Aberdeenshire Council

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EIA Version	Date	Author	Changes
1.0	16/02/2021	Sharon Jamieson	EIA created

Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity ("activity" is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions including those that affect services the council delivers).	
Service	Education & Children's Services
Section	Libraries
Title of the activity etc.	Reduction in library building stock (LLA)
Aims and desired outcomes of the activity	To rationalise the estate and invest in those identified for retention To deliver a modern and fit for purpose library service To provide an improved hub and spoke model of service that focusses on the needs of each community rather than a generic delivery model To be adaptive to community needs and take decisions that best provide for that community Provide dedicated staff hours for improved activity and engagement
Author(s) & Title(s)	Sharon Jamieson, Library and Information Services Manager

Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment and explain what it means in relation to the activity you are assessing.		
Evidence	What does it say?	What does it mean?

Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	Customer satisfaction surveys have been assessed. Hourly issue figures have been taken from different times of year and the patterns have been assessed. No of visitors per year have been assessed. Issue figures (annual) over a three-year period have been assessed. Computer usages over a three-year period have been assessed. Numbers of active borrowers were assessed. Number of participants and activities were assessed. Click and Collect surveys and data have been analysed since the inception of service following the Covid pandemic. Using the data from the different elements, an analysis has been formed for Click and Collect and Home Delivery. Each site has been analysed in respect of cost to run, providing statistical information of cost per open hour and cost per staff hour. The standard of each building has been assessed. Analysis of the previous survey respondents of Developing the Library Service. Over 7.000 respondents provided a considerable amount of information on community needs and requirements. This information is available through Power BI to ensure community responses are taken on board.	The comments in the satisfaction survey that were made speak highly of the service provided in the communities. Hourly issues indicate that there is inconsistent usage and usage has dropped significantly over the years with some libraries issuing below 5 resources over a 2-hour period. Computer-use again remains inconsistent with several smaller libraries barely utilising the service at all. Participants and activities is a growth area and the statistics support this. Communities are accessing activities if they are available. Survey analysis of click and collect and home delivery are very favourable with many users indicating that they would wish to retain this service.
Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	Engagement with Library Staff (Mar 21) Consultation with the Area Management Team (Mar 21) Engagement with Cleaning Services Staff (Mar 21)	
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils.	Engagement with potential partners for delivery (Mar 21 – Apr 21) Engagement with community groups (Mar 21 – Apr 21) Engagement with community councils (Apr 21)	
External data (census, available statistics).	Census information for all small libraries https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/statistics/areas-and-towns/ Broadband coverage in libraries (https://www.streetcheck.co.uk/postcode/ab393sh	

Other (general information as appropriate).	Consideration will be given in any area where estate may be removed to ensure that the following consultations are taken into consideration. Consideration will also be given to the full LLA estate in each locality to ensure service continuity. Waste consultation Stagecoach consultation Council tax rises Other venues and places available to communities at no cost to resident	

Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.		
Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?	Engagement information from staff Engagement information from stakeholders Engagement information from communities	

Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.		
What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.	**Measures:**	**Timescale:**
	Staff engagement – briefing sessions will take place during March. Staff will be advised of options and provided with a survey to complete within 3 weeks of those meetings. Survey results will be analysed by the end of April 21	Mar 21 – Apr 21
	A press release will be distributed in March 21 and community engagement will take place in April 2021. Targeted groups will be identified, and a further conversation will be carried out with them to obtain further information or their thoughts for the proposed changes. There will be engagement sessions out with the Library to ensure feedback from non-users of the service	Apr 21
	Stakeholder engagement – this will follow the same path as those for the community engagement, but staff will actively engage with stakeholders who are in invested in their use of the mobile library service	Apr 21 – May 21

Stage 5: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups/areas?	
These should be included in the action plan.	• Open and transparent communication is key. Recognising and supporting issues within the community. Highlighting the rationale for the changes and communicating the benefits that the changes will have. Consultation with all stakeholders including those with protected characteristics and those who are not currently users of the service • Following the engagement process, feedback and ideas from those engaged with will be taken into consideration when developing alternative modes of delivery, fostering a sense of ownership • Build on existing partnerships and develop new, to investigate and develop alternative ways of delivering services and resources. • Frequent information and awareness-raising to keep all stakeholders informed.

Stage 6: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?
Providing a more bespoke model of delivery for library services will allow the service to impact all areas of the community more positively. Providing different delivery methods will allow communities to access library services in a way that fits with their lifestyles, demands and needs. Buildings have been closed during the pandemic and the library service has adapted to ensure that communities are still able to actively engage with the service with many users positively referencing those changes. Activities and resources remain the top 2 requirements from a library service and whilst there may be a reduction in estate this will be mitigated using the hub and spoke model. This will allow Home Delivery to continue in communities, along with activities run by local staff from the nearest hub library. It is likely that with more targeted interventions there will be more equality for groups accessing those services.

