

Worcestershire County Council

Business Case

Worcestershire County Museum Future Service Delivery

August 2023

v2

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1. Executive Summary

Worcestershire County Museum is a popular destination bringing local residents and tourists to Hartlebury Castle. It brings significant visitor spend into Worcestershire, as well as supporting learning, creativity and volunteering benefits for local residents.

The vision for the County Museum's future is, in addition to maintaining the above, for space and new programmes that work with Primary Care Networks and other partners supporting positive health outcomes for local residents.

By aligning with health priorities and addressing the increasing demand for healthy living services, the museum aims to enhance the health of Worcestershire residents, contribute to a reduction to the burden of healthcare costs, and create a sustainable revenue stream for its service. Through a well-structured approach and careful management, the museum can become a pivotal contributor to support residents to *Be Well in Worcestershire*, the vision of the Council's Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

Potential health-focused programmes for the County Museum are detailed in the Strategic Case (3.1). These have been developed from work undertaken informally and evaluated as project work or trial programmes or are under discussion with partners responding to local need. To enable all these programmes to be fully developed and to take place at the County Museum, its property facilities need to be refurbished and improved. These property needs are summarised in 3.2.6.

The Council has significant obligations as a tenant at Hartlebury Castle that it needs to fulfil. By using some of these costs as matched funding, the museum service aims to lever in approximately £4million of external funding to fund the property refurbishment and improvements and support the transformation of the service to a wider delivery model.

Not all tenant obligations can count as matched funding and thus, to maximise the chance of funding success, Worcestershire County Council would commit an additional £800k-£1million funding to the project. This would be required in stages from 2027 onwards.

The County Museum's main income source is currently earned income for admissions and school sessions. This is limited by the restrictions of its current management agreement and short property lease. This new delivery model will encompass a much wider diversity of funding for the service and a range of procurement models. It will enable a better management agreement with its partner and landlord, Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust, both working with complementary customer bases. It will enable the proportion of the museum budget funded by the Council to decrease.

Property improvements to enable the County Museum's developed delivery model will be supported through a series of workstreams with dedicated project management support, support from external expertise and expertise from colleagues in legal and finance teams.

A decision will be made by Worcestershire County Cabinet on the options for the future of Worcestershire County Museum in October 2023. The property plans will be brought to Capital Board at initial stage in August 2023 and again at detailed design stage.

2. Business Case details

Project Name	Worcestershire County Museum Service Delivery
Project Sponsor	Hannah Needham
Project Manager	To be added at next stage
Service description	Worcestershire County Museum, Communities, People Directorate
Partner organisation(s)	Part of future work
Project Reference	tbc

3. Strategic Case

3.1 The proposal

Community wellbeing is fundamental to the service model of museums.

It is delivered as volunteering and work experience, through displays and facilities, participation in activities and with handling collections, and engaging with other visitors and with the museum team.

Currently, these activities are mostly delivered informally as part of traditional museum programmes like exhibitions, education and family activities, responding to customer demand and external funding.

The service has undertaken ground-breaking projects that support wellbeing outcomes for participants but, the recording and building on quantitative evidence of impact was a low priority until recently. The outcomes of these programmes are not currently included within of the wider Worcestershire County Council social care programmes.

Formalising a health and wellbeing offer in museums - working with colleagues across social care and partners to deliver set programmes with planned resident health outcomes - will support the Council to improve health outcomes for Worcestershire residents.

Future health-focused programmes for the County Museum are expected to include the following. These have so far been undertaken informally as project work or trial programmes or are under discussion with partners as potentials:

- Wellbeing sessions for the general public which can be booked into directly or via social prescribing focusing on gentle exercise and mental health, eg yoga, tai chi, art, craft, walk and talk, run by museum staff and by specialist practitioners
- Preventative health care sessions, eg strength and balance classes designed to help reduce the incidence of falls amongst older residents
- Partner venue use (as a hire) such as AgeUK's Dementia Meeting Centre sessions
- Social volunteering opportunities with health outcomes, supported by museum staff
- Inclusive work placements, supported by museum staff
- Day care for adults with learning disabilities, run by museum staff alongside partners or agency workers supporting participants. Probably subcommissioined by organisations commissioned to undertake this care.
- Outreach to care homes, using reminiscence resources, led by museum staff
- Potentially a health therapy tenant as part of the County Museum site offer, run as a commercial letting

3.2 The case for change

3.2.1 Alignment with Council objectives/priorities

Museums embody the Council's vision of putting communities at the heart of what we do. The County Museum support residents to better understand their Worcestershire home and connect to the people and places that are meaningful for them. Developing the service delivery programmes aligns with the People Directorate's guiding principles to listen and engage with communities and partner organisations and empower people in their health outcomes.

Worcestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy 2022 to 2032 sets out a vision and priorities for improving the health and wellbeing of people who live and work in Worcestershire.

The strategy's priorities are:

- Good mental health and wellbeing;
- supporting people to live well in good health for as long as possible, particularly those who have poorer health outcomes;
- ensuring children have the best start in life;
- young people will have hope and aspiration for the future; and
- residents live longer, more independent lives in good health, with fewer people going on to need care and support

In addition, relevant priorities of the Council's Prevention Strategy are:

- to support good physical health in later life to prevent falls, including through a programme of classes;
- create a sense of connection through communities including by enabling inclusive spaces,
- championing the 5 ways to wellbeing and enabling access to a range of activities; and,
- as part of a priority of advice and guidance to ensure that preventative action regarding health and wellbeing is embedded across all areas of the local authority.

3.2.2 Fit with national policy

Research undertaken by University College London in 2019 analysing the English Longitudinal Study of Aging showed that engaging with cultural activity just once or twice a year correlated to a 14% lower risk of dying over the study period, independent of the demographic or socioeconomic background of the study participants.

Under the 2014 Care Act, WCC has a statutory duty to promote wellbeing, and to undertake programmes of work that delay the need for care and support services.

Evidence-based national prevention reviews such as the Local Government Association report *Prevention – A Shared Commitment* show that working with communities can maximise take-up of screening and healthy activities and reduce the burden on healthcare services. Museums can provide the right venues to support these programmes.

3.2.3 Customer user needs – current and future

Current visitors to the County Museum as a visitor attraction will continue to be important users of the service. They will continue to expect to have access to the objects, research and resources of the County's nationally-significant collections through exhibitions and activities. The earned income from part of the site's admission charges remains an important part of a future service delivery model for the County Museum.

Alongside these existing customers, the potential is to extend the customer base of the service with programmes that support the council's vision to *Be Well in Worcestershire*. For example - working with charities such as Age UK to use the museum resources to deliver support to those living with dementia and their carers, or with Worcester University to deliver strength and balance resources to reduce the risk of falls.

3.2.4 Improvement of current service delivery arrangements

The County Museum currently has a successful operating model with growing visitor numbers to the site and increasing secondary spend. However, the current management agreement with WCC's partner and landlord Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust limits WCC's earned income to a proportion of admission fees only, minimising the ability to grow the service's income or to make savings. Developing new programmes based around health and wellbeing outcomes will enable the service to maintain the success of its current model, while developing in response to the wider need to support Worcestershire residents.

Discussions on a new management agreement are underway with the aim of the two complementary businesses (the County Museum and the Trust) operating alongside each other at Hartlebury Castle, both with joint interest in presenting the buildings and displays to complementary audiences.

3.2.5 Benefits and risks

Development of the service will:

- improve the access to health programmes for local residents;
- support partners to reach some of those in the community who would benefit from prevention programmes; and
- diversify the service's income base, facilitating a long-term objective to reduce WCC's share of the County Museum budget.

Developing new programmes comes with risk. Long-term it will change staff roles, and core spend profiles. It will take time to build up the right partnerships, programmes and funding streams.

There is also a risk to not developing this delivery model for the service. The limitations of the current operating model mean the service could struggle to remain relevant and sustainable.

3.2.6 Constraints and dependencies

Developing new health-centred programmes is already underway, there is not a threshold required for work to start.

But the challenges of the County Museum site – a main space inaccessible because of asbestos, outstanding maintenance requirements, and layouts not changed since the 1960s - mean that serving groups is currently restricted. A short lease means that the service is not eligible to apply for many grants. The opportunity of funding invested by WCC in the 2000s to maximise the access to the museum for visitors using wheelchairs is not now maximised.

Some of the change envisioned is dependent on the County Museum's landlord and partner Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust. They support this business development as it also offers them additional opportunities to develop their commercial business model in non-competing ways.

Ideally, to enable the full selection of envisioned programmes to be undertaken, Worcestershire County Museum would include the following improved property facilities:

- Museum displays refurbished to maximise accessibility and resource value and with learning spaces planned in.
- A new build transport gallery in the Orchard, suitable to use with groups.

- Workshop suitable for learning/commercial/wellbeing activities, incl learning resources storage and a changing places toilet.
- A self-contained therapy suite in the Orchard.
- Landscaped outdoor space for learning and wellbeing sessions use.
- Admin block ground floor repurposed as self-contained multipurpose learning space(s) with toilets and kitchen facilities.
- Office space in admin block first floor reconfigured to include a volunteers/training suite.

