



Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Date: Tuesday, 19 January 2016

Committee:

Decision making session by Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing

Date: Wednesday, 27 January 2016

Time: 9.30 am

Venue: Room IL 48, Shirehall, Shrewsbury SY2 6ND

You are requested to attend the above meeting.
The Agenda is attached

Claire Porter
Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Members of Decision making session by Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing

Karen Calder

Your Committee Officer is:

Jane Palmer Senior Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01743 257712

Email: jane.palmer@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 **Redesign of the Shropshire Registration Service** (Pages 1 - 118)

Report is attached marked 1.

For more information contact: Karen Burton Tel: 01743 258478

Note:

Portfolio Holder Decision Making Sessions are not open to the public. However members of the public are welcome to submit a request to address or ask a question of the Member making the portfolio decision. Any request should be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive at The Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND by no later than 2 clear working days before the proposed Member Session. This is to ensure that the individual Member has sufficient time to decide whether or not to hear such persons and if so the arrangements to be made. If you would like further details please telephone 01743 257712 or email jane.palmer@shropshire.gov.uk



REDESIGN OF THE SHROPSHIRE REGISTRATION SERVICE

Responsible Officer: Karen Burton
Email: Karen.burton@shropshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01743 258478
Fax: 01743 350791

1. Summary

1.1 This report seeks approval for changes to the provision of Registration Services in the Shropshire Council Area.

1.2 A six week public consultation was held in the summer of 2015.

1.3 By the end of the 6 week consultation period 48 on line responses had been received and 7 written responses had been received. The views of the respondents have been taken into consideration in making the recommendations contained in this report.

1.4 The consultation set out 3 options for the provision of Registration Services in Shropshire in order to provide savings to Shropshire Council's Budget. The options were as follows:

- Option 1 Leave everything as it is, make no changes
- Option 2 Concentrate registration services in busier towns which would lead to the closure of Church Stretton Office and Wem Office, a reduction in the opening hours in Ludlow from 20 to 12 and the closure of the staffed office at Bishops Castle which would be replaced by an appointment only service available once per week. Opening hours would increase at the Oswestry, Market Drayton and Whitchurch Offices.
- Option 3 Centralise all services in the Shrewsbury Office, close all offices in market towns.

1.5 The information and views of the respondents to the consultation have been taken into consideration and the proposals at option 2 have been amended as a direct consequence.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Public Health accepts the revised proposal covered by Option 2 as follows:

That Church Stretton, Wem and Bishops Castle offices are replaced with an appointment only service to operate once a week and provide 4/5 appointment slots

That the opening hours of Ludlow Office are reduced from 20 per week to 16 hours per week.

That there are no increases to the opening hours at Oswestry, Market Drayton and Whitchurch.

That the opening hours at Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth remain unchanged

2.2 It is recommended that delegated authority is given to the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Public Health to finalise the detail of these proposals and to deliver these recommendations

2.3 Reasons for decision:

The proposal put forward at Option 2 (Revised), provides for the continuation of a local registration service, whilst meeting savings objectives and also delivers Shropshire Council's statutory obligations in a way in which meets the needs of the residents of Shropshire.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 One of the criticisms levelled during the consultation was that the ESSIA's were inadequate when Option 3 was taken into consideration. Since preparing the original EINA's the Council has updated the paperwork and process and the assessments are now called ESSIA. The Equality assessments have been redone to take into account the recommendations and to ensure that the assessment is done in the most up to date format.
- 3.2 The main risks identified related to the rurality of some of the communities. These risks have been taken into consideration and ESSIA's have been carried out on all 4 affected locations and are attached at Appendix B, and are low or medium impact. Officers are confident that the ESSIA's are adequate based on the minimal changes which are taking place. All areas currently covered by the service will still be covered by service.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Savings of £55491.00 are achievable by adopting the proposed changes.

5. Background

- 5.1 In 2005 Shropshire Registration Service was formed by amalgamation of 6 registration districts, Bridgnorth, Clun, Ludlow, North Shropshire, Oswestry and Shrewsbury. Registration Districts and sub districts, opening hours and staffing were determined via Local Schemes which had to be approved by the Registrar General. Since 2007 the responsibility for all of these areas has rested with the Local Authority who have the right to vary according to local need and usage.
- 5.2 As a result of pressures on local government, Shropshire Council has had to consider the manner in which it provides all of its services. Shropshire Council has no option but to look at what services it provides, how and where these services are provided and how much they cost.
- 5.3 The budgetary pressures have combined with the recent reconfiguration of Women's and Children's Services within the Shropshire and Telford Health Trust, the reduction in certificate income, and the retirement/voluntary redundancy requests, of a number of registration staff, to present the need to examine how and where the Registration Service is provided.
- 5.4 A public consultation was held over a six week period commencing on 12th May 2015 and ending on 26th June 2015. A press release was issued which generated coverage of the plans in the local press, the local radio station also picked up the story. The consultation was made available via the Shropshire Council Consultation Portal. Prior to this, local members had participated in discussions about the proposals and the consultation had been circulated to members.
- 5.5 By the end of the 6 week consultation period 48 on line responses (Appendix C.a) had been received and 7 written responses (Appendix C.b) had been received, some of the written responses were received after the closing date of the consultation but were included. The views of the respondents have been taken into consideration in making the recommendations contained in this report. The original consultation paper is attached at Appendix A and the Report following the Consultation is attached at Appendix C.

5.6 The consultation set out 3 options for the provision of Registration Services in Shropshire in order to provide savings to Shropshire Council's Budget. The options were as follows:

- Option 1 Leave everything as it is, make no changes
- Option 2 Concentrate registration services in busier towns which would lead to the closure of Church Stretton Office and Wem Office, a reduction in the opening hours in Ludlow from 20 to 12 and the closure of the manned office at Bishops Castle which would be replaced by an appointment only service available once per week. Opening hours would increase at the Oswestry, Market Drayton and Whitchurch Offices.
- Option 3 Centralise all services in the Shrewsbury Office, close all offices in market towns.

5.7 The consultation showed that of all respondents:

- 48% preferred things to be left as they are currently
- 37.5% preferred option 2
- 14.5% preferred option 3

The consultation responses were considered and as a result of the replies received some changes were made to Option 2 based on suggestions and representations received.

5.8 A post consultation report was prepared and is attached at Appendix C.

The revised option 2 (following the outcome of the consultation and having taken into account the consultation responses and the findings of the ESIIA) is presented as follows:

Option 2 (revised)

Instead of closing Church Stretton and Wem offices outright, it is proposed that they are replaced with an appointment only service as per the proposal for Bishops Castle. The proposed reduction in the opening hours of Ludlow Office from 20 per week to 12 per week has been revised to 16 hours per week. The additional opening hours provided at Oswestry, Market Drayton and Whitchurch have been withdrawn, so no changes to the provision in these locations.

Proposals for Church Stretton and Wem were made by Wem and Church Stretton Town Councils which included offers of accommodation. The days and times of attendance need to be fully discussed by Shropshire Council with the two aforementioned town councils in order to settle on specific attendance days and times.

Table 1 : Example of how the revised Option 2 proposal may work – **for illustrative purposes only.**

Locality of Offices	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Bishops Castle	Closed	10:00 -12:00 Appointment only	Closed	Closed	Closed
Bridgnorth	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	Closed	10:00 - 16:00
Church Stretton	Closed	13:30 -15:00 Appointment only	Closed	Closed	Closed
Ludlow	10:00-14:00	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00
Market Drayton	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	10:00 - 14:00
Oswestry	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 13:00	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 16:00
Shrewsbury	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00
Wem	Closed	Closed	Closed	10:00 - 12:00 Appointment Only	Closed
Whitchurch	13:30 - 17:00	09:30 -14:00	Closed	Closed	10:00 - 14:00

The illustrative table above and the proposals in Option 2 (Revised) ensure that Shropshire Council is able to meet its statutory responsibilities to register all of the births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships which occur in the Shropshire Council Area.

6. Conclusion

6.1 That after taking into account the responses to the consultation exercise and the findings of the ESIA it is recommended:

6.2 That Option 1: To leave the service provision as it is currently is discarded as a result of there being:

- No savings available
- Insufficient staff to continue to staff all of the existing offices during their current opening times.

6.3 That Option 3: To centralise all services in Shrewsbury is discarded by reason of:

- The potential hardships caused for people having to travel into Shrewsbury from across the Shropshire Council Area.
- The significance of difficulties, of travel in particular, potentially caused for residents of Shropshire outweigh any of the potential savings benefits available to Shropshire Council.

6.4 That after taking into account the responses to the consultation exercise and the findings of the ESIA it is recommended that Option 2 revised provides a good compromise between the proposals of Option 1 and Option 3 and allowing for registration service provision to remain local and not cause significant hardship for any Shropshire residents who may have lost their provision under Option 3 or the original Option 2.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information):

Key Decision: Yes

Included within Forward Plan: Yes

If a Key Decision and not included in the Forward Plan have the General Exception or Special Urgency Procedures been complied with: Yes / No

Name and Portfolio of Executive Member responsible for this area of responsibility:
Councillor Karen Calder, Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing

Local Member:

All

Appendices:

Appendix A – Original Consultation Proposal

Appendix B – New EISSA's based on recommendation

Appendix C– Report following Consultation

Appendix C.a – Consultation Results (Electronic Responses)

Appendix C.b - Consultation Replies (Postal Responses)

Declaration of Interest

- I have no interest to declare in respect of this report

Signed Date

NAME:

PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR:

- I have to declare an interest in respect of this report

Signed Date

NAME:

PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR:

(Note: If you have an interest you should seek advice as to whether it is appropriate to make a decision in relation to this matter.)

For the reasons set out in the report, I agree the recommendation(s) in the report entitled

.....

Signed

Portfolio Holder for

Date

If you have any additional comment which you would want actioned in connection with your decision you should discuss this with the report author and then set out your comment below before the report and pro-forma is returned to Democratic Services for processing.

Additional comment :

.....

.....

Note: If you do not wish to approve the recommendations, or wish to make an alternative decision, it is important that you consult the report author, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Chief Executive and the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance (S151 Officer) and, if there are staffing implications the Head of Human Resources (or their representatives) so that (1) you can be made aware of any further relevant considerations that you should take into account before making the decision and (2) your reasons for the decision can be properly identified and recorded, as required by law.

Note to Portfolio Holder: Your decision will now be published and communicated to all Members of Council. If the decision falls within the criteria for call-in, it will not be implemented until five working days have elapsed from publication.

Appendix A

Public Consultation on the redesign of the Registration Service in Shropshire

Why are we consulting?

In line with the general need across public service to make savings, and Shropshire Council's commitment to service redesign, Shropshire's Registration Service has examined the way in which the service operates and the changes which could be made in order to make savings.

With changes being introduced over the years, such as certificate ordering on line and over the phone, a reduction in staff resources, as well as the ability to register at any office in Shropshire, together with future plans to use technology to enable ceremonies to be booked and managed on line, the opportunity has presented itself to further redesign the service and further reduce costs in line with the austerity measures being experienced across public services.

In order to help us determine our way forward to ensure Registrars Services continue to meet the needs of local people, we would like very much to get your views on the options available to us as we see them, and to better understand any issues which we may have overlooked.

This consultation is only about the future of the Registration Service and has no bearing on the future of any other services or the buildings in which the Registration Service sits in any locality.

In order that the nature of the work which we do and the content of our proposals can be better understood please read the full briefing below.

Background:

What we do

We register all births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships, and still births occurring in the County of Shropshire.

Our services are provided from 11 different locations across the County in 9 towns: Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Ludlow, Wem, Bishops Castle, and Church Stretton.

Members of the public can come to register a life event at ten of these locations, and the eleventh location is our central register repository, where all of the completed births, deaths and marriage registers containing events which have happened in Shropshire since 1st July 1837 are kept and where our historical certificates are produced, and to where there is no public access.

The main maternity unit at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital has ceased to operate and will drastically reduce the numbers of births being registered within the county which in turn will affect the workload and income of the service. The impact of this change will not be fully understood for at least 12 months, however it is important that we look at this change and reorganise our services where possible to reflect customer need and usage.

Alongside the statutory services which have to be provided, the service also provides a range of complimentary services including: Nationality Checking Services, Civil Naming Ceremonies, Civil Renewal of Vows Ceremonies and Civil Funerals.

Statutory responsibilities (The duties we have to do by law)

- Register all births,
- Register all deaths,
- Register all still births
- Register all marriages,
- Register all civil partnerships

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- To report marriages or civil partnerships which they suspect are being entered into for the purpose of evading UK Immigration Law.
- To collect marriage returns from all of the churches across Shropshire four times per year.
- Responsibility for the administration of the certification and registration of places for worship and religious marriages.
- To administer the Local Authority's approval process for licensing venues for civil marriage and civil partnerships.
- The service is required to meet or exceed national standards which are laid down by the Government, and a report has to be made to the General Register Office on an annual basis reporting on performance against these standards.
- The storage and issue of books of medical cause of death certificates to medical practitioners across the county in hospitals and medical practices.
- The service also retains a stock of marriage registers for issue to the clerics in churches of all denominations in emergency situations
- To provide advice to clerics across the county
- To provide advice and information to a range of other organisations.
- Provision of statistical information to the Government in order that it can plan its social and economic policies based on quantified evidence.

Registrations have to be carried out in person, this is a legal requirement. Although much of the work of the service is prescribed in regulation, and there are accommodation guidelines applied by the General Register Office, there is no specific duty placed on a Local Authority to deliver services in specific locations, nor is there any stipulation relating to the number of registration officers or locations per capita. Indeed in many large cities registration services are delivered from a single site.

Table 1 – Services delivered over the past five years:

Statutory Services	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Birth registrations	4798	4734	4887	4789	4793
Death registrations	2807	2903	2835	3252	3184
Still birth registrations	32	35	19	25	27
Marriage registrations	1088	1222	1271	1410	1217
Civil Partnership Registrations	23	23	29	41	30
Notices of Marriage	1837	1993	2398	2136	2029
Notices of Civil Partnership	39	51	64	48	47
Historical certificates	6976	6385	5818	5456	5530
Non Statutory Services	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Funeral, naming and reaffirmation of vows ceremonies	4	26	26	43	120
Naming Ceremonies	15	12	5	5	5
Reaffirmation of Vows Ceremonies	8	10	20	11	10
British Citizenship	107	116	104	115	162
Nationality Checking	187	154	227	87	161

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Challenges and opportunities for Registration Services

Along with all Council services the Registration Service is being asked to make savings to their base budget in the financial year 2015/2016.

In order to make the necessary savings it is important that the service considers how it does things and where it offers its services.

All of our statutory registration functions are required to be conducted in person so cannot be carried out via other technical solutions, such as online or via telephone. However, where possible, some services are provided remotely for the convenience of the customer, for example, approximately 90% of our certificate applications are received either online or by telephone. Customers can now book their own appointments to register births, deaths, notices of marriage and notices of civil partnerships through the Councils web site as well as over the telephone.

For more information on Registration Services visit www.shropshire.gov.uk/births.-deaths-and-marriages

Current Initiatives - Looking at how things are done:

We are working on providing greater accessibility via software solutions which will ultimately allow customers wishing to arrange/pay for a ceremony to do so 24 hours per day 7 days per week.

It is important that registrars are spending the majority of their time with customers and not on avoidable administrative duties and for this reason the service will continue to move towards the centralisation and/or automation of these duties where possible. By doing this, the service should continue to be able to cope with the seasonal peaks and troughs of demand at the very front line, the registrars who are there to register life events.

The reduction of the administrative burden on registrars to ensure that they maximise their availability for customers and can provide greater flexibility in the service for the future is a key part of our strategy.

How we then reconfigure the service to future proof it for new challenges is a key issue.

An initial Equality Impact Needs Assessment for each location has been carried out, and forms part of this document, it will be updated following the outcome of the consultation (Appendix A)

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Options available:

There are three options available to Shropshire Council when considering how best to structure the registration service:

Option 1: Leave the provision exactly as it is.

There are no savings available and it would be necessary to fill a number of vacant posts in order to continue to provide service in all of the existing locations. Retirements and redundancies have left insufficient staff to maintain the current structure. The locality in which a registration office is available would remain the same, and the opening hours would remain unchanged, see Table 2.

Table 2

Offices	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Registration Staff hours
Bishops Castle	Closed	10:00 - 12:00	Closed	Closed	10:00 - 12:00	4
Bridgnorth	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	Closed	10:00 - 16:00	25
Church Stretton	Closed	14:00 - 16:00	Closed	Closed	14:00 - 16:00	4
Ludlow	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00	20
Market Drayton	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	10:00 - 14:00	12
Oswestry	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 13:00	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 16:00	33.3
Shrewsbury	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	111
Wem	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00		10:00 - 14:00		12
Whitchurch	10:00 - 14:00		10:00 - 14:00		10:00 - 14:00	12

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Option 2: Close under used offices and concentrate on providing service where there is greatest demand

Under this proposal the offices based in Wem, and Church Stretton would close (summary of travel distances to alternative locations are shown in Table 7).

Table 3 All other offices would remain open with opening hours varied

Location	Current Hours	New Hours	Weekly Opening hours	Comments Why
Bishops Castle	4	By appointment max 2 hours	Reduced	Under utilisation and excessive costs
Bridgnorth	25	25	Unchanged	Not applicable
Ludlow	20	12	Reduced	Staff redundancy
Market Drayton	12	13.5	Increased	To provide additional resource for customers from Wem office
Whitchurch	12	13.5	Increased	
Oswestry	33.3	38	Increased	Protecting staff hours affected by closures. Also to provide additional resource for the Oswestry/North area
Shrewsbury	111	111	Unchanged	Not Applicable

We have calculated that it is possible to reduce our staffing, buildings and associated costs by reducing the numbers of registration service offices across the county whilst still meeting the expected needs of our customers.

Across Shropshire every week we have 526, 30 minute appointments available. Looking at our annual numbers of registrations which remain reasonably static, the very minimum number of appointments which would be required to meet the demand would be 320 appointments per week.

