

<b>Name of proposal/policy</b>	Northamptonshire Libraries and Information Service Review 2017: Towcester Library	<b>Budget number (if applicable)</b>	
<b>Service area responsible</b>	Northamptonshire Libraries and Information Service	<b>Cabinet meeting date</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2017
<b>Name of completing officer</b>	Dawn Howsam / Ben Dawson	<b>Date EqIA created</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> December 2017
<b>Approved by Director / Assistant Director</b>	Esther Bushell	<b>Date of approval</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> February 2018

The Equality Act 2010 places a 'General Duty' on all public bodies to have 'Due regard' to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations

We do this by undertaking equality impact assessments (EqIAs) to help us understand the implications of policies and decisions on people with protected characteristics – EqIAs are our way of evidencing this.

All assessments must be published on the NCC equalities web pages. All Cabinet papers where an EqIA is relevant **MUST** include a link to the web page where this assessment will be published. If you require assistance in getting your EqIA published, please contact [equalities@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

## PART 1

### Description of current provision/policy and main beneficiaries/stakeholders

Northamptonshire Libraries and Information Service, "LibraryPlus", provides a comprehensive range of services through 36 community hub libraries and a mobile library, enabling face to face access to a range of public services. Local authorities have a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' in the area that want to make use of it. In considering how best to deliver the statutory duty each library authority is responsible for determining, through consultation, the local needs and to deliver a modern and efficient library service that meets the requirements of their communities within available resources.

A full description of the breadth of the service is contained within the Library Service Review 2017 document and its appendix, and this EqIA should be read in conjunction with those documents.

### Description of proposal under consideration/development

Three proposed future options for the library service are set out in the appendix to the October Cabinet paper on the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Option 1 – Retain 15 libraries. Develop a community model to run 21 libraries, where viable options for community managed libraries are put forward by alternative organisations. Towcester is one of the 15 libraries. Withdraw mobile library provision.

Option 2 – Retain 15 libraries. Close 21 libraries. Withdraw mobile library provision. Towcester is one of the 15 libraries.

Option 3 – Retain 8 libraries. Close 28 libraries. Withdraw mobile library provision. Towcester is one of the 8 libraries.

### Data used in this Equality Impact Assessment (general population data where appropriate but each EqIA should contain information on people who use the service under consideration – if this is not applicable to your proposal then you probably do not need to do an EqIA)

Data Source (include link where published)	Please summarise what the data tells us – for example "X number of people use this service, X are male, Y are female etc."			
1) Demographic data collected by the library service from library membership records. The membership data is based on the records of members registered with the library and captures cards which were used in 2016/17. A membership card is only required for a few library services, for e.g. borrowing something, checking your account, renewing and requesting items. Many library services do not require membership and facilitate anonymous use as a community hub, for e.g.	Protected characteristics – Options 1 and 2 and 3		All libraries	Towcester Library
	Gender	Female	All Mship: 54% Adult Only Mship: 56% APLUS: 62%	All Mship: 51% Adult Only Mship: 53% APLUS: 71%
		Male	All Mship: 45%	All Mship: 47%
		Unknown	All Mship: 1%	All Mship: 1%

<p>visiting the library for any purpose, using the computer, attending activities, reading newspapers etc. There are no administration systems in place able to capture this use on an individual basis, though numbers of visits, attendances and use of some services are available.</p> <p>For Towcester the above data is based on 4,155 membership records of which 2,425 are from adults aged 18 and over.</p> <p>2) In 2016, 362 adults in Towcester Library took part in a week long visitor survey (the Adult Public library User Survey, or APLUS), where paper questionnaires are offered to all adult library visitors during the survey period.</p> <p>3) Analysis of distance to nearest NCC statutory library.</p>	Gender Reassignment		No data collected	No data collected
	Age	Children 0-10	31%	33%
		Young adults 11-17	9%	9%
		Adults 18+	60%	58%
		(of which aged 60+ for Mship and 65 and over for Adult Only Mship and APLUS)	All Mship: 23% Adult Only Mship: 36% APLUS: 34%	All Mship: 22% Adult Only Mship: 32% APLUS: 32%
	Disability	Disabled	All Mship: 3.8% Adult Only Mship: 5.2% APLUS: 24.9%	All Mship: 3% Adult Only Mship: 3.8% APLUS: 18.8%
		Not disabled/blank/ prefer not to state	All Mship: 96.2% Adult Only Mship: 94.8% APLUS: 75.1%	All Mship: 97% Adult Only Mship: 96.2% APLUS: 81.2%
	Race & Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British	All Mship: 2.4% Adult Only Mship: 1.7% APLUS: 2.7%	All Mship: 0.4% Adult Only Mship: 0.4% APLUS: 0.8%
		Black or Black British	All Mship: 2.3% Adult Only Mship: 1.3% APLUS: 2%	All Mship: 0.3% Adult Only Mship: 0.3% APLUS: 0.6%
		Mixed	All Mship: 1.5% Adult Only Mship: 0.6% APLUS: 1.6%	All Mship: 0.5% Adult Only Mship: 0.3% APLUS: 0%
		White	All Mship: 56.1% Adult Only Mship: 53.8%	All Mship: 58.6% Adult Only Mship: 50.5%

