

Equality Impact Assessment Template – Stage Two

Name of item being assessed:	Budget Proposal 2016/17 Phase 2: Domestic Reduction of Library Service
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	
Budget Holder for item being assessed:	Mike Brook
Name of assessor:	Mike Brook
Name of Service & Directorate	Culture and Environmental Protection / Environment
Date of assessment:	10.01.2016
Date Stage 1 EIA completed:	11.02.2016

Any actions identified whilst completing this EIA should be recorded in the Action Plan at Step 7.

STEP 1 – Scoping the Equality Impact Assessment

1. What data, research and other evidence or information is available which will be relevant to this Equality Analysis? Please tick all that apply.			
Service Targets	<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance Targets	<input type="checkbox"/>
User Satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Take-up	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workforce Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	Press Coverage	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complaints & Comments	<input type="checkbox"/>	Census Data	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information from Trade Union	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Previous Equality Impact Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Consultation	Yes	Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Please summarise the findings from the available evidence for the areas you have ticked above.
<p>2751 responses were received, which included one response from a District Councillor, 13 responses from Town/Parish Councils and 46 from other organisations. Five separate petitions against the proposed library closures were also received</p> <p>Objections to the proposed reduction from 11 libraries to 1 included those on grounds of:</p> <p>Age</p> <p>Older people will be adversely affected by the loss of internet access through public PCs in</p>

libraries, and by the necessity of travelling much further to a library.

Young families will lose access to activities for pre-school and primary school children with negative impact on mental well-being of parents.

Disability

Older people and disabled rural residents, especially those without transport, will suffer increased isolation and reduced independence.

Poorer people

Poorer families and individuals will be further disadvantaged as access to a library is made more difficult. Many will effectively be denied a useable library service.

Households without transport living outside walking distance of Newbury Library are unlikely to be able to access the library other than the e.resources and e.books service.

Poorer households are the most likely to be without internet access and thus rely on our library network to use a PC for emails, information and use of job seeking, benefit claims and other government services.

Costs of public transport and time spent travelling and waiting for buses will deter many poorer people from continuing their library use.

Social and Community Life

Proposal will have a devastating effect on

- Literacy, IT and other skills
- Mental health
- Quality of life in rural and non-rural communities
- Social isolation
- Local economy
- Attractiveness of West Berkshire as a place to live

3. If you have identified any gaps in the evidence provided above, please detail what additional research or data is required to fill these gaps? Have you considered commissioning new data or research? If 'No' please proceed to Step 2.

Needs Analysis

Discussions with DCMS revealed the need for a detailed Needs Assessment to inform any changes to the way Libraries operate. Research will be commissioned to provide this before finalising the future structure and scope of the service.

STEP 2 – Involvement and Consultation

1. Please outline below how the findings from the evidence summarised above will affect people with the 9 protected characteristics. Where no evidence is available to suggest that there will be an impact on any specific group, please insert the following statement 'There should be no greater impact on this group than on any other.'

Target Groups

Describe the type of evidence used, with a brief summary of the

	responses gained and links to relevant documents
Age – relates to all ages	<p>The breakdown of the consultation responses was as follows:-</p> <p>Not answered: 611 Under 18: 102 18 to 24: 31 25 to 34: 147 35 to 44: 488 45 to 54: 357 55 to 64: 331 65+: 684</p> <p>Older people and children are less able to travel independently to a library</p> <p>Young parents (and especially mothers) are likely to be affected by the loss of the activities libraries run for them, leading potentially to increased stress and reduced mental well-being.</p>
Disability - applies to a range of people that have a condition (physical or mental) which has a significant and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out 'normal' day-to-day activities. This protection also applies to people that have been diagnosed with a progressive illness such as HIV or cancer.	<p>The breakdown of the consultation responses was as follows:-</p> <p>Not answered: 699 Disabled: 186 Non-disabled: 1,866</p> <p>People with a condition/disability which makes it more difficult for them to access a library independently will find this problem exacerbated by the removal of so many libraries, including Mobiles, and may become deprived of the service altogether. The At Home Library Service will be under more pressure unless it can attract significant numbers of volunteers to cope with existing customers and new customers transferred from the Mobile service.</p>
Gender reassignment - definition has been expanded to include people who chose to live in the opposite gender to the gender assigned to them at birth by removing the previously legal requirement for them to undergo medical supervision.	There should be no greater impact on this group than on any other.
Marriage and Civil partnership –.protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.	There should be no greater impact on this group than on any other.
Pregnancy and Maternity - protects against discrimination. With regard to employment, the	There should be no greater impact on

woman is protected during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled. It is also unlawful to discriminate against women breastfeeding in a public place	this group than on any other.
Race - includes colour, caste, ethnic / national origin or nationality.	There should be no greater impact on this group than on any other.
Religion and Belief - covers any religion, religious or non-religious beliefs. Also includes philosophical belief or non-belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.	There should be no greater impact on this group than on any other.
Sex - applies to male or female.	<p>The breakdown of the consultation responses was as follows:-</p> <p>Not answered: 615 Female: 1,499 Male : 637</p> <p>As mentioned above, young parents, especially mothers are likely to be affected by the loss of the activities libraries run for them, leading potentially to increased stress and reduced mental well-being.</p>
Sexual Orientation - protects lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and heterosexual people.	There should be no greater impact on this group than on any other.

