



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Equality Impact Assessment Digital Library Service

To inform the development of policy
or service decisions

This form is to be used for recording the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of Council activities. EIA is particularly important in supporting the Council to make fair decisions. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Using this form will help Council officers to carry out EIA in an effective and transparent way and provide decision-makers with full information on the potential impact of their decisions. The purpose is to avoid inadvertent disadvantage or discrimination resulting from decisions.

EIA is not a fixed process – it will vary according to the scale and type of activity. The form and guidance are designed to cover all eventualities. Officers should not be discouraged by the form but should use their discretion in using it flexibly according to the activity they are assessing.

EIA does not happen at a single point in time. It is an ongoing and integral part of the development of the activity or proposal. This EIA template should be kept open and live as a planning document and updated as the activity or proposal progresses.

Section 149 of the Equality Act states:

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

(2) A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1).

(3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

(a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

(b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

(c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

(4) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

(5) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

(a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

(6) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

(7) The relevant protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

(8) A reference to conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act includes a reference to:

(a) a breach of an equality clause or rule; (b) a breach of a non-discrimination rule.

Section 1 – Service Details and Summary of EIA Activity

Title of activity:	Digital Library Service	
Lead Officer:	Paul Williams	
Directorate:	Place Directorate Communities Department	
Service or Team:	Library Service	
Head of Service	David Boocock	
Director:	Tanya Wilcock	
Executive Director:	Lisa Harris	
<p>What stage has the EIA reached? This table provides a ‘cover note’ of progress to be maintained as the EIA is developed over time. Note the stage reached and any consultation or engagement carried out. Simple activities may not need all these stages. Provide details of population/individuals affected in Section 2</p>		
Stage	Date	Summary of position
<p>Stage 1: Initial Officer Assessment. Whole Population likely to be affected identified</p>	<p>March 2023</p>	<p>The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any resident with a library card who wishes to access e-books, e-audio, e-magazines, e-newspapers and e-comics. The service is free to use and there are over 40,000 titles available to download.</p> <p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.</p> <p>The identified mitigations include signposting to alternative library provision both within and outside the borough, providing travel planning information to other libraries (bus routes etc.), promotion of digital services and access to the Home Delivery Library Service where appropriate.</p>
<p>Stage 2: Further Assessment. Target Population likely to be affected identified</p>	<p>March 2023</p>	<p>The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any resident with a library card who wishes to access e-books, e-audio, e-magazines, e-newspapers and e-comics. The service is free to use and there are over 40,000 titles available to download.</p> <p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.</p> <p>The identified mitigations include signposting to alternative library provision both within and outside the borough, providing travel planning information to</p>

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Stage 3: Further Assessment. Individuals likely to be affected identified	August 2023	<p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Index of likely course of action: demographic & other groups</th> <th>Stop using St Helens Library Service</th> <th>Visit a library in another borough</th> <th>Visit the nearest library as often as I visited my local library</th> <th>Visit the nearest library less frequently than currently</th> <th>Download books/magazines online</th> <th>None of these/don't know</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="2">All active users</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Nearest library closing</td> <td>150</td> <td>124</td> <td>45</td> <td>106</td> <td>105</td> <td>62</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="6">Age</td> <td>Under 18*</td> <td>137</td> <td>95</td> <td>71</td> <td>135</td> <td>0</td> <td>96</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18-24*</td> <td>126</td> <td>127</td> <td>91</td> <td>54</td> <td>120</td> <td>68</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-34</td> <td>120</td> <td>95</td> <td>110</td> <td>78</td> <td>73</td> <td>79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35-44</td> <td>108</td> <td>53</td> <td>93</td> <td>99</td> <td>92</td> <td>103</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45-54</td> <td>89</td> <td>116</td> <td>112</td> <td>88</td> <td>180</td> <td>106</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55-64</td> <td>87</td> <td>129</td> <td>95</td> <td>102</td> <td>61</td> <td>121</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Gender</td> <td>65 or over</td> <td>97</td> <td>83</td> <td>107</td> <td>112</td> <td>121</td> <td>91</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>100</td> <td>99</td> <td>102</td> <td>100</td> <td>106</td> <td>98</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Gender</td> <td>Male</td> <td>96</td> <td>94</td> <td>103</td> <td>101</td> <td>103</td> <td>103</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All disabled respondents</td> <td>111</td> <td>56</td> <td>106</td> <td>86</td> <td>100</td> <td>96</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="5">Disability</td> <td>Learning Disability/Difficulty*</td> <td>125</td> <td>0</td> <td>60</td> <td>107</td> <td>0</td> <td>115</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Long-Standing Illness or Health Condition</td> <td>110</td> <td>59</td> <td>113</td> <td>98</td> <td>156</td> <td>78</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mental Health Condition</td> <td>109</td> <td>33</td> <td>125</td> <td>78</td> <td>69</td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Physical Disability</td> <td>118</td> <td>98</td> <td>88</td> <td>100</td> <td>138</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sensory Impairment (Hearing or Sight)*</td> <td>90</td> <td>0</td> <td>117</td> <td>69</td> <td>0</td> <td>148</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Sexual orientation</td> <td>LGBTQ+</td> <td>112</td> <td>103</td> <td>104</td> <td>80</td> <td>273</td> <td>79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Straight</td> <td>93</td> <td>104</td> <td>108</td> <td>102</td> <td>105</td> <td>101</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Ethnic group</td> <td>White</td> <td>97</td> <td>98</td> <td>105</td> <td>101</td> <td>105</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ethnic minorities</td> <td>98</td> <td>205</td> <td>89</td> <td>73</td> <td>217</td> <td>104</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Faith/religion</td> <td>Christian (inc. 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	Stage 4: Analysis of Findings	August 2023	The above groups identified they would use the service more should their local library close.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																													
Stage 5: Reporting and Action Planning	September 2023	Digital service will be targeted and mitigation measures for each Library have been included in their individual EIA's																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																														
Stage 6: Sign-Off	October 2023	To be completed following all other stages																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																														