			APLUS: 79%	APLUS: 89.8%
		Blank/ prefer not to say/ other	All Mship: 37.7% Adult Only Mship: 42.7% APLUS: 14.7%	All Mship: 40.2% Adult Only Mship: 48.5% APLUS: 8.8%
	Sexual Orientation: From APLUS only	Heterosexual/ Straight	82.2%	93.3%
		Gay / Lesbian / Bisexual / Other	2.1%	0.0%
		No response	15.7%	6.7%
	Religion Or Belief	Blank/ Prefer not to state/ no religion	All Mship: 84.4% Adult Only Mship: 86.7% APLUS: 46.1%	All Mship: 76.9% Adult Only Mship: 79.1% APLUS: 47.2%
		Christian	All Mship: 13.4% Adult Only Mship: 11.7% APLUS: 48.8 %	All Mship: 22.6% Adult Only Mship: 20.2% APLUS: 50.6%
		Other religion	All Mship: 2.1% Adult Only Mship: 1.6% APLUS: 5.1%	All Mship: 0.6% Adult Only Mship: 0.7% APLUS: 2.2%
	Pregnancy And Maternity		No data collected	No data collected
	<b>Proposed Closure – Option 2</b>			<b>Distance to nearest NCC statutory library</b>
This library is not proposed for closure.				
It is the nearest remaining NCC library for Deanshanger and Roade libraries which are proposed for community model / closure in these options.				

	<b>Proposed Closure – Option 3</b>	<b>Distance to nearest NCC statutory library</b>
	This library is not proposed for closure.	
	It is the nearest remaining NCC library for Brackley, Deanshanger, Middleton Cheney and Roade libraries in this option.	

Tick the relevant box for each line by using a capital 'P' to make a <input type="checkbox"/>	Based on the above information, what impact will this proposal have on the following groups?			
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
Sex			✓	
Gender Reassignment			✓	
Age		✓		
Disability			✓	
Race & Ethnicity			✓	
Sexual Orientation			✓	
Religion or Belief (or No Belief)			✓	
Pregnancy & Maternity		✓		
Human Rights			✓	
Rural isolation			✓	
Socio-economic exclusion			✓	

Initial impact	
Explain your findings above	Actions identified to mitigate, advance equality or fill gaps in information
<p><b>Sex:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total membership: 51% of members are females, 3 percentage points lower than the service overall, this is 4 percentage points more than are males for this library.</li> <li>Adults only membership: 53% of adult members are female, 3 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> <li>APLUS: 51% of visitors are female, 11 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>

