

Name of proposal/policy	Northamptonshire Libraries and Information Service Review 2017: Higham Ferrers Library & Children's Centre	Budget number (if applicable)	
Service area responsible	Northamptonshire Libraries and Information Service	Cabinet meeting date	19 th October 2017
Name of completing officer	Dawn Howsam / Ben Dawson	Date EqlA created	4 th December 2017
Approved by Director / Assistant Director	Esther Bushell	Date of approval	27 th 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 (EqlAs) to help us understand the implications of policies and decisions on people with protected characteristics – EqlAs are our way of evidencing this.

All assessments must be published on the NCC equalities web pages. All Cabinet papers where an EqlA is relevant **MUST** include a link to the web page where this assessment will be published. If you require assistance in getting your EqlA published, please contact 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 EqlA 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. Higham Ferrers is one of the 21 libraries. Withdraw mobile library provision.

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

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

Data used in this Equality Impact Assessment (general population data where appropriate but each EqlA 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 EqlA)

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	Higham Ferrers Library
	Gender	Female	All Mship: 54% Adult Only Mship: 56% APLUS: 62%	All Mship: 53% Adult Only Mship: 55% APLUS: 77%
		Male	All Mship: 45%	All Mship: 46%
		Unknown	All Mship: 1%	All Mship: 2%

<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 Higham Ferrers the above data is based on 1,427 membership records of which 802 are from adults aged 18 and over.</p> <p>2) In 2016, 146 adults in Higham Ferrers 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%	35%
		Young adults 11-17	9%	9%
		Adults 18+	60%	56%
		(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: 26% Adult Only Mship: 42% APLUS: 38%
	Disability	Disabled	All Mship: 3.8% Adult Only Mship: 5.2% APLUS: 24.9%	All Mship: 2.1% Adult Only Mship: 3% APLUS: 24.7%
		Not disabled/blank/ prefer not to state	All Mship: 96.2% Adult Only Mship: 94.8% APLUS: 75.1%	All Mship: 97.9% Adult Only Mship: 97% APLUS: 75.3%
	Race & Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British	All Mship: 2.4% Adult Only Mship: 1.7% APLUS: 2.7%	All Mship: 0.3% Adult Only Mship: 0.3% APLUS: 1.4%
		Black or Black British	All Mship: 2.3% Adult Only Mship: 1.3% APLUS: 2%	All Mship: 0.6% Adult Only Mship: 0.6% APLUS: 0%
		Mixed	All Mship: 1.5% Adult Only Mship: 0.6% APLUS: 1.6%	All Mship: 0.8% Adult Only Mship: 0.3% APLUS: 0%
		White	All Mship: 56.1% Adult Only Mship: 53.8%	All Mship: 55% Adult Only Mship: 46.8%

			APLUS: 79%	APLUS: 94.5%	
		Blank/ prefer not to say/ other	All Mship: 37.7% Adult Only Mship: 42.7% APLUS: 14.7%	All Mship: 43.3% Adult Only Mship: 52.1% APLUS: 4.1%	
	Sexual Orientation: From APLUS only	Heterosexual/ Straight	82.2%	80.2%	
		Gay / Lesbian / Bisexual / Other	2.1%	0.5%	
		No response	15.7%	19.3%	
	Religion Or Belief	Blank/ Prefer not to state/ no religion	All Mship: 84.4% Adult Only Mship: 86.7% APLUS: 46.1%	All Mship: 93.3% Adult Only Mship: 94.1% APLUS: 35.6%	
		Christian	All Mship: 13.4% Adult Only Mship: 11.7% APLUS: 48.8 %	All Mship: 5.6% Adult Only Mship: 5.1% APLUS: 58.2%	
		Other religion	All Mship: 2.1% Adult Only Mship: 1.6% APLUS: 5.1%	All Mship: 1.1% Adult Only Mship: 0.8% APLUS: 6.2%	
	Pregnancy And Maternity		No data collected	No data collected	
	Proposed Closure – Option 2 and 3			Distance to nearest NCC statutory library	
	Rushden Library			1.33 miles	