Adjusting for peaks and troughs of demand and by closing the offices in Bishops Castle, Church Stretton, and Wem, we can still provide 430, 30 minute appointments per week which we calculate is sufficient to cope with peaks and troughs of demand and allow enough time for the completion of the administrative duties of the registrars based in each of the remaining offices. Our aim is that our registrars will spend 70% of their time engaged in Face to Face contact with customers and that all admin which can be done centrally will be done centrally in order to achieve this.

The reason that the offices in Bishops Castle, Church Stretton and Wem have been singled out for closure under this proposal is because, statistics shown in Table 4, demonstrate that they are underused, expensive to run (see Table 5), and that the vast majority of registrations are conducted in the offices which are to be retained. This point is demonstrated by the fact that in 2013/14 95% of birth registrations and 89% of death registrations occurred within the 6 main market towns – Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Ludlow, Bridgnorth, Market Drayton and Whitchurch. We feel that situating our service in these main localities is the best way to utilise our resources

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Table 4

Public utilisation only - without administrative duties	Shrewsbury	Bridgnorth	Ludlow	Bishops Castle	Church Stretton	Wem	Oswestry	Market Drayton	Whitchurch
2012/13	44%	36%	42%	20%	16%	33%	36%	36%	28%
2013/14	49%	43%	49%	21%	29%	35%	39%	41%	36%

The figures are based on the percentage of appointment time available in each office which has actually been used for the purposes of carrying out a registration.

It is clear to see that the offices at Bishops Castle, Church Stretton and Wem are underused and hence become subject to scrutiny in terms of viability, hence why under Option 2 they are singled out for closure.

As well as considering how well used the offices at Church Stretton, Bishops Castle and Wem are, we have also examined the costs associated with providing appointments in these locations,

The gross cost of providing a 30 minute appointment in a registration office in Shropshire during 2012/2013 and 2013/14 are as follows.

Table 5

Gross cost per 30 minute appointment based on actual number of appointments excluding income and below the line costs	Shrewsbury	Bridgnorth	Ludlow	Bishops Castle	Church Stretton	Wem	Oswestry	Market Drayton	Whitchurch
2012/2013	£69	£77	£65	£132	£119	£98	£81	£69	£98
2013/2014	£70	£80	£67	£178	£140	£106	£88	£73	£95

In calculating the appointment costs, the full costs of service delivery including recharges and non-controllable items have been apportioned proportionally across each office, calculated per hour open to the public. Where specific costs are attracted by an individual office these costs have been attributed in full, for example, rental or rates.

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Table 6- the new opening times and locations of offices are shown below

Offices	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Registration Staff hours
Bridgnorth	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	Closed	10:00 - 16:00	25
Ludlow	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	Closed	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00	12
Market Drayton	10:00 - 14:30	Closed	10:00 - 14:30	Closed	10:00 - 14:30	13.5
Oswestry	09:30 - 16:30	09:30 - 16:30	09:15 - 16:30	09:30 - 16:30	09:30 - 16:30	38
Shrewsbury	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	111
Whitchurch	10:00 - 14:30	closed	10:00 - 14:30	closed	10:00 - 14:30	13.5

This proposed concentration of our resources in fewer locations - but with a reasonable geographical spread across the county - still provides the opportunity for people to register conveniently closer to home, than option 3.

Further data support for closures of the specified offices is lent by the fact that in 2013/14 95% of birth registrations and 89% of death registrations took place in the registration service offices in Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Ludlow, Bridgnorth, Market Drayton and Whitchurch.

The proposals for closure and variance of opening hours across the service recognise the specific difficulties related to the rurality of some areas of the county. As previously mentioned an Equality Impact Needs Assessment has been carried out and will be updated following the outcome of the consultation.

Option 3:
Close all local registration offices and centralise all registration services in Shrewsbury.

All registration services would be available in Shrewsbury only, centralising our services and closing all other offices although this could create additional savings, it would undoubtedly cause great inconvenience to customers from anywhere other area of the county, which does not, we feel, reflect the needs of a rural county such as Shropshire.

In order to accommodate appointments centrally in Shrewsbury Opening Hours would have to alter and a shift system would be required.

Appointments in Shrewsbury would be available between 09:00 – 19:00, Monday to Friday

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Equality Impact Needs Assessment

Conclusion from our Equality Impact Needs Assessment highlighted the fact that the rurality of the county of Shropshire does need to be considered when redesigning services and also that some provision does need to be available in areas such as the Bishops Castle Area where the population is sparse and not conducive to having an officer based there permanently. We have also tried to minimise additional travel distance for residents in those areas which may lose their permanent Registration office. Following this consultation we hope to be able to further update our Equality Impact Needs Assessment with further information gleaned from respondents.

Under Option 1 travel distances would be unaffected,

Under Option 2 those residents of Church Stretton, and Wem whose local registration offices are earmarked for closure would have to travel an additional distance to an alternative office and these distances are shown below-

Table 7

Current nearest Office	Nearest office under option 2	Additional distance of travel for customers
Wem Registrars Office	Whitchurch Registrars Office	9 miles
	Shrewsbury Registrars Office	11 miles
	Market Drayton Registrars Office	14 miles
	Oswestry Registrars Office	19 miles
Church Stretton Registrars Office	Bishops Castle	13 miles
	Shrewsbury Registrars Office	13 miles
	Ludlow Registrars Office	16 miles

Under Option 3 which would see all registration services centralised in Shrewsbury and all other registration offices closed, the additional distances of travel would be:

Table 8

Current nearest Office	Nearest office under option 3	Approximate distance of travel for customers	Additional distance of travel for customers
Bishops Castle Registrars Office	Shrewsbury Registrars Office	24 miles	
Bridgnorth Registrars Office	Shrewsbury Registrars Office	22 miles	

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Church Stretton Registrars Office	Shrewsbury Registrars Office	13 miles
Ludlow Registrars Office	Shrewsbury Registrars Office	30 miles
Market Drayton Registrars Office	Shrewsbury Registrars Office	22 miles
Oswestry Registrars Office	Shrewsbury Registrars Office	18 miles
Wem Registrars Office	Shrewsbury Registrars Office	11 miles
Whitchurch Registrars Office	Shrewsbury Registrars Office	21 miles

As part of this consultation, we would like very much to hear your views on the options available and also we would like to hear of any other ideas which you may have which would influence our thinking.

If there are specific issues such as travel or transport issues which would cause any of these plans to be unworkable or problematic, please make sure that we are aware of these as we consider this to be central to our understanding of the impact which any changes would have on the residents of any particular locality or the wider Shropshire Council area.

Please note that these proposals only relate to Registration Services and are not in any way related to any proposals for any other area of the Council.

If you would like any further information about the service or the proposals please contact

Karen Burton,
Registration & Coroners Service Manager,
The Register Office,
The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay,
Shrewsbury, SY3 8HQ
karen.burton@shropshire.gov.uk

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Shropshire Council Part 1 ESIIA: initial screening and assessment

Name of service change

Church Stretton – Reduction in appointment availability of Shropshire Council's Registration Service. Change from a permanently staffed office to attendance weekly by appointment.

Aims of the service change and description

We register all births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships, and still births occurring in the County of Shropshire.

Our services are provided from 10 different locations across the County in 9 towns: Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Ludlow, Wem, Bishops Castle, and Church Stretton. They had been provided in 11 locations which included at the Maternity Unit at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, this unit has now ceased to operate and the main maternity unit is now based at the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford. The responsibility for the registration of these births now rests with Telford & Wrekin's Registration Service.

The impact on the workload and income of the service of this significant change will not be fully understood for at least 12 months, however it is important that we look at this change and reorganise our services where possible to reflect customer need and usage.

Members of the public can come to register a life event at nine of these locations, and the tenth location is our central register repository, where all of the completed births, deaths and marriage registers containing events which have happened in Shropshire since 1st July 1837 are kept and where our historical certificates are produced, and to where there is no public access.

Alongside the statutory services which have to be provided, the service also provides a range of complimentary services including: Nationality Checking Services, Civil Naming Ceremonies, Civil Renewal of Vows Ceremonies and Civil Funerals, the fees generated from these and the statutory services go towards covering the costs of service provision.

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- Responsibility for the administration of the certification and registration of places for worship and religious marriages.
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- To provide advice to clerics across the county
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Registrations have to be carried out in person, this is a legal requirement. No charge can be made for the registration of a birth or death and certificate charges are set by statute as are many of the charges which may be levied for Registration Services. The majority of income is produced from our ceremony services (statutory and Celebratory), licensing of approved venues and provision of nationality and citizenship services.

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Shropshire Registration Service has a budget of around £200K with which to provide its services. The total expenditure of the service including non-controllable costs is in the region of £950K, non-controllable costs total around £290K. The service itself creates an income of around £750K annually.

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A domiciliary service is and has always been in place for those people who experience severe difficulties with registration, ie if they are housebound by reason of illness or disability and cannot attend at a registration service point to conduct their business. This provision is rarely requested.

We feel that the evidence gathered demonstrates no significant difficulties would be incurred by the residents of the Church Stretton area which cannot be overcome. We are happy that this change provides an excellent way of reducing costs whilst maintaining a local service.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

This change represents a change to the service arrangements for those who wish to register a birth, give notice of marriage or civil partnership, or to register a death. As these situations are experienced by all members of the community, including those in the protected characteristic groupings, this change will potentially affect all members of the community

Evidence used for screening of the service change

As referred to earlier on in this document, significant changes most importantly the cessation of the Consultant led maternity unit have a knock on effect to the numbers of registrations to be done by the Shropshire Registration Service. This and the need to make savings necessitates the need for how, when and where we provide registration services across the council area to be considered.

The evidence for this change is presented in the utilisation figures

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In order to ensure that the registration service is in the right shape to deal with the changing needs of communities whilst balancing off the Council's statutory obligation for the provision of service dictates that the changes need to be made now in order that the service improves its efficiency.

The year to date figures for utilisation and the year to date figures for numbers of registrations bears out the need to rationalise provision of services.

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There is clearly nothing in the above figures which supports the case to leave things as they are, but we also recognise that it would be incredibly difficult for many residents if all service was based in Shrewsbury.

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change

Public Consultation was carried out over a 6 week period between June and August 2015, via the Shropshire Council Consultation Portal and the local councillors had been involved in cross party discussion group prior to the issue of the consultation. Publicity for the consultation appeared in the local newspapers and on local radio.

48 responses were received on line and 7 responses were received in writing.

Of the on line responses:

48% supported leaving provision exactly as it is currently

38% supported the closure of Church Stretton, and Wem service points (Bishops Castle Closure was not given as an option) in favour of retaining the other out stations

14% supported the centralisation of registration services in Shrewsbury and the closure of all out stations.

Of the on-line responses:

42% of respondents were male

47% of respondents were female

11% of respondents preferred not to say

8% of respondents were aged between 25 and 40

24% of respondents were aged between 41 and 59

55% of respondents were aged over 60 years

13% of respondents preferred not to say

The 7 written responses showed the following:

2 of the responses were from Town Councils

1 of the responses was from a local councillor

1 of the responses was from a member of the public who also organised community transport

2 of the responses were from members of the public

1 of the responses was anonymous

Respondents local register offices as identified from consultation:

Bishops Castle:	0
Bridgnorth:	3
Church Stretton:	15
Ludlow:	13
Oswestry:	3
Market Drayton:	0
Wem:	11
Whitchurch:	1
Shrewsbury:	7
South Offices in General:	1
Unidentified	1

From the feedback received from those who cited their local register office as Church Stretton, it was clear how much the service is valued and that potential hardships could be avoided by finding a way in which we could continue to offer our service within this town. From the consultation offers of assistance, from Church Stretton Town Council, with accommodation issues has been forthcoming and will be explored to the full.

The Shropshire Registration Service carry out a full customer survey at least once per year for a period of 1 month and ask for customer feedback on a number of areas including access to services. These results and comments are published on the Shropshire council website and are provided to the General Register Office for whom a stewardship report has to be prepared annually. This change, as with any organisational change will be monitored closely and the service is prepared to react quickly to any areas which create significant problems.

Potential impact on Protected Characteristic groups and on social inclusion

Guidance notes on how to carry out the initial assessment

Using the results of evidence gathering and specific consultation and engagement, please consider how the service change as proposed may affect people within the nine Protected Characteristic groups and people at risk of social exclusion.

1. Have the intended audiences and target groups been consulted about:
 - their current needs and aspirations and what is important to them;
 - the potential impact of this service change on them, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended;
 - the potential barriers they may face.
2. If the intended audience and target groups have not been consulted directly, have representatives been consulted, or people with specialist knowledge, or research explored?
3. Have other stakeholder groups and secondary groups, for example carers of service users, been explored in terms of potential unintended impacts?
4. Are there systems set up to:
 - monitor the impact, positive or negative, intended or intended, for all the different groups;
 - enable open feedback and suggestions from a variety of audiences through a variety of methods.
5. Are there any Human Rights implications? For example, is there a breach of one or more of the human rights of an individual or group?
6. Will the service change as proposed have a positive or negative impact on fostering good relations?
7. Will the service change as proposed have a positive or negative impact on social inclusion?

Guidance on what a negative impact might look like

High Negative	Significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place or no evidence available: urgent need for consultation with customers, general public, workforce
Medium Negative	Some potential impact, some mitigating measures in place but no evidence available how effective they are: would be beneficial to consult with customers, general public, workforce
Low Negative	Almost bordering on non-relevance to the ESIIA process (heavily legislation led, very little discretion can be exercised, limited public facing aspect, national policy affecting degree of local impact possible)

Initial assessment for each group

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through inserting a tick in the relevant column. Please add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>

<p>Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)</p>				<p>X There could be a small negative impact for older people, wishing to register a death, who may have to wait a little longer to register locally. This negative impact is based on the requirement to register a death within 5 days unless the Coroner has been involved in which case the requirement is waived.</p>
<p>Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)</p>				<p>X there should be no significant impact on those with any disability other than the possibility of having to wait a little longer to register a death. In cases of severe hardship the registration service operates a domiciliary service for the registration of births and deaths. This could be used if the person responsible for the registration were housebound for example</p>
<p>Gender re-assignment (please include associated</p>				<p>X This change would have no</p>

aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				impact either negative or positive for this group other than a reduced access to registration service should they need to register a birth or death or give notice of marriage or civil partnership
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X There should be minimal impact on this group of people. In reality people can give notice of marriage up to 12 months in advance of their chosen date of marriage and a minimum of 28 days beforehand. Legislation provides for housebound or detained people to give notice where they reside.
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X there should be no positive or negative impact on this group, other than having reduced access to registration services locally, however following the birth of a child a family have 42 days during which they should register the birth.
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture,				X This change will have no

language, gypsy, traveller)			<p>impact on this aspect. Marriage and Civil Partnership law already determines that those subject to immigration control have to give notice at a designated register office, which would necessitate the couple travelling to Shrewsbury or to another designated office. These amendments will have no direct impact as a result of someone's race.</p>
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)			<p>X No changes are being made which would affect any aspect of someone's religious beliefs. The law requires a death to be registered within 5 days for everyone unless the Coroner is involved in some way. No distinction is made on the basis of religion or belief. We do recognise that for the Muslim and Jewish communities there can be a desire to have deaths registered very</p>

				<p>quickly especially where a body is to be removed from England and Wales. This can only be facilitated where there is no Coroner involvement and the Registration Service always accommodates these (perhaps one per year) even out of hours where possible. We also have links with the bigger muslim community in Telford which we meet with at their request to address any particular issues, of which there have not been any, or to participate in Q&A sessions if required. Most of the deaths of people from these communities are dealt with by one particular funeral director with whom we have very strong links.</p>
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X The proposed amendments do not impact on either sex in a negative or positive way.
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects:				X The proposed

safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				amendments do not impact on the sexual orientation of any person in a negative or positive way.
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)			X There is a potential for medium negative impact on those people living in the rural area in and around Church Stretton. Whilst they would still be able to register locally they may have to wait a little longer to be able to do so	

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	X	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		

If Part One, please now use the boxes below and sign off at the foot of the page. If Part Two, please move on to the full report stage.



Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change
The consultation originally discussed the potential for the closure of the Office in Church Stretton outright, or the centralisation of all registration services in Shrewsbury. The discussions with the local councillors and the feedback received from the consultation caused a rethink in terms of the option for outright closure. The rurality of the area and the potential hardships that a closure would cause to residents has resulted in the proposal to retain registration services in Church Stretton but on an appointment only basis on one occasion per week.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change
<i>Shropshire Registration Service conduct at least one consultation with its customers over the period of a month every year and uses the information gained to inform future plans and considerations. Usage of the planned facility in Church Stretton will also be monitored to ensure that there is sufficient provision or if there appears to be insufficient provision to look again at the situation.</i>
In addition we will liaise with colleagues in Shropshire Council's Performance and Policy team on ways

to systemically and in a proportionate and non intrusive manner collect equalities data to enable us to monitor the effects of this change on those residents with protected characteristics.

The service area will seek to make use, where possible of national comparator data on demographic changes and models of registrar service delivery that reflect the rurality of the area and the changing nature of the service, for example reduction in the numbers of civil partnerships now that equal marriage is in place



Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
Lead officer carrying out the screening	 Mrs Karen Burton, Registration & Coroners Service Manager; ext 8478	12/01/2016
Any internal support*		
Any external support**	 Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist; ext 5684	11/01/16
Head of service		

*This refers to other officers within the service area

**This refers either to support external to the service but within the Council, eg from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, or support external to the Council, eg perhaps from a peer authority

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Lead officer's name		12/01/2016
Head of service's name		18/01/2016

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A domiciliary service is and has always been in place for those people who experience severe difficulties with registration, ie if they are housebound by reason of illness or disability and cannot attend at a registration service point to conduct their business. This provision is rarely requested.

We feel that the evidence gathered demonstrates no significant difficulties would be incurred by the residents of the Church Stretton area which cannot be overcome. We are happy that this change provides an excellent way of reducing costs whilst maintaining a local service.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

This change represents a change to the service arrangements for those who wish to register a birth, give notice of marriage or civil partnership, or to register a death. As these situations are experienced by all members of the community, including those in the protected characteristic groupings, this change will potentially affect all members of the community

Evidence used for screening of the service change

As referred to earlier on in this document, significant changes most importantly the cessation of the Consultant led maternity unit have a knock on effect to the numbers of registrations to be done by the Shropshire Registration Service. This and the need to make savings necessitates the need for how, when and where we provide registration services across the council area to be considered.