<p><b>Gender Reassignment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No membership data.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p><b>Age:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total membership: 55% of members are in the 0 to 10's or 60 and over range, the same as the service overall. Overall 33% are 0 to 10's, which is 2 percentage points higher than the service overall and 22% are 60 and over which is 1 percentage point lower than the service overall.</li> <li>Adults only membership data: 32% of adult members are aged 65 and over, 4 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> <li>APLUS: 32% of adult visitors are aged 65 and over, 2 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p><b>Disability:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total membership data: 3% of members are disabled, 0.8 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> <li>Adults only membership data: 3.8% of adult members are disabled, 1.4 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> <li>APLUS: 18.8% of adult visitors are disabled, 6.1percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p><b>Race &amp; Ethnicity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total membership data: 1.2% are members of ethnic groups, 5 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> <li>Adults only membership data: 1% are members of ethnic groups, 2.5 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> <li>APLUS: 1.4% are members of ethnic groups, 5 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p><b>Sexual Orientation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No membership data.</li> <li>APLUS: 0% for Gay / Lesbian / Bisexual / Other which is 2 percentage points lower than the service overall. The no response % was 6.7% which is 9 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p><b>Religion or Belief (or no Belief):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total membership data: has 0.6% Other, 1.5 percentage points lower than the service overall and 22.6% Christian, 9.2 percentage points higher than the service overall.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adults only membership data: has 0.7% Other, 0.9 percentage points lower than the service overall and 20.2% Christian, 8.5 percentage points higher than the service overall.</li> <li>APLUS: has 2.2% Other, 2.9 percentage points lower than the service overall and 50.6% Christian, 1.8 percentage points lower than the service overall.</li> </ul>																						
<p><b>Pregnancy and Maternity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivered 285 activities for 0to4s and their parents and carers last year with 2,937 attendances by children aged 0to4 and overall a total of 5,496 attendances, an average of 19 per activity (Source: Library data). Included Health Visitor Clinics and Breast Feeding Support sessions.</li> <li>If Deanshanger and Roade libraries are closed (option 2) then attendances could potentially increase by 24%, an additional 5, to 24 per session.</li> <li>If option 3 is selected then as a knock on effect of Brackley library's closure, Towcester library is also the nearest remaining library for customers of Brackley and Middleton Cheney libraries, as well as Deanshanger and Roade and overall attendances could increase by 91%, an additional 18, to 37 per session.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>																					
<p><b>Socio-economic exclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Northamptonshire 005D LSOA which is ranked 28,053 out of 32,844 LSOAs. This is amongst the 20% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country, (IMD data).</li> </ul>	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>																					
<p><b>Public transport provision in the area? Car ownership?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus journeys are not applicable as this library remains open in all options.</li> <li>13.98% of households in the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) which mention Towcester have no car / van in the household (Source: Northamptonshire Analysis using Census and LSOA data).</li> </ul> <p><b>APLUS 2016:</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="114 1054 1375 1412"> <thead> <tr> <th>Library</th> <th>Private transport, e.g. car, motorbike</th> <th>Public transport, e.g. bus, train, metro / tram</th> <th>On foot</th> <th>Bicycle</th> <th>Other</th> <th>Blank</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Towcester</td> <td>59%</td> <td>2%</td> <td>31%</td> <td>1%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Service Average</td> <td>43%</td> <td>11%</td> <td>37%</td> <td>2%</td> <td>1%</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Library	Private transport, e.g. car, motorbike	Public transport, e.g. bus, train, metro / tram	On foot	Bicycle	Other	Blank	Towcester	59%	2%	31%	1%	0%	7%	Service Average	43%	11%	37%	2%	1%	7%	
Library	Private transport, e.g. car, motorbike	Public transport, e.g. bus, train, metro / tram	On foot	Bicycle	Other	Blank																
Towcester	59%	2%	31%	1%	0%	7%																
Service Average	43%	11%	37%	2%	1%	7%																

**Would the Library To You service provide any mitigating actions for users of Towcester Library?**

This service is for those who through age or disability cannot get to their nearest library. This service is delivered by Home Library Service Volunteers (HLS Vols) using their own transport and resources from the nearest library. Towcester currently has 2 volunteers for this service.

- For Option 1 (if no community management found) and Option 2 it is the nearest remaining library for Deanshanger, Middleton Cheney and Roade Libraries. Deanshanger has 0 HLS Vols, Middleton Cheney has 1 and Roade has 0, who may transfer to Towcester (source: Library Data).
- For Option 3 it is the nearest remaining library for Brackley, Deanshanger, Middleton Cheney and Roade Libraries. Brackley has 1 HLS Vol, Deanshanger has 0, Middleton Cheney has 1 and Roade has 0 who may transfer to Towcester Library (source: Library Data).

**Alternative Universal Children’s Centre Provision**

Towcester is not proposed for closure.

