

Title of report: To agree the Super Hubs approach

Decision maker: Cabinet Member housing, regulatory services and community

Decision Date: Monday 30th January 2023

Report by: Service Director Communities

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

The purpose of this report is to approve the recommended option for now taking this forward and deliver Super Hubs in Herefordshire.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **The recommended option to deliver Super Hubs in Herefordshire is agreed as set out in the key considerations section of the report and supported by appendix 1**

- b) Authority is delegated to the Corporate Director of Community Wellbeing to take all operational and budgetary decisions to implement the recommended option, including but not limited to approval of the grant award criteria and the capital bid process and procedure to be applied utilising the approved budget following consultation with the Cabinet member for Health and Adult Wellbeing.**

Alternative options

1. Continue with the original scope as outlined in the business case that was developed in 2019 and agreed at full council in February 2020. Due to the pandemic and other driving factors, the landscape has changed since the original business case was written and some of the priorities and focus for the project have moved on. The impacts of Covid-19 and other economic factors also now need to be considered in defining the vision and drivers for Super Hubs in Herefordshire. Our partnership with health colleagues, particularly around the Integrated Care System (ICS); and with the community and voluntary sector has also grown considerably over the last two years resulting in greater opportunities for collaboration. Therefore, it was identified that the original business case needed to be reviewed and an options and feasibility study undertaken to identify the best option for delivering Super Hubs in Herefordshire. This report outlines the options that have been identified and reviewed and sets out the recommended option for delivery.
2. Option 1 - Do nothing – this is not recommended because the delivery of Super Hubs will support the council's county plan ambitions by strengthening communities to ensure everyone lives well and safely together, it will help to ensure all children are healthy, safe and inspired to achieve and will protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people. It will do this by continuing to develop approaches through Talk Community that build on people's strengths and the many resources they have in their local communities, such as our exceptionally strong voluntary sector.
3. Option 2 - Super Hubs delivered and run by the Council - This option would involve the Council leading and would primarily focus on the current Council owned and available assets in communities and explore how we could utilise them more effectively to integrate our own and partner services to bring them closer to our most vulnerable families and residents. This option is not recommended because this is not a true collaborative approach, community organisations could feel disengaged by this approach and communities are less likely to engage if this is council led.
4. Option 3 – Enhanced Talk Community hubs/ Super Hubs delivered and run by the community - This is the option that is recommended as it would ensure that Hubs are community led and driven; and would focus on individual community need and demand, allowing communities to design, own and deliver an enhanced Talk Community hub/ Super Hub which expands on the county's current hub infrastructure and is appropriate and proportionate for their community. Capital funding would be allocated to communities based on a robust application and appraisal process. The Council's role would be as an enabler and facilitator for the community and to support the development of placed based partnerships across the system. The development of a robust application process supports a platform for community led decision making.

Key considerations

5. Since the original business case was developed a number of factors have meant that the project has not progressed. The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown resulted in a number of projects being put on hold, including Super Hubs, whilst priorities and resources were focused on supporting our local communities and our most vulnerable residents affected by the pandemic.
6. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, it also presented opportunities, particularly around the way communities came together to support their local residents. During this time, Talk Community was the council led community response across Herefordshire, working with communities to support our most vulnerable residents. As a result, Herefordshire Council re-established and strengthened its relationship with its local communities and embedded Talk Community as its strategic approach to working with communities. Alongside this, the Talk Community Hubs project (a separate project) was implemented and this has gone from strength to strength. Currently there have been over 60 Talk Community hubs (TCH) launched across Herefordshire.
7. In addition, the government announced the potential of £1m funding from central government to support the development of Family Hubs. Unfortunately Herefordshire was not one of the 75 local authorities chosen to receive this, therefore the Children and Young People's Directorate have been collaborating with Talk Community to discuss the opportunity of utilising Super Hubs as Family Hubs.
8. Therefore, taking these factors into consideration, and the opportunity to build on the existing good work going on in communities through Talk Community, it was agreed to review the scope of the Super Hubs project and undertake an options appraisal and feasibility study to explore how this project can be taken forward. This Business Case (appendix 1) sets the rationale behind the Super Hubs project, the options that have been reviewed and the recommendations for moving this project forward.
9. Herefordshire's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which was undertaken in 2021 identified a number of key messages including the double edged sword of rurality: natural environment vs challenges of service delivery, with persistent areas of deprivation in some urban areas and other hidden pockets. Talk Community Hubs support residents within their local community, by building on this model and enhancing Herefordshire's hub network the aim will be to target those areas of persistent deprivation and offer access to services at a more local level.

Overview of the options

10. **Table One: Options Appraisal**

Option	Pros Summary	Cons Summary
Option One Do nothing	Note - This option has been included as a baseline comparator. 'Doing nothing' is not considered a viable option, as it does not address the council's priorities and challenges nor contributes to developing preventative approaches to manage and reduce future demand on formal care and support services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not address key issues and challenges for communities • Does not support a collaborative approach to working with and supporting our communities
Option Two Council Led	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces the risk of duplication / overlap with other projects and initiatives • Strong partnership with health to maximise efficiencies and bring health and social care services closer to communities • Maximisation and more efficient use of council assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council led and not community led and owned • Not a true collaborative approach • Restrictions / limitations around some of the council assets and how they can be used • Could be politically sensitive • Communities less likely to engage if this is council led • Community groups/organisations could feel disengaged by this approach
Option Three Community Led	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community owned and led • Council is perceived as a respected partner in communities by setting and leading a new way of working with communities, as an enabler and facilitator • Greater community buy-in • Builds on and compliments the existing Talk Community Hubs model and infrastructure • True collaboration and partnership working with our communities • May stimulate additional hubs which will bring added benefits to communities and residents • Community groups already have a strong community network that can be built on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential insufficient community response / buy in from the community • Risk that hubs could fail due to financial sustainability • Investment made and the community do not deliver • Lack of community leadership to deliver vision and achieve outcomes. • Capital investment only, no revenue funding to support future sustainability

Proposal

11. Based on the findings of the options appraisal and business case, (appendix 1) it is recommended that option 3 is taken forwards to allow the community to bid for funding as part

of a capital bid process to either enhance an existing Talk Community Hub or develop a Super Hub.