2. Who are the main stakeholders (eg service users, staff etc) and what are their requirements?

- Service users
- Library Staff
- Library Service Volunteers
- Partner organisations, eg Schools sharing resources, Town/Parish Councils

3. How will this item affect the stakeholders identified above?

Service users will find much greater pressure on the remaining Newbury Library and At Home Library Service.

Children's reading ability depends greatly on access to Libraries, as does development of other important life and learning skills. Independent use of libraries by children will be impossible for most 8 to 17 year olds living away from Newbury.

Many service users appreciate the library as the main social hub of their community, so community life in general will be devastated.

Library staff will face a complete restructure whether this proposal is adopted or not in the face of a savings target. Whilst staff will need to appreciate the need to work more effectively and efficiently, morale will be destroyed if most libraries are closed.

Volunteers already assisting Libraries may welcome the chance to give extra support, but they

will also come under greater pressure to deliver services, eg the At Home Service, in a less measured way, which could adversely affect our Volunteer retention.

Theale Green School and Willink School will lose valuable support from the local library as we end our respectively formal and informal links.

Thatcham and Hungerford Town Councils will have to take on running and funding a library service, with implications for their finance and major burdens in seeking legal and professional support in business planning and running the service. The same applies to Parish Councils in Theale, Wash Common, Pangbourne, Lambourn, Burghfield Common and Mortimer.

Organisations like the NHS and the Police will see greater pressure of work because libraries will not be as able to contribute to the preventative agenda.

STEP 3 – Assessing Impact and Strengthening the Policy

What are the measures you will take to improve access to this item or to mitigate against adverse impact?

The proposal should be reconsidered so that libraries are retained pending the outcome of an independent Needs Assessment.

STEP 4 – Procurement and Partnerships

Is this item due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

Yes/No (please delete)

If 'yes', will there be any additional requirements placed on the contractor? Have you done any work to include equality considerations into the contract already? You should set out how you will make sure that any partner you work with complies with equality legislation.

The Needs Assessment will be carried out by a contractor, subject to all the relevant Council's procedures,

STEP 5 – Making a Decision

Summarise your findings and make a clear statement of the recommendation being made as a result of the assessment. This will need to take into account whether the Council will still meet its responsibilities under the Equality Duty.

The Council will fail in its equality duty, and also its statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service under the Public Libraries and Museums Act, if it proceeds with a major reduction in its Libraries service without due process.

I recommend the proposal be reconsidered so that libraries are retained pending the outcome and recommendations of an independent Needs Assessment

STEP 6 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

Before finalising your action plan, you must identify how you will monitor this item following the Equality Impact Assessment and include any changes of proposals you are making.

Once the change has taken place, how will you monitor the impact on the 9 protected characteristics?

Impact on the needs of all residents will be assessed during the proposed research. The research brief should include plans for ongoing monitoring of how the Libraries service assures compliance with the equality duty.

STEP 7 – Action Plan

Any actions identified as an outcome of going through Steps 1-6 should be mapped against the headings within the Action Plan. You should also summarise actions taken to mitigate against adverse impact.

	Actions	Target Date	Responsible Person
Involvement & consultation	Public consultation	March 2016	Mike Brook
	Public consultation II	July 2016	

Data collection	Contractor to conduct Needs Assessment	April to June 2016	Mike Brook
Assessing impact	Contractor to conduct Needs Assessment	April to June 2016	Mike Brook
Procurement & partnership	Contractor to consider needs of partners as part of Needs Assessment	April to June 2016	Mike Brook
Monitoring, evaluation and reviewing	Needs Assessment to be consulted on and to include plans for ongoing monitoring	July 20216 and Ongoing	Mike Brook

STEP 8 – Sign Off

The policy, strategy or function has been fully assessed in relation to its potential effects on equality and all relevant concerns have been addressed.

Contributors to the Assessment		
Name: Mike Brook	Job Title: Library Service Manager	Date: 10.03.2016

Head of Service (sign off)		
Name: Steve Broughton	Job Title: Head of CEP	Date: 10.03.2016

Please email a copy of the EIA to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality & Diversity): Rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk