the delivery of this strategy.

4.4 Perpetrators

Evidence based programmes are being delivered within the county to challenge and change perpetrator behaviour, these include:

- Drive Herefordshire and Worcestershire (for high risk perpetrators) mobilised in February 2021. Drive is an evidence-based and evaluated programme which has delivered encouraging results in other areas. More information about the Drive programme can be found [here](#).
- The Men and Masculinities programme provides a safe space for people who have engaged in abusive, harmful and damaging behaviour within their relationships. The programme explores what it means to display appropriate behaviour within relationships and highlights how conflict, aggression and anger can deeply impact the lives of others. More about this programme can be found [here](#).

WMWA have secured funding to deliver training to Magistrates through their family court IDVA's in order to support the aim of using the criminal justice system to full effect.

5. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021

5.1 Overview

Building on previous government initiatives, including the violence against Women and Girls Strategy launched in January 2019, the government introduced the Domestic Abuse Bill to the House of Commons in March 2020. It was designed to promote awareness of domestic abuse; protect and support victim-survivors and their families; transform the justice process to prioritise victim-survivor safety and provide an effective response to perpetrators; and to drive consistency and better performance in the response to domestic abuse across all local areas, agencies and sectors.

On the 29th April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 was enacted and new duties on came into force, with all local authorities required to:

1. Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board that it will consult as it performs certain specified functions.
2. Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their area for all victim-survivors or their children, including those who come from outside the area.
3. Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover their locality, having regard to the needs assessment.
4. Give effect to the strategy (through commissioning / de-commissioning decisions) including the provision of safe accommodation.
5. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy, reviewing it every three years.

5.2 What is Domestic Abuse?

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 creates a statutory cross government definition of domestic abuse, outlined below;

- *'Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if*
 - a. *A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected* to each other, and*
 - b. *The behaviour is abusive.*
- *Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following:*
 - a. *Physical or sexual abuse.*
 - b. *Violent or threatening behaviour*
 - c. *Controlling or coercive behaviour.*
 - d. *Economic abuse*
 - e. *Psychological, emotional, or other abuse.*

And it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

- *"Economic abuse" means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B's ability to*
 - a. *Acquire, use, or maintain money or other property, or*
 - b. *Obtain goods or services.*
- *For the purposes of this Part A's behaviour may be behaviour "towards" B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B's child).*

*The statutory guidance defines that two people are "personally connected" to each other if any of the following applies:

- a. they are, or have been, married to each other;
- b. they are, or have been, civil partners of each other;
- c. they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);

- d. they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- e. they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;
- f. they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental
- g. relationship in relation to the same child
- h. they are relatives

This definition includes so called 'honour' based violence (HBV), female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and makes it clear that domestic abuse is not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Herefordshire's response to HBV, FGM and forced marriage is co-ordinated under the domestic abuse agenda by the [Community Safety Partnership](#).

In the new definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and be personally connected. Abusive behaviour directed at a person under 16 would be dealt with as child abuse rather than domestic abuse.

The definition above lists the broad categories that capture a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic.

The Act also recognises that domestic abuse can impact on a child who sees, hears or experiences the effects of the abuse and it treats these children as victim-survivors of domestic abuse in their own right where they are related to either the abuser or the abused.

[Statutory guidance](#) on the Act was finalised in October 2021, giving more detail about how the Act should be interpreted and used.

The Local Partnership Board welcome having a clear definition of domestic abuse, however the board feels that it is important to underline the power and control element of domestic abuse and will deliver local services on this basis.

5.3 Safe Accommodation and homelessness

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021, places a new statutory duty on the council to deliver support to victim-survivors of domestic abuse and their children residing in refuges and other safe accommodation. It also requires that the council assesses the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their area for all victim-survivors or their children, including those who require highly specialist support and those who come from outside the area.

The legislation indicates that the following are classed as safe accommodation:

- refuge accommodation;
- specialist safe accommodation;
- dispersed accommodation;
- sanctuary schemes; and
- move-on or second stage accommodation.

It is noteworthy that the Act specifically excludes the use of accommodation with shared facilities e.g. B&B accommodation, as this is not considered relevant safe accommodation.

The option for victim-survivors to stay in their own homes where it is safe and possible to do so should be explored. There is an existing sanctuary scheme in Herefordshire that supports this approach. A sanctuary scheme is a multi-agency victim/survivor centred initiative, which aims to enable households at risk of domestic abuse to remain in their own homes and reduce repeat victimisation through the provision of enhanced security measures (Sanctuary) and support¹.

The Act amends existing homelessness legislation (the Housing Act 1996) by extending priority need to all eligible victim-survivors who are homeless as a result of being a victim-survivor of domestic abuse. This change removes the requirement for victim-survivors of domestic abuse to demonstrate vulnerability in order to attain priority need and clarifies the remit of people affected by this change with the new statutory definition of domestic abuse. This requirement was already a feature of Herefordshire Council's allocations scheme, which has been updated to include the new definition of Domestic Abuse.

6. Domestic Abuse in Herefordshire (Needs Assessment)

A domestic abuse needs assessment was carried out in June 2021 to refresh the needs assessment completed in 2018. The information below comes from this needs assessment, the full report can be found in appendix 2.

In Herefordshire between April 2020 and March 2021, the police recorded 1,354 domestic abuse incidents and 2,168 domestic abuse offences, this is roughly 4 incidents and 6 offences per day. It is widely understood that domestic abuse is under reported, data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales indicates that there were likely to be an estimated 4,900 women and 2,400 men in Herefordshire who were victim-survivors of domestic abuse in 2019/20.

Police data provides just one insight into understanding domestic abuse in Herefordshire, so data has been analysed from other sources, including West Mercia Women's Aid, Primary Care and Social Services. Below is a brief overview of some of the key findings regarding domestic abuse in Herefordshire.

- An estimated 4,900 women and 2,400 men in Herefordshire experienced Domestic Abuse in 2019/20
- Being disabled or LGBTQ+ puts you at higher risk of Domestic Abuse
- West Mercia Police have recorded an increase in Domestic Abuse offences in Herefordshire each year since 2017 - there were 2168 offences recorded between 2020/21
- In approximately 60% of Domestic Abuse offences in Herefordshire the victim-survivor does not supporting police action
- 3 of the 4 domestic homicides in Herefordshire between 2017-2021 were matricide (a person who kills their mother)
- Between a quarter to a third of referrals to refuge were unsuccessful/denied, primarily due to lack of space. Over 50% of referrals came from out of area and the remaining 17-24% were successful referrals were for victim-survivors inside the area

¹ [15 -wha-sanctuary-scheme.pdf \(dahalliance.org.uk\)](#)

- 1% of MARAC cases were LGBT, 13% of MARAC cases were BAME, <1% of MARAC cases were people with a disability, 2% of MARAC cases were men
- 97% of victim-survivors supported by IDVA were women
90% of victim-survivors supported by IDVA were heterosexual/straight
- 143 victim-survivors were supported by Housing Solutions in 2020
- There has been a decrease in Adult Social Care referrals where Domestic Abuse is a factor since 2018. There were 118 referrals in 2020/21, accounting for 7% of referrals to Adult Social Care
- Most referrals to Children's Social Care, where Domestic Abuse is a factor per 1,000 population were from South West Hereford
- GPs were most likely to flag Domestic Abuse on a patient's record if they were aged 25-44

The information below gives further an insight into domestic abuse in Herefordshire:

6.1 Source - Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) and estimated prevalence (2019/20)

- An estimated 4,900 women and 2,400 men in Herefordshire experienced Domestic Abuse in 2019/20
- 4% of adults have experienced domestic abuse from a partner, and 1.9% of adults experience domestic abuse from family members
- Domestic abuse is most prevalent in 16-19 year olds and prevalence largely decreases through the age groups
- Domestic abuse is most prevalent in Mixed – White and Black Caribbean ethnic group
- Somebody with a disability is more likely to be a victim-survivor of domestic abuse than somebody who is not disabled
- Bisexuals are more likely to be the victim-survivors of domestic abuse than any other sexual orientation

6.2 Source - West Mercia Police (2017/18 to 2020/21)

- The number of domestic abuse offences recorded has increased year on year since 2017/18, with 1416 offences in 2017/18 to 2168 offences in 2020/21
- Around 60% of Domestic Abuse offences in Herefordshire result in the victim-survivor not supporting police action
- 71% of recorded victim-survivors were women
- 98% of recorded victim-survivors were "White North European" or "Unknown"
- 50% of suspects and victim-survivors were aged 25-45
- The youngest victim-survivor was 0 years old, the oldest was 96
- The youngest suspect was 6 years old and the oldest suspects were 96
- 66% of recorded victim-survivors were only seen by police on one occasion between 2017 and 2021, but one victim-survivor was seen 28 times during the same time period
- Most domestic abuse incidences and offences were recorded in Hereford City, particularly in Centre, Courtyard and South Wye areas. Other areas with high levels were Kingstone, John Kyrle area of Ross-on-Wye and the Gateway area of Leominster

- Four domestic homicides were recorded between 2017 and 2021. Three of these homicides were matricide (a person who kills their mother).

6.3 Source - West Mercia Women's Aid (Refuge) (2018/19 to 2020/21)

- Per 1,000 population, most referrals were from the Colwall, Cradley and Wellington Heath area, but referrals were received from across the county and not concentrated in the city or market towns
- Between a quarter to a third of referrals were unsuccessful/denied, over 50% came from out of area
- Lack of room has been the most common reason for victim-survivors to be denied access to refuge year on year
- 71% of referrals were for victim-survivors aged 25-34
- 16% of referrals were for BAME victim-survivors
- Nearly 100% of referrals were for women, 1 referral was for a victim-survivor who identified as transgender

6.4 Source - Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) (2018-2020)

- 71% of cases are referred by the police
- 1% of MARAC cases were LGBT
- 13% of MARAC cases were BAME
- <1% of MARAC cases were disabled
- 2% of MARAC cases were men
- 240 cases in 2018, 214 in 2019 and 233 in 2020
- 18% of cases are repeat cases

6.5 Source - Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) (2018/19 to 2020/21)

- There has been a nearly 30% increase of victim-survivors being supported by IDVAs in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20
- 72% of victim-survivors supported by IDVAs were aged 19-44
- 97% of victim-survivors supported by IDVA were female
- 90% of victim-survivors supported by IDVA were heterosexual/straight

6.6 Source - Housing and Homelessness (2020)

- 143 domestic abuse victim-survivors were supported by Housing Solutions team in 2020
- 99% of victim-survivors supported by Housing Solutions were women, only two men were supported
- 66% of victim-survivors supported by Housing Solutions were in touch with other agencies

- Over 60% of victim-survivors supported had children or were pregnant
- 66% of victim-survivors were aged 25-44

6.7 Source - Adult Social Care (2018/19 to 2020/21)

- The number of referrals where Domestic Abuse is a recorded factor and the source of risk is a family member or partner has decreased each year between 2018/19 to 2020/21
- Referrals where domestic abuse is a factor and the source of risk is a family member of partner, makes up about 7% of all referrals received by Adult Social Care
- Most referrals were for individuals aged 80-89
- Most referrals cite the source of risk as a partner, but this is not the case for those aged 80+ where it is family members who are recorded as the source of risk
- 90% of referrals were for victim-survivors who were white
- 75% of referrals were for women

6.8 Source - Children's Social Care (2018/19 to 2020/21)

- 12% of referrals were for BAME children
- Per 1,000 population, the majority of referrals were from the South West Hereford MSOA
- Nearly 50% of all referrals came from the police

6.9 General Practice (2017/18 to 2020/21)

- 25-44 year olds are most frequently recorded with a domestic abuse code by their GPs
- 89% of recorded domestic abuse codes were for female patients

The overall picture shows that victim-survivors who are using these services are primarily aged 25-44, predominately female, and where data is available, largely straight/heterosexual and nondisabled. It is worth noting that data on sexuality and disability are not routinely recorded by most of these sources, so knowledge is limited regarding the sexuality and disability of survivors. In addition, recording of ethnicity is inconsistent, such as only recording victim-survivors as "White" or "White Northern European" and not differentiating between different White ethnic groups, which is especially important in Herefordshire as the largest minority ethnic group in Herefordshire is "White: Other". Where there is data on ethnicity, it appears that more than 10% of victim-survivors are recorded as BAME, which is higher than the county BAME population average which the 2011 census recorded as 6.4% .

This suggest that there are groups of people who are not accessing services. Data indicates that this is also the case for people under the age of 25, (despite the CSEW suggesting domestic abuse is most prevalent in 16-19 year olds).over 45s (despite Herefordshire having an aged population compared to national averages); genders other than women; people with a disability and people from the LGBTQ+ community.

The needs assessment also highlighted that access to refuge is frequently declined due to lack of space and that victim-survivors rarely support police action when an offence has occurred. The domestic homicides data also emphasises the danger of familial domestic abuse. This is also illustrated as a specific issue for over 80's in the Adult Social Care data.

There have been concerns nationally that COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns since March 2020, will have led to an increase in domestic abuse, however, based on the available data the only noticeable increase in demand in Herefordshire seems to be for IDVAS, which may suggest that whilst there has not been an increase in domestic abuse generally, we have seen more victim-survivors who are assessed as being at high risk.

7. Strategic priorities for 2021 - 2024

The priorities for the strategy are:

- Priority 1 – Prevention
- Priority 2 – Provision
- Priority 3 – Partnerships
- Priority 4 – Perpetrators

These priorities remain unchanged from the 2019 strategy with minor changes to the objectives in order to reflect the new act requirements. The vision, priorities and objectives were developed through ongoing work with, and gaining the views of professionals, stakeholders and groups from across Herefordshire, including people with lived experience of domestic abuse.

The outcomes for each priority listed below will be monitored by the Local Partnership Board via their annual work plan.

7.1 Priority 1 – Prevention

The aim is that individuals and communities understand domestic abuse and the harm it causes and have the skills to build a culture that supports healthy relationships. Preventing domestic abuse is key to delivery of our vision.

Talk Community is the council's strategic approach to prevention, enabling people to get the assistance they need and managing demand for more specialist services. It conveys an aspiration and culture which prioritises prevention, innovates and intervenes at the earliest possible point to make independence and wellbeing inevitable. There are five strategic aims of Talk Community, shown below:

- Putting wellbeing, social value and strengths based approaches in all practice, policy and decision making.
- Ensuring that prevention and early intervention are prioritised.
- Targeting resources based on need and place, maximising impact and value for money.
- Challenging and developing our culture and practice, and
- Working in partnership with a focus on system integration at all levels.

Talk Community offers an approach that is fundamental to the council's future delivery and prevention agenda. It compliments prevention activities taking place for different groups within communities, including children and young people where early help activity is already taking place. The following objectives are set within this strategic approach.

Objectives: Partner agencies will:

- Collect and use data effectively to create a shared understanding of domestic abuse in Herefordshire.
- Work collaboratively across organisations and through Talk Community to support culture change in the population, developing a community that recognises and rejects all forms of domestic abuse.
- Create an environment throughout universal services and Talk Community that supports early disclosure of domestic abuse by those affected and provides a high quality and consistent initial response.
- Increase awareness amongst those who work with people with additional vulnerabilities and certain protected characteristics (see Appendix 1) to ensure domestic abuse is identified through an effective initial response.
- Support young people, children and families to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and understand the harm it causes as well as the positive impact of disclosing abuse.
- Ensure information, advice and support in relation to the above is accessible and appropriate for victim-survivors with certain protected characteristics and other vulnerabilities that there is adequate support in place.

Outcomes for Priority 1:

- Increased recognition by the population of all forms of domestic abuse and the harm it causes to children with particular reference to those with certain protected characteristics and other vulnerabilities.
- Increased understanding by professionals of the signs, symptoms and appropriate response to domestic abuse
- Decrease in the impact of domestic abuse on children, through reduction in the number of children affected, improved early identification and reduction in repeat incidents affecting children.

7.2 Priority 2 - Provision

The aim is that when domestic abuse is disclosed, identified or reported, those affected can access timely and effective information, safe accommodation, advice and support. This support should meet the needs of the affected individuals in a way which ensures equality for victim-survivors across our communities including any children, now recognised as victim-survivors in their own right.

Objectives: Partner agencies will:

- Ensure that those experiencing domestic abuse can easily and safely contact, or be referred, and access specialist domestic abuse services and safe accommodation,

including those with certain protected characteristics or vulnerability such as multiple complex needs, and children who are identified as victim-survivors in their own right.

- Ensure that children exposed to domestic abuse are supported in the best possible way.
- Ensure that housing advice, emergency and other appropriate housing solutions are available to those experiencing domestic abuse, and where appropriate support those affected by domestic abuse and their children to remain in their homes safely.

Outcomes for Priority 2:

- Those affected by domestic abuse and their families are supported to re-build their lives, and to maintain an enhanced view of positive relationships both within their families and their future.
- Those affected by domestic abuse and their families are safe from harm.
- Children who are victim-survivors of domestic abuse are safe from harm and supported as victim-survivors in their own right

7.3 Priority 3 - Partnerships

Domestic abuse has impact across multiple agencies who play a key role. These include primary and secondary health care, police, early years, children's social services, adult social care, schools, courts and probation. There is no single place that a person might disclose domestic abuse and no single agency that can provide a full response. Acknowledging that domestic abuse can be the cause of or underlying issue in relation to multiple health and social problems including substance use and mental health. It is also recognised that abuse towards people and abuse towards animals are often interlinked. Close partnership working is essential, with a shared vision, strong leadership and clear pathways. The aim is to work together across organisations and geographical areas in an efficient and effective way to prevent, and protect those experiencing, domestic abuse.

Objectives: Partner agencies will:

- Ensure there is strong leadership across all organisations on domestic abuse.
- Work collaboratively across organisations to create clear pathways for supporting those experiencing domestic abuse.
- Ensure data is collected and collated to provide a clear understanding of those effected by domestic abuse across Herefordshire. The data will support the on-going needs assessment and the development of future service provision to accurately reflect Herefordshire residents, including identifying those affected with certain protected characteristics.
- Ensure that front line staff (for example, staff who work in primary care, emergency department, children's centres, schools, children's social care, adult social care, fire service);
 - i) have a good understanding of domestic abuse;
 - ii) are professionally curious in their investigation of underlying causes of a person's current circumstances

- iii) have awareness and understanding of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and how the measures impact on their roles and responsibilities
- iv) see it as their role and responsibility to reduce the harm of domestic abuse; and
- v) understand the tools/resources available to them to do so.

Outcomes for Priority 3:

- Improved shared understanding of the whole system response to domestic abuse.
- Reduction in cross organisation barriers to an effective response to domestic abuse.
- Established pathways for joint working and planning of health and social interventions.

7.4 Priority 4 – Perpetrators

There are many tools available to the police and court system to prevent and deter perpetrators from domestic abuse. The aim is that the tools available are used effectively and consistently and that those experiencing domestic abuse see the police and criminal and civil legal systems as working to protect them and their children.

Objectives: Partner agencies will:

- Support those experiencing domestic abuse to use the various tools available to prevent further offending (e.g. Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, Clare's Law), Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Domestic Violence Protection Orders).
- Use the criminal justice system to its full effect to deter offending and bring perpetrators to justice.
- Make available effective, evidence-based programmes to help change perpetrator behaviour, where perpetrators have the capacity to change.

Outcomes for Priority 4:

- Reduction in re-offending by perpetrators
- Victim-survivors of domestic abuse are aware of the range of prevention tools available and supported to access them.

8. Delivering the Domestic Abuse Act requirements and strategy implementation

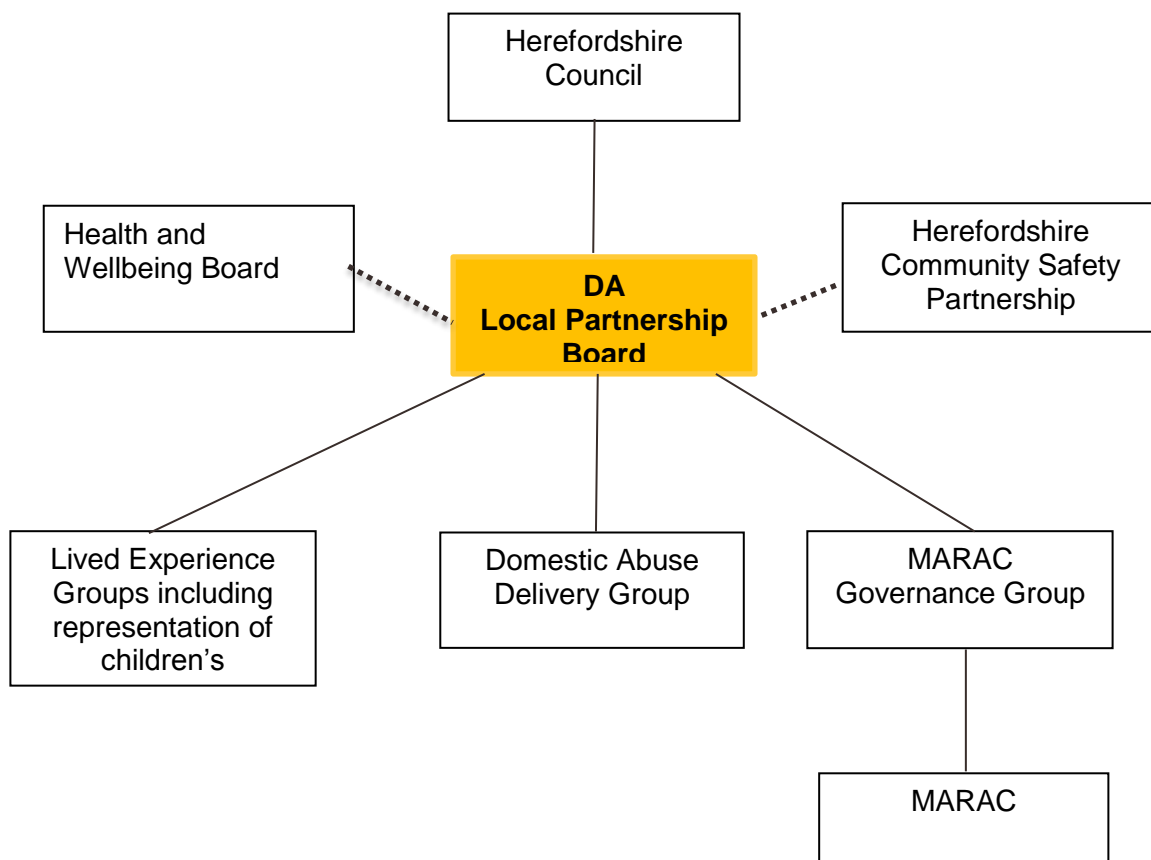
8.1 Leadership and delivery

The existing Domestic Abuse Strategic and Delivery Group, acting as the Board under the Community Safety Partnership structure has been amended to provide a higher level executive group which now forms the Local Partnership Board. The Board will deliver a collaborative approach to domestic abuse, oversee and monitor progress of the needs assessment, the strategy and its implementation and report back to Government. It is responsible for providing advice to the council about the functions required under section 57 of the Act. In line with the draft statutory guidance, the Local Partnership Board includes the following members:

- Council representative
- Victim-survivors representative
- Children's representative
- Voluntary sector representative linked to supporting victims-survivors
- Health representative
- Policing representative
- Housing representative
- Representative for those people with 'protected characteristics' identified within the statutory guidance

The Board can add to this membership where it is deemed relevant for the furtherance of the aims set out in the Act. The Board will agree a work plan to implement the strategy, working alongside the operational delivery group. The work plan will take account of existing commissioned services and focus on actions, opportunities and resources available within each partner organisation and wider funding opportunities as well as monitoring the outcomes of this strategy. Commissioned services are monitored through quarterly meetings lead by the Community Commissioning Team at Herefordshire Council.

The Governance Structure for the Local Partnership Board is as follows:



8.2 Consultation and engagement

A stakeholder consultation was undertaken via an online survey in December 2021. A stakeholder focus group was convened in March 2022 to follow this up. The following feedback was received from a range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations; please also see corresponding responses:

- Need to embed quality standards. This has already started through the commissioning and improved partnership working e.g. co-location with MASH. This will be further developed by the Local Partnership Board via their work plan.
- How can we help people to understand what domestic abuse is e.g. much more than physical violence? This will be achieved through training and education. WMWA and WMRSASC deliver training to a wide range of partners and in local schools to help professionals and young people to develop an understanding of positive relationships and behaviours that are abusive.
- Ensure that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is addressed in the strategy. The impact of the pandemic has been highlighted in the strategy.
- How can the VCS add value to existing commissioned services? By increasing awareness of domestic abuse within their organisations and customer, by attending training events, by identifying gaps in service provision and by sign posting to services.
- How can we identify gaps in service provision? The domestic abuse needs assessment will be updated annually. Feedback from service users, people with lived experience and wider VCS / statutory service providers will be used to shape future service provision.
- The definition of domestic abuse is welcomed, but it does not strongly underline the power and control element of domestic abuse. This has been acknowledged in the strategy.

West Mercia Women's Aid were commissioned to undertake detailed engagement work with service users and people with lived experience of Domestic Abuse in March and April 2022. This included survey work and focus group sessions and included feedback on how best to continue engagement activity throughout the lifetime of the strategy.

The main themes arising from this engagement process were:

- There should be more education around domestic abuse available to young people.
- Need to improve access to services, remove barriers to coming forward to sharing experience of domestic abuse,
- A need for greater understanding of the signs, symptoms of, and response to, domestic abuse amongst professionals.
- Partnership working is fundamental to supporting people with lived experience of domestic abuse.
- More tools are needed for the Police and Court systems to deter perpetrators of domestic abuse.

These key themes are picked up in the strategy under the priorities of prevention, provision, partnership and perpetrators.

The information gathered through this process has been used to update the strategy and will be used to inform the future commissioning activity in line with the guidance provided alongside the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

8.3 Commissioned Services

8.3.1 Council funded services

The council commissions a domestic abuse support service which delivers the following outcomes based services to support victim-survivors, and is in place until 2024. This represents an investment of £1 million over a period of five years. The service includes;

- Online and telephone helpline
- Safe accommodation through housing support or refuge accommodation with associated support work in relation to information, advice and signposting
- Outreach support
- Group Work
- Information and advice
- Raising awareness
- Support for children
- Intelligence sharing
- Strategic influence

The support work offered is individualised, outcome focussed and uses a strengths based approach with victim-survivors in line with the councils Talk Community approach.

Previous Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG - now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities DLUHC) funding enabled short term investment in staffing capacity with the existing countywide service provider to support seven separate properties of refuge dispersed accommodation as well as resource supporting children and young people. The learning from this pilot work has influenced commissioning activity, specifically, the additional funding from MHCLG in 2021/22 which has been used to sustain and enhance the safe accommodation and associated support offer to nine dispersed accommodation units.

8.3.2 Other local services

There are a number of other services supporting victim-survivors of domestic abuse in operation in Herefordshire funded from a range of sources such as the Police and Crime Commissioner and central government. These include;

- Independent Domestic Violence Advisors
- West Mercia Women's Aid Children and Young person's worker
- Building Better relationships – behaviour change programme
- Inspiring Families – support for families as victim-survivors and behaviour change for perpetrators
- Sexual Assault Referral Centre
- West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre
- The Drive Programme – behaviour change programme for perpetrators

- Helping hands and Crush programmes – awareness and understanding in primary and secondary aged children
- Herefordshire Substance Use Recovery Service
- Sexual Health services – Solutions for Health
- Public Health nursing (Health Visitors and School nurses)
- Herefordshire Home Point – Herefordshire choice based letting scheme for social housing.
- Talk Community initiatives including the free holiday activities programme.

Service planning and commissioning activity is regularly considered collectively by key stakeholders and this will continue through the new Local Partnership Board and the existing partnership structure.

8.3.3 Additional service provision during 2021/22

With the funding available from central government for 2021/22, the council commissioned a range of new, but complimentary, services which focused on increasing resources within the county to deliver the following:

- Connecting West Mercia Women's Aid with universal services, organisations, talk community hubs, community groups and individuals with expertise in working with and for people with certain protected characteristics.
- Training and awareness raising to upskill professionals across these services/organisations to recognise and respond to domestic abuse, raise awareness, create culture change and communicate services available.
- Increased communication and media activity.
- Continuation and expansion of a short term government funded project, developed during the Covid19 response, which will deliver the staffing support to:
 - 9 houses in Herefordshire used as dispersed safe accommodation for victim-survivors fleeing domestic abuse (in addition to the main refuge), the majority of which permit pets.
 - Associated advice, advocacy and support for adults and children
- An experienced domestic abuse professional co-located virtually within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Domestic Abuse Hub for the purposes of developing and sharing intelligence and triage of cases. The role will also focus on enhancing the data captured around certain protected characteristics, which will in turn support the needs assessment.
- Specialist worker to focus on those people with multiple complex needs and facilitating access to counselling support.
- Enhanced data capture particularly around protected characteristics.

The general themes of support provided by the enhanced workforce through the new services include;

- a. Advocacy support
- b. Domestic abuse prevention advice

- c. Specialist support for victim-survivors with relevant protected characteristics and/or complex needs
- d. Children's support
- e. Housing related support
- f. Counselling and therapy

The needs assessment confirms our approach by demonstrating that victim-survivors of some protected characteristics are currently seldom accessing services and that there is constant and often unmet demand for safe accommodation.

8.3.4 Future commissioning

DLUHC have confirmed another annual grant for the 2022/23 financial year, to support local authorities to deliver the new duties set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. This funding will be used to continue some of the successful work started during 2021/22 as well as commissioning new activities based on the needs assessment, feedback from our engagement process with service users and people with lived experience and examples of best practice. The following areas of focus are being considered:

- Community champions – linked to Talk Community Hubs.
- Co-locating services to ensure shared specialist knowledge.
- Workforce development – including social care specifically in relation to domestic abuse in relation to people with disabilities and older people.
- Legal and financial advice – drawing on Talk community programmes around financial advice and developing opportunities to access legal advice and information within hubs.
- Perpetrator programmes

The annual nature of the funding settlement, can make it difficult to retain staff and sustain services. It is not yet known if more funding will be granted for 2023/24.

9. Challenges in addressing Domestic Abuse

All people affected by domestic abuse are vulnerable in some way. However, there are certain groups of people who are harder to reach due to certain protected characteristics, vulnerabilities or cultural challenges:

9.1 Men

There are fewer known cases of men reporting domestic abuse than women. Just 2% of high risk cases discussed by MARAC were male, lower than the expected proportion of between 4-10%. There are very few men accessing the local domestic abuse support service provided by West Mercia Women's Aid.

9.2 Older People

Older people are less likely to make disclosures of domestic abuse, further exacerbated by health conditions such as dementia or physical disability. People in these circumstances are more likely

to be isolated and reliant upon their partner or family for their care, while the demands upon their carer can cause additional pressures and a shift in the dynamic of their relationship.

9.3 People with a disability

Similarly, people with physical or mental health illness or learning disabilities can be additionally vulnerable to domestic abuse due to isolation or a reliance upon their family or partner as their carer.

9.4 LGBTQ+ Community

People from the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender or Queer (LGBTQ+) community are less likely to report domestic abuse. Local data provided by West Mercia Women's Aid shows low numbers of people in Lesbian, Gay or Bi-sexual relationships accessing the service and similarly lower than expected numbers of LGBTQ+ cases are considered in MARAC (less than 1% of all high risk cases) than would be expected (more than 5%). The West Mercia and Warwickshire Police Draft Domestic Abuse Threat Assessment 2017 reports for couples in a same sex relationship, females accounted for 7% of reported offences and males for 8%. This would indicate that proportionately, those in same sex relationships are not accessing domestic abuse support services.

9.5 Ethnic Minorities

People from ethnic minority groups may be reluctant to report abuse due to fear of isolation or repercussions, or due to a lack of understanding about domestic abuse, UK law and the support available. Key communities to consider in Herefordshire include the Eastern European and Traveller populations. People affected by domestic abuse in both of these communities might face additional challenges which make it harder to identify abuse for both the person affected and agencies, and more difficult to flee the abusive relationship. Reasons for this may include; lack of trust in police and other professionals, being ostracised from their own community for example; if women leave a marriage, traditional established roles for men and women and lack of culturally-appropriate refuge accommodation

9.6 Rural Communities

People living in rural communities may face additional challenges to accessing services, or have concerns about their information being shared with others in their community should they make a disclosure. In 2019, The National Rural Crime Network, published the results of an 18 month intensive research project on domestic abuse in rural areas, '[Captive and Controlled](#)'. The report shows a picture of domestic abuse in rural Britain with hidden victims who feel isolated, unsupported and unprotected.

The report finds:

- Abuse lasts, on average, 25 per cent longer in the most rural areas.
- Traditional, patriarchal communities control and subjugate women.
- The policing response is largely inadequate.
- Support services are scarce – less available, less visible and less effective.

- The more rural the setting, the higher the risk of harm.
- Retreating rural resources make help and escape harder.
- Rurality and isolation are deliberately used as weapons by abusers.
- The short-term, often hand-to-mouth funding model has created competing and fragmented service provision.
- Close-knit rural communities facilitate abuse.
- An endemic data bias against rural communities leads to serious gaps in response and support (victims in rural areas are less likely to report and this in turn leads to a that the problem is not as serious as it actually is, which in turn leads to less resources being devoted to it).

Herefordshire is a rural county, which brings additional barriers for those experiencing domestic abuse, including recognising abuse, asking for help, accessing support and fleeing the abusive relationship.² Domestic abuse in rural communities is no less prevalent but can be less visible. Women living in rural areas have been found to particularly value the importance of health practitioners, especially GPs, in providing confidential and safe services for women compared to women living in urban areas. Women have been found to express concern about the confidential nature of services they received in their community, not echoed by women living in urban areas.³

Our enhanced service commissioned in 2021 and delivered through WMWA has prioritised and provided support to those victim-survivors with protected characteristics or vulnerabilities such as complex needs, both as victim-survivors and through wider community engagement work. People from all backgrounds must be enabled and encouraged to access services, and the system must be prepared to respond to their individual needs. WMWA are working with Rural Media to deliver targeted campaigns. Links to Talk Community are being explored through this work in order to better understand how this network could be used to sign post and enhance the work of commissioned domestic abuse services.

10. Preventing Domestic Abuse

Primary prevention of domestic abuse is key. This means preventing abuse before it happens. There are several broad categories of interventions that work at a primary prevention level. These include⁴:

- Early childhood and family-based approaches: not only, as described above, does witnessing abuse have a direct impact on child development, but it is in early childhood that children learn a range of skills and attitudes. Skills such as problem-solving, emotional management, and social skills, alongside attitudes to gender roles, relationships and acceptability of aggression and violence, form the basis of future relationships. Children learn much of this from the behaviour of people around them. Positive parenting

² SafeLives Herefordshire MARAC review, 2018

³ McCarry M and Williamson E. Violence against women in rural and urban areas. https://www.thewi.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/49874/vawruralandurbanareas.pdf

⁴ World Health Organization. Primary prevention of intimate-partner violence and sexual violence: Background paper for WHO expert meeting May 2–3, 2007 https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/publications/violence/IPV-SV.pdf

and safe and supportive home environments are therefore crucial to pro-social behaviour and healthy relationships.

- Public Health approach: provides a useful framework for prevention of domestic abuse through primary prevention programmes and policy interventions. This approach is aimed at entire populations and as such can address underlying causes of domestic abuse to prevent them from occurring or re-occurring. This approach is dependent on engagement and action from multiple organisations and agencies simultaneously for its success, acknowledging that there are multiple causes of health and social problems. Multiple agencies working in partnership is a key component of addressing both the underlying causes of domestic abuse and preventing the recurrence of incidents. Primary prevention should be targeted at both community and individual levels, addressing gender norms and healthy relationships and empowering individuals and communities in education, workplace and healthcare settings.
- School-based approaches: school based programmes to prevent abuse should be part of broader community based prevention strategies. Evidence suggests that most effective programmes are those that aim to change attitudes and norms, rather than provide information, and should address both boys and girls.
- Interventions to reduce alcohol and substance misuse: alcohol and drug use are typically a situational factor that contribute to the severity of abuse, or a coping mechanism for ongoing abuse, rather than being the primary cause. Alcohol harm reduction strategies, although not addressing the underlying cause, can still lead to improvements in preventing abuse.
- Public information and awareness campaigns: such campaigns are a common approach to preventing domestic abuse, to try to break the silence and influence attitudes and social norms. Communications strategies based on a social marketing framework are more likely to be effective in changing individuals' knowledge, attitudes, and social norms.
- Community-based approaches: such approaches include interventions targeted at subgroups of the population (such as group education for people at risk) and comprehensive community-wide mobilisation [interventions like Herefordshire Councils Talk Community programme](#). Comprehensive programmes are designed to effect social change by creating an enabling environment for changing individual attitudes and behaviour. This approach requires multiple components, often including participatory education or training, public awareness campaigns, and social marketing techniques. These approaches can be particularly challenging as they rely on long-term, participatory engagement with high-quality facilitation and are most effective where there is community ownership.
- Structural and policy approaches: working towards strengthening gender equality can have fundamental impact on domestic abuse whilst improving criminal justice system responses is a key part of a comprehensive approach.

This overview, based on international research, outlines the range of activities required across the system to effectively prevent domestic abuse and the importance of the wider work of organisations, such as the council. This strategy and the identified priorities include primary prevention strategies, alongside early identification and harm-reduction after domestic abuse incidents have taken place.

