Sheffield City Council
Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy/project/decision: Libraries Review

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Date: 06/09/2013   **Service:** Libraries

Portfolio   Communities

What are the brief aims of the policy/project/decision?

The overall aim of the Libraries Review is to provide a comprehensive & efficient Library Service within the dedicated budget. This EIA addresses, at this stage, the Community Libraries element of the recommendations going out to consultation. The proposal for consultation is to retain 11 hub libraries – determined by a priority tool linked to the overall needs assessment – and to provide limited funding for up to 5 'community-led' libraries – the location to be determined by a combination of the availability of social capital and the level of demographic need. This latter process will take until April 2014 to be completed so at this stage this EIA is concerned with the impacts of retaining the 11 hubs against the whole portfolio of Community Libraries. Some impacts may subsequently be addressed in part or in whole by the determination of the location of the 5 'community-led' libraries.

A separate EIA has been completed for the consultation process on these proposals and the outcomes of that consultation will feed into an updated EIA to be considered prior to any final decision making. This will include an assessment of the impacts of the wider proposals in the main report including, for example, the Mobile Library service, staffing and changes in technology. Any future proposals for closure of individual Libraries will be accompanied by individual Equality Impact Assessments.

Areas of possible impact	Explanation and evidence
Age	The age profile of Registered Library Users (RLUs) shows that the largest proportion comes from the 18-65 age groups with 47%. Under 18's make up 40% of and those 65+ 13%. There is a wide variation in the age profiles of registered library users in individual community libraries. The number of under 18s and people 65+ living in the community has been included as a demographic indicator in determining need/priorities for Community Libraries **Under 18's** - there is no discernible pattern in the proportions of children in the population registered as Library users across the city. The CL with the largest proportion is Park with 59% of its RLUs under 18 with the lowest proportion at 35% in Crystal Peaks and Totley. The best performing areas are dispersed around the city and may in part reflect the success of the promotion of the Bookstart programme. The numbers are generally lower in the South East of the City. **65+** - The highest proportion of 65+ RLUs is 25% in Totley and the lowest is 4% in Burngreave. The needs of older people (over 65) were also taken into account in the priority tool as increasingly there are more older people in the population. Social isolation is an

Areas of possible impact	Explanation and evidence
	issue for many older people, particularly those who have lost a partner (by 2025 it is estimated that there will be a 23% increase in people aged over 75 living alone). Low income is an issue for many pensioners, and 28% of people aged over 60, living in Sheffield households, claiming benefits relating to low income. **2012 Consultation** The largest proportion of RLU's who responded were aged 65+ at around 3%. For those under 25 the proportion was very low at 0.2%. This indicates the consultation exercise was least successful with younger RLUs and most successful with older RLUs. Whilst all age groups wished to protect the range of services and materials most, and the Council running services least, there were some distinctive variations in between. Under 16s wished to protect Opening Hours; Library staff; Number of Libraries (in that order) Over 80s wished to protect Opening Hours; Number of Libraries; Library staff **Potential Impacts;** Initial analysis of RLUs for those 65+ shows there is a 1% lower proportion registered with the proposed 11 hubs so in general there would be a slight detrimental impact for this age group. There are however several individual non 'hub' libraries with a distinctly higher than average proportion of RLUs 65+; Totley 25.1%; Ecclesfield 20%; Gleadless 19.6%; average 12.9%. For RLUs u18 the analysis shows there is a 1% lower proportion registered with the proposed 11 hubs so in general there would be a slight detrimental impact for this age group. One individual non 'hub' library has a distinctly higher proportion of U18 RLUs – Park 59%; average 39.8%.
Disability	Monitoring of Library Users asks whether individuals consider themselves disabled. The current overall figure for this declaration is 1.4% in Community Libraries. The highest proportion of RLUs declaring themselves disabled is in Woodhouse at 3% and the lowest is in Broomhill at 0.6%. The estimated number of disabled people (using figures for Adults and Children in receipt of Social Care) has been included as a demographic indicator in determining need/priorities for Community Libraries. **2012 Consultation** The proportion of respondents reporting a disability was 10%. This compares very favourably with the 1.5% of RLUs reporting disabilities. There was no variation from the overall priorities for protection from disabled respondents. The needs of disabled people were taken into account in the priority tool as the location of library services is more acute for this group of people, who may be less able to travel to other libraries. **Potential Impacts;** Initial analysis of RLUs with Disabilities shows there is a slightly higher proportion registered with the proposed 11 hubs so in general there would be no overall detrimental impact. There are 3 non-hub Libraries, Woodhouse 3%, Upperthorpe 2.9% and Stannington 2.2% which have distinctly higher than average – 1.4% - numbers of disabled people. There are a considerable number of people with Mental Health problems identified through their registration. The availability of a secure and welcoming environment valued by this group will be detrimentally affected by the reduction in the number of CLs
Pregnancy/ maternity	There are no impacts anticipated for this category and there is no monitoring of diversity of RLUs in this area but consultation will seek to establish whether there are specific impacts

Areas of possible impact	Explanation and evidence
Race	Analysis of RLUs shows that 21% are from BME backgrounds compared to an estimate 19% BME people in the wider population. The BME Community should not, however, be seen as a single homogenous group. The 3 groups that are most significantly better represented within RLUs are the Black African, Pakistani and Other White groups. The number of BME people has been included as a demographic indicator in determining need/priorities for Community Libraries. The proportion of RLUs from BME Communities in individual Community Libraries varies substantially from 72% in Burngreave to 2.3% in Frecheville - in part reflecting the make-up of the communities using the Community Libraries.