The evidence for this change is presented in the utilisation figures

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In order to ensure that the registration service is in the right shape to deal with the changing needs of communities whilst balancing off the Council's statutory obligation for the provision of service dictates that the changes need to be made now in order that the service improves its efficiency.

The year to date figures for utilisation and the year to date figures for numbers of registrations bears out the need to rationalise provision of services.

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Civil Partnership to Marriage Conversions						13	13

There is clearly nothing in the above figures which supports the case to leave things as they are, but we also recognise that it would be incredibly difficult for many residents if all service was based in Shrewsbury.

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change

Public Consultation was carried out over a 6 week period between June and August 2015, via the Shropshire Council Consultation Portal and the local councillors had been involved in cross party discussion group prior to the issue of the consultation. Publicity for the consultation appeared in the local newspapers and on local radio.

48 responses were received on line and 7 responses were received in writing.

Of the on line responses:

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Market Drayton:	0
Wem:	11
Whitchurch:	1
Shrewsbury:	7
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Unidentified	1

From the feedback received from those who cited their local register office as Church Stretton, it was clear how much the service is valued and that potential hardships could be avoided by finding a way in which we could continue to offer our service within this town. From the consultation offers of assistance, from Church Stretton Town Council, with accommodation issues has been forthcoming and will be explored to the full.

The Shropshire Registration Service carry out a full customer survey at least once per year for a period of 1 month and ask for customer feedback on a number of areas including access to services. These results and comments are published on the Shropshire council website and are provided to the General Register Office for whom a stewardship report has to be prepared annually. This change, as with any organisational change will be monitored closely and the service is prepared to react quickly to any areas which create significant problems.

Potential impact on Protected Characteristic groups and on social inclusion

Guidance notes on how to carry out the initial assessment

Using the results of evidence gathering and specific consultation and engagement, please consider how the service change as proposed may affect people within the nine Protected Characteristic groups and people at risk of social exclusion.

1. Have the intended audiences and target groups been consulted about:
 - their current needs and aspirations and what is important to them;
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Initial assessment for each group

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through inserting a tick in the relevant column. Please add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>

<p>Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)</p>				<p>X There could be a small negative impact for older people, wishing to register a death, who may have to wait a little longer to register locally. This negative impact is based on the requirement to register a death within 5 days unless the Coroner has been involved in which case the requirement is waived.</p>
<p>Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)</p>				<p>X there should be no significant impact on those with any disability other than the possibility of having to wait a little longer to register a death. In cases of severe hardship the registration service operates a domiciliary service for the registration of births and deaths. This could be used if the person responsible for the registration were housebound for example</p>
<p>Gender re-assignment (please include associated</p>				<p>X This change would have no</p>

aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				impact either negative or positive for this group other than a reduced access to registration service should they need to register a birth or death or give notice of marriage or civil partnership
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X There should be minimal impact on this group of people. In reality people can give notice of marriage up to 12 months in advance of their chosen date of marriage and a minimum of 28 days beforehand. Legislation provides for housebound or detained people to give notice where they reside.
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X there should be no positive or negative impact on this group, other than having reduced access to registration services locally, however following the birth of a child a family have 42 days during which they should register the birth.
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture,				X This change will have no

language, gypsy, traveller)			<p>impact on this aspect. Marriage and Civil Partnership law already determines that those subject to immigration control have to give notice at a designated register office, which would necessitate the couple travelling to Shrewsbury or to another designated office. These amendments will have no direct impact as a result of someone's race.</p>
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)			<p>X No changes are being made which would affect any aspect of someone's religious beliefs. The law requires a death to be registered within 5 days for everyone unless the Coroner is involved in some way. No distinction is made on the basis of religion or belief. We do recognise that for the Muslim and Jewish communities there can be a desire to have deaths registered very</p>

				<p>quickly especially where a body is to be removed from England and Wales. This can only be facilitated where there is no Coroner involvement and the Registration Service always accommodates these (perhaps one per year) even out of hours where possible. We also have links with the bigger muslim community in Telford which we meet with at their request to address any particular issues, of which there have not been any, or to participate in Q&A sessions if required. Most of the deaths of people from these communities are dealt with by one particular funeral director with whom we have very strong links.</p>
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X The proposed amendments do not impact on either sex in a negative or positive way.
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects:				X The proposed

safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				amendments do not impact on the sexual orientation of any person in a negative or positive way.
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)			X There is a potential for medium negative impact on those people living in the rural area in and around Church Stretton. Whilst they would still be able to register locally they may have to wait a little longer to be able to do so	

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	X	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		

If Part One, please now use the boxes below and sign off at the foot of the page. If Part Two, please move on to the full report stage.



Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change
The consultation originally discussed the potential for the closure of the Office in Church Stretton outright, or the centralisation of all registration services in Shrewsbury. The discussions with the local councillors and the feedback received from the consultation caused a rethink in terms of the option for outright closure. The rurality of the area and the potential hardships that a closure would cause to residents has resulted in the proposal to retain registration services in Church Stretton but on an appointment only basis on one occasion per week.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change
<i>Shropshire Registration Service conduct at least one consultation with its customers over the period of a month every year and uses the information gained to inform future plans and considerations. Usage of the planned facility in Church Stretton will also be monitored to ensure that there is sufficient provision or if there appears to be insufficient provision to look again at the situation.</i>
In addition we will liaise with colleagues in Shropshire Council's Performance and Policy team on ways

to systemically and in a proportionate and non intrusive manner collect equalities data to enable us to monitor the effects of this change on those residents with protected characteristics.

The service area will seek to make use, where possible of national comparator data on demographic changes and models of registrar service delivery that reflect the rurality of the area and the changing nature of the service, for example reduction in the numbers of civil partnerships now that equal marriage is in place


Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
Lead officer carrying out the screening	 Mrs Karen Burton, Registration & Coroners Service Manager; ext 8478	12/01/2016
Any internal support*		
Any external support**	 Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist; ext 5684	11/01/16
Head of service		

*This refers to other officers within the service area

**This refers either to support external to the service but within the Council, eg from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, or support external to the Council, eg perhaps from a peer authority

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Lead officer's name		
Head of service's name		

Shropshire Council Part 1 ESIIA: initial screening and assessment

Name of service change

Ludlow – Reduction in appointment availability of Shropshire Council's Registration Service from 20 hours per week to 16.

Aims of the service change and description

We register all births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships, and still births occurring in the County of Shropshire.

Our services are provided from 10 different locations across the County in 9 towns: Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Ludlow, Wem, Bishops Castle, and Church Stretton. They had been provided in 11 locations which included at the Maternity Unit at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, this unit has now ceased to operate and the main maternity unit is now based at the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford. The responsibility for the registration of these births now rests with Telford & Wrekin's Registration Service.

The impact on the workload and income of the service of this significant change will not be fully understood for at least 12 months, however it is important that we look at this change and reorganise our services where possible to reflect customer need and usage.

Members of the public can come to register a life event at nine of these locations, and the tenth location is our central register repository, where all of the completed births, deaths and marriage registers containing events which have happened in Shropshire since 1st July 1837 are kept and where our historical certificates are produced, and to where there is no public access.

Alongside the statutory services which have to be provided, the service also provides a range of complimentary services including: Nationality Checking Services, Civil Naming Ceremonies, Civil Renewal of Vows Ceremonies and Civil Funerals, the fees generated from these and the statutory services go towards covering the costs of service provision.

Statutory responsibilities (The duties we have to do by law)

- Register all births,
- Register all deaths,
- Register all still births
- Register all marriages,
- Register all civil partnerships
- To report marriages or civil partnerships which they suspect are being entered into for the purpose of evading UK Immigration Law.
- To collect marriage returns from all of the churches across Shropshire four times per year.
- Responsibility for the administration of the certification and registration of places for worship and religious marriages.
- To administer the Local Authority's approval process for licensing venues for civil marriage and civil partnerships.
- The service is required to meet or exceed national standards which are laid down by the Government, and a report has to be made to the General Register Office on an annual basis reporting on performance against these standards.
- The storage and issue of books of medical cause of death certificates to medical practitioners across the county in hospitals and medical practices.

- The service also retains a stock of marriage registers for issue to the clerics in churches of all denominations in emergency situations
- To provide advice to clerics across the county
- To provide advice and information to a range of other organisations.
- Provision of statistical information to the Government in order that it can plan its social and economic policies based on quantified evidence.

Registrations have to be carried out in person, this is a legal requirement. No charge can be made for the registration of a birth or death and certificate charges are set by statute as are many of the charges which may be levied for Registration Services. The majority of income is produced from our ceremony services (statutory and Celebratory), licensing of approved venues and provision of nationality and citizenship services.

Although much of the work of the service is prescribed in regulation, and there are accommodation guidelines applied by the General Register Office, there is no specific duty placed on a Local Authority to deliver services in specific locations, nor is there any stipulation relating to the number of registration officers or locations per capita. Indeed in many large cities registration services are delivered from a single site. Only local government employees are permitted by law to carry out registration duties.

The numbers of registrations required for events in the Shropshire Council area has remained pretty static over the last six years. At the time the consultation was carried out the figures for 2014/2015 were not available, but as they are now available we have included them. The numbers of registrations in the Shropshire Council Area for 2016 as at 07/01/2016 are also included for your information. As you can see the impact of the loss of birth registrations is significant.

Services delivered over the past six years:

Statutory Services	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 ytd
Birth registrations	4798	4734	4887	4789	4793	2720	435
Death registrations	2807	2903	2835	3252	3184	3184	2335
Still birth registrations	32	35	19	25	27	9	0
Marriage registrations	1088	1222	1271	1410	1217	1334	1147
Civil Partnership Registrations	23	23	29	41	30	12	4
Notices of Marriage	1837	1993	2398	2136	2029	2152	1501
Notices of Civil Partnership	39	51	64	48	47	13	6
Historical certificates	6976	6385	5818	5456	5530	5201	3288
Civil Partnership to Marriage Conversions						13	13
Non Statutory Services	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 ytd
Funeral, ceremonies	4	26	26	43	120	103	88
Naming Ceremonies	15	12	5	5	5	2	2
Reaffirmation of Vows Ceremonies	8	10	20	11	10	15	17
British Citizenship	107	116	104	115	162	74	76
Nationality Checking	187	154	227	87	161	75	81

Shropshire Registration Service has a budget of around £200K with which to provide its services. The total expenditure of the service including non-controllable costs is in the region of £950K, non-controllable costs total around £290K. The service itself creates an income of around £750K annually.

The service has to make savings from the £200K base budget of around £50K and have examined ways in which this can be achieved. The utilisation of offices and their costs have been examined as a way of identifying ways of achieving these.

In addition to the closure of the Main Consultant led Maternity Unit at RSH, applications for voluntary redundancy received from several members of staff, which have to be considered, and in the context of a number of retirements, the how and where services are provided has had to be considered as staffing is the largest cost to the service.

Currently services are provided in the following localities:

Bridgnorth
 Bishops Castle
 Church Stretton
 Ludlow
 Market Drayton
 Oswestry
 Shrewsbury
 Wem
 Whitchurch.

The actual % of time spent on customer facing appointments in each office is shown in the table below (this does not account for the duties which have to be undertaken after a registration). The figures used in the consultation were prepared prior to the figures being available for 2014/15 which we have now been able to include

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The figures are based on the percentage of appointment time available in each office which has actually been used for the purposes of carrying out a registration.

It is evident that the office in Ludlow is well used and compares favourably with the main office in Shrewsbury. The proposed reduction in opening hours of the Ludlow office from 20 per week over 5 days to 16 per week is a compromise position. The background is as follows:

The 5 day service had been provided by 2 part time members of staff one working 12 hours and the other working 8 in this location. The retirement of another member of staff working out of a different office created a vacancy which one of these members of staff applied for and was successful. The remaining member of staff had applied for voluntary redundancy and has subsequently agreed to withdraw their application and furthermore has agreed to increase their contracted hours in order that the service in Ludlow can continue with minimal disruption. In Ludlow it has never been about making a saving it has been about how we can continue to provide a service.

Comparisons with the usage of the Bridgnorth office which has not faced a reduction are understandable, however the usage reflects the public facing aspect of actual appointments. Another consideration has to be the amount of time which an officer spends on enquiries particularly about marriage bookings. The Bridgnorth area is much busier than the Ludlow area with weddings and hence the number of enquiries for dates and times and associated wedding day issues is proportional to that. Time has to be allowed for this aspect of work also.

The office based registration service across the County is provided by a very small number of staff, only 11 staff members, most of whom are part time, who are responsible for the registration of births and deaths and marriage/civil partnership notices in 9 locations around the county. A small admin team has taken away from the registration officers some extremely onerous and time consuming duties in order to maximise the time available for an officer to see the public.

The compromise that has been reached allows the service to continue in Ludlow with little change.

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Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through inserting a tick in the relevant column. Please add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>

<p>Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)</p>				<p>X There could be a small negative impact for older people, wishing to register a death, who may have to wait a little longer to register locally. This negative impact is based on the requirement to register a death within 5 days unless the Coroner has been involved in which case the requirement is waived.</p>
<p>Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)</p>				<p>X there should be no significant impact on those with any disability other than the possibility of having to wait a little longer to register a death. In cases of severe hardship the registration service operates a domiciliary service for the registration of births and deaths. This could be used if the person responsible for the registration were housebound for example</p>
<p>Gender re-assignment (please include associated</p>				<p>X This change would have no</p>

aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				impact either negative or positive for this group other than a reduced access to registration service should they need to register a birth or death or give notice of marriage or civil partnership
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X There should be minimal impact on this group of people. In reality people can give notice of marriage up to 12 months in advance of their chosen date of marriage and a minimum of 28 days beforehand. Legislation provides for housebound or detained people to give notice where they reside.
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X there should be no positive or negative impact on this group, other than having reduced access to registration services locally, however following the birth of a child a family have 42 days during which they should register the birth.
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture,				X This change will have no

language, gypsy, traveller)			<p>impact on this aspect. Marriage and Civil Partnership law already determines that those subject to immigration control have to give notice at a designated register office, which would necessitate the couple travelling to Shrewsbury or to another designated office. These amendments will have no direct impact as a result of someone's race.</p>
<p>Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)</p>			<p>No changes are being made which would affect any aspect of someone's religious beliefs. The law requires a death to be registered within 5 days for everyone unless the Coroner is involved in some way. No distinction is made on the basis of religion or belief. We do recognise that for the Muslim and Jewish communities there can be a desire to have deaths registered very</p>

				<p>quickly especially where a body is to be removed from England and Wales. This can only be facilitated where there is no Coroner involvement and the Registration Service always accommodates these (perhaps one per year) even out of hours where possible. We also have links with the bigger muslim community in Telford which we meet with at their request to address any particular issues, of which there have not been any, or to participate in Q&A sessions if required. Most of the deaths of people from these communities are dealt with by one particular funeral director with whom we have very strong links.</p>
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X The proposed amendments do not impact on either sex in a negative or positive way.
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects:				X The proposed

safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				amendments do not impact on the sexual orientation of any person in a negative or positive way.
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)				X There is a potential for low negative impact on those people living in the rural area in and around Ludlow. Whilst they would still be able to register locally on some occasions they may have to wait a little longer to be able to do so

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	X	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		

If Part One, please now use the boxes below and sign off at the foot of the page. If Part Two, please move on to the full report stage.


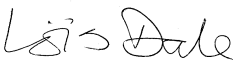
Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change
The consultation originally discussed the potential for the reduction of opening hours from 20 to 12 per week in the Ludlow Office, or the centralisation of all registration services in Shrewsbury. The discussions with the local councillors, staff members and the feedback received from the consultation resulted in the removal of the option for centralisation of services in Shrewsbury and provided for a compromise position where the office in Ludlow will remain open for 4 days per week.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change
Shropshire Registration Service conduct at least one consultation with its customers over the period of a month every year and uses the information gained to inform future plans and considerations. Usage of the facility in Ludlow will also be monitored to ensure that there is sufficient provision or if there appears to be insufficient provision to look again at the situation.
In addition we will liaise with colleagues in Shropshire Council's Performance and Policy team on ways to systemically and in a proportionate and non intrusive manner collect equalities data to enable us to monitor the effects of this change on those residents with protected

characteristics.

The service area will seek to make use, where possible of national comparator data on demographic changes and models of registrar service delivery that reflect the rurality of the area and the changing nature of the service, for example reduction in the numbers of civil partnerships now that equal marriage is in place



Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
Lead officer carrying out the screening	 Mrs Karen Burton, Registration & Coroners Service Manager; ext 8478	12/01/2016
Any internal support*		
Any external support**	 Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist; ext 5684	11/01/16
Head of service		

***This refers to other officers within the service area**

****This refers either to support external to the service but within the Council, eg from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, or support external to the Council, eg perhaps from a peer authority**

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Lead officer's name		
Head of service's name		

Shropshire Council Part 1 ESIIA: initial screening and assessment

Name of service change

Wem – Reduction in appointment availability of Shropshire Council's Registration Service. Change from a permanently staffed office to attendance weekly by appointment.

Aims of the service change and description

We register all births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships, and still births occurring in the County of Shropshire.

Our services are provided from 10 different locations across the County in 9 towns: Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Ludlow, Wem, Bishops Castle, and Church Stretton. They had been provided in 11 locations which included at the Maternity Unit at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, this unit has now ceased to operate and the main maternity unit is now based at the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford. The responsibility for the registration of these births now rests with Telford & Wrekin's Registration Service.

The impact on the workload and income of the service of this significant change will not be fully understood for at least 12 months, however it is important that we look at this change and reorganise our services where possible to reflect customer need and usage.

Members of the public can come to register a life event at nine of these locations, and the tenth location is our central register repository, where all of the completed births, deaths and marriage registers containing events which have happened in Shropshire since 1st July 1837 are kept and where our historical certificates are produced, and to where there is no public access.