11. Representing victim-survivors

As part of previous engagement work, views were sought from those who have experienced, or continue to experience domestic abuse in order to provide valuable insight into their journey. We also sought the views of parents with young children and professionals working closely with those who have experienced domestic abuse.

The key themes that have emerged from our conversations include:

- Recognition of abuse: People understand that domestic abuse is not just violence, however people affected by domestic abuse found it difficult to identify whether the behaviours they were experiencing or witnessing constituted abuse or were just typical relationship issues.
“When should alarm bells ring and who do you talk to, to check it out?”
- Fear of losing children: There was a deep fear of children’s social services or intervention into family matters. This was driven by the concern that children would be taken away or custody issues. Perpetrators often use children as leverage to exert power and control and persuade someone to stay in the abusive relationship.
- Crisis point: The majority of those affected waited until things reached crisis point and the police or social services became involved before they sought help.
- Cycle of domestic abuse: Many (but not all) of those affected by domestic abuse reported coming from abusive families, and had experienced multiple abusive relationships.
- Feeling that no-one is on their side: Those affected reported that as a parent, once you have been identified as a victim-survivor, you are continually seen as the ‘bad guy’ by the authorities who are checking up on your parenting skills; by the police who don’t believe you unless there’s hard evidence (and perpetrators are usually very good persuaders); by their families who think you should keep the family together; and by the criminal justice system which fails victim-survivors, with perpetrators who receive a conviction getting more lenient sentences for physically assaulting a member of their family than they would receive if they had attacked a stranger.
- Housing concerns: Property rights and tenancies are used as another manipulation tool.
- Impact on children: The impact of domestic abuse on children, whilst the parent affected by domestic abuse was with them, was not recognised – with the parent feeling they could protect the child(ren) from harm. People affected by domestic abuse reported concern about the impact on their children who remained living with their abuser.

- Organisations could work better together: reports of organisations continuing to work in a fragmented way, leading to confusion and conflicting information.

The Local Partnership Board is committed to enabling the victim-survivors voices to be heard and represented. Therefore as well as representation at the Board, we are also proposing to develop a separate group to enable people with lived experience to engage with the ongoing review of this strategy and the development of service provision.

12. Key policies and partners

12.1 Stakeholders

There are a wide range of partners instrumental to the delivery of this strategy across Herefordshire as follows;

- Herefordshire Council
- West Mercia Police
- Wye Valley Trust
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust
- NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group
- Taurus Healthcare GP Federation
- West Mercia Women's Aid
- West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre
- National Probation Service
- West Mercia Community Rehabilitation Company
- West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner
- West Mercia Youth Justice Service
- Herefordshire Substance Use Recovery Service

12.2 Out of county support

Victim-survivors from out of county areas will receive the equivalent support to those from within the county. If the victim-survivor has been working with their current Local Authority, the support package will transfer over with them so they will be able to access the equivalent services in Herefordshire. This means that support will continue and the victim-survivor will still be in receipt of support from services they were receiving previously such as MARAC. Equally, the council can refer victim-survivors to other Local Authorities.

The safe accommodation available within the county is part of the national network for refuge accommodation. The mix between those accessing the accommodation support from within the county to those outside the county fluctuates continuously and is impacted by duration of stay.

Discussions are taking place with colleagues from Worcestershire regarding joint working and wider representation and engagement which are expected to develop further over the strategy period.

12.3 Wider policy and legislation

There are a large number of local and national policies that impact on the delivery of the strategy. Whilst the list below is not exhaustive it provides some of the key policies and legislation relevant to domestic abuse.

- Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG) 2016-2020
- The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime 2021
- Housing Act 1985
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Care Act 2014
- Children's Act 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Policing and Crime Act 2017
- Local Government Act 2000
- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Herefordshire County Plan
- West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner Safer West Mercia Plan
- Herefordshire Adults Safeguarding Policy
- Herefordshire Children and Young Peoples Policy
- Herefordshire Looked after children commissioning and sufficiency strategy

13. Measuring progress

There are two main ways in which we will measure progress against this strategy:

13.1 Priority Outcomes and Contract Performance Measures

The strategy includes details of the outcomes that we are seeking to achieve under each of the four priorities listed, these are highlighted in section 7 and below.

Outcomes for Priority 1:

- Increased recognition by the population of all forms of domestic abuse and the harm it causes to children with particular reference to those with certain protected characteristics and other vulnerabilities.
- Increased understanding by professionals of the signs, symptoms and appropriate response to domestic abuse
- Decrease in the impact of domestic abuse on children, through reduction in the number of children affected, improved early identification and reduction in repeat incidents affecting children.

Outcomes for Priority 2:

- Those affected by domestic abuse and their families are supported to re-build their lives, and to maintain an enhanced view of positive relationships both within their families and their future.
- Those affected by domestic abuse and their families are safe from harm.
- Children who are victim-survivors of domestic abuse are safe from harm and supported as victim-survivors in their own right

Outcomes for Priority 3:

- Improved shared understanding of the whole system response to domestic abuse.
- Reduction in cross organisation barriers to an effective response to domestic abuse.
- Established pathways for joint working and planning of health and social interventions.

Outcomes for Priority 4:

- Reduction in re-offending by perpetrators
- Victim-survivors of domestic abuse are aware of the range of prevention tools available and supported to access them.

These outcomes will be incorporated into the Local Partnership Boards work plan. Some of the outcomes are broad and will be backed up by performance indicators in commissioned contracts.

Contract monitoring is a key function of the community commissioning team and each contract is issued with a clear set of performance measures. Contract monitoring is undertaken quarterly. Data collected through this process will feed into the work plan held by the Local Partnership Board.

13.2 Government Performance Monitoring

The government have issued all local authorities with a performance monitoring form to monitor the implementation of the Statutory Duties as stated in the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) concerning the provision of support within safe accommodation by Local Authorities to victims of domestic abuse and their children. This covers the following areas in detail:

- Availability of Commissioned Safe Supported Accommodation
- Specialist Services available in Commissioned Safe Supported Accommodation
- Support Types Commissioned in Safe Supported Accommodation
- Specialist Characteristics Supported in Safe Supported Accommodation
- Number of instances a household was unable to be supported in the local authority area, by reason
- Number of instances of victims/survivors who moved on following stay in Safe Accommodation
- Quality of Support
- Strategy

- Finance

The form will be completed annually by the community commissioning team and submitted to the Local Partnership Board as well as DLUHC.

Appendix 1 - Domestic Abuse Act summary

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29th April 2021. The Act delivers a number of significant changes to improve the protection of victims within the community and the criminal justice system. It has been designed to promote awareness of domestic abuse and drive consistency and better performance in response to domestic abuse across all local areas, agencies and sectors.

The statutory guidance is currently in draft form and this draft strategy will be updated according once the final guidance is published.

Summary of the Act:

Supporting survivors:

- Create a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, coercive, or controlling, and economic abuse. As part of this definition, children will be explicitly recognised as survivors if they see, hear, or otherwise experience the effects of abuse;
- Create a new offence of no-fatal strangulation;
- Extend the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post separation abuse;
- Extend the ‘revenge porn’ offence to cover threat to disclose intimate images with the intention to cause distress;
- Clarify the law to further deter claims of “rough sex gone wrong” in cases involving death or serious injury;
- Create a statutory presumption that survivors of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts (for example, to enable them to give evidence via a video link)
- Establish in law the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, to stand up for survivors, raise public awareness, monitor the response of authorities, the justice system and other statutory agencies and hold them to account in tackling domestic abuse
- Place a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to survivors of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation;
- Provide that all eligible homeless survivors of domestic abuse automatically have ‘priority need’ for homelessness assistance;
- Place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (“Clare’s law”) on a statutory footing;

- Ensure that when local authorities rehouse survivors of domestic abuse, they do not lose a secure lifetime or assured tenancy;
- Stop vexatious family proceedings that can further traumatise survivors by clarifying the circumstances in which a court may make a barring order under section 91(14) of the Children Act 1989;
- Prohibit GPs and other health professionals from charging a survivor of domestic abuse for a letter to support an application for legal aid

Strengthened measures to tackle perpetrators

- Prohibit perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their survivors in person in family and civil courts in England and Wales;
- Bring the case of R vs Brown into legislation, invalidating any courtroom defence of consent where a survivor suffers serious harm or is killed;
- Enable domestic abuse offenders to be subject to polygraph testing as a condition of their licence following their release from custody;
- Extend the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the criminal courts in England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland to further violent and sexual offences;
- Provide for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order, which will prevent perpetrators from contacting their survivors, as well as force them to take positive steps to change their behaviour, e.g., seeking mental health support;
- Extend the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the criminal courts in England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland to further violent and sexual offences;
- Introduce a statutory duty on the Secretary of State to publish a domestic abuse perpetrator strategy (to be published as part of a holistic domestic abuse strategy)

Protected characteristics and other vulnerabilities requiring additional support:

- Black Asian and Minority Ethnic [Including Gypsy Roma and Traveller, with consideration to the Women and Equalities Committee report]
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and / or Transgender
- Disabled – including but not limited to, deaf or hard of hearing, visually impaired, Autistic, wheelchair users and those with learning difficulties
- Male
- Young (aged 16-18 – including care leavers) and older victims (over 65)
- People with an offending history
- Those presenting with complex needs including those with mental health and/or substance misuse needs
- Those facing multiple forms of abuse within the family such as honour based violence and forced marriage
- Religious and/or spiritual, particularly if facing barriers as a result
- Having insecure immigration status

- From isolated and/or marginalised communities, including where there is limited English proficiency.
- Survivors who have no choice but to move away from their local areas, communities, and friends to escape their perpetrator to stay safe and receive the support they need.
- Children of survivors (including adolescent male children) within safe accommodation.
- Survivors with children, including large families and those with older adolescence boys (12+)
- Pregnant survivors

Appendix 2 - Domestic Abuse Needs assessment



DA Needs
Assessment v1.0 FINA

DOMESTIC ABUSE IN HEREFORDSHIRE 2021

Version 1.0

Herefordshire Council Intelligence Unit

October 2021

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Key findings

- Domestic abuse is a hidden crime – most victims are not reporting the abuse and therefore not accessing help or support
- There is sometimes a misconceived view of what a victim of domestic abuse should look like - those who do not fit this stereotype may not be identified as a victim and ultimately denied support
- Support is not being offered to most victims of domestic abuse - only 38% of the victims and survivors in West Mercia surveyed in 2020 were offered any form of support
- Data recording by agencies is often limited or incomplete – there is not a complete picture of the victims they are supporting

Introduction

This report applies the latest intelligence on domestic abuse (DA) in Herefordshire gathered from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), West Mercia Police, West Mercia Women's Aid (WMWA), Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), independent domestic violence advisors (IDVA), health data, housing data and social care data.

Data from the different sources do not necessarily relate to the same victims, although there will be some overlap.

As per the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if—

A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive.

'Abusive behaviour' is defined as any of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional or other abuse

Two people are "personally connected" to each other if any of the following applies:

- a. they are, or have been, married to each other;
- b. they are, or have been, civil partners of each other;
- c. they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- d. they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- e. they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;

- f. they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- g. they are relatives.

CSEW and estimated prevalence

Domestic abuse is often a hidden crime that is not reported to the police and therefore, data held by the police can only provide a partial picture of the actual level of domestic abuse experienced. A recent report by the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (Senker & Scott, 2020) found that only 33% of the victims and survivors interviewed reported DA to the police.

The Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) is the preferred measure to identify trends in the prevalence of domestic abuse as it is unaffected by changes in police activity, recording practice, or inclination of victims to report such crimes. Experiences of DA are sought in a self-completion section on intimate violence which is asked of adults aged 16 to 74 years, covering experience of emotional, financial and physical abuse by partners (including former partners) or family members, as well as sexual assaults and stalking. It is important to note that CSEW does not survey people who live in institutions, including care homes, so it cannot offer insight into people who live in these type of settings.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic there was a move from face-to-face data collection to interviews over the telephone. Concerns around confidentiality and respondent safeguarding has limited the number of questions relating to DA being routinely asked since this move in March 2020. Subsequently, the latest available data relates to the year ending March 2020. CSEW estimates for the year ending March 2020 are based on face-to-face interviews with 33,735 people aged 16-74. It will be this data that will be used and discussed in this report.

Figures 1-7 show the prevalence of DA by different characteristics.

As can be seen Figure 1, an estimated 7.3% of women and 3.6% of men aged 16-74 were victims of DA in the year ending March 2020, this is equal to 4,900 women and 2,400 men in Herefordshire. The majority of DA is between partners, with 4% of adults having experienced this type of abuse, and 1.9% of adults experiencing abuse from family members. Women are also most likely to be victims of all types of DA, although the difference in prevalence between men and women suffering family abuse is much smaller than the difference in prevalence between men and women suffering partner abuse.

Women are most likely to be the victims of all types of domestic abuse

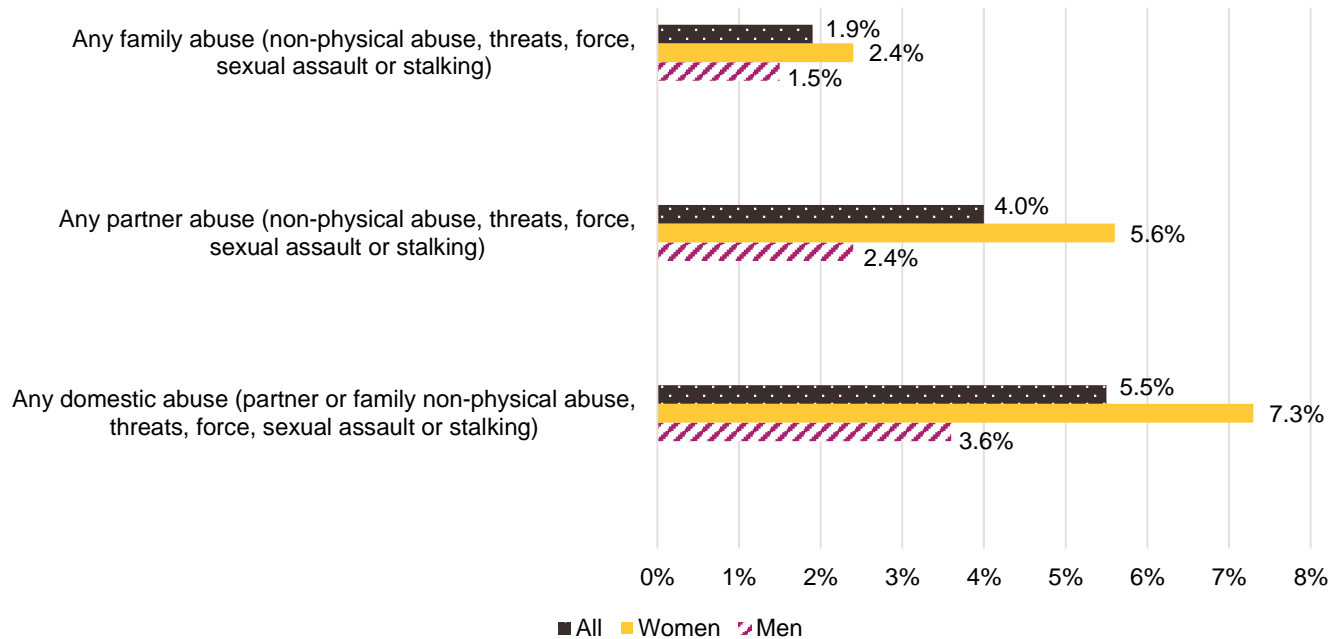


Figure 1 Prevalence of DA by sex and abuse type for year ending March 2020

Figure 2 shows that the prevalence of DA has remained largely stable since 2009, but there has been a slight fall in the number of female DA victims during this time period.

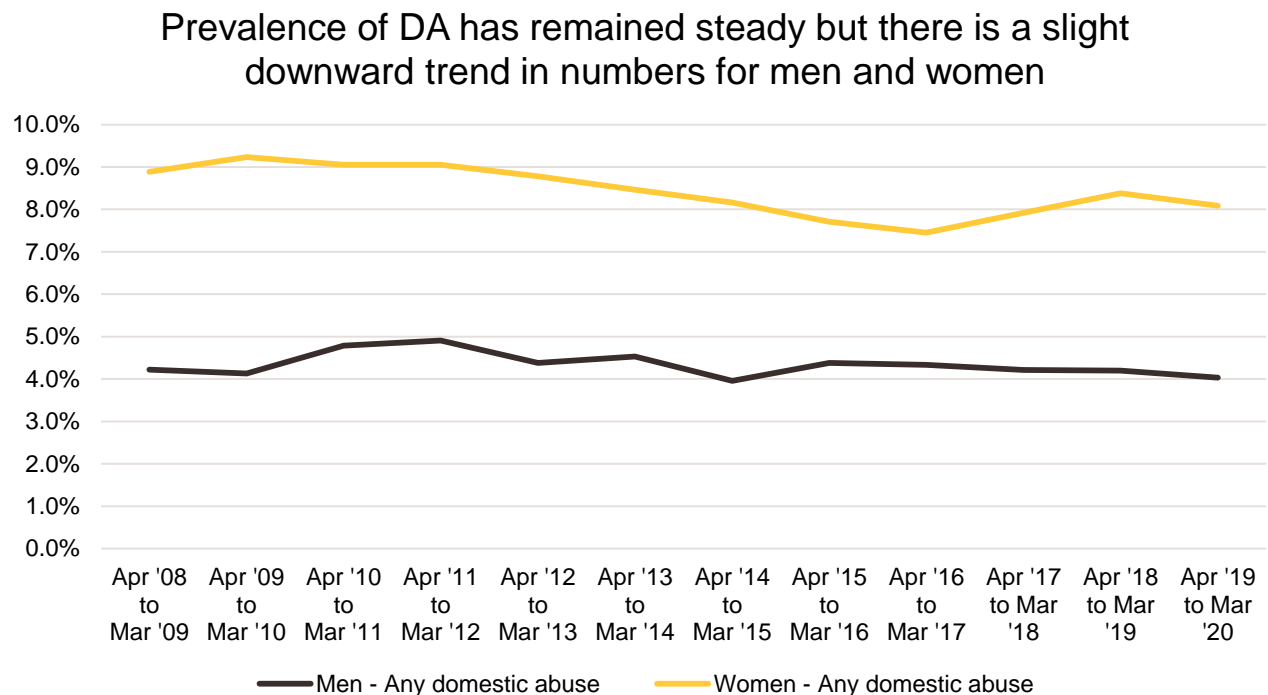


Figure 2 Prevalence of all DA from year ending 2009 to 2020 by sex

Figure 3 shows that victims of DA are more likely to be younger and that prevalence rates largely decreases through the age groups. There is also a larger proportion of women suffering from family abuse in the youngest two age brackets, which may be related to younger people being likely to still be living at the family home. In addition, Figure 4 shows how the prevalence rates changed between March 2019 to March 2020 across the age groups, and suggests that the largest increases in prevalence is amongst the 16-19 and 55+ age groups. Due to the way CSEW recorded DA before 2019, it is not possible to look at any longer term trends.

DA is most prevalent in 16-19 year olds and prevalence largely decreases through the age groups

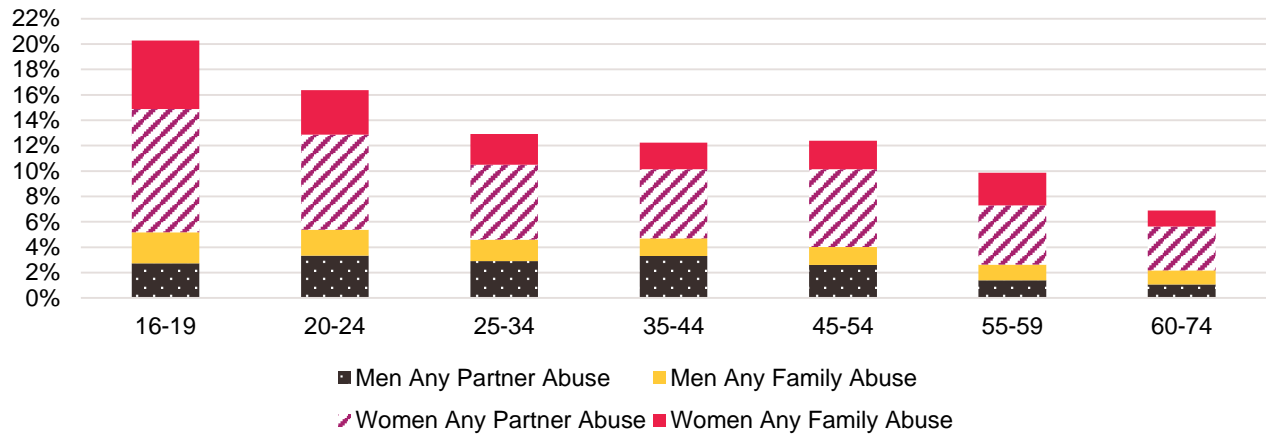


Figure 3 Prevalence of DA across age groups for year ending March 2020

The largest increase in prevalence has been for women aged 16-19

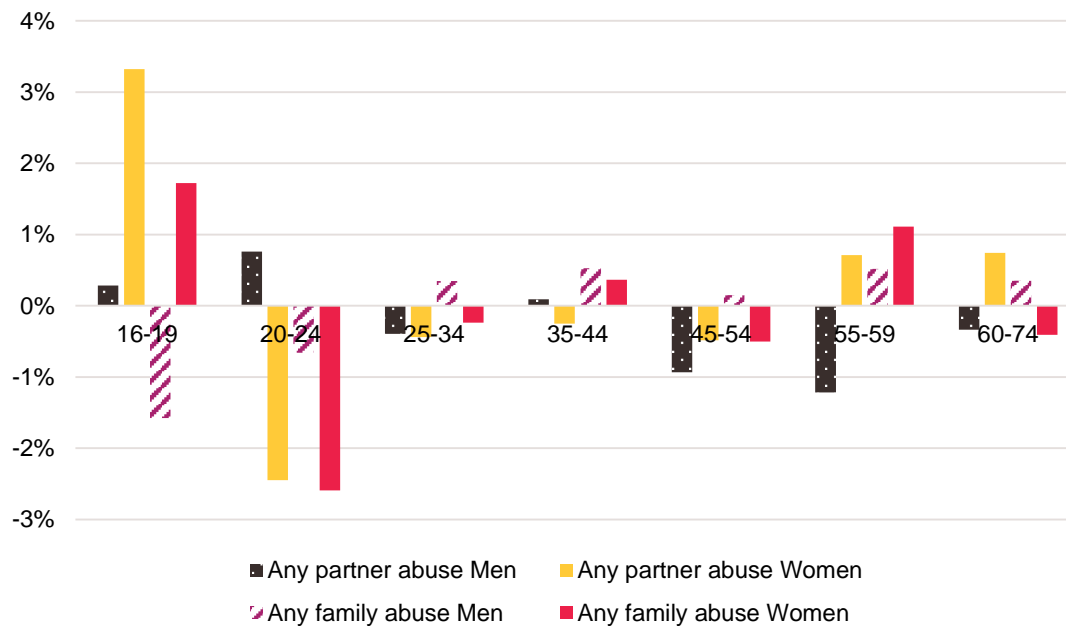


Figure 4 The percentage change in DA prevalence recorded by CSEW from March 2019 to March 2020 by age group

Figure 5 shows that the ethnicity with the highest level of DA prevalence is Mixed-White and Black Caribbean and that it appears to be only women within this ethnicity that are victims of domestic abuse. Also of particular note, is that when looking at the results for Mixed – White and Asian, only men reported being victims of DA, this goes against the general trend of DA prevalence, so more investigation and support may be required to understand why this is the case.

It is important to note that only 6.4% of Herefordshire are BAME, compared to 19.5% for the whole of England, so it is expected that there will be fewer BAME victims in Herefordshire than you might see nationally. Additionally, the largest minority ethnic group in Herefordshire is “White: Other” with only 1.8% of the population recorded as “Not White”.

DA is most prevalent in Mixed -White and Black Caribbean ethnic groups

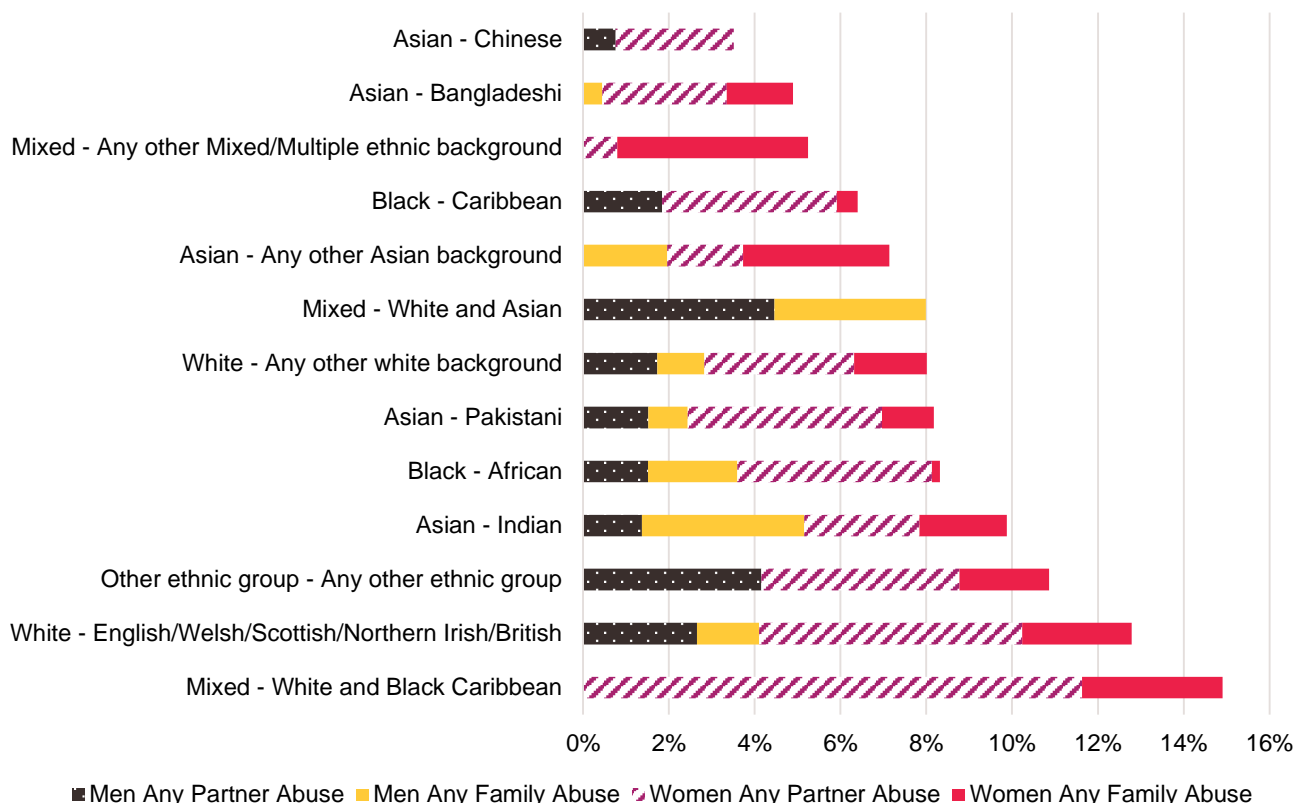


Figure 5 DA prevalence by ethnicity for year ending March 2020

Figure 6 shows that people with a disability are more likely to be victims of DA than those without a disability, and a study by SafeLives (2017) found that DA against disabled people is often more severe and frequent and over longer periods of time than for non-disabled victims. There are numerous factors as to why this is the case, including support being inaccessible, stereotypes of what a victim or perpetrator looks like and that the perpetrator may also be the victim’s carer and hold a position of power over the victim.

Somebody with a disability is more likely to be a victim of DA than somebody who is not disabled

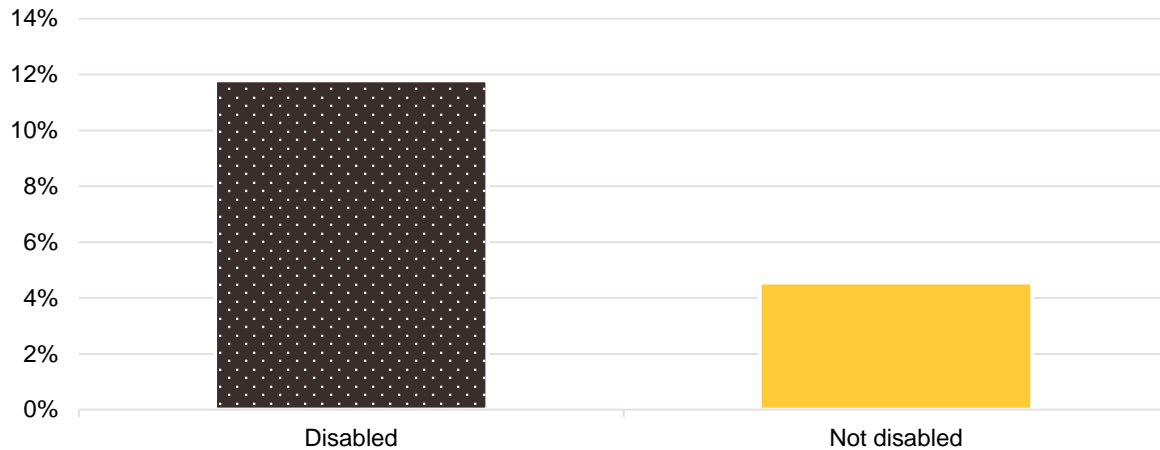


Figure 6 DA prevalence by disability status for year ending March 2020

Figure 7 shows that LGBT people are more likely to be victims of DA than their heterosexual counterparts, with bisexuals reporting the most abuse of all sexual orientations. Galop highlights that there are numerous myths and misconceptions regarding DA and the LGBTQ+ community which can make it more difficult for these individuals to seek help and be recognised as victims, such as thinking that women do not perpetrate abuse or that gay men can more easily protect themselves.

Bisexuals are most likely to be the victims of DA than any other sexual orientation

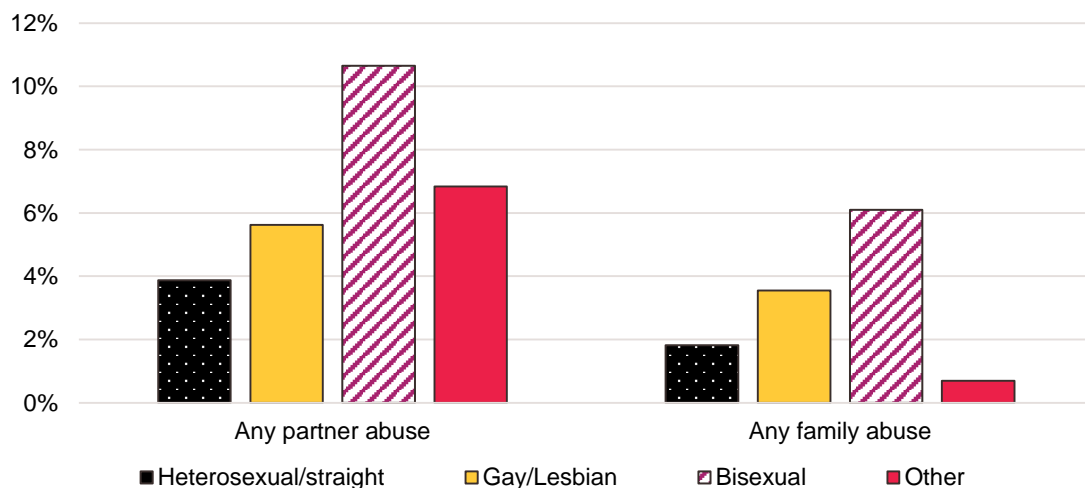


Figure 7 DA Prevalence by sexual orientation for year ending March 2020

West Mercia Police Data

The following data was provided by West Mercia Police in April 2021 and covers offences recorded in Herefordshire that had a DA “flag”. Since April 2015, crimes should be “flagged” as being domestic abuse-related by the police if the offence meets the government definition of domestic violence and abuse.

Figure 8 shows that there has been a year on year increase in the number of DA offences reported in Herefordshire by West Mercia Police. As prevalence recorded by CSEW does not show the same trend, it suggests that there is not an increase in DA within the county, but that people are increasingly reporting offences to the police or the police have improved their reporting of DA.

However, despite this increase in reporting, there has been a decrease in charges/summons and an increase of victims not supporting police action, as can be seen in Figure 9. A full list of outcomes of DA offences can be found in Table 2. It is not clear from the data why this is the case, and a 2019 report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services suggested that police forces need to collect feedback to establish why victims do not support action in order to address potential issues/concerns and better support victims.

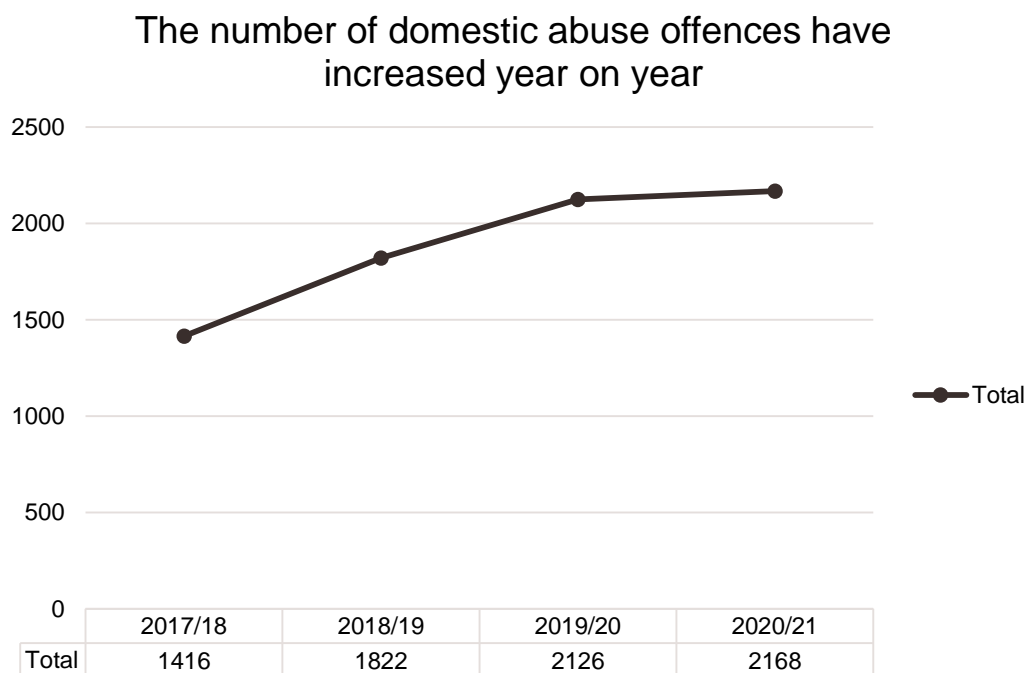


Figure 8 Number of DA offences recorded by West Mercia Police by year in Herefordshire

Most offences resulted in the victim not supporting police action

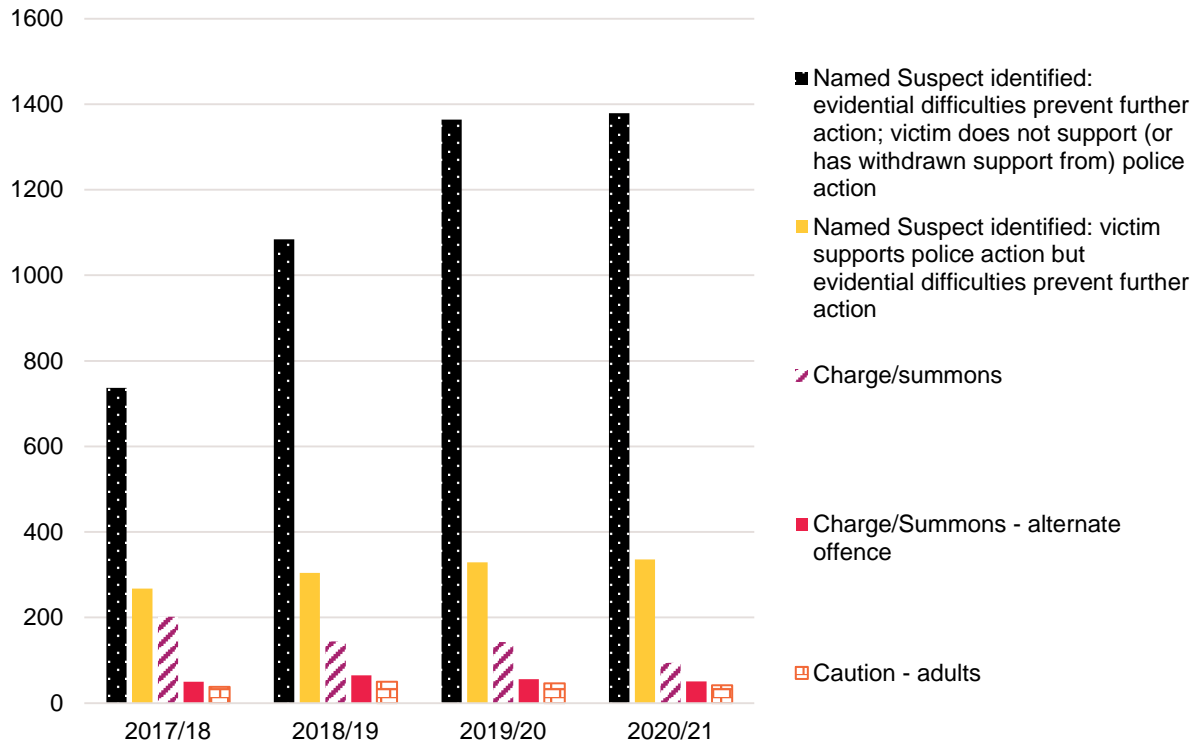


Figure 9 Five most common outcomes of offences recorded by West Mercia Police in Herefordshire

Figure 10 shows the number of DA victims in Herefordshire recorded by West Mercia Police by year and sex. Based on the estimated prevalence in Herefordshire, this only accounts for 20-30% of expected female victims, and 14-25% of expected male victims. This supports what is already known, and that DA is often a hidden crime which is underreported.