Tick the relevant box for each line by using a capital 'P' to make a P	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>Sex:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total membership data: 53% are female, 1 percentage point lower than the service overall. Adults only membership data: 55% of adult members are female, 1 percentage point lower than the service overall. APLUS: 53% of visitors are female, 9 percentage points lower than the service overall. 	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No data. 	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p>Age:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total membership data: 61% of members are in the 0 to 10's or 60 and over range, 6 percentage points higher than the service overall. Overall 35% are 0 to 10's, which is 4 percentage points higher than the service overall and 26% are 60 and over which is 3 percentage points higher than the service overall. Adults only membership data: 42% of adult members are aged 65 and over, 6 percentage points higher than the service overall. 	<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"> • APLUS: 38% of adult visitors are aged 65 and over, 4 percentage points higher than the service overall. 	
<p>Disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total membership data: 21.8% of members are disabled, 1.7 percentage points lower than the service overall. • Adults only membership data: 3% of adult members are disabled, 2.2 percentage points lower than the service overall. • APLUS: 24.7% of adult visitors are disabled, 0.2 percentage points lower than the service overall. 	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p>Race & Ethnicity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total membership data: 1.7% are members of ethnic groups, 4.5 percentage points lower than the service overall. • Adults only membership data: 1.1% are members of ethnic groups, 2.5 percentage points lower than the service overall. • APLUS: 1.4% are members of ethnic groups, 5 percentage points lower than the service overall. 	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No membership data. • APLUS: 0.5% for Gay / Lesbian / Bisexual / Other, 2 percentage points lower than the service overall. The no response was 19.3%, 4 percentage points higher than the service overall. 	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p>Religion or Belief (or no Belief):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total membership data: has 1.1% Other, 1 percentage point lower than the service overall and 5.6% Christian, 7.8 percentage points lower than the service overall. • Adults only membership data: has 0.8% Other, 0.8 percentage points lower than the service overall and 5.1% Christian, 6.6 percentage points lower than the service overall. • APLUS has 6.2% Other, 1.1 percentage points higher than the service overall and 58.2% Christian, 9.4 percentage points higher than the service overall. 	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered 151 activities for 0to4s and their parents and carers last year with 2,077 attendances by children aged 0to4 and overall a total of 3,662 attendances, an average of 24 per activity (Source: Library data). 	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>

<p>Rural Isolation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buses with journeys of 13 to 27mins to the nearest remaining NCC library, Rushden library, which is 1.33 miles away. 	<p>The proposals are undergoing consultation and this EqIA will be updated to reflect the findings and fill in gaps in information.</p>																					
<p>Socio-economic exclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Northamptonshire 007A LSOA which is ranked 16,891 out of 32,844 LSOAs. This is amongst the 50% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country, (IMD data). 	<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"> Option 1 looks at the possibility of Higham Ferrers Library being run as a community managed library, rather than by NCC as part of its provision. This would mean that there continues to be library provision in Higham Ferrers, although exactly what this would look like would be dependent on viable expressions of interest coming forward to run it as a community managed library. Options 2 and 3 would see Higham Ferrers Library closed. If either of these options were to be implemented, the nearest remaining library would be Rushden Library, which is 1.33 miles away. 																						
<p>Public transport provision in the area? Car ownership?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus journeys of 13 to 27 mins (source: web search) 14.34% of households in the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) which mention Higham Ferrers have no car / van in the household (Source: Northamptonshire Analysis using Census and LSOA data). 																						
<p>APLUS 2016:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="100 902 1274 1273"> <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>Higham Ferrers</td> <td>42%</td> <td>3%</td> <td>48%</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	Higham Ferrers	42%	3%	48%	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																
Higham Ferrers	42%	3%	48%	1%	0%	7%																
Service Average	43%	11%	37%	2%	1%	7%																
<p>Would the Library To You service provide any mitigating actions for users of Higham Ferrers Library?</p> <p>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 using their own transport and resources from the nearest library. Higham Ferrers currently has 3 volunteers for this service. For Option</p>																						

2 and 3 the nearest remaining library, Rushden Library, currently has 0 volunteers for this service (source: Library Data).

Alternative Universal Children’s Centre Provision

Based on web searches using NCC website (Service provision) and for e.g. ‘Net Mums’. Within a mile of Higham Ferrers there are:

0-5 Provision	
Day nursery	Higham Ferrers Infant School - Nursery
Day nursery	Little Steps Day Nursery
Parent and Toddler Group	Tiny Tots Higham Ferrers
Pre-School Playgroup	Alpha Pre-School
Groups, Clubs And Activities	Starlight Dance and Musical Theatre School Higham Ferrers
Groups, Clubs And Activities	Boogie Tots
Advice And Support	Ups 'n' Downs

Groups/sessions/activities run for groups with protected characteristics

- Delivered 24 activities for 5-10’s last year with 726 attendances, an average of 30.25 per activity (from activity data).
- Delivered 267 activities targeted at adults last year with 3,264 attendances, an average of 12.22 per activity (from activity data).