Alongside the statutory services which have to be provided, the service also provides a range of complimentary services including: Nationality Checking Services, Civil Naming Ceremonies, Civil Renewal of Vows Ceremonies and Civil Funerals, the fees generated from these and the statutory services go towards covering the costs of service provision.

Statutory responsibilities (The duties we have to do by law)

- Register all births,
- Register all deaths,
- Register all still births
- Register all marriages,
- Register all civil partnerships
- To report marriages or civil partnerships which they suspect are being entered into for the purpose of evading UK Immigration Law.
- To collect marriage returns from all of the churches across Shropshire four times per year.
- Responsibility for the administration of the certification and registration of places for worship and religious marriages.
- To administer the Local Authority's approval process for licensing venues for civil marriage and civil partnerships.
- The service is required to meet or exceed national standards which are laid down by the Government, and a report has to be made to the General Register Office on an annual basis reporting on performance against these standards.
- The storage and issue of books of medical cause of death certificates to medical practitioners across the county in hospitals and medical practices.

- The service also retains a stock of marriage registers for issue to the clerics in churches of all denominations in emergency situations
- To provide advice to clerics across the county
- To provide advice and information to a range of other organisations.
- Provision of statistical information to the Government in order that it can plan its social and economic policies based on quantified evidence.

Registrations have to be carried out in person, this is a legal requirement. No charge can be made for the registration of a birth or death and certificate charges are set by statute as are many of the charges which may be levied for Registration Services. The majority of income is produced from our ceremony services (statutory and Celebratory), licensing of approved venues and provision of nationality and citizenship services.

Although much of the work of the service is prescribed in regulation, and there are accommodation guidelines applied by the General Register Office, there is no specific duty placed on a Local Authority to deliver services in specific locations, nor is there any stipulation relating to the number of registration officers or locations per capita. Indeed in many large cities registration services are delivered from a single site. Only local government employees are permitted by law to carry out registration duties.

The numbers of registrations required for events in the Shropshire Council area has remained pretty static over the last six years. At the time the consultation was carried out the figures for 2014/2015 were not available, but as they are now available we have included them. The numbers of registrations in the Shropshire Council Area for 2016 as at 07/01/2016 are also included for your information. As you can see the impact of the loss of birth registrations is significant.

Services delivered over the past six years:

Statutory Services	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 ytd
Birth registrations	4798	4734	4887	4789	4793	2720	435
Death registrations	2807	2903	2835	3252	3184	3184	2335
Still birth registrations	32	35	19	25	27	9	0
Marriage registrations	1088	1222	1271	1410	1217	1334	1147
Civil Partnership Registrations	23	23	29	41	30	12	4
Notices of Marriage	1837	1993	2398	2136	2029	2152	1501
Notices of Civil Partnership	39	51	64	48	47	13	6
Historical certificates	6976	6385	5818	5456	5530	5201	3288
Civil Partnership to Marriage Conversions						13	13
Non Statutory Services	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 ytd
Funeral, ceremonies	4	26	26	43	120	103	88
Naming Ceremonies	15	12	5	5	5	2	2
Reaffirmation of Vows Ceremonies	8	10	20	11	10	15	17
British Citizenship	107	116	104	115	162	74	76
Nationality Checking	187	154	227	87	161	75	81

Shropshire Registration Service has a budget of around £200K with which to provide its services. The total expenditure of the service including non-controllable costs is in the region of £950K, non-controllable costs total around £290K. The service itself creates an income of around £750K annually.

The service has to make savings from the £200K base budget of around £50K and have examined ways in which this can be achieved. The utilisation of offices and their costs have been examined as a way of identifying ways of achieving these.

In addition to the closure of the Main Consultant led Maternity Unit at RSH, applications for voluntary redundancy received from several members of staff, which have to be considered, and in the context of a number of retirements, the how and where services are provided has had to be considered as staffing is the largest cost to the service.

Currently services are provided in the following localities:

Bridgnorth
 Bishops Castle
 Church Stretton
 Ludlow
 Market Drayton
 Oswestry
 Shrewsbury
 Wem
 Whitchurch.

The actual % of time spent on customer facing appointments in each office is shown in the table below (this does not account for the duties which have to be undertaken after a registration). The figures used in the consultation were prepared prior to the figures being available for 2014/15 which we have now been able to include

Public facing utilisation only - without administrative duties	Shrewsbury	Bridgnorth	Ludlow	Bishops Castle	Church Stretton	Wem	Oswestry	Market Drayton	Whitchurch
2012/13	44%	36%	42%	20%	16%	33%	36%	36%	28%
2013/14	49%	43%	49%	21%	29%	35%	39%	41%	36%
2014/15	46%	41%	49%	25%	32%	29%	35%	35%	35%
01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 YTD	44%	40%	44%	15%	19%	18%	33%	31%	30%

The figures are based on the percentage of appointment time available in each office which has actually been

used for the purposes of carrying out a registration.

It is clear to see that the offices at Bishops Castle, Church Stretton and Wem are underused and hence become subject to scrutiny in terms of viability, hence why the provision of service in these locations is being altered.

In Wem, the uptake of the service is low and the cost of providing a permanent staffed office for 12 hours per week over 3 days is high. We propose to provide access to appointments in Wem on a single day per week by appointment only, over a period of 2.5 hours and provide a registrar to attend for the purpose of that/those appointment(s) only. We will explore the options with Wem Town Council and Meres and Mosses and any other relevant organisations. The staff can be provided using existing staff who are either usually based elsewhere or who are roving members of staff. We should then be able to delete some vacant posts.

Had the facility to register locally been removed completely there would be additional travel for residents of that particular area of the County, as follows:

Whitchurch	9 miles
Shrewsbury Registrars Office	11 miles
Market Drayton	14 miles
Oswestry	19 miles

Access to the service is by appointment although we will always see walk in customers if we are able to or make an appointment for these customers to attend. Appointments can be made by telephoning the Shropshire Council Customer Service Centre on 0345 678 9016, or by visiting the Shropshire council website www.shropshire.gov.uk, or by visiting any Shropshire council customer service point.

A domiciliary service is and has always been in place for those people who experience severe difficulties with registration, ie if they are housebound by reason of illness or disability and cannot attend at a registration service point to conduct their business. This provision is rarely requested.

We feel that the evidence gathered demonstrates no significant difficulties would be incurred by the residents of the Wem area which cannot be overcome. We are happy that this change provides an excellent way of reducing costs whilst maintaining a local service.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

This change represents a change to the service arrangements for those who wish to register a birth, give notice of marriage or civil partnership, or to register a death. As these situations are experienced by all members of the community, including those in the protected characteristic groupings, this change will potentially affect all members of the community

Evidence used for screening of the service change

As referred to earlier on in this document, significant changes most importantly the cessation of the Consultant led maternity unit have a knock on effect to the numbers of registrations to be done by the Shropshire Registration Service. This and the need to make savings necessitates the need for how, when and where we provide registration services across the council area to be considered.

The evidence for this change is presented in the utilisation figures

Public facing utilisation only - without administrative duties	Shrewsbury	Bridgnorth	Ludlow	Bishops Castle	Church Stretton	Wem	Oswestry	Market Drayton	Whitchurch
2012/13	44%	36%	42%	20%	16%	33%	36%	36%	28%
2013/14	49%	43%	49%	21%	29%	35%	39%	41%	36%
2014/15	46%	41%	49%	25%	32%	29%	35%	35%	35%
01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 YTD	44%	40%	44%	15%	19%	18%	33%	31%	30%

In order to ensure that the registration service is in the right shape to deal with the changing needs of communities whilst balancing off the Council's statutory obligation for the provision of service dictates that the changes need to be made now in order that the service improves its efficiency.

The year to date figures for utilisation and the year to date figures for numbers of registrations bears out the need to rationalise provision of services.

Statutory Services	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 ytd
Birth registrations	4798	4734	4887	4789	4793	2720	435
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Historical certificates	6976	6385	5818	5456	5530	5201	3288
Civil Partnership to Marriage Conversions						13	13

There is clearly nothing in the above figures which supports the case to leave things as they are, but we also recognise that it would be incredibly difficult for many residents if all service was based in Shrewsbury.

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change

Public Consultation was carried out over a 6 week period between June and August 2015, via the Shropshire Council Consultation Portal and the local councillors had been involved in cross party discussion group prior to the issue of the consultation. Publicity for the consultation appeared in the local newspapers and on local radio.

48 responses were received on line and 7 responses were received in writing.

Of the on line responses:

48% supported leaving provision exactly as it is currently

38% supported the closure of Church Stretton, and Wem service points (Bishops Castle Closure was not given as an option) in favour of retaining the other out stations

14% supported the centralisation of registration services in Shrewsbury and the closure of all out stations.

Of the on-line responses:

42% of respondents were male

47% of respondents were female

11% of respondents preferred not to say

8% of respondents were aged between 25 and 40

24% of respondents were aged between 41 and 59

55% of respondents were aged over 60 years

13% of respondents preferred not to say

The 7 written responses showed the following:

2 of the responses were from Town Councils

1 of the responses was from a local councillor

1 of the responses was from a member of the public who also organised community transport

2 of the responses were from members of the public

1 of the responses was anonymous

Respondents local register offices as identified from consultation:

Bishops Castle:	0
Bridgnorth:	3
Church Stretton:	15
Ludlow:	13
Oswestry:	3
Market Drayton:	0
Wem:	11
Whitchurch:	1
Shrewsbury:	7
South Offices in General:	1
Unidentified	1

From the feedback received from those who cited their local register office as Wem, it was clear how much the service is valued and that potential hardships could be avoided by finding a way in which we could continue to offer our service within this town. From the consultation offers of assistance with accommodation issues has been forthcoming and will be explored to the full.

The Shropshire Registration Service carry out a full customer survey at least once per year for a period of 1 month and ask for customer feedback on a number of areas including access to services.

These results and comments are published on the Shropshire council website and are provided to the General Register Office for whom a stewardship report has to be prepared annually. This change, as with any organisational change will be monitored closely and the service is prepared to react quickly to any areas which create significant problems.

Potential impact on Protected Characteristic groups and on social inclusion

Guidance notes on how to carry out the initial assessment

Using the results of evidence gathering and specific consultation and engagement, please consider how the service change as proposed may affect people within the nine Protected Characteristic groups and people at risk of social exclusion.

1. Have the intended audiences and target groups been consulted about:
 - their current needs and aspirations and what is important to them;
 - the potential impact of this service change on them, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended;
 - the potential barriers they may face.
2. If the intended audience and target groups have not been consulted directly, have representatives been consulted, or people with specialist knowledge, or research explored?
3. Have other stakeholder groups and secondary groups, for example carers of service users, been explored in terms of potential unintended impacts?
4. Are there systems set up to:
 - monitor the impact, positive or negative, intended or intended, for all the different groups;
 - enable open feedback and suggestions from a variety of audiences through a variety of methods.
5. Are there any Human Rights implications? For example, is there a breach of one or more of the human rights of an individual or group?
6. Will the service change as proposed have a positive or negative impact on fostering good relations?
7. Will the service change as proposed have a positive or negative impact on social inclusion?

Guidance on what a negative impact might look like

High Negative	Significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place or no evidence available: urgent need for consultation with customers, general public, workforce
Medium Negative	Some potential impact, some mitigating measures in place but no evidence available how effective they are: would be beneficial to consult with customers, general public, workforce
Low Negative	Almost bordering on non-relevance to the ESIIA process (heavily legislation led, very little discretion can be exercised, limited public facing aspect, national policy affecting degree of local impact possible)

Initial assessment for each group

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through inserting a tick in the relevant column. Please add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>

<p>Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)</p>				<p>X There could be a small negative impact for older people, wishing to register a death, who may have to wait a little longer to register locally. This negative impact is based on the requirement to register a death within 5 days unless the Coroner has been involved in which case the requirement is waived.</p>
<p>Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)</p>				<p>X there should be no significant impact on those with any disability other than the possibility of having to wait a little longer to register a death. In cases of severe hardship the registration service operates a domiciliary service for the registration of births and deaths. This could be used if the person responsible for the registration were housebound for example</p>
<p>Gender re-assignment (please include associated</p>				<p>X This change would have no</p>

aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				impact either negative or positive for this group other than a reduced access to registration service should they need to register a birth or death or give notice of marriage or civil partnership
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X There should be minimal impact on this group of people. In reality people can give notice of marriage up to 12 months in advance of their chosen date of marriage and a minimum of 28 days beforehand. Legislation provides for housebound or detained people to give notice where they reside.
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X there should be no positive or negative impact on this group, other than having reduced access to registration services locally, however following the birth of a child a family have 42 days during which they should register the birth.
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture,				X This change will have no

language, gypsy, traveller)			<p>impact on this aspect. Marriage and Civil Partnership law already determines that those subject to immigration control have to give notice at a designated register office, which would necessitate the couple travelling to Shrewsbury or to another designated office. These amendments will have no direct impact as a result of someone's race.</p>
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)			<p>X No changes are being made which would affect any aspect of someone's religious beliefs. The law requires a death to be registered within 5 days for everyone unless the Coroner is involved in some way. No distinction is made on the basis of religion or belief. We do recognise that for the Muslim and Jewish communities there can be a desire to have deaths registered very</p>

				<p>quickly especially where a body is to be removed from England and Wales. This can only be facilitated where there is no Coroner involvement and the Registration Service always accommodates these (perhaps one per year) even out of hours where possible. We also have links with the bigger muslim community in Telford which we meet with at their request to address any particular issues, of which there have not been any, or to participate in Q&A sessions if required. Most of the deaths of people from these communities are dealt with by one particular funeral director with whom we have very strong links.</p>
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X The proposed amendments do not impact on either sex in a negative or positive way.
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects:				X The proposed

safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				amendments do not impact on the sexual orientation of any person in a negative or positive way.
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)			X There is a potential for medium negative impact on those people living in the rural area in and around Wem. Whilst they would still be able to register locally they may have to wait a little longer to be able to do so	

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	X	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		

If Part One, please now use the boxes below and sign off at the foot of the page. If Part Two, please move on to the full report stage.



Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change
The consultation originally discussed the potential for the closure of the Office in Wem outright, or the centralisation of all registration services in Shrewsbury. The discussions with the local councillors and the feedback received from the consultation caused a rethink in terms of the option for outright closure. The rurality of the area and the potential hardships that a closure would cause to residents has resulted in the proposal to retain registration services in Wem but on an appointment only basis on one occasion per week.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change
Shropshire Registration Service conduct at least one consultation with its customers over the period of a month every year and uses the information gained to inform future plans and considerations. Usage of the facility in Wem will also be monitored to ensure that there is sufficient provision or if there appears to be insufficient provision to look again at the situation.
In addition we will liaise with colleagues in Shropshire Council's Performance and Policy team on ways

to systemically and in a proportionate and non intrusive manner collect equalities data to enable us to monitor the effects of this change on those residents with protected characteristics.

The service area will seek to make use, where possible of national comparator data on demographic changes and models of registrar service delivery that reflect the rurality of the area and the changing nature of the service, for example reduction in the numbers of civil partnerships now that equal marriage is in place



Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
Lead officer carrying out the screening	 Mrs Karen Burton, Registration & Coroners Service Manager; ext 8478	12/01/2016
Any internal support*		
Any external support**	 Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist; ext 5684	11/01/16
Head of service		

*This refers to other officers within the service area

**This refers either to support external to the service but within the Council, eg from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, or support external to the Council, eg perhaps from a peer authority

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Lead officer's name		12/01/2016
Head of service's name		18/01/2016

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Shropshire Council Part 1 ESIIA: initial screening and assessment

Name of service change

Bishops Castle – Reduction in appointment availability of Shropshire Council's Registration Service. Change from a permanently staffed office to attendance weekly by appointment.

Aims of the service change and description

We register all births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships, and still births occurring in the County of Shropshire.

Our services are provided from 10 different locations across the County in 9 towns: Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Ludlow, Wem, Bishops Castle, and Church Stretton. They had been provided in 11 locations which included at the Maternity Unit at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, this unit has now ceased to operate and the main maternity unit is now based at the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford. The responsibility for the registration of these births now rests with Telford & Wrekin's Registration Service.

The impact on the workload and income of the service of this significant change will not be fully understood for at least 12 months, however it is important that we look at this change and reorganise our services where possible to reflect customer need and usage.

Members of the public can come to register a life event at nine of these locations, and the tenth location is our central register repository, where all of the completed births, deaths and marriage registers containing events which have happened in Shropshire since 1st July 1837 are kept and where our historical certificates are produced, and to where there is no public access.

Alongside the statutory services which have to be provided, the service also provides a range of complimentary services including: Nationality Checking Services, Civil Naming Ceremonies, Civil Renewal of Vows Ceremonies and Civil Funerals, the fees generated from these and the statutory services go towards covering the costs of service provision.

Statutory responsibilities (The duties we have to do by law)

- Register all births,
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- Register all marriages,
- Register all civil partnerships
- To report marriages or civil partnerships which they suspect are being entered into for the purpose of evading UK Immigration Law.
- To collect marriage returns from all of the churches across Shropshire four times per year.
- Responsibility for the administration of the certification and registration of places for worship and religious marriages.
- To administer the Local Authority's approval process for licensing venues for civil marriage and civil partnerships.
- The service is required to meet or exceed national standards which are laid down by the Government, and a report has to be made to the General Register Office on an annual basis reporting on performance against these standards.
- The storage and issue of books of medical cause of death certificates to medical practitioners across the county in hospitals and medical practices.

- The service also retains a stock of marriage registers for issue to the clerics in churches of all denominations in emergency situations
- To provide advice to clerics across the county
- To provide advice and information to a range of other organisations.
- Provision of statistical information to the Government in order that it can plan its social and economic policies based on quantified evidence.

Registrations have to be carried out in person, this is a legal requirement. No charge can be made for the registration of a birth or death and certificate charges are set by statute as are many of the charges which may be levied for Registration Services. The majority of income is produced from our ceremony services (statutory and Celebratory), licensing of approved venues and provision of nationality and citizenship services.

Although much of the work of the service is prescribed in regulation, and there are accommodation guidelines applied by the General Register Office, there is no specific duty placed on a Local Authority to deliver services in specific locations, nor is there any stipulation relating to the number of registration officers or locations per capita. Indeed in many large cities registration services are delivered from a single site. Only local government employees are permitted by law to carry out registration duties.