4. Economic Case

3.3 Appraisals of costs and benefits

Using the County Museum to support some of its wider health priorities for residents maximises the use of WCC's facilities and resources making the best use of public funding. Rather than the different parts of the council and other public services in Worcestershire operating in isolation, this delivery model works on the basis of partnership, using an existing council asset to achieve other objectives. The museum service can support other council programmes to reach and support the community.

The Public Health and Communities teams are reviewing opportunities for measuring health impact within the Libraries and Museums service. Additional health related performance measures will be driven by partnerships as the delivery model develops.

The existing museum performance indicators will allow the monitoring of this expansion of service delivery for its effectiveness as part of an efficiently run museum:

Average improvement in wellbeing experienced by museum visitors and participants	Measures impact	Reported to Joint Museums Committee quarterly
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by Worcestershire County Council?: Museums/galleries	Measures quality	Annual residents Viewpoint survey, This question is specifically reported to Joint Museums Committee annually and the survey as a whole to the Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Income performance for all sites against target (%)	Measures viability	Reported to Joint Museums Committee quarterly

3.4 Critical success factors to achieving the Economic Case

To achieve success, networks need to develop into real partnerships with benefits to both partners and long-term evidence of improved health outcomes. Programmes need to be trialled and evaluated with customers to ensure that they are achieving the health outcomes and the shared resource use envisioned by the delivery model.

This stage of business plan implementation is intended for the next 5 years and ideally will align with the improvement of the physical estate of the County Museum so that space and facilities for the programmes become ready as programmes are developed.

3.5 Risk assessment

Risk: external funding cannot be secured to develop the property and facilities to support the service delivery

Mitigation: a full investigation of options for the County Museum has been undertaken, along with discussions with potential funders so that the potential change is fully aligned with funder priorities.

Risk: national priorities change and programmes become superseded

Mitigation: the service delivery model is being planned as a flexible approach, maximising a diversity of funding and supporting a range of health outcomes. It is important that networks continue to be developed so that the service remains responsive and actively supporting new initiatives.

5. Commercial Case

3.6 Market analysis and demand

Investigation over the last twelve months has increased the awareness of the museum offer within colleagues in public health, local primary care networks and commissioned organisations.

Discussions have started about potential partnership programmes and, in the case of AgeUK, led to the introduction of Dementia Meeting Centre sessions at the County Museum.

Trial sessions targeting social isolation (*Make Time*), mindfulness and reminiscence have been undertaken and evaluated, to better understand the demand and the need locally, in order to develop the right programmes with the right partners.

The progress in this work was reported to the Joint Museums Committee at their meeting on 2 March 2023.

3.7 Contractual arrangements

This new delivery model is likely to encompass a range of procurement agreements, including:

- Site management agreement with Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust.
- Joint funding applications with other partners (for example the University of Worcester recently submitted a UK Research and Innovation grant application regarding healthcare for Gypsy, Roma, Traveller communities which included using the County Museum's spaces, resources and skilled staff).
- Museum staff leading programmes and the commissioning of freelance practitioners to do so.
- Social Prescribing relationships with Worcestershire Primary Care Networks.
- Working with organisations commissioned to deliver care programmes for specific groups, residents or against specific needs.

3.8 Charging mechanism

The County Museum's main income source is currently earned income for admissions and school sessions. Fees and charges as reviewed and set annually by the Joint Museums Committee.

The annual research that benchmarks charges to ensure they are appropriate for the market will continue, adapting for new programmes. This can encompass activities for social prescribing as those projects develop.

6. Financial Case

3.9 Capital and revenue requirements

Description	Start date	End date
REVENUE, SERVICE COSTS		
Continue at same level while new programmes are built up		2026
Decrease of around 5% of staff costs once new management agreement with HCPT agreed	2026	
Potential decrease of up to 50% in energy costs, dependent on capital investment	2028	
Increase in earned income when new programmes are in place, build up to 100% increase	2029	
CAPITAL, FACILITIES COSTS		
Laid out in more detail in main August Capital Board report		

3.10 Resource requirements

Total funding required set out in main August Capital Board report

External funding to be pursued				
Where is it from?	When will the money be available?			
	Year 1 2024/25	Year 2 2025/26	Year 3 2026/27	Year 4 onwards 2027 onwards
Museum Reserves, (secured) Set aside for development planning	£40,000	£37,000		
National Lottery Heritage Fund Development phase		£200,000	£200,000	
National Lottery Heritage Fund Delivery phase				Approx. £3.4 million
Wychavon UK Shared Prosperity Fund	£25,000			
Arts Council England Museum Project Grant				£90,000

National Lottery Community Fund				To be determined
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Staff Resources no increase to WCC-funded staffing profile, potentially a 5% reduction following a new management agreement with HCPT. Additional staff brought in to support the project using project funding and reserves set aside for the project.

