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Hampshire  
County Council

## NOTICE OF MEETING

**Meeting** Culture and Communities Select Committee

**Date and Time** Thursday, 18th March, 2021 at 2.00 pm

**Place** Remote meeting

**Enquiries to** members.services@hants.gov.uk

John Coughlan CBE  
Chief Executive  
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

## FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting is being held remotely and will be recorded and broadcast live via the County Council's website.

### AGENDA

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 3 - 6)**

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 January 2021.

**4. DEPUTATIONS**

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

**5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements the Chairman may wish to make.

**6. SUMMARY OF COVID IMPACTS AND RECOVERY POSITION (Pages 7 - 18)**

To consider a report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services with an update on how cultural and community services are responding to the Covid pandemic.

**7. COUNTY FARMS POLICY (Pages 19 - 42)**

To consider a report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services with the revised County Farms Policy.

**8. RIGHTS OF WAY AND COUNTRYSIDE PATHS (COVID) (Pages 43 - 72)**

To consider a report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services setting out the Path Recovery Programme.

**9. WINCHESTER DISCOVERY CENTRE – FUTURE STRATEGY (Pages 73 - 106)**

To consider a report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services setting out proposals for the future strategy at Winchester Discovery Centre.

**10. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 107 - 112)**

To consider the Committee's forthcoming Work Programme.

**ABOUT THIS AGENDA:**

**On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.**

**ABOUT THIS MEETING:**

**The press and public are welcome to observe the public sessions of the meeting via the webcast.**

# Agenda Item 3

AT A MEETING of the Culture and Communities Select Committee of  
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held as a remote meeting on Tuesday, 12th  
January, 2021

Chairman:

\* Councillor Anna McNair Scott

- |                                 |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| * Councillor Christopher Carter | * Councillor Pal Hayre       |
| * Councillor John Bennison      | * Councillor Dominic Hiscock |
| Councillor Fred Birkett         | * Councillor Rob Mocatta     |
| * Councillor Jackie Branson     | * Councillor Michael White   |
| * Councillor Ann Briggs         |                              |
| * Councillor Zilliah Brooks     |                              |
| * Councillor Peter Chegwyn      |                              |
| Councillor Daniel Clarke        |                              |
| * Councillor Rod Cooper         |                              |

\*Present

Also present with the invitation of the Chairman:

Councillor Edward Heron – Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage,  
Countryside and Rural Affairs

## 110. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Daniel Clarke.

## 111. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

## 112. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

**113. DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations.

**114. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman was pleased to note that the staff consultation phase of the Library Service Transformation had been completed and that the savings requirement had been met without the need for any compulsory redundancies. Blackfield, Elson, Fair Oak, Horndean, Lee-on-the-Solent, Lyndhurst, Odiham and South Ham Libraries had all closed with negotiations underway with regards to transitions to Independent Community Libraries.

The Chairman announced that the Library Service had been awarded £34,000 to act as a Census Support Service and that this service would be operated from a number of libraries within Hampshire. Members heard that, in December 2020, the Library Service submitted an Expression of Interest to take part in the Reading Agency's 'Reading Friends' Scheme and that the scheme used volunteers to keep in touch with isolated or lonely residents.

The Chairman noted that the Registration Service had been at the forefront of the response to the Covid pandemic and that during the first lockdown staff had needed to register deaths by phone for the first time in history. During this period, staff had received many unsolicited compliments from the public. Furthermore, the Chairman was delighted to advise that the backlog of 1800 birth registrations and 400 Citizenship ceremonies had now been largely addressed.

The Committee heard that visits to Countryside Service sites and Country Parks had seen a significant increase this year, averaging 20% higher than last year and over 50% increase in visits during lockdowns. A new Covid-secure approach to events had enabled several Christmas activities to be available to visitors.

**115. 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET REPORT FOR CULTURE, COMMUNITIES AND BUSINESS SERVICES**

The Committee considered the report and presentation of the Directors of Corporate Services – Corporate Resources and Culture, Communities and Business Services outlining the 2021/22 revenue budget for cultural and community services.

It was confirmed that there were no new savings proposals being brought forward within the report and that the 2021/22 budget formally removed the Transformation to 2021 (T21) savings as had previously been agreed. Members noted the range of services provided within the department and that the majority of these were largely dependent on income generation. A list of T21 savings targets was presented and it was noted that each CCBS target had been achieved on time and, in some cases, early.



In response to Members' questions it was confirmed that:

- The revised budget included some one-off additions where the cost of change was being used to support savings programmes (as referred to in paragraph 31 of the report).
- That financial loss as a result of the Covid pandemic was being managed corporately and not via departments.
- That the car parking income at Country Parks had seen a slight increase at times throughout the pandemic – at around 15%. Memberships and admissions generally were lower than under normal circumstances.

RESOLVED:

That the Culture and Communities Select Committee support the recommendations being made to the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs as below:

To approve for submission to the Leader and the Cabinet:

- i. The revised revenue budget for 2020/21 as set out in Appendix 2.
- ii. The summary revenue budget for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 2.

#### 116. **CCBS CLIMATE CHANGE - NATURAL ENVIRONMENT WORKSTREAM**

The Committee considered the presentation of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services outlining some of the climate change work that was progressing within the department.

The climate change objectives and programme workstreams were set out as were the sequential steps being taken within each area. Examples from ongoing site work was used to illustrate how climate change tools and processes were being implemented.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed that:

- The County Council was a member of farm cluster groups across Hampshire and that the groups offer a valuable opportunity to work with farmers, to raise awareness for issues and for education purposes as opposed to providing a direct advice based service for Hampshire farms.
- That there are no solar panels on buildings within Country Parks mostly because these sites are heritage/have listed status. Country Parks were considering other ways in which solar technology could be implemented.
- That the Countryside Service had made a significant contribution to the work of the Hampshire 2050 Commission which was reaching out to residents, school and stakeholders across the County regarding climate change initiatives.
- That the County Council were working with the Hampshire Wildlife Trust to develop collective strategies to specific climate issues such as nitrate run off.

RESOLVED:

That the Culture and Communities Select Committee notes the content of the presentation.

117. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Transformation and Governance which set out the Committee's upcoming work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the following items be added to the Work Programme:

- Covid update for cultural and community services (information update item) – 22 March 2021
- Footpath conditions (including Country Parks) (information update item) – 22 March 2021
- County Farms Policy (pre-scrutiny item) – 22 March 2021
- Country Parks Transformation Programme – 19 July 2021

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee</b>	Culture and Communities Select Committee
<b>Date:</b>	18 March 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Summary of Covid Impacts and Recovery position
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

**Contact name:** Felicity Roe

**Tel:** 01962 847876

**Email:** [felicity.roe@hants.gov.uk](mailto:felicity.roe@hants.gov.uk)

#### **Purpose of this report**

1. To provide a summary of the impacts of Covid-19 on services over the past year during the course of the pandemic, and the current position in terms of re-opening and recovery.

#### **Recommendations**

2. Note the contents of this report which provides a summary of the exceptional events and responses by services to the Covid-19 crisis, and the ongoing challenges and opportunities.

#### **Executive Summary**

3. This report summarises the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our services. It sets out how the services have responded throughout the pandemic over the last year, and the plan for re-opening and resuming services in line with the current national roadmap out of lockdown.
4. Over the last year, services have moved in and out of response and recovery phases, with limitations to different aspects of service provision at every stage. This crisis has been unusual due to the significant period it has extended over and this has put considerable pressure on services and staff.
5. The priority for services has been to remain open where possible whilst ensuring safety of our staff and service users through compliance with the government guidelines. The report recognises that services have reacted quickly to respond to the changing position of the pandemic, and that the resilience, adaptability and commitment from staff has been extraordinary. Even where sites have had to close, services have continued to operate throughout the lockdown periods and have provided invaluable support to the Covid response across the County Council.

6. This report sets out the key impacts of the pandemic for services in the last year, including:
  - The service provision impact, involving closures of sites and activities, and withdrawal of specific services;
  - A significant financial impact, particularly in relation to income generation;
  - The major challenges encountered, including workforce impacts and changes to the way that services are delivered to ensure they are Covid compliant, as well as rising demand in some areas;
  - The positives and developing opportunities we have seen, including the incredible efforts by staff, the acceleration of digital use, innovation to drive new offers, and an increased appreciation by the public of our services, in particular outdoor spaces.
7. Finally, the report sets out how the services are working to re-open and recover in line with the government's current roadmap out of lockdown with all services expected to fully resume by late June 2021.

### **Contextual information**

8. Since the pandemic crisis was declared in March 2020, there have been 3 formal national lockdowns and a range of different restrictions enforced. The first national lockdown started in March 2020 and saw significant closures across our services, most of which were lifted by early July 2020. A second national lockdown then followed in November, after which local tiers were introduced.
9. The third national lockdown came into effect from 5 January 2021, and the government have produced a roadmap setting out how the restrictions are expected to ease over the coming months. From 21 June at the earliest, the government aims to remove all limits on social contact. CCBS services are putting plans in motion to re-open and resume activities that have been closed, as well as consider the medium-longer term recovery journey.

### **Impact on service provision of the national lockdowns**

10. When the pandemic crisis was declared in March 2020 and we entered our first national lockdown, there were immediate and significant impacts across our services. A number of services had to close including libraries, country park car parks and related facilities, farm attractions (Manor Farm and Staunton), Titchfield Haven, Hillier Gardens, Hampshire Record Office, and all Hampshire Outdoor Centres. Marriage and civil partnership ceremonies were cancelled – with the exception of death bed marriages - and face-to-face birth registrations and Notice of marriage appointments were stopped. Inquests for the Coroners service were put on hold. Trading Standards inspections largely ceased and Hampshire Scientific Service

had to put on hold work programmes involving site visits to schools and care homes, and adapted working practices. The asbestos re-inspection programme (condition checking of known asbestos) was put on hold. All office based staff were asked to work from home where possible.

11. Following this immediate response period, guidance began to be made available from central government to support industries in resuming their services. Our services worked hard to understand government guidance and put in place measures to enable services to re-open in a 'Covid-safe' way as soon as possible: ensuring the safety of our staff and customers is a priority. Before re-opening services, a risk assessment was required for each site to ensure that suitable control measures were in place, including reduced capacity at sites, social distancing, additional cleaning, hygiene procedures, all supported by adequate signage and communications.
12. Aspects of services began to re-open from May 2020 including the County Park car parks and toilets, Calshot car park and slipways, and the Home Library Service. Sir Harold Hillier Gardens opened for pre-booked visits in early June. As national restrictions were further lifted in early July, additional services were able to re-open including libraries, farm attractions, Titchfield Haven, and Hampshire Record Office, and small wedding ceremonies were permitted to proceed.
13. In parallel with the efforts to re-open sites, services also reacted quickly to put in place alternative channels for customers to ensure continued access to critical services. At the point of the first lockdown the Library service immediately invested in more digital books and pivoted the physical offer to digital platforms, using social media and online forms to provide a virtual library experience. The Registration service made substantial revisions in process in order to manage death registrations by phone removing the need for face-to-face appointments. Trading Standards set up a system for virtual inspections.
14. May to October marked a period of relative recovery for the services with a significant part of the service provision resumed and services adapted to the changed circumstances. The Registration service caught up on the backlog of birth registrations whilst handling numerous requests for changes to ceremonies. Demand for asbestos services returned with routine services delivered with Covid secure procedures in place. The commercial sites focused on boosting income as visitors returned, including maximising camping uptake and offering limited activities for small groups, such as Marine Explorers at Calshot and guided walks at Lepe. The Library service developed and launched a Ready Reads collection service – where library staff select books according to a reader's preferences which customers can then collect from their local branch – which proved hugely successful.
15. Services also played a role in supporting efforts to manage the impacts of the pandemic. Trading standards developed new processes around market surveillance of PPE equipment and trading during lockdown. Hampshire Scientific Service adapted the method used for measuring alcohol in blood to test hand sanitisers and have been instrumental in

identifying fake products (some with no alcohol in whatsoever), enabling them to be removed from the market place or being distributed to frontline workers. The Senior Coroner was responsible for chairing the Excess Death Advisory Group which met regularly, and the service has supported the preparation for temporary additional mortuary provision in preparation for an anticipated increase in body storage.

16. The second national lockdown forced a number of sites to close again, and ceremonies to stop with the exception of emergency ceremonies including death bed marriage. Libraries closed for browsing but remained open for Ready Reads collection, essential PC use and limited face to face learning. Car parks, toilets and take-away catering remained open at Calshot and the Country parks, although the farm attractions and Titchfield Haven were closed.
17. As the restrictions eased in December, most sites were able to re-open, some Christmas activities and outdoor trails were able to proceed, and small ceremonies were able to resume. However, this relief was brief as Hampshire was moved into Tier 4 from 26 December and the third national lockdown came into effect from 5 January 2021. Government guidance on what could or should stay open or close has been less prescriptive and in some cases contradictory. The country parks, and the Hillier Gardens are currently open, with ANPR running and takeaway food. The outdoor activity centres remain closed but the parking at Calshot spit is open. Registration services have had to prioritise death registrations due to the numbers involved (January saw a 38% rise in death registrations compared to the same period last year) and birth registration appointments were paused, resuming from the beginning of March. Weddings remain significantly impacted and Registration has done their utmost to reassure disappointed couples and re-schedule ceremonies. The libraries service is closed to browsing but continues to offer a 'click and collect' service, a huge digital book resource and access to the 'Go-Online' terminals through a referral system with Adult Services and Job Centre Plus. Hampshire Scientific Service are open and functioning effectively. Trading Standards Weights and measures inspections continue, and Buy with Confidence audits are being carried out virtually.

## Financial Impacts

18. As a result of the pandemic and service closures, **income has been significantly impacted**. In terms of income there is projected to be in the region of £2m losses for 20/21 within each of Registration, Outdoors Centres service and Countryside. Smaller, but significant income losses are also being felt in Libraries service (£900k), Hillier Gardens (£500k), Scientific Service (£300k), Asbestos (£270k), Trading Standards (£100k) and Archives (£85k). Additional costs directly due to Covid have also been reported, particularly in relation to purchasing of protective and hygiene equipment, and accommodating new working practices. To some extent these income losses and additional costs have been offset by a reduction in other costs, including savings made through furloughing staff, but there

is a significant gap across the department. It is uncertain to what extent ongoing impacts will be felt as we move into the new financial year and services begin to re-open and recover.

19. Hiller Gardens applied to the National Lottery Cultural Recovery Fund and were awarded a grant of up to £920k that should cover most of its loss of income due to Covid, and support the recovery to drive back visitors.
20. Hampshire County Council's strategy in dealing with the financial impact of Covid-19 was set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy update report to Cabinet and the County Council in July 2020. The strategy sees Covid-19 as a one-off event (albeit a significant one) and has identified funding sources at a corporate level (including Government grant provided for this purpose) to deal with the identified net impact for the County Council as a whole. At a departmental level the budget position has been analysed to separate out the impact of Covid-19 from business as usual activities. The financial impact of Covid-19 will be met from the corporate provision so there will be no impact on the financial position of individual departments.

### Key Challenges

21. It has been critical that services were compliant to government guidance issued, and this has changed multiple times over the course of the year. The pandemic has required services to **adapt quickly and adopt new ways of working** over the last year. The planning for the recovery of services has involved extensive work on site specific risk assessments within the overarching County Council approach to Covid and other risk more generally. This has involved introducing new protocols at frontline sites to ensure Covid measures are in place and adhered to, as well as changes to the way that staff were managed allowing for small work bubbles to form. New staff rotas had to be developed and significant staff communications were required. As an example of adaptive change, soon after the first lockdown commenced, the scientists at HSS adapted their working patterns over 7 days – combining early starts and late finishes to ensure the work could continue to be delivered while remaining Covid compliant within their office and laboratory space.
22. Services usually rely on many thousand hours from volunteers. Whilst volunteers have continued to play a critical role in areas, for example in the delivery of the Home Library Service, overall **volunteer hours have been significantly reduced**, largely due to Covid measures, reduced opening hours and less appetite from volunteers. This has had impact across many services, but in particular in Countryside where the invaluable volunteer hours that contribute to the winter work programme have been sorely missed. As services look to move into recovery, the return of volunteers is very important.
23. **Higher demand on some services** has also caused issues. Since the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic in March 2020 there has been an increase in the use of our County Parks and Rights of Way. Visits to the

Country Parks have risen by between 120% – 160% over the past 6 months when compared to last year despite reduced catering facilities and no events or activities for much of that period. Whilst this increase in visitors to enjoy our sites is positive, this has led to considerable pressure on sites, as well as some misuse of our countryside, which has put additional pressure on staff (for example dealing with increased litter and clearing of late night parties). Over the recent colder months, the numbers of visitors have been manageable and mostly behaving sensibly. Spot check visits by the Health and Safety Executive early in the new year have confirmed this.