2012 Consultation – 9% of the respondents identified themselves as BME – half of what would have been expected. The views expressed were consistent with the overall survey results in terms of priorities

The needs assessment has taken into account people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Unlike the general population (from a white British background), many people from black and minority ethnic communities live in households concentrated in specific areas of the city. This means the location of a library service could have a bigger impact on this group.

Potential Impacts; Initial analysis of RLUs from BME Communities shows there is a slightly higher proportion registered with the proposed 11 hubs so in general there would be no overall detrimental impact. There are however 3 non 'hub' libraries with a distinctly higher than average proportion of BME RLUs; Burngreave 72.5%; Tinsley 68.3%; Upperthorpe 43.4%; average 21%. |
| **Religion/belief** | There are no impacts anticipated for this category and there is no monitoring of diversity of RLUs in this area of diversity but consultation will seek to establish whether there are specific impacts |
| **Sex** | More women than men are registered as Library Users 57% – 43%. There is very little distinction in the gender of RLUs up to the age of 16 – but between the ages of 16 and 69 there are around 50% more women RLUs than men. A 60% - 40% split was also evident in the 2009 PLUS survey responses. This might reflect the variations in working and caring patterns between the genders.

2012 Consultation The split between women and men respondents was exactly 2/3 – 1/3. This balance is quite disproportionate to the population where it is nearly 50/50 but more reflective of Library Users. There was very little difference in opinions on gender lines for the key question around options for cuts with the biggest variation being greater preference amongst women to retain the number of libraries. |
Sexual orientation	There are no impacts anticipated for this category and there is no monitoring of diversity of RLUs in this area of diversity but consultation will seek to establish whether there are specific impacts and will seek out the views of representative organisations
Transgender	There are no impacts anticipated for this category and there is no monitoring of diversity of RLUs in this area of diversity but consultation will seek to establish whether there are specific impacts and will seek out the views of representative organisations
Financial	Poverty – The Index of Multiple Deprivation has been included as a demographic

Areas of possible impact	Explanation and evidence
inclusion, poverty, social justice, cohesion or carers	indicator in determining need/priorities for Hub & Community Led Libraries There are 29 neighbourhoods in the city that are within the most 20% deprived within England, in total accounting for 28% of the city's population. The location of library services is acute for this group of people, as the cost of travelling to another library could be a barrier to accessing the service. The availability of free books and internet access is of greater importance when income levels are low. Carers were identified as part of the **2012 consultation** but expressed views consistent with the overall survey findings In considering how a comprehensive geographical spread of Libraries might be achieved, consideration has included the accessibility by frequent public transport routes.
Voluntary, community & faith sector	VCF Sector organisations have been invited to express an interest in running libraries and will be invited to participate in the process to facilitate the running of the 'community led' libraries. Community Groups will be affected in the context of their use of Library buildings for meetings and events in those areas where 'Hub' Libraries are not provided. Engagement with Community Groups as part of the proposed consultation will seek to establish whether there are specific impacts.
Other/additional:	The needs analysis referenced in the report provides insight and evidence of the need for library services in the city. From this and the consultation undertaken in 2012 we can ascertain that people use libraries for the following key reasons: - Free access to books and other materials, particularly for people who are frequent and heavy readers, and people on low and restricted incomes. - Social spaces – for book groups, coffee mornings, children's activities, general relaxing space to meet. Particularly important for isolated older people. Children's activities not only provide development and socialisation opportunities for Children, but also provide support to parents and guardians by enabling them to make new friendships and share the challenges of parenting. - Access to knowledge, particularly for young people, especially where there is access to school and college curriculum information, and quiet space to study. - Access to free computers and internet. It is estimated that 45,980 households in Sheffield do not have a computer at home with internet access. Many services are now only available online, such as Universal Credit; therefore free access to the internet is essential for many people. - Access to reliable information, research and reference material including local history for leisure and educational purposes The needs assessment has also taken into account literacy needs, as access to books, knowledge and learning in a safe and welcoming environment, can help people with low literacy needs improve their skills. Consultation will seek to establish whether there are specific impacts.

Overall summary of possible impact

- Consultation and research has highlighted the desire and benefit of libraries running as community hubs, where local people can access a range of council services, advice and community activity from

one place. Hub libraries will be easily accessible by public transport and conveniently located amongst other services and shops. We will liaise with other council services and voluntary sector partners to ensure the 'hub' mix of services provided reflects the needs of local people as much as possible. Library space is regarded as a safe and welcoming environment and this will be maintained.

- Evidence from the inclusion of diversity elements in the Demographic Indicators has meant that the overall impact of these proposals appears to have only slight detrimental effect (in the 2 protected age groups). The impact on individual Community Library RLUs is however significant.

Approved (Lead Manager): Andrew Milroy **Date:** 13/09/2013

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