

Bristol City Council Equality Impact Assessment Form



Name of proposal	Library Strategy - Service Impact
Directorate and Service Area	Communities, Libraries
Name of Lead Officer	Kate Murray

Step 1: What is the proposal?

1.1 What is the proposal?

Background

Due to increasing constraints on financial resources, Bristol City Council needed to make significant budget savings in order to avoid a projected shortfall of £92M a year from 2017. Following the consultation on budget proposals at the end of 2016, a budget saving for Bristol Libraries was agreed by Bristol's Full Council in February 2017. This proposal was that the budget of £4.66M for Bristol Libraries would reduce by a total of £1.4M over three years from April 2017. This would have reduced the budget for Libraries by approximately 30%.

In February 2017, the budget proposals were agreed at Full Council, and this included the proposal that £1.4M would be saved from the Library Service budget. Between June and September 2017, as part of the Your Neighbourhood consultation, we consulted citizens, stakeholders and staff on proposals to reduce the number of Council-run libraries, while meeting our statutory duty to ensure the City of Bristol has a "comprehensive and efficient" library service. The library service is statutory which means that Bristol City Council has to ensure that a library service is provided in Bristol.

Revised Proposal – July 2018

Following consideration of all the feedback a revised proposal was confirmed at the July 2018 Cabinet meeting. It was confirmed that Bristol City Council will continue to manage 27 libraries, with the existing budget, staff resources and opening hours.

October 2018 proposal

The recommendations to Cabinet in October 2018 are as follows:

- To approve the development of a library strategy
- To delegate authority to the relevant Executive Director to approve the strategy in conjunction with the S151 Officer and in discussion with the Cabinet lead for Libraries
- To note ongoing community conversations around all 27 Libraries
- To approve the allocation of resources (up to £359K) to support ongoing community conversations and strategy development.
- To note the commencement of a library technology review which will include the procurement of replacement self-service kiosks, and revision of all existing contracts

Step 2: What information do we have?

2.1 What data or evidence is there which tells us who is, or could be affected?

The library service is a universal service and available to all; therefore people across the city could be affected by the proposals, whether or not they currently regularly use the library service.

We have city-wide data from the 2011 Census which includes: age; disability; sex; ethnicity; religion

We also have age data available from our library membership database.

In 2014, during our previous library service redesign work, we captured information from our consultation work with various equalities groups. This gives us valuable insights into the type of impact that changes to the library service are likely to have on individuals in these groups.

There are other sources of factual information about people with protected characteristics in Bristol which might have implications for future library proposals, and we would be mindful of these as this EqlA is updated:

- “The population of Bristol is now almost 450,000 people and has grown at a faster rate than nationally, especially in the inner city. The population is relatively young with a high but falling birth rate, but there

has been an increase in older people in the North and West inner locality. The city is increasingly diverse especially amongst children, and Somalia and Poland are the most common countries of origin for non-UK born mothers.”

(Bristol JSNA: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/policies-plans-strategies/jsna-data-profile>)

- “The population is projected to increase 10.4% to 488,500 by 2024. The child population is projected to rise 16.2% by 2024 (13,400 more children). The proportion of older people is lower than nationally but is now rising, mainly in the North & West (inner) - Projected to be 7,700 additional people 65 & over by 2024, a 13.1% rise.”

(Bristol JSNA: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/policies-plans-strategies/jsna-data-profile>)

- 52% satisfied with libraries (48% for most deprived areas); 28% with a limiting illness, health problem or disability (45% in most deprived areas).

(<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/33896/Quality+of+Life+survey+2017-18+report+%28final%29.pdf/502d1c1d-24b0-5df5-a3f0-25734bd782af>)

- The population of Bristol has become increasingly diverse and some local communities have changed significantly. There are now at least 45 religions, at least 180 countries of birth and at least 91 main languages spoken. The proportion of the population who are not ‘White British’ increased from 12% (2001) to 22% (2011).