The numbers of registrations required for events in the Shropshire Council area has remained pretty static over the last six years. At the time the consultation was carried out the figures for 2014/2015 were not available, but as they are now available we have included them. The numbers of registrations in the Shropshire Council Area for 2016 as at 07/01/2016 are also included for your information. As you can see the impact of the loss of birth registrations is significant.

Services delivered over the past six years:

Statutory Services	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 ytd
Birth registrations	4798	4734	4887	4789	4793	2720	435
Death registrations	2807	2903	2835	3252	3184	3184	2335
Still birth registrations	32	35	19	25	27	9	0
Marriage registrations	1088	1222	1271	1410	1217	1334	1147
Civil Partnership Registrations	23	23	29	41	30	12	4
Notices of Marriage	1837	1993	2398	2136	2029	2152	1501
Notices of Civil Partnership	39	51	64	48	47	13	6
Historical certificates	6976	6385	5818	5456	5530	5201	3288
Civil Partnership to Marriage Conversions						13	13
Non Statutory Services	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 ytd
Funeral, ceremonies	4	26	26	43	120	103	88
Naming Ceremonies	15	12	5	5	5	2	2
Reaffirmation of Vows Ceremonies	8	10	20	11	10	15	17
British Citizenship	107	116	104	115	162	74	76
Nationality Checking	187	154	227	87	161	75	81

Shropshire Registration Service has a budget of around £200K with which to provide its services. The total expenditure of the service including non-controllable costs is in the region of £950K, non-controllable costs total around £290K. The service itself creates an income of around £750K annually.

The service has to make savings from the £200K base budget of around £50K and have examined ways in which this can be achieved. The utilisation of offices and their costs have been examined as a way of identifying ways of achieving these.

In addition to the closure of the Main Consultant led Maternity Unit at RSH, applications for voluntary redundancy received from several members of staff, which have to be considered, and in the context of a number of retirements, the how and where services are provided has had to be considered as staffing is the largest cost to the service.

Currently services are provided in the following localities:

Bridgnorth
 Bishops Castle
 Church Stretton
 Ludlow
 Market Drayton
 Oswestry
 Shrewsbury
 Wem
 Whitchurch.

The actual % of time spent on customer facing appointments in each office is shown in the table below (this does not account for the duties which have to be undertaken after a registration). The figures used in the consultation were prepared prior to the figures being available for 2014/15 which we have now been able to include

Public utilisation only - without administrative duties	Shrewsbury	Bridgnorth	Ludlow	Bishops Castle	Church Stretton	Wem	Oswestry	Market Drayton	Whitchurch
2012/13	44%	36%	42%	20%	16%	33%	36%	36%	28%
2013/14	49%	43%	49%	21%	29%	35%	39%	41%	36%
2014/15	46%	41%	49%	25%	32%	29%	35%	35%	35%
01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 YTD	44%	40%	44%	15%	19%	18%	33%	31%	30%

The figures are based on the percentage of appointment time available in each office which has actually been used for the purposes of carrying out a registration.

It is clear to see that the offices at Bishops Castle, Church Stretton and Wem are underused and hence become subject to scrutiny in terms of viability, hence why the provision of service in these locations is being altered.

In Bishops Castle, the uptake of the service is low and the cost of providing a permanent staffed office for 5 hours per week over 2 days is high. We propose to provide access to appointments in Bishops Castle on a single day per week by appointment only, over a period of 2.5 hours and provide a registrar to attend for the purpose of that/those appointment(s) only and pay rental on the office facility for the time which we are actually

on site. The staff can be provided using existing staff who are either usually based elsewhere or who are roving members of staff. We should then be able to delete some vacant posts.

Had the facility to register locally been removed completely there would be additional travel for residents of that particular area of the County, as follows:

Church Stretton	13 miles
Shrewsbury Registrars Office	24 miles
Ludlow Registrars Office	18 miles

Access to the service is by appointment although we will always see walk in customers if we are able to or make an appointment for these customers to attend. Appointments can be made by telephoning the Shropshire Council Customer Service Centre on 0345 678 9016, or by visiting the Shropshire council website www.shropshire.gov.uk, or by visiting any Shropshire council customer service point.

A domiciliary service is and has always been in place for those people who experience severe difficulties with registration, ie if they are housebound by reason of illness or disability and cannot attend at a registration service point to conduct their business. This provision is rarely requested.

We feel that the evidence gathered demonstrates no significant difficulties would be incurred by the residents of the Bishops Castle area which cannot be overcome. We are happy that this change provides an excellent way of reducing costs whilst maintaining a local service.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

This change represents a change to the service arrangements for those who wish to register a birth, give notice of marriage or civil partnership, or to register a death. As these situations are experienced by all members of the community, including those in the protected characteristic groupings, this change will potentially affect all members of the community

Evidence used for screening of the service change

As referred to earlier on in this document, significant changes most importantly the cessation of the Consultant led maternity unit have a knock on effect to the numbers of registrations to be done by the Shropshire Registration Service. This and the need to make savings necessitates the need for how, when and where we provide registration services across the council area to be considered.

The evidence for this change is presented in the utilisation figures

Public facing utilisation only - without administrative duties	Shrewsbury	Bridgnorth	Ludlow	Bishops Castle	Church Stretton	Wem	Oswestry	Market Drayton	Whitchurch
2012/13	44%	36%	42%	20%	16%	33%	36%	36%	28%
2013/14	49%	43%	49%	21%	29%	35%	39%	41%	36%
2014/15	46%	41%	49%	25%	32%	29%	35%	35%	35%
01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 YTD	44%	40%	44%	15%	19%	18%	33%	31%	30%

In order to ensure that the registration service is in the right shape to deal with the changing needs of communities whilst balancing off the Council's statutory obligation for the provision of service dictates that the changes need to be made now in order that the service improves its efficiency.

The year to date figures for utilisation and the year to date figures for numbers of registrations bears out the need to rationalise provision of services.

Statutory Services	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015 ytd
Birth registrations	4798	4734	4887	4789	4793	2720	435
Death registrations	2807	2903	2835	3252	3184	3184	2335
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Notices of Civil Partnership	39	51	64	48	47	13	6
Historical certificates	6976	6385	5818	5456	5530	5201	3288
Civil Partnership to Marriage Conversions						13	13

There is clearly nothing in the above figures which supports the case to leave things as they are, but we also recognise that it would be incredibly difficult for many residents if all service was based in Shrewsbury.

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change

Public Consultation was carried out over a 6 week period between June and August 2015, via the Shropshire Council Consultation Portal and the local councillors had been involved in cross party discussion group prior to the issue of the consultation. Discussions were also had with representatives of Enterprise South West. Publicity for the consultation appeared in the local newspapers and on local radio.

48 responses were received on line and 7 responses were received in writing.

Of the on line responses:

48% supported leaving provision exactly as it is currently
38% supported the closure of Church Stretton, and Wem service points (Bishops Castle Closure was not given as an option) in favour of retaining the other out stations
14% supported the centralisation of registration services in Shrewsbury and the closure of all out stations.

Of the on-line responses:

42% of respondents were male
47% of respondents were female
11% of respondents preferred not to say

8% of respondents were aged between 25 and 40
24% of respondents were aged between 41 and 59
55% of respondents were aged over 60 years
13% of respondents preferred not to say

The 7 written responses showed the following:

2 of the responses were from Town Councils
1 of the responses was from a local councillor
1 of the responses was from a member of the public who also organised community transport
2 of the responses were from members of the public
1 of the responses was anonymous

Respondents local register offices as identified from consultation:

Bishops Castle:	0
Bridgnorth:	3
Church Stretton:	15
Ludlow:	13
Oswestry:	3
Market Drayton:	0
Wem:	11
Whitchurch:	1
Shrewsbury:	7
South Offices in General:	1
Unidentified	1

The Shropshire Registration Service carry out a full customer survey at least once per year for a

period of 1 month and ask for customer feedback on a number of areas including access to services. These results and comments are published on the Shropshire council website and are provided to the General Register Office for whom a stewardship report has to be prepared annually. This change, as with any organisational change will be monitored closely and the service is prepared to react quickly to any areas which create significant problems.

Potential impact on Protected Characteristic groups and on social inclusion

Guidance notes on how to carry out the initial assessment

Using the results of evidence gathering and specific consultation and engagement, please consider how the service change as proposed may affect people within the nine Protected Characteristic groups and people at risk of social exclusion.

1. Have the intended audiences and target groups been consulted about:
 - their current needs and aspirations and what is important to them;
 - the potential impact of this service change on them, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended;
 - the potential barriers they may face.
2. If the intended audience and target groups have not been consulted directly, have representatives been consulted, or people with specialist knowledge, or research explored?
3. Have other stakeholder groups and secondary groups, for example carers of service users, been explored in terms of potential unintended impacts?
4. Are there systems set up to:
 - monitor the impact, positive or negative, intended or intended, for all the different groups;
 - enable open feedback and suggestions from a variety of audiences through a variety of methods.
5. Are there any Human Rights implications? For example, is there a breach of one or more of the human rights of an individual or group?
6. Will the service change as proposed have a positive or negative impact on fostering good relations?
7. Will the service change as proposed have a positive or negative impact on social inclusion?

Guidance on what a negative impact might look like

High Negative	Significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place or no evidence available: urgent need for consultation with customers, general public, workforce
Medium Negative	Some potential impact, some mitigating measures in place but no evidence available how effective they are: would be beneficial to consult with customers, general public, workforce
Low Negative	Almost bordering on non-relevance to the ESIIA process (heavily legislation led, very little discretion can be exercised, limited public facing aspect, national policy affecting degree of local impact possible)

Initial assessment for each group

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through inserting a tick in the relevant column. Please add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>

<p>Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)</p>				<p>X There could be a small negative impact for older people, wishing to register a death, who may have to wait a little longer to register locally. This negative impact is based on the requirement to register a death within 5 days unless the Coroner has been involved in which case the requirement is waived.</p>
<p>Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)</p>				<p>X there should be no significant impact on those with any disability other than the possibility of having to wait a little longer to register a death. In cases of severe hardship the registration service operates a domiciliary service for the registration of births and deaths. This could be used if the person responsible for the registration were housebound for example</p>
<p>Gender re-assignment (please include associated</p>				<p>X This change would have no</p>

aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				impact either negative or positive for this group other than a reduced access to registration service should they need to register a birth or death or give notice of marriage or civil partnership
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X There should be minimal impact on this group of people. In reality people can give notice of marriage up to 12 months in advance of their chosen date of marriage and a minimum of 28 days beforehand. Legislation provides for housebound or detained people to give notice where they reside.
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X there should be no positive or negative impact on this group, other than having reduced access to registration services locally, however following the birth of a child a family have 42 days during which they should register the birth.
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture,				X This change will have no

language, gypsy, traveller)			<p>impact on this aspect. Marriage and Civil Partnership law already determines that those subject to immigration control have to give notice at a designated register office, which would necessitate the couple travelling to Shrewsbury or to another designated office. These amendments will have no direct impact as a result of someone's race.</p>
<p>Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)</p>			<p>X No changes are being made which would effect any aspect of someone's religious beliefs. The law requires a death to be registered within 5 days for everyone unless the Coroner is involved in someway. No distinction is made on the basis of religion or belief. We do recognise that for the Muslim and Jewish communities there can be a desire to have deaths registered very</p>

				<p>quickly especially where a body is to be removed from England and Wales. This can only be facilitated where there is no Coroner involvement and the Registration Service always accommodates these (perhaps one per year) even out of hours where possible. We also have links with the bigger muslim community in Telford which we meet with at their request to address any particular issues, of which there have not been any, or to participate in Q&A sessions if required. Most of the deaths of people from these communities are dealt with by one particular funeral director with whom we have very strong links.</p>
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X The proposed amendments do not impact on either sex in a negative or positive way.
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility;				X The proposed amendments

potential for bullying and harassment)				do not impact on the sexual orientation of any person in a negative or positive way.
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)			X There is a potential for medium negative impact on those people living in the rural area in and around Bishops Castle. Whilst they would still be able to register locally they may have to wait a little longer to be able to do so	

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	X	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		

If Part One, please now use the boxes below and sign off at the foot of the page. If Part Two, please move on to the full report stage.


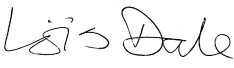
Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change
<i>The consultation originally discussed the potential for the closure of the Office in Bishops Castle outright, or the centralisation of all registration services in Shrewsbury. The discussions with the local councillors and with Enterprise South West caused a rethink in terms of the option for outright closure. The rurality of the area and the potential hardships that a closure would cause to residents has resulted in the proposal to retain registration services in Bishops Castle but on an appointment only basis on one occasion per week.</i>

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change
<i>Shropshire Registration Service conduct at least one consultation with its customers over the period of a month every year and uses the information gained to inform future plans and considerations. Usage of the planned facility in Bishops Castle will also be monitored to ensure that there is sufficient provision or if there appears to be insufficient provision to look again at the situation.</i>
In addition we will liaise with colleagues in Shropshire Council's Performance and Policy team on ways to systemically and in a proportionate and non intrusive manner collect equalities data to enable us to

monitor the effects of this change on those residents with protected characteristics.

The service area will seek to make use, where possible of national comparator data on demographic changes and models of registrar service delivery that reflect the rurality of the area and the changing nature of the service, for example reduction in the numbers of civil partnerships now that equal marriage is in place



Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
Lead officer carrying out the screening	 Mrs Karen Burton, Registration & Coroners Service Manager; ext 8478	12/01/2016
Any internal support*		
Any external support**	 Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist; ext 5684	11/01/16
Head of service		

*This refers to other officers within the service area

**This refers either to support external to the service but within the Council, eg from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, or support external to the Council, eg perhaps from a peer authority

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Lead officer's name Karen Burton		12/01/2016
Head of service's name		18/01/2016

Appendix C Report Following Public Consultation – Revised Proposals

What have we been consulting on?

As a result of pressures on local government, Shropshire Council has had to consider the manner in which it provides all of its services. Shropshire Registration Service has been consulting on how best to re design and future proof registration services in Shropshire. In addition to the budgetary pressures faced by all local authorities, the recent reconfiguration of Women’s and Children’s Services within the Shropshire and Telford Health Trust and the resultant drop in the numbers of births which are able to be registered in Shropshire and the retirement of a number of registration staff now is a good time to have a look at what we do and how we do it.

A six week consultation was held during which the views of the residents of Shropshire were sought on a range of 3 options for the Registration Service.

Option 1: Leave the provision exactly as it is.

There are no savings available and it would be necessary to fill a number of vacant posts in order to continue to provide service in all of the existing locations. Retirements and redundancies have left insufficient staff to maintain the current structure. The locality in which a registration office is available would remain the same, and the opening hours would remain unchanged, see Table 2.

Table 1

Offices	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Registration Staff hours
Bishops Castle	Closed	10:00 - 12:00	Closed	Closed	10:00 - 12:00	4
Bridgnorth	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	Closed	10:00 - 16:00	25
Church Stretton	Closed	14:00 - 16:00	Closed	Closed	14:00 - 16:00	4
Ludlow	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00	20
Market Drayton	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	10:00 - 14:00	12
Oswestry	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 13:00	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 16:00	33.3
Shrewsbury	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	111
Wem	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00		10:00 - 14:00		12
Whitchurch	10:00 - 14:00		10:00 - 14:00		10:00 - 14:00	12

Appendix C Report Following Public Consultation – Revised Proposals

Option 2: Close under used offices and concentrate on providing service where there is greatest demand

Under this proposal the offices based in Wem, and Church Stretton would close Table 2 All other offices would remain open with opening hours varied

Table 2

Location	Current Hours	New Hours	Weekly Opening hours	Comments Why
Bishops Castle	4	By appointment max 2 hours	Reduced	Under utilisation and excessive costs
Bridgnorth	25	25	Unchanged	Not applicable
Ludlow	20	12	Reduced	Staff redundancy
Market Drayton	12	13.5	Increased	To provide additional resource for customers from Wem office
Whitchurch	12	13.5	Increased	
Oswestry	33.3	38	Increased	Protecting staff hours affected by closures. Also to provide additional resource for the Oswestry/North area
Shrewsbury	111	111	Unchanged	Not Applicable

Table 3- the proposed opening times and locations of offices for Option 2 shown below

Offices	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Registration Staff hours
Bridgnorth	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	Closed	10:00 - 16:00	25
Ludlow	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	Closed	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00	12
Market Drayton	10:00 - 14:30	Closed	10:00 - 14:30	Closed	10:00 - 14:30	13.5
Oswestry	09:30 - 16:30	09:30 - 16:30	09:15 - 16:30	09:30 - 16:30	09:30 - 16:30	38
Shrewsbury	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	111
Whitchurch	10:00 - 14:30	closed	10:00 - 14:30	closed	10:00 - 14:30	13.5

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Option 3:

Close all local registration offices and centralise all registration services in Shrewsbury.

All registration services would be available in Shrewsbury only, centralising our services and closing all other offices although this could create additional savings, it would undoubtedly cause great inconvenience to customers from anywhere other area of the county, which does not, we feel, reflect the needs of a rural county such as Shropshire.

In order to accommodate appointments centrally in Shrewsbury Opening Hours would have to alter and a shift system would be required.

Appointments in Shrewsbury would be available between 09:00 – 19:00, Monday to Friday

Consultation Response

The consultation ran for a period of 6 weeks. During which time 48 on line responses were received, 2 written responses were received outside of the consultation period, but which will be considered and 5 responses were received by e-mail direct to the registration service.