12. This is the recommended option for taking this project forward because it is more likely that this project will succeed if it is owned, driven and delivered by the community. The council can work with communities to help them succeed in delivering a Super Hub by enabling, facilitating and supporting them to shape and develop a delivery model for a Super Hub that is based on local need and demand.

Community Impact

13. This project supports the council's County Plan and Community objectives to "offer a range of services that enable people to gain new skills, get help and advice, access a culture and arts offer and receive health and care services" whilst also recognising that communities across Herefordshire differ tremendously. As well as "developing further preventative family-centred approaches with partners. This will include building up our early help approach by making best use of community spaces which might include Talk Community hubs and children's centres."
14. The Super Hubs will support delivery of objective C04: Work to minimise inequalities in our communities and C06: Further develop the Talk Community Approach as outlined in the councils delivery plan 2022/23 This project will also support objectives C01& C02 Integrate a "Right Help – Right Time" approach within the Talk Community programme, so families are better supported within communities.

Environmental Impact

15. This decision will have significant impact on some of the environmental factors and success measures that are outlined in the councils County Plan.
 - Reduce the council's carbon emissions
 - Work in partnership with others to reduce county carbon emissions
 - Improve the air quality within Herefordshire
16. The aim of Super Hubs is to increase access to services within local communities. This will decrease the amount of travel required across the county to access these services.
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 development of this project will aim to minimise any adverse environmental impact and will actively seek opportunities to improve and enhance environmental performance. Environmental impact will be referenced within the capital bid application to ensure this can be taken into account.

Equality duty

19. 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.

20. As part of the capital bid process all applicants will be requested to assess the equality impact of their project as part of their application

21. 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. Our providers will be made aware of their contractual requirements in regards to equality legislation.

Resource implications

22. Of the £2m project budget, £100k will be spent on the resources needed to deliver the project and £1.9m will be spent on successful grant awards to external community groups. In line with the business case (appendix 1) a detailed process will be designed for capital bids to be submitted and measured against. These grant awards will only be for capital works.

Capital cost of project	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Project Management/ Internal professional fees		34	33	33	100
Grant awards		700	600	600	1,900
TOTAL		734	633	633	2,000

Funding streams (indicate whether base budget / external / grant / capital borrowing)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Capital Receipts Reserves		734	633	633	2,000
TOTAL		734	633	633	2,000

23. There are no ongoing revenue implications associated with this project, as these will be the responsibility of the organisation running that hub.

24. Where projects require a procurement via external service providers this will be undertaken in line with the council's contract procedure rules to ensure a compliant procurement route and value for money when delivering these projects

Legal implications

25. The project should have a positive impact on the community and the Council can provide assistance of this nature. This assistance in the form of a grant may raise certain legal issues.

26. The process for capital bids to be submitted and the selection of recipients must be robust.

27. Legal will have to ensure that the grant agreements meet the minimum requirements for grant agreements, including satisfying the subsidy laws. The drafting and negotiation of the grant agreements must be overseen by Legal.

Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Community Interest – if there is insufficient interest from the community for the capital grants, the project may not meet its potential.	Some community interest has already been identified. Engagment with communities through various methods will be undertaken to promote and support the scheme
Future sustainability of the project following the capital investment	Sustainability will form part of the grant criteria to ensure that succesful bids have considered and planned for future sustainability
Lack of available appropriate spaces and assests in communities to deliver Super Hubs	The project is linked in with the strategic assests review to ensure it is sighted on potential options. Also a number of TCH's are already established so a new assest may not be required .
TCH's may not have a long term lease or freehold arrangement for the asset which could have an impact if a grant is awarded to enhance the building and it is then not used in the future by the community	Legal will support the devlopment of the criteria to ensure this risk is mitigated against.
Lack of council revenue funding	The recomemnded option for this to be community led will reduce the amount of revenue funding required.

28. Project risks will be managed as part of business as usual processes. Anything requiring escalation will be through the Community Wellbeing Programme Board and if deemed necessary will be recorded on the Community Wellbeing directorate risk register.

Consultees

29. A Talk Community all member briefing was held on 29.11.2022 11.00-12.30 this session was repeated on 30.11.2022 17.30-19.00 via zoom and was open to all members. This session was also recorded and uploaded to the members you tube channel to ensure all members who were not able to attend have access to the information. This briefing session covered the wide range of areas that Talk Community encompasses including the proposal around Super Hubs.
30. A political group consultation was undertaken on 08.12.2022 15.30 – 16.30 via zoom. This was open to all members and was also recorded and shared via the members YouTube channel to ensure all who were not able to attend had access to the information.
31. The response from members attending the political group consultation was positive, some discussions around potential criteria for the capital bid process and also outcomes for the scheme were discussed, these have been noted and will feed into grant criteria.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Super Hubs Business Case 0.1

Background papers

None

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Governance	John Coleman	Date 12/01/2023
Finance	Karen Morris	Date 09/01/2023
Legal	Patricia Haywood	Date 11/01/2023
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 21/12/2022
Equality Duty	Harriett Yellin	Date 03/01/2023
Procurement	Lee Robertson	Date 21/12/2022
Risk	Jo Needs	Date 21/12/2022

Approved by Hillary Hall, Director Community Wellbeing Date 16/01/2023