24. The Coroners service has continued to function throughout the pandemic with ever increasing workloads and demands associated with rising death rates. The service fielded a huge number of calls at the beginning of the pandemic from medical professionals who were unclear on the referral requirements for deaths related to Covid. Registration service were also impacted by high death rates with staff dealing exclusively with back to back telephone death registrations. January 2021 saw death registrations levels up 38% compared to the same period in the previous year. Early on in the pandemic the service trained a significant number of additional staff from the libraries and trading standards services to support the worst-case peak in the projections. As another example of services working flexibly to support each other Archives and Records took on the function of preparing and issuing death certificates on behalf of Registration. Over a three-month period, working from Hampshire Record Office, a team of four staff issued nearly 13,000 death certificates.
25. There has also been considerable pressure on the ceremonies coordination team due to the multiple changes in restrictions, with thousands of calls over the pandemic period. Many customers have cancelled and re-booked ceremonies (for some rebooking 4 or 5 times) and the team have worked hard to manage this and support customers.
26. The pressure of the extraordinary year has undoubtedly led to concerns over **staff wellbeing**. Anxiety due to the national crisis, absences related to Covid, new ways of working, increased pressure, and uncertainty throughout the year have all contributed to a challenging time for staff. Staff have shown incredible resilience and many resources to support wellbeing have been developed corporately, but it remains a key priority for us to ensure staff are supported. The department has also commissioned interventions within the Coroners Service to support staff dealing directly with the death management process and its associated personal impacts. This has been much appreciated by the team, securing business continuity during a period of high stress and anxiety.

### **Key Successes and Opportunities**

27. **The extraordinary efforts from all staff** have been humbling throughout this long crisis. Staff have worked incredibly hard to keep services running and to accommodate the changes in a flexible and innovative



way, putting the needs of our service users as a priority. We have seen teams pull together to overcome the multitude of challenges, demonstrating commitment and compassion. Just one examples of this is the efforts our ceremonies team have put in to support their customers through a very challenging time. Following the announcement of the second lockdown in November late on a Saturday night, on the Sunday the team called around all those with ceremonies booked in the days immediately after the Thursday start to lockdown, offering to reschedule them to earlier in the week, prompting compliments from customers for the service provided. A ceremony was even attended with one hour's notice so that a couple could get married before lockdown 3 came into effect. During this period, the Library service have also been running and implementing Hampshire's largest ever public consultation on Library Service Transformation Strategy to 2021. Staff consultation commenced in September with those leaving through voluntary redundancy exiting by 31st December.

28. The **increasing use of digital** has been very important throughout the pandemic, as a critical route to keep connected with the public. This has created new opportunities for the future. Across all services, we have seen significant increase in web visits and social media interactions, and we have been able to keep our newsletter subscribers updated. Our digital channels have been vital to keep customers informed about what they might expect at our sites and to keep people up to date with the latest information. Services have also been able to use digital channels to carry out tasks previously conducted face-to-face, including virtual inspections and Buy With Confidence audits by Trading Standards, virtual inquests for Coroners services where possible, and virtual citizenship ceremonies within Registration.
29. Within libraries, the digital offer for the service has expanded significantly throughout the pandemic. The service has invested in more digital books and pivoted the physical offer to digital to provide a virtual library experience. This continues to include a weekly schedule of activities such as baby RhymeTime and Storytime sessions, children's activities, digital reading groups and wellbeing videos. Social media audiences have grown exponentially in the last year and a new audience is enjoying online accessibility to library services. Library videos have been viewed over half a million times. eBooks and eAudiobooks have been heavily promoted, providing alternative formats for even the most traditional readers and usage has nearly doubled compared to the same period in the previous year. The service moved delivery of the national annual children's Summer Reading Challenge to a digital platform and this proved successful with 7,320 children taking part (the highest in the South East Region). The service also ran a Hampshire Winter Reading Challenge for the first time, following a similar online platform, attracting 2,258 challengers during January and February 2021. Staff skills and new teams have been rapidly developed to accommodate the digital demand.
30. We have seen excellent innovation and a number of **new services have been designed and launched to support and protect the public**

throughout the lockdowns. The new library Ready Reads service has proved hugely successful - 13,000 customers have requested Ready Reads and many have discovered new genres and authors along the way. Over 6,000 Ready Reads customers remain active, collecting book bundles every 3-4 weeks. The Home Library Service team have also developed a Reading Friends service, launched through the Reading Agency and supported by government funding. This involves a telephone-based service that links volunteers to people who may be vulnerable, isolated or at risk of loneliness. The service aims to create social connections and get people talking. Face to face 'Discovery time' sessions for new parents have also been launched at some libraries, targeted at new parents and focussing on early years literacy and development, and parental attachment. The library service have also been supporting the development of a domestic abuse project with Hampshire police. The commissioned domestic abuse charity has recently begun pilot projects at Chandlers Ford Library and Gosport Discovery Centre. The initial stages of the project will enable staff to gain a basic level of training and support anyone comes into branch and discloses to signpost effectively. There has been an investment in new stock both in branch and through digital offer. Digital books all went out on loan quickly so more have been purchased.

31. Within Trading Standards, the Animal Health teams made welfare 'check ins' with all dairy farmers in the first lockdown. These farmers had seen the market for their produce disappear overnight due to closures of pubs; hotels and restaurants in periods of lockdown. We continue to maintain our networks with Farmers to monitor Animal Welfare, and support their Mental Wellness.
32. With school residential visits unable to happen, Calshot launched a new offer targeted at family bubbles to make use of the accommodation space available and providing the opportunity for families to enjoy these activities. The Calshot family adventure holidays will continue to be promoted and open up a new commercial offer which could be expanded beyond the pandemic.
33. Our communication and **commitment to put customers first** has led to commercial benefit in some areas. We have built relationships with new schools who have been keen to use our outdoor centres, where they have been let down by the private sector.
34. Enabling **access to our outdoor spaces has been vital for public wellbeing**, particularly during lockdowns, and the appetite to use these spaces has been huge. Research commissioned through the countryside service in May 2020 showed that 99% of people recognised that outdoor spaces have a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing, and 72% believed that our country parks had a large impact in improving their families quality of life. This increased appreciation for the countryside and outdoor spaces, along with evidence that new users have been using our sites and spaces, presents opportunities for the future. We

can also anticipate a rise in 'staycations' with more people seeking to spend their holidays and free time within Hampshire.

### **The Roadmap out of lockdown**

35. All areas are gearing up to re-open again in line with the government roadmap. From 29 March ceremonies are able to proceed with the legal limit of 6. From Step 2 of the timeline (12 April) a number of services can re-open including Libraries, farm attractions, Titchfield Haven, Hampshire Records Office, Calshot Hangar and the Outdoor Centre campsites. Outdoor catering can resume and retail areas can re-open. Ceremonies will be allowed with up to 15 people. At step 3 (17 May) indoor attractions (e.g. the Chapel), indoor catering, events, and indoor play areas will be able to resume, and ceremonies will be expanded to 30 people. At step 4 (21 June) it is hoped that all services will have resumed and restrictions lifted.
36. As this timeline progresses we hope to get clarity on the extent of covid-safe measures will need to remain in place, and we will continue to align to government guidance.
37. The recreational services are preparing to maximise income generation over the spring/summer and beyond, capitalising on the increased staycations and appetite to enjoy the outdoors. The outdoor activity centres are looking forward to bringing school groups back, both for day visits initially and for residential at the appropriate stage. The Library service are seeking to have phased reintroduction of groups and activities, with face to face learning and room hire resuming. Unsurprisingly as this roadmap was published, many people are seeking to rearrange their wedding ceremonies, with significant demand beyond June 21 when it is hoped all restrictions on weddings will be lifted.
38. Coroners service caseload remains exceptionally high and they will be seeking to address the backlog in relation to inquests, but this may take up to a year to return to normal levels.
39. There remains uncertainty around how the pandemic may evolve, the timelines linked to the roadmap out of lockdown, and how our customer behaviours may have change beyond the pandemic. Services will continue to adapt as the situation evolves. The impacts of the pandemic will be lasting and whilst resuming services remains a priority, capitalising on the opportunities that have arisen and moving to a 'new normal' is also vital.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy, and independent lives:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	yes

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation).
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard to:

- The need to remove or minimize disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low

### **2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

The proposed Summary of Covid Impacts and Recovery position should not raise any equality or diversity issues.

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## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee</b>	Culture and Communities Select Committee
<b>Date:</b>	18 March 2021
<b>Title:</b>	County Farms Policy
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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### Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the County Farms policy review process and conclusions and bring forward the new Policy for approval.

### Recommendations

2. That the Culture and Communities Select Committee recommend that the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs:
  - i) Approves the new County Farms Policy set out at Appendix 1.
  - ii) Notes that the future leadership of the County Farms Service will be provided by the interim Assistant Director for Recreation and Natural Environment in CCBS.
  - iii) Notes the intention to bring forward an annual performance report for the County Farms Service commencing in 2022.

### Executive Summary

3. The report outlines the policy review process that has been undertaken for the County Farms Service and sets out a proposed new County Farms Policy that looks towards 2050 to continue to attract and support new entrants to farming while delivering high quality environmental, social and economic outcomes for the people and place of Hampshire.

4. In September 2019, the Executive Member for Countryside and Rural Affairs [approved a review](#) of the County Council's Policy for County Farms. The purpose of the review was to ensure a viable framework for County Farms service delivery in relation to emerging policies on Brexit, mitigation, climate change and the Vision for Hampshire 2050 and to consider the approach to farm replacement in light of land identified for development under the County Council's strategic land programme.
5. This report provides a summary of the review process and conclusions and how these have been incorporated into the new Policy and brings forward the Policy for approval.

### **Contextual Information**

6. HCC's County Farms Service was established from the inter-war years onwards as the County Smallholdings Service, under legislation designed to support entry into the farming industry, to produce more food and provide ex-servicemen with employment in the growth area of agriculture.
7. Legislation was consolidated into the Agriculture Act 1970 with the aim of supporting young and new entrants into farming by providing affordable land and buildings under County Council ownership to new farmers, in a sector that has significant start-up capital costs, and where the average age of farmers is now 60. The objective of enabling new entrants into farming remains a core principle of the County Farms Service today.
8. The County Farms Review [report](#) of 14 April 2010, approved by the Executive Member for Policy and Resources, set out the approach to the ongoing management of the County Farms Service and Estate for a 15 year period to 2025 with reviews on a 5 yearly basis.

### The County Farms Estate

9. Hampshire County Council is one of 43 authorities (21 unitary authorities and 22 county councils) maintaining a farm estate. At the start of the review in 2019, the estate comprised 1,914 hectares of land across just under 30 different county locations, including 38 equipped holdings (that is to say, with a house and/or farm buildings), bare land lettings, grazing and some other arrangements (e.g. allotments, in-hand woodland & tracks). The Estate includes around 350 buildings and other structures.
10. Equipped holdings range in size from the smallest at approximately 1.8 hectares (4.45 acres) to the largest at approximately 114 hectares (282 acres). The holdings support a range of farm sectors, with principal use by



area being for dairy, arable/horticulture and livestock. Some holdings are also currently occupied by horse livery enterprises.

11. The holdings vary in terms of their size, location, condition and therefore their suitability for particular types of farm business and rental income potential. The performance of the tenants' businesses is also variable with a number of very successful operations and others that are less so. A summary of the County Farms holdings and current tenancies is provided at Appendix 2.
12. The County Farms estate offers wider commercial opportunities, with the farm buildings at some locations having the potential to provide commercial opportunities, and land across a number of holdings is already identified for development within the County Council's strategic land programme.

### Legislative Framework

13. The County Farms Estate is a 'smallholdings' estate and the County Council is a smallholdings authority as defined in Part 3 of the Agriculture Act 1970. The Act provides county councils with a discretionary power to provide opportunities for appropriately qualified persons to farm on their own account.
14. Where land held for smallholdings purposes is not required for that use, the 1970 Act allows councils to let the land. This power is in addition to the general power of local authorities to sell, exchange or appropriate any of its land under the Local Government Act 1972.
15. The Agriculture Act 2020 has not changed the discrete legislation applying to county smallholdings, save that retirement notice provisions now align with pensionable age. The Act also empowers Defra to provide funding, which it says it will do through the New Entrants Support Scheme, working with councils that have 'county farms' and others "*to create lasting opportunities for new entrants to access land, infrastructure and support to establish successful and innovative businesses*". Defra's plan is published in the November 2020 policy paper [The Path to Sustainable Farming: An Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024](#) (page 54).
16. The Agriculture Act 2020 sets out various provisions for farmers and land managers in England to receive public money for "public goods" – such as better air and water quality, thriving wildlife, soil health, or measures to reduce flooding and tackle the effects of climate change – through various new schemes, including the new Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs). In practice, ELMs will be the key and only public funding support mechanism available to farmers and land managers currently receiving the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) direct payment (which largely pays farmers based on the total amount of land farmed), and it also replaces funding under other key environmental schemes, including Countryside Stewardship.

Further detail on the transition towards the new schemes is set out in Defra's [Agricultural Transition Plan](#) policy paper.

### **Approach to the review**

17. The County Farms Policy review was initiated in autumn 2019 following approval from the Executive Member for Countryside and Rural Affairs on 19 September 2019. The [report](#) to the Executive Member for Countryside and Rural Affairs set out the governance arrangements and the scope, objectives and priorities for the review.
  
18. In line with the approach set out in the report, an officer Steering Group was established, under the direction of the Director for Culture, Communities and Business Services and comprising officers with relevant knowledge and experience. The Steering Group met on a series of occasions to review key themes relevant to the review including:
  - Tenancy policy
  - Land management
  - Climate change
  - Financial performance
  - Farm replacement and strategic land
  
19. A Member Advisory Group was convened comprising Cllr Heron, Cllr McNair Scott, Cllr Simpson, Cllr Latham and with The Earl of Malmesbury as an external consultee. The Member Advisory Group met on five occasions between June and October 2020 to discuss and review the following themes put forward by the officer Steering Group:
  - Introduction to the County Farms Service and estate
  - Purpose and benefits of the County Farms service and estate
  - Climate change, environment and diversification
  - Tenancy policy
  - Scale of the estate and farm replacement
  
20. The Member Advisory Group also visited some of the farms: Little Abshot, Lower Brownwich, Yew Tree and Attwoods Drove farms over 2 days during August 2020. These visits provided the Member Advisory Group with the opportunity to tour the holdings and have discussions with the farm tenants and hear their views on their approach to farm management and the County Farms service.

21. Tenants' views have also been sought on the key themes of the review, engaging through both ongoing informal dialogue and with a formal tenant questionnaire.

## **Summary of Review Findings and Conclusions**

22. The review considered the key issues, risks and opportunities under each of the themes identified above. Within each theme, this took into account the current and historic performance of the County Farms service and estate, existing and emerging legislation, County Council policies, priorities and programmes of work and examples from the wider agricultural sector, including other county farms services. A summary of the matters discussed and conclusions reached is provided below.