The electronic on-line survey was carried out using an application which allows for the responses to be collated into statistical reports, and also allows for the recording of individual comments. A full copy of this report is attached at [Appendix A](#). The comments contained within the 7 responses received outside of the electronic report have been reproduced separately at [Appendix B](#)

The outcome of the consultation showed that
48% of respondents preferred option 1,
37.5% of respondents preferred option 2
14.5% of respondents preferred option 3

The main concerns which were expressed by respondents related to:

- Transport
- Lack of provision in South of the County
- Over provision in the North
- Oswestry being favoured over the South of the County
- In adequate EINA
- No consideration given to the people of Wem
- Will disproportionately affect the less well off
- Elderly people - the impact of travelling on them
- Cost and time spent travelling to other offices

Appendix C Report Following Public Consultation – Revised Proposals

The following suggestions were made as alternatives to the proposals and have been discarded for the reasons shown:

Table 4 – Suggestions

Suggestion	Discarded because:
Town Clerks could register instead	Unfortunately this is not possible as the law states that a registrar has to be employed by the Registration authority
Increase Council Tax	The setting of Council Tax is not under the remit of Shropshire Registration Service so is unable to be considered as part of this consultation
Change the law so that a death can be registered in 10 days	Unfortunately this requires primary legislation so unfortunately cannot be considered as part of this consultation
Register in people's homes	<p>A Domiciliary service has and is provided for people who are housebound or have insurmountable issues which prevent them attending a registration office.</p> <p>To have a registration service purely built on attending peoples homes to register would be uneconomical as officers would spend large chunks of the day travelling and not registering. It is more effective for the public to come to the registrar in order that they can be seen with no wasted time in between registrations.</p>
Cut Salaries of Senior Shropshire Council Managers	This cannot be considered as part of the Registration Service consultation as the service has no influence here.
Make managers redundant	The Registration Service has 1 manager and 3 team leaders all of whom are also operational registration officers.
Cut cabinet members remuneration	The Registration Service is not able to influence this at all and as such it cannot be considered as part of this consultation.
Part time staff/job share	With the exception of 7 members of staff all staff are part time
Make savings on transport costs - use local staff	Staff do not get paid for travelling into their base
Don't use Agency Staff	The Registration Service do not use agency staff
Recruit more staff to the front line and reduce managers	We do not have any dedicated managers within the Registration Service all staff are operational
Keep Wem Open, more houses being built so more births likely	Births have to be registered where they occur and the main maternity unit is now

Appendix C Report Following Public Consultation – Revised Proposals

	in Telford and Wrekin, so most births will not be registered in Shropshire any more.
Register on line	This is not something which Shropshire Council have within their gift. The method of registration is prescribed by law, primary legislation is required to make this change
Train Librarians or other members of Council Staff to be registrars, they would be cheaper?	Librarians and customer service staff are paid similarly to Registration Officers, they also have their own roles to perform. The requirement to maintain security stock, and have access to central government systems together with a working knowledge of Registration Law and Practice does not make this a viable option. It is important that access to government systems and valuable security stock is limited.
<p>Campaign for a change in marriage law, lobby national panel to change the law to send one member of staff to a wedding instead of 2</p> <p>Why have you taken on an apprentice and trained her as the UK's youngest registrar you should focus on redeploying or safeguarding existing jobs rather than creating new ones. It must be awful for those in a redundancy situation</p>	<p>This is already on the wish list of the National Panel for Registration and the General Register Office. Primary legislation is needed to make changes such as this.</p> <p>This respondent also seems to be under the misconception that the redundancies referred to within the document are/were compulsory – this is not the case at all, all were/are requests for voluntary redundancy.</p> <p>The comments directed at member of staff who has been featured in media recently are inaccurate as this was a funded apprentice post, the young person works in our administration team and also, as with all our team, is trained in particular aspects of registration, allowing her to provide assistance at ceremonies.</p>

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The following suggestions are all areas which merit further discussion and consideration

Table 5

Reduce hours in the North to supplement the South
Maintain the Ludlow Opening Hours
Increase the Ludlow Opening Hours
Use peripatetic part- time staff to provide service in the areas likely to lose their service
Operate out of Community Hubs to reduce overheads
Reduce the hours at all offices
Don't increase Oswestry's hours
Reduce hours in Wem but keep the office open
Impact study on how it effects the elderly
Reduce hours in Church Stretton but keep the office open
Reduce numbers of days offices open don't close offices

Revised proposal:

Taking into account the suggestions made above, the following plan has been put together, the following changes have been made:

A service available by appointment will be made available in Wem, and Church Stretton, as well as in Bishops Castle, on the proviso that an accord can be reached on the availability of office space with the other interested agencies such as hubs, Town Councils etc

There will be no increase in the opening hours of Ludlow Office, however the loss of hours will be minimal, with service maintained for 4 days per week.

There will be no increase in the opening hours of the North based offices – Market Drayton, Whitchurch, or Oswestry, however existing provision will be maintained.

Table 6 – Revised proposal

Locality of Offices	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Bishops Castle	Closed	10:00 -11:30 Appointment only	Closed	Closed	Closed
Bridgnorth	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	10:00 - 16:00	Closed	10:00 - 16:00
Church Stretton	Closed	12:30 -2:00 Appointment only	Closed	Closed	Closed
Ludlow	10:00-14:00	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	10:00 - 14:00	10:00 - 14:00
Market Drayton	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	10:00 - 14:00	Closed	10:00 - 14:00
Oswestry	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 13:00	09:30 - 16:00	09:30 - 16:00
Shrewsbury	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00	09:15 - 17:00
Wem	Closed	Closed	Closed	10:00 - 12:00 Appointment Only	Closed
Whitchurch	13:30 - 17:00	09:30 -14:00	Closed	Closed	10:00 - 14:00

The above plan allows for the savings to be made whilst encompassing most of the suggestions gathered by the consultation information.

Appendix C Report Following Public Consultation – Revised Proposals

Savings Comparison – New proposal compared with proposed savings prior to consultation:

Table 7

Element	Pre Consultation Option 2 Savings	Proposal	Post Consultation New proposal saving
Staff (No Compulsory Redundancies)	£59361.00		£47751.00
Rent/Council Tax	£3400.00		£3400.00
Additional Rent Savings not previously Identified			£4340.00
Total Savings	£62761.00		£55491.00

(Sought after saving prior to consultation was £58,000)

Recommendation

The revised plan shown at table 6 takes into account the majority of concerns raised at consultation, whilst still achieving the vast majority of savings required, for this reason we would recommend that the revised plan is accepted by the cabinet and furthermore ratify the proposal at full Council in order to ensure transparency.

Report prepared by: Karen Burton, Registration & Coroners Service Manager

Director: Professor Rod Thomson

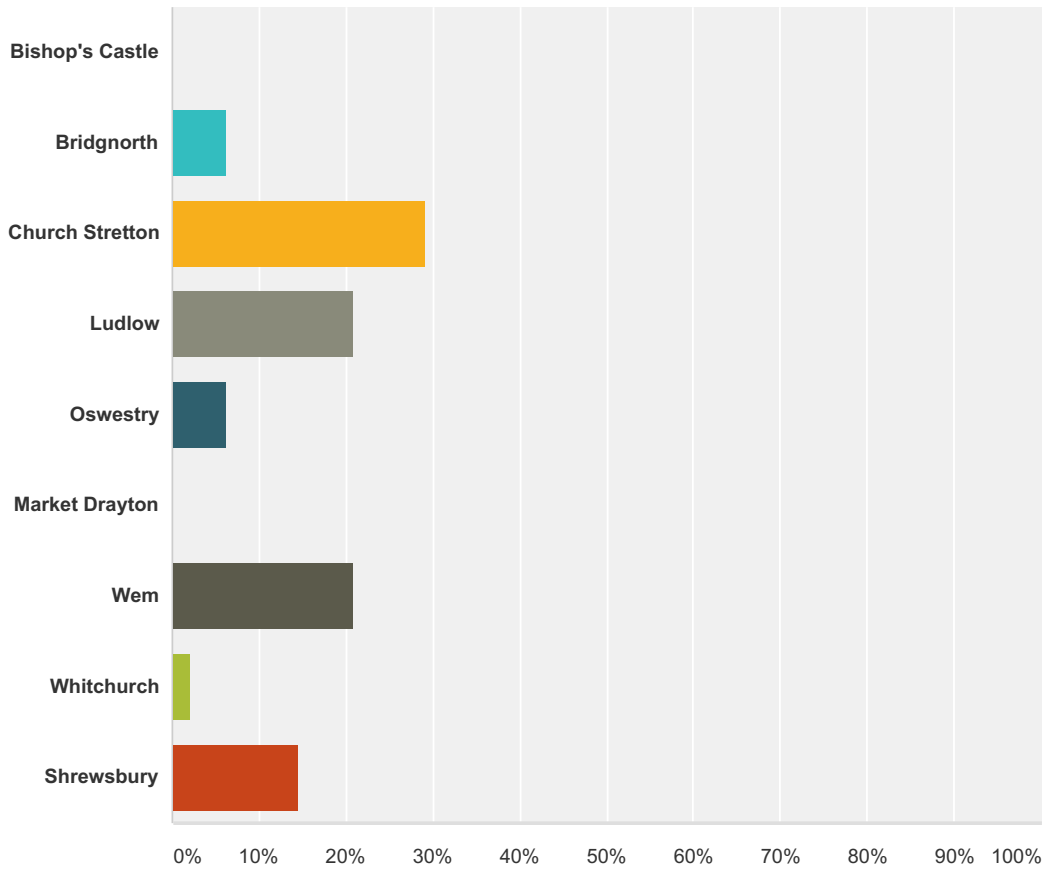
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Karen Calder

Produced 04/09/2015

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Q1 Let us know which is currently your local registration office:

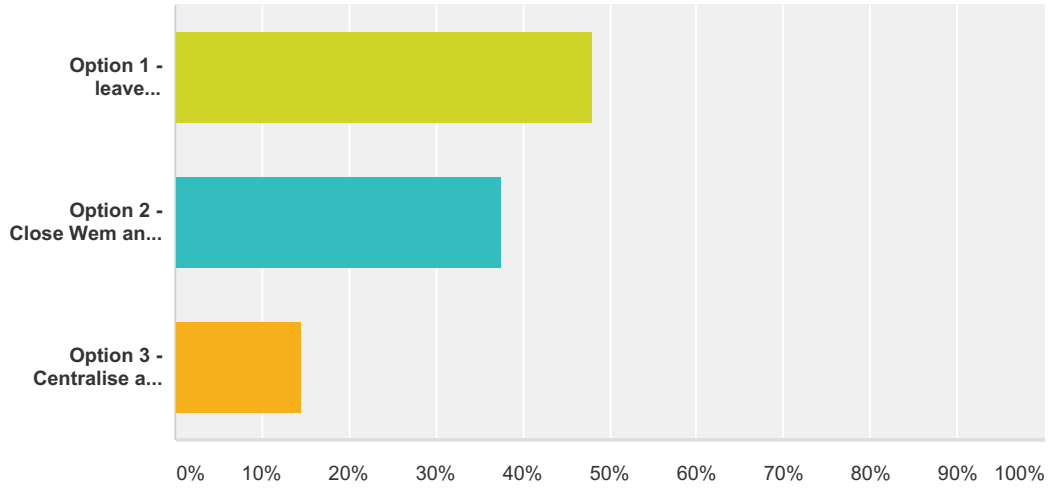
Answered: 48 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Bishop's Castle	0.00% 0
Bridgnorth	6.25% 3
Church Stretton	29.17% 14
Ludlow	20.83% 10
Oswestry	6.25% 3
Market Drayton	0.00% 0
Wem	20.83% 10
Whitchurch	2.08% 1
Shrewsbury	14.58% 7
Total	48

Q2 Having read the information around each option, please identify which would be your preferred option:

Answered: 48 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Option 1 - leave everything as is and recruit to vacant posts	47.92%	23
Option 2 - Close Wem and Church Stretton registration points and alter opening hours at other locations	37.50%	18
Option 3 - Centralise all registration services in Shrewsbury and close other offices	14.58%	7
Total		48

Q3 Bearing in mind that we have no choice but to make savings, if your preference is to leave everything as it is currently, how would you recommend savings could be made?

Answered: 14 Skipped: 34

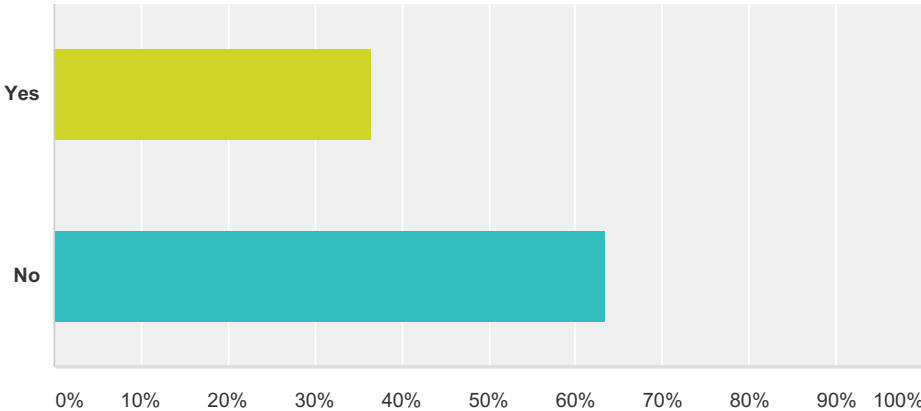
#	Responses	Date
1	We would like to see the possibility of a peripatetic registrar service linked to an appointment service operating out of a range of community hubs/offices eg Town Council offices. This would reduce fte and fixed overhead costs considerably.	6/26/2015 1:00 PM
2	Church Stretton has only 4hours a week of registrars opening times, instead of closing it, would it not make sense to take hours from those already with more than us, instead of increasing them. For those who have to rely on public transport, particularly if old or infirm, the trauma of bereavement is enough without the added burden of a long journey to register same. It would appear that when cuts have to be made Church Stretton always seems to be in the firing line, first the library, now this, what next?	6/22/2015 7:46 AM
3	Church Stretton only has 4hours a week in which to see a registrar, would it not be feasible to equalise these hours at all the offices, thus saving several hours but also enabling us to keep our office here in Church Stretton?	6/21/2015 7:22 PM
4	You have not allowed for an alternative suggestion in in Question 2 (providing only 3 potential scenarios. This does not seem to constitute 'consultation!') Having read all of the information provided I would suggest that 35% usage at Wem demonstrates a significant amount of need, and usage, by the local population. 35% usage compares very favourably with other local providers (eg. Whitchurch 36%), and is a significantly higher usage than Church Stretton and Bishops Castle - both of whom have less than 30% usage. Wem has a very high %age of 'older' residents for whom travelling an additional 9 miles, or more, would be a significant burden (especially at a time of sadness/bereavement when people are considerably more vulnerable). Wem The town of Wem has a population in excess of 5,000 people, which means it is far in excess of the populations of Church Stretton and Bishop Castle added together! There is also a substantial hinterland population around Wem. this draws upon the wide and sporadic rural communities that surround the town. There are several communities, especially to the north and west of Wem town, that would be further than 10 miles away from the nearest remaining registration centre under the current proposals. this is not acceptable, and it appears that Shropshire Council have been mindful of the wider community around Bishop castle in their machinations, but do not appear to have given similar weighting to those who live near Wem. I hope that these comments will be given due consideration.	6/17/2015 10:10 AM
5	Wem Town Council is strongly opposed to the options to close the registrar's office in Wem. There is a purpose built registrar's office in Edinburgh House and it is an excellent location with a car park for people with mobility problems to access. It is much more cost efficient for a registrar to travel to this office for several appointments rather than the people wishing to use the service having to travel to Whitchurch or Shrewsbury. When undertaking this review it should be borne in mind Shropshire is a large rural county with a low wage economy and the closure of these offices will have an adverse impact on local residents. One cost saving would be to reduce the opening hours of all offices.	6/5/2015 9:30 AM
6	Wem Town Council strongly objects to the suggested option of closing the registrar's office in Wem. There is a purpose built room designed for the use of the Registrar in Edinburgh House and the offices are accessible to the public with an adjacent car park for people who may have mobility issues. Presumably Shropshire Council has a lease for this accommodation from Meres & Mosses which has to be honoured. Also it is far more cost efficient for the Registrar to travel to Wem once or twice a week for several appointments rather than the various individuals wishing to register a birth or death, etc having to travel at least 9 miles to Whitchurch or even further to Shrewsbury. Not all people have access to private cars and in time of a bereavement need to encounter the least inconvenience.. Savings could be made by reducing the hours perhaps at Wem but the provision of this service at some level ought to be retained in Wem.	6/4/2015 1:48 PM
7	There has been a choice year after year to freeze council tax. This makes no economic sense at all for a body whose fundamental role is to provide essential public services. No business could survive in this way.	6/3/2015 1:06 PM

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8	Change the law so that a death can be registered in, say, 10 days rather than the current 5 days. It is the proposed reductions in service which will create the difficulties, especially for those without their own transport. An alternative would be for a travelling registrar service, rather like a mobile library or perhaps by personal appointment to one's home.	6/1/2015 9:19 AM
9	If services have to be cut and I beg to query the rigour of many of the financial decisions reached by this authority... then look to an appointment system across a wider range of sites.	5/22/2015 9:55 AM
10	As someone with disabilities I understand that but I also understand one is required to report a death within 5 days If you were to close Wem then that period would need to be extended how do your proposals stack up in the light of the Equalities Act 2010 ? I suspect this applies to most isolated communities	5/22/2015 7:10 AM
11	Reduce salaries at top level of Shropshire Council or make redundant managers.	5/18/2015 9:47 AM
12	Suggest that Church Stretton has an appointment system. Certifying a death can be a very stressful event. This will be made more stressful by travelling to Shrewsbury. The library in the centre of town has been ideal for this. Otherwise the Town Council Offices would be ideal for 2 hours each week.	5/17/2015 1:34 PM
13	Cutting cabinet members remuneration which easily pay for shortfalls. Anyway we are taxpayers not customers. Customers have a choice.	5/16/2015 6:43 PM
14	Part time staff/job share positions Make savings on transport costs but using local staffing Don't use Agency staff	5/13/2015 10:52 PM

Q4 Do you want to make any comments about option 1?