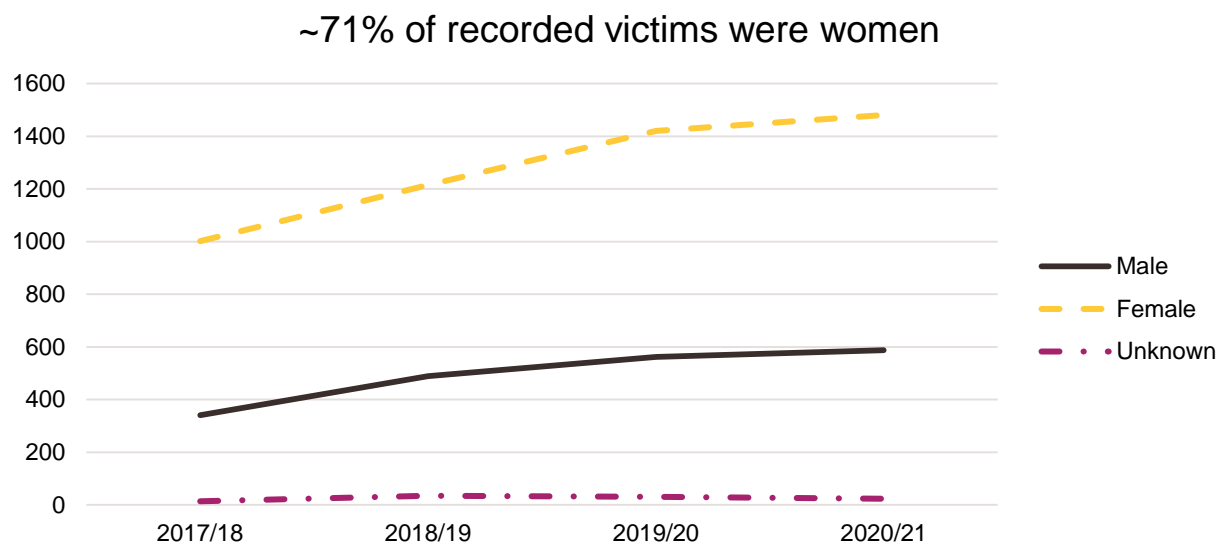


Figure 10 Number of DA offences recorded by West Mercia Police by year and sex in Herefordshire

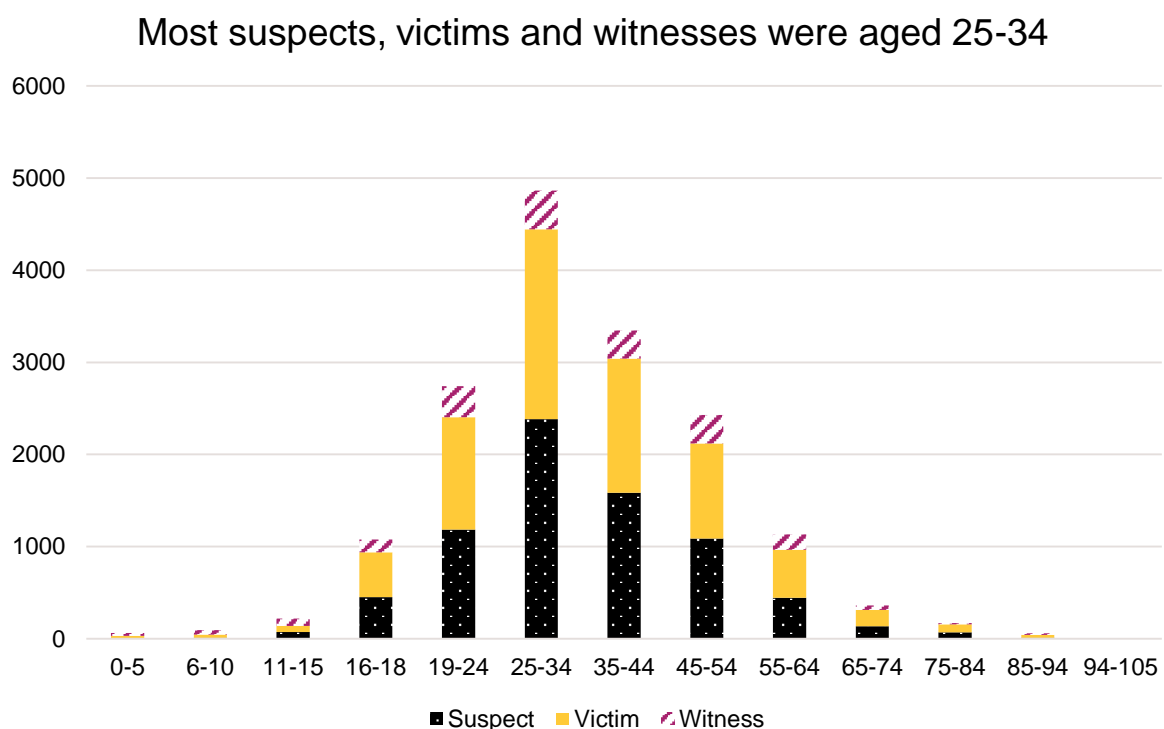


Figure 11 Number of DA suspects, victims and witnesses recorded by West Mercia Police by age group between 2017/18 to 2020/21 in Herefordshire

Figure 11 shows that most suspects, victims and witnesses recorded for DA offences were aged 23-34. The youngest victims recorded where 0 years old, and the eldest victim was aged 96 which shows that people of all ages are at risk of being a victim of DA. The youngest suspect of DA was 6 years old and the oldest suspects were 96 which again shows that DA can be perpetrated across the life course.

Figure 12 shows the ethnic appearance of DA victims recorded by West Mercia Police from March 2017 to March 2021, and shows that most victims were recorded as being White – North European. This is an unusual way of recording ethnicity as it relies on officers determining a victim's ethnic appearance, and White – North European would encompass those who are White-British, who make up the majority of Herefordshire's population, but would also include other White minority groups. There is also a large number of victims who have no ethnic appearance recorded, so this data is very limited in what it can tell us about the victims and it is difficult to make any conclusions.

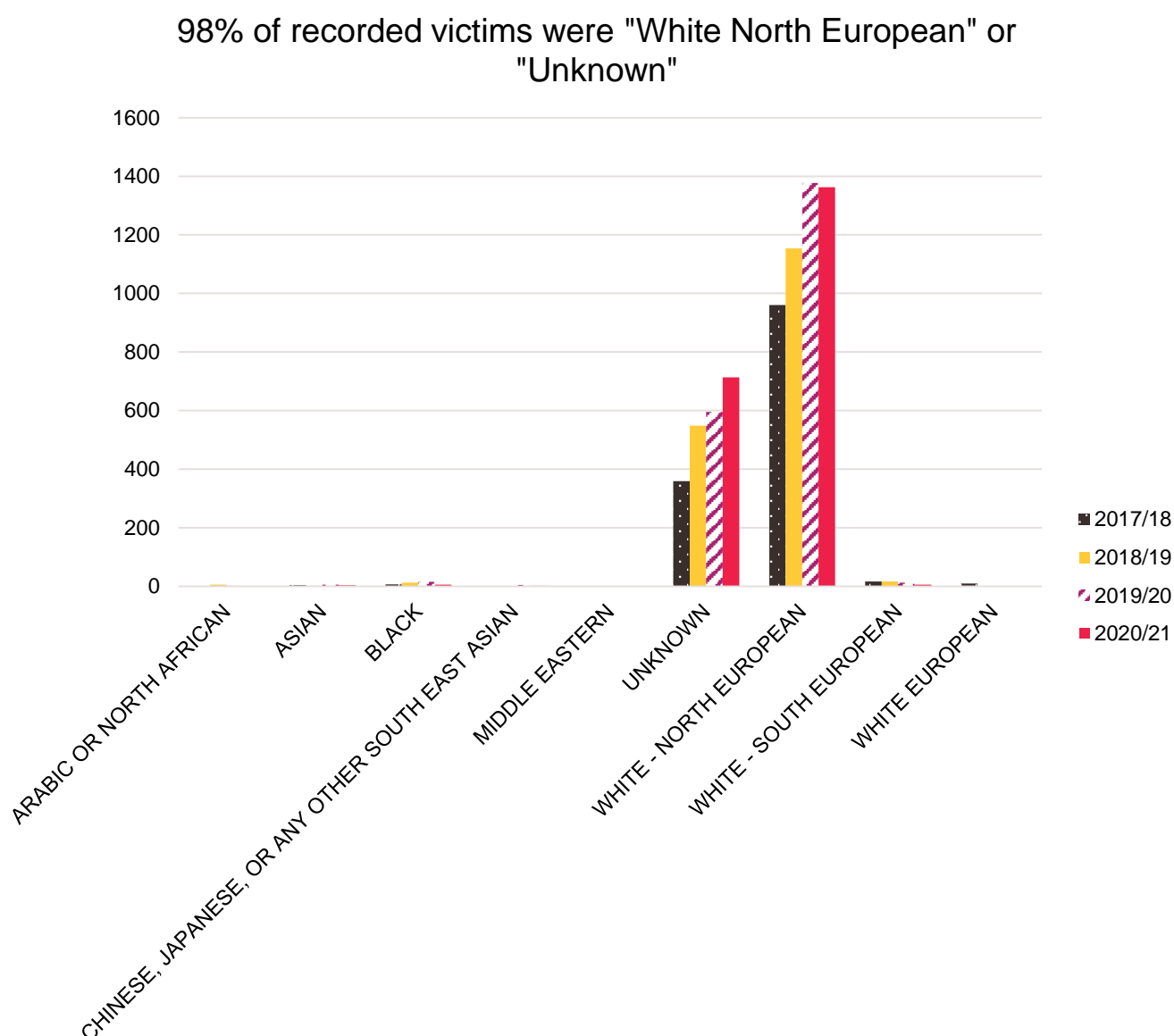


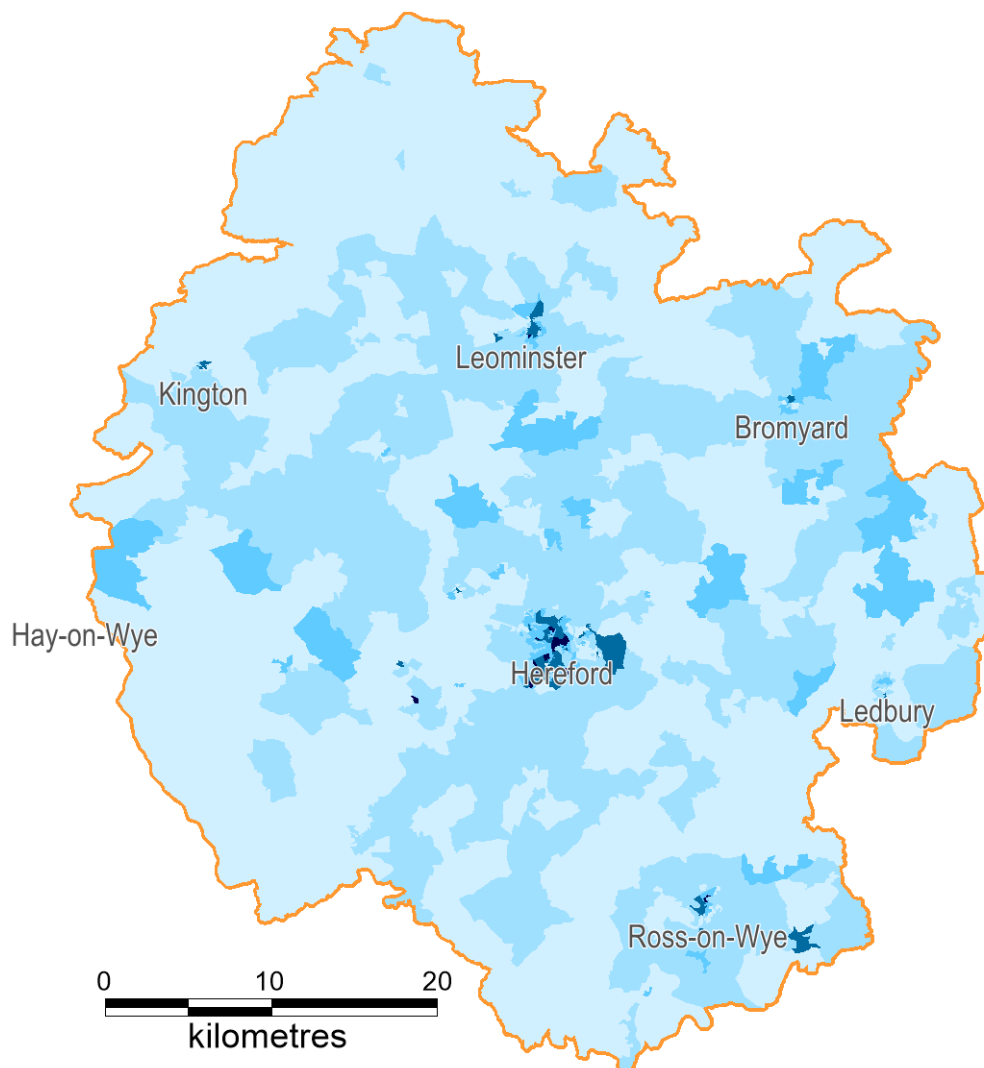
Figure 12 Number of DA offences recorded by West Mercia Police by year and ethnic appearance in Herefordshire

As can be seen in Table 1, almost two-thirds of victims were only seen by the police on one occasion between 2017-2021, but one individual was seen 28 times during the same time period. The data does not tell us whether the people who were only seen on one occasion by the police

did not experience any further DA or whether they decided not to contact the police in future, and if so, for what reason. A recent report by the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (Senker & Scott, 2020) found that only 39% of people who had reported DA to the police thought the response was good, with 31% thinking it was okay and 30% thinking the response was poor. Furthermore, only 52% of people who had reported DA to the police said they would report any future incident in the future. The variability in responses by the police was also highlighted in this report, which suggests that there is room for improvement for how the police in West Mercia work with DA victims and survivors, particularly in offering a consistently good service to all victims.

Table 1 Number of incidents West Mercia Police were called to each victim by year

Number of offences police are called to for same victim	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Grand Total
1	918	1024	1020	1014	2928
2	133	198	262	261	774
3	30	50	71	77	282
4	9	18	30	34	137
5	4	7	11	14	87
6	2	6	7	7	34
7	1	1	3	5	26
8	1	1	1	2	14
9	0	0	0	0	11
10	0	0	1	1	4
11	0	1	0	0	4
12	0	0	0	0	2
13	0	0	0	0	1
14	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	0	0	0
16	0	0	0	0	5
17	0	0	0	1	2
18	0	0	0	0	1
19	0	0	0	0	1
20	0	0	0	0	0
21	0	0	0	0	0
22	0	0	0	0	0
23	0	0	0	0	0
24	0	0	0	0	0
25	0	0	0	0	0
26	0	0	0	0	0
27	0	0	0	0	0
28	0	0	0	0	1
Total	1098	1306	1406	1416	4314



Amount higher or lower than the average county rate

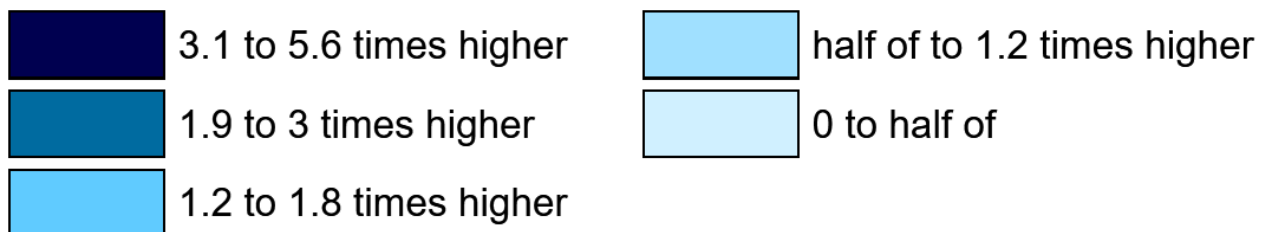


Figure 13 Map of DA incidences and offences in Herefordshire showing prevalence vs county average

Figure 13 Map of DA incidences and offences in Herefordshire showing prevalence vs county average shows levels of police reported incidents/offences around Herefordshire compared with the county as a whole. Levels are defined by the proportion of addresses within an Output Area (OAs) where a police reported incident or offence has been committed, between April 2017 and March 2021. The majority (70%) of OAs with levels that are twice or more than the average for Herefordshire are located in Hereford city; followed by around 15% in Leominster and 6% in Ross-on-Wye. The remainder are dotted randomly around the county.

The highest levels in the city are located in the centre, Courtyard and areas in South Wye. Other areas notable for having relatively high levels of reported DA incidents/offences include an area within Kingstone village, the John Kyrle area of Ross-on-Wye and the Gateway area in Leominster.

Homicide

During the period between 2017/18 to 2020/21, there were 4 homicides recorded where DA was a factor in Herefordshire. There was no record of the police visiting the victims or suspects previous to any of the homicides, which may suggest that there wasn't a history of DA between the parties and that the situation escalated very quickly, or that despite a history of DA the police were not contacted in the past.

Table 1 Three of the four homicides were committed by an adult child against their mother. Whilst these numbers are too small to denote anything significant, it does however highlight that despite DA being most prevalent between partners, the danger and importance of abuse amongst family members cannot be overlooked.

Comparative data on domestic homicide is recorded by police force area, so the following data is for the whole West Mercia police force area, which includes Herefordshire and 3 additional local authorities: Worcestershire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin.

As can be seen in

West Mercia had the second highest number of domestic homicides between March 2016 to March 2019 compared to similar Police forces

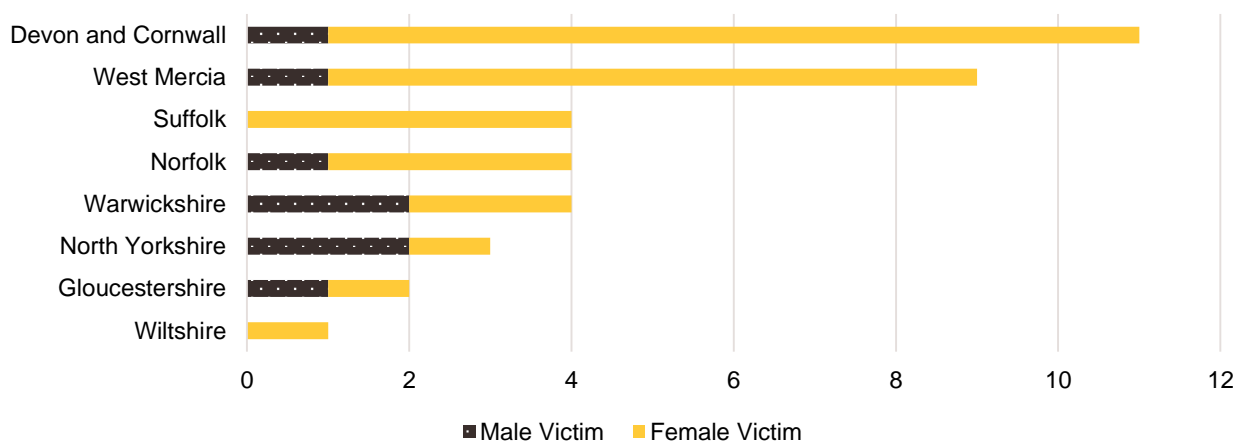


Figure 1 Figure 14, when compared with similar police force areas, West Mercia had the second highest number of domestic homicides reported, with only Devon and Cornwall recording a higher rate.

West Mercia had the second highest number of domestic homicides between March 2016 to March 2019 compared to similar Police forces

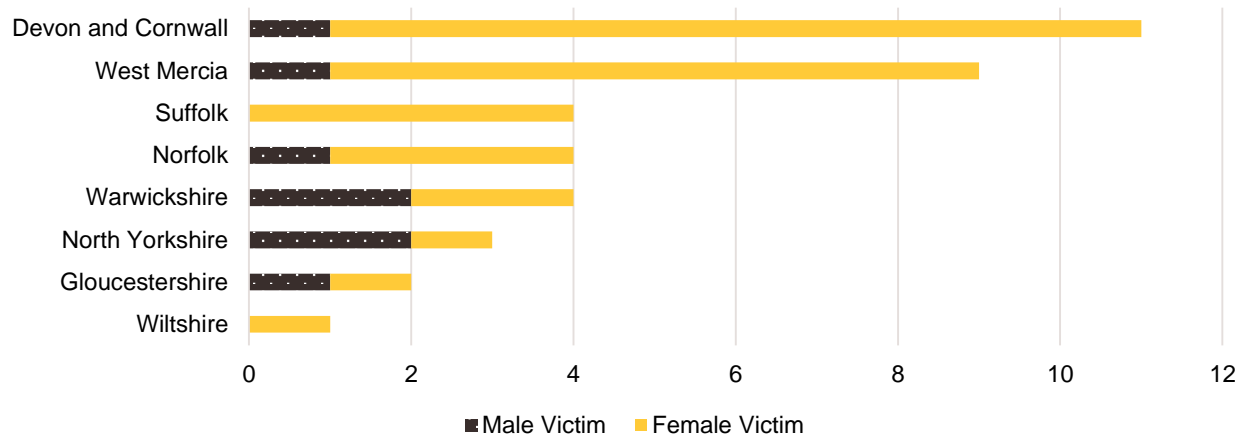


Figure 14 Count of domestic homicide between March 2016 to March 2019 for West Mercia and similar police force areas

West Mercia Women's Aid Refuge Data

A survey completed for the West Mercia Crime Commissioner in 2020 (Senker & Scott) found that only 38% of the victims and survivors surveyed were offered any form of support, which shows there is a substantial number of people who are not offered support and more could be done to support all victims and survivors of DA.

The following data was provided by West Mercia Women's Aid (WMWA) in May and June 2021 and shows the level of referrals they had between April 2018 until the end of March 2021, most of the data relates to referrals to refuge.

Figure 15 shows that between April 2018 to March 2021, Colwall, Cradley and Wellington Heath had the most referrals to WMWA per 1,000 residents at 42 referrals per 1,000 residents, and that Penyard, Goodrich and Llangarron had the fewest referrals to WMWA at just 20 per 1,000 residents. The data shows that the need for support for victims of domestic abuse was apparent all across the county and not concentrated in the city or market towns.

Colwall, Cradley and Wellington Heath had the highest number of referrals per 1,000 residents

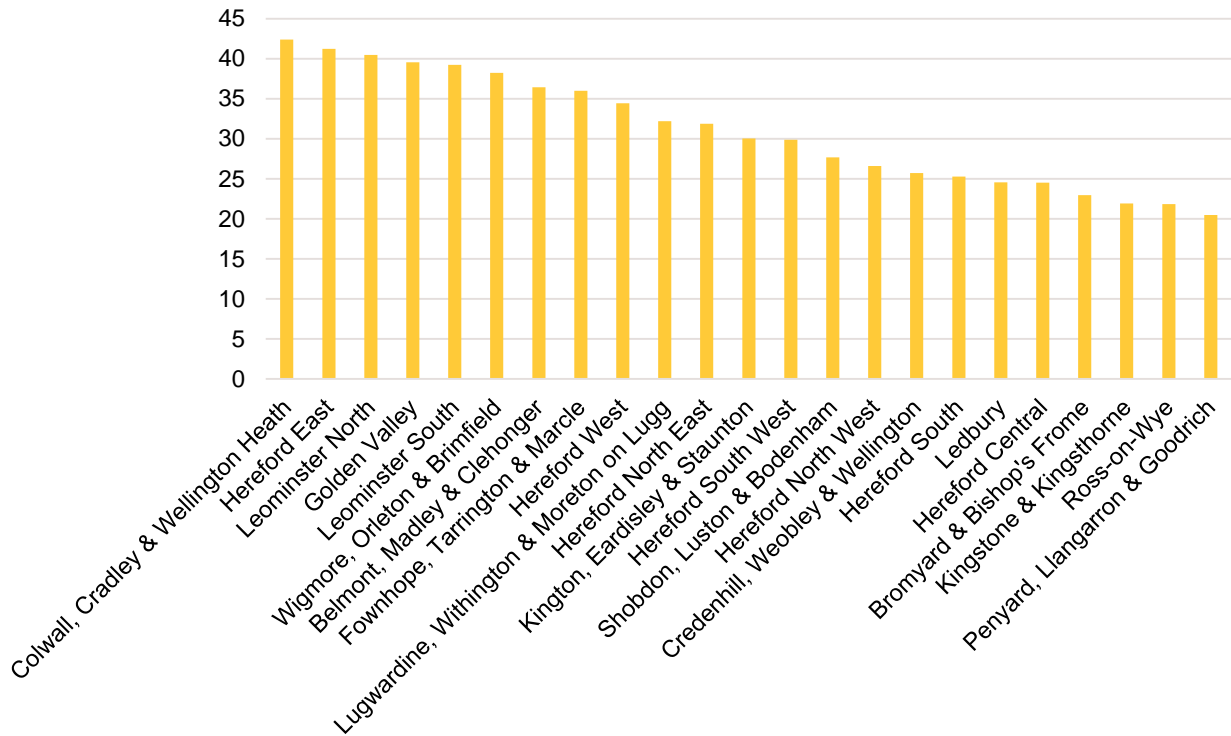


Figure 15 The number of referrals between April 2018 to March 2021 to WMWA per 1,000 residents by MSOA

Figure 16 shows that there have been between 62-73 referrals to refuge per year with most referrals occurring in 2019/20. 2019/20 also saw the longest average stay in refuge of 108 days, compared with 90 and 75 days in 2018/19 and 2020/21 respectively.

As can be seen in Figure 17, over the period 2018/19 to 2020/21 most referrals for refuge came from the local helpline, but in the most recent year of 2020/21, referrals from this source have dropped and more referrals are now coming from other professionals and self-referrals. Referrals from other sources have been consistently low, so it may be beneficial to ensure that these partners are aware that they can refer victims to refuge when needed and they understand the process of how to do this.

There was a higher number of referrals in 2019/20 than the previous and subsequent year

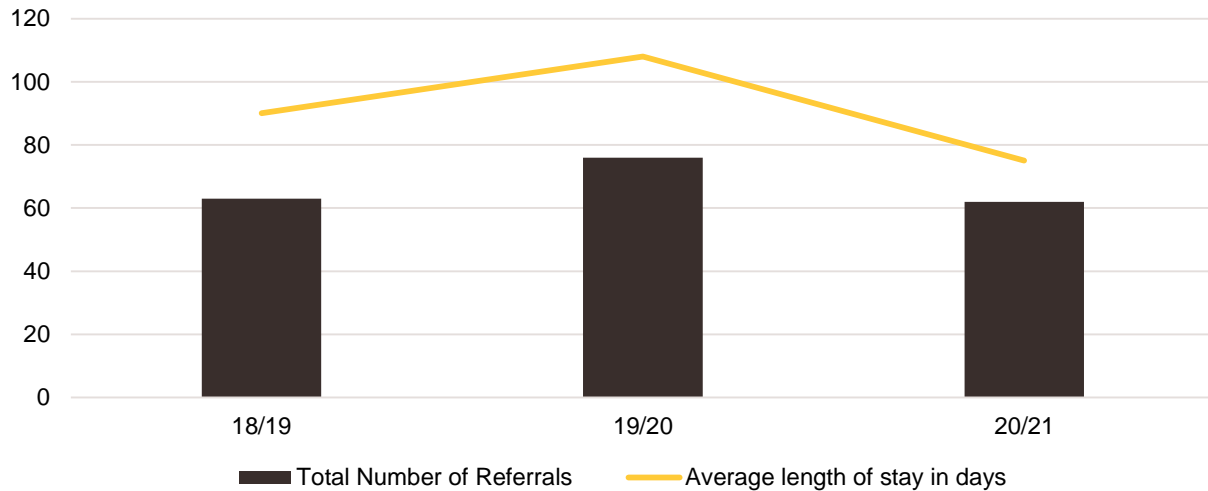


Figure 16 Number of referrals to refuge and average length of stay by year

Most referrals for refuge came from the Local Helpline

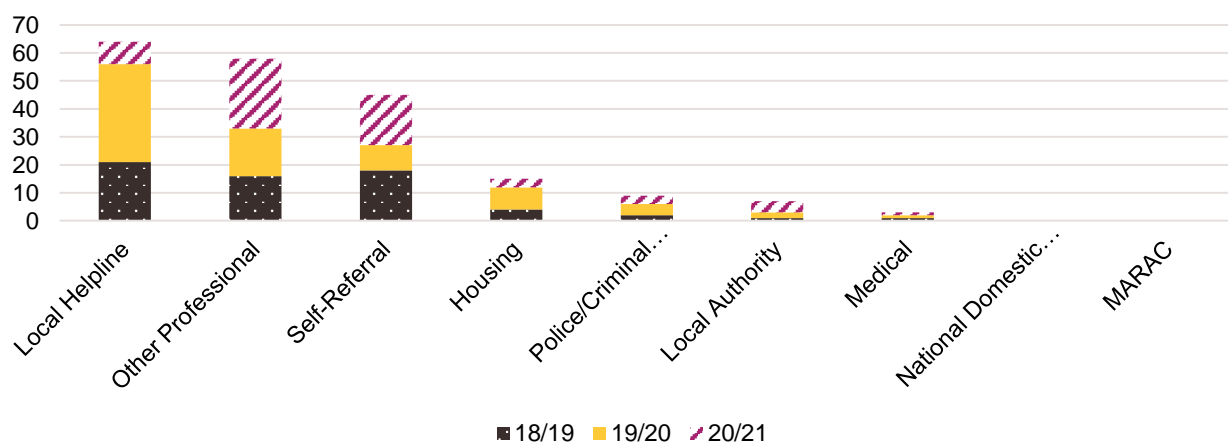


Figure 17 The number of referrals to refuge by source and year

As can be seen in Figure 18, between a quarter to a third of referrals were unsuccessful/denied, over 50% came from out of area and the remaining 17-24% of referrals were for victims inside the area. The reasons for referrals being denied can be seen in Figure 19, which shows that lack of room has been the most common reason for victims to be denied access to refuge year on year, which suggests that supply is not able to meet current demand.

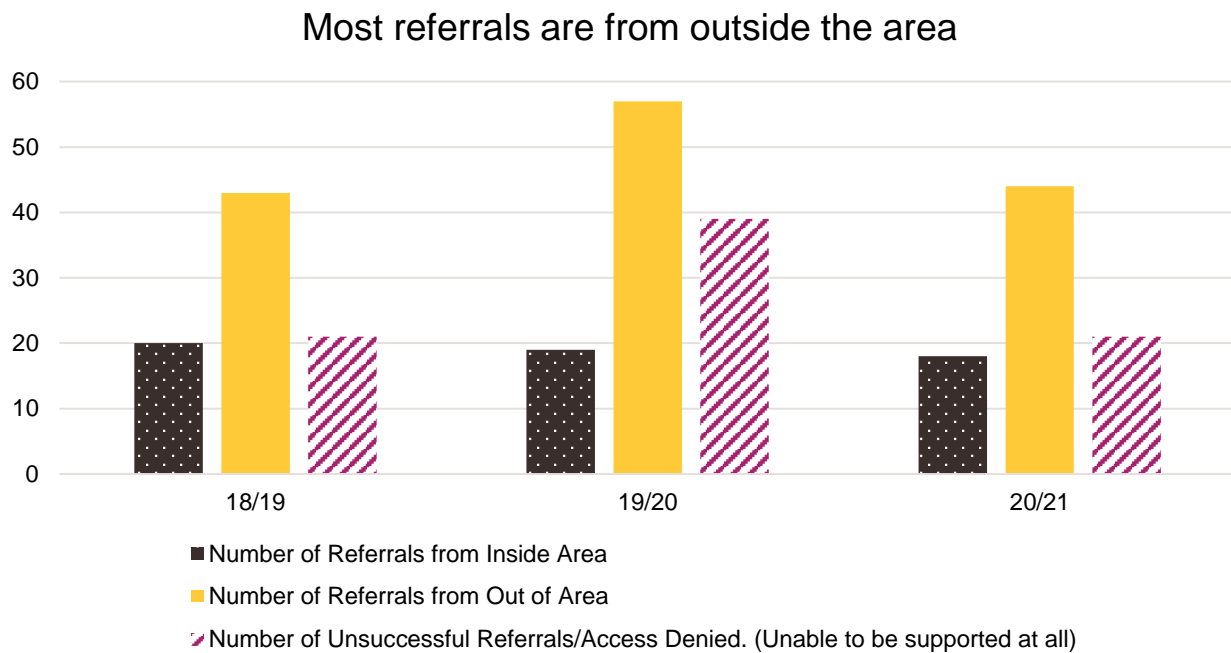


Figure 18 The number of referrals to refuge which were from inside/out of area and unsuccessful referrals by year

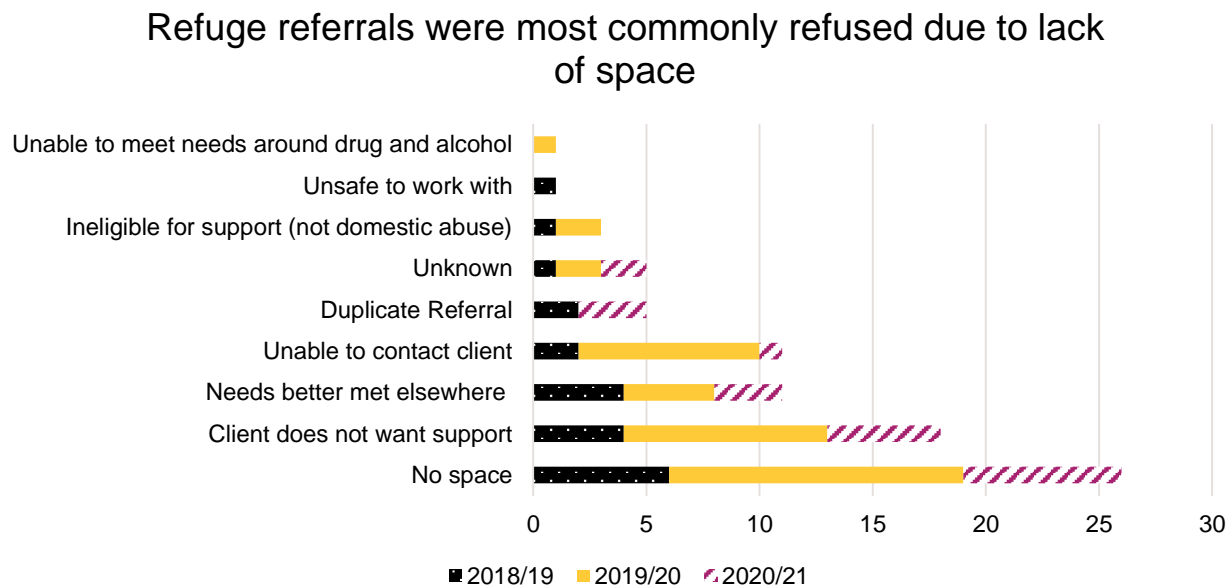


Figure 19 The number of referrals to refuge denied by reason and year

Figure 20 and Figure 21 show the age and ethnicity of victims who have been referred to refuge and the number of referrals which were accepted and refused. Most referrals were for those aged 25-34 with about 71% of referrals being accepted for those within this age range. All referrals for those aged 16-18 were refused access to refuge as it is not suitable for under 18s to be housed in refuge, but it is important to ensure that these people are receiving suitable support and accommodation. The other groups that were refused more than average were 55-64, 65-74 and

“Unknown”, which may suggest that older victims are less likely to be accepted into refuge, however the number of referrals for these groups were very small so it is not possible to infer much from this data.

16% of referrals were for people who are of BAME origins, which is actually much higher than the county average with only 1.8% of the county being recorded as non-white in the 2011 census. The data from WMWA does not break down “White” and as “White: Other white” is the largest minority in Herefordshire at 3.9%, it would be beneficial to break this down in future to further understand the makeup of people accessing refuge. Those of mixed race and recorded as “Other Isolated/ Marginalised community/ Prefer Not to Say” were refused access more than average, however, due to very small numbers of referrals for these groups it is not possible to come to firm conclusions.