### Tenancies

23. The review recognised the important role that county farms estates provide nationally to enable new entrants to farming and proposed that this should remain a principal aim of the Hampshire County Farms Service. This is further supported by Defra's proposals for a New Entrant Support Scheme, to be co-designed with councils and other stakeholders.
24. The current practice of advertising new opportunities for starter holdings on the open market and securing the most appropriate tenant through a fair and transparent selection process, was supported. The selection process will include consideration of the prospective tenants' business plans and how well these meet the County Council's objectives, particularly in relation to sustainable land management and natural environment outcomes.
25. The review considered whether the scale of Hampshire's County Farms estate allows it to continue to offer progression holdings as well as starter holdings and, if so, how these should be made available to existing tenants. The review concluded that, while it is not possible to guarantee a progression opportunity to every tenant, such opportunities can be an important next step for tenants who may not be able to easily transition from a starter holding into the private let sector. It was therefore felt that it is appropriate to continue to offer progression opportunities to existing tenants, via an open application process, when a suitable holding becomes available.
26. Tenancy lengths for starter and progression holdings were reviewed. The need to provide tenants with sufficient certainty to enable them to plan for and invest in their businesses was highlighted, along with the importance of managing tenancies within a robust performance framework with regular farm inspections and ongoing dialogue with the tenants. It was agreed that the current standard tenancy lengths of 7 years with a 3 year discretionary extension period for starter tenancies and 10 years with a 5 year discretionary

extension period for progression tenancies, should be retained as the norm under the new Policy.

27. The support provided to County Farm tenants by the County Council was discussed. Participants in the review felt that such support was best provided by encouraging and enabling collaboration between tenants and that there were opportunities for joint professional development activities. It was agreed that social media platforms and virtual meeting technology offer improved ways to connect with and support the tenants in this respect and that this could include signposting to external learning and development opportunities and services that support the wellbeing of farmers. These opportunities have been incorporated into the new Policy.

#### Land management and farming systems

28. Participants to the review were in agreement that farming and food production should remain at the core of the County Farms service and the farm business proposals invited from prospective tenants. It was also considered important to achieve a high standard of animal welfare and sustainable land management, deliver positive outcomes for the natural environment and ensure that the County Farms estate is aligned to the County Council's climate change targets of carbon neutrality by 2050 and resilience to a 2°C temperature rise.
29. It was noted that these aims aligned well with the themes emerging from the Agriculture Bill that was being considered by parliament during the review and that came into effect as the Agriculture Act 2020 in November 2020. This paves the way for the introduction of ELMs from 2022 which will provide 'public money for public goods' including improvements in air, water and soil quality.
30. To support these aims the Policy sets out that the County Council will identify the environmental and social priorities for each farm holding to allow tenants to identify in their business plans how they will achieve these. The Policy also includes a requirement for tenants to adopt a sustainable farming system and an expectation that tenants will have membership of an appropriate assurance scheme, such as LEAF, Arla or Red Tractor, that incorporates high standards of animal welfare, food safety and environmental protection. These requirements will also put tenants in a strong position to manage the transition to ELMs over the next few years.
31. In addition to reducing the carbon emissions from the farms in line with the 2050 carbon neutrality target, the Policy recognises the role of innovative farming techniques, technologies and cropping to enable farms to adapt to and become more resilient in the face of temperature rise and an increase in extreme weather events caused by climate change.

32. Diversification of tenants' farm businesses was supported by the review, where this is complementary to the core farm business, increases the financial resilience of the tenant's business and integrates the farm into the local community. This is reflected in the Policy.
33. The review identified a desire to see the County Farms as part of the wider family of County Council services and seek opportunities to secure social benefits by aligning services. The Policy continues to encourage these wider social benefits from farms, including rights of way to enable residents of Hampshire to be able to access our rural estate for recreational and wellbeing purposes.

#### Financial management

34. An analysis of the revenue income and expenditure for the County Farms service was undertaken for the review and demonstrated that a small net income is generated each year when all revenue operating costs are accounted for against income generated from tenancies and other sources.
35. As a non-statutory service, and in light of the increased pressures on the County Council's finances, participants in the review considered that it was appropriate that the County Farms service should be funded through income from tenancies and other sources, and not be subsidised by the County Council. The County Council seeks to break even or achieve a small contribution to overheads in its financial arrangements for the management of the service.
36. To support this, there was agreement that rents should continue to be set at market rates and subject to regular review. However, it was also felt that there should also be sufficient flexibility to agree discounted rents, where a tenant is delivering substantial added value to the County Council, and to recoup any investment made by the County Council in farm improvements that benefit the tenant.
37. The importance of maintaining the County Farms estate, to ensure that it is fit for purpose, enables tenants to grow viable agricultural businesses and continues to generate the required rental income, was acknowledged in the review. This is reflected in the Policy and includes obligations and liabilities for the County Council as landlord and the tenants as set out in with the formal tenancy agreements.
38. It was noted that tenants are more likely to be able to access external grant funding to support additional investment in the farm holdings and their business and therefore it is important to continue to work in close partnership with tenants to identify and secure these opportunities.

## The Farm Estate

39. Consideration was given in the review to the scale and nature of the County Farms Estate, including total acreage held, number of holdings and sector and viability of holdings. The review endorsed maintaining a diversity of holdings to support a range of farm business models, but it was agreed that the scale of the estate should not be defined by a specific number of holdings. A flexible approach to the allocation of land to holdings was supported, with an end of tenancy review and reshaping of the holding where appropriate, to provide the best possible opportunity for the next tenant.
40. The review identified an ambition to maintain the scale of the County Farms estate at its 2019 baseline size of 1,914 hectares, in order to provide sufficient suitable opportunities for tenants and sustain the required levels of income. It was noted that the County Farms estate is the primary source of land for the County Council's strategic land programme, with up to 252 hectares identified for development over the 10 to 15 year period from 2019. It was also noted that the strategic land programme is an important source of capital receipts which are reinvested to support the County Council's strategic priorities and that this longer-term financial opportunity remains an important aspect of the County Farms estate, particularly in light of the anticipated ongoing impact of Covid-19 on the County Council's finances and wider economy.
41. In considering these matters, the review concluded that the new Policy should include an ambition to maintain the scale of the County Farms estate through a farm replacement programme. There is currently an agreed corporate approach to facilitate land purchase where an appropriate business case can be made. The challenge is the identification of suitable land and further work is needed to establish how the County Council can engage most effectively within this particular specialist market place.

## **The Policy**

42. The revised Policy is provided at Appendix 1 of the report. The Policy comprises an overarching vision of 'Towards 2050: A vision for a Better Farming Future' and is divided into four main sections under the following strategic aims:
- *To provide inclusive opportunities for new entrants to a sustainable and innovative farming environment and opportunities for existing tenants to progress to larger holdings.*

- *To achieve sustainable and adaptive systems of farming and land management to support high quality environmental, social and economic outcomes for Hampshire.*
  - *To support tenants to establish and grow viable agricultural businesses by providing farms from which they can operate and thrive for the duration of their tenancy.*
  - *To maintain the scale and quality of the land and assets available to the County Farms Service.*
43. These aims capture and reflect the priority themes that emerged from the review. Each strategic aim is supported by a number of policy statements which address the key issues discussed and the conclusions reached in the review.
44. The new Policy comes at a time when the farming industry is facing significant change driven by Brexit, the new Agriculture Act and the Environment Bill. These changes place an increasing requirement on farmers to provide public goods for public money. The new Policy provides a clear but flexible framework for the future management of Hampshire's County Farms to ensure that they are able to meet these changing demands.

### **Implementation of the Policy**

45. The Policy provides a strong framework to work in partnership with both new and existing tenants to support the development of their business and further explore and develop the opportunities to deliver positive environmental and social outcomes for the County Council and the people and place of Hampshire.
46. Recognising the synergies with the Countryside Service and the increasing value being placed on the natural environment, leadership of the County Farms service will be provided by the Interim Assistant Director for Recreation and Natural Environment in CCBS. This will enable a more flexible, agile and holistic approach to the use of the County Council's rural estate.

### **Financial arrangements and implications**

47. The primary source of income for the County Farms Service is the rental income received from the farm tenancies, bare land lettings, and grazing arrangements, supplemented by wayleave payments and occasional commercial lettings (e.g. temporary site compounds) where the opportunity arises. Revenue repair and maintenance costs and staff costs make up the majority of the expenditure.

48. The County Council currently receives a BPS grant payment for some of the land managed within the County Farms portfolio. The level of grant received varies each year, linked to changes across the rural estate. BPS grant is applied to relevant expenditure on the County Farms estate on an annual basis. Unallocated grant is carried forward for use in future years. Under the agricultural transition plan set out by the government, BPS grants will reduce over the next few years as ELMs is introduced. For County Farms, BPS grant income is expected to reduce to zero by 2027.
49. Capital investment totaling £2.4million is identified in the [CCBS Capital Programme](#) for 2021/22, approved by the Executive Member for Commercial Services, Human Resources and Performance on 19 January 2021. This investment will be used to deliver a number of essential maintenance and compliance schemes and is funded from capital receipts accumulated from discrete disposals of County Farms land and buildings over a number of years.
50. It is expected that the day to day operational provisions of the new Policy can be implemented within current revenue resources, with the accrued BPS grant available to support the implementation of the sustainable land management approach set out in the new Policy. Opportunities to generate additional income and secure external grant funding will continue to be sought.

## **Performance**

51. The review considered the contribution that Hampshire's County Farms service makes within the wider agricultural sector:
- Starting up in the farming industry is a recognised challenge in the UK and there is a shortage of inclusive new entrant opportunities. A key route in is through the let land sector, which represent 35% or thereabouts of all UK agricultural land.
  - As a small estate, representing only 2% or thereabouts of land held for county farms purposes nationally, Hampshire's standalone contribution to the industry could be seen as relatively insignificant. However, the national county farms estate, of which Hampshire forms part, collectively and as a national service provides a significant proportion of new entrant opportunities each year. For example, it provides around 12% (on an area basis) of land let on new farm tenancies.
  - New entrants are reported to take around 23% of all new occupier lettings nationally each year. County Councils have been responsible for around 49% of these opportunities in recent years. On average over the last 10 years, Hampshire has offered one new entrant opportunity per year.



- County Farms help to provide longer and therefore more sustainable new entrant opportunities. For example, the average letting period for a fully equipped county farm is almost 9 years, compared with an overall average of 7.5 years in the UK let land sector. The average letting for a Hampshire County Farm is 9.6 years with 41% of lettings being for 10 years or longer.
  - Councils also provide in the region of 58% of all fully equipped holdings available to rent. 80% of Hampshire's farm lettings are fully equipped.
52. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has proved to be a challenging period, but the majority of County Farm tenants have continued to perform well during the year, some finding innovative ways to quickly and effectively respond to local need. Milk vending machines located at a number of farms have proved a real success and lifeline for local communities and well-stocked farm shops have benefitted from increased demand, with more households choosing to shop either locally or online. The tenant at Lower Brownwich Farm expanded his Boxxfresh delivery service nationally in early 2020 and was therefore well placed to respond to the sudden surge in requirement for in food delivery services early in the pandemic.
53. The new Policy has an increased emphasis on performance of the County Farms Service and the estate, and it is proposed to provide an annual performance report to the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs from spring 2022.

### **Consultation and Equalities**

54. As noted earlier in the report, engagement about the County Farms policy review has taken place through informal dialogue throughout the review period. The pandemic has prevented the County Farm tenants from meeting as a group, but in December 2020 and January 2021 all farm tenants were invited to take part in some informal group tenant engagement sessions, via MS Teams.
55. In February 2021, County Farm tenants were invited to take part in a survey and 26 tenants participated, by completing an online questionnaire. Feedback from tenants has been mainly positive, with many anticipating and already operating to the higher environmental expectations incorporated into the new Policy. Further detail on the outcomes from the tenant consultation questionnaire are provided at Appendix 3.
56. The review recognised the potential for gender inequality in the County Farms service and the importance of removing barriers to diversity across the agricultural sector. The new Policy reflects a more open and inclusive

approach to the recruitment of tenants as the first step in enabling opportunity and increasing diversity across Hampshire's County Farms estate.

## **Climate Change**

57. The County Farms estate forms part of the County Council's wider corporate estate and is therefore subject to the County Council's climate change strategy and targets.
58. The approach to achieving a carbon net zero position for the County Farms estate and ensuring its resilience in response to a potential 2°C temperature rise is being considered as part of the wider approach to the County Council's internal carbon reduction programme set out in the recent [report](#) to Cabinet.
59. The County Farms service will continue to work closely with those leading the County Council's climate change programme and farm tenants to identify and implement appropriate actions in line with the emerging strategy.

## **Conclusions**

60. The review of Hampshire's County Farms Service set out to ensure that there continues to be a viable framework for the delivery of the service in light of changes in the agricultural sector driven by Brexit, the new Agriculture Act 2020 and the Environment Bill.
61. The review recognised the important contribution that county farms continue to make to farming in the UK, in particular their role in enabling new entrants to the sector. The review also identified the increasing requirement for farmers to provide public goods for public money and the particular role of the Hampshire County Farms estate in contributing to the environmental and social priorities of the County Council.
62. The new County Farms Policy, now brought forward for approval, provides a concise and forward thinking approach that strengthens and reaffirms the County Council's commitment to these principles and the wider benefits the service offers for the people and place of Hampshire.

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u> <a href="#">County Farms Policy Review</a>	<u>Date</u> 19.09.2019
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u> <a href="#">Agriculture Act 2020 (legislation.gov.uk)</a>	<u>Date</u> 11.11.2020

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

### 1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### 2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- (a) why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or
- (b) will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions

**County Farms Policy**

*Refer to separate document*

## Summary of the County Farms Estate and Holdings

### County Farms holdings:

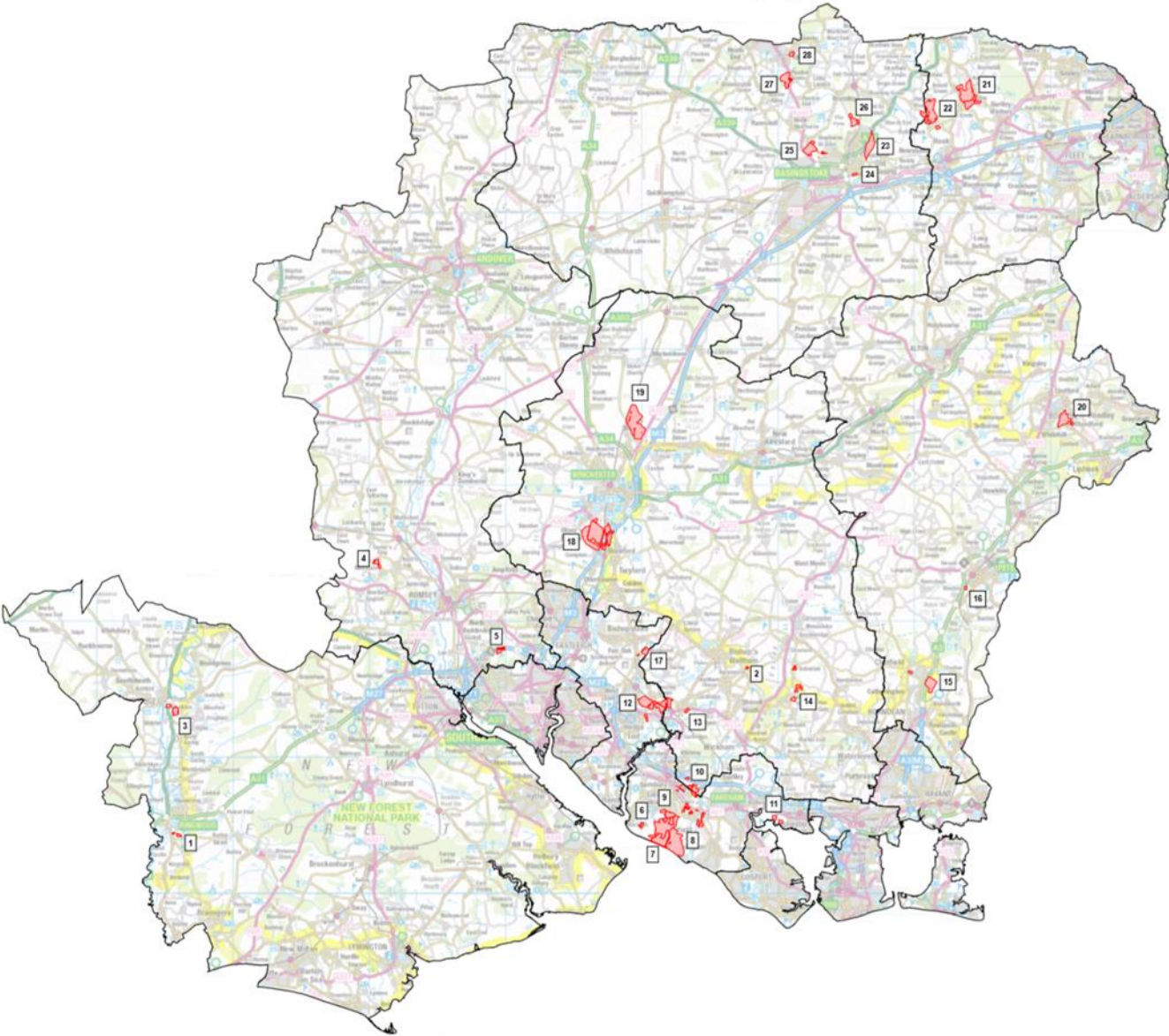
Farm type	No. equipped holdings	Area (ha)	Area (acres)
Dairy	8	571.22	1,411.50
Livestock	15	503.83	1,244.96
Arable & Horticulture	9	466.68	1,153.16
Livery	5	30.56	75.51
Vacant for development purposes	2	194.73	481.16
Bare land	-	109.62	270.87
Other (e.g. Woodland, ponds, compounds)	-	37.36	92.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1,914.00</b>	<b>4,729.48</b>
Number of holdings available to county farms service at start of Review:	<b>38</b>	<i>[excluding one livery unit on 99-year lease]</i>	

### County Farms tenancies:

Tenancy type	2019-2020
Lifetime	7
Retirement	3
FBT Less than 5 years	11
FBT 5 - 10 years	9
FBT 10-15 years	8
FBT More than 15 years	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>41*</b>

*[\*NB total number of holdings reported and tenancy types do not correlate, e.g. because some holdings may have 1+ agreements]*

Locations of the County Farms estate







## Hampshire County Farms Policy Review Tenant Survey - February 2021

As part of the County Farms Policy Review tenants of HCC farms were invited to take part in an online survey. Three quarters of the 35 tenant farmers responded which was a positive level of engagement and their views have helped to shape the proposed County Farms Policy.