What Council proposal is being assessed? (including the main purpose and aims)

St Helens Borough Council's statutory Library Service currently operates 13 libraries, as well as the Archive Service, Home Delivery and Schools Library Services.

The draft Library Strategy and Delivery Plan outlines how the service is expected to transform over the next five years, with outcomes focussed on increasing access to digital services, expanding outreach activity in partnership and offering the Home Delivery Library Service to children and adults with medical issues preventing them from using a library. The strategy also outlines a reduction in the number of library buildings.

The Digital Library Service is available to any resident with a library card who wishes to access e-books, e-audio, e-magazines, e-newspapers and e-comics. The service is free to use and is available 24/7.

In relation to the proposal being assessed, please set out the following.

1 What must the LA provide under statute?

2 Any discretionary element of provision?

3. What is currently provided under that discretion?

4. What could change as a result of the proposal and how could it change?

5. What is being consulted on?

1. What must the LA provide under statute?

Local authorities (unitary, county or metropolitan borough councils) have a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' for all those who live, work or study in the area (section 7). In providing this service Local Authorities must, among other things:

- encourage both adults and children to make full use of the library service (section 7(2)(b))
- lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area (in accordance with section 8(3))

2. Any discretionary element of provision?

The statutory duty referred to above is not prescriptive in how local authorities should provide their library services, although library buildings in St Helens enable adults and children to access books and other resources free of charge. For this reason, the delivery mechanisms and geographical spread of service provision is discretionary in nature.

3. What is currently provided under that discretion?

The statutory Library Service in St Helens provides discretionary elements of provision. The Digital Library Service is one of the discretionary elements and is available 24/7 for any resident with a library card who wishes to access e-books, e-audio, e-magazines, e-newspapers and e-comics. The service is free to use and there are over 40,000 titles available to download.

4. What could change as a result of the proposal and how could it change?

Library users from localities where their library is proposed to close and/or where opening hours are proposed to reduce will be signposted to the Digital Library Service. This could result in more users downloading digital titles rather than visiting libraries to borrow books.

5. What is being consulted on?

No consultation is planned specifically in relation to the Digital Library Service; however consultation is planned on the overall draft Library Strategy.

Details of the activity (including the main purpose and aims)

The draft Library Strategy and Delivery Plan outlines how the service is expected to transform over the next five years, with outcomes focussed on increasing access to digital services, expanding outreach activity in partnership and offering the Home Delivery Library Service to children and adults with medical issues preventing them from using a library. The strategy also outlines a reduction in the number of library buildings.

The Digital Library Service is one of the discretionary elements and is available 24/7 for any resident with a library card who wishes to access e-books, e-audio, e-magazines, e-newspapers and e-comics. The service is free to use and there are over 40,000 titles available to download.

The Digital Library Service offer includes the ability to access the library catalogue, reserve items and renew loans, download eBooks, eAudiobooks and an extensive range of eNewspapers and Magazines, as well as accessing online reference materials. Despite the high proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.

Who will be affected by the activity?

Provide details of the groups and numbers of people affected below, updating the table as the EIA develops and the understanding of who will be affected emerges in more detail.

Whole population

Library performance

Total visits/loans to the Digital Library Service between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023:

Digital Library	Visits
Visits	139,963
Loans	67,668

The overall performance of the Digital Library Service is that visits are down 15% compared to 2021/22, however loans of e-materials are up 25% compared to the same period 12 months ago. It is anticipated that visits to the

Digital Library Service and loans of e-materials will rise if the decision is taken to adopt the draft Library Strategy which includes the closure of 6 libraries.

Protected Characteristics

Age

Age breakdown for St Helens Borough:

0-15: 17.8%

16-65: 61.6%

65+: 20.5%

Source: Census 2021

Disability

Percentage of people disabled under the Equality Act with day-to-day activities limited:

St Helens = 22.3%

England = 17.3%

Source: Census 2021

Disability by Local Authority