- Towcester delivered 285 activities for 0to4s and their parents and carers last year with 2,937 attendances by children aged 0to4 and overall a total of 5,496 attendances, an average of 19 per activity (Source: Library data).
- If Deanshanger and Roade libraries are closed (option 2) then attendances could potentially increase by 24%, an additional 5, to 24 per session.
- If option 3 is selected then as a knock on effect of Brackley library’s closure, Towcester library is also the nearest remaining library for customers of Brackley and Middleton Cheney libraries, as well as Deanshanger and Roade and overall attendances could increase by 91%, an additional 18, to 37 per session.

**Groups/sessions/activities run for groups with protected characteristics**

- Delivered 91 activities for 5-10’s last year with 1,258 attendances, an average of 13.82 per activity (Source: Library data).
- Delivered 507 activities targeted at adults last year with 3,846 attendances, an average of 7.59 per activity (Source: Library data).

Activities By Target Audience	Adult Target Audiences	Total Activities targeted at Adults	Total Attendance at Activities targeted at Adults
Towcester	Adult Learners	63	185
	Carers All Ages	16	121



	Elders (65 And Over)	21	111	
	Families All Ages	3	48	
	Friends Group	1	8	
	Job Seekers / Unemployed	25	78	
	Library Visitors / Local Community	373	3274	
	Men	2	11	
	Other-Staff	1	0	
	People With Disabilities	1	10	
	Volunteers	1	0	
	<b>Towcester Total</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>3846</b>	

**Do you need to undertake further work (e.g. consultation, further equality analysis) based on the impact and actions identified above? If yes, set this out below and then carry out the work and complete Part 2**

There is a proposed county-wide reduction in provision and a formal consultation is being undertaken which ends 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018. This EqlA will be updated with the findings of the consultation to understand the impact of the different proposals. The updated EqlA and consultation feedback will be analysed and considered to inform the final decision that will be made in February 2018 as part of the budget setting process for 2018/19.

**PART 2 – if required**

**Consultation, follow up data and information gathered from actions identified above**

To provide a broader profile in addition to the library consultation feedback below, 2011 Census data by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) from Northamptonshire Analysis has been included. LSOAs were matched to library based on name and the data aggregated. While libraries do not have a catchment area as such, this gives a reasonable indication as to who might access each library, based on location.

Protected characteristics – Census and LSOA		Towcester Library
Gender	Female	50.41%
	Male	49.59%
Gender Reassignment	Not available	Not available
Age	0 to 4	6.02%
	5 to 19	18.80%
	20 to 64	61.84%
	65 and over	13.35%
Disability	Disabled	13.58%
	Not disabled / blank / prefer not to state	86.42%
Race & Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British	1.44%
	Black or Black British	0.32%
	Mixed	1.24%
	White	96.84%
	Blank / prefer not to say/ other	0.15%
Sexual Orientation	Not available	Not available
Religion Or Belief	Blank / Prefer not to state/ no religion	34.84%
	Christian	63.75%
	Other religion	1.08%
Pregnancy And Maternity	Not available	Not available

Respondents to the questionnaire were asked if they were prepared to provide equalities monitoring data. While this is useful to help us understand the range of people who responded in this way, this data relates to respondents to the questionnaire only and those who chose to answer demographic information about themselves. As such, this only provides part of the picture around impact on people with protected characteristics, and so the quantitative data is supported by the qualitative comments that respondents to the questionnaire provided along with all other feedback received (see below).

Some respondents to the questionnaire who stated that they use Towcester Library also stated that they