### Key Findings

- 85% either agreed or strongly agreed that providing inclusive opportunities for new entrants into agriculture should continue to be a county farms service priority.
- A few tenants who responded did point out the significant financial challenges faced by new entrants perhaps best summed up by one respondent, who warned that:

*“The opportunity creates massive challenges in today’s climate in farming. Ever declining margins linked to increased capital requirements. Creates a very demanding set of obstacles. Not for the faint hearted!”*

- The respondents identified the most important characteristic for a new entrant to county farms as someone who has worked in the farming industry with relevant skills in agriculture (some qualifications or experience). The importance of understanding the agricultural industry along with being able to run a business was also highlighted.
- Half the respondents suggested the County Council could support tenants by providing ways in which information could be shared and tenants could access further guidance. Other ways in which the County Council could support tenants included increased inspections to assist tenants meet the standards expected of them, and access to capital funds for investment.
- Over three quarters of the tenants who responded were able to show the range of new approaches, techniques and principles they had adopted that showed a commitment to improving sustainability. Activities included; actively reducing use of inorganic fertilisers, implementing soil health strategy actions, grass rotation for soil health, precision methods of farming and biodiversity enhancement measures.
- 58% of respondents are already accredited by an independent assurance standard such as Red Tractor, with two tenants having achieved the highest Arla 360 standard and one awarded the exemplar LEAF Marque amongst others.

- Of the 88% who said that they were considering how climate change affects their business and land management activities, 68% of these said they had either taken action or were intended to take action to mitigate or adapt to climate change.
- 85% of respondents were looking to, or already had, incorporated natural environment management improvements including actions such as tree planting, hedgerow management and creating wildlife corridors. A few suggested that the County Council could signpost partnerships or assist with on farm landscape and environmental assessment and delivery.
- A benefit of County Farms that is often overlooked, it was clear from the study that most tenants make a meaningful contribution to their local community and recognise its importance in promoting an understanding of farming and its role within the countryside.
- In term of what more the County Council could do to help tenants succeed and thrive in their business a range of responses were received. Many referenced building stronger relationships, providing more opportunities for progression with one quoted as saying *"Nothing at the moment, happy tenant"*.



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# COUNTY FARMS POLICY 2021 TOWARDS 2050

*A Vision for a Better Farming Future*

## THE POLICY

*Supporting the future of farming to contribute to Hampshire's quality of place and environment.*



**Hampshire County Council has long recognised the importance of farming in Hampshire - since 1892 when smallholdings legislation was introduced we have helped hundreds of new entrants into farming /gain opportunities in the agricultural sector.**

The review of the County Farms estate which began last year, has led to the development of this concise and forward thinking new County Farms Policy. Being involved with the review afforded me the opportunity to meet many of our 35 tenants who are managing farming and agricultural businesses across Hampshire. I was so impressed with the skills, knowledge and expertise of our tenants and the range of businesses that contribute to the rural economy of Hampshire.

The review comes at a time when the farming industry stands at the edge of significant change driven by Brexit, the new Agricultural Act, Climate Change and the Environment Bill. There is an increasing requirement for farmers to provide public goods for public money and the County Farms are uniquely placed to meet these changing demands, with support and guidance from the County Council.

I am very proud of our County Farms estate and hope that this policy will strengthen and reaffirm the County Council's commitments to bringing new entrants into farming as well as delivering a whole host of environmental and social benefits for the county.

Finally, I would like to thank members of the advisory group, officers, and tenants for all their advice and contribution to the review and development of the Policy. I hope you agree that it sets out an ambitious and positive future for our County Farms.

Edward Heron  
Councillor



# PRIORITIES

## Tenancy

**Our aim is to provide inclusive opportunities for new entrants into a sustainable and innovative farming environment and opportunities for existing tenants to progress to larger holdings.**

1. New tenancy opportunities will be offered on Starter Holdings. These will be openly advertised and be subject to a fair and transparent tenant selection process.
2. Tenancy opportunities for Progression Holdings will be offered to current HCC tenants using a fair and transparent selection process. Progression holdings will be offered externally on the same basis if there are no suitable candidates from HCC starter holdings.
3. We will work proactively and in partnership with existing and future tenants to deliver the outcomes outlined in the policy.
4. New entrants to farming will be supported to build sustainable farming businesses and progress to new opportunities at the end of a tenancy.
5. The tenancy length for Starter Holdings will normally be 7 years with a discretionary 3 year extension, subject to satisfactory performance and business plan from the tenant.
6. The tenancy length for Progression Holdings will normally be 10 years with a discretionary 5 year extension, subject to satisfactory performance and business plan from the tenant. This longer period is to enable business growth on a larger holding.
7. Tenant performance will be monitored against the agreed business plan and reviewed according to the tenancy agreement, but at least annually.
8. Tenants will be supported, in the management of their business and their personal wellbeing, through regular dialogue, the provision of timely information and by facilitating appropriate training and mentoring.
9. Collaboration between tenants and with the County Council will be encouraged and the County Farms Service will actively recognise and promote tenants' achievements.
10. As a Smallholdings Authority, Hampshire County Council will follow the requirements of the Agriculture Act 1970 and other relevant legislation.

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## Land management and farming systems

**Our aim is to achieve sustainable and adaptive systems of farming and land management to support high quality environmental, social and economic outcomes for Hampshire.**

1. County Farms estate management will focus on sustainable, productive and innovative farming, with food production at its core.
2. Environmental and social priorities, e.g. access improvements, will be identified for each farm to enable tenants to identify how they will achieve the desired outcomes within their agreed business plan.
3. The County Council will work in partnership with tenants, partner organisations and other landowners to enhance the natural capital of the County Farms estate by connecting habitats, delivering ecosystem services and conserving historic features in the landscape.
4. All farm tenants will be required to adopt an adaptive sustainable farming system that delivers the public goods outlined in the Agriculture Act 2020 and Environment Bill 2019-21 (e.g. better air and water quality, thriving wildlife, soil health, measures to reduce flooding) and contributes to the County Council climate change strategy and targets.
5. Tenants will be expected to meet high standards of animal welfare, food safety and environmental protection through membership of appropriate assurance schemes e.g. LEAF, Arla, Red Tractor.
6. Innovative farming techniques, technologies and cropping on the County Farms estate will be encouraged and supported, along with sustainable, efficient and renewable energy solutions.
7. Farm diversification will be encouraged where this supports the financial viability and resilience of the tenant's farm business and contributes positively to the local economy, community and wider County Council objectives.

## Financial management

**Our aim is to support tenants to establish and grow viable agricultural businesses by providing farms from which they can operate and thrive for the duration of their tenancy.**

1. Rents will be set at the appropriate market rate and reviewed regularly. Tenants will be required to meet their financial responsibilities as set out in the agreement. Rental levels may be discounted where farm tenants are able to deliver agreed, clearly defined and substantial value to the County Council through their management of the holding.
2. The County Council will not subsidise the County Farms Service, neither does it seek to make profit. Income from tenancies and other sources will be used to sustain the farm estate.
3. The County Council will deliver a programme of maintenance and investment to maintain the Estate in a sustainable condition, meet its obligations as landlord and maintain the farm rental value.
4. Opportunities for capital investment in the Estate through grants will be explored and developed in partnership with tenants.
5. The County Council's investment in farm improvements that financially benefit the tenant will be subject to a business case and require a rental return on expenditure employed

## The Farm Estate

**Our aim is to maintain the scale and quality of the land and assets available to the County Farms Service**

1. Sound estate management practice will be demonstrated having due regard to the interests, aspirations and responsibilities of both the tenants and the Council.
2. A diversity of holdings will be maintained to support a variety of farm business models. There will be a flexible approach across the wider rural land portfolio when reviewing and creating opportunities for both starter and progression holdings.
3. The County Council will seek to maintain the farm estate at its current scale, quality and diversity through judicious acquisition of new land in line with agreed business case and financial parameters thus mitigating the impact of land identified for alternative uses.
4. The County Council will take a strategic view when acquiring land for the County Farms estate and where land is identified for development or alternative uses, a transition plan will be developed in partnership with any tenants affected.

## For more information contact:

 [county.farms@hants.gov.uk](mailto:county.farms@hants.gov.uk)

 [@hantsfarms](https://twitter.com/hantsfarms)

 [@hampshirecouncilfarms](https://www.facebook.com/hampshirecouncilfarms)

 [@hampshirecountyfarms](https://www.instagram.com/hampshirecountyfarms)



## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee</b>	Culture and Communities Select Committee
<b>Date:</b>	18 March 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Rights of Way and Countryside Paths (Covid)
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

**Contact name:** Jo Heath

**Tel:** 07545735629

**Email:** [jo.heath@hants.gov.uk](mailto:jo.heath@hants.gov.uk)

#### **Purpose of this report**

1. To provide an update on the use and condition of public rights of way and paths across the countryside estate over the past year, during the Covid 19 pandemic.
2. Outline a proposal for funding remedial works to identified priority rights of way and paths to improve their condition and enable their continued use.

#### **Recommendations**

3. That the Culture and Communities Select Committee recommend to the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs that he:
  - i) Notes the impact of increased use and weather conditions on the rights of way network and paths at country parks and countryside sites across Hampshire.
  - ii) Approves the establishment of a £500,000 Path Recovery programme to carry out remedial works to improve the condition of the worst affected rights of way and countryside paths in 2021/22 to be funded from the CCBS accumulated Cost of Change reserve.

#### **Executive Summary**

4. Hampshire has an extensive public rights of way network across the whole county that provides opportunities for the public to explore the countryside, offering benefits for both mental and physical health and wellbeing.

5. The rights of way network along with paths across the whole countryside estate are highly valued by the people that use them and there is evidence that this appreciation has grown due to the Covid 19 pandemic.
6. Visits to the countryside have significantly increased and people who previously have not visited the countryside are now regularly taking their daily exercise at our parks, sites and on the rights of way network. Research has indicated that even when restrictions are lifted, they are likely to continue to visit the countryside.
7. This winter has been one of the wettest on record and the impact of this, in combination with increased footfall and use by cyclists, has been a deterioration in the surface of many paths across the county.
8. A Path Recovery programme is proposed to address some of the worst affected rights of way and paths across the countryside estate over the next 6 months and approval is sought for £500,000 of CCBS Departmental underspends to be allocated for 2021/22.

### **Contextual information**

9. The public rights of way network in Hampshire is 4,613km or 2,866 miles long and comprised of footpaths (3,312km, 2,058 miles), bridleways (761km, 473miles), restricted byways (253km, 157miles) and byways open to all traffic (287km, 178miles).
10. Although most of the rights of way network cross privately owned land the County Council has a statutory duty to maintain rights of way, including the surface of the path, in a fit state for public use.
11. All five of the County Council Country Parks and all the 80 other countryside sites, comprising National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves and other conservation sites and green spaces, have permissive routes as well as public rights of way that enable visitors to actively explore the countryside. The Basingstoke Canal towpath is also an extremely popular and well used route for walkers and cyclists.
12. Since the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic in March 2020 there has been an increase in the use of rights of way. This has been difficult to quantify however the number of reports to the Countryside Access Management System by members of the public (typically around 300 per month) has increased in some months by as much as 60%. During the summer months the increase in anti-social behaviour and conflicts on the rights of way network were evident and the Countryside Service introduced campaigns to encourage responsible behaviour and provided support to landowners wherever possible. The focus was to keep the network open and accessible for all legitimate users.



13. Research conducted in the summer 2020 also provided evidence of increased use and that this use is likely to continue. The survey indicated a significant rise in appreciation of the countryside and the importance of being outside for mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- Nearly all the 2,500 respondents acknowledge the key role of accessing public outdoor space and some 99% agree that it has a positive role on their mental health and wellbeing.
  - More than four in five respondents (81%) believe this has become even more important since the advent of Covid19. Facing a prolonged period of lockdown has reinforced and enhanced people's appreciation and attitude to the outdoors.
  - More than 70% confirm that their attitude to the outdoors has grown, with most of these confirming a major positive shift.
  - The demand for visiting local greenspaces and using local paths is not likely to wain with 98% of the respondents indicating that they will continue to visit these sites even as other facilities such as country parks open. This coupled with 85% indicating that they will be planning a staycation this year and potentially greater promotion of walking and cycling (from organisations such as Visit England) shows that the demand is likely to stay high.
14. Visits to the Country Parks has risen by between 120% – 160% over the past 6 months when compared to last year despite reduced catering facilities and no events or activities for much of that period. It is difficult to quantify the visits to other countryside sites however the site rangers have evidence of a significant upward shift in use over the past year.
15. The Basingstoke Canal towpath has seen a significant rise in pedestrian and cycle use – counts carried out during lockdown indicated that all use was at least 110% of previous levels and cycle use in places was up to 300% of previous levels. An average of 16,000 pedestrians a month were using the towpath near the Canal Centre.
16. According to the Met Office 2020 was in the top ten wettest years of all time, with the wettest day on record on 3 October and several extreme weather events affecting the South East over the past 6 months.
17. These conditions along with the increased footfall have had a significant impact on the surface of the paths across the majority of Hampshire. The worst conditions are in river valleys, on clay soils and paths close to conurbations that are heavily used. Paths in the Country Parks and across the rest of the countryside estate have also suffered with the same issues.
18. People often try to avoid the wettest parts of the paths which leads to a spreading of the width of the route. Depending on the location of the path this can have a detrimental impact on crops or sensitive habitats.

## Path Recovery Programme

19. The Countryside Service has been gathering evidence of the impact of increased use, as a result of the pandemic, coupled with the wet weather experienced over the winter 2020/2021. The pictures in Appendix 1 illustrate the issues on some of the worst affected rights of way and paths.
20. There are in the region of 76 paths that are known to be affected either through reports received via CAMs (Countryside Access Management System) or complaints to Country Park and Sites management officers or through physical inspections.
21. A programme of improving the worst affected paths is proposed in order to keep these paths open for use and to reduce further damage.
22. The aim of the programme is to carry out remedial works to as many paths as possible that have been affected by increased use across the county due to Covid 19 within the budget allocation of £500,000.
23. It is proposed that the targeting of paths for remedial works is based on the following criteria and level of damage assessment: -
  - a. Paths located close to communities
  - b. Circular routes linked to car parks and communities
  - c. Promoted routes
  - d. Paths damaged through sensitive habitat areas

The degree of damage and inconvenience will be allocated against the following criteria:

- i. Path un-usable in large sections (effectively closed)
- ii. Path spread damaging surrounds in sensitive habitat areas
- iii. Path un-usable in one specific location
- iv. Path spread damaging surrounding areas
- v. Pinch points with significant localised damage (infrastructure damaged restricting passage)
- vi. Other

The degree of community concern level of reported problems

- 1) High – Multiple frequently
- 2) Medium - Multiple occasionally
- 3) Low – few reports
- 4) Not reported

Record in the service as concern raised by MP/Cllr/Parish Council - YES / NO

24. Once the Path Recovery programme is approved the ambition would be to carry out works to the priority routes between March and October to bring them back into use and build some resilience for next winter.
25. Details of the Path Recovery Programme will be communicated via the Parish Pages and we will be looking to work closely with Parish Councils to identify and co-ordinate works on paths that are important to the Parishes.