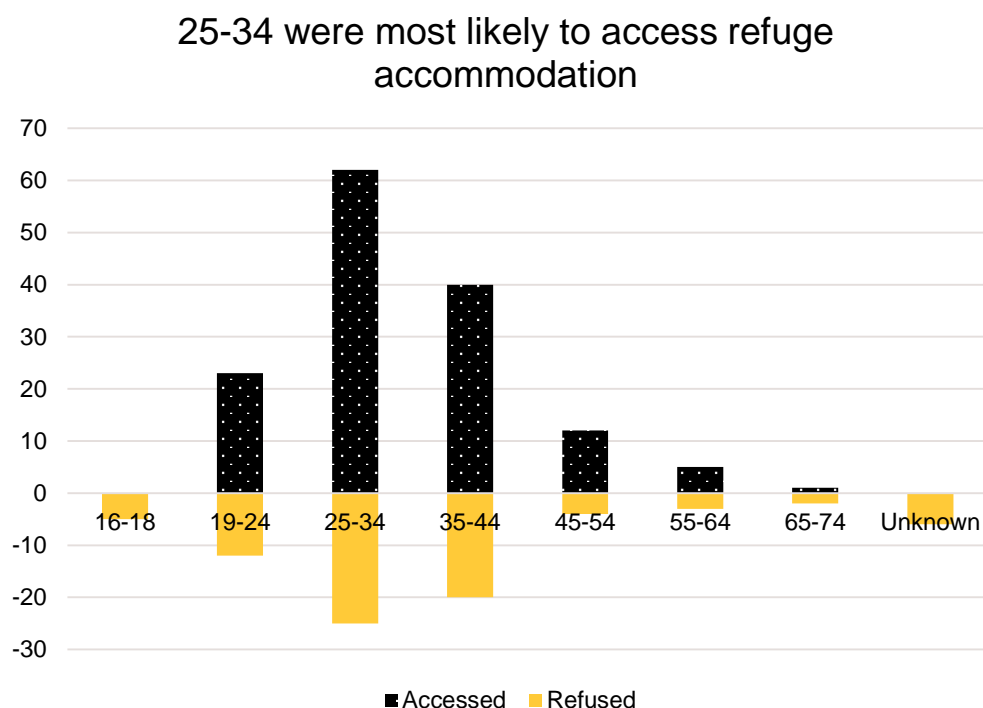


Figure 20 The number of successful and refused referrals to refuge between April 2018 and March 2021 by age

Most referrals were for victims who are white

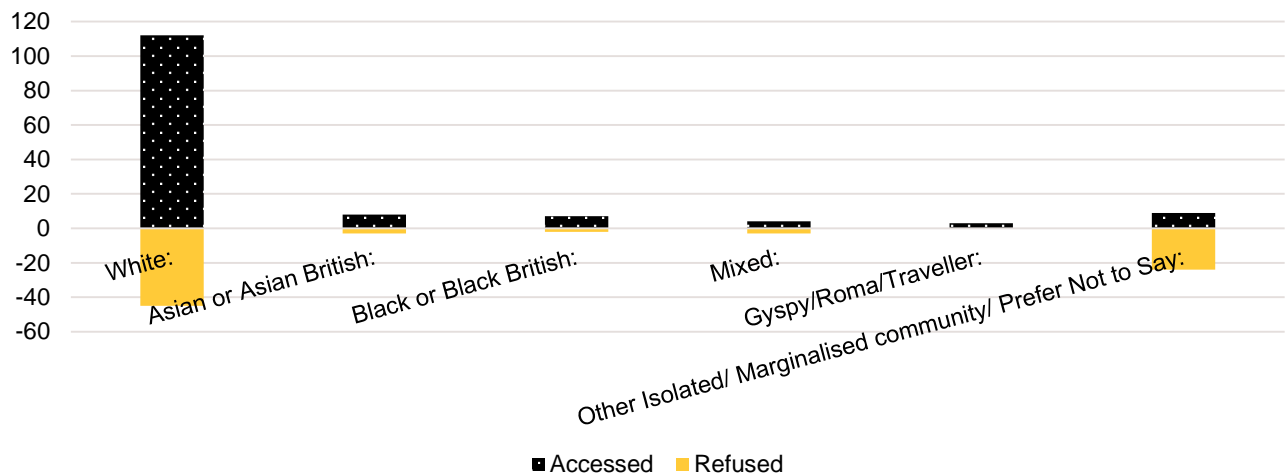


Figure 21 The number of successful and refused referrals to refuge between April 2018 and March 2021 by ethnicity

A report by the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner in 2020 (Senker & Scott) found that refuge was being utilised by those who had a history of DA in addition to victims who were currently fleeing DA which was felt to be inappropriate, and that refuge places should only be available for those who were currently fleeing DA. Whilst this report considered refuge across the whole West Mercia police area, the quality of refuge specifically in Herefordshire was highlighted as being good.

MARAC/IDVA Data

MARAC

SafeLives describes Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) as “a meeting where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. After sharing all relevant information they have about a victim, the representatives discuss options for increasing the safety of the victim and turn these into a co-ordinated action plan. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim. The MARAC will also make links with other fora to safeguard children and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator. At the heart of a MARAC is the working assumption that no single agency or individual can see the complete picture of the life of a victim, but all may have insights that are crucial to their safety. The victim does not attend the meeting but is represented by an IDVA who speaks on their behalf.”

The MARAC data below comes from reports that West Mercia Police send to SafeLives and covers the period May 2009 to January 2021.

As can be seen in Figure 22, there has been an increase in cases heard at MARAC since 2009, with the vast majority of referrals coming from the police. The disparity between referrals between

the police and other sources may be because the police are more likely to be involved in high risk cases of DA, so have cases to refer, or it could be a lack of understanding of other agencies regarding how to refer to MARAC or in identifying cases that should be referred.

Most MARAC referrals came from the police

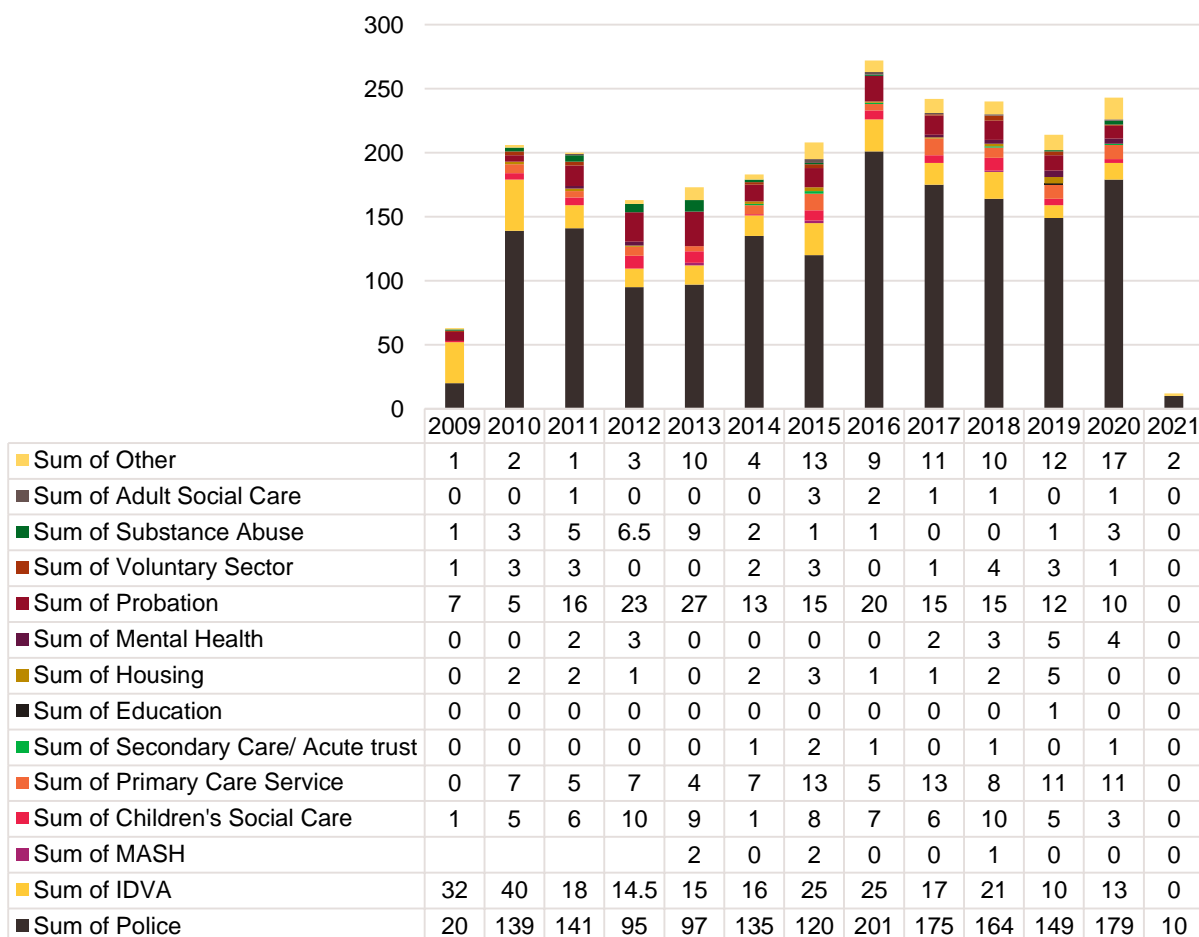


Figure 22 The number of MARAC cases heard in Herefordshire by year and source of referral

As can be seen in Figure 23, the number of cases that are seen each year where victims are BAME, LGBT, disabled or male are very low. CSEW data suggests that DA is actually more prevalent in people with disabilities and who are LGBT, which suggests that there are likely to be many unseen disabled and LGBT victims and it should be considered whether more can be done to support these unseen victims.

CSEW also showed that DA was most prevalent in people of mixed White and black Caribbean ethnicity, however, as the 2011 census estimates that 93.7% of Herefordshire are White British, it is unsurprising that the number of BAME cases are relatively low.

According to CSEW estimates, we would expect that male victims make up about a third of DA cases, however, it appears that cases involving male victims are very infrequently brought to

MARAC. Further investigation is needed to understand why this is the case, as there may be high risk male victims who are not getting their cases heard at MARAC who should be.

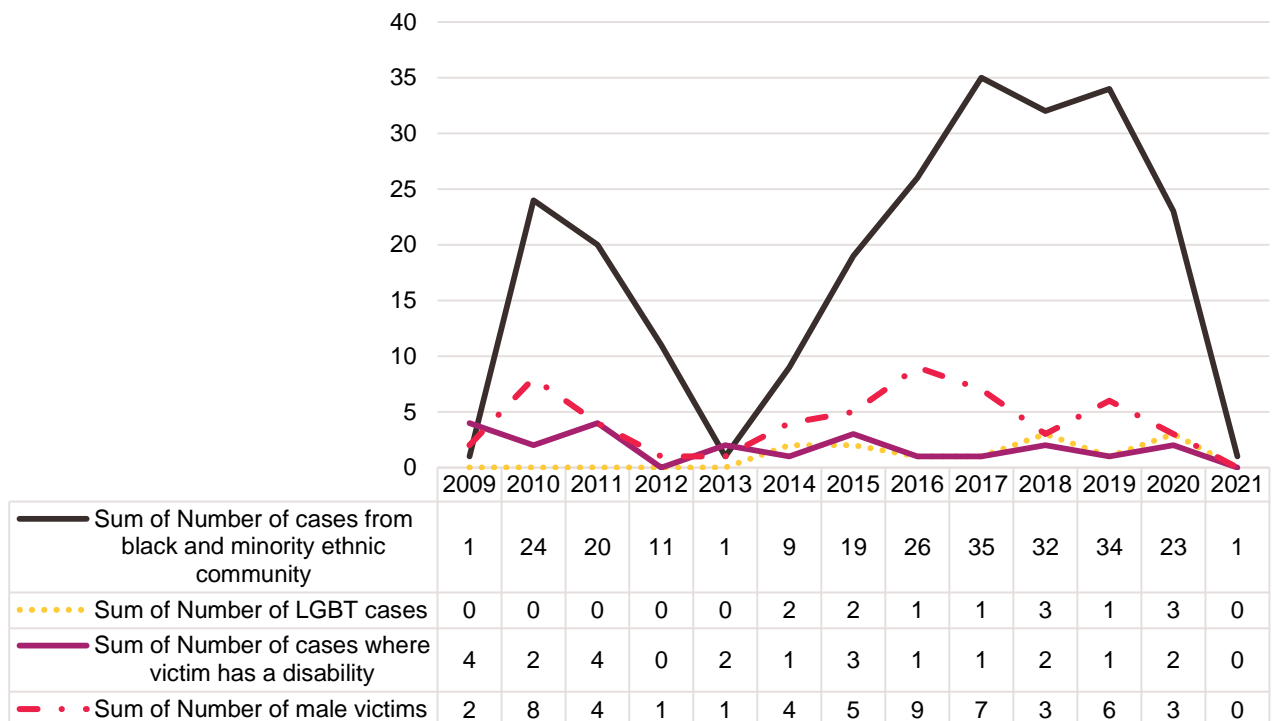


Figure 23 Count of cases where victims were of specified characteristics

IDVA

Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) are specialists who are SafeLives accredited. They are trained to work with victims of domestic abuse at high-risk of serious harm. IDVAs provide high-risk victims of domestic abuse with a tailored and person-centered safety and support plan so that victims and their families are protected from abusive behaviour (SaferFutures).

The following information was provided by WMWA in May 2021 and shows how many victims they supported with IDVAs between April 2018 and March 2021.

Figure 24 shows that there has been an increase in the number of victims being supported by IDVA in 2020/21 and that 25-34 year olds are most likely to be supported by IDVA across all three years. Looking at other sources, there doesn't appear to have been an increase in demand, referrals or reports around DA in 2020/21, so it is uncertain why there has been this increase in demand for IDVA support. It could be that there were more victims being assessed as high risk than in previous years but it is not possible to come to conclusions from the data. There was also a substantial increase in the number of victims aged 65+ in 2020/21 meaning that more older victims are being supported by IDVAs than before, although numbers for this age group still remains low.

Those aged between 25-34 are most likely to be supported by IDVA

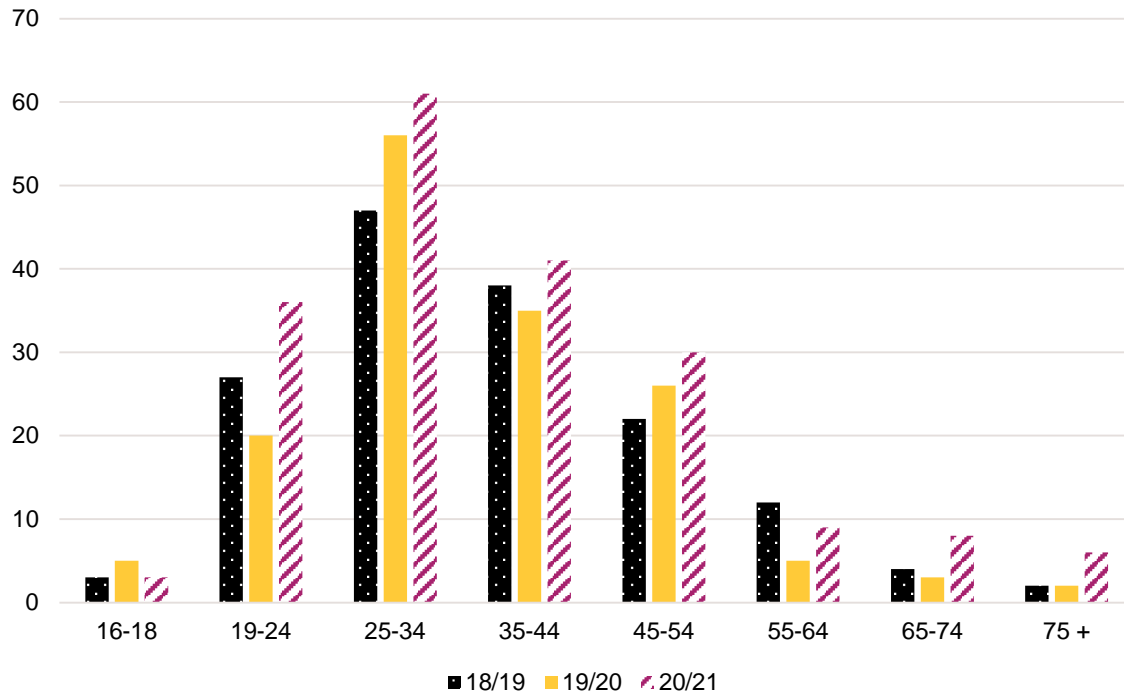


Figure 24 The number of victims supported by IDVA by age group and year

Figure 25 shows that it is almost exclusively women who have been supported by IDVA, with only 15 male and 2 transgender/transsexual victims receiving support in this 3 year period. These figures are starkly different to the prevalence levels reported by CSEW, which suggests there are likely to be a lot of male and transgender victims not receiving IDVA support who need it.

97% of victims supported by IDVA were women

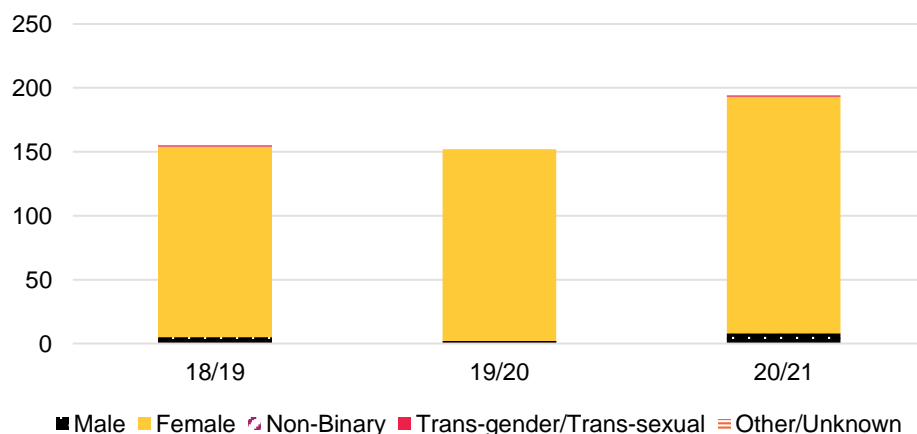


Figure 25 The number of victims supported by IDVA by gender and year

Figure 26 shows that 90% of victims supported by IDVAs were heterosexual/straight, 8% were “other/unknown”, 1% were gay/lesbian and 1% were bisexual. This is also quite different to the prevalence rates reported by CSEW, which suggests there is an underrepresentation of LGBTQ+ survivors being supported by IDVA.

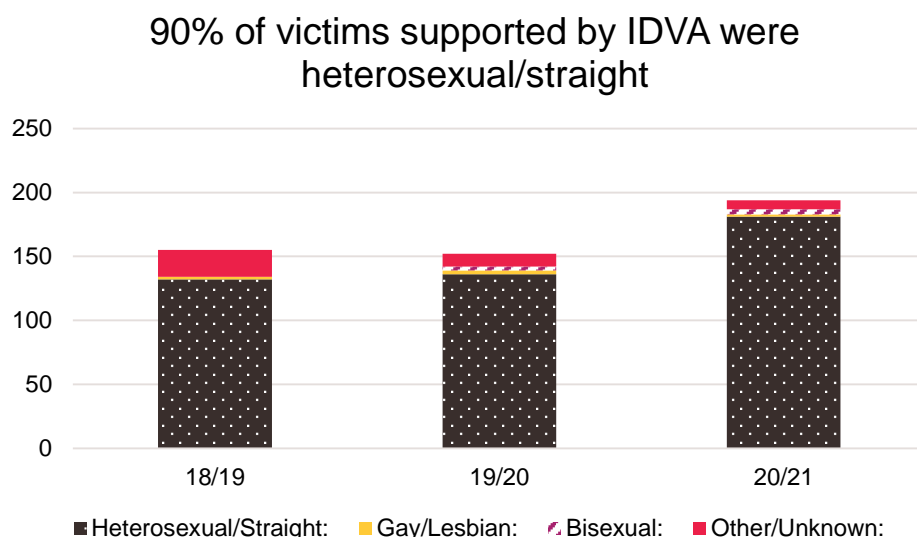


Figure 26 The number of victims supported by IDVA by sexuality and year

A 2020 report by the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (Senker & Scott) found that the IDVA programme was highly thought of amongst stakeholders and victims/survivors, especially the work of IDVAs within hospitals. However, it was highlighted that as IDVAs only worked with high risk individuals, many victims were not receiving this type of support, and that high risk did not always mean high need. A recommendation of finding a solution to this gap in support provision was noted.

Housing and Homelessness Data

The following data was provided by the Housing Solutions team within Herefordshire Council in April 2021. Please note, the data only covers the year 2020 as this is when data was first recorded in this way.

During 2020, the Housing Solutions team recorded 147 instances where they worked with individuals needing housing where DA was reported as an issue. This was made up of 4 individuals requiring assistance twice within the year, and 139 individuals being seen only once in that year. Of these 143 people, only 2 were men; whilst there is clearly a disproportionate lack of men being supported by Housing Solutions, it is not possible to determine why this is the case, and further enquiry would be needed to understand why.

Two thirds of the individuals supported by Housing Solutions are recorded as working with other agencies, which both brings to the fore the importance of good inter-agency working and also

raises the question whether it is necessary or beneficial to refer the remaining third of people on to other agencies for additional support.

As can be seen by Figure 27, over 60% of DA victims supported by Housing Solutions had children or were pregnant, which may suggest that victims who have children are more likely to seek support and that more may need to be done to ensure that those without children are also able to seek support if needed. In addition, this finding also shows that the current demand for housing, needs to be suitable not just for victims, but also for their children.

Most DA victims needing housing had children

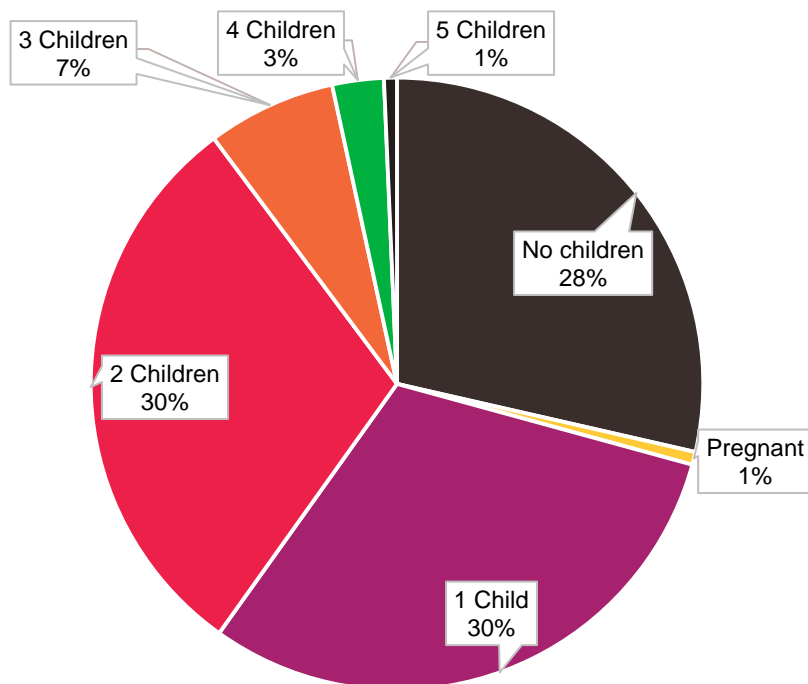


Figure 27 Breakdown of DA victims supported by Housing Solutions by number of children

Whilst Housing Solutions work to rehome victims of DA, a report by West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (Senker & Scott, 2020) highlighted that many victims want to remain in their own homes, and feel that being the one that has to leave is an additional “punishment”. Obviously each situation will be unique, but efforts should be made to allow victims to stay in their home if this is their wish and it is safe to do so, for example using the Sanctuary Scheme.

Social Care Data

Adult Social Care

This data was provided by the Adult Social Care Performance team in May 2021 and covers the period April 2018 to March 2021. The figures relate to referrals made to Adult Social Care when DA is recorded as a factor and the source of risk is a family member or partner.

As can be seen in Figure 28, there has been a reduction in the number of referrals made to Adult Social Care each year between 2018 and 2021. It is unclear why this would be the case, and further investigation may be required.

Figure 29 shows that referrals where DA is a factor and the source of risk is a family member of partner makes up only about 7% of all referrals received by Adult Social Care.

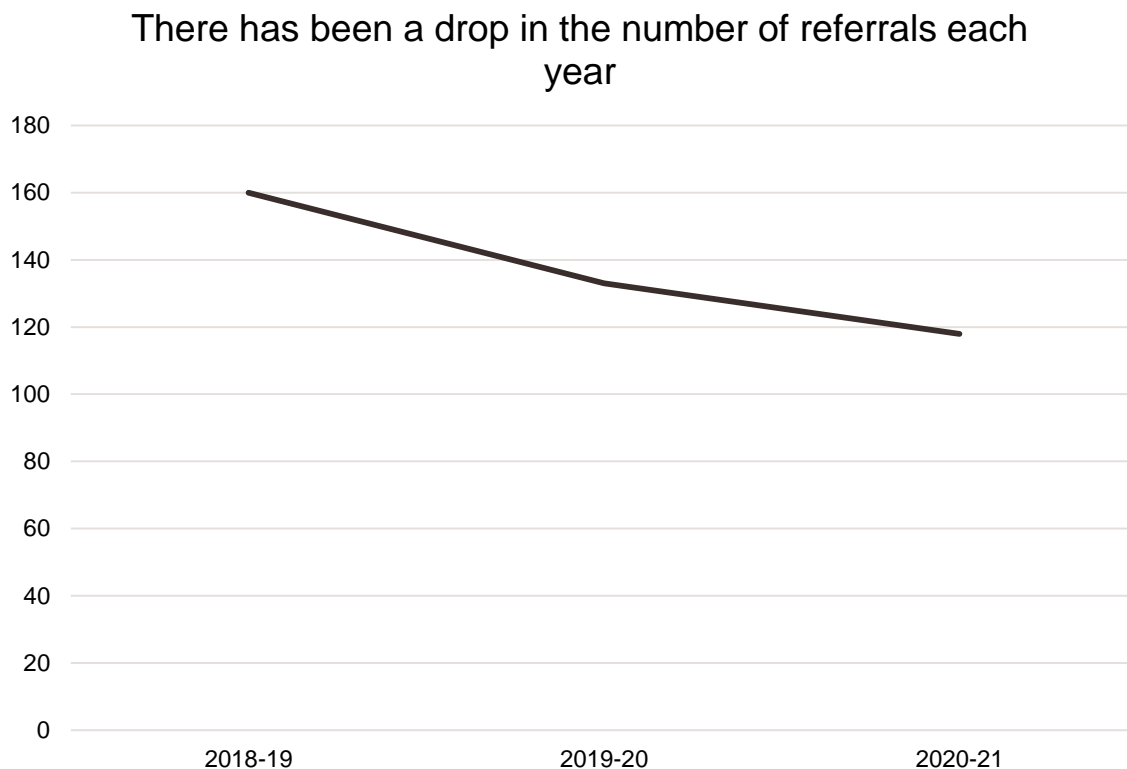


Figure 28 The number of referrals per year to Adult Social Care where DA is a recorded factor and the source of risk is a family member or partner

Referrals for DA account for about 7% of all referrals to Adult Social Care

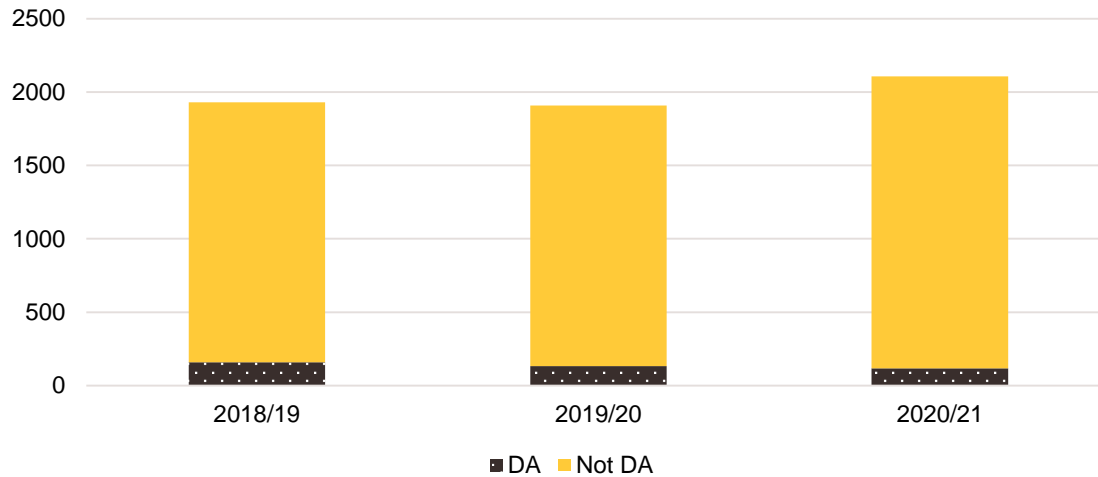


Figure 29 The number of referrals per year to Adult Social Care where DA is a recorded factor and the source of risk is a family member or partner compared to all other referrals to Adult Social Care

Partners are the source of risk for most age groups, but family members are the source of risk for those aged 80+

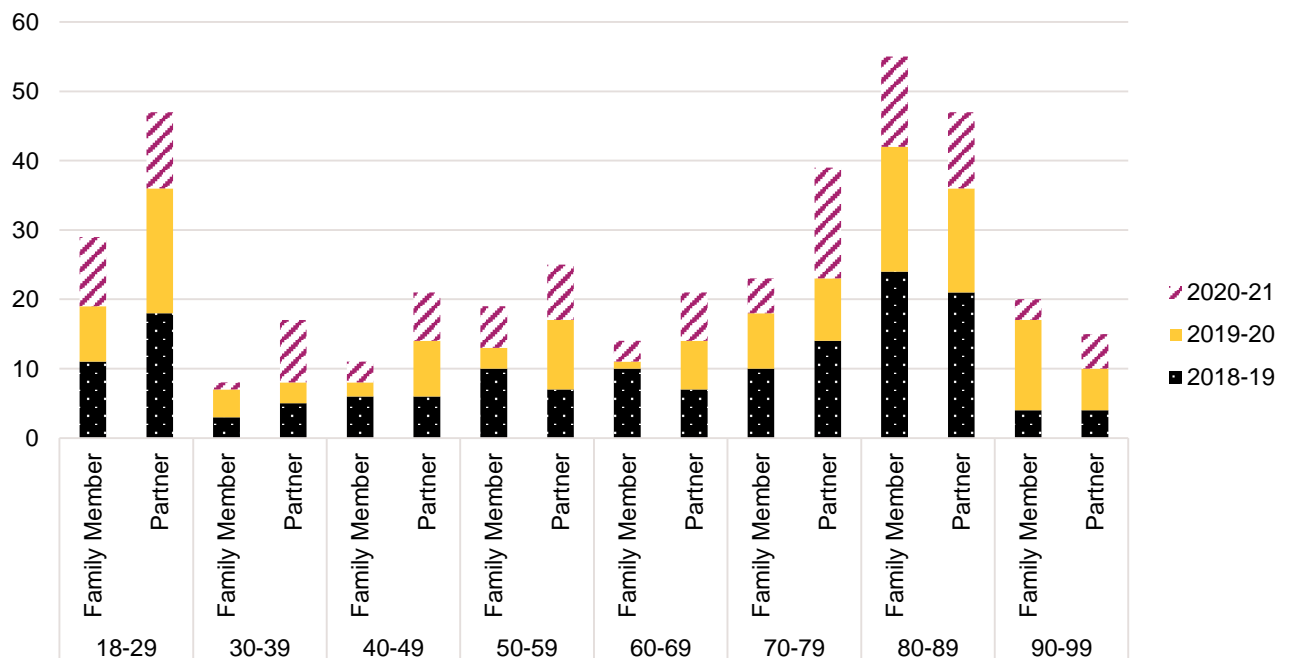


Figure 30 The number of referrals to Adult Social Care, where DA is a factor and the source of risk is a family member or partner, between April 2018 and March 2021 by age group and source of risk

Figure 30 shows that most referrals were for individuals aged 80-89 which is consistent with the frequency that this age group represents when looking at all referrals to Adult Social Care, however, it is a group where DA is rarely recorded by other agencies so support for older victims may be best provided through Adult Social Care. This graph also shows that 18-29 year olds were the second largest age group to be referred for DA, which is disproportionately high compared to the frequency that this age group represents when looking at all referrals to Adult Social Care, which supports the expectation that DA is especially prevalent in this age group.

Figure 30 also shows that most referrals cite the source of risk as a partner, but this is not the case for those aged 80+ where it is family members who are recorded as the source of risk. CSEW only surveys adults aged 79 and under about their experiences of DA, so there is no prevalence data available for this age group which makes this an even more hidden issue for those aged 80+. There are also concerns that DA perpetrated against older victims is not always recognised as DA, but instead classified as Elder Abuse which then means that victims are not receiving specialist DA support.

Figure 31 shows that around 46% of referrals for DA were for people whose primary support reason (PSR) was “physical support” which is proportionately the same as for all referrals, but there is a much higher proportion of people with “no PSR” for DA referrals compared to when looking at all referrals. All people that have been referred will have care and support needs, but not all are receiving services from the Local Authority, and those who are not receiving services won’t have been assessed so are recorded as “no PSR”.

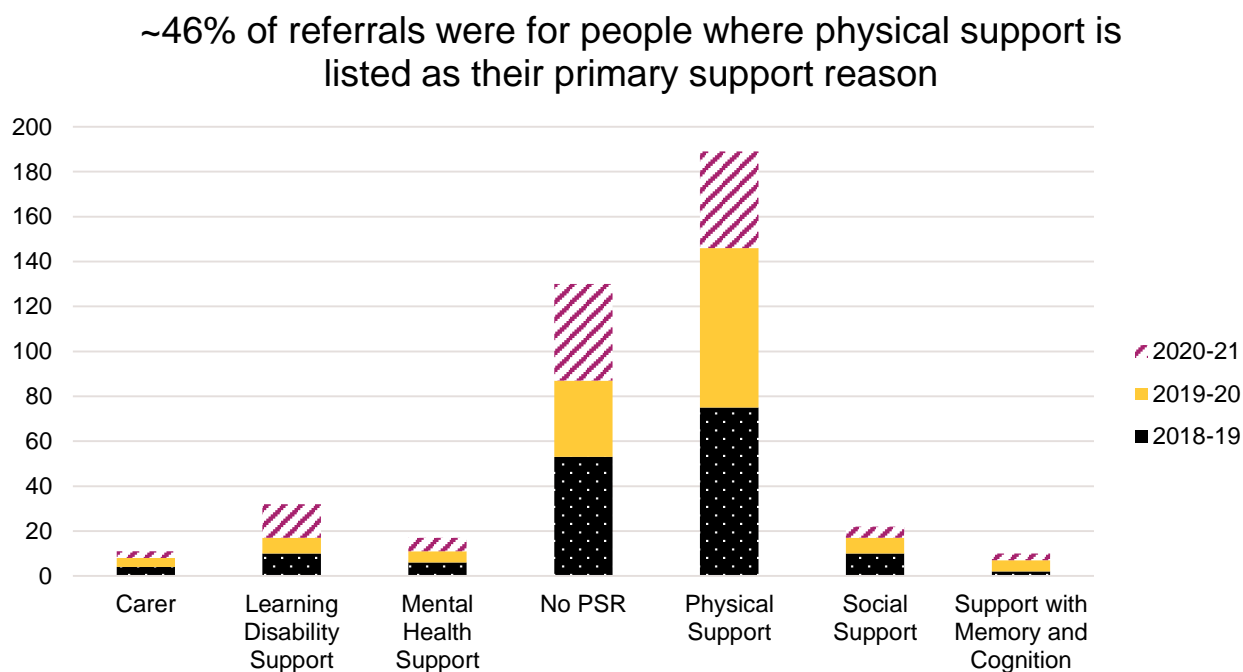


Figure 31 The number of referrals to Adult Social Care, where DA is a factor and the source of risk is a family member or partner, between April 2018 and March 2021 by primary support reason

Figure 32 shows the ethnicity of referrals is overwhelmingly “White”, which correlates with the ethnic makeup of the county. However, the data does not break down “White” into different

subcategories which would be helpful as the largest ethnic minority group in Herefordshire is “White: Other” but we cannot understand the level of referrals for this group of people due to the way the data is recorded.

Figure 33 shows that women make up ~75% of referrals for DA, which is much higher than the ~56% when looking at all referrals. However, the CSEW prevalence rates suggest that women make up about 75% of DA cases, so this figure actually fits with what we would expect.