Answered: 41 Skipped: 7



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	36.59%	15
No	63.41%	26
Total		41

Q5 Use this space to make comments about option 1:

Answered: 13 Skipped: 35

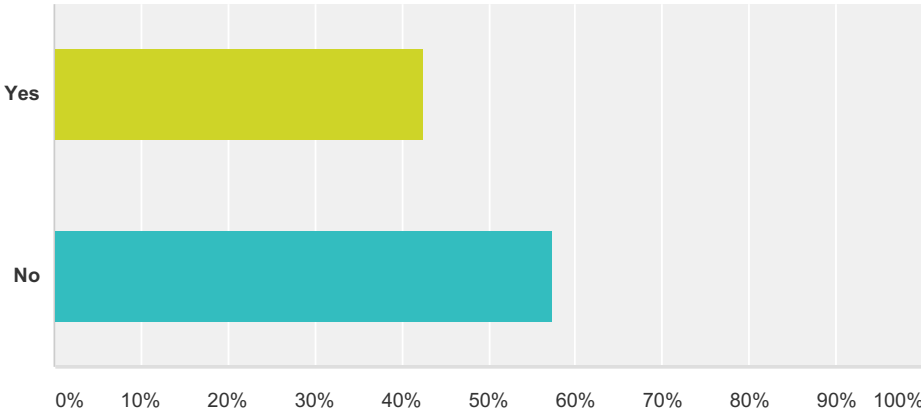
#	Responses	Date
1	Proposal to withdraw registration services from Church Stretton. Consider the traumatic situation if a partner dies at home, with no other witnesses. If the surviving partner has no transport or nearby relative it would be unkind to expect the shocked person to travel by public transport to Shrewsbury or Ludlow. Surely if the State insists on someone attending to register a death then the State should make the task as easy and as stressfree as possible. So far as death registrations are concerned, I believe the Church Stretton registrar's visits should continue until the State accepts death registrations by post or by email.	6/22/2015 3:56 PM
2	You have not allowed for an alternative suggestion in in Question 2 (providing only 3 potential scenarios. This does not seem to constitute 'consultation!') Having read all of the information provided I would suggest that 35% usage at Wem demonstrates a significant amount of need, and usage, by the local population. 35% usage compares very favourably with other local providers (eg. Whitchurch 36%), and is a significantly higher usage than Church Stretton and Bishops Castle - both of whom have less than 30% usage. Wem has a very high %age of 'older' residents for whom travelling an additional 9 miles, or more, would be a significant burden (especially at a time of sadness/bereavement when people are considerably more vulnerable). Wem The town of Wem has a population in excess of 5,000 people, which means it is far in excess of the populations of Church Stretton and Bishop Castle added together! There is also a substantial hinterland population around Wem. this draws upon the wide and sporadic rural communities that surround the town. There are several communities, especially to the north and west of Wem town, that would be further than 10 miles away from the nearest remaining registration centre under the current proposals. this is not acceptable, and it appears that Shropshire Council have been mindful of the wider community around Bishop castle in their machinations, but do not appear to have given similar weighting to those who live near Wem. I hope that these comments will be given due consideration.	6/17/2015 10:10 AM
3	Whilst it is appreciated Shropshire Council wish to make cost savings it should be remembered this is a statutory service and should be reasonably easy for people to access without having to travel miles. It is much more environmentally friendly for the registrars to travel rather than people (particularly the bereaved) have to spend hours on public transport to reach an office. What about localism and providing a service for the ratepayers of Shropshire?	6/5/2015 9:35 AM
4	Seems the most sensible of the three options available	6/1/2015 9:19 AM
5	Whilst this might be the ideal for all communities I recognise in the age of austerity this is not likely to be a reality.	5/26/2015 9:25 AM
6	See previous comments	5/22/2015 9:59 AM
7	There is an assumption that rural residents have access to personal transport THIS IS NOT ACCURATE You would need to establish that the 900 (or so) rural people without access to adequate public transport can get to the places where they can register events in a timely and legal way	5/22/2015 7:10 AM
8	Recruit staff to make this service available through the week. This is achievable through reduced manpower at the top level. This is easy to achieve if you have a mind to do it.	5/18/2015 9:48 AM
9	As mentioned in previous comment	5/17/2015 1:40 PM
10	How heartless to propose a measure that will disproportionately affect the less well off in society. Those who have to rely on public transport. It's not like County Hall is easily accessible and if you are elderly and grieving that is not what you want so soon after the death of close one. In Wem we lost the monthly rubbish collection at Edinburgh House, there is talk of closing the library and now this proposal. Why should we pay our taxes and have our services cut? What more have you got in store?	5/16/2015 6:50 PM
11	Ludlow is in the far South of the County and for people to travel to Shrewsbury to Register makes costs to the end user prohibitive For those dependent on limited public transport it would be a nightmare.....we are not in the middle of a city with adequate public services	5/13/2015 10:55 PM
12	Although Church Stretton is my local office, it is so rarely open as to be of no use. Ludlow office should be kept open, otherwise there will be no provision in South Shropshire	5/13/2015 8:16 PM

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13	<p>Would cost too much money for an under utilised service. The usage figures are on the decline, but I question why the figures for 2014/15 have not been published when we are 6 weeks into the financial year which is more than enough time to collate figures which are collected electronically anyway. Most people expect to travel and have access to a suitable form of transport, even if they do not drive themselves, most have access to family or public transport. If you are looking to make staff redundant why have you taken on an apprentice and trained her to be the UKs youngest Registrar? Surely the focus should be on redeploying or safeguarding existing jobs rather than creating new ones. It really must be a blow to those in the redundancy situation, especially with the amount of publicity it has received. It also goes to show that it cannot be that difficult to be trained as a Registrar, if it can be incorporated into a level 2 NVQ, which adds credence to my suggestions in option 2.</p>	5/13/2015 7:39 AM
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Q6 Do you want to make any comments about option 2?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 8



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	42.50%	17
No	57.50%	23
Total		40

Q7 Use this space to make comments about option 2.

Answered: 17 Skipped: 31

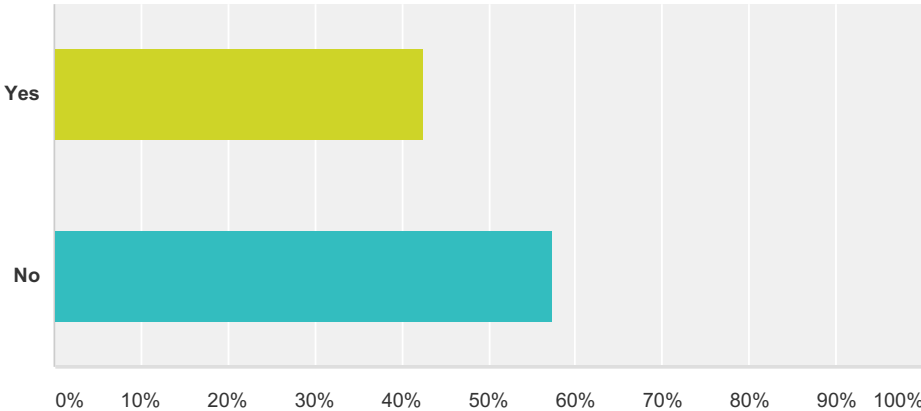
#	Responses	Date
1	Church Stretton has a larger than average aged 65+ population, many of whom do not have access to public transport. We therefore believe that a bookable by appointment system would be fairer and more accessible to residents.	6/26/2015 1:03 PM
2	If it is in fact deemed absolutely necessary to close any Registration Offices around the county I think that greater consideration should be given to the possibility first of closing much smaller Registration Offices (such as Church Stretton and Bishops Castle), where the population and the usage is very much lower than at Wem. This would create the opportunity for a 'phased and review' approach, giving time to see how the first phase of changes 'bed in' and whether any unexpected outcomes occur. Wem currently has a higher than average 'older' population, so it could be considered that more usage of the Wem office would be for the registration of deaths. However, there is a very big programme of house building currently being undertaken in the Wem area, and the type of housing is likely to attract more couples and young families. National statistics suggest there has been a rapid increase in births over recent years (hence the drastic problems in some areas of the Country with a lack of available places in Nursery schools). It is anticipated that this trend of a rise in birth rates will continue, and it should therefore be anticipated that Wem town is also very likely to see an increase in the number of births (and therefore of birth registrations). I would therefore suggest that it would be sensible to leave the facilities in Wem open for the time being, and perhaps review the situation in a few years time.	6/17/2015 10:28 AM
3	The reasons for the increase in hours in Oswestry is not fully understandable from the explanation given.	6/9/2015 1:51 PM
4	This is completely unacceptable to Wem Town Council. Even if the registrars office is only open one day a week the service should be provided in Wem. Shropshire Council has an excellent registrars office in Edinburgh House which should continue to be used...	6/5/2015 9:38 AM
5	This will seriously impact yet again on the most elderly population in a town with a high proportion of senior citizens. Many (responsibly) give up driving when they find that aging has taken a toll, and it is essential that services are kept within Church Stretton town centre. You will be forcing the elderly bereaved to go into Shrewsbury to register a loved one's death, probably by bus. How far will they then have to trek to reach the Register office in town? There should be an impact study on behalf of the elderly upon whom the effects of this withdrawal of service will fall unfairly.	6/3/2015 1:07 PM
6	South Shropshire is once again the poor relation. Ludlow is central for this area ...Not Shrewsbury.	6/1/2015 9:38 AM
7	Refer to my comments about a mobile service above. The greatest issue facing people with the proposed reduced service is to meet the 5 day registration requirement. Of course, an even more sensible approach would be to facilitate registration online, which could remain at the present 5 day period, if necessary possibly to be backed up by a personal appointment within, say, one month. The latter could be achieved by a central office in, say, the middle of Shrewsbury. Alternatively a sworn statement before a solicitor could be taken instead, as for the grant of probate.	6/1/2015 9:23 AM
8	This seems to be a compromise solution	5/26/2015 3:57 PM
9	Ludlow is a town with high numbers of elderly people, and with a low vehicle ownership. The journey to Shrewsbury would be expensive and stressful. Reduced hours seem a good compromise.	5/26/2015 9:30 AM
10	The savings that you make will be minimal. The difference between costings at Wem and other sites is marginal. The public transport system between Wem and the other sites is not fit for purpose. You will be talking about more than half a day to register a B, M or D. Registration cannot be done on-line. You will end up with more people requesting a home visit. Has that been costed?	5/22/2015 10:01 AM
11	As people age their ability and legal entitlement to drive personal transport changes. The medical requirements for entitlement to drive are becoming more restrictive It should not be assumed that isolated resident will be able to drive the additional distances closure of Wem would leave some resident without the ability to drive disadvantaged and potentially in breach of the law. - You should try to get a taxi to come to Whixall!	5/22/2015 7:11 AM
12	Not acceptable. See option 1.	5/18/2015 9:49 AM

Registrars service review 2015

13	Closing Church Stretton and Wem will create stress especially when registering death . A service by appointment for 2 hours a week would be a sensible alternative. Some events may be completed online.	5/17/2015 1:45 PM
14	Impossible to go back on this website without losing what I have already written, so why didn't you design the questionnaire so that one could refer back?	5/16/2015 6:51 PM
15	Don't mess with rural services	5/13/2015 10:55 PM
16	I think it is essential to prioritise services in the main market towns including Oswestry - this should apply to all services.	5/13/2015 7:19 PM
17	Again, as option one, there is no need to keep all rural offices open. Registrars must be expensive to employ, particularly looking at the cost per registration, even in Shrewsbury this is high. If this option is to be considered, why cannot librarians or other council officials be trained to register births and deaths? There are council owned sites across the County that are staffed for a dual purpose, for example, libraries and customer services, these staff could be trained and are less expensive to employ and the usage costs will be lower as the office/facility is already manned. This would prevent the need to keep ALL offices open. The majority of registrars are more senior in years and are seen as being stuffy and they think they are a cut above, the usage of "normal" staff would also offer a more personal and less stuffy service and access would be increased as there are more multiuse sites across the county.	5/13/2015 7:39 AM

Q8 Do you want to make any comments about option 3?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 8



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	42.50%	17
No	57.50%	23
Total		40

Q9 Use this space to make any comments about option 3.

Answered: 17 Skipped: 31

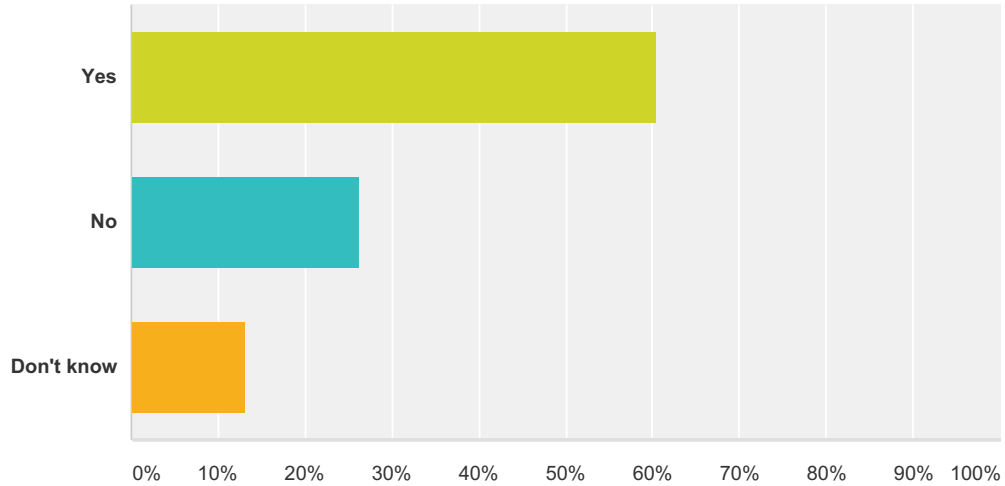
#	Responses	Date
1	<p>Centralising 'services' means that services end up benefitting those who live in the more urban hotspots, and alienate those who live in rural areas. People in rural areas pay a Community Tax but already receive much lower levels of service and provision of facilities than those in urban areas. By depleting the service provision in the smaller satellite towns those who live in less populated areas of the county (and especially those who are more vulnerable) do not get a fair and equal level of treatment. This cannot be the way forward for a fair and equitable society. Before considering the full closure of any facility such as a Registration Office I think it would be much better to consider opening offices for a shorter space of time (ie. on fewer days in the week - rather than reducing the number of hours in the day). the council should be more creative with looking at ways in which services and facilities could be maintained even though they may be reduced in some capacity. Councils are sometimes too quick to just look at 'cutting', rather than finding the more positive outcome of reducing costs but still maintaining services. I completely understand the need to reduce costs, and often the cost of upkeep of old buildings, as well as the costs of wages, make closing a facility/service an inviting prospect. But the provider of the service in this instant is the qualified legal registrar - and not the actual building that is being used. Why not consider more flexible use of a Registrar - who could perhaps be based in an area or district of the county, and who would then visit two or three towns in that area on a regular basis on different days of the week. Libraries would be an ideal place to become 'community hubs' for the provision of a number of different services. Or alternatively in Wem we have the wonderful space of Wem Town Hall which has lovely meeting rooms and facilities - ideally suited to use by a Registrar on a couple of days a week. Crucially this type of re-thinking can result in maintaining the provision of the service, releasing equity by being able to sell off expensive-to-run building stock, but also create new and exciting 'hubs' in town for community use that bring those buildings into use by more people - surely a win/win scenario. I do feel that it is particularly important with Registration Offices to consider ways of protecting the services locally since there is an actual legal obligation for people to register births, marriages and deaths, so it is not quite the same as services that people opt into. But I do believe that a little bit more thinking about this topic, and about the provision of many other services and facilities (both legal and simply culturally beneficial), could produce an exciting and yet financially viable model for the future provision for our rural county in coming decades. I hope you will consider my suggestions and thoughts. Thank you</p>	6/17/2015 10:56 AM
2	<p>This is unacceptable to the Town Council. To make residents from the whole of Shropshire travel to Shrewsbury to register a birth, death, etc. is an unacceptable proposal. Shropshire is a rural county with poor transport links and this proposal will create immense difficulties for people with mobility issues without their own transport. It will also not help environmentally and increase traffic pollution issues, etc.</p>	6/5/2015 9:44 AM
3	<p>Shropshire Council should serve the whole county. This is a large rural area with poor transport links. Centralising services upon Shrewsbury would disadvantage the most needy in society. This option is disgraceful.</p>	6/3/2015 1:13 PM
4	<p>1. This makes the most sense. Centralise the service and benefit from the economies of scale. The job of a registrar is, broadly speaking a glorified administrator so these administrators should be housed under one roof. 2. The management and councilors of Shropshire should be actively campaigning for a change in marriage law. Why, in this day and age, do you need two expensive registrars at a wedding? I am told by your staff that there is a 'National Panel for Registration' where local and central government meet. What are they doing to campaign for change and what pressure is being exerted on that national panel by Shropshire Council? Your biggest overhead must be your staff and your figures state you deliver about 1200+ marriages each year. How much would sending one member of staff, rather than two, to each of those ceremonies save? This would be a significant saving both for Shropshire and, if replicated across the country, nationally and so is a 'no brainer' surely?</p>	6/1/2015 5:55 PM
5	<p>Centralisation: "The last refuge of administrative incompetence"</p>	6/1/2015 9:46 AM
6	<p>As stated above, the greatest issue facing people with the proposed reduced service is to meet the 5 day registration requirement. Of course, an even more sensible approach would be to facilitate registration online, which could remain at the present 5 day period, if necessary possibly to be backed up by a personal appointment within, say, one month. The latter could be achieved by a central office in, say, the middle of Shrewsbury. Alternatively a sworn statement before a solicitor could be taken instead, as for the grant of probate. Another factor about a single central office is that it must be readily accessible by public transport. This means a central location in Shrewsbury.</p>	6/1/2015 9:25 AM