## **Finance**

26. The operational budget for the management of rights of way is £252,000 per annum, equivalent to approximately £88 per mile or £55 per km. This budget covers vegetation removal, signage, health, and safety related repairs on the network.
27. Capital funding of £330,000 has been allocated to bridge and byway repairs for 2021/22.
28. Additional funding is required in order to meet our responsibilities in repairing the paths most significantly damaged through increased use and wet weather.
29. Funding will be allocated across the parks, sites, Basingstoke Canal, and the rights of way network. Data has been collated and once approved the prioritisation criteria will be applied to provide a programme of works to be undertaken. This will be monitored via a new SharePoint site developed for this purpose. Appendix 2 illustrates the system developed for this programme.
30. The Path Recovery Programme budget of £500,000 will be allocated from CCBS accumulated Cost of Change reserve.

## **Future Direction**

31. Following approval the Countryside Service will prioritise the spend across the Countryside estate and rights of way network based on the criteria outlined in this report.
32. The Service will liaise with Parish Councils and others with the aim of delivering the programme in the first half of 2021/22.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy, and independent lives:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	yes

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>		
<u>Title</u>		<u>Date</u> 18 January 2018
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>		
<u>Title</u>		<u>Date</u>

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation).
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard to:

- The need to remove or minimize disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low

### **Equalities Impact Assessment:**

- b) The scheme will have a positive impact on as it will deliver:
- i) Surfacing improvements and provision of a ramp replacing a 5 metre high set of steps will enable access for pushchairs and improved routes to school.
  - ii) A new route for cyclists and an improved route for walkers, Headbourne Worthy Footpath 2 will provide free access to the edge of Winchester for shops and facilities.
  - iii) A new route for cyclists and improved route for walkers, Headbourne Worthy Footpath 2 will provide free access to the edge of Winchester for shops and facilities.



Appendix 1 – Photos illustrating the impact of increased use



Dogmersfield FP3



Basingstoke Canal Towpath



Royal Victoria Country Park

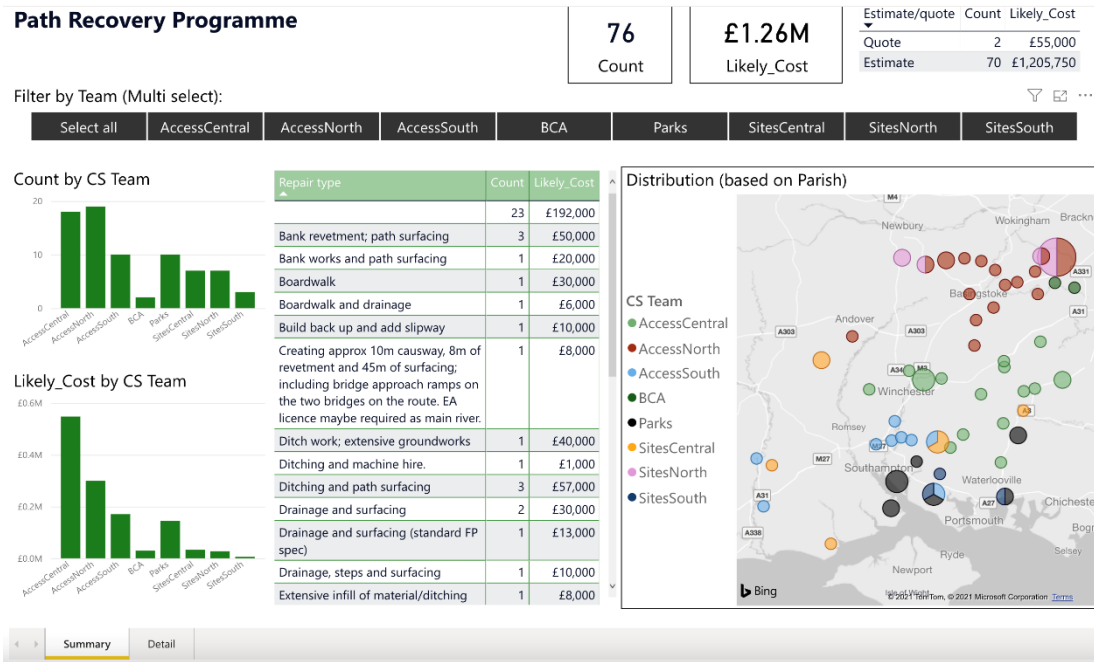


Stroud Pond





## Appendix 2 – Programme prioritisation and monitoring system



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# Hampshire Rights of Way & Countryside Paths

Jo Heath

Interim Assistant Director CCBS



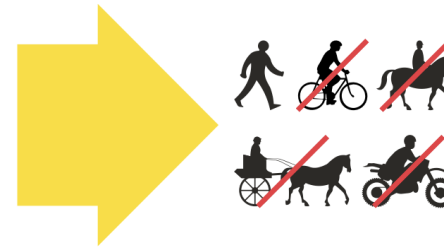
Hampshire  
County Council



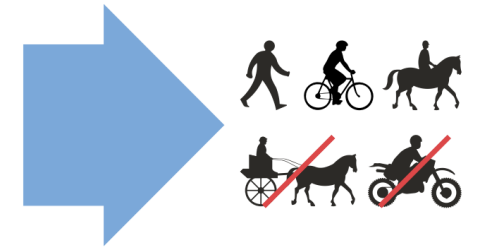
# Public Rights of Way Network

- Total network 4,613km or 2,866 miles.
- 72% Footpath, 17% Bridleway, 5% Restricted Byway and 6% BOAT.
- Public have a right to pass and repass only.
- Rural routes and many are historical.
- Most rights of way cross privately owned land.
- There are 13 promoted routes across Hampshire.

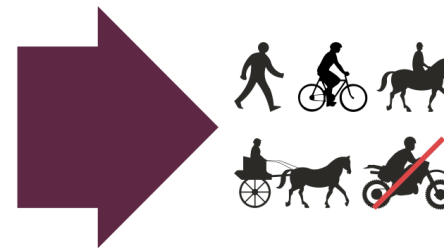
Footpath



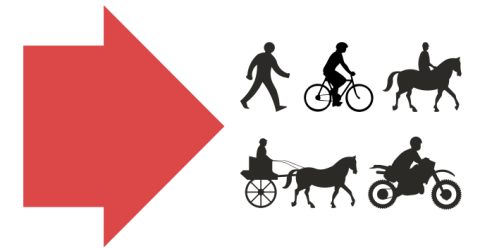
Bridleway



Restricted Byway



Byway Open to All Traffic – BOAT



# Promoted Routes

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# Roles & Responsibilities

- HCC has a statutory duty to maintain rights of way in a fit state for public use.
- HCC include:
  - Maintaining the legal record
  - Surface of the path
  - Signposting from the highway
  - Bridges
- Landowners include:-
  - Access structures (stiles & gates)
  - Keep clear and unobstructed
- Parish Councils:
  - No statutory duty but powers



# How we manage the network

- 3130 bridges on our network, 500 on a structural inspection programme
- Priority vegetation cutting list – contractors (660km / 410 miles) HCC team (284km /176 miles)
- Work closely with Parishes – to agree priority routes and assist with Parish projects
- Volunteers – normal year 9086 hrs in 2019 vs 4545hrs in 2020.

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Images taken pre-Covid

# Beyond the network - Countryside Paths

Permissive routes, promoted routes & rights of way exist across the Countryside estate to encourage active enjoyment and connection with nature including:

- 5 Country Parks – attracting 3m visitors in 2019/20.
- 80 countryside sites, comprising National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves and other conservation sites and green spaces.
- Basingstoke Canal towpath – 32 miles in Hants & Surrey.

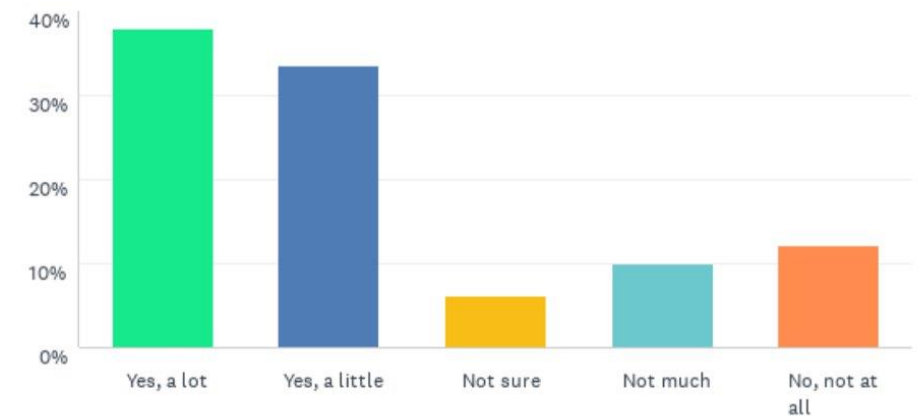




# COVID impact – Increased use and appreciation

- Survey conducted in June 2020 to assist with recovery
- Evidence of increased use and that this use is likely to continue.
- Significant rise in appreciation of the countryside and the importance of being outside for mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- 99% agree that it has a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing.
- More than four in five respondents believe this has become even more important since the advent of Covid19.
- More than 70% confirm that their attitude to the outdoors has grown, with most of these confirming a major positive shift.
- The demand for visiting local greenspaces and using local paths is not likely to wain with an increase in staycations in 2021.

Has your attitude changed to view outdoor space more positively since Covid 19 pandemic?



# 90%

of the responses have **visited a country park or farm attraction** managed by Hampshire County Council.

# 80%

**can not** visit a country park by **foot or by bicycle**.

# 32%

have **visited a country park** after some **restrictions had been lifted** on 13th May 2020.

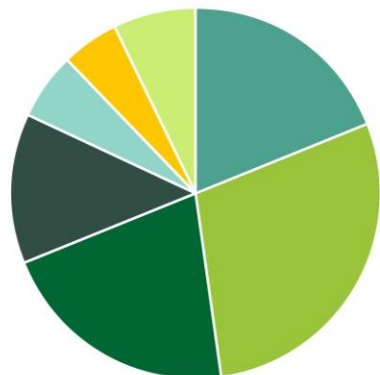
# 89%

agreed that they are most likely to **visit a country park within 3 months** of them opening after the COVID-19 restrictions.

## Travel time

The responses show that the **majority of people travel up to 30 minutes to get to their local country park.**

- 19% travel 10 minutes or under
- 29% travel between 11-20 minutes
- 21% travel between 21-30 minutes
- 13% travel between 31-40 minutes
- 6% travel between 41-50 minutes
- 5% travel between 51-60 minutes
- 7% travel 60 minutes or over



# SURVEY RESULTS



## HAMPSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE



### During lockdown

- Over **70%** would visit a local greenspace or park and use **local paths** for walking or cycling.
- 98%** of these **will continue** this post lockdown.

# 44%

stated that their appreciation for country parks or green spaces has increased a lot.

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## Visit frequency

# 52%

**52%** believe that the frequency of their visits to their local country park will **stay the same**.

# 42%

**42%** believe that the frequency would **increase**.

# 7%

**7%** believe it will decrease as they would prefer to use a **more local green space**.



# 99%

believe that outdoor spaces have a **positive impact on mental health and wellbeing**.

Of this, **81%** has found this more **important since lockdown**.

# 85%

are **unlikely to take a holiday overseas** in 2020.

# 72%

believe that Hampshire County Council's country parks have had a large impact in improving their **family's quality of life**, scoring between **8-10/10**.

# 8-10

# 10



The majority of people asked in this survey have stated that in order to encourage more frequent visits to the country parks, **full access to toilets and washroom facilities** would have to be provided, as well as **pre-visit information about the precautions taken** to ensure visitor safety.



# Covid Impact – Increased use

Visits to the Country Parks has risen by between 120% – 160% over the past 6 months when compared to last year, despite reduced catering facilities and no events or activities for much of that period.

The Basingstoke Canal towpath - significant rise in pedestrian and cycle use – counts carried out during lockdown indicated that all use was at least 110% of previous levels and cycle use in places was up to 300% of previous levels

Increase in reports - number of reports to the Countryside Access Management System by members of the public has increased by as much as 60% some months (Nov 2020).





# Covid Impact – management

- Increase in anti-social behaviour.
- Litter campaign – shared with other authorities.
- #walk the right way – using social media to promote responsible use.
- Supporting & responding to landowners and Parishes.
- Reduced volunteers – still able to undertake inspections.
- Teams doing more as no vegetation contract 20/21.
- Considering what more we can do this year to promote responsible use.



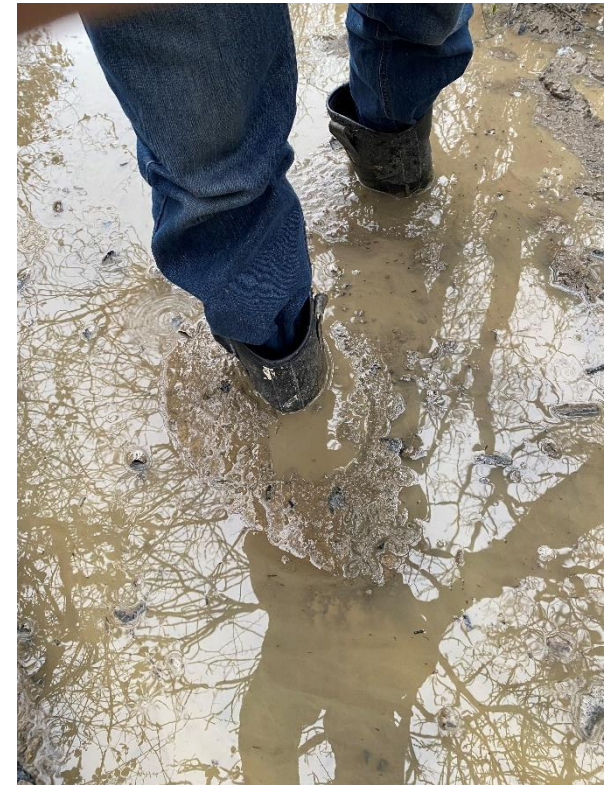
# Covid Impact - Condition

- Met Office reported 2020 was top ten wettest years of all time, and several extreme weather events
- Weather conditions affecting all paths compounding the issue of increased use.
- Recognising the importance of being outdoors, investment required to ensure paths stay open and easy to use.
- Reduce the impact from spreading on surrounding sensitive habitats and farmland.



# Proposed Path Recovery Programme

- Aim: to carry out remedial works to as many paths as possible that have been affected by increased use across the county due to Covid 19.
- Budget allocation of £500,000 from CCBS accumulated Cost of Change reserve.
- Majority of works to be completed between April & September.