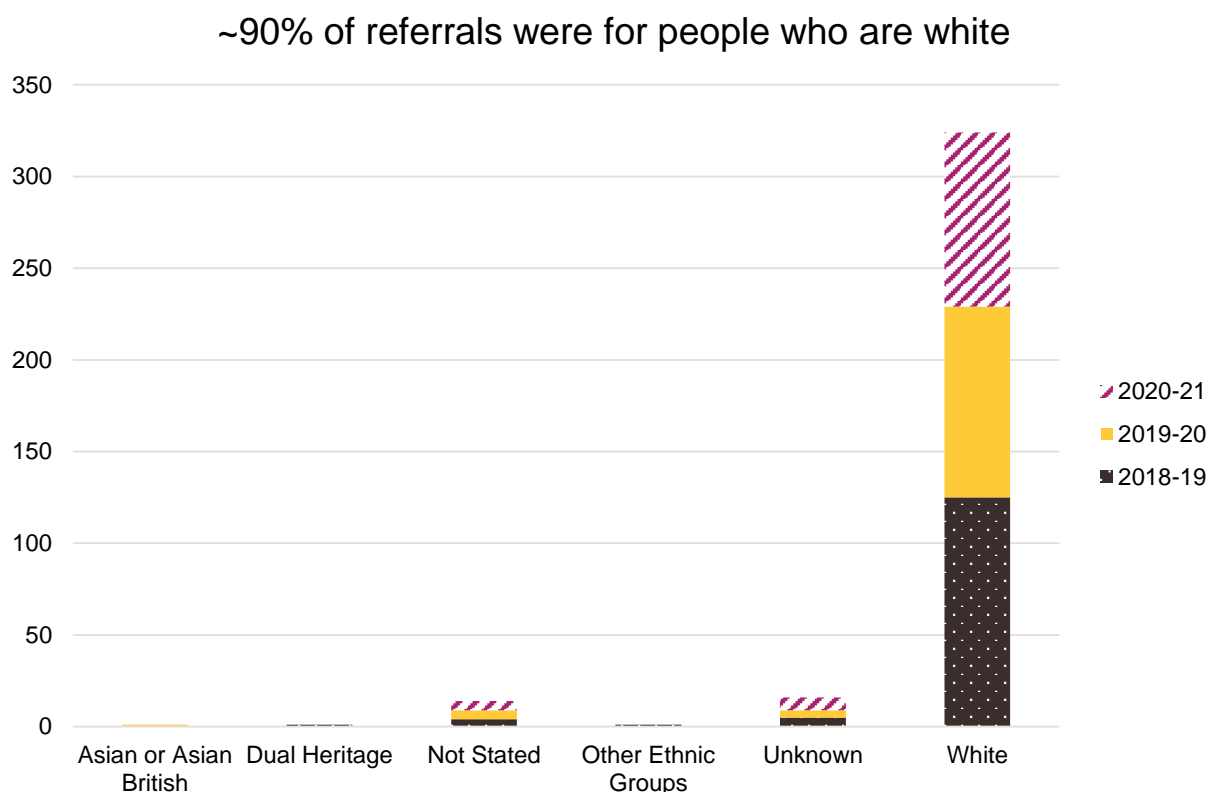


Figure 32 The number of referrals to Adult Social Care, where DA is a factor and the source of risk is a family member or partner, between April 2018 and March 2021 by ethnicity

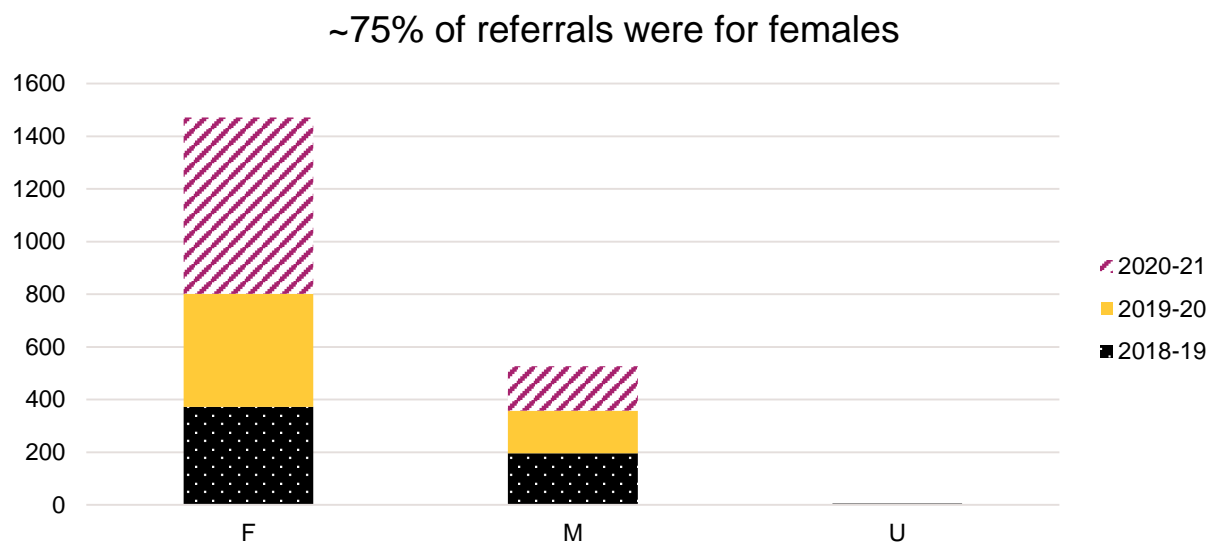


Figure 33 The number of referrals to Adult Social Care, where DA is a factor and the source of risk is a family member or partner, between April 2018 and March 2021 by sex

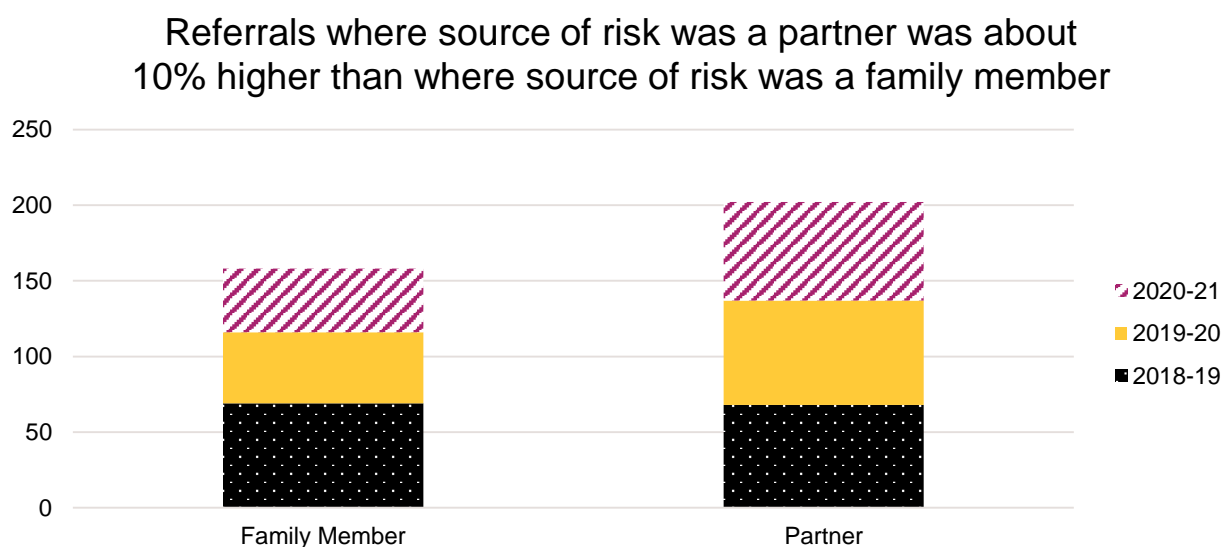


Figure 34 The number of referrals to Adult Social Care, where DA is a factor and the source of risk is a family member or partner, between April 2018 and March 2021 by source of risk

Figure 34 shows the source of risk of referrals which allows us to see whether the suspected perpetrator of the DA is a family member or partner. CSEW suggests that partner abuse is around twice as prevalent as familial abuse, which does not match what is seen in this data. This may suggest that familial abuse is disproportionately prevalent in those who have care and support needs. However, this is the only data set that separates out partner abuse to familial abuse, so it is not known whether this pattern is seen across Herefordshire or is specific to those with care and support needs.

Children Social Care

This data was provided by the Children Social Care Performance team in June 2021 and covers the period April 2018 to March 2021. The figures relate to referrals made to Children Social Care when DA is recorded as a factor.

Figure 35 shows that there was a large fall in referrals in 2019/20 and then a large increase in 2020/21, however, these discrepancies have been accounted for by changes in the way referrals have been recorded rather than due to changes in levels of abuse. Before 2019/20, all referral forms were recorded as a referral, but after this time, only referrals agreed by the manager were recorded. From 2020/21, the introduction of the DA Hub and referrals coming through Early Help led to an increase of referrals recorded.

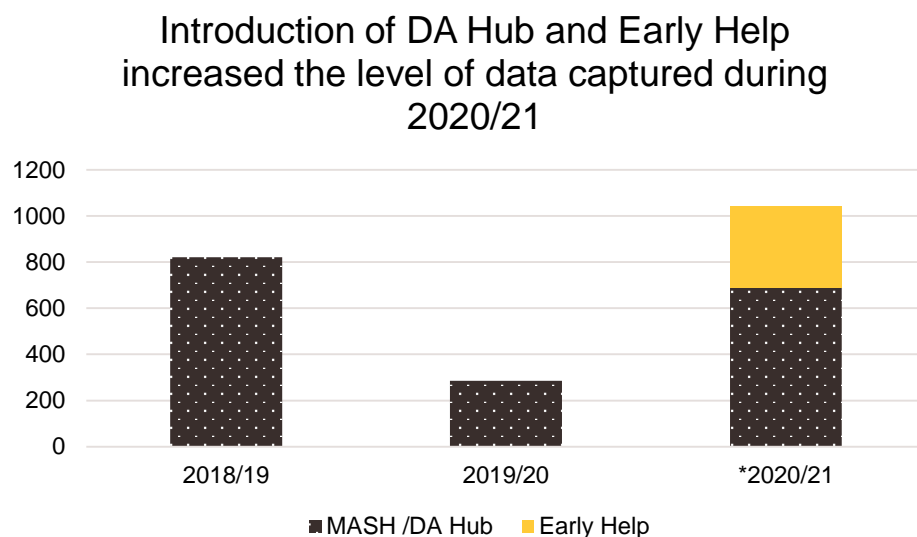


Figure 35 The number of referrals to Children Social Care where DA was a factor by year and referral route

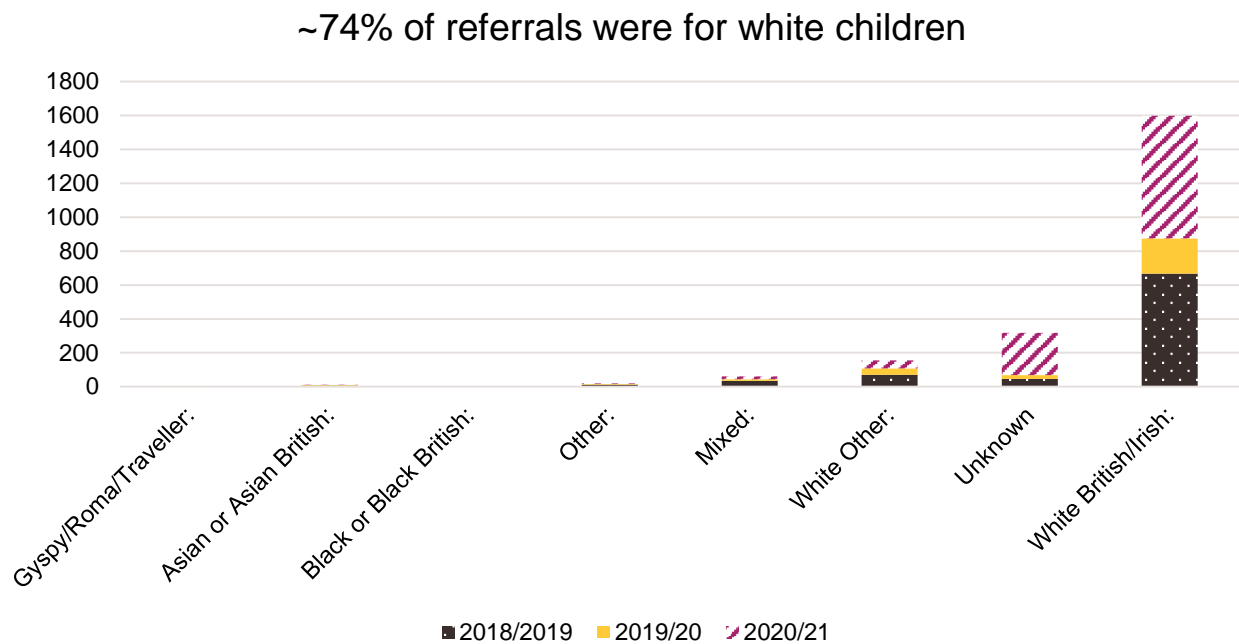


Figure 36 The number of referrals to Children Social Care where DA was a factor by ethnicity

Figure 36 shows that ~74% of referrals were for White British/Irish children, with a further ~15% comprising of those with “Unknown” ethnicity with the remaining ~12% children being BAME. The majority of BAME referrals are for children recorded as “White Other” at ~7% which is to be expected as “White: Other” is the largest ethnic minority group in Herefordshire.

Figure 37 shows which MSOA referrals have come from and it is clear that most referrals come from Hereford South West, and more generally from the city and market towns. This may be suggestive of the need for support in these areas for children who are victims or witnesses of DA, and also to ensure that in areas with lower numbers of referrals that there aren’t more hidden victims.

Most referrals to children's social care were from Hereford South West (per 1,000 of under 18 population)

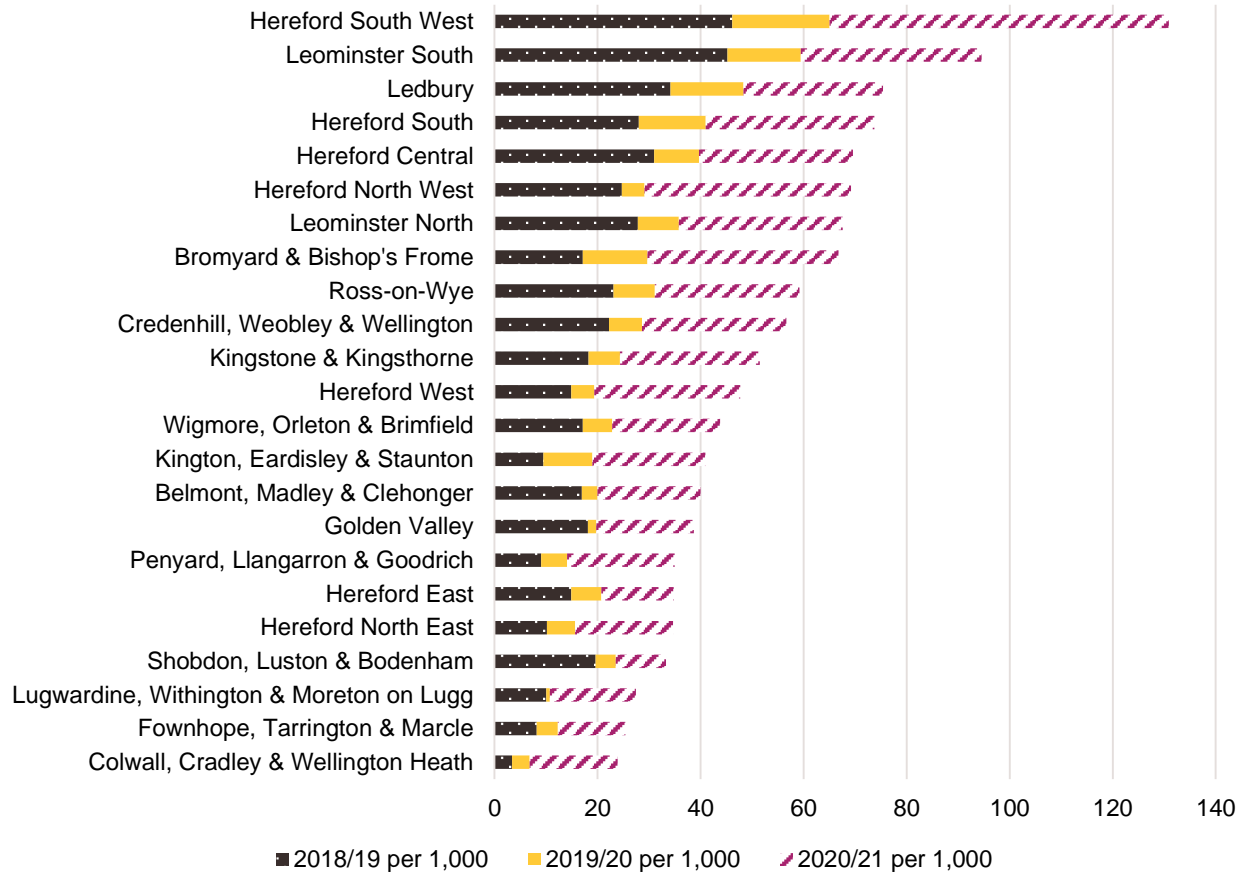


Figure 37 The number of referrals to Children Social care where DA is a factor by year and MSOA

Figure 38 shows that the majority of referrals are coming from the police which is reassuring that there appears to be a robust referral pathway between the police and children social care. However, the small number of referrals from other partners suggests that perhaps more work is needed to understand why there aren't more referrals and make changes if needed to ensure that all partners are referring to children social care when appropriate.

Nearly 50% of all referrals came from the police

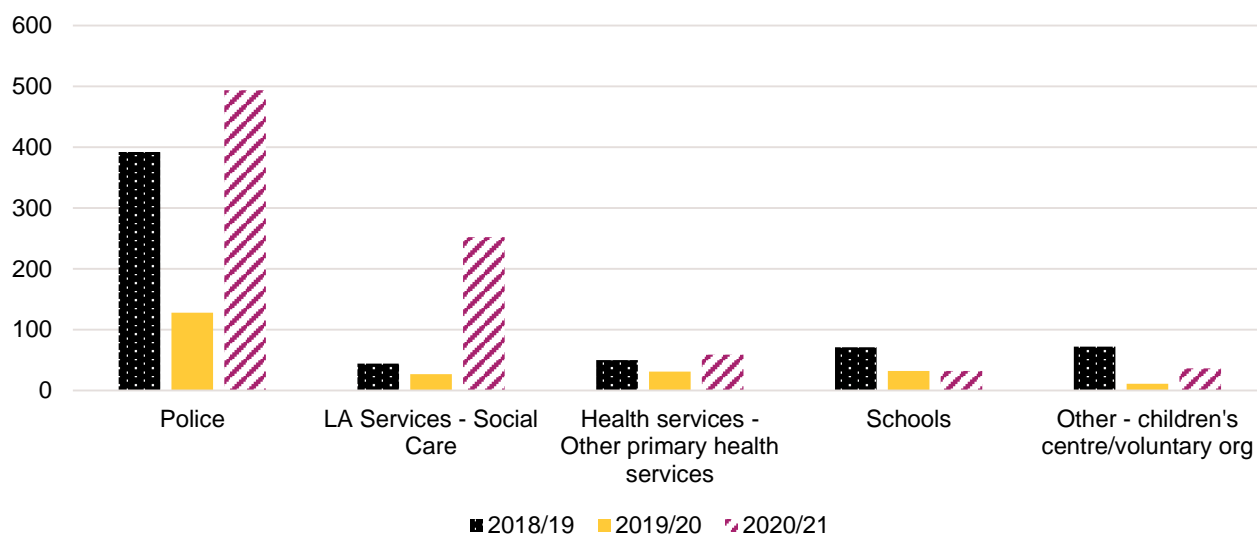


Figure 38 The number of referrals to Children Social care where DA is a factor by year and referral source

Health Data

General Practice

This data was provided by Taurus, which is a federation of all GP practices in Herefordshire, in April 2021 and covers the period April 2017 to March 2021. The figures are counts of when a GP records a code relating to DA on a patient's record, a list of the codes can be found in appendix B Table 3.

Figure 39 shows that GPs across Herefordshire have been seeing patients in relation to DA across all age ranges, but the majority of people were aged between 25-44. The low levels of people in the youngest age bracket does not align with what would be expected based on the prevalence levels seen in CSEW. This may in part be attributed to the fact that Herefordshire has a more aged population compared to England and Wales averages, but it would then be expected to see higher levels amongst older patients, which is not the case.

Figure 39 also shows that there was a substantial increase in the number of patients with a recorded DA code in 2019/20, especially in the 25-34 and 45-54 age groups, but the figures fell in 2020/21 to levels similar to 2018/19. A reduction in 2020/21 may be because patients have been unable to visit their GPs in person during the covid-19 pandemic, so GPs may have found it harder to pick up on cues from their patients, and patients may have found it more difficult to disclose this information over the telephone. It is uncertain when face-to-face GP appointments will resume to previous levels, so it may be beneficial to consider how GPs can ensure that they can better detect DA amongst their patients during these different ways of working.

25-44 year olds are most frequently recorded with a DA code by their GPs

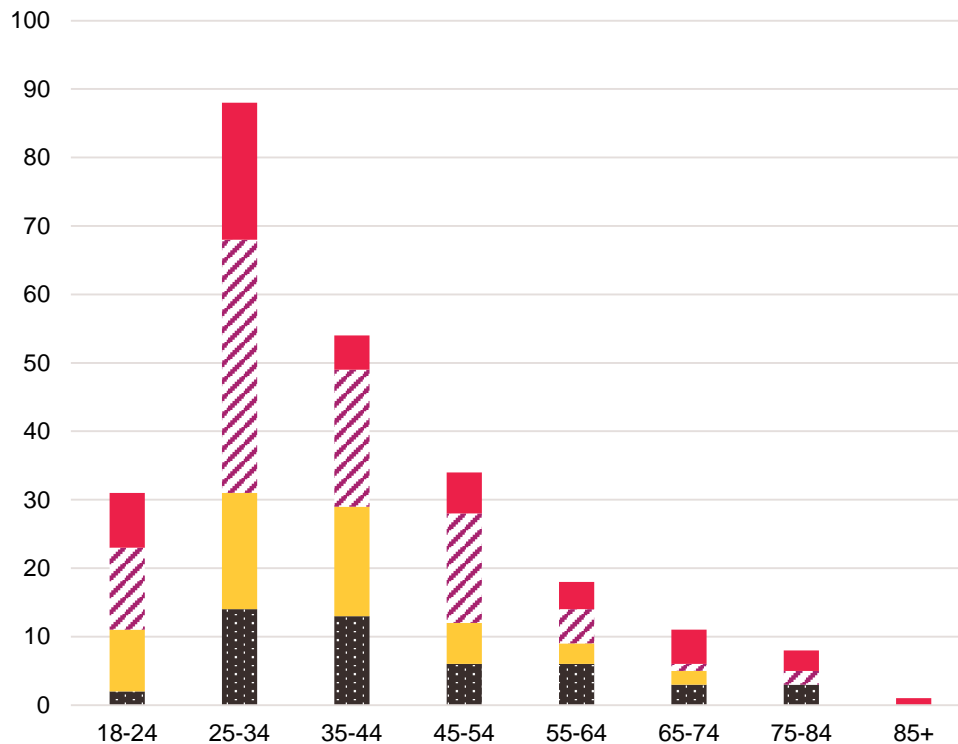


Figure 39 The count of DA codes recorded by GPs in Herefordshire by age band

As can be seen in Figure 40, 89% of recorded DA codes were for female patients, which is a much higher proportion than would be expected based on CSEW prevalence rates. This may be due to the fact that GPs use the Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) system to identify victims of DA, and this system only considers women as victims, there is no acknowledgment of the potential for men to be victims of DA. A recent paper (Szilassy et al., 2021) highlighted this as an issue which meant that men and children were not being identified as victims of DA when they should be, and that GPs have not had the necessary training to identify male victims and don't know how to refer them on for additional support. This is of course a concerning situation and as suggested by Szilassy et al. (2021) this should be rectified so that all victims of DA are identified and supported.

GPs are most likely to record a DA code for female patients

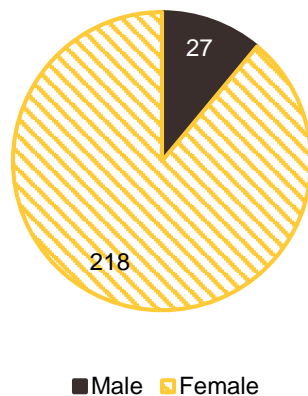


Figure 40 The count of DA codes recorded by GPs in Herefordshire by sex

Figure 41 shows how many DA codes were recorded per 1,000 registered patients by primary care network (PCN) in Herefordshire for 2020/21. The county is divided into 5 different PCNs: East Herefordshire, North West Herefordshire, South West Herefordshire and with Hereford Medical Group (HMG) and Wargrave, Belmont and Cantilupe (WBC) covering the city of Hereford. The data shows that WBC recorded many more DA codes than any other PCN, so it may be helpful to investigate further as to why this is the case and whether learning could be shared with the other PCNs to help them identify more potential victims.

WBC recorded the most DA codes in total and per 1,000 registered patients in 2020/21



Figure 41 The count of DA codes recorded by GPs in Herefordshire by PCN

Limitations

This needs assessment focuses on the current demand on numerous DA services within Herefordshire and the expected prevalence of DA in the county, but does not consider the importance of prevention. It would be advantageous for future reports to consider what work is currently being done around the prevention of DA, especially the DRIVE programme, and if this could be improved.

Family courts can play a large part in DA situations and a recent report from the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (Senker & Scott, 2020) highlighted that many victims will not report DA to the police, but will pursue civil proceedings, for example for divorce or custody. The same report also describes that the family courts were unanimously viewed as traumatic. As family courts are a key part of understanding the DA situation in Herefordshire, it is recommended that any future needs assessment includes information from the family courts.

This report is based on statistical data provided by partners, but may benefit from an additional qualitative approach which could take into account the views of victims and professionals.

Appendices

Appendix A

Table 2 Outcome of offences recorded by West Mercia Police in Herefordshire

Offence Outcome	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Grand Total
Named Suspect identified: evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim does not support (or has withdrawn support from) police action	737	1084	1364	1379	4564
Named Suspect identified: victim supports police action but evidential difficulties prevent further action	268	304	329	336	1237
Charge/summons	202	144	143	94	583
Charge/Summons - alternate offence	50	65	56	51	222
Caution - adults	38	50	46	42	176

Offence Outcome	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Grand Total
Evidential Difficulties Victim Based – Named suspect not identified: The crime is confirmed but the victim either declines/ or is unable to support further police investigation to identify the offender.	29	44	49	54	176
(blank)	5	2	9	121	137
Prosecution time limit expired: Suspect identified but prosecution time limit has expired.	6	40	28	25	99
Transferred to external agency	16	20	44	4	84
Investigation Complete: No suspect identified. Crime investigated as far as reasonably possible –Case closed pending further investigative opportunities becoming available	16	17	17	13	63
Caution - Adult - alternate offence	5	13	11	14	43
Prosecution prevented – Named suspect identified but is too ill (physical or mental health) to prosecute	3	15	6	13	37
Further investigation, resulting from the crime report, which could provide evidence sufficient to support formal action being taken against the suspect is not in the public interest – police decision.	18	3	2	1	24

Offence Outcome	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Grand Total
Diversory, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action.		1	14	8	23
Prosecution not in the public interest (CPS) (all offences)	3	7	3	2	15
Formal action against the offender is not in the public interest (Police)	10	3			13
Caution - youths	4	1	2	2	9
Community Resolution	5	2	1	1	9
Prosecution prevented – Named suspect identified but victim or key witness is dead or too ill to give evidence		3	2	4	9
Caution - Youth - alternate offence		2		1	3
Prosecution prevented – Named suspect identified but is below the age of criminal responsibility	1	2			3
The Offender has Died (all offences)				2	2
Penalty Notice for Disorder				1	1

Appendix B

Table 3 Count of DA codes recorded by Herefordshire GPs

Code Term	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Advice about domestic abuse	1	0	2	0	3
Advice about domestic violence	2	2	1	0	5
DASH (Dom Abuse Stalking Harassment HBV) 2009 Risk Checklist	0	6	0	0	6
DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment and Honour Based Violence) 2009 Risk Checklist	0	0	8	22	30
Domestic abuse	0	1	12	2	15
Domestic abuse of adult	0	0	3	0	3
Domestic abuse victim in household	4	0	0	0	4
History of domestic abuse	3	7	12	1	23
History of domestic emotional abuse	1	1	1	0	3
History of domestic sexual abuse	1	0	0		1
History of domestic violence	10	10	11	3	34
Routine enquiry about domestic abuse	1	4	7	7	19
Routine enquiry about domestic abuse declined		0	1	0	1
Routine enquiry about domestic abuse not made	1	0	0	0	1
Victim of domestic abuse	23	22	35	17	97

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Appendix 3

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

Please read EIA guidelines when completing this form

1. Name of Service Area/Directorate

Name of Head of Service for area being assessed: **Ewen Archibald, Corporate Director**

Community Wellbeing

Directorate: **Community Wellbeing**

Individual(s) completing this assessment: **Hannah McSherry**

Date assessment completed: **02.04.2022**

2. What is being assessed

Activity being assessed (eg. policy, procedure, document, service redesign, strategy etc.)

Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024

What is the aim, purpose and/or intended outcomes of this activity?

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a range of new duties on Local Authorities including:

- a) Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, which will be consulted in the implementation of the new Act.
- b) Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their area for all victims or their children, including those who come from outside the area.
- c) Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover the local authority locality, having regard to the needs assessment.
- d) Give effect to the strategy (through commissioning or de-commissioning decisions) including the provision of safe accommodation.
- e) Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy, reviewing it every three years.

Herefordshire Council carried out a domestic abuse needs assessment in 2021 and have used the information captured in the needs assessment to update the Domestic Abuse strategy in line with the guidance issued alongside the 2021 Act. The strategy reviews activities undertaken though the previous Domestic Abuse Strategy and outlines the activities that will be taken forward to prevent and tackle domestic abuse in Herefordshire during the lifetime of the updated strategy.

Name of lead for activity

Ewen Archibald

Who will be affected by the development and implementation of this activity?

- ☒ Service users
- ☐ Patients
- ☒ Carers
- ☐ Visitors
- ☒ Staff
- ☒ Communities

☐ Other:

Is this:

- ☒ Review of an existing activity/policy
- ☐ New activity/policy
- ☐ Planning to withdraw or reduce a service, activity or presence?

What information and evidence have you reviewed to help inform this assessment? (name your sources, eg. demographic information for services/staff groups affected, complaints etc.)

A full needs assessment of domestic abuse has been undertaken using a range of data sources across local support providers and stakeholders as well as sub regional, regional and national data, this was completed in 2021.

Summary of engagement or consultation undertaken (eg. who and how have you engaged with, or why do you believe this is not required)

An online stakeholder consultation was carried out during December 2021. This was followed up with a stakeholder workshop in March 2022. West Mercia Women's Aid were commissioned to carry out a more detailed consultation process with service users and people with lived experience of domestic abuse during March 2022. Feedback from the consultation process has been used to update the strategy.

Summary of relevant findings

Feedback has been received about the new definition of domestic abuse, which the 2021 Act has specified. Commissioners are keen to ensure that council commissioned services are accessible to people with protected characteristics / in hard to reach groups and have worked to engage with these groups via West Mercia Women's Aid to better understand the barriers to accessing services. Feedback from people with lived experience of domestic abuse will help inform future service delivery.

3. The impact of this activity

Please consider the potential impact of this activity (during development and implementation) on each of the equality groups outlined below. **Please tick one or more impact box below for each Equality Group and explain your rationale.**

Please note it is possible for the potential impact to be both positive and negative within the same equality group and this should be recorded. Remember to consider the impact on staff, public, patients, carers, partner organisations, etc. in these equality groups.

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
Age	✓			The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 asks local authorities to have particular regard to victims and their children with relevant protected characteristics as per the Equality Act 2010 and states that they must be able to access the support that they need.
Disability	✓			
Gender Reassignment	✓			
Marriage & Civil Partnerships	✓			Under this duty, local authorities must ensure the appropriate and adequate support within safe accommodation that meet the needs of all victims including those with relevant protected characteristics, additional and / or multiple complex needs and who's support needs may
Pregnancy & Maternity	✓			

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
Race (including Travelling Communities and people of other nationalities)	✓			<p>not be able to be met within non-specialist domestic abuse safe accommodation.</p> <p>This duty is reflected in the councils updated Domestic Abuse Strategy and should result in a potential positive impact on all of the groups listed.</p>
Religion & Belief	✓			
Sex (including issues of safety and sexual violence)	✓			
Sexual Orientation	✓			
Other Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Groups (eg. carers, care leavers, homeless, social/ economic deprivation, etc)	✓			
Health Inequalities (any preventable, unfair & unjust differences in health status between groups, populations or individuals that arise from the unequal distribution of social, environmental & economic conditions within societies)	✓			

What actions will you take to mitigate any potential negative impacts?

Potential negative impact	Actions required to reduce/ eliminate negative impact	Who will lead on action?	Timeframe
N/A			

Where an impact on any of the Equality Groups is realised after the implementation of the project/service/policy, the commissioners and/or providers of the project/service/policy will seek to minimise the impact and carry out a full review of this EIA.

4. Monitoring and review

How will you monitor these actions?

Needs assessments are an important precursor to developing local strategies. A full needs assessment should be conducted at a minimum every 3 years, with a refresh being undertaken on an annual basis to ensure any change in demand or support requirements are adequately captured. This will be used to inform the strategy and resulting actions. The strategy will be implemented by the Local Partnership Board, a multi-agency partnership. The council will be required to report to the Government annually.

When will you review this EIA? (eg in a service redesign, this EIA should be revisited regularly throughout the design & implementation)

The EIA will be reviewed at least every 3 years at the same time as the strategy is updated.

5. Equality Statement

- All public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to set out arrangements to assess and consult on how their policies and functions impact on the 9 protected characteristics.
- Herefordshire Council will challenge discrimination, promote equality, respect human rights, and design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, and population, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.
- All staff are expected to deliver services and provide services and care in a manner which respects the individuality of service users, patients, carers etc, and as such treat them and members of the workforce respectfully, paying due regard to the 9 protected characteristics.

Signature of person completing EIA

Hannah McSherry

Date signed

02.04.2022

Appendix 4

Scrutiny Committee Recommendations and Responses

Recommendation	Response
The report be checked for typographical errors, clarity and appropriate use of language including use of victim/survivor alongside strengths based approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report has been updated and checked for typos. Clarity of purpose has been strengthened. The term victim-survivor has been used throughout the document in line with the strength based approach, except where we have used information that has come from other sources that refers to survivors only e.g. the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
Greater emphasis be placed on specific issues relating to rurality.	The issue of rurality has been further emphasised in section 8.6 'Rural Communities'.
Links to talk community be improved within the Strategy for example drawing on existing networks and the benefits of holistic support packages and improved promotion of support within communities.	<p>This is an area of work that needs further development.</p> <p>The strategy now includes the following paragraph in section 8.6 'Rural Communities':</p> <p><i>Links to Talk Communities are being explored through this work in order to better understand how this network could be used to sign post and enhance the work of commissioned domestic abuse services.</i></p> <p>This area of work will be picked up in the Local Partnership Boards work plan for 2022/23.</p>
Social media and remote abuse be included within the definitions of abuse	Definitions added to glossary of terms.
The Strategy should start with the assumption that the victim of abuse should be able to stay in their own home, where this is possible.	<p>The following information has been added to section 4.3.</p> <p>The option for victim-survivors to stay in their own homes where it is safe and possible to do so should be explored. There is a sanctuary scheme in Herefordshire that supports this approach. A Sanctuary Scheme is a multi-agency victim/survivor centred initiative, which aims to enable households at risk of domestic abuse to remain in their own homes and reduce repeat victimisation through the provision of enhanced security measures (Sanctuary) and support¹.</p> <p>This approach is also included in section 6.2 Priority 2 – Provision:</p>

¹ [15 -wha-sanctuary-scheme.pdf \(dahalliance.org.uk\)](#)

	<p>Ensure that housing advice, emergency and other appropriate housing solutions are available to those experiencing domestic abuse, and where appropriate support those affected by domestic abuse and their children to remain in their homes safely.</p>
The collection, presentation and contextualisation of data in the report be reviewed and improved.	A summary has been included in a highlighted text box in section 5.
Work with educational settings be reviewed and strengthened.	<p>The following information is included in section 3.1 Priority 1 Prevention.</p> <p>Supporting young people to recognise and understand harm of domestic abuse – The council and the Police and Crime Commissioner commission West Mercia Women's Aid to provide information, advice, tools and support to education professionals. Training for children and family workers within the council's Early Help team has been delivered. Operation Encompass ensures information about domestic abuse involving children is shared in a timely way with schools.</p> <p>This section is focused on progress made against the previous strategy, but operation encompass continues to ensure that schools are made aware of information about domestic abuse involving children in their care.</p> <p>Looking forward the theme of prevention and education is picked up under sections 6.1 Priority 1 Prevention, 6.2 Priority 2 – Provision and 6.3 Priority 3 - Partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an environment throughout universal services and others that supports early disclosure of domestic abuse by those affected and provides a high quality and consistent initial response. • Support young people, children and families to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and understand the harm it causes as well as the positive impact of disclosing abuse. • Ensure that front line staff (for example, staff who work in primary care, emergency department, children's centres, schools, children's social care, adult social care, fire service); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) have a good understanding of domestic abuse; ii) are professionally curious in their investigation of underlying causes of a person's current circumstances

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii) have awareness and understanding of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and how the measures impact on their roles and responsibilities iv) see it as their role and responsibility to reduce the harm of domestic abuse; and v) understand the tools/resources available to them to do so.
Approaches to rehabilitation of perpetrators be considered	<p>Information about locally delivered perpetrator programmes has been included in section 3.4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive Herefordshire and Worcestershire (for high risk perpetrators) mobilised in February 2021. Drive is an evidence-based and evaluated programme which has delivered encouraging results in other areas. More information about the Drive programme can be found here. • The Men & Masculinities programme is a programme that provides a safe space for people who have engaged in abusive, harmful and damaging behaviour within their relationships. The programme explores what it means to display appropriate behaviour within relationships and highlights how conflict, aggression and anger can deeply impact the lives of others. More about this programme can be found here.



Title of report: Quarter 4 Budget & Performance Report

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 26 May 2022

Report by: Cabinet member finance, corporate services and planning;

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To review performance for Quarter 4 2021/22 and the final budget outturn for the year.