Balance of funding requested

A commitment is required to support the securing of external funds

This does not include the cost of leased site tenant obligation costs, set out in the August Capital Board project main report

	Year 1 2024/25	Year 2 2025/26	Year 3 2026/27	Year 4 onwards 2027 onwards
Total				£800k-£1million

3.11 Financial benefits

Savings and additional income targets will be added as the project progresses and the level of opportunity becomes clearer, subject to the dependencies noted. An indication of the scale of these is noted in 6.1.

3.11.1 Requirements in order to realise savings

A decision must be made on the future of the service and where it will be based at the end of the County Museum lease in 2026 at Hartlebury Castle.

Assuming a new lease is approved and negotiated, the scope of the refurbishment and capital improvements of the site must be agreed.

Partnership agreements to delivery programmes must be secured.

External funding, as laid out in 6.2 above must be secured for the improved facilities.

At each of these points, the scale and scope of the delivery model can be reviewed. The proposed model is scalable.

3.12 Non-financial benefits

Once fully realised, the proposed delivery model can make a difference in the health outcomes for local residents. Prevention strategy programmes will reduce the healthcare costs of Worcestershire’s aging population.

The County Museum at Hartlebury Castle will continue to attract tourists into Worcestershire, bringing with them economic impact through their spend. Total economic impact for Worcestershire from Museums Worcestershire’s Museums in 2022-23 was £2,402,931 (calculated using a standard methodology based on numbers of visitors, their distance of travel, and their standard associated spend during their stay on food, parking, hotels and other purchases).

7. Management case

3.13 Programme and project management plans

The development of new health & wellbeing programmes at the County Museum is being led by the Museums Learning Manager. This work is initially supported by a consultant from the National Academy for Social Prescribing. As the offer develops it will continue to be reported to the Joint Museums Committee and feed into the annual service plan and budget setting.

Property lease negotiations and improvements will be managed through a series of workstreams with dedicated project management support, support from external expertise and expertise from colleagues in legal and finance teams. The plans will be brought to Capital Board at initial stage in August 2023 and at detailed design stage.

Any new management agreement with Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust will be overseen by the Hartlebury Castle Strategic Board.

3.14 Approach to management and delivery of benefits

As the new programmes develop, it is likely that a liaison group between the museum team (and potentially colleagues in Libraries and Countryside) and social prescribers/PCNs and public health colleagues will become appropriate. This liaison function is currently overseen by the Assistant Director for Communities and managed through existing strategic sharing groups.

3.15 Approach to risk management

Risk management for any property work will form part of the terms of reference for the project workstreams and will be owned by WCC's Property team.

3.16 Monitoring during implementation

For any property plans, project management will include a series of milestones to ensure that progress is being managed to the planned delivery programme. Timing will be partly driven by external funding and so will be closely monitored to ensure matched funding requirements and cash flow is being met.

New programme delivery will be closely evaluated as it develops, with programmes trialed and tested with the market and with participants at all stages of development. External support for evaluation will be included in all external funding applications, and analysis will be shared more widely to support development in other areas.

3.17 Post implementation evaluation arrangements

New programmes will continue to be monitored and to evolve, being responsive to demand and to need. This will continue to be monitored quarterly by the Joint Museums Committee as part of the service's performance.

Property project plans will be seen not just as 'complete at launch' but will continue to have targets and milestones after completion. This will be supported by external funding and by the evaluation requirements from external funders. Once property project teams have disbanded, the work will continue to be monitored by regular reviews between the museum and property teams.

3.18 Contingency arrangements/exit strategy

A baseline minimum requirement to the Hartlebury Castle leased property, consistent with WCC's tenant obligations if the County Museum is to remain on site, has been included in the August report to Capital Board. This could form phase 1 of a longer-term refurbishment of the property, seeking external funding in phases rather than as one complete project.

A mothballing, non-renewal of lease option will be included in the October Cabinet Report (this will be subject to public consultation if it is the option chosen by cabinet).

Both of these decisions will change but not completely close the options for the planned development of the delivery model for the County Museum. The delivery model, and its associated benefits, would have to be scaled back in part or significantly depending upon the decisions made.