Colden Common Footpath 21

# Path Recovery Programme - prioritisation

## Type/location of path

- Paths located close to communities
- Circular routes linked to car parks and communities
- Promoted routes
- Paths damaged through sensitive habitat areas

## Damage/inconvenience

- Path un-usable in large sections (effectively closed)
- Path spread damaging surrounds in sensitive habitat areas
- Path un-usable in one specific location
- Path spread damaging surrounding areas
- Pinch points with significant localised damage
- Other

## Community Concern

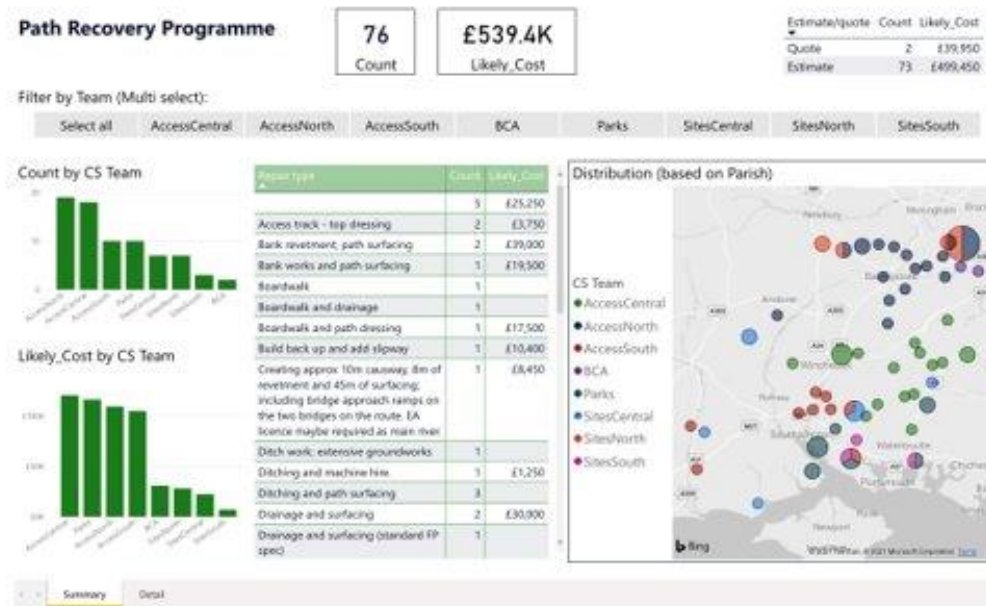
- High - Multiple frequently
- Medium - Multiple occasionally
- Low – few reports
- Not reported

Concern raised by MP/Cllr /Parish Council - YES / NO



# Path Recovery Programme - prioritisation

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Programme prioritisation & monitoring

Type of works include:

- Removal of surface mud
- Drainage improvements
- Resurfacing – top dressing
- Funding split across rights of way, country parks and sites including Basingstoke Canal towpath.



# Covid Impact - condition



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Basingstoke Canal Towpath



Dogmersfield Footpath 3



Colden Common Footpath 21



Staunton Country Park

# Covid impact - benefits

## Developing New Partnerships

- Project Stride – Parish project to replace stiles with gates and promote responsible use.
- New partnership developed during lockdown with Walking with Wounded has seen the development of a volunteer scheme for veterans/services leavers - Funding now secured (£20k) from Armed Covenant Fund in February 2021.

## Appreciated by others

*Steep Parish Council asked me to write to express our gratitude for your continued efforts and hard work in maintaining the Ashford Hangers. The Ashford Hangers are much loved by everyone in the village, as can be evidenced by the visible wear of the increased footfall during the pandemic on all the footpaths and tracks.*

# Summary

- High level of use during lockdown has had a negative impact on the countryside however there has been a marked increase in appreciation.
- Investment in rights of way and countryside paths through the Path Recovery Programme will assist in keeping paths open to continue to be enjoyed.

**Thank You**

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## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee:</b>	Culture and Communities Select Committee
<b>Date:</b>	18 March 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Winchester Discovery Centre - Future Strategy
<b>Report from:</b>	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

**Contact Name:** Emma Noyce

**Tel:** 0370 779 8373

**Email:** Emma.noyce@hants.gov.uk

#### **Purpose of this Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to outline proposals for a new partnership model between Hampshire Library Service ('the Library Service') and Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT) at Winchester Discovery Centre (WDC).
2. The partnership will enhance and develop Winchester Discovery Centre's position as a strategically important hub for culture and creativity in Hampshire. In addition, the partnership will bring financial and non-financial benefits to both organisations and secure the long-term viability of the venue.
3. This report includes proposals to transfer operational responsibility for the building (including associated day-to-day running costs) and for cultural programming to HCT. The Library Service will continue to deliver a highly successful library service, free at the point of access, within WDC. Hampshire County Council will retain the freehold ownership of the building and associated repair and maintenance responsibilities.
4. The report also includes proposals for refurbishment of WDC, including essentials works, interior refurbishment and spatial reorganisation.

#### **Recommendations**

5. That the Culture and Communities Select Committee recommends that the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs:
  - i. Approves plans to proceed with the proposed partnership model, subject to agreement being reached by both parties on final details of the arrangement.
  - ii. Approves the commercial principles as set out in paragraph 48 and delegates authority to the Director of CCBS in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Corporate Resources and the Head of Legal Services



to conclude the detailed financial agreement in line with the commercial principles.

- iii. Notes the HR implications as set out in paragraphs 57 to 62.
  - iv. Authorises any other steps be taken that are reasonably necessary in order to implement the above recommendations.
6. It is also recommended that Culture and Communities Select Committee notes that the following proposals are due to be considered at a future Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Human Resources and Performance Decision Day:
- v. The detailed property arrangements by which the operational responsibility for WDC is transferred to HCT (including the nature and duration of tenure).
  - vi. The detailed programme of property refurbishment and improvement outlined in paragraphs 63 to 67.
  - vii. Proposals to transfer employment of some Hampshire County Council Catering Service ('HC3S') staff to HCT.

### **Executive Summary**

7. Hampshire Library Service (the Library Service) and Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT) have been working closely to explore ways to strengthen their existing partnership at Winchester Discovery Centre (WDC).
8. Following an extensive feasibility study, a new service delivery model is proposed for WDC, whereby HCT assumes full operational responsibility for the building, including all cultural programming. The Library Service will continue to deliver library services, including book and magazine lending, public IT access and safe community space, within an expanded, culturally led venue.
9. This model builds upon a track record of achievement and partnership work that will enable both organisations to realise financial benefits, increase public access and participation, and secure investment at a time of major financial challenge. It reduces dependency upon local authority funding, whilst maximising income generation and fundraising opportunities.

## **Contextual Information**

### **Library Service Strategy to 2025**

10. Hampshire Libraries' strategy to 2025 is being developed to ensure that the Library Service can evolve to meet the changing needs of its customers, whilst maintaining core and statutory services. It will help develop a sustainable and vibrant library service for people who live, work or study in Hampshire.

11. The vision for Hampshire Library Service is:

A modern, relevant and sustainable library service that is valued by our communities and which plays an important role in the delivering Hampshire County Council's strategic goals through achieving three core priorities:

- Promoting Reading
- Supporting Healthy, Creative Communities
- Providing Access to Digital Services

Further information about the future vision can be found in Appendix 1.

12. In this context, a strategic business plan has been developed for WDC, with the aim of creating a modern destination for creativity and learning. A key theme of the business plan was to develop new ways of working in partnership to deliver the best possible outcomes for customers, and to ensure the long-term financial viability of the building.

### **About Winchester Discovery Centre**

13. WDC is a key destination in the heart of Winchester, occupying an iconic site on Jewry Street.

14. The Grade II listed building was opened in 1838, originally serving as the city's Corn Exchange. It has also been a roller-skating rink, theatre, and dance hall, before being converted to a public library in 1936. In 2008, the building was extensively refurbished and extended, re-opening as WDC the same year.

15. The building currently offers:

- A modern two-storey library, with space for reading and quiet study
- A separate children's library
- Free 'Go-Online' public computers, printing and copying facilities, and free wi-fi
- Library self-service kiosks
- Two public art galleries, both operated by Hampshire Cultural Trust
- A 180-seat Performance Hall, with flexible seating making it suitable as a 200-capacity conference venue
- A café/bar, currently operated by Hampshire County Council Catering Services (HC3S)

- Accessible space for community groups to meet
  - Hireable rooms for clubs and societies
  - Spaces let to community organisations on a leasehold basis
  - A small retail area selling literary gifts and cards
  - Free public toilets, including a Changing Places accessible toilet.
16. The opening hours of the building are set out below. At the time of writing this report, library venues across the county are closed for browsing due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The opening hours referenced here represent the opening hours of WDC post-Covid-19, agreed as a result of two Library Service Public Consultations undertaken during 2020:
- Monday 9.30am – 5.00pm
  - Tuesday 9.30am – 5.00pm
  - Wednesday 9.30am – 1.30pm
  - Thursday 9.30am – 5.00pm
  - Friday 9.30am – 5.00pm
  - Saturday 9.30am – 5.00pm
  - Sunday Closed
17. WDC is Hampshire’s busiest library - it is the third most-visited library building of any English County Authority<sup>1</sup> - and is an important community hub, providing a safe, accessible, and inclusive space for individuals and groups to meet, learn and discover. With over half a million visitors and 224,000 items loaned in 2019-20, it offers a vast range of books, magazines, and reference materials for people of all ages. WDC houses the Railway Collection, which forms part of the Library Service’s five Special Collections<sup>2</sup>. It provides technology to help people access information, opportunities and services online through a suite of ‘Go Online’ terminals. It also offers an arts and culture programme of events and activities in the Performance Hall and other spaces.
18. Currently, the Library Service has operational responsibility for the building, working in conjunction with HCC Facilities Management (FM). HCC Property Services retains the repair and maintenance liability for the building.
19. Since November 2014, HCT has operated the two galleries within WDC - The Gallery and City Space - and is responsible for creative programming in both spaces.

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<sup>1</sup> Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA), ‘Public Library Statistics, 2019-20 Actuals’, available online (subscription only), at <https://www.ipf.com/cipfavalidation/login/login.asp?type=OTHER&dest=www.cipfastats.net/leisure/publiclibrary/Default.asp>

<sup>2</sup> Special collections are a rich and diverse range of books, pamphlets, news cuttings, videos and photographs. In addition to the Railway Collection at WDC, the other four Special Collections are the Aviation Collection at Farnborough Library, the Military Collection at Aldershot Library, the Naval Collection at Gosport Discovery Centre and the Jane Austen Collection at Alton Library.



20. The Gallery is HCT's flagship exhibition space as it meets strict government indemnity standards to receive loaned works and artefacts of international importance. The Gallery has a programme of exceptional quality and varied temporary exhibitions, including HCT's curated shows, as well as works from national lenders such as Tate, British Museum and Victoria & Albert Museum. City Space is Winchester City Council's Community Gallery, operated by HCT. It is a vibrant and versatile gallery and hosts a rolling programme of exhibitions which celebrate the very best of Winchester's and Hampshire's thriving arts community.
21. The Café/Bar is operated by Hampshire County Council Catering Service (HC3S). It comprises a food and beverage service counter in a prominent location in the building, as well as a large external terrace. The Café/Bar offers a limited range of cold snacks, as well as hot and cold beverages; it is licensed to serve alcohol.

### **Development of the Partnership**

22. WDC demonstrates some of the best of what a high-performing modern library can offer. However, there is potential for greater and more intensive use of the varied spaces within the building to enable WDC to realise its full potential as a large cultural venue.
23. The present offer, with various operators working independently from each other (the Library Service, HCT, HC3S, community organisations, event partners, room hirers, etc.), has the potential to develop into a more cohesive model to offer a seamless and high quality customer experience and realise the potential efficiencies from a single operating model.
24. The County Council continues to face significant financial pressures which have been exacerbated in the past year by the financial challenge of the pandemic.
25. In this context, a strategic business plan has been developed for WDC, with the aim of generating savings for the Library Service and improving the offer to customers. The plan aims to ensure that WDC is a modern destination for creativity and learning, and can realise its full potential as a large cultural venue in the heart of Winchester. A key theme of the business plan is to explore ways of working in partnership to deliver the best possible outcomes for customers, and to ensure the long-term financial viability of the building.
26. Over the past three years, the Library Service has worked with colleagues from HCC and external organisations, to explore a range of partnership and income generation opportunities for WDC. This report now recommends that the Library Service proceeds to the next stage in developing a partnership with HCT that will secure and develop WDC as a vibrant cultural, arts and learning centre for Winchester and its hinterland, bring financial benefits for both organisations, improve the customer experience and secure the long-term financial viability of the building.

27. HCT has been selected as the Library Service's preferred partner at WDC for the following reasons:
- HCT is a leading cultural organisation in Hampshire, and already delivers arts, cultural and museum programming on behalf of both HCC and Winchester City Council as part of an existing, long-term partnership.
  - HCT is an existing major stakeholder in WDC, having successfully operated The Gallery and City Space since 2014. This also means that it has experience of operating within WDC, and an associated existing knowledge of the building and its operations.
  - The nature of HCT's existing partnership with HCC means that one-off set-up costs, as well as ongoing administrative costs, will be relatively low.
  - HCT has experience delivering a thriving cultural offer for the county of Hampshire, which it can draw on to develop a pilot programme of cultural events and activities across the entire Hampshire library network as a potential second phase of the partnership.
  - HCT's vision for WDC closely aligns with the ambitions of the Library Service.

### **A Shared Vision for WDC**

28. The Library Service and HCT have worked closely together to explore ways to develop and strengthen their existing partnership. A new service delivery model is now proposed for WDC, whereby HCT takes on full operational responsibility for the building, including all cultural programming, whilst Hampshire Library Service continues to deliver library services, including book and magazine lending, public IT access and safe community space, within an expanded, culturally led venue.
29. The emerging vision is founded on three key principles: *Community, Culture and Curiosity*. The shared vision sees the integration of all cultural aspects of WDC under one programming strategy, creating a unique cultural venue for Winchester's community that brings together those who are curious, creative and community minded. The ambition is:
- 'To become a progressive centre for enjoyment, the expression of creativity, and the pursuit of learning for the people of Winchester and beyond.'***
30. Hampshire Library Service will continue to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, free at the point of access, within the building. It will retain its status as a thriving library venue and will work to deliver the vision to promote reading and literacy, support healthy creative communities and invest in digital services. This will be achieved through continued provision of existing community services, as well as using the partnership approach to explore and develop new opportunities to improve literacy and social outcomes.
31. Through the partnership with HCT, WDC will offer unique, high-quality cultural facilities and a programme of exciting cultural activities that will meet visitors'

needs and interests throughout their lifetime. This will be achieved through a range of tried-and-tested programming formats including exhibitions, live performance, events, workshops, classes, and immersive experiences. WDC will become the place for piloting experimental cultural programming that could develop into a viable and stimulating offer delivered across the library network at a later stage.

32. As part of the project the customer entry point will be improved by introducing welcome areas that multi-function as points for information, ticketing, enquiries, etc. The Café/Bar will be remodelled to achieve increased capacity and the flexibility to turn the area into an evening events space. A retail area will offer exhibition merchandise and products from local artists and makers.
33. The partnership approach will create a new joint branding and staffing team providing an integrated offer where interests can be pursued through a variety of pathways. Customers will be able to move seamlessly between resources and books, hands-on making and social interactivity, entertainment and learning experiences.
34. Both HCC and HCT will pursue investment for growth and innovative projects from funding bodies, potentially including a joint application for Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status.
35. The expected benefits of the partnership are:
  - **Financial**
    - To maximise the financial potential of WDC through additional net income and operating cost efficiencies for the financial benefit of both partners
    - To improve the return on investment for both organisations, including delivery of annual efficiency savings for the Library Service by 2023-2024.
    - To secure operational efficiencies related to management of the building (for example a reduction in business rates through the new charitable purpose for the building)
    - To maximise the income generating potential of the building
    - To enable joint funding applications to Arts Council England and other funders.
  - **Customer**
    - To enhance the customer journey and experience (before, during and after their visit)
    - To continue to grow a diverse cultural programme
    - To increase public access by increasing provision and extending opening hours.
  - **Organisational**
    - To secure the long-term viability of the site

- To grow participation and increase visitor numbers.