To provide assurance that progress has been made towards delivery of the agreed revenue budget and service delivery targets, and that the reasons for major variances or potential under-performance are understood and are being addressed to the cabinet's satisfaction.

The final 2021/22 outturn shows a net underspend of £461k.

The proportion of performance measures showing an improvement, or remaining the same compared to the same period last year is 74%. At the end of the quarter, 74% of actions from the delivery plan are identified as complete or are progressing within planned timescales.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **Cabinet review performance and financial forecast for year 2021/22, as set out in the appendices A-F, and identifies any additional actions to be considered to achieve future improvements.**

Alternative options

1. Cabinet may choose to review financial, delivery and operational performance more or less frequently; or request alternative actions to address any identified areas of under-performance, including referral to the relevant scrutiny committee.

Key considerations

Revenue Budget

2. The 2021/22 outturn is £4,248k overspend before the allocation of the COVID-19 grant. The net underspend is £541k.
3. The table below sets out the cabinet portfolio position at the end of March. Further service detail is available in Appendix A.

Revenue Summary

Portfolio	Councillor	Gross Budget	Working Budget	Outturn	Variance	COVID Grant Allocation	Variance including the Grant
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Health & Adult Wellbeing	Cllr Crockett	103,567	61,996	56,187	(5,809)	1,100	(6,909)
Children's and Family Services, and Young People's Attainment	Cllr Toynbee	48,818	40,237	44,761	4,524	1,000	3,524
Commissioning, Procurement and assets	Cllr Davies	23,008	16,845	19,062	2,217	1,200	1,017
Environment and Economy	Cllr Chowns	3,372	1,488	1,639	151	0	151
Housing, Regulatory Services and Community Safety	Cllr Tyler	4,024	524	728	204	500	(296)
Infrastructure and Transport	Cllr Harrington	20,768	10,091	11,440	1,349	90	1,259
Finance, Corporate Services and Planning	Cllr Harvey	26,299	21,918	24,551	2,633	26	2,607
Corporate strategy and budget	Cllr Hitchiner	1,383	449	529	80	873	(793)
Portfolios		231,239	153,548	158,897	5,349	4,789	560
Central, treasury management, capital financing & reserves		19,883	7,448	6,347	(1,101)	0	(1,101)
Total Revenue		251,122	160,996	165,244	4,248	4,789	(541)

4. The forecast underspend in Health and Adult Wellbeing reflects a combination of savings achieved to date, some of which are non-recurrent, reductions in the number of care packages, mostly within homecare and also the impact of the discharge to assess process resulting in a proportion of client expenditure being funded via that process. There are also underspends in Commissioning and Operational Service Delivery due to continued vacancies within Homefirst and some of the operational teams. The overspend in Children's and Family services and young people's attainment is due to cost of placements continues to cause pressure.
5. The overspend in the remaining portfolios reflects pressure on income targets as a result of covid restrictions, and savings targets that have not been achievable in year. This has been offset by vacancies.
6. The central, treasury management, capital financing and reserves underspend is detailed in Appendix C and reflects the delayed need to borrow from a combination of high cash balances and slippage in capital investment spend, detailed in Appendix B.

Capital Budget

7. The original £97.870m capital budget for 2021/22 has been revised to £69.097m, the summary breakdown is shown in the table below, but this consists of £33.296m 2020/21 carry forwards of unspent budget, use of reserves of £0.056m and additional grants of £7.311m. Details of the

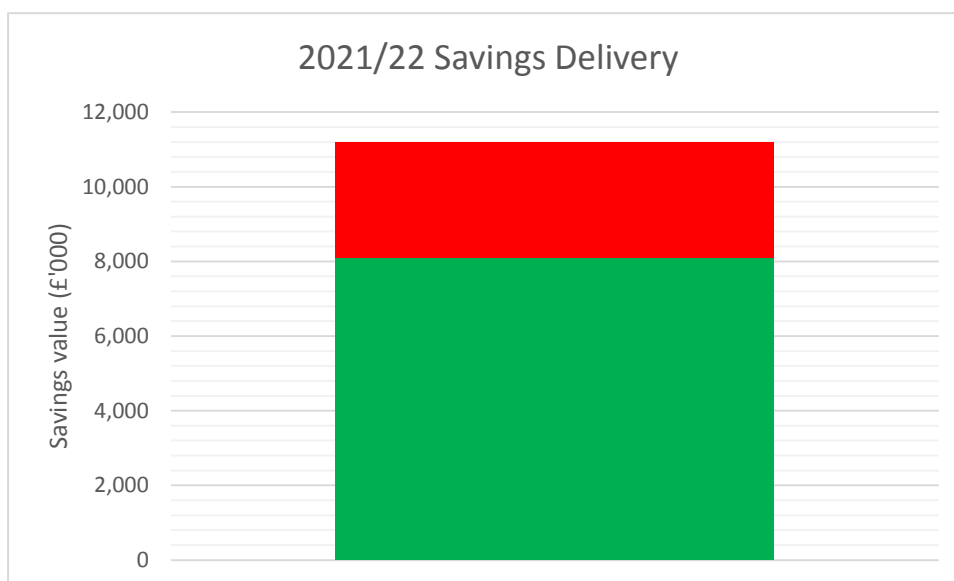
exercise to re-profile project budgets that took place in quarter 2 are in Appendix B Table B, which saw a reduction of £69.436m.

8. The final forecast spend position is £37.607m, which is an underspend of £31.490m on the current 2021/22 budget of £69.097m. Full details for each project are in Appendix B Table A. This underspend consists of £4.793m projects that have delivered below the project budget and projects that may no longer be required such as the car park fire suppression system. The remaining £26.697m are budgets that may not be committed in this financial year but have been rolled forward to 2022/23 as they are funded by grants or land may not be acquired in this financial year for housing but the budgets need to be retained for those projects. The full capital programme budget for this and all future years can be seen in detail by project in Appendix B Table C.

	2021/22 Budget £000s	2022/23 Budget £000s	2023/24 Budget £000s	2024/25 Budget £000s	Total
February 2021 Council Approved Budget	97,870	66,634	21,179	10	185,693
Reprofile Budget	-69,436	6,440	41,861	21,135	0
20/21 Carry Forwards	33,296	-	-	-	33,296
Use of Reserve	56	-	-	-	56
Additional Grants	7,311	17,964	18,661	18,661	62,597
Revised Capital Budget	69,097	91,038	81,701	39,806	281,643

Savings

9. The graph below shows the final delivery of savings for 2021/22. As can be seen from the graph, 72% of savings are identified as green; the remaining savings have been identified as red.



Section 106 portfolio

10. The council's approach to Section 106 is set out in its Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and is designed to meet the relevant objectives of the Core Strategy and the other relevant strategies to support the significant increase in population and employment.

11. Cabinet took a decision on 25 November 2021 which approved the procurement route and implementation of new delivery proposals and processes and expenditure of up to £9.3m of Section 106 monies, including resources required, to deliver Section 106 schemes.
12. In order to assist with the development and delivery of the Section 106 Works Programmes, two temporary Section 106 Senior Project Managers have been recruited to focus on the delivery of Section 106 monies.
13. Section 106 data is currently being cleansed and validated and is due for completion by the end of May 2022. During this process the Section 106 Project Management Office Team will continue to deal with any critical issues as they are identified.
14. Section 106 process maps, where available, are also being reviewed and new draft processes are being developed for all gain types, to enable a robust delivery process is in place. These will be reviewed with the planning and service areas and then issued to the S106 Portfolio Sponsor in June 2022 for approval.
15. Currently there are 224 Section 106 contributions covering 14 gain types. The Section 106 Project Management Office Team is focused on addressing any expired /expiring Section 106 agreements as a priority and then delivering the 189 agreements covering the following gain types; Highways, Education, Sports, Off-site play and Open spaces. The team are also in the process of working with internal stakeholders to reconcile information, finance and data with a view to providing delivery programmes in July 2022. Where appropriate, projects will be consolidated by requirement and procured via the appropriate framework to ensure value for money.
16. A further decision by Cabinet will also be required to outline the council's Section 106 policy and procedure for future Section 106 monies, to ensure future spend is complete in a timely and efficient manner.

Performance: Economy

17. Of the 19 activities of the delivery plan, 4 have been completed (blue), 13 are on track (green), 1 is at risk (amber) and 1 is compromised (red); this position is an improvement to that reported at the end of December 2021.
18. All measures have shown an improvement on the same point last year where comparison can be made. Two-thirds of reported performance measures within the theme have met, or exceeded targets – there remains some work within the directorates to ensure all measures have targets established.
19. Market Town Investment Plans (MTIPs) for each of the five market towns have been agreed by Cabinet. Plans for Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury, Bromyard and Kington identify the longer term vision for the growth, sustainable economic development of the towns and ultimately to increase the amount of inward investment to each town. These have been produced based on extensive local engagement, as well as the current economic analysis of each town. The plans identify a number of potential projects for each town as well as the possible sources of income which could support their development. The council will now be looking to work with local partners to take forward projects identified, and seeking opportunities to finance these, including as part of the council's capital programme.

20. The Town Investment Plan scheme at Maylord Orchards has progressed and the decision has been made to procure support for the detailed design of the library and learning resource centre. Similarly, the decision to contract for a design team capable of delivering the detailed designs for Hereford Museum and Art Gallery was also taken. These decisions will both develop the plans necessary to develop the full business case for submission by June 2022.
21. The COVID recovery plan has delivered economic, social and health benefits across the county. Following the passport of more than £58m to Herefordshire businesses in grants throughout the pandemic, the county has also delivered a number of initiatives as part of the recovery plan. These include grants of more than £230k to businesses to promote business start-ups and rent at vacant units, a marketing campaign to promote Herefordshire as a fantastic “staycation” destination which has reached more than 52 million people.
22. The council has supported more than 108,000 free bus journeys to incentivise people to visit towns and attractions across the county, allowing them to leave the car behind. Car clubs pools have also been supported in Leominster, Fownhope, Kington and Belmont.
23. The council also completed the delivery of a “Love Going Out Locally” pre-paid card as part of the recovery plan. This offered a pre-paid card of £15 to each household in Herefordshire, with money to be spent in Herefordshire shops and businesses – this card was topped up with an additional £10 in quarter 4. The scheme was successful in issuing more than 60,000 cards and resulted in more than £1 million spent in more than 1850 local businesses. The council has also supported local businesses with a marketing campaign to support local businesses, products and services. Further investment through a Great Places to Visit project has invested £450k to revitalise market town places through greening of market town centres, grants for shop front enhancements, infrastructure for events and improvements for public rights of way/cycling routes.
24. At the end of the final quarter, 93.9% of premises in Herefordshire can access superfast broadband speeds of 30Mbps or above (based on independent figures from [thinkbroadband](#)). This has been slow progress this year as the remainder of the programme is based on coverage to the hardest to reach premises because of limited existing infrastructure and in reaching sparse rural areas with a fibre network. There were also two impacts to the project during the year – a supplier of Gigaclear ceased trading with a new provider having to be mobilised; and secondly, Gigaclear pulling out of delivery in south of the county due to costs. Whilst contracted delivery continues in the north of the county the future programme will be a combination of bespoke local schemes to support businesses, communities and households (as agreed on [18 November 2021](#)) with the implementation of the new [Project Gigabit](#) programme launched by national government.

Performance: Environment

25. Of the 16 activities of the delivery plan, 1 is complete (blue), 8 are on track (green), 4 are at risk (amber), and 3 are compromised (red); this position is an improvement on that reported at the end of December 2021.
26. Seventy-one percent of reported performance measures within the theme have met, or exceeded targets – there remains some work in directorates to ensure all measures have targets established. Ninety-one percent of measures have shown an improvement on the same point last year where comparison can be made.

27. A set of recommendations as to how Herefordshire should meet the challenges of climate change was made following the completion of a citizens' assembly. The assembly sought the views of a group of county residents who were carefully selected to represent the county's demography. After 30 hours of engagement, hearing the views of a number of experts in climate change, a series of recommendations were made (found [here](#)) which have been taken forward by the cabinet and form part of the 2022/23 delivery plan. A wide range of recommendations were made, including sustainable food options, active travel measures, improved access to support and information for local businesses and residents. This was subject to a further decision in cabinet in April (found [here](#)).
28. The Hereford Transport Review continues through the city master planning work. A delivery director has been appointed to lead the development of this work and an engineering firm has been appointed through the Midlands Highways Alliance Framework to progress the review of the eastern river crossing. In addition, active travel measures on quiet routes at Holme Lacy Road and the Hereford Enterprise Zone has recently progressed to design work and is on track to commence construction in 2022/23.
29. To support the reduction of phosphate levels in the county's rivers, the first site has been purchased and planning consent granted for the development of a wetlands site. Initial works have been completed on site and detailed designs are being peer reviewed to ensure robustness and effectiveness of the design, prior to further cabinet ratification and the next stages of construction. In addition, a second site has been purchased with design underway and a third site has been identified for procurement. These sites will filter the river water and reduce the amount of phosphates, with the aspiration of reducing the levels to enable the moratorium on development to be eased.
30. In order to update and re-develop the core strategy for the council, significant work has gone in to developing the housing land availability assessment (due for completion in June 2022), special options consultation has been completed, retail and town centre study, employment land study and playing pitch and sports facilities studies have all been commissioned. A draft gypsy and traveller accommodation assessment has been complete and a transport scoping report and natural environment evidence brief is currently out for tender.

Performance: Community

31. Of the 27 activities of the delivery plan, 9 have been completed (blue), 11 are on track (green), and 7 are at risk (amber). This is an improved position to that reported at the end of December 2021.
32. Seventy-five percent of reported performance measures within the theme have met, or exceeded targets, which represents an improvement on the previous quarter end position – there remains some work to ensure all measures have targets established. Sixty-four percent of measures have shown an improvement on the same point last year where comparison can be made – this is a small decline on the end of quarter 3 position.
33. Childrens social care continues its improvement journey, with the Improvement Board meeting regularly. In March 2022, Cabinet agreed investment of £11.49 million in support of the improvements of children's social care. Specifically, the priority action areas will be; to address caseloads across the directorate, more frequent and improved supervision and management decision making, and consistently improved practice. One of the major challenges to the directorate remains recruitment and retention of social workers, a significant amount of the additional investment is due to focussed on staff, but there is a national shortage of qualified social workers meaning that many authorities are struggling in this area.

34. To continue to focus on improvement in childrens social care, a second iteration of the Childrens Improvement Plan is currently being drafted. A draft is currently being consulted on within the directorate; with a focus on embedding the changes to practice and culture that have started in 2021/22.
35. Additional demand driven by national media interest on high profile cases and potential pandemic driven demand, as well as previous inconsistencies with the application of thresholds are resulting in increasing levels of demand for the service. Following this analysis and insight from case file audits, the directorate have changed the approach at the front door and introduced a number of additional assessment teams; the service used to only have 3 teams, but this is temporarily increased to 7. These teams are focussed on resolving the backlog of assessments which are due for completion and helping to reduce the average caseload of the assessment, which was previously as high as 30 cases per worker but currently around 23. Getting the front door of the service is an important development, as this will mean that the service is engaged with the right children and maximising their capacity.
36. Close financial management of the Community Wellbeing directorate throughout the year has resulted in savings being achieved, as well as a significant underspend of the annual revenue budget. The directorate are planning on investing a small amount of this underspend on additional locum resourcing to focus on annual reviews for clients, which has not delivered as expected during the year, at 53%, to ensure that packages of care meet clients current demands.
37. Analysis of the adult social care pathway has demonstrated that there has been a significant increase in demand for placements in domiciliary care; this is partly due to changed discharge routes following hospital admissions for self-funders, the Brokerage team is currently seeing about 3 times the number of placement requests. In order to meet this increased demand and keep the adult social care pathway flowing, the Community Wellbeing directorate are exploring ways of supporting this demand, including the possibility of further boosting the domiciliary care market by working with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) over and above the already planned annual uplifts.
38. Talk Community has continued to deliver a range of activities to support communities within Herefordshire to support their residents and maintain their collective independence. The Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) has continued to provide opportunities for more than 2700 school children in the county during school holidays and has also sought feedback from those using the activities, and their families, on living in the county; more than 1000 people's opinions were gathered services will use these to further develop their approaches for working with communities. In addition, funding for the next 3 years has been confirmed, which means the HAF scheme will continue to provide activities throughout school holidays.
39. The target of 50 community hubs has been achieved and exceeded, with 54 hubs operational at the end of March 2022. This work will be continued during 2022/23, with the intention of further expanding the network to more than 75 hubs, as well as a new approach to two integrated service hubs.
40. There has also been good progress on strengthening the mental health and wellbeing of communities, supported by the COVID recovery plan (details in Appendix F). A mental health toolkit has been launched this year, Qwell, which is an online platform – during March 2022, more than 160 people logged in to the system, and further work is being done to seek further roll-out and engagement. In addition, 55 people in communities have been trained as Mental Health first-aiders, capable of supporting other residents in the community.

41. The council has brought back the Public Rights of Way and Traffic Management services, into council management which had been delivered by BBLP. This decision was taken by Cabinet in order to support the transformation of the services and also to address a backlog of more than 120 schemes requiring assessment.

Performance: Corporate

42. Appendix F contains a set of measures of corporate performance, which have been selected as an indication of the overall health of the organisation. For measures which had baselines in 2020/21, 44% of measures were showing an improvement. Forty-four percent of measures which have targets set have met these targets. This position is a decline from the end of December 2021 position.
43. Sickness in the council is on an upward trend although absence is still below pre-pandemic rates. Benchmarking would suggest that the council has traditionally had lower than average sickness when compared to other local authorities, and the increase in absence is in line with other authorities. It is noticeable that the increases are across all directorates and the increasing trend is being investigated in order to fully understand the reason for the increase.
44. The performance report shows 49% completion on mandatory training, but for clarity the new modules were introduced at the start of the calendar year. For the financial year the following results were achieved in the training subjects:

Mandatory Training subject	Complete by workforce
Information Governance	92%
Information Security	91%
Prevent	92%
Code of Conduct	93%

45. The council continues to experience difficulties in recruiting across all roles and service areas and turnover in the council has increased to 14.82% from 9.57% this time last year. This reflects the recent experience of other local authorities and is believed to be a consequence of the well reported national labour shortage. Where posts are being filled it is common for managers to have to advertise multiple times. In response the council is reviewing its candidate offer, introducing new recruitment software and benchmarking its terms and conditions to ensure it remains a competitive employer.
46. The council continues to manage Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulation requests within timescales, achieving over 96% percent through the course of the year, this is despite some internal challenges associated with staff changes, but also due to increasing demand. The service continues to benchmark its performance against other councils, and the council performance in this area continues to perform better than the English average. The same is also true of complaints, where more than 92% of complaints received in the year met our statutory timescales.
47. Between April 2021 and March 2022 the council dealt internally with 641 complaints, of which the council upheld or partially upheld 12%. In addition, 23 complaints were processed under the children's complaints procedure for children's social care.

48. In March 2022, full Council agreed to approve the amendments to the council's constitution recommended by audit and governance committee which drew extensively on the work of the Re-thinking Governance Working Group. Among the principal recommendations made was a reorganisation of scrutiny committee functions into 5 committees; introduction of a dedicated statutory scrutiny officer to lead a scrutiny improvement programme, including new mandatory scrutiny training for all members and new dedicated scrutiny web-pages for the council's web-site. On and following the Annual Meeting on 20 May 2022, Council will introduce a number of new procedures. These will include new processes for political group consultations, a new training programme on council decision making, a new look forward plan and a re-presentation of the council's constitution. In addition, members will be asked to consider recommendations from an independent remuneration panel as to whether the new Scrutiny Chair's should attract a Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA); if there should be remuneration offered to the post of deputy leader; if Task and Finish Group chairpersons should attract a one off SRA and proposals to create a sliding scale to the basic allowance linked to the amount of committees members take up positions on.
49. The revenue budget outturn for the year was an underspend of £541k. This is an improvement from the forecast at the end of the last quarter, and represents an improvement on 2020/21 outturn.
50. Our final capital budget outturn was 54% of the annual budget; this is a decline on the forecast position at the end of quarter 3, and for 2020/21.

Community impact

51. In accordance with the accepted code of corporate governance, the council must ensure that it has an effective performance management system that facilitates effective and efficient delivery of planned services. To support effective accountability the council is committed to reporting on actions completed and outcomes achieved, and ensuring stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the council plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner.
52. Regularly reviewing performance with a view to identifying actions which will further drive improvement in outcomes or efficiencies helps ensure the council achieves its County Plan priorities.

Environmental Impact

53. This report details how progress is being made in achieving the Delivery Plan; this document details how the council is working to deliver the environmental ambitions set out in the County Plan. Individual projects and deliverables included within the Delivery Plan will all be subject to their own governance arrangements and assessment of environmental and ecological impact.

Equality duty

54. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

55. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. Whilst this paper is not seeking any project specific decisions, in determining the council's budget allocation, the council is working towards its equality objectives. In addition, projects identified within the delivery plan, where relevant, will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure appropriate attention is given to our Equality Duty.

Resource implications

56. These recommendations have no direct financial implications, however cabinet may wish to consider how money is utilised in order to meet the council's objectives.

Legal implications

57. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk management

58. The risks associated with the council's business as recorded in the relevant service risk register and escalated in accordance with the council's Performance Management Framework and Risk Management Plan. The highest risks, i.e. those scoring 16 or more after controls, are escalated to the council's Corporate Risk Register. These risks can be found at Appendix F.

Consultees

59. None in relation to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A	Revenue Outturn
Appendix B	Capital Outturn
Appendix C	Treasury Management outturn
Appendix D	Debt Write Offs
Appendix E	Savings Outturn
Appendix F	Delivery Plan Dashboards

Background papers

None Identified

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	Sarah Buffrey, Democratic Services Officer	Date 16/05/2022
Finance	Louise Devlin	Date 13/05/2022
Legal	Alice McAlpine	Date 17/05/2022
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 18/05/2022
Equality Duty	Carol Trachonitis	Date 13/05/2022
Procurement	Mark Cage	Date 13/05/2022
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 18/05/2022
Approved by	Andrew Lovegrove	Date 18/05/2022

Appendix A: Revenue Budget Position 2021/22

Revenue Summary

Portfolio	Councillor	Gross Budget £000	Working Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000	COVID Grant Allocation £000	Variance including the Grant £000	December Outturn (Q3) £000
Health & Adult Wellbeing	Cllr Crockett	103,567	61,996	56,187	(5,809)	1,100	(6,909)	(4,383)
Children's and Family Services, and Young People's Attainment	Cllr Toynbee	48,818	40,237	44,761	4,524	1,000	3,524	2,003
Commissioning, Procurement and assets	Cllr Davies	23,008	16,845	19,062	2,217	1,200	1,017	1,216
Environment and Economy	Cllr Chowns	3,372	1,488	1,639	151	0	151	69
Housing, Regulatory Services and Community Safety	Cllr Tyler	4,024	524	728	204	500	(296)	173
Infrastructure and Transport	Cllr Harrington	20,768	10,091	11,440	1,349	90	1,259	1,455
Finance, Corporate Services and Planning	Cllr Harvey	26,299	21,918	24,551	2,633	26	2,607	1,554
Corporate strategy and budget	Cllr Hitchiner	1,383	449	529	80	873	(793)	(788)
Portfolios		231,239	153,548	158,897	5,349	4,789	560	1,299
Central, treasury management, capital financing & reserves		19,883	7,448	6,347	(1,101)	0	(1,101)	(400)
Total Revenue		251,122	160,996	165,244	4,248	4,789	(541)	899

Health & Adult Wellbeing: Cllr Crockett

	Gross Budget	Working Net Budget	Full Year Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Services for Vulnerable Adults (care provision)	69,305	54,248	51,791	(2,457)
Commissioning and Operational Service Delivery	22,744	5,901	2,549	(3,352)
Public Health	11,518	1,847	1,847	0
	103,567	61,996	56,187	(5,809)

The key outturn variances are:

Services for Vulnerable Adults (care provision) mainly reflects a combination of savings achieved, some of which are non-recurrent, reductions in the number of care packages, particularly homecare and also the impact of the discharge to assess funding process which has operated throughout 2021/22.

The full year underspend in Commissioning and Operational Service Delivery is due to the number continued vacancies within Homefirst as well as some of the operational teams and also reflects the receipt discharge to assess income of £2.6m received during 21/22.

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Non-recurrent element of the directorate final outturn position:

	£k
RCT legal case resolution	389
Backdated non-recurrent savings in addition to ongoing savings achieved (both CHC & Learning Disability)	1,528
PSP & CEV covid grant allocation to the Directorate	218
LD Day Care non-attendance gaps due to covid	268
Staffing underspends - Care Operations (incl Homefirst of £532k)	1,083
Non-recurrent element of the Community Wellbeing underspend	£3,486k

Children's and Family Services, and Young People's Attainment: Cllr Toynbee

	Gross Budget £000	Working Net Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000
Children and young people's education and attainment	5,617	2,138	2,099	(39)
Post 16 education, training and skills development	647	(49)	(49)	0
Services for vulnerable young people, children and families	42,554	38,148	42,711	4,563
	48,818	40,237	44,761	4,524

The key variances are:

Children and young people's education and attainment - savings arising from vacant posts

Services for vulnerable young people, children and families - 189k relating to 1.75% Backpay not budgeted and agency staff covering vacant posts. The cost of placements continues to cause pressure with a £274k increase in costs & CP Court costing increase by 124k.

Commissioning, Procurement and Assets: Cllr Davies

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	Gross Budget £000	Working Net Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000
Waste Collection & Disposal	15,965	14,007	13,974	(33)
Corporate Support Services	1,294	1,171	1,171	0
Community services: Leisure Services	30	30	31	1
Council Property Services	3,920	41	2,219	2,178
Cultural services	1,799	1,596	1,667	71
	23,008	16,845	19,062	2,217

The key variances are:

Council Property Services - £129k BBLP Council Property Services - £243k buildings maintenance and cleaning contract mobilisation costs partially offset by reduced pay costs due to vacancies. £129k BBLP refund for overpaid rent, £169k backdated business rates for Hereford library and increase in car park rates, £105k estimate for College Road Campus business rates for 20/21 and 21/22 loss of rent at Shire Hall and Churchill House £96k. £200k agreed spend on condition surveys. The remainder of the overspend relates to savings targets not being delivered in the current year. Further pressure on the subcontractors spend.

Environment and Economy: Cllr Chowns

	Gross Budget £000	Working Net Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000
Economic Development and Regeneration	1,625	386	383	(3)
Tourism	62	62	62	0
Broadband	339	202	202	0
Environmental promotion, protection and sustainability including response to climate emergency	1,346	838	992	154
	3,372	1,488	1,639	151

The key variances are:

Environmental promotion, protection and sustainability – actuarial strain on a fixed term contract ending and increased costs due to energy prices

Housing, regulatory services and community safety: Cllr Tyler

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	Gross Budget £000	Working Net Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000
Community Safety including the Community Safety Partnership	0	0	0	0
Animal health and welfare	140	10	36	26
Bereavement services including coroner services	352	(1,167)	(961)	206
CCTV	176	27	27	0
Environmental health and trading standards	1,578	1,436	1,308	(128)
Gypsy and Traveller Services	410	222	214	(8)
Licensing	25	(480)	(395)	85
Markets and Fairs	121	(136)	(58)	78
Registration Services	220	(230)	(300)	(70)
Strategic housing, homelessness, housing allocation and condition	361	276	260	(16)
Communications and Web Presence	641	566	597	31
	4,024	524	728	204

The key variances are:

Bereavement services – lower than expected activity at the crematorium has caused pressure on income budgets although some improvement shown in the last quarter
 Environmental health and trading standards - receipt of grant income has improved the final position
 Markets and Fairs - impact of COVID restrictions on income from market stall rental and cancellation of the May fair
 Registration Services - higher than expected income in final quarter
 Communications and Web Presence - Posts funded by adults and waste that weren't included in forecast

Infrastructure and Transport: Cllr Harrington

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	Gross Budget	Working Net Budget	Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Building Control	364	(256)	(232)	24
Car parking policy and services	334	(5,125)	(3,862)	1,263
Highways & community services	571	182	101	(81)
Land drainage, flood alleviation, rivers and waterways	200	0	(2)	(2)
Land use strategies including Core Strategy	1,094	658	650	(8)
Traffic Management	256	256	232	(24)
Transport and highways policy strategy and operations	17,949	14,376	14,553	177
	20,768	10,091	11,440	1,349

The key variances are:

Car parking and policy services - impact of lockdown and COVID on parking income and savings achievement, £225k costs of interim management posts

Highways & community services/Transport and highways policy strategy and operations - costs for transport strategy and contract management consultants, some of these have been capitalised due to works undertaken. Winter maintenance costs lower than forecast

Finance, Corporate Services and Planning: Cllr Harvey

	Gross Budget	Working Net Budget	Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Planning and conservation	2,867	(273)	392	665
Council ICT services	3,725	3,171	3,215	44
Human Resources	1,571	1,207	1,139	(68)
Equality and Human Rights	237	87	84	(3)
Land Charges	198	(17)	(53)	(36)
Information Governance and Modern Records	389	351	349	(2)
Health and safety, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity	160	160	171	11
Performance and Intelligence	1,708	1,708	2,374	666
Legal and Democratic Services including Member Development and Training	7,090	7,121	7,539	418
Financial Policy, Fees and Charging Policy, Financial Control and Reporting	8,354	8,403	9,341	938
	26,299	21,918	24,551	2,633

The key variances are:

Planning income is below budget, Legal & Governance - Increase in Agency costs and permanent legal staff, Finance - Increase in consultancy costs for climate change, savings not achieved, costs of agency staff, Performance and Intelligence – increase in staff costs. Cost of pay award not included in previous forecasts

Corporate Strategy: Cllr Hitchiner

	Gross Budget £000	Working Net Budget £000	Outturn £000	Variance £000
Corporate budget	1,383	449	529	80
	1,383	449	529	80

Appendix B

Table A - 2021/22 Capital Budget Outturn Position

*Adjustments include reprofiling to future years and additional grants allocations	2021/22				
	2021/22 Budgets £000s	Adjustments in Year* £000s	Budget £000s	Actual Spend £000s	Variance £000s
Disabled facilities grant	1,853	685	2,538	1,248	-1,289
Hillside	0	1,841	1,841	30	-1,811
Care home & Extra Care Development	669	-669	0	0	0
Super Hubs	1800	-1,800	0	0	0
Homelessness Hub & Property Investment	0	44	44	44	0
Empty Property Investment & Development	752	58	810	584	-226
Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme	0	0	0	280	280
Gypsy & Traveller Pitch development	739	-131	608	61	-547
Strategic Housing Development	10,000	-8,326	1,674	132	-1,541
Private sector housing improvements	0	51	51	23	-28
Total Housing Delivery Board	15,813	-8,248	7,565	2,403	-5,162
Fastershire Broadband	6,707	552	7,259	697	-6,561
PC Replacement	397	-48	349	599	251
Electronic Document Management Storage	0	356	356	188	-168
Capital Development Fund	1,000	-750	250	0	-250
Technology Enabled Communities	500	-38	462	0	-462
Better Ways of Working	0	260	260	145	-115
Total Corporate & Digital Delivery Board	8,604	331	8,935	1,629	-7,306
Colwall Primary School	0	66	66	5	-62
Schools Capital Maintenance Grant	1,195	1,215	2,410	406	-2,004
Peterchurch Area School Investment	7,353	-7,053	300	218	-82
Expansion for Marlbrook school	1,600	-1,101	499	203	-296
Brookfield School Improvements	3195	-2,912	283	79	-204
High Needs Grant	0	648	648	0	-648
C & F's S106	300	254	554	436	-118
Healthy Pupils	0	8	8	8	0
Short Breaks Capital	0	99	99	11	-88
Basic Needs Funding	5700	-3,620	2,080	2,017	-63
Preliminary works to inform key investment need	0	481	481	165	-316
School Accessibility Works	240	0	240	99	-141
Property Estate Enhancement Works	0	110	110	1	-109
Leisure Centres	0	147	147	77	-70
Leisure Pool	0	244	244	192	-52
Estates Capital Programme 2019/22	2,722	1,113	3,835	1,334	-2,501
Car Parking Strategy	0	95	95	54	-42
Upgrade of Hereford West Side CCTV Cameras	0	27	27	0	-27
Upgrade of Herefordshire CCTV	0	28	28	2	-26
Grange Court Loan	359	0	359	0	-359

Hereford Library	0	203	203	3	-200
Temporary school accommodation replacement	150	300	450	0	-450
Total Schools & Corporate Property Delivery Board	22,814	-9,646	13,168	5,309	-7,859
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	12,272	3,194	15,466	15,466	0
Pothole & Challenge Fund 20/21	0	2,363	2,363	2,296	-67
Priority Flood Repair Works	0	853	853	254	-598
E & P's S106	750	34	784	359	-425
Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance & Biodiversity Net Gain	2,299	-930	1,369	17	-1,352
Investment in Infrastructure Assets	0	1,057	1,057	930	-126
Highway asset management	1,000	868	1,868	1,825	-44
Total Highways Maintenance Delivery Board	16,321	7,438	23,759	21,147	-2,612
Integrated Wetlands	800	-25	775	625	-150
Marches Renewable Energy Grant	120	141	261	232	-29
Solar Photovoltaic Panels	1,286	-936	350	57	-293
SEPubU Grant	0	101	101	0	-101
Warm Homes Fund	0	469	469	89	-381
Schools Transport Route Planning	15	1	16	15	-1
Air Quality Monitoring Station Resource Improvements	140	52	192	0	-192
Green Homes Grant - Local Authority Delivery	0	1,820	1,820	29	-1,791
Sustainable Landscape Sustainable Places	0	31	31	31	0
Total Environment & Sustainability Delivery Board	2,361	1,655	4,016	1,079	-2,937
Hereford Enterprise Zone	1,965	371	2,336	979	-1,357
Hereford Enterprise Zone - Further funded dev	0	135	135	135	0
Hereford Enterprise Zone - Infrastructure Works	0	675	675	675	0
Herefordshire Enterprise Zone Shell Store	0	393	393	115	-278
Marches Business Investment Programme	893	358	1,250	1,184	-67
Employment Land & Incubation Space in Market Towns	10,838	-10,838	0	0	0
Leominster Heritage Action Zone	841	169	1,009	167	-842
Safer Streets / CCTV	0	278	278	0	-278
Stronger Towns Fund - Hereford Museum & Art Gallery Redevelopment	0	250	250	2	-248
Stronger Towns Fund - Maylord Orchard Redevelopment and Learning Resource Centre	0	150	150	1	-149
Development Partnership activities	3,268	-2,922	346	0	-346
Total Economic Development Delivery Board	17,804	-10,982	6,822	3,257	-3,565
Hereford City Centre Transport Package	3,353	-1,564	1,789	989	-800
Hereford City Centre Improvements (HCCI)	3,000	-1,075	1,925	1,794	-131
Hereford ATMs and Super Cycle Highway	0	1,000	1,000	0	-1,000
Emergency Active travel Fund	0	119	119	0	-119
Passenger Transport Fleet (Electric)	7,800	-7,800	0	0	0
Total Transport & Place Making Delivery Board	14,153	-9,321	4,832	2,783	-2,049
Total	97,870	-28,800	69,097	37,607	-31,490

Table B – Reprofiled budget details

	2021/22 Budgets Adj £000s	2022/23 Budgets Adj £000s	2023/24 Budgets Adj £000s	2024/25 Budgets Adj £000s	Reason
Schools & Corporate Property Delivery Board					
Peterchurch Area School Investment	-7,350	-	7,350	-	Due to feasibility options and discussions taking longer than planned, commissioning of detailed design was later than planned. Spend profile now reflects Cabinet approval for RIBA Stage 3 design and estimated programmed delivery of new building.
Brookfield School Improvements	-3,520	3,520	-	-	Detailed design phase took longer than estimated and therefore commencement of contract tendering was later than planned. Spend profile now reflects paused construction programme for the works at Brookfield School.
Estates Capital Programme 2019/22	-893	943	-40	-10	Spend profile revised to reflect project delays starting works at Shire Hall.
Basic Needs Funding	-4,811	1,426	3,385	-	A plan is in place to build capacity across the county. Feasibility studies (17) have been commissioned the reports of which are due back in autumn. These will inform the delivery stage which will require further Cabinet decision(s). Commissioning for design and build will follow, but capital spend is not anticipated this financial year.
Total Schools & Corporate Property Delivery Board	-16,574	5,889	10,695	-10	
Corporate & Digital Delivery Board					
Fastershire Broadband	-313	313	-	-	Fastershire budget has been realigned to meet expected spend by suppliers as contracted lot areas are completed and milestones met. Funding is issued only on actual and agreed expenditure based on milestone payments therefore dependent on delivery by suppliers – the forecast takes account of expected expenditure with allows for time for claims to be submitted and assured by the council. The expenditure could increase if the supplier delivers the network quicker.
PC Replacement	-349	349	-	-	To reflect previous annual role out of PC replacement.