(<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/32947/State+of+Bristol+Key+Facts+2017-18/94b14c82-b664-0f5f-4487-8623f4be9ae6>)

2.2 Who is missing? Are there any gaps in the data?

We don’t hold city-wide, general population data on sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy/maternity, though we do have estimated figures for LGB and Transgender people in Bristol.

We don’t currently hold equalities data on library members apart from age.

2.3 How have we involved, or will we involve, communities and groups that could be affected?

The Your Neighbourhood consultation was a city-wide consultation that

received 3,749 responses, 3,473 of which were in relation to the library service proposals. Among these responses we have feedback both from people with protected characteristics and from people concerned about those with protected characteristics. During the consultation period there were also 8 public meetings, as well as more focussed meetings with equalities groups.

Step 3: Who might the proposal impact?

3.1 Does the proposal have any potentially adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics?

We do not believe that the proposals for Cabinet in October 2018, in themselves, have any potentially adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics.

The proposed community conversations area likely to lead to changes to the library service, though it is hoped that these changes will mean enhancements to the service provided. Where there is potential for any future changes to impact adversely on people with protected characteristics, this EqIA will be updated to reflect those considerations.

During the Libraries for the Future consultations in 2014 and 2015 and the Your Neighbourhoods consultation in 2017, we had feedback from many people with protected characteristics via the surveys and at face-to-face meetings. The dominant themes from this feedback that are likely to be most impacted by any future changes to the library service are as follows:

Equalities group	Requirements
Older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access and proximity to the home • Continued access to book lending • A safe, physical space to spend time around other people and engage in the community, which is nonetheless not overly noisy • Access to information about events and neighbourhood news • Access to ICT facilities, and help to use them • Libraries on bus routes
Younger people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access via public transport or walking, including from universities, schools and

	<p>colleges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study / work space, preferably quiet • Modern, welcoming venues for meeting other people • Access to ICT facilities, particularly wifi and computers for study/homework • Access to books for homework • A place to go that gives independence • Access to a wide range of books to read
BME people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Libraries that function as spaces to socialise with friends and colleagues • Connections between libraries and other organisations / services within the community • Modern, welcoming buildings • Culturally relevant stock • Books and courses for people with English as a second language • Libraries are good for social cohesion
Disabled people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good accessibility into and within building, and accessible facilities (e.g. signage, toilets) • Large print and audio books and assistive/accessible ICT services • Easy parking / transport • A safe space to visit, to reduce social isolation and increase access to events • Co-location with other services • Staff to help with advice and services • Near to home – not too far to travel

3.2 Can these impacts be mitigated or justified? If so, how?

The work resulting from these proposals (if agreed) may bring changes to the library service, but these changes are currently unknown. As plans for changes to libraries develop, this EqIA will be updated with any potential adverse impacts considered for mitigation of justification.

3.3 Does the proposal create any benefits for people with protected characteristics?

The work resulting from these proposals (if agreed) may bring enhancements to the library service, and therefore benefits to library users, but these changes are currently unknown. As plans for changes to libraries develop, this EqIA will be updated with any potential adverse impacts considered for mitigation of justification.

3.4 Can they be maximised? If so, how?

As above.

Step 4: So what?

4.1 How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal?

It is expected that as the library strategy and community conversation proceeds, more details about the possible changes to the library service will become clear.

The EqIA will be updated to reflect possible impacts as the potential changes to the service are clarified, and these updates will, in turn, inform the proposals.

4.2 What actions have been identified going forward?

In early 2019 we plan to develop a customer survey which will enable us to capture improved equalities data of our current library users. We can then use this data to inform this EqIA.

4.3 How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured moving forward?

This will be considered once the details of future changes are more defined.

Service Director Sign-Off:

Equalities Officer Sign Off:



Date: 06/08/2018



Duncan Fleming

Date: 19/7/2018