### **Proposed Operating Model**

36. Under the proposed model, operational management of the building will be passed to HCT, (including associated day-to-day running costs), through a formal lease agreement. HCT will manage the space, operate the café and run the enhanced cultural programme, including continued operation of The Gallery and City Space. HCT will be recruiting to their 'Destination Winchester' team to facilitate this.
37. Hampshire County Council will retain the freehold ownership of the building and retain property repair and maintenance liabilities accordingly.
38. Heads of Terms are still to be agreed, subject to approval to proceed with the partnership proposal in principle. This will include the length and nature of the legal arrangements (e.g. lease or licence) and appropriate break clauses and reviews.
39. The Library Service will deliver the library services within the building. Library Service staff will remain in the employment of Hampshire County Council.
40. The proposed operating model offers the opportunity to extend building opening hours. Following an extensive Public Consultation in 2020, the opening hours at WDC were reduced as part of a suite of changes to opening hours across the Library Service. As part of the consultation, the Library Service committed to working with partners and members of the community to extend opening hours where the opportunity arose.
41. Under HCT management, the overall opening hours of the building would increase to around 61 hours a week. Under this model, although the Library elements would only be staffed for 41.5 hours a week, access to books, self-service issue, reservations and returns and study space will be available whenever the building is open to the public.
42. The Library Service has considered a range of other options for the future management of Winchester Discovery Centre, but each has been discounted at this stage. There remains an option for the Library Service to continue to manage the building and operations, continuing its efforts to decrease expenditure and increase income. However, this does not provide the wider cultural, community or strategic benefit that the proposed model confers nor afford the same level of savings. Nonetheless, this remains a fully viable option if the current proposal is not progressed.

### **Governance**

43. A Management Funding Agreement already exists between HCT and Hampshire County Council which sets out governance, responsibilities, reporting requirements and funding. A Service Level Agreement specific to

WDC will set out detailed operating requirements for WDC to allow future review of the partnership.

44. HCC already has representation on the HCT Board of Trustees, which has responsibility for all significant partnership and investment decision making. HCT's trustees bring a wealth of skills and experience to the project, with expertise across a broad spectrum of professional areas.

### **Finance and Resources**

45. The proposed operating model is a partnership that aims to deliver financial benefits for both the Library Service and HCT.
46. Winchester Discovery Centre currently costs c£1.03 million a year to run (including both direct and indirect apportioned costs) and generates an income of approximately £200,000 per year, resulting in a net cost of £830,000 per year.
47. Under this model, responsibility for all operational costs (excluding those linked directly to the provision of statutory library services), together with the benefit of all income (excluding income derived from statutory library services) would transfer to HCT. The County Council will provide an annual grant to HCT to cover the operational costs for running the building.
48. The proposed financial model will be governed by the following key commercial principles:
- Over time, both parties should see financial benefits from the arrangements; HCT through the increase of income generated by activity and HCC through the reduction in costs (and longer term reduction in grant levels)
  - HCC recognises that in the initial set up phase (Year 0) there will be a need to increase expenditure to 'pump-prime' the project
  - In year 1 (2022-23) each party will break even, and be no worse off than the current position
  - By year 2 (2023-24), both parties should be seeing financial benefits
  - In year 3 (2023-24) the financial position will be assessed and the grant arrangement will be reviewed, potentially with a view to incorporating it into the wider grant that HCC provides to HCT.
49. HCT will carry the commercial risk and responsibility for growth in income to achieve its financial benefit and return on initial investment, whilst HCC will provide a grant for the first three-year period ensuring future financial certainty. HCC and HCT will make a significant initial capital investment into the scheme and HCC will continue to bear running costs for Library Services. For its part, HCC carries the risk that it is not able to reduce its expenditure on library functions on the timescales envisaged by the financial model.

50. Savings to HCC will be achieved through a combination of operational efficiencies, reductions in events expenditure and changes in staffing as a result of transferring the building and cultural programme to HCT. The single biggest anticipated overall saving will be through the transition to charitable purpose for the building and associated application for charitable business rate relief.
51. In addition to cashable savings, this project will also deliver a resource benefit, as it will release staff from existing duties at WDC to work in other capacities across the Library Service.
52. Robust financial planning is essential to ensure that HCT is less reliant on financial subsidy from HCC in the longer term. HCT will achieve this through programming efficiencies at WDC, and by connecting WDC to other cultural venues in Winchester and across the county. A cultural programming model with the potential to be delivered across the library network could deliver further ongoing financial benefits for both organisations.
53. HCT will deliver increased earned income from ticketing, retail and events, as well as an enhanced food and beverage offer that will complement the creative programme.
54. The existing catering provision in WDC is delivered by HC3S. Under this proposal, HC3S will cease operations at WDC, and the business will transfer to HCT. This is anticipated to have a net neutral financial impact on HC3S. Anticipated staff impacts related to the transfer of the Café/Bar are set out in paragraph 60.
55. HC3S currently contributes £10,000 p.a. to the Library Service from income generated at WDC, and this loss of income to the Library Service has been factored into the financial model.
56. There are no anticipated financial impacts on FM, as the contract to deliver services at WDC is expected to transfer to HCT as part of this proposed partnership.

### **Staff Implications**

57. When taken together (including HCT, Hampshire Libraries and HC3S staff) the overall number of staff required will remain broadly the same under the proposed partnership. However, over time it is expected that the number of staff employed by HCC will reduce and the number of staff employed by HCT will increase.
58. During the next 4 years the staffing ratios between HCC and HCT will be monitored and reviewed as the partnership develops. Reductions within HCC staffing will be managed wherever possible through natural turnover. If reductions cannot be achieved through vacancy management, formal processes will be followed. It is anticipated that there will be role opportunities



within HCT to further mitigate any risk and maximise employment opportunities.

59. Staff providing Library Services will remain in the employment of the Library Service.
60. As part of this proposal, the Café/Bar will change management from HCC to HCT. Therefore, all eligible employees employed in the Café/Bar by HC3S before transfer will automatically transfer from HCC to HCT<sup>3</sup>.
61. Facilities Management ('FM') staff working in WDC will remain employees of the County Council and are not anticipated to be impacted by this proposal, as it is intended that the FM contract will transfer wholesale to HCT at the point the leasehold agreement takes effect.
62. New job opportunities and roles will be developed within HCT, in relation to the enhanced cultural programme and changes to operational responsibilities being proposed.

### **Property Works**

63. With no significant investment in the interior fixtures and finishes since 2008, Winchester Discovery Centre is starting to show the effects of its half a million visitors per year and is in need of general maintenance and refurbishment – whether or not the partnership proposal goes ahead.
64. Achieving the shared vision, and the expected financial and non-financial benefits for both organisations, will require improvements to the building including essential works; internal refurbishment; and spatial reorganisation. These works will be designed to create a welcoming environment that encourages movement and exploration for customers, as well as maximising income-generating potential for both organisations.
65. The proposed partnership will be supported by a programme of building improvements. The Library Service and HCT will work together during Quarter 1 of the 2021-22 financial year to agree a programme of works that meets the aspirations of both organisations, but which will include:
  - Refurbished Café/Bar and WCs
  - Improvements to key spaces including the Children's Library and City Space gallery
  - Relocation of some library book stock to enable better flow throughout the building

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<sup>3</sup> A transfer of an undertaking under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/246) (a TUPE transfer) occurs when the whole or part of an employer's business or undertaking is sold or transferred as a going concern to another employer.

- Creation of welcoming space at the heart of the building for groups and individuals to relax and spend time, or to begin exploring the cultural programme on offer
  - Development of a new, unique brand identity for WDC that will encapsulate the exciting joint venture, including new signage and wayfinding within the space.
66. A package of HCC and HCT funding is being assembled to meet the indicative costs of £630,000, with a further potential for a bid to the Arts Council for additional funding of c£70,000 in preparation pending the outcome of this decision.
67. The building handover date to HCT is planned for Quarter 4 of the 2021-22 financial year.

### **Key Risks / Other Key Issues**

68. A decision to proceed with the partnership between the Library Service and HCT is recommended on the grounds it represents the best opportunity to safeguard the long-term viability of WDC as a cultural venue for the people of Winchester and beyond. The proposed operating model is expected to deliver long-term financial and non-financial benefits for both organisations.
69. However, the proposed partnership is not without risk. A primary risk is that HCT is unable to deliver on its predicted financial performance. Potential risk areas that may impact on financial performance include the ability of funding partners to continue investment, and underachievement of visitor and income targets at WDC.
70. Moreover, the unprecedented circumstances brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic have significantly disrupted activities of the Library Service (at WDC and across the wider library network), and at HCT venues. Forced closures, cancelled events and limited visitor numbers have adversely impacted earned income for both organisations during 2020-21, and this is expected to continue into 2021-22 and beyond.
71. Although the financial positions of both organisations have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, and may therefore take longer to realise the benefits of the partnership and require more effort to rebuild audiences, this partnership proposal still represents a strong option for the long-term success of WDC.
72. Under the proposed model, risk associated by underperformance of income or increased operational costs would be primarily borne by HCT. As a core element of ordinary budgeting procedures, HCT will be able to anticipate cash flow issues or budget pressures and put mitigation strategies into place to ensure a balanced budget, in discussion with HCT's Board and with funding partners. A break clause will be included within the tenure agreement for the benefit of both parties.

73. In addition to the income related pressures, the overall savings projections remain finely balanced for both parties. Other key factors, such as the eligibility of the new operational model for charitable relief on business rates, will have a significant effect on whether or not the arrangement can proceed. If the required savings cannot be made, officers will revisit the proposals and revise the model accordingly.
74. Similarly, the savings for the County Council are reliant on a reduction in staff over time. Library Service customer-facing staff have only recently been subject to an extensive consultation and service review exercise and managers are mindful of the additional uncertainty and pressure that any subsequent changes may place on library staff.

### **Consultation and Equalities**

75. In early 2020 the Library Service conducted a significant public consultation on the future strategy for the Service. This consultation elicited c28,000 responses and in July 2020 the Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage agreed to the proposals. This included proposals to generate additional income and deliver services differently. There was strong public support for partnering with other services to reduce costs.
76. Later in 2020 the Library Service ran a subsequent consultation on opening hours. Specific feedback was received regarding the opening hours at Winchester Discovery Centre.
77. The information gleaned through both of these consultation exercises has been taken into account in the development of this proposal.
78. The Local Member, Councillor Hiscock, is aware of the proposals.
79. Winchester City Council invested in the original refurbishment of the Discovery Centre and, as a condition of this investment, maintains the right to operate City Space from the premises. Winchester City Council comments:  
  
*“Winchester City Council welcomes this new partnership between Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Cultural Trust which seeks to enhance the cultural and customer experience at the Winchester Discovery Centre. As a founding partner to the Trust and with a continued desire to support the District’s cultural and creative sectors, the council supports this new approach to how the centre is operated. It will provide an opportunity to build on the offer already available at the City Museum, The Westgate, and City Space which, under this proposal, will be enhanced and benefit from closer operational links with The Gallery. We look forward to working with both HCC and HCT as the plans progress over the coming year.”*
80. Formal consultation with staff and unions is planned in 2021-22 for HC3S staff who are eligible for TUPE transfer to HCT.

81. Draft Equalities Impact Assessments for both staff and service users have been prepared.

### Next Steps and Timetable

82. Key events in the timetable for the proposed partnership are as follows:

Stage	Activity	Status/target date
Stage 1	Development of vision and scoping of high-level business case	Complete
Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision by Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Cultural Trust to proceed in principle</li> <li>Communication with staff and Trade Unions.</li> <li>Engagement with Winchester City Council to discuss use of space and wider strategic benefits</li> <li>Agreement on Heads of Terms and Financial Model</li> </ul>	March- April 2021
Stage 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of phased transition and handover plan</li> <li>Formation of partnership agreement with HCT</li> <li>Commencement of statutory approvals and pre-construction phase for capital works</li> </ul>	2021-22, Q1 - Q2 (April – September)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction phase for capital works</li> <li>Enter into formal consultation with HC3S staff who are eligible for TUPE transfer to HCT</li> <li>HCT to commence recruiting team to deliver cultural programme and operational duties.</li> </ul>	2021-22, Q3 (October – December)
Stage 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of capital works</li> <li>Building transfer to HCT.</li> </ul>	Q4 FY 21/22 (February handover)
Stage 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor staff turnover and review of staffing levels</li> <li>Review of financial performance and future funding model (linked to wider HCT MFA)</li> </ul>	2022-23 onwards

## **Conclusions**

83. This report recommends a new partnership between the Library Service and HCT at WDC.
84. The partnership will transfer operational responsibility for the building and for cultural programming to HCT. The Library Service will continue to deliver a comprehensive and efficient library service, free at the point of access, within WDC.
85. A refurbishment of WDC is also proposed, which includes essential works, interior refurbishment and spatial reorganisation, to support and enable delivery of the shared vision.
86. The partnership will bring financial and non-financial benefits to both organisations, secure the long-term viability of the building, increase public access and participation, improve the customer experience and secure investment at a time of major financial challenge. It reduces dependency upon local authority funding, whilst maximising income generation and fundraising opportunities.
87. Both the Library Service and HCT endorse and recommend this partnership at WDC and present it as a sound option to secure the long-term viability of the building.

## **Appendices**

- 1 Hampshire Library Service – future vision
- 2 About Hampshire Cultural Trust
- 3 Shared vision for WDC

## **Appendix 1 - Library Service Future Vision**

A modern, relevant and sustainable library service that is valued by our communities and which plays an important role in the delivering Hampshire County Council's strategic goals through achieving three core priorities:

### **Priority one: Promoting reading**

- i. Providing a service for everyone – championing reading for pleasure.
- ii. Developing children's literacy, particularly within the Early Years (ages 0-5) – giving children the best start in life.
- iii. Investing in Hampshire's Digital Library – reflecting increasing use of electronic books and offering greater choice to readers.

### **Priority two: Supporting healthy, creative communities**

- i. Establishing council-run libraries as 'community hubs' – bringing individuals, communities and services together, thereby making better use of available public funds and improving outcomes for people.
- ii. Taking the Library Service into communities – engaging with residents in the most deprived areas, where use of library services is lowest, and partnering with voluntary and community sector organisations.
- iii. Delivering a programme of learning and activities that meet the needs of library users – promoting literacy, health, wellbeing and digital skills

### **Priority three: Investing in digital services**

- i. Providing access to technology, prioritising those at risk of digital exclusion – working with partners to help people access information, opportunities and services online.



## Appendix 2 - About Hampshire Cultural Trust

Hampshire Cultural Trust was established in 2014 to promote Hampshire as a great cultural county and our **vision** is to create inspirational cultural experiences in Hampshire that enrich and transform lives.

Our **mission** is to provide great arts, heritage, museums and creative programming, working closely with local and national partners, and placing communities, our collections and their stories at the heart of everything we do.

We run a huge variety of exhibitions, workshops, classes, events and projects for both young and old, with particular emphasis on reaching people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged and would not normally be able to access arts and culture.

Our goals are to:

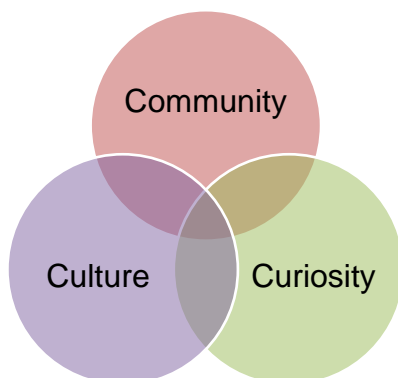
- To provide high-quality programmes and venues that engage diverse audiences and inspire local pride
- To improve wellbeing, health and happiness through cultural experiences
- To deliver a sustainable future for culture in Hampshire, contributing to the local economy and building stronger communities
- To create fulfilling employment and volunteering opportunities through culture

We achieve this by:

- Operating 18 museums across Hampshire and East Dorset, providing access to local history for residents and visitors
- Working in partnership with external organisations to deliver community museum services at three further venues in Hampshire
- Operating three arts centres in Hampshire, bringing high quality performing arts to local communities
- Delivering a flagship gallery programme, bringing major exhibitions to three government indemnified galleries in Winchester, Basingstoke and Gosport
- Delivering engaging cultural programmes for young people; Wessex Dance Academy works with the most vulnerable young people using contemporary dance and Horizon 20:20 engages young people in non-mainstream education settings using a variety of cultural activity
- Delivering of a schools and adult education programme creating learning opportunities inspired by local history, artists and creatives
- Caring for over 2.5 million objects relating to Hampshire's cultural heritage
- Operating of Hampshire Wardrobe which provides costume and loans materials for schools and other local users to support history and the arts
- Hosting of museum development advice for the wider museums sector in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight area via the Arts Council England funded Museum Development programme.

## Appendix 3 - Shared Vision for WDC

Hampshire Library Service and Hampshire Cultural Trust are working together in partnership to deliver a shared vision for WDC. There are three key elements to the vision: Community, Culture and Curiosity.