Capital Development Fund	-750	750	-	-	Revolving Fund - identifying new schemes which anticipate may not start until 22/23
Technology Enabled Communities	-1,000	1,000	-	-	Spend profile reflects the current delivery aspirations.
Better Ways of Working	-568	568	-	-	Ryefield project will begin later than planned.
Total Corporate & Digital Delivery Board	-2,979	2,979	0	0	

Housing Delivery Board

Care home & Extra Care Development	-919	-12,031	8,150	4,800	Spend profile reflects the current delivery aspirations for the new Care Facility.
Hillside	-150	150			Delivery of final works expected in following year due to delay starting with covid.
Super Hubs	-2,000	2,000	-	-	Project delayed due to Covid-19 lockdowns delaying our plans to engage with communities and key stakeholders. Project currently in the options and feasibility stage of development.
Empty Property Investment & Development	-788	788	-	-	Spending realigned to reflect the current known position, delays in getting capita spend approved have meant some schemes have fallen by the way side.
Gypsy & Traveller Pitch development	-575	575			Spend profile adjusted to reflect expected delivery.
Private sector housing improvements	-146	146			Spend profile adjusted to reflect expected delivery.
Strategic Housing Development	-8,319	-	8,319	-	Spending profile revised to reflect the current delivery programme for housing development. However, the exploration of potential third party owned sites which offer a proceedable solution for developing housing may require further revision of the spending profile.
Total Housing Delivery Board	-12,897	-8,372	16,469	4,800	

Transport & Place Making Delivery Board

Hereford City Centre Transport Package	-2,820	-120	2,940	-	Spend profile revised to reflect revised delivery programme for development public realm and transport hub projects and subsequent programme for delivery following internal review of project finances in 2020/21.
Hereford City Centre Improvement	-2,397	1,447	950	-	Spend profile is revised to reflect revised delivery programme of High Town refurbishment and development of additional area around Broad Street and King Street areas based on progress in 2020/21 on design review and streetscape elements. Further review of approach to delivering remaining elements being undertaken.

Passenger Transport Fleet	-7,800	-7,800	-	15,600	Spend profile revised as grant funding has not yet been secured.
Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance & Biodiversity Net Gain	-930	930			Spend profile adjusted to reflect expected delivery.
Total Transport & Place Making Delivery Board	-13,947	-5,543	3,890	15,600	

Environment & Sustainability Delivery Board

Integrated Wetlands	-1,159	1,159	-	-	Due to the time frame involved in negotiating and purchasing land which will then takes us into winter months when the work to create wetlands is not advised due to weather
Solar Photovoltaic Panels	-1,142	1,142	-	-	Going through governance at the moment - trying to do PV on schools and once they have got some pilot schools more schools will come on board in year 2/3
SEPUBU Grant	-255	255			A number of envisaged grant projects have not being realised in the Herefordshire area as a result of both the flooding of early 2020 and then the pandemic. The project team is working with other Council officers and partners to identify other buildings for grant, however this will mean spend being pushed into 2022-23 as allowed under our grant offer. The project is due to complete in May 2023.
Air Quality Monitoring Station Resource Improvements	52	-26	-26		Spend profile adjusted to reflect expected delivery.
Total Environment & Sustainability Delivery Board	-2,504	2,530	-26	0	

Economic Development Delivery Board

Hereford Enterprise Zone	-500	500	-	-	Due to delays of commencing works in 20/21, delivery is expected to go into the start of the following year.
Marches Business Investment Programme	-128	-76	205	-	The monies are profiled until June 2023 in line with our MHCLG contract. Interest in the scheme is high and therefore we have re-profiled in line with current commitments/ approvals

Employment Land & Incubation Space in Market Towns	-11,781	6,199	4,837	745	We are aiming to finalise and seek cabinet approval for the five market town Economic Development Investment Plans in October, and finalise the outline business cases for projects seeking funding through the Employment Land and Business Space Capital Programme allocation. Thereafter, we will seek to develop the full business cases as soon as possible. However a range of technical advice will be required such as land valuations, site surveys, architectural support in order to finalising the projects. In a number of cases third party land acquisitions or permissions such as planning permission is likely to be required. As such, it is unlikely that any significant capital expenditure could be incurred before 2021/22
Leominster Heritage Action Zone	73	-447	374	-	A national delay to the commencement of the Heritage Action Zone programme (for all Heritage Action Zones) due to Covid 19 impacted delivery, with funds re-profiled into future years.
Development Partnership Activities	-6,572	1,154	5,418	-	Budgets re-profiled to reflect the delay in taking forward DRP projects primarily due to Covid 19. For example a decision regarding the development of student accommodation at the Hereford Football Club site, and progressing development option assessments of sites along the City Link Road and on College Road Campus have been paused until the impacts of Covid 19 are better known.
Total Economic Development Delivery Board	-18,908	7,330	10,833	745	
Highways Maintenance Delivery Board					
Priority Flood Repair Works	-1,627	1,627			Spend profile adjusted to reflect expected delivery.
Total Highways Maintenance Delivery Board	-1,627	1,627	0	0	
Total	-69,436	6,440	41,861	21,135	

Table C – Capital Programme position 2021/22

Scheme Name	Prior Years £000s	2021/22 budget £000s	2022/23 budget £000s	2023/24 budget £000s	2024/25 budget £000s	Total scheme budget £000s
Disabled facilities grant	0	2,538	2,000	2,000	2,000	8,538
Hillside	559	1,841	150	0	0	2,550
Care home & Extra Care Development	0	0	1,050	8,150	4,800	14,000
Super Hubs	0	0	2,000	0	0	2,000
Homelessness Hub & Property Investment	60	44	0	0	0	104
Empty Property Investment & Development	0	810	1,088	0	0	1,898
Unified Tech Fund – Digitising Social Care Prog	0	0	75	0	0	75
Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme	0	0	423	0	0	423
Gypsy & Traveller Pitch development	694	608	575	0	0	1,877
Strategic Housing Development	7	1,674	10,000	8,319	0	20,000
Private sector housing improvements	2	51	146	0	0	199
Total Housing Delivery Board	1,322	7,565	17,507	18,469	6,800	51,663
Fastershire Broadband	21,460	7,259	7,020	0	0	35,738
PC Replacement	819	349	349	0	0	1,516
Electronic Document Management Storage	24	356	0	0	0	380
Capital Development Fund	0	250	750	0	0	1,000
Technology Enabled Communities	38	462	1,000	0	0	1,500
Better Ways of Working	22	260	568	0	0	850
Total Corporate & Digital Delivery Board	22,363	8,935	9,686	0	0	40,984
Colwall Primary School	0	66	0	0	0	66
Schools Capital Maintenance Grant	0	2,410	1,195	1,195	1,195	5,995
Peterchurch Area School Investment	10	300	3,193	7,350	0	10,853
Expansion for Marlbrook school	5,642	499	0	0	0	6,141
Brookfield School Improvements	141	283	3,520	0	0	3,945
High Needs Grant	0	648	0	0	0	648
C & F's S106	0	554	0	0	0	554
Healthy Pupils	91	8	0	0	0	99

Short Breaks Capital	19	99	0	0	0	118
Basic Needs Funding	0	2,080	3,426	3,385	0	8,891
Preliminary works to inform key investment need throughout the county	35	481	0	0	0	516
School Accessibility Works	0	240	0	0	0	240
Property Estate Enhancement Works	0	110	0	0	0	110
Leisure Centres	221	147	0	0	0	368
Leisure Pool	317	244	0	0	0	561
Estates Capital Programme 2019/22	1,439	3,835	1,628	0	0	6,902
Car Parking Strategy	151	95	0	0	0	246
Upgrade of Hereford West Side CCTV cameras	0	27	0	0	0	27
Upgrade of Herefordshire CCTV	156	28	0	0	0	184
Grange Court Loan	0	359	0	0	0	359
Hereford Library	142	203	0	0	0	345
Temporary school accommodation replacement	0	450	0	0	0	450
Total Schools & Corporate Property Delivery Board	8,365	13,168	12,962	11,930	1,195	47,620
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	0	15,466	15,466	15,466	15,466	61,864
Pothole & Challenge Fund 20/21	5,311	2,363	0	0	0	7,674
Priority Flood Repair Works	1,547	853	1,627	0	0	4,027
E & P's S106	0	784	0	0	0	784
Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance & Biodiversity Net Gain	0	1,369	930	0	0	2,299
Investment in Infrastructure Assets	943	1,057	0	0	0	2,000
Highway asset management	0	1,868	0	0	0	1,868
Total Highways Maintenance Delivery Board	7,802	23,759	18,023	15,466	15,466	80,517
Integrated Wetlands	66	775	1,159	0	0	2,000
Marches Renewable Energy Grant	159	261	0	0	0	420
Solar Photovoltaic Panels	642	350	1,142	0	0	2,134
SEPUBU Grant	76	101	255	0	0	432
Warm Homes Fund	491	469	0	0	0	960
Schools Transport Route Planning	74	16	0	0	0	90
Air Quality Monitoring Station Resource Improvements	0	192	0	0	0	192

Green Homes Grant - Local Authority Delivery	0	1,820	0	0	0	1,820
Sustainable Landscape Sustainable Places	163	31	0	0	0	195
Total Environment & Sustainability Delivery Board	1,671	4,016	2,556	0	0	8,243
Hereford Enterprise Zone	12,111	2,336	500	0	0	14,947
Hereford Enterprise Zone - Further funded dev	5,297	135	0	0	0	5,432
Hereford Enterprise Zone - Infrastructure Works	0	675	0	0	0	675
Herefordshire Enterprise Zone Shell Store	6,923	393	0	0	0	7,316
Marches Business Investment Programme	701	1,250	1,273	205	0	3,428
Employment Land & Incubation Space in Market Towns	341	0	9,265	10,350	745	20,701
Leominster Heritage Action Zone	0	1,009	2,217	374	0	3,600
Safer Streets / CCTV	0	278	0	0	0	278
Stronger Towns Fund - Hereford Museum & Art Gallery Redevelopment	0	250	0	0	0	250
Stronger Towns Fund - Maylord Orchard Redevelopment and Learning Resource Centre	0	150	0	0	0	150
Development Partnership activities	10,415	346	4,422	5,418	0	20,600
Total Economic Development Delivery Board	35,788	6,822	17,677	16,346	745	77,378
Hereford City Centre Transport Package	34,042	1,789	1,880	2,940	0	40,651
Hereford City Centre Improvements (HCCI)	178	1,925	2,947	950	0	6,000
Hereford ATMs and Super Cycle Highway	0	1,000	0	0	0	1,000
Emergency Active travel Fund	19	119	0	0	0	137
Passenger Transport Fleet (Electric)	0	0	7,800	15,600	15,600	39,000
Total Transport & Place Making Delivery Board	34,239	4,832	12,627	19,490	15,600	86,788

Total	111,550	69,097	91,038	81,701	39,806	393,192
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	2021/22 Budget £000s	2022/23 Budget £000s	2023/24 Budget £000s	2024/25 Budget £000s	Total
February 2021 Council Approved Budget	97,870	66,634	21,179	10	185,693
Reprofile Budget	-69,436	6,440	41,861	21,135	0
20/21 Carry Forwards	33,296	-	-	-	33,296
Use of Reserve	56	-	-	-	56
Additional Grants	7,311	17,964	18,661	18,661	62,597
Revised Capital Budget	69,097	91,038	81,701	39,806	281,643

Grant Additions since February Council

	£000s
Local Transport Plan Increase	3,194
DfE Schools Maintenance Increase	66
Disabled Facilities Grant Increase	416
Marches Business Investment Programme	428
SEPuBu	39
Green Homes Grant - Local Authority Delivery	1,340
High Needs Grant	648
Hereford Enterprise Zone - Infrastructure Works - LEP Grant	675
Local Transport Plan DfT future years	46,398
DfE Schools Maintenance Future Years	2,390
Disabled Facilities Grant Future Years	6,000
Leominster Heritage Action Zone reduction to award	(200)
Stronger Towns Fund Grant - Museum	250
Stronger Towns Fund Grant - Maylords	150
Safer Streets / CCTV Grant	278
West Side Cameras/CCTV Grant	27
Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme	423
Unified Tach Fund – Digitising Social Care Prog	75

62,597

Annual Treasury Management Report 2021/22

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The council's treasury management activity is underpinned by CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management. Before the start of every year the Code requires local authorities to produce Prudential Indicators and a Treasury Management Strategy Statement detailing the policies and objectives of the council's treasury management activities for the forthcoming year. This outturn report compares actual activity to those policies and objectives.
- 1.2. The council borrows and invests substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of these risks are central to the treasury management strategy.

2. Economic Background

- 2.1. **Growth:** The financial year 2021/22 has seen us slowly make our way out of the pandemic, delayed slightly in late November following the emergence of a new variant of the Covid-19 virus named Omicron, which resulted in the implementation of the Government's 'Plan B' for England, with the reintroduction of face coverings being required by law in most indoor settings, working from home and the requirement for proof of vaccination. Despite this, the economy started to open up, fuel shortages from September are now a distant memory, but record high wholesale gas and electricity prices saw many smaller utility companies go out of business.
- 2.2. **UK Monetary Policy:** The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) raised Bank Rate from 0.10% to 0.25% in December 2021 and then made two further increases of 0.25% each in February and March 2022 to bring the rate to 0.75%. The most recent increase was felt warranted due to the tightness of the labour market, containing signs of robust domestic cost and price pressures and the risk that those pressures would persist.
- 2.3. **Inflation:** The UK inflation rate rose to 7% in the year to March 2022, the highest rate since 1992 and up from 6.2% in February. The cost of living is expected to rise further after the energy price cap was increased resulting in higher gas and electricity bills. Fuel had the biggest impact on the inflation rate, with average petrol prices rising by 12.6p per litre between February and March, the largest monthly rise since records began in 1990, by comparison it was a 3.5p per litre between the same months of 2021. The Bank of England's main monetary policy aim remains an inflation target of 2%. Their February report stated that they expected the inflation rate to fall back from the middle of 2022, that energy prices will continue to rise as fast and the shortages that are currently making it difficult for businesses to make their products should ease. They expect inflation to be close to the 2% target in around two years' time. The Bank of England have stated that they may need to raise their interest rates somewhat further to ensure inflation returns to their target in a sustainable way.

3. Borrowing

- 3.1. The council continues to choose to utilise accessing lower cost short-term loans from other local authorities, should it need to, rather than more expensive longer term debt due to the differential between short and longer-term interest rates. This policy is expected to continue in 2022/23 but should this differential decrease and short term borrowing costs

Annual Treasury Management Report 2021/22

increase, the council will begin securing additional fixed long term debt to fund its borrowing requirements.

- 3.2. In 2021/22 the council undertook one new PWLB loan in November of £5m at a rate of 1.72%. This is to be repaid on an equal instalment of principal basis over 15 years. The weighted average interest rate paid on council borrowing remained at 4.00% (4.00% in 2020/21) reflecting the higher cost of older long term borrowing.
- 3.3. It is council strategy to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels by using “internal borrowing”, utilising usable reserves. This maintains borrowing and investment balances to a minimum level, reducing interest cost and counterparty exposure risk.
- 3.4. In February the Bank of England decided to not only start reversing Quantitative Easing (QE) by no longer reinvesting the proceeds from its maturing gilts in line with its previous guidance, but also said it will sell its £20bn holding of corporate bonds.
- 3.5. The premium charged by the PWLB for the early repayment of PWLB debt remained too expensive for existing loans in the council’s portfolio to be repaid and rescheduled. No rescheduling activity was undertaken in 2021/22, this option will continue to be constantly considered.
- 3.6. Borrowing activity during the year is summarised below:

Borrowing Activity in 2021/22	01/04/21 Balance £m	New Borrowing £m	Debt Maturing £m	31/03/22 Balance £m
Short-term borrowing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Long-term borrowing	126.8	5.0	(2.4)	129.4
TOTAL BORROWING	126.8	5.0	(2.4)	129.4
Other long-term liabilities*	48.4	0.3	(2.8)	45.9
TOTAL EXTERNAL DEBT	175.2	5.3	(5.2)	175.3
<i>*Other long term liabilities represent existing commitments under PFI arrangements included in the medium term financial strategy</i>				

- 3.7. Total borrowing decreased by £2.4m representing repayments made during the year. £5.0m of new external borrowing was undertaken during 2021/22.
- 3.8. The council’s underlying need to borrow is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). As at 31/03/2022 this totalled £324.9m. The difference of £149.6m between the CFR and total external debt shown in the table above represents internal borrowing from usable reserves, working capital balances and the outstanding loan balance with Mercia waste of £32.9m.
- 3.9. The council’s capital financing costs in 2021/22 were as follows;

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Capital financing costs for 2021/22:	Budget	Outturn	Over / (under) spend
	£m	£m	£m
Minimum Revenue Provision (provision for repayment of loan principal)	8.4	7.8	(0.6)
Interest payable on all loans	5.4	5.1	(0.3)
TOTAL	13.8	12.9	(0.9)

3.10 The underspend has arisen from a slippage in the capital investment budgeted spend in 2021/22. The delay to new borrowing being required to fund capital spend delivered an underspend in expected interest payable.

4. Investments

4.1. The council invests significant funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves. During 2021/22 the council's investment balances averaged at £92m and ranged from £59m in April 2021 to £121m in January 2022. Much of this increased cash balance reflected the receipt of central government grant funding in advance of spend in response to Covid 19.

4.2. Security of capital remained the council's primary objective. Investment income remained low due to the continued low interest rate environment.

4.3. Investments held at the start and end of the year were as follows:

Investments	31/03/21 Balance £m	Investments Made £m	Maturities/ Withdrawals £m	31/03/22 Balance £m
Instant Access Accounts	17.55	384.04	(364.90)	36.69
Notice Accounts	13.88	-	(0.88)	13.00
Fixed Term Deposits	30.00	55.00	(55.00)	30.00
Total	61.43	439.04	(420.78)	79.69
Increase in investments				18.26

4.4. There are a growing number of financial institutions promoting environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues. The council invested in the following ESG 'green' deposits

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during 2021/22:

Start Date	Counterparty	Investments Made £m	Interest Rate %	Term
	Barclays Green Deposit	5.0	0.15-0.55	95 day notice Account
04/10/2021	Standard Chartered Sustainable Deposit	5.0	0.19	182 days

4.5. Interest received during the year was as follows:

Month	Average amount invested		Average rate of interest earned		Budget	Interest earned	(Surplus) /deficit
	Actual £m	Budget £m	Actual %	Budget %	£000	£000	£000
Apr-21	69.0	40	0.11	0.01	6	-	(6)
May-21	76.4	40	0.09	0.01	6	-	(6)
Jun-21	83.3	40	0.08	0.01	5	-	(5)
Jul-21	90.6	40	0.07	0.01	5	-	(5)
Aug-21	93.2	40	0.06	0.01	5	-	(5)
Sep-21	94.1	40	0.06	0.01	4	-	(4)
Oct-21	96.1	40	0.06	0.01	5	-	(5)
Nov-21	104.2	40	0.06	0.01	5	-	(5)
Dec-21	97.4	40	0.08	0.01	7	-	(7)
Jan-22	109.8	40	0.10	0.01	11	-	(11)
Feb-22	105.53	40	0.27	0.01	22	-	(22)
Mar-22	80.0	40	0.39	0.01	27	-	(27)
Outturn					108	-	(108)

4.6. The interest received in the year was lower than the budget because, despite having high balances invested, the interest rates dropped in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Interest rates have risen following the Bank of England rate increases, the first being in December 2021

4.7. The average interest rate achieved during 2021/22 was 0.12%, higher than budgeted.

4.8. In addition to interest earned on balances interest has been accrued in relation to the energy from waste plant loan to Mercia waste. This totalled £2.3m, the net loan position is set aside to fund increased waste disposal costs in future years.

5. Compliance with Prudential Indicators

- 5.1 The Council complied with its Prudential Indicators, Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices for 2021/22 as detailed in Annex 1. A prudent approach has been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.

Annual Treasury Management Report 2021/22

Annex 1

Performance Indicators**1. Treasury Management Indicators**

The council measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

1.1 Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing

This indicator is to limit large concentrations of fixed rate debt needing to be replaced at times of uncertainty over interest rates.

Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing	Lower Limit %	Upper Limit %	Actual Fixed Rate Borrowing 31/03/22 £m	% Fixed Rate Borrowing 31/03/22
Under 12 months	0%	10%	6.86	4%
12 months and within 24 months	0%	10%	3.09	3%
24 months and within 5 years	0%	25%	19.55	15%
5 years and within 10 years	0%	35%	26.64	21%
10 years and above	0%	80%	73.29	57%
Total			129.43	100%

Two LOBO ("Lenders Option then Borrowers Option") bank loans of £6m each are repayable in 2054 however if the lenders seek to increase the interest rate charged, currently 4.50%, the council has the opportunity to repay the loans.

1.2 Upper Limit for Total Principal Sums Invested Over 364 Days

The purpose of this limit is to contain exposure to the possibility of financial loss that may arise as a result of the council having to seek early repayment of the sums invested.

Upper Limit for Total Principal Sums Invested Over 364 Days	2021/22 Approved £m	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 Estimate £m	2023/24 Estimate £m
Total	5	0	5	5

During 2021/22 no long-term investments were made for a period exceeding 364 days.

2. Prudential Indicators**2.1 Estimates of Capital Expenditure**

This indicator is set to ensure that the level of proposed capital expenditure remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, to consider the impact on council tax.

Capital expenditure has been and is expected to be financed or funded as follows:

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Capital Financing	2021/22		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Estimate £000	Actual £000	Estimate £000	Estimate £000	Estimate £000
Capital grants	42,386	22,310	57,937	53,036	37,941
Capital receipts	5,005	3,248	13,430	14,883	-
Prudential borrowing	21,706	12,049	61,881	35,810	11,534
Total	69,097	37,607	133,248	103,729	49,475

Generally prudential borrowing finance is provided where the return on the investment exceeds the debt financing cost.

3. Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

Estimates of the council's cumulative maximum external borrowing requirement for 2021/22 to 2023/24 are shown in the table below:

Capital Financing Requirement	2021/22 Estimate Approved £000	2021/22 Actual £000	2022/23 Estimate £000	2023/24 Estimate £000
Total CFR	367,534	324,909	376,222	400,602

Total debt is expected to remain at or below the CFR during the forecast period.

4. Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to set an Affordable Borrowing Limit or Authorised Limit. This is a statutory limit which should not be breached.

The Operational Boundary is based on the same estimates as the Authorised Limit but reflects the most likely, prudent but not worst-case scenario without the additional headroom included within the Authorised Limit.

	2021/22 Approved Operational Boundary £m	2021/22 Approved Authorised Limit £m	Actual External Debt as at 31/03/22 £m
Borrowing	340.0	350.0	129.4
Other Long-term Liabilities	60.0	70.0	45.9
Total	400.0	400.0	175.3

5. Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs, net of investment income.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2021/22 Approved %	2021/22 Actual %
Net Revenue Stream	160,996	165,756

Financing Costs	13,974	12,908
Percentage	8.7%	7.8%

6. Adoption of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code

This indicator demonstrates that the council has adopted the principles of best practice.

The council has incorporated the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition* into its treasury policies, procedures and practices.

Debt write offs for the period 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022

- 1 The finance procedure rules stipulate that the chief financial officer must approve the writing off of debt exceeding £20k. For the period 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 there were 0 cases exceeding £20k (4 cases for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021) as follows.

- 2 Individual debts written off in the period 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 totalled £321k (£406k for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021) as shown in the table below. Debts are only written off once full debt recovery processes are completed, occasionally debt previously written off becomes payable if the debtors circumstances change. The council works closely with statutory bodies when deciding to write off debt. Legislative processes can take many months, or even years, if the debtor is on low income, to conclude before a write off is sanctioned.

1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022	Council Tax	NNDR	Housing Benefit over- payments	Sundry debtors	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Total debts written off	200	29	25	67	321

- 3 Debts written-off represent a very low proportion of income collected per annum as shown in the table below. We are steadily moving back toward normal recovery processes hence the write off level starting to increase again, however we are still dealing with the impact of the pandemic therefore this will a progressive matter over the next 12 months.

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000
Total amount written off	1,026	772	571	727
Council tax charged	123,323	131,598	137,175	144,538
Business rates charged	48,641	48,134	19,963	34,585
General debtors charged	60,147	60,004	72,635	72,691

**Project Nova Savings
Status at 31 March 2022**

-v-

Appendix E: Saving proposals approved by Full Council on 12 February 2021

£000	Appendix E Savings	Savings achieved at Quarter 4 31/03/2022	Variance/ Shortfall for the year at Quarter 4
Community Wellbeing (S1 to S3)	3,270	3,270	0
Children and Young People (S4 to S9)	2,390	1,322	1,068
Economy and Environment (S10 to S26)	4,348	2,596	1,752
Corporate (S27 to S28)	1,197	911	286
Total	11,205	8,099	3,106

Community Wellbeing

Ref	Savings scheme £000	2021/2022 Savings Target for the year	2021/2022 Savings achieved Q4 for the year	2021/2022 Savings Variance for the year	Narrative
S1	Learning disability and complex needs services redesign	1,500	1,500	0	Learning disability and complex needs services redesign' (S1) and 'Targeted review of complex cases' (S2) are inextricably linked due to the complexity of the client base concerned. As a result, the final position of both savings proposals have been considered together and reported on jointly for the final year-end position.
S2	Targeted review of complex cases	1,250	1,250	0	See above
S3	Maximisation of social care income	520	520	0	
Total		3,270	3,270	0	

At the end of the financial year, Community Wellbeing have delivered their full year savings target of £3.270 million.

Children and Young People

Ref	Savings scheme	2021/2022 Saving Target for the year	2021/2022 Savings achieved Q4 for the year	2021/22 Savings Variance for the year	Narrative
S4	16+ Accommodation, Widemarsh Street	320	34	286	There are unlikely to be any savings on Bath Street unless there has been a change in occupancy (contract was costing nearly £200k more than the original costs of the first cohort of young people that went in the flats) and the Widemarsh savings won't change unless there has been turnover.

S5	Step down from residential care	1,000	637	363	A total of x6 children have stepped down from residential, with a potential x1 further child likely in January 2022. The plan to achieve £1m from 5 step downs was ambitious as it assumed step down of more expensive placements and that these would be full year savings rather than stepping down mid-year as has been the reality.
S6	Prevention of children becoming looked after and reunification of looked after children with families	567	651	(84)	£287K savings from last year that are carried forward to this year as these children were budgeted for as being in care. Savings achieved in year are the savings for children whose costs were included in the 21/22 budget that have returned home.
S7	Recruit 30 new foster carers per annum for 5 years	200	0	200	Delivery for the net gain of 25 more in-house foster carers is now likely to start by December/January but implementation will take several months to embed and see change so it is unlikely we will see any resultant financial savings by 31 March 2022.
S8	Full cost recovery of traded services	20	0	20	Not achievable as majority of services are provided by Hoople.
S9	Manage inflation/contract efficiencies	200	0	200	The CareCubed IT tool has been purchased and training has been given to the Placements Team. There has been a delay in deploying the tool due to capacity issues in the Placements Team and so the tool is not yet in use.
	Reduce agency spend	83	0	83	Agency spend - Not achievable - was originally based on reducing support for NQSW as they became more experienced but the support wasn't in place as planned so there is no expenditure to reduce.
Total		2,390	1,322	1,068	

At the end of the financial year, there was a shortfall in the Children and Young People Directorate's savings of £ 1.068 million as detailed above.

Ref	Saving	2021/2022 Savings Target for the year	2021/2022 Savings achieved Q4 for the year	2021/22 Savings Variance for the year	Commentary
S10	Public Realm efficiency savings	300	300	0	
S11	Streetworks & enforcement function efficiency improvements	50	50	0	
S12	Hereford Markets	15	7	8	Transfer of Hereford Markets to City Council not feasible this financial year.
S13	Encourage waste minimisation	200	200	0	Over achievement of £11k recorded as nil as some waste disposal costs funded from reserves so not an in year budget saving
S14	Directorate transformation and redesign	650	455	195	Balance will not be achieved this financial year.
S15	Parking Review	900	522	378	RAG rated RED as limited options for recovery of shortfall.
S16	Technology and Lighting	90	63	27	RAG rated RED – no alternatives proposed to achieve shortfall.
S17	Review of Property Estate	1,000	0	1,000	Transferred to Corporate Services, under review
S18	Review efficiency and utilisation of transport fleet	150	150	0	
S19	Review weekend vehicle rental of council fleet vehicles	0	0	0	Moved to S22
S20	Review of Bereavement & Registrars income	270	278	(8)	
S21	Review of building control services	115	79	36	

S22	Review of Regulatory, Environment and Waste division income	125	135	(10)	Over delivering by £10k as substitute for S19
S23	Pre-planning application advice full cost recovery	100	54	46	
S24	Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	273	273	0	
S25	Use S106 funding to cover full costs of delivering highways improvements	30	30	0	
S26	Introduction of natural burials/pet burials & cremes	80	0	80	This will not be achieved this year
	Total	4,348	2,596	1,752	

At the end of the financial year, the Economy and Environment Directorate had achieved £2.596 million savings leaving a shortfall in their savings target of £1.752 million. This includes the £1.0 million saving for the Review of Property Estate (S17) which was transferred to Corporate Services and is currently under review.

Corporate

Ref	Savings scheme £000	2021/2022 Saving Target for the year	2021/2022 Savings achieved Q4 for the year	2021/2022 Savings Variance for the year	Narrative
S27	Back office initiatives and efficiency savings	497	211	286	MERS savings not achieved (staff opportunity to retire early offer) MBSO savings not achieved (establishment saving)
S28	Removal of contingency	700	700	0	
	Total	1,197	911	286	

At 31 March 2022 there was a £286k shortfall in the Corporate savings target of £1.197 million as shown in the table above.

Project Nova Savings
Status at 31 March 2022 (Year End)

-v-

Appendix B: Saving proposals approved by Full Council on 12 February 2021

Directorate	Ref	Name of proposal	a Appx B Feb 21 Savings £000	b Updated Appx B Savings	c Savings delivered to 31/03/22	d Variance 12 months to 31/03/22 (b-c)	e RAG Rating
Community Wellbeing	S1	Learning disability and complex needs services redesign	1,500	1,500	1,500	0	
Community Wellbeing	S2	Targeted review of complex cases	1,250	1,250	1,250	0	
Community Wellbeing	S3	Maximisation of social care income	520	520	520	0	
Children and Young People	S4	16+ Accommodation - Widemarsh Street	320	320	34	286	
Children and Young People	S5	Step down from residential care	1,000	1,000	637	363	
Children and Young People	S6	Prevention of children becoming looked after and reunification of looked after children with families	400	567	651	(84)	
Children and Young People	S7	Recruit 30 new foster carers per annum for 5 years	200	200	0	200	

Children and Young People	S8	Full cost recovery of traded services	20	20	0	20	
Children and Young People	S9	Manage inflation and secure contract efficiencies	450	200 83	0 0	200 83	
Economy and Environment	S10	Public Realm efficiency savings	300	300	300	0	
Economy and Environment	S11	Streetworks & enforcement function efficiency improvements	50	50	50	0	
Economy and Environment	S12	Hereford Markets	15	15	7	8	
Economy and Environment	S13	Encourage waste minimisation	200	200	200	0	
Economy and Environment	S14	Directorate transformation and redesign	650	650	455	195	
Economy and Environment	S15	Parking Review	900	900	522	378	
Economy and Environment	S16	Technology and Lighting	90	90	63	27	
Economy and Environment	S17	Review of Property Estate	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	
Economy and Environment	S18	Review efficiency and utilisation of transport fleet	150	150	150	0	
Economy and Environment	S19	Review weekend vehicle rental of council vehicles (moved S22)	10	10	10	0	
Economy and Environment	S20	Review of Bereavement & Registrars income	270	270	278	(8)	

Economy and Environment	S21	Review Building Control services	115	115	79	36	
Economy and Environment	S22	Review of Regulatory, Environment and Waste division income (over delivering as a substitute for S19)	115	115	125	(10)	
Economy and Environment	S23	Pre-planning application advice full cost recovery	100	100	54	46	
Economy and Environment	S24	Efficiency Savings (already identified in Medium Term Financial Strategy)	273	273	273	0	
Economy and Environment	S25	Use s106 Funding to cover full costs of delivering identified highway improvements	30	30	30	0	
Economy and Environment	S26	Introduction of natural burials and pet burials & cremations	80	80	0	80	
Corporate	S27	Back office initiatives and efficiency savings	497	497	211	286	
Corporate	S28	Removal of contingency	700	700	700	0	
			11,205	11,205	8,099	3,106	

*RAG Rating – to show confidence in delivery of savings

Blue Full savings have already been achieved (complete)

Red Forecasts over 10% away from target for the year

Amber Forecasts within 10% of their target for the year

Green Forecast variance for the year is zero (or negative), but not yet achieved

Delivery

Ambition	Action	Progression	Lead Officer	Key milestones due in period	RAG
EC0 - Support an economy which builds on the county's strengths and resources	EC0.1 - Develop an engagement framework for the business sector that enables the effective coordination of advice and support	Delivery continues in 22/23	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· More than 40 business regularly attending quarterly briefings. Monthly development and growth blog sent to over 600 people.	
	EC0.2 - Enhance engagement with the private sector through a Talk Business programme of communications, networking and events	Delivery continues in 22/23	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· None in period.	
	EC0.3 - Provide support to businesses to enable the soonest possible recovery of the local economy from the impacts of COVID-19	Complete as planned 2021/22	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· Over £7m of additional grants successfully delivered. Over 59,000 households requested pre-paid card, spending almost £1m in the local economy	
EC1 - Develop environmentally sound infrastructure that attracts investment	EC1.1 - Introduce policy to ensure that a robust climate and nature impact assessment is conducted for all infrastructure proposals	Complete as planned 2021/22	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	· None in period	
EC2 - Use council land to create economic opportunities and bring higher paid jobs to the county	EC2.1 - Work with partners to develop and implement a £25m Town Investment Plan for Hereford, to be funded through the Stronger Towns Fund	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Head of Economic Development	· Cabinet agreement to fund design prior to submission of final business case	
	EC2.2 - Develop & implement Market Town Economic Development Investment Plans for each of the five market towns (Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross) to support recovery, growth and jobs	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· Cabinet agreed the 5 plans and is working with town councils to implement each of the plans	
	EC2.3 - Develop a Rural Economic Development Investment Plan to support job creation in rural areas	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· Project not progressing, to be included as part of the Economic Plan	
	EC2.4 - Continue to support development of the Hereford Enterprise Zone , including completion & successful operation of the Shell Store business incubation centre and the Midlands Centre for Cyber Security, to deliver new high-skill job opportunities	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· Additional infrastructure in development; North magazine works due for completion Summer	
	EC2.5 - Develop Maylord Orchards as a key strategic site; acting as a catalyst for the regeneration of Hereford City Centre	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· Cabinet agreement to fund design prior to submission of final business case to the Stronger Towns Fund, seeking £3m of grants for new library and learning resource centre	
EC3 - Invest in education and the skills needed by employers	EC3.1 - Enable and support the development & expansion of higher education in the county (NMITE, HCA), including through supporting work to increase the availability of student accommodation	Complete as planned 2021/22	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· None in period.	
	EC3.2 - Work with partners to expand our adult and community learning programme , with a particular focus on those at risk of long term unemployment, and young people at risk of not being in education, training or employment	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD for Education	· Apprenticeship Plan produced. · Youth Hub Co-ordinator in post.	
	EC3.3 - Provide more apprenticeships , including through the council's direct contracts	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD People	· None in period.	
EC4 - Enhance digital connectivity for communities and business	EC4.1 - Expand the Fastershire programme to increase delivery of superfast and ultrafast broadband coverage, including launch of Stage 5 to reach the remaining 3% of premises at the end of current contracts through Community Broadband Grant	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD Corporate Support	· Funding model agreed for commissioning of work to create infrastructure for all homes in tenth community.	
	EC4.2 - Increase the number of businesses connected to high speed broadband by providing bespoke grant support	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD Corporate Support	· None in period.	
	EC4.3 - Undertake feasibility study for a low power digital infrastructure that delivers benefits to residents and business and reduce the impact of digital exclusion	Delivery continues in 22/23	Director Adults and Communities	· Work is delayed following the departure of the Portfolio Manager	
EC5 - Protect and promote our heritage, culture and natural beauty to enhance quality of life and support tourism	EC5.1 - Work with private sector partners to support the growth of the tourism industry across Herefordshire building on our strengths of outdoor activities, heritage & culture; and support the development of a destination business improvement district	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· BID Ballot complete and Limited by Guarantee company formed. · Delivery of 5 yr. plan a little delayed but commences from 2022.	
	EC5.2 - Implement the Leominster Heritage Action Zone Project , to act as a catalyst to the regeneration of the town and to attract new visitors	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· Public Wi-Fi now operational · Web-app launched and live · Public realm consultation approved and Conservation Area appraisal to follow on.	