<p>used other Northamptonshire libraries. The top 5 other libraries for respondents who said they used Towcester Library are shown here:</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="831 89 1865 177">Top five other Libraries used by Respondents who stated that they use Towcester Library</th> <th data-bbox="1865 89 2132 177">% of respondents</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="831 177 1865 220">Brackley</td> <td data-bbox="1865 177 2132 220">32.16%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="831 220 1865 263">Roade</td> <td data-bbox="1865 220 2132 263">24.62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="831 263 1865 306">Northampton Central</td> <td data-bbox="1865 263 2132 306">21.11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="831 306 1865 349">Hunsbury</td> <td data-bbox="1865 306 2132 349">16.08%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="831 349 1865 379">Middleton Cheney</td> <td data-bbox="1865 349 2132 379">13.07%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Top five other Libraries used by Respondents who stated that they use Towcester Library	% of respondents	Brackley	32.16%	Roade	24.62%	Northampton Central	21.11%	Hunsbury	16.08%	Middleton Cheney	13.07%
Top five other Libraries used by Respondents who stated that they use Towcester Library	% of respondents												
Brackley	32.16%												
Roade	24.62%												
Northampton Central	21.11%												
Hunsbury	16.08%												
Middleton Cheney	13.07%												
<p>Comments/feedback from questionnaire, letters, emails, and events feedback: In addition to quantitative data, we received a large volume of comments about how the closure or change to library service provision would affect people with protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Concerns were raised about the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sex – Towcester is not proposed for closure and respondents mostly commented about the impact of the options for other libraries having a negative impact on women in particular, because of the groups held in the library which are predominantly (but not exclusively) used by female carers with young children as they would be unlikely to be able to travel to the library.</li> <li>• Age – Towcester is not proposed for closure and respondents mostly commented about the impact of the options for other libraries having a negative impact in terms of age, for both older and younger service users as they would be as they would be unlikely to be able to travel to the library. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For older people, there were concerns that if local libraries were to close or were to be open for fewer hours if run as a community library by volunteers, it could lead to an increase in social isolation for this group, which currently benefits from free access to library resources (including IT support), groups that are run with a particular focus on older people and the general social benefits of visiting a library and social interaction with others. In addition, this group was identified as being less likely/less able to access alternative library provision because they would be less likely to drive and more reliant upon public transport.</li> <li>○ For children and young people, there were concerns about the loss of access to groups specifically for babies and toddlers, and for older children, there were concerns about the loss of the library as a source of education, a venue for doing homework and accessing further information to support their studies (particularly for children from lower income families) and taking part in events such as the Summer Reading Challenge and the impact this would have on literacy.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Disability – concerns were raised that the proposal would have a negative impact upon people with disabilities as they would be unlikely to be able to travel to the library. The positive impact of libraries on the wellbeing of people with mental health issues was also mentioned, and it was a frequently raised concern that this would suffer if access to the current library provision changed.</li> </ul>												

- Race and ethnicity – whilst libraries are in their nature inclusive to all, nothing specific was mentioned, beyond the general support and safe environment the library provides to all members of the community which facilitates inclusion and community cohesion.
- Religion or belief – as for Race and Ethnicity above.
- Pregnancy and maternity – The Library was considered as vital for new mothers, with services such as easy access to baby groups, health visitors, advice etc. and the view that many respondents shared was that using their library either stopped them from developing post-natal depression or helped them recover from it. It was noted how libraries are welcoming to mothers and babies and how they provide free access to a range of services, meaning that income is not a barrier, for e.g. this library provides an average of 6 activities per week for under 5s.

There is no reason to believe that the proposal would have a disproportionate impact upon people because of gender reassignment or sexual orientation.

Whilst not protected characteristics under the Equality Act, the feedback also showed that there were concerns about the impact on socio-economic exclusion:

- Towcester is not proposed for closure and respondents mostly commented about the impact of the options for users of other libraries. Concerns were raised that the potential closure of libraries in rural areas would make it harder for people to access alternative library services, because they would have further to travel. If they do not have their own transport, they are reliant upon public transport (and with the proposed removal of bus subsidies, this would have a greater impact on rural areas) which can take a long time, be infrequent and costly.
- With the majority of library services being free, concerns were raised that reduced access to library services would affect people on lower incomes, in terms of accessing things like the internet and computers for job searches, benefit applications etc., as well as the fact that people valued libraries as places where people can access information, newspapers etc. for free and just sit quietly without having to pay (which was also noted as being important for homeless people).

Final impact analysis (taking the findings from Part 2 into account) – including review date if required				
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
Sex			✓	

<b>Gender Reassignment</b>			✓	
<b>Age</b>			✓	
<b>Disability</b>			✓	
<b>Race &amp; Ethnicity</b>			✓	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			✓	
<b>Religion or Belief (or No Belief)</b>			✓	
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>			✓	
<b>Human Rights</b>			✓	
<b>Rural isolation</b>			✓	
<b>Socio-economic exclusion</b>			✓	

**Final impact**  
 In the final recommendation in the budget proposal, this library remains open. The impact of this is therefore neutral.