Registrars service review 2015

7	The extra mileage quoted for Ludlow is 30 miles, I presume we do not have to get home i.e. round trip of 60 miles.	5/26/2015 4:01 PM
8	Unacceptable	5/25/2015 9:10 PM
9	A ridiculous suggestion... the impact on people in other towns will be significant. If this is the pattern of the future then people not living in Shrewsbury should be subject to lower rates.	5/22/2015 10:05 AM
10	Locating services in Shrewsbury would mean that my death may go unregistered for reasons of accessibility and disability From North Shropshire it is easier to Shop in Manchester than Shrewsbury for disabled people	5/22/2015 7:12 AM
11	Not acceptable. See comments for option 1.	5/18/2015 9:50 AM
12	If the Church Stretton registrar service is closed. The alternative will be Shrewsbury so this is not a fair alternative.	5/17/2015 1:50 PM
13	Ditto about bad design of questionnaire.	5/16/2015 6:52 PM
14	The is a distinct feeling that those of us in east Shropshire are forgotten about, or mistakenly lumped in with Telford. Travelling to Shrewsbury - both the distance involved and the parking issues on arrival - would be a distinct disadvantage. Bridgnorth is not exactly convenient, but much better than Shrewsbury.	5/15/2015 5:26 PM
15	Option 3 is the nearest to what we be my choice. I would advocate gathering actual numbers of each service delivered, map this data geographically and choose 2 or 3 centres - wherever they might be. This data is not present in your considerations. I believe that to be service centric in these sorts of decisions will deliver savings but maintain an eye on cost reduction. The risk is that in centralising service in more than 1 place you must estimate usage to determine cost - maybe thats why you haven't considered it? Austerity and savings yes but please let us be careful with prime, intergenerational services that sit at the heart of our Salopian experience until times improve and we have retained an important part of our past.	5/13/2015 9:52 PM
16	DO not centralise services in Shrewsbury - this does not serve the needs of our rural county an dis counter productive. Take more services out to these areas and centralise less - this would reduce costs and increase efficiencies across all service areas.	5/13/2015 7:22 PM
17	If my suggestions for option 2 were not to be taken up then this is the most sensible option as all costs would be reduced, although I acknowledge that Shrewsburys costs would increase marginally. As explained, most people have access to transport and could travel to Shrewsbury if need be, however if the option to train library of customer service staff the number of offices available to register at would increase.	5/13/2015 7:39 AM

Q10 Do you think the proposals for the Registration Service in your local area or the proposals in general will affect you?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 10



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	60.53% 23
No	26.32% 10
Don't know	13.16% 5
Total	38

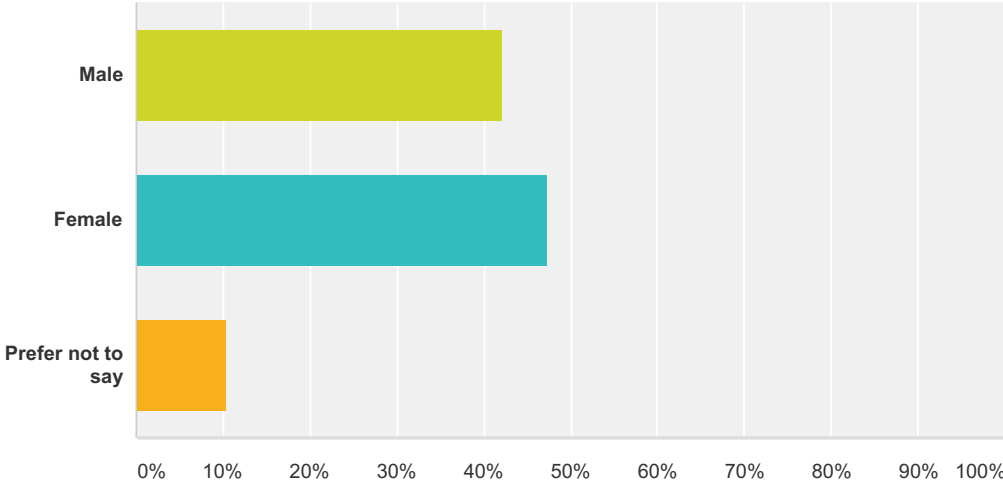
#	If you answered 'Yes', please explain how you think they will affect you.	Date
1	They will cause difficulty for any residents of Church Stretton who do not have access to a car.	6/26/2015 1:04 PM
2	I could be the person needing to register a death.	6/22/2015 3:56 PM
3	Please see original comments.	6/22/2015 7:47 AM
4	I live 4 miles north of Wem. Please also see all of my earlier comments.	6/17/2015 10:56 AM
5	The loss of the office in Wem would mean residents would have to travel to Whitchurch and Shrewsbury - a journey of at least 9 miles and it must be borne in mind the station in Whitchurch is probably a mile from the town centre.	6/5/2015 9:44 AM
6	The effects of illness, accident and aging are starting to affect me, and have made me very aware that even the simplest journey, which I would have undertaken without any worry ten years ago, can seem very challenging.	6/3/2015 1:13 PM
7	They will effect me when I need them but I will just have to get used to the change, like most things. The council should ensure it protects the truly vulnerable in Shropshire. Bereaved people are, perhaps, at a vulnerable time in their lives but are not truly vulnerable such adults or children suffering from abuse.	6/1/2015 5:55 PM
8	When myself or my wife dies do the council expect one of us to travel 30 miles and walk to the register office only to be messed about by "jobs worths" who know nothing about our circumstances. We do not own a car and rely on public transport. This would involve at least 3-4 hours travelling! Who exactly is this council working for? Try cutting some of the stupid salaries being paid to your officials!	6/1/2015 9:46 AM
9	Access as an elderly/infirm person is an important issue which options 2 and 3 will make more difficult. The assessment of access on the web site is wholly inadequate and, indeed, misleading.	6/1/2015 9:25 AM

Registrars service review 2015

10	Yet another service lost in Ludlow.	5/26/2015 4:01 PM
11	My mother and I are both pensioners. We have no other relatives. If I die first my mother will be faced with the 60mile round journey. She no longer goes to Shrewsbury because of the transport issue. I would not want to see her exposed to the stress of such a trip.	5/26/2015 9:34 AM
12	Expect to have to register deaths. Shrewsbury would not be a viable journey	5/25/2015 9:10 PM
13	Cost and time spent travelling to other centres.	5/22/2015 10:05 AM
14	for example If I were to die tomorrow afternoon (Friday) it would be 7 days before my wife, a non driver, could get to Whitchurch There is only 1 bus per week leaving 0830 each Friday.	5/22/2015 7:12 AM
15	Everybody is affected obviously - remember everyone is born and will die!!!	5/18/2015 9:50 AM
16	Obviously certification of death for myself or husband or friends.	5/17/2015 1:50 PM
17	Any visit will involve a considerable longer journey, therefore more time and cost.	5/15/2015 5:26 PM
18	Obviously, if the Ludlow office were to close it would mean a difficult (for me) and inconvenient journey to Shrewsbury. Too many local services are being cut in south Shropshire.	5/14/2015 8:01 AM
19	Living in the far South and being self employed it would create further time loss and expense	5/13/2015 10:56 PM
20	This will present an efficient and accessible service to the second largest town in Shropshire - do not overlook this for other services, such as benefits, planning and building control.	5/13/2015 7:22 PM
21	Inconvenience by taking away a local service	5/13/2015 3:19 PM
22	Need to keep sufficient provision in the South and South West of the county, due to rural community and limited travel options.	5/13/2015 11:32 AM
23	We all need to register at some point.	5/13/2015 7:39 AM

Q11 Are you:

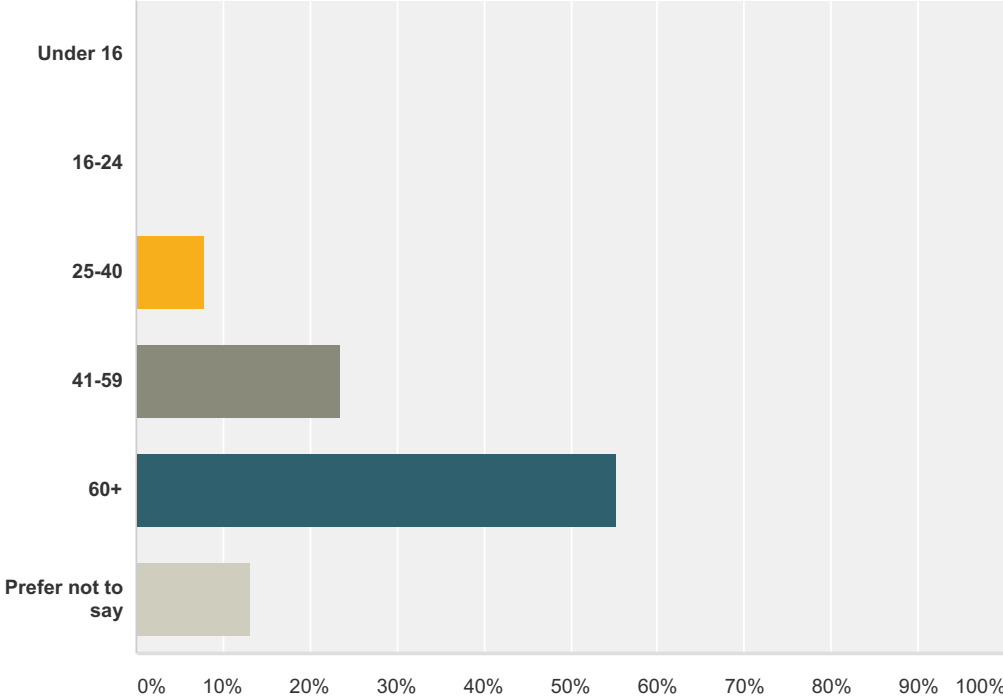
Answered: 38 Skipped: 10



Answer Choices	Responses
Male	42.11% 16
Female	47.37% 18
Prefer not to say	10.53% 4
Total	38

Q12 How old are you?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 10



Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 16	0.00%	0
16-24	0.00%	0
25-40	7.89%	3
41-59	23.68%	9
60+	55.26%	21
Prefer not to say	13.16%	5
Total		38

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APPENDIX C. b

Type of Respondent	Response	Service notes
Anon	<p>I wish to leave the following feedback on the Registry Office Consultation :</p> <p>Option 1 – Keep things as they are:</p> <p>Clearly SCC do not see this as an option as this in a cost cutting exercise.</p> <p>Option 3- Centralise in Shrewsbury: It is totally unacceptable in a rural county the size of Shropshire, with very poor public transport infrastructure, to centralise registration services in Shrewsbury. The difficulties for those without cars would make registration of very important and often emotional life milestones extremely stressful it is the duty of the Council to deliver (or no doubt “Commission”)the best service to its customers and this option does in no way do this.</p> <p>So this leaves us with Option 2.</p> <p>There seems to be almost perverse elements to the proposals in this option. In particular with regard to the South of the County, which needs consideration. Church Stretton is to close. Ludlow, which along with Shrewsbury has the highest usage, and also the cheapest running costs of all the Registry Offices in Shropshire including Shrewsbury, is to have hours reduced and staff redundancy. The ONLY office to incur this. Despite the fact that usage might be increased because of closure of Church Stretton, Bridgnorth, the most northerly and is the only south Shropshire Register Office not to have hours reduced. This is despite having a lower usage rate of 36% to Ludlow’s 49% and a £13 per appointment higher running cost. Despite this it will have more than twice the opening hours of Ludlow in the option 2 proposal. On the other hand in the North, Oswestry hwith 10% less usage and higher running costs than Ludlow is to have it’s hours increased to provide a greater resource for the North. In fact other than the closure of Wem, all offices in the North of the County will have increased opening times. It would appear that increased hours in the North are at the expense of residents in the South of the County. Equality of Service doesn’t seem to be in the running and I urge a rethink of Option 2 to make it more fair to the South of the county before further decisions are made.</p>	<p><i>Any redundancies in the service were or would be voluntary, which we accept was not made clear in the consultation document</i></p>

<p>Member of the public/community transport organiser</p>	<p>3 as someone with disabilities. I understand that but I also understand one is required to report a death within 5 days. If you were to close Wem that period would need to be extended. Do your proposals stack up in the light of the Equalities Act 2010? I suspect that this applies to most isolated communities. If I were to die tomorrow afternoon (Friday) it would be 7 days before my wife, a non driver, could get to Whitchurch. There is only bus per week leaving 0830 each Friday.</p> <p>5 There is an assumption that rural residents have access to personal transport. THIS IS NOT ACCURATE. You would need to establish that the 900 (or so) rural people without access to adequate public transport can get to the places where they can register events in a timely and legal way.</p> <p>As people age their ability and legal entitlement to drive personal transport changes. The medical requirements for entitlement to drive are becoming more restrictive. It should not be assumed that isolated residents will be able to drive the additional distances closure of Wem would leave some residents without the ability to drive disadvantaged and potentially in breach of the law. - You should try to get a taxi to come to Whixall!</p> <p>9 Locating services in Shrewsbury would mean that my death may go unregistered for reasons of accessibility and disability. From North Shropshire it is easier to shop in Manchester than Shrewsbury for disabled people.</p> <p>10 For example If I were to die tomorrow afternoon (Friday) it would be 7 days before my wife, a non driver, could get to Whitchurch. There is only 1 bus per week leaving 0830 each Friday.</p>	
<p>Local Councillor</p>	<p>I comment via e-mail as the online form does not allow me to express my opinions fully. In summary: I do not see the case for a change in hours for the Ludlow office and believe the office should remain as open as at present.</p> <p>The three options given are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Continue as we are 2. Reduce the hours of the Ludlow Office 3. Close Ludlow completely. <p>Faced with these three alternatives, only Option 1 is acceptable. But with a change to Option 2 to keep Ludlow's hours as at present, this might be acceptable.</p>	

<p>Nothing can be more exciting than recording a birth, though finding time to do it can be hard.</p> <p>Nothing can be more painful than registering a death, which needs to be done with dignity and without fuss. Residents of Ludlow and its hinterland should not have to go to Shrewsbury to register a birth, and certainly not to register a death. To force people to take a sixty mile round trip to register the death of a loved one is cruel.</p> <p>It costs Shropshire Council almost the same to register a death, birth or marriage in Ludlow as Shrewsbury. There is the same level of usage of the service. The options are cut back the hours at the Registrars Office in Ludlow or even close it. But the Shrewsbury Registrars Office ill not be cut back under any scenario.</p> <p>We are a town with a significant elderly population. A quarter of our residents are aged 65 or over, higher than in Shrewsbury or across Shropshire as a whole. A quarter of households in Ludlow have no car or van; considerably greater than the Shropshire average. If our Registrars office closes will people have to go on the bus? We are talking about a journey three hours each way from Clee Hill to Shrewsbury.</p> <p>In Ludlow, 49% of potential appointments were filled in 2013/2014. Under Option 2, it will get a cut of hours. Up in Oswestry, just 39% of appointment slots were filled. Under Option 2, it gets an increase in hours.</p> <p>The nature of the Registrar business means that not all appointment slots can be filled. In Ludlow, the Registrars Office is open for 1.5 hours for every visit by a member of the public. In Oswestry, it is open for 1.8 hours. Under Option 2, Ludlow will be reduced to 0.9 hours per visit and Oswestry increased to 2.1 hours.</p> <p>It already costs more for a 30 minute appointment in Oswestry: £88.00 compared to Ludlow's £67. This disparity can only increase under the current Option 2.</p> <p>I cannot see any demographic or operational reason for this difference in treatment. It is blatantly favouring Oswestry at the expense of services in the south of the County.</p> <p>Given these statistics, I do not see the case for a change in hours for the Ludlow office and believe the office should remain open with the same hours as at present.</p> <p>**The inadequate Eina.</p> <p>The Equality Impact Needs Assessment (EINA) for this consultation is inadequate. I cant see it meets legislative requirements. For example, for Ludlow the EINA says for disability "minimal impact as there are no sweeping changes proposed". That's not the case. Option 3 for this consultation is to close Ludlow Registrars Office altogether, a sweeping change in any book. The Eina for Bishops Castle, again on disability says: "As utilisation rate of the office is so low (disabled) people are obviously able to get to other offices to complete their business. There are no numbers on how many people with disabilities or have mobility problems use the service at Bishops Castle. There are no numbers on people with mobility issues or not, who are "obviously able to get to other offices". We</p>	<p>**Please note that all registration services have provide domiciliary services for those people who are in desperate need and who cannot attend an office to conduct their business. There is no guesswork involved with this at all. This facility is rarely used (less than once per year, with the exception of those in the dreadful position of having to have a "death bed marriage or civil partnership") but none the less provides a safeguard to those most vulnerable.</p>
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	<p>cant meet the needs of people who are vulnerable or have mobility problems using guesswork. I do not believe that any changes should be made without a more robust EINA</p>	
Town Council	<p>At the Church Stretton Town Council meeting on 23rd June, the issue for the proposed closure of the Church Stretton service was discussed. Councillors were concerned that other options which preserved access for our local population, whilst providing the necessary savings for you, seemed not to be under consideration. For example, we would be happy to host a Registrar in the Town Council offices (or Silvester Horne Institute next door) by appointment, reducing your office overheads considerably. In Staffordshire the service to outlying rural areas is delivered via part-time, peripatetic staff, rather than fixed f/t equivalents. There is also the possibility that some appropriately qualified (and willing) Town Clerks could be trained to provide the service locally – again reducing your overheads considerably.</p> <p>We offer these thoughts in full understanding of the pressure you are under to make savings. However we must always seek to secure the best service we can for the townsfolk of Church Stretton.</p>	
Town Council	<p>At a full council meeting on the 22nd June 2015, members discussed the consultation on the provision of the Registrars Service in Shropshire. Members felt that none of the options proposed were suitable and resolved the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) A very cost effective and efficient registrars service is currently provided in Ludlow; ii) An increase in opening and staff hours at Ludlow registrar office is requested iii) The current office provision is disgraceful and more fitting and dignified office accommodation needs to be provided at Ludlow Library 	
Member of the public	<p>Regarding the Register Office proposals I would vote for option 3. The registrations are only very occasionally required, and the additional effort to travel to Shrewsbury for recording the event etc would not be great for the individuals concerned.</p>	
Member of the public	<p>I would be opposed to registration services at Ludlow being reduced or discontinued altogether. The demand appears to be as great at the Ludlow office as in Shrewsbury where there is no proposal to reduce services. People in Ludlow and South Shropshire would find it extremely arduous and costly to travel to Shrewsbury if there were no facilities in Ludlow. It is not fair that people in this rural area should be faced with extra costs simply to enable the service to make savings. This is always the easy option</p>	