EC5.3 - Take appropriate action to ensure our historic environment data is up-to-date	Delivery continues in 22/23	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	· Funding request to secure additional resources · Reviews still in progress	
EC6 - Spend public money in the local economy wherever possible	EC6.1 - Develop and implement a Social Value procurement policy to maximise the local benefit of all council spending	Complete as planned 2021/22	AD Corporate Support · First contract awarded under new policy. · Establish social value procurement	

■ complete
 ■ on target
 ■ at risk
 ■ compromised

Performance Measures

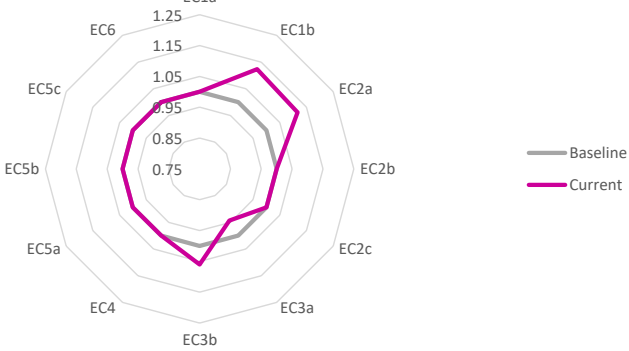
Ambition	Measure	Lead Officer	Q3	Improve-ment?	Target Met?	Comments
EC0 - Support an economy which builds on the county's strengths and resources	The number of business engaged and supported	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	3,773			
	The value of grants paid to businesses to support viability, or enable growth	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	£3.219m			MBIG, SEG grants & ARG support
EC1 - Develop environmentally sound infrastructure that attracts investment	The value of investment in the county from both public and private sources	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	£2.224m			
	Percentage of infrastructure proposals where climate and nature impact assessments have been completed	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	TBC			Finalising collection methods
EC2 - Use council land to create economic opportunities and bring higher paid jobs to the county	The money invested and leveraged (both public and private) by council to create economic opportunities	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	£2.224m			
	The number of jobs created (directly and indirectly) as a result of council investment	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	319			
EC3 - Invest in education and the skills needed by employers	The number of Higher Education students	AD for Education	NA			Annual data available in Feb. 2022
	The percentage qualification achievement rate of provision of Higher Education	AD for Education	NA			Annual data available in Feb. 2022
	The number of adult and community learning students	AD for Education	NA			Annual data available in Feb. 2022
	The percentage qualification achievement rate of adult and community learning	AD for Education	NA			Annual data available in Feb. 2022
	The number of apprenticeships and job placements	AD for Education	NA			Annual data available in Feb. 2022
	The percentage qualification achievement rate of apprenticeships	AD for Education	NA			Annual data available in Feb. 2022
	The number of hard to fill vacancies	AD for Education	TBC			Establishing collection from EMSI
	The number of 18-24 year olds in receipt of unemployment related benefits (claimant count)	AD for Education	445			
	The percentage of apprenticeship levy spent	AD People	79.0%			
EC4 - Enhance digital connectivity for communities and business	The percentage of premises in Herefordshire able to access a superfast broadband service	AD Corporate Support	93.9%			
EC5 - Protect and promote our heritage, culture and natural beauty to enhance quality of life and support tourism	The number of unique visits to www.visitherefordshire.co.uk	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	334,455			
	The percentage of eligible businesses supporting DBID	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	83%			Referendum in autumn.
	The number of people reached by tourism marketing	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	117m			Reach of the marketing campaign.
	The investment of the council on protecting and promoting our heritage, culture and natural beauty	Service Director Economy and Regulatory	£0.285m			
EC6 - Spend public money in the local economy wherever possible	The social value attributable to council procurement	AD Corporate Support	NA			Not launched this year so will be reported in 2022/23
	The percentage of the council procurement budget spent locally	AD Corporate Support	TBC			

■ on target/improvement
 ■ within 10% of target/small decline
 ■ missed target by more than 10% /significant decline
 ■ Not Available

County Plan - Success Measures

Outcome Measure	EC1a
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- EC1a - Gross Value Added
- EC1b - County Carbon Emissions
- EC2a - Average Workplace Earnings
- EC2b - Gross Value Added
- EC2c - Unemployment Rate
- EC3a - Residents with NVQ4 +
- EC3b - Residents with No Qualification
- EC4 - Internet usage
- EC5a - Visitors to the county
- EC5b - Money spent by visitors
- EC5c - Quality of Life
- EC6 - Gross Value Added



Corporate Risks

Risk		Impact					
		1	2	3	4	5	
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Significant	
Likelihood	5 Certain						
	4 Likely				CRR.63 --, CRR.69 *		
	3 Possible						
	2 Unlikely						
	1 Rare						

Delivery

Ambition	Action	Progression	Lead Officer	Key milestones due in period	RAG
EN0 - Protect and enhance our environment and keep Herefordshire a great place to live	EN0.1 - Develop the evidence base for the update of the Core Strategy and confirm programme for new plan following enactment of the planning white paper	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Director Economy and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design a national template for design guidance Public consultation on strategic options, spatial strategy Public Health Evidence complete. Community engagement strategy complete Housing & Employment Land Availability Assessment complete. Design based Evidence complete 	
EN1 - Minimise waste and increase reuse, repair and recycling	EN1.1 - Develop a new waste strategy that drives the environmental ambition of the council, delivers value for money and meets residents' expectation. The new strategy will inform the future commissioning of waste collection and disposal in Herefordshire	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year One of three year Implementation Plan 	
EN2 - Improve and extend active travel options throughout the county	EN2.1 - Complete the Hereford Transport Strategy Review and begin implementation of the preferred options	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery Director for City Masterplanning appointed Progressing review of eastern river crossing. Funding from DfT received to support team resourcing 	
	EN2.2 - Continue to deliver and extend the Choose How You Move sustainable and active travel programme to increase levels of walking and cycling	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None in period 	
	EN2.3 - Significantly increase electric vehicle charging infrastructure by leveraging private sector investment through the development of a concession contract	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electric vehicle concession contract now let, now mobilising and delivery commenced 	
	EN2.4 - Explore feasibility for the development of a cycle super highway	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiolme Lacy and HEZ quiet route now progressing in line with revised timescales; designs due Summer 2022 	
EN3 - Build understanding and support for sustainable living	EN3.1 - Create a new countywide climate & ecological emergency partnership, strategy and action plan to improve biodiversity and achieve countywide carbon neutrality by 2030	Delivery continues in 22/23	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership Board meetings continue Sub-groups established to further develop action plan 	
	EN3.2 - Introduce supplementary planning guidance on environmental building standards to ensure all new buildings are compatible with our climate and nature goals	Delivery continues in 22/23	Service Director Economy and Regulatory Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public consultation delayed due to wider scope of environmental factors. 	
EN4 - Invest in low carbon projects	EN4.1 - Support the most vulnerable people in our communities by providing energy efficient and more affordable heating	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping next years delivery 	
	EN4.2 - Develop new domestic building retrofit programmes to further improve the energy efficiency of Herefordshire's housing stock, reducing carbon emissions, improving wellbeing and tackling fuel poverty	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay on business case completion, now scheduled for 2022/23. 	
EN5 - Identify climate change action in all aspects of council operation	EN5.1 - Reduce the council's own carbon footprint through implementing our Carbon Management Action Plan	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reductions in the council's carbon footprint, which will be confirmed in Summer's reporting 	
	EN5.2 - Improve the environmental and energy efficiency standards of Council buildings through the introduction of: a) new minimum standards for energy efficiency b) a plan for investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy measures for existing buildings c) a plan for achieving net zero carbon for all council new-build buildings	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Chief Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options for carbon reduction under the capital programme being explored 	

EN6 – Seek strong stewardship of the county's natural resources	EN6.1 - Construct the first of up to eight integrated wetlands as tertiary treatments for waste water treatment works to reduce phosphate levels within the River Lugg catchment area	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	· First site procured, designed and initial works complete. · Second site purchased and third site identified	
	EN6.2 - Develop & implement supplementary planning guidance on intensive livestock units to protect water quality in our rivers	Delivery continues in 22/23	Service Director Economy and Regulatory Services	· Delay in conversations with Natural England	
	EN6.3 - Continue to support the River Wye and Lugg pilot Natural Flood Management Project to reduce flood risk to communities within Herefordshire	Delivery continues in 22/23	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	· Funding confirmation delayed, received by Environment Agency in February	
EN7 – Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity, value nature and uphold	EN7.1 - Develop & implement a new nature strategy to enhance and protect biodiversity across the Council's estate	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	· Procure Technical Support to develop Nature Strategy · Contract Award - Consultants to develop Nature Strategy.	

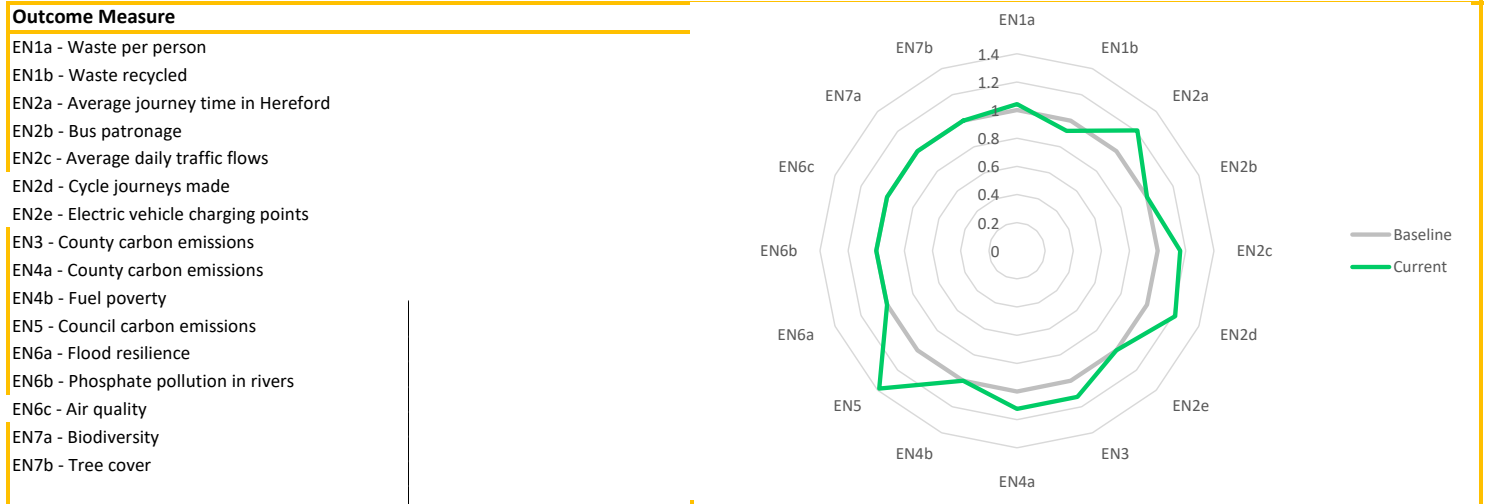
■ complete
 ■ on target
 ■ at risk
 ■ compromised

Performance Measures

Ambition	Measure	Lead Officer	Q3	Improve-ment?	Target Met?	Comments
EN1 - Minimise waste and increase reuse, repair and recycling	The average kilograms of waste per person (YTD)	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	373.91kg			
	The percentage of waste sent for recycling	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	38.22%			
EN2 - Improve and extend active travel options throughout the county	The total kilometres cycled using Beryl's Bikes	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	241,960km			
	The number of children trained through Bikeability	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	825			
	The total kilometres of cycle route within the county	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	63km			This will be used as the baseline going forward.
	The total number of bus journeys within the county	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	NA			Data being collated.
	The total number council installed charging points	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	15			No new points delivered in quarter. New partner commissioned
EN3 - Build understanding and support for sustainable living	The KWh in business emissions through the provision of grant assistance from Business Efficiency Programme	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	5,487,846			
	The total number of signatories to the Herefordshire Climate and Nature Partnership	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	70			Partnership will launch during COP26. Targeting 50 signatories.
EN4 - Invest in low carbon projects	The number of households that have had a significant impact on their carbon footprint as a result of council intervention	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	89			Scheme delays have been experienced due to price increases, supply chain issues and elongated procurement across both Green Homes Grant (LAD) and Warm Homes Fund schemes, however household energy efficiency and heating installs remain on-going and activity is expected to increase in 22/23 following further funding awards.
	The £ and percentage of investment that contributes significantly to climate and nature goals	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	£2.556m circa 2%			This is a reflection of the amount of capital investment
EN5 – Identify climate change action in all aspects of council operation	The energy consumption across all council operations	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	59.5%			This is the reduction for 2020/21. Data is available in July retrospectively.
	The KWh saved as a result of capital investment and grants	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	194,000kWh			

EN6 – Seek strong stewardship of the county's natural resources	Phosphate reduction as a result of the introduction of new wetlands The number of properties with a reduced risk of flooding as a result of the council's support and intervention	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	NA 117	NA	This will be reported after the completion of the first of the wetlands
EN7 – Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity, value nature and uphold environmental standards	The percentage of road verges managed for wildlife The number of trees planted as a result of direct council intervention The percentage of planning applications submitting a full ecology checklist	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste Service Director Economy and Regulatory	TBC TBC TBC		Collection methods still need developing for this metric, to include; trees planted under the public realm contract, capital projects and property developments, as well as trees through planning conditions Civica doesn't allow the capability to report on this currently and will need to be remedied
<div> <div></div> on target/improvement <div></div> within 10% of target/small decline <div></div> missed target by more than 10% /significant decline <div></div> Not Available </div>					

County Plan - Success Measures



Corporate Risks

Risk		Impact				
		1 Insignificant	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Significant
Likelihood	5 Certain					CRR.67 *
	4 Likely					CRR.68 *
	3 Possible					
	2 Unlikely					
	1 Rare					

Delivery

Ambition	Action	Progression	Lead Officer	Key milestones due in period	RAG
CO0 - Strengthen communities to ensure everyone lives well and safely together	CO0.1 - Improve the overall mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents of all ages with a more diverse and increased level of support that helps people to make healthy food and lifestyle choices	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD Talk Community Operations	· MH and Wellbeing training offer, Debt and Money Management and Holiday Activity Fund all complete. HAF funding secured and now BAU	Blue
	CO0.2 - Improve the capacity and capability of data management and use of systems to drive efficiencies and maximise user experience	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD Corporate Support	· CRM system procured · Data development aligned to Digital Strategy	Green
	CO0.3 - Implement capital highway maintenance projects	Complete as planned 2021/22	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	· None in period	Green
	CO0.4 - Deliver the asset management plan to improve road conditions across the county	Complete as planned 2021/22	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	· Project progressing in line with Transport Asset Management Plan	Green
	CO0.5 - Complete the infrastructure repair work following the flooding in winter 2019	Delivery continues in to 22/23	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	· Design work of Whitney complete prior to tender in 2022/23. · Contractor commissioned to deliver 67 smaller sites, starting in April.	Yellow
	CO0.6 - Complete the review of governance arrangements and implement new arrangements and constitution	Delivery continues in to 22/23	Solicitor to the Council	· Nearing completion at Council in May	Green
	CO0.7 - Development of a communication strategy and engagement framework that supports the delivery of the County Plan and improves the involvement by residents and key stakeholders in the development of services and ongoing direction of travel	Complete as planned 2021/22	AD Corporate Support	· Complete	Blue
	CO0.8 - Development and delivery of the SafeHerefordshire campaign to support the fight against the pandemic and ensure key messages are being targeted effectively	Complete as planned 2021/22	AD Corporate Support	· None in period	Blue
	CO0.9 - Effectively manage COVID-19 outbreaks through the development and implementation of the Outbreak Control Plan	Delivery continues in to 22/23	Director of Public Health	· None in period	Green
CO1 - Ensure all children are healthy, safe and inspired to achieve	CO1.1 - Deliver schools investment programme including completion of the expansion of Marlbrook and Mordiford primary schools and development of Brookfield and Peterchurch schools	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD for Education	· Mordiford and Marlbrook complete · Still in discussions with DfE regarding Brookfield funding with revised cost plan and revised milestone plan due. · Slight delay at Peterchurch due to delays in consultee responses	Green
	CO1.2 - Work with school leaders locally and nationally to develop and implement an action plan to support pupils and students to make the most of their education, particularly at Key Stage 4 and the move into the world of work	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD for Education	· None in period	Green
	CO1.3 - Work with school and education leaders and other partners to minimise the impact of the pandemic by enabling and implementing a range of support including online teaching and home learning	Delivery continues in to 22/23	AD for Education	· None in period	Green
	CO1.4 - Improve the oral health of children in the county	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Director of Public Health	· Universal 4/6 month oral health and weaning check in place · 210 professionals trained · Book, Brush, Bed rolled out to 4-6mo and 3-4yo. · 5yr Dental survey commissioned	Green
CO2 - Ensure that children in care, and moving on from care, are well supported and make good life choices	CO2.1 - Implement and embed a new Children's social work model of practice which provides a strengths based approach to child protection case work (model is known as Signs of Safety)	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD Children's Safeguarding Quality and Improvement	· Implementation plan reviewed · SoS forms continue to be reviewed · Training plans being reviewed · Additional resources secured as part of transformation paper	Yellow
	CO2.2 - Continue the improvement of the children's safeguarding system to ensure children and families get the right support at the right time, including early help and reduce the number of children	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD Children's Safeguarding and Family Support	· Further support for improvement agreed by Cabinet and a new iteration of the Improvement plan being	Yellow

	needing to be cared for by the council			drafted. · New recruitment campaign in Community Care launched and recruitment of NQSWs underway · Edge of Care service and Early Help Hub both live	
CO3 - Build publicly owned sustainable and affordable houses and bring empty properties back in to use	CO3.1 - Develop feasibility and options for the development of council owned homes and confirm the model for delivery	Complete as planned 2021/22	Assistant Director All Ages Commissioning	· Delivery Model agreed	
	CO3.2 - Submit planning application for the first site of Council owned affordable net zero carbon housing	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Assistant Director All Ages Commissioning	· Feasibility of proposed sites in progress and on track · Review of financial impact of schemes delayed · Detailed design and predevelopment of sites at Holme Lacay and Aylestone Hill	
CO4 - Protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people	CO4.1 - Develop and adopt new models of care accommodation to support vulnerable young people, people with learning disabilities and older people	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD All Ages Commissioning	· Holme Lea, Alton Rd, Ross-on-wye and Bath St. all complete. LD project now in delivery, slightly later than anticipated due to capacity	
	CO4.2 - Develop and deliver a community meal offer (Talk Community Kitchen) that provides healthy meals to the local community and offers skills and training opportunities for young people and those at risk of long term unemployment	Complete as planned 2021/22	AD Talk Community Operations	· None in period.	
	CO4.3 - Develop Right Support, Right Time for Families through our Talk Community approach and building on strengths within local communities	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Director of Children and Families	· Agreement for work to be re-scoped as part of Improvement Plan and DfE bid submitted to provide additional resources	
	CO4.4 - Embrace the principles of “no second night out” and “housing first” through developing a model of delivery that prevents homelessness	Delivery continues in to 22/23	Head of Prevention Adults & Communities	· Slight delay with Blackfriars due to challenges in connecting utilities.	
	CO4.5 - Develop the council owned Hillside Care Centre to be a fully digital, dementia friendly and environmental care home	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD All Ages Commissioning	· Phase 1 complete. Further developments being scoped due to changes in personnel	
	CO4.6 - Develop and implement an all ages, whole system commissioning strategy that improves outcomes for people and families and maximises the use of resources	Delivery continues in to 22/23	AD All Ages Commissioning	· Phase 1 complete. Phase 2, incl. Business case, now going through internal governance.	
CO5 - Use technology to support home care and extend independent living	CO5.1 - Develop a new Independent Living Services offer for Herefordshire residents	Delivery continues in to 22/23	Director of Adults and Communities	· Pathways and structure re-design complete and approved as part of budget setting. Moved in to BAU	
	CO5.2 - Develop our assistive technology offer to enable people to maximise independent living including the delivery of a demonstration centre at Hillside Care Centre and an online catalogue	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD All Ages Commissioning	· Demo centre works consolidated with other Hillside works to reduce disruption. Invitation to Tender for contractor out, appointment planned Q1 22/23	
CO6 - Support communities to help each other through a network of community hubs	CO6.1 - Support communities to improve community resilience through development of a network of community led hubs throughout the county	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	AD Talk Community Operations	· 54 hubs launched across the county.	
	CO6.2 - Develop integrated service hubs within communities to tackle inequalities, meet the needs of the local community and that make best use of council and community assets	Continues in to 22/23 Delivery Plan	Director of Adults and Communities	· Project plan being re-visited. Carrying forward in to 2022/23 delivery plan	

■ complete
 ■ on target
 ■ at risk
 ■ compromised
 ■ on hold

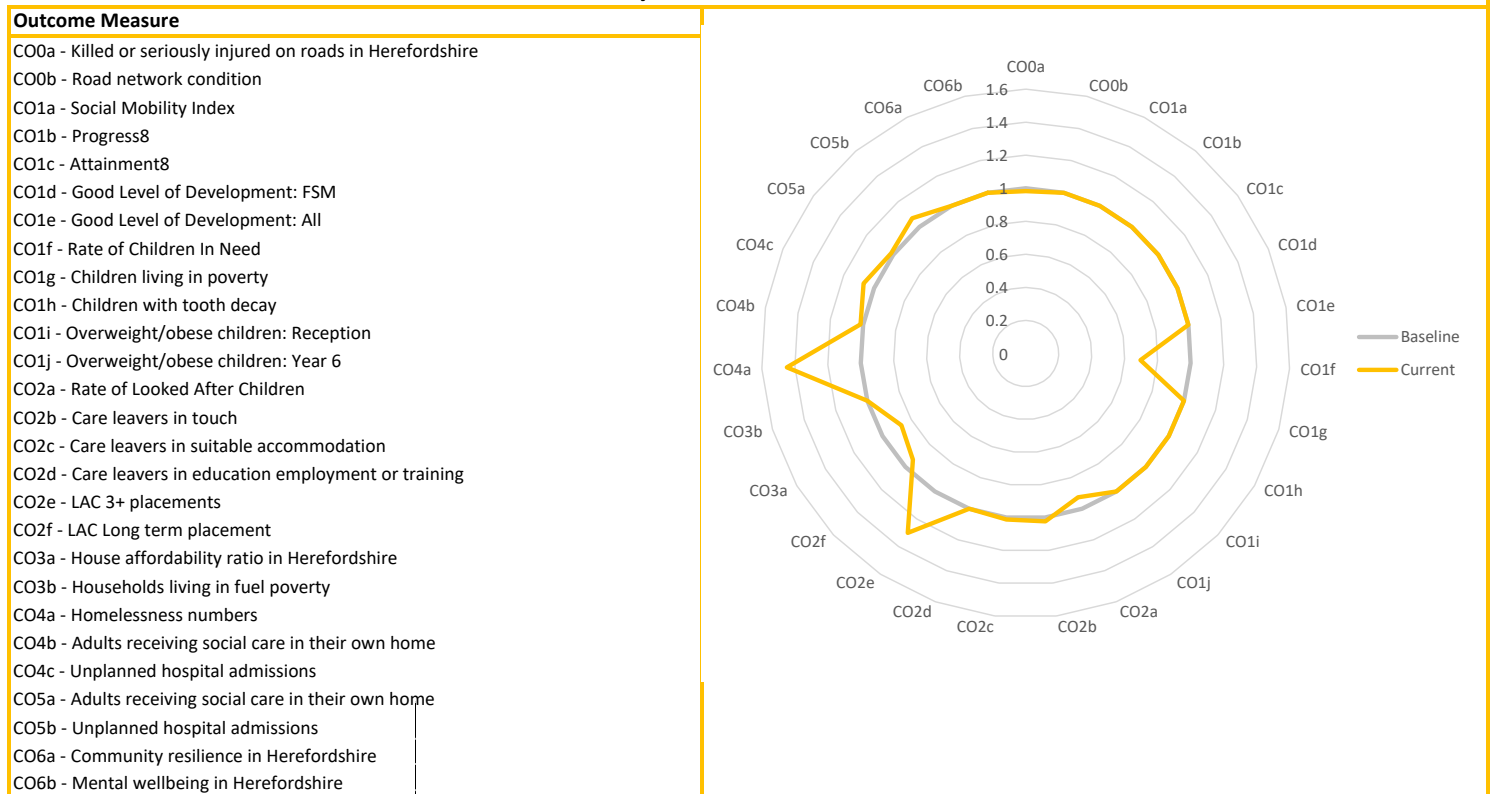
Performance Measures

Ambition	Measure	Lead Officer	Q3	Improve-ment?	Target Met?	Comments
CO0 – Strengthen communities to ensure everyone lives well and safely together	Employee engagement index (council workforce)	AD of People	NA			Employee opinion survey being redeveloped. Results likely Q1/2 22/23 Regular mechanism to be confirmed
	Resident engagement and overall satisfaction with the council	AD of Strategy	TBC			
	Percentage of Category 1 defects managed within timescale	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	100%			

	The percentage of overall condition of footways rated as good	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	73%			
	Percentage of Category 2a defects managed within timescale	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	88.16%			
	Percentage of construction materials reused and recycled	Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	99.6%			
CO1 - Ensure all children are healthy, safe and inspired to achieve	The percentage of school buildings identified as safe, appropriate and up-to-date	Director of Children & Families	TBC			Condition surveys being commissioned to provide definitive position
	The percentage of school leavers that are (a) not in education, employment or training, or (b) not known	Director of Children & Families	(a) 3.3% (b) 0.6%			
	The percentage of (a) primary and (b) secondary schools rated good or outstanding by OFSTED	Director of Children & Families	(a) 97.4% (b) 86.7%			
	The percentage of pupil attendance in (a) primary and (b) secondary schools	Director of Children & Families	(a) 96.9% (b) 94.5%			Annual published data covering 20-21 academic term
	The proportion of schools able to provide online learning	Director of Children & Families	100%			
	The number of children seen as part of a 4-6 month health check	Director of Public Health	72 families			This new scheme started in July, so reporting will be in future quarters. 72 families as at end March. Target is all children 4 - 6 months so RAG target is green as on track.
	The percentage uptake of childrens 2.5yr ages and stages review	Director of Public Health	100.0%			
	The number of early years settings signed up to and implemented a supervised brushing programme	Director of Public Health	20			
	The percentage of children looked after/children with a child protection plan offered a health assessment	Director of Children & Families	100% CiC			
	The percentage of child and family assessments completed within statutory timescales	Director of Children & Families	62%			
	The percentage of timely (a) Children in Care (b) Child Protection and (c) Child in Need visits	Director of Children & Families	(a) 96% (b) 94% (c) 82%			CP and LAC represent significant improvements since the end of the last quarter.
	The percentage of referrals which are re-referrals (within 12 months of a previous referral)	Director of Children & Families	15%			
	The percentage of all current child protection cases which have previously been on a CP Plan (within 2 years)	Director of Children & Families	6.0%			
	The proportion of audits of children's cases rated as good or outstanding	Director of Children & Families	14%			
CO2 - Ensure that children in care, and moving on from care, are well supported and make good life choices	The numbers of children being referred into children's social care for specialist support after an assessment	Director of Children & Families	47%		TBC	Proportion of children remaining open post assessment
	Increase the timeliness of the number of children who are adopted and/or has a permanency plan by the second looked after review	Director of Children & Families	207 days 79%			A20 adoption measure Plan at second review
	Increasing the numbers of children in receipt of edge of care support that have not entered the care system	Director of Children & Families	23	NA		this is a new service, with limited comparable data
	Increase the percentage of children that have timely health assessments and completed SDQ's	Director of Children & Families	23% initial 87% review 60%		NA	Health checks in timescale
	The percentage of children and families surveyed who reported that their social care intervention was positive and made a difference	Director of Children & Families	TBC		NA	SDQ's complete
CO3 - Build publicly owned sustainable and affordable houses and bring empty properties back in to use	The number of affordable houses delivered with 450 homes built by March 2022	Strategic Housing Manager	248			
	The number of affordable net zero carbon houses (from April 22 onwards)	Strategic Housing Manager	-			These are scheduled for delivery from April 2022 onwards
	The number of empty properties brought back in to use	Strategic Housing Manager	39			30 properties in the last quarter.
CO4 - Protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people	The number of people engaging with the Healthy Lifestyle Trainer Service	AD Talk Community Operations	1201			Improved engagement this year, partly driven by increased demand post-pandemic.
	The number of new tenancies developed for independent living	AD All Ages Commissioning	50			

	The number of new dwellings of extra care developed	AD All Ages Commissioning	TBC		Future measure as this becomes a priority for Herefordshire
	The local count of Herefordshire homelessness	Head of Prevention Adults & Communities	4		
	The number of cases where homelessness has been (a) prevented and (b) relieved	Head of Prevention Adults & Communities	(a) 195 (b) 270		Figures provided are YTD.
CO5 - Use technology to support home care and extend independent living	The rate of admissions to care homes for clients aged under 65	AD for Adult Social Care Operations	25.66		This equates to less than 30 admissions, but remains cause for focus, with developments in plan to address the relatively high rate of younger people admitted to care homes.
	The rate of admissions to care homes for clients aged over 65	AD for Adult Social Care Operations	472.57		Very low levels of admissions were noted during the same period last year due to the pandemic. But we remain below the anticipated level of permanent residents.
CO6 - Support communities to help each other through a network of community hubs	Establish a baseline for the volunteer capacity in Herefordshire	AD Talk Community Operations	23%		Based on the talk community survey outputs.
	The number of talk community hubs active in the county to 50 by March 2022	AD Talk Community Operations	54		
	The number of people engaging with Talk Community hubs	AD Talk Community Operations	TBC		Mechanism for this measure is being established
	The number of hits on the Talk Community Directory (previously WISH)	AD Talk Community Operations	69,384		
<div> ■ on target/improvement ■ within 10% of target/small decline ■ missed target by more than 10% /significant decline ■ Not Available </div>					

County Plan - Success Measures



Corporate Risks

Risk		Impact				
Likelihood	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Certain	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Significant
	CRR.60 - Development of Sufficiency strategy to support best value model				CRR.66 *	
	CRR.61 - Market workforce economy				CRR.61 --	CRR.60 --, CRR.64 ↑
	CRR.64 - Inability to recruitment and retain social care staff and other key roles within the service					
	CRR.66 - OFSTED Inspection					

Corporate *to evidence our continued drive for efficient internal services*

Quarter 4 - 2021/22

Performance Measures

Measure	Lead Officer	Q4	Improve- ment?	Target Met?	Comments
Average days sickness per FTE	AD of People	8.32 days			Increasing sickness trend, exploration and better data analysis capability being delivered
Percentage of mandatory training completed	AD of People	49%			Performance for this measure is re-set each calendar year, so this equates nearly half of staff having completed in the first 3 months
Percentage of permanent staff	AD of People	TBC			Establishing final collection methods in order to provide an accurate position
Number of RIDDOR reportable incidents	AD of People	1			Only 1 reportable incident this year, in August.
Revenue outturn	Chief Finance Officer	£541k underspend			Detail provided in Appendix A.
Percentage of capital budget spent	Chief Finance Officer	54%			Detail provided in Appendix B.
Percentage of savings delivered, or on track to be delivered	Chief Finance Officer	72%			Detail provided in Appendix E.
Percentage of invoices paid on time	Chief Finance Officer	88.00%			
Percentage of projects delivered on time	AD of Strategy	TBC			
Percentage of projects delivered on budget	AD of Strategy	TBC			
Percentage of complaints responded to within timescales	AD Corporate Support	92.1%			
Percentage of FOIs & EIRs responded to within timescales	AD Corporate Support	96.2%			
<div> on target/improvement within 10% of target/small decline missed target by more than 10% /significant decline Not Available </div>					

Corporate Risks

Risk		Impact				
		1 Insignificant	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Significant
Likelihood	5 Certain					
	4 Likely					
	3 Possible					
	2 Unlikely					
	1 Rare					

Recovery Plan

Quarter 4 - 2021/22

Business viability and resilience: enabling businesses to restart and recover trade as quickly and effectively as possible whilst meeting national Covid 19 guidelines. Providing opportunities to kickstart trade, adding value to existing products and services, or to diversify into new market opportunities. As well as providing support for people to start a new business revitalising the local economy.

Action	What	When	Lead Officer	Progress in period	RAG
Revive and Thrive	· Grants to support first few month rent in vacant retail units and business space · Access to business advice through the Marches Growth Hub · Encourage business start-ups, pop up shops, cultural and creative use of space · Utilising the Shell Store and Midlands Centre for Cyber Security · Focus on encouraging young entrepreneurs, providing access to premises and support services.	August 21 - March 22	Head of Economic Development	Total grants of £232,434 awarded; including 19 commercial assists, 5 retail assists and 8 start up assists	
Visit Herefordshire	· Promote Herefordshire as a fantastic staycation destination, building on the current campaign into the autumn, Christmas and spring 2022 · Focus on festivals and events.	July 21 - March 22	Head of Economic Development	Total marketing reach of more than 52 million during quarter 4	
Love Going Out Locally	· Incentivise residents to spend locally on a wide range of local activities · Track and analyse use to understand people's interests and trends.	July 21 - March 22	Head of Economic Development	Nearly 60,000 cards issued. £1mil spent in local shops over 248,000 transactions in 1850 local businesses	
Shop Local Love Local	· Marketing and PR campaign to encourage people to support local businesses, making people aware of products and services and any offers · Developing content for the Herefordshire Loyal Free app	July 21 - December 21	Head of Economic Development	Funding allocation to dates means some carry forward to 2022/23.	

Safe and Welcoming Places: encouraging people to safely return to a more normal way of life, through creating safe, attractive and vibrant places for events, leisure and hospitality, visiting, studying, culture, re-engaging with friends and family generating spend in our towns, city and wider rural county.

Action	What	When	Lead Officer	Progress in period	RAG
Great Places to Visit	· Revitalised places offering high quality experiences such as 'dressing'/presentation/greening of market town centres · Grants for shop front enhancements · Infrastructure for events · Improvements to public rights of way/cycling routes.	July 21 - March 22	Head of Economic Development	Town councils have started to deliver events during March which will continue through to the end of June.	
Return to Towns & City	· Incentivising people to get back to leisure/social activities · Working out of home and exploring new places · Helping people to access new jobs through providing periods discounted bus fares, access to the Hereford bike scheme · Possible roll out of services elsewhere, developing car pools, utilising e-cargo (people carrier) bikes, and feasibility for future cycling connectivity routes · Monitor and analyse take up to understand trends, and inform incentivisation of modal shift.	July 21 - March 22	Head of Economic Development	More than 108,000 free bus journeys since the start of the project. 37 ebikes have been delivered, including 8 E-cargo bikes. Leominster, Fownhope, Kington and Belmont all with community car pools established and one further scheme likely to launch in Much Birch.	

Supporting Local People: stem the rise in unemployment, support people who have been made or are at risk of redundancy to return to work including through opportunities to re-skill/change career path, and find new job opportunities. Consider the impact of the pandemic on people's wellbeing, and the support required to enable recovery

Action	What	When	Lead Officer	Progress in period	RAG
Joined Up for Jobs: NEET Prevention	· Additional support for complex Not in Education and Employment (NEET) cases		Post 16 Senior Advisor	31 referrals of which 25 have remained on the course	
Joined Up for Jobs: Youth Employment Hub	· Launch of the Herefordshire Youth Employment Hub		Post 16 Senior Advisor	Youth Employment Hub Co-ordinator post out to advert Building work tender being drawn together	
Joined Up for Jobs: One Stop Shop Advice	· One stop shop advice (contact point, local events, proactive engagement) to guide people to the right location to access the wide range of available support.		AD Talk Community Programme	Due to recruitment challenges, agreement to transfer some funding to Hoople to support the Workmatch scheme, and additional money to extend the NEET contract with Brookfield school.	

Supporting Whole Population Physical and Mental Wellbeing: to encourage, facilitate and develop opportunities for the whole population to improve physical and mental wellbeing, including those most affected fastest.

Action	What	When	Lead Officer	Progress in period	RAG
Community and Personal Resilience	· Supporting individuals, families and communities to connect through free events, activities and targeted support · Increased activities within libraries, children's centres and schools · Providing funding to the VSCE that supports community and personal resilience.	July 21 - March 22	AD Talk Community Programme	Review of VCSE sector now out for second survey, with final draft report due for end of April. Second round of funding for VCSE grants, to the values of £46,407 to support projects not funded in round 1. Book bags prepped for delivery in summer.	

Get Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased opportunities to encourage individuals to become more active Supporting physical activity through improved infrastructure and access to green space scaled up preventative and behavioural support, including workplaces. 	July 21 - March 22	AD Talk Community Programme	<p>120 adults receiving swimming lessons</p> <p>2740 young people signing up to free gym membership</p> <p>Easter swimming lessons fully booked during easter holidays</p> <p>34 grants approved to support communities to improve their access to green space; 11 TIF projects receiving £60k and 23 project supporting grass roots projects each receiving £1000</p> <p>Additional green space grants totalling £32,500</p> <p>Additional funding of £22k for 2 projects to support arts and culture</p> <p>343 people engaged with lifestyle trainers receiving support for behaviour changes</p>	
Mental Health Awareness and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online mental and wellbeing toolkits and campaigns at key times of the year. 	July 21 - March 22	AD Talk Community Programme	<p>Qwell MH wellbeing toolkit, launched with regular engagements online but further awareness planned to increase activity. Three months of a five month promotional campaign focussing on MH have delivered 3 different messages to date. Solihull parenting model delivery continues, with a request to extend to deliver vlogs/podcasts to bring messages to life.</p>	
Early Awareness and Identification of excessive/harmful drinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early detection of high risk alcohol consumption assertive outreach for complex drinkers 	August 21 - March 22	Director of Public Health	Project complete, with evaluation report being delivered in April.	
Education Catch Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catch-up/Mentor programmes for education Support for schools and teachers 	August 21 - March 22	AD Education	<p>School grants delivered, with impact reports due in July 2022.</p> <p>CPD event for all primary and secondary schools held in April, positive feedback received</p>	
Digital Poverty & Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceleration and scale up of existing support to improve access for digital inclusion through existing community assets and infrastructure. 	July 21 - March 22	AD Talk Community Programme	<p>Continued engagement, with new clients continuing to join the scheme.</p> <p>Interest in community groups in Bromyard, Leominster, Moreton-on-Lugg, Kington. Further computer courses being organised in Whitchurch, Kingstone and Ross.</p>	

■ complete
 ■ on target
 ■ at risk
 ■ compromised