This vision has been developed to:

- Further develop HCC's partnership with HCT to realise benefits for both organisations, and for existing and potential users.
- Provide high-quality library and cultural experiences, contributing towards HCC's and HCT's strategic goals.
- Realise WDC's full potential and furthering its founding vision as a progressive cultural venue.
- Reimage the way in which the building and facilities are used and managed.
- Integrate all cultural aspects of WDC under one programming vision.
- Pilot a programming model with the potential to be delivered across the library network (phase 2).

The benefits of the partnership approach and shared vision are:

### Financial

- To improve the return on investment for both organisations.
- To secure operational efficiencies related to management of the building.
- To enable joint funding applications to Arts Council England and other funders.

### Customer

- To increase public access by safeguarding and increasing opening times.
- To continue to grow a diverse cultural programme.
- To enhance the customer journey and experience (before, during and after their visit).

### Organisational

- To secure the long-term viability of the site.
- To grow participation and increase visitor numbers.

The shared vision is being delivered for:

- People who live, work or study in Winchester and Hampshire.
- People who visit Winchester for leisure.

## **How the vision will be delivered**

### **Delivering high-quality library services**

Hampshire Library Service will continue to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, free at the point of access, within WDC. It will work to deliver its vision to promote reading and literacy, support healthy creative communities and invest in digital services, prioritising access to technology to those at most risk of exclusion.

This will be achieved through continued provision of existing community services, as well as using the partnership approach to explore and develop new opportunities to improve literacy and social outcomes. This includes:

- Promotion of reading for pleasure, with a strong focus on early years (ages 0-5 years)
- Access to a safe and inclusive space for diverse communities to meet, learn and discover
- Purposeful engagement with hard-to-reach communities to improve literacy and social outcomes
- Access to space for quiet study and reflection
- Support for community groups
- Access to technology to help people access information, opportunities and services online

Careful management of stock will continue to ensure the best possible offer for customers, including a significant financial investment to refresh the book stock held at WDC. The location of stock within WDC will be reviewed to ensure that the space is easily navigable, and some collections could be relocated as a result. The Library Service will continue to ensure that stock reflects changing customer needs, as well as being aligned to the cultural vision for the venue.

### **Cultural programme**

The cultural programme will create a narrative across the building and connect all activities, so that customers will be able to explore their interests in a range of different ways. Programming will be people-centric and grow with them as they progress on their personal journeys of exploration and learning at WDC.

Broad cultural and creative themes will be explored through a range of tried-and-tested programming formats:

- Flagship exhibition programme and community exhibition opportunities.
- Live performance (music, comedy, spoken word) in the Performance Hall and Café/Bar.
- Relaxed film screenings for young families and those with additional needs.

- Big name speakers in the Performance Hall and regular talks in the learning rooms.
- Regular one-off workshops for adults and young people, providing next steps to the free activities offered.
- Term-long classes for more in-depth learning experiences, focusing on life skills and creative practice.
- Digital workshops for young people and adults, developing skills in coding, gaming, and the digital arts.
- Weekly after school club for 11 to 14-year-olds to explore STEAM learning areas<sup>4</sup>.
- Large scale seasonal programming with half-term immersive experiences and biannual themed fairs.

The cultural programme piloted in WDC will have the potential to be adapted for delivery across the library network, which could leverage further investment in programming and increase participation.

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<sup>4</sup> Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics.

## REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

### Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

### Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> <a href="#">Results of Library Consultation</a>	<u>Date</u> 28 July 2020
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

Draft Equalities Impact Assessments for both staff and service users have been prepared in relation to the proposed partnership.

For service users, impacts on age, disability and pregnancy and maternity have been assessed as positive, due to opportunities offered by the partnership, including an enhanced cultural offer, which will align with Hampshire Libraries' Strategy to 2025, which has a particular focus on supporting literacy in the Early Years (age 0-5). Improvements to facilities (including updates to the public WCs and Changing Spaces toilet), potential increases to the building opening hours and the continued promotion of the building as a safe and welcoming community space will all impact positively on service users.

For staff, impacts on age, disability, gender and pregnancy and maternity have been assessed as low. A lower percentage of the workforce at WDC are over 55 compared to the wider Library Service. Reasonable adjustments will continue to be made for staff who have declared a disability, where appropriate. 76% off the



workforce at WDC identify as female and 24% identify as male and impacts on gender, pregnancy and maternity have been assessed as low.”

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# Context – Winchester Discovery Centre



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- Winchester Discovery Centre is Hampshire's busiest library and is an important community hub, providing a safe, accessible and inclusive space for individuals and groups to meet, learn and discover. It includes:
  - A modern two-storey library, with space for reading and quiet study
  - A separate children's library
  - Free 'Go-Online' public computers, printing and copying facilities, and free wi-fi
  - Library self-service kiosks
  - Two public art galleries, both operated by Hampshire Cultural Trust
  - A 180-seat Performance Hall, with flexible seating making it suitable as a 200-capacity conference venue
  - A café/bar, currently operated by Hampshire County Council Catering Services (HC3S)
  - Accessible space for community groups to meet
  - Hireable rooms for clubs and societies
  - Spaces let to community organisations on a leasehold basis
  - A small retail area selling literary gifts and cards
  - Free public toilets, including a Changing Places accessible toilet.
- The Discovery Centre attracts over half a million visits and a quarter of a million issues per year. It is the third most visited county library in the Country.
- The Library Service incurs costs of around £830,000 each year to run WDC (expenditure is £1.03 million, and income is c£200,000).



# Context - HCT

- Set up in 2014 by HCC & WCC, Hampshire Cultural Trust is the largest independent cultural trust in England and the largest county-wide cultural organisation in Hampshire.
- HCT operates 23 venues including museums, 3 arts centres hosting comedy, music and theatre and 3 Government Indemnity Scheme (GIS) art galleries in Winchester, Basingstoke and Gosport
- Since 2014 HCT has absorbed a 30% reduction in LA funding (£1.2M p/a) whilst increasing earned income by 44% and raised over £5M in external fundraising
- HCT has invested over £450K in HCC / WCC venues since 2014 and generated a modest surplus in each year since 2014 which, along with central government support, has been critical in mitigating the financial cost of Covid-19 in 2020/21
- HCT operates 'The Gallery' and 'City Space' within the Winchester Discovery Centre welcoming over 70,000 visitors to the galleries each year
- 'The Gallery' has hosted a programme of world class exhibitions and UK premiers since 2014 including 'Turner and the Sun', Jane Austen 200, the BP Portrait Award as well as showcasing up and coming artists and self-curated exhibitions from HCC and WCC collections
- HCT has gained a strong reputation for digital investment, a commercial approach to pricing and promotion and high staff and volunteer engagement (achieved indicative placing as a Times Top 100 Not for Profit Organisation to work for in 2020)

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# Proposed Operating Model

- A new partnership that will secure and develop WDC as a vibrant cultural, arts and learning centre for Winchester and its hinterland.
- The integration of all cultural aspects of WDC under one programming strategy, creating a unique cultural venue for Winchester's community that brings together those who are curious, creative and community minded.
- Hampshire Cultural Trust are the preferred partner.
- The proposal would see:
  - Operational control of the building being passed to HCT
  - HCT managing the space, operating the café and running the cultural programme
  - The status of Winchester Discovery Centre as a flagship library maintained and enhanced by this project.

**'To become a progressive centre for enjoyment, the expression of creativity, and the pursuit of learning for the people of Winchester and beyond.'**





# Commercial Principles

- The partnership aims to deliver financial benefits for both the Library Service and HCT.
- The proposed financial model will be governed by the following key commercial principles:
  - Over time, both parties should see financial benefits from the arrangements; HCT through the increase of income generated by activity and HCC through the reduction in costs (and longer term reduction in grant levels)
  - In the initial set up phase (Year 0) there will be a need to increase expenditure to 'pump-prime' the project
  - In year 1 (2022-23) each party will break even, and be no worse off than the current position
  - By year 2 (2023-24), both parties should be seeing financial benefits
  - In year 3 and beyond (2023-24) the financial position will be assessed and the grant arrangement will be reviewed.
- HCT will carry the commercial risk and responsibility for growth in income to achieve its financial benefit and return on initial investment, whilst HCC will provide a grant for the first three-year period ensuring future financial certainty. HCC and HCT will make a significant initial capital investment into the scheme and HCC will continue to bear running costs for Library Services. For its part, HCC carries the risk that it is not able to reduce its expenditure on library functions on the timescales envisaged by the financial model.





# Staffing Impacts

- The overall number of staff employed within the building will remain largely the same. Over the next 4 years the proportion employed by HCT will be higher, and the proportion employed by HCC will be lower.
- HCT staff will deliver 'front of house' services including visitor and café services, as well as the cultural programming.
- Staff providing library services will remain in the employment of Hampshire County Council to support the operation of the library element of the offer.
- HC3S staff will TUPE (transfer) to HCT where appropriate.
- Staffing levels will be monitored – HCC staffing reductions will be managed wherever possible through natural turnover; if, over time, reductions cannot be made through vacancy management, formal processes will be followed.
- New job opportunities and roles will be developed within HCT.

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# Property Improvements

- Achieving the shared vision will require a range of improvements to the building.
- A scheme is currently being developed, funded largely through corporate capital, which includes the following:
  - Refurbished Café/Bar and WCs
  - Improvements to key spaces including the Children's Library and City Space gallery
  - Relocation of some library book stock to enable better flow throughout the building
  - Creation of welcoming space at the heart of the building or groups and individuals to relax and spend time, or to begin exploring the cultural programme on offer
  - Development of a new, unique brand identity for WDC that will encapsulate the exciting joint venture, including new signage and wayfinding within the space.
- Target completion date for the building works is February 2022, with an estimated cost of c£700,000.



# Summary of benefits

## Financial

- To provide financial benefits to both organisations, including significant annual efficiency savings by 2023-24.
- To secure operational efficiencies related to management of the building.
- To maximise the income generating potential of the building.
- To enable joint funding applications to Arts Council England and other funders.

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## Customer

- To enhance the customer journey and experience (before, during and after their visit).
- To continue to grow a diverse cultural programme.
- To increase public access by increasing provision and extending opening hours.



## Organisational

- To secure the long-term viability of the venue.
- To grow participation and increase visitor numbers.





Stage	Activity	Status/target date
Stage 1	Development of vision and scoping of high level business case	Complete
Stage 2	Decision by Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Cultural Trust to proceed in principle  Communication with staff and Trade Unions  Agreement on Heads of Terms and Financial Model	March – April 2021
Page 105	Development of phased transition and handover plan  Formation of partnership agreement with HCT  Commencement of statutory approvals and pre-construction phase for capital works	2021-22, Q1 - Q2 (April – September)
	Construction phase for capital works  Enter into formal consultation with HC3S staff who are eligible for TUPE transfer to HCT  HCT to commence recruiting ‘Destination Winchester’ team to deliver cultural programme and operational duties.	2021-22, Q3 (October – December)
Stage 4	Construction handover and close-out  Building handover to HCT	Q4 FY 21/22 (February handover)
Stage 5	Monitor staff turnover and review of staffing levels  Review of financial performance and future funding model	2022/23 onwards

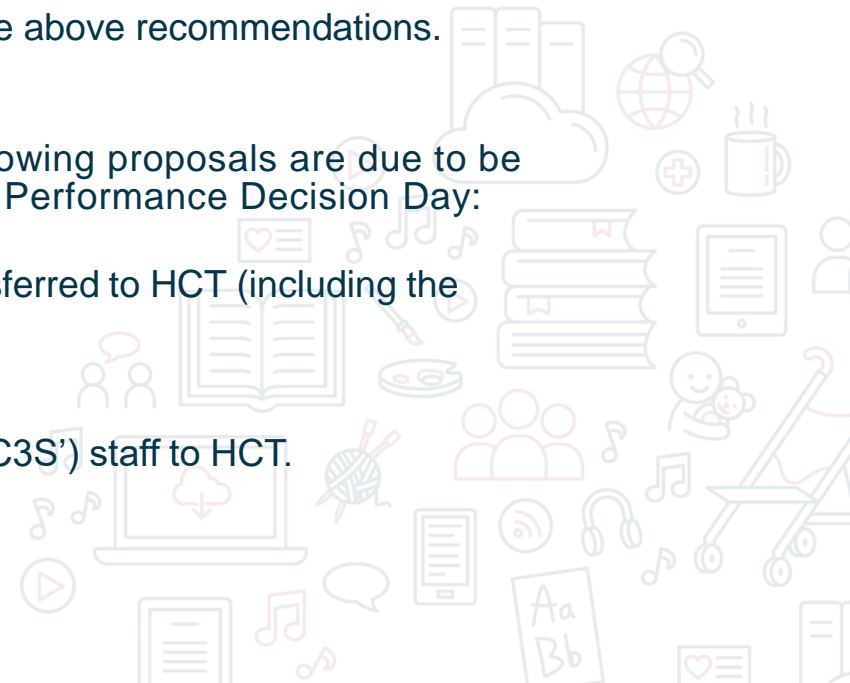
# Recommendations

That the Culture and Communities Select Committee recommends that the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs:

- i. Approves plans to proceed with the proposed partnership model, subject to agreement being reached by both parties on final details of the arrangement.
- ii. Approves the commercial principles as set out in the Report and delegates authority to the Director of CCBS in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Corporate Resources and the Head of Legal Services to conclude the detailed financial agreement in line with the commercial principles.
- iii. Notes the HR implications.
- iv. Authorises any other steps be taken that are reasonably necessary in order to implement the above recommendations.

It is also recommended that Culture and Communities Select Committee notes that the following proposals are due to be considered at a future Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Human Resources and Performance Decision Day:

- i. The detailed property arrangements by which the operational responsibility for WDC is transferred to HCT (including the nature and duration of tenure).
- ii. The detailed programme of property refurbishment and improvement.
- iii. Proposals to transfer employment of some Hampshire County Council Catering Service ('HC3S') staff to HCT.



## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee:</b>	Culture and Communities Select Committee
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	18 March 2021
<b>Report Title:</b>	Work Programme
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Transformation & Governance

**Contact name:** Emma Cousins

**Tel:** 0370 779 5788

**Email:** emma.cousins@hants.gov.uk

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To review and agree the Work Programme for the Culture and Communities Select Committee.

#### **Recommendation**

2. That the Committee agree the Work Programme as attached and make any amendments as necessary.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	yes

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

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- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

This is a scrutiny review document setting out the work programme of the Committee. It does not therefore make any proposals which will impact on groups with protected characteristics.

**WORK PROGRAMME – CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Reason for inclusion</b>	<b>18 March 2021</b>	<b>18 June 2021</b>	<b>20 September 2021</b>	<b>29 November 2021</b>	<b>17 January 2022</b>
<b>Pre- scrutiny items</b>	2022/23 Revenue Budget Report for Culture, Communities and Business Services	Pre-scrutiny of 2022/23 budget proposals for relevant services prior to consideration by the Executive Member.					<b>x</b>
	Winchester Discovery Centre – Future Strategy	Pre-scrutiny of the future strategy for the Discovery Centre prior to consideration by the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs.	<b>x</b>				
	Right of Way and Countryside Paths (COVID)	Pre-scrutiny of the Path Recovery Programme prior to consideration by the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs.	<b>x</b>				
	County Farms Policy	Pre-scrutiny of the revised County Farms Policy prior to consideration by the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs.	<b>x</b>				
<b>Overview items</b>	Registration Service	To receive an overview of the service.		<b>x</b>			
	Covid update for cultural and community services	To receive an information update on how cultural and community services within CCBS are responding to the Covid pandemic.	<b>x</b>				

**WORK PROGRAMME – CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Reason for inclusion</b>	<b>18 March 2021</b>	<b>18 June 2021</b>	<b>20 September 2021</b>	<b>29 November 2021</b>	<b>17 January 2022</b>
<b>Overview items (regular updates)</b>	Update on Hampshire Cultural Trust	To receive a regular update from the Cultural Trust. <i>Last update – September 2020</i>					
	Transforming the County Council’s Country Parks	To receive a regular update on the programme progress. <i>Last update – September 2020</i>		<b>x</b>			
	Library Service Update	To receive a regular update on the Library Service. <i>Last update – September 2020</i>					

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