Stage 7a: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? The protected groups covered by the equality duty are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Who is affected by the activity or who is intended to benefit from the proposed activity and how? Complete the table below for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.				
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger	No	Yes		
Age - Older	Yes	No		
Disability	No	Yes		
Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)		No		Yes

Religion or Belief		No		Yes
Sex		No		Yes
Pregnancy and maternity		No		Yes
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)		No		Yes
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)		No		Yes
Marriage and Civil Partnership		No		Yes

Stage 7b: Do you have evidence or reason to believe that this policy, activity etc. will or may impact on socio-economic inequalities?

This is about trying to be fair to everyone. Part of that is realising that not everyone may be starting at the same place. Some individuals and families may have low income, may have very little or no savings which means they are living from month to month therefore changes to council policies/services may have a greater adverse impact on them.

On this basis you should consider potential impacts on individuals/families by:

- Place: on specific vulnerable areas or communities (SIMD, regeneration, rural) e.g., housing, transport.
- Pockets: household resources, (Income, benefits, outgoings) ability to access a service
- Prospects: peoples life chances e.g., Access to, or ability to access employment, training, services (such as council or health) or support.

Groups of people who may be impacted include, but not limited to:

• Unemployed • Single parents and vulnerable families • People on benefits • Those involved in the criminal justice system • People in the most deprived communities • People who live in rural areas	• Pensioners • Looked after children • Carers including young carers • Veterans • Students • Single adult households • People who have experienced the asylum system	• Those leaving the care setting including children and young people and those with illness • Homeless people • People with low literacy/numeracy • People with lower educational qualifications • People in low paid work • People with one or more protected characteristic

Please complete by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.

Socio-economic disadvantage	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown

Pockets: Low income/income poverty – cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing				Yes
Pockets: Low and/or no wealth – enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future				Yes
Pockets: Material deprivation – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e., financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies	Yes			
Place: Area deprivation – where you live, where you work				Yes
Prospects: Socioeconomic background – social class i.e. parents education, employment and income, educational achievement.		Yes		

Stage 8: What are the positive and negative impacts?		
Impacts.	Positive	Negative

Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.	Click and collect and home delivery will have a positive impact on their communities by being available at times suitable to those residents. Outreach will be delivered as part of the home delivery model and there are currently no staff hours dedicated to Outreach in the communities. This will allow staff time to participate at a 1-2-1 level within the community where it is necessary but also to potentially support those families who may be at a socio-economic disadvantage. The new model of delivery will allow a far more tailored delivery within each community, allowing the library service to develop in a way in which the community are supported in the way that they require rather than a generic one size fits all. This model will allow us to support groups with protected characteristics in a more targeted manner. The introduction of the new LLA membership will provide wider access to both library resources along with sports and physical activity, increasing enhanced mental health and well being	If the local library is not available, then it may be necessary for those affected to travel a greater distance to access online learning and employment. If further travel is required, then there may be cost implications for those affected

Stage 9: Have any of the affected groups/areas been involved, engaged with or consulted?	
If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?	No they have not yet been consulted. This will be done through community engagement in Mar-Apr 2021

Stage 10: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?		
These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.	**Mitigating Steps**	**Timescale**
	Provide a straightforward communication plan for those affected	Apr-May 21

Stage 11: What monitoring arrangements will be put in place? How the EIA will be used to monitor the proposal	
These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).	• Customer satisfaction surveys • Focus group feedback from groups with protected characteristics • LMS data monitoring • Shadow PI monitoring • Complaints and compliments • Staff observation and customer comments

Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?		
Please complete the appropriate box/boxes	1	No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.
	2	Negative Impacts have been identified; these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.

		Although negative impacts have been identified these can be mitigated by the introduction of the home delivery service, an enhanced click and collect service and an improved outreach hub and spoke model
	3	The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen

* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.
Although there may be a reduction to the estate, the hub and spoke model will continue to provide access to library resources efficiently and effectively. By reducing the estate customers will have improved access to modern and cared for buildings through estate modernisation and renewal. By introducing targeted workshops within the localities, users will be more able to take advantage of those offerings as rather than limiting them to library buildings, they will be delivered in either community buildings or commercial buildings. Service provision within a commercial building will continue to build on economic development and sustainability within that community following the impact of the pandemic

Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.				
Sign off and authorisation.	1) Service and Team			
	2) Title of Policy/Activity	(if appropriate)		
	3) **Authors:** I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/ activity.	Name: Sharon Jamieson Position: Library and Information Services Manager Date: 16/02/2021 Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:	
		Name: Position: Date: Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:	

	4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: Tim Stephen Date: 17/02/2021	
	5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Position: Interim Head of Service, Live Life Aberdeenshire Date: 17 Feb 2021	Name: Position: Date:
	6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee.		Date:
	7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: equalities@aberdeenshire.gov.uk		Date:

Action Plan					
Action	Start	Complete	Lead Officer	Expected Outcome	Resource Implications
Staff Engagement	March 21	April 21	Sharon Jamieson	Support for proposals	Staff time
Stakeholder engagement	April 21	May 21	Sharon Jamieson	Support for proposals	Staff time