Activities By Target Audience	Adult Target Audiences	Total Activities targeted at Adults	Total Attendance at Activities targeted at Adults
Higham Ferrers	Adult Learners	95	877
	Families All Ages	3	69
	Friends Group	8	56
	Job Seekers / Unemployed	1	0
	Library Visitors / Local Community	159	2258
	Volunteers	1	4
Higham Ferrers Total		267	3264

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 13th January 2018.

This EqIA will be updated with the findings of the consultation to understand the impact of the different proposals. The updated EqIA 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		Higham Ferrers Library
Gender	Female	51.17%
	Male	48.83%
Gender Reassignment	Not available	Not available
Age	0 to 4	7.15%
	5 to 19	18.62%
	20 to 64	59.26%
	65 and over	14.98%
Disability	Disabled	15.91%
	Not disabled / blank / prefer not to state	84.09%
Race & Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British	1.31%
	Black or Black British	1.39%
	Mixed	1.46%
	White	95.71%
	Blank / prefer not to say/ other	0.12%
Sexual Orientation	Not available	Not available
Religion Or Belief	Blank / Prefer not to state/ no religion	40.41%
	Christian	57.88%
	Other religion	1.26%
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 Higham Ferrers Library also stated that

<p>they used other Northamptonshire libraries. The top 5 other libraries for respondents who said they used Higham Ferrers Library are shown here:</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="779 152 1745 233">Top five other Libraries used by Respondents who stated that they use Higham Ferrers Library</th> <th data-bbox="1745 152 2007 233">% of respondents</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="779 233 1745 274">Rushden</td> <td data-bbox="1745 233 2007 274">38.01%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="779 274 1745 315">Wellingborough</td> <td data-bbox="1745 274 2007 315">23.98%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="779 315 1745 355">Raunds</td> <td data-bbox="1745 315 2007 355">23.39%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="779 355 1745 396">Irthlingborough</td> <td data-bbox="1745 355 2007 396">14.62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="779 396 1745 423">Kettering</td> <td data-bbox="1745 396 2007 423">13.45%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Top five other Libraries used by Respondents who stated that they use Higham Ferrers Library	% of respondents	Rushden	38.01%	Wellingborough	23.98%	Raunds	23.39%	Irthlingborough	14.62%	Kettering	13.45%
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Kettering	13.45%												
<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"> • Sex – many respondents felt that the proposal for Higham Ferrers would have 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. • Age – many respondents felt that the proposal for Higham Ferrers would have a negative impact in terms of age, for both older and younger service users. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For older people, there were concerns that if the library 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. ○ For children and young people, there were concerns about the loss of access to groups specifically for babies and toddlers, particularly as the library is a designated Children’s Centre 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, a link with local schools and the impact this would have on literacy. Reference was also made to the new housing being built in bringing new young families in to the community. • Disability – concerns were raised that the proposal would have a negative impact upon people with disabilities, who would find it difficult to use another library (as well as the difficulties in accessing an alternative 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. 												

- 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 is a designated Children Centre and 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 provided an average of 5 activities per week for under 5s from April to Dec 2017.

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:

- Concerns were raised that the potential closure of smaller, local libraries 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 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 books, 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				✓
Gender Reassignment			✓	
Age		✓		
Disability				✓
Race & Ethnicity				✓

Sexual Orientation			✓	
Religion or Belief (or No Belief)				✓
Pregnancy & Maternity				✓
Human Rights			✓	
Rural isolation			✓	
Socio-economic exclusion				✓

Final impact

The initial recommendation in the budget proposal that was presented to Cabinet on February 13th 2018 was for Option 1 – the Community Management option. This library is therefore proposed for community management. It is unsure therefore what the final impact of this proposal will be as this will largely be dependent on the eventual success of the Community Library. It will be necessary to revisit and review the impact as the community managed model evolves, especially at each decision point in the transition period. However, in this model it is likely that there will be an overall reduction in services which are predominantly accessed by older people, most notably in supporting the applications for blue badges and bus passes, and therefore this has been determined as a negative impact. There is also a recommendation that there is a full review of universal Children’s Centre Services provision, and therefore the impact of this is also unsure at this point in time. There is an acknowledgement that should the community management of this library ultimately not prove feasible and the library proceeds towards closure, the impact on all groups would be negative.

PART 3 – Budget Proposal Update (27th February 2018)

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

Final impact

The final recommendation following amended budget proposals is for Option 2 (Retain 15 libraries. Close 21 libraries. Withdraw mobile library provision). Higham Ferrers is one of the 21 libraries and is therefore proposed for closure. Given the reduction in all services, the overall impact is acknowledged as negative. Children’s Centre Services provision will continue whilst a review is undertaken to mitigate the impact of the library proposals. However, given the breadth of the library offer extends beyond Children’s Centre Services, the overall impact is still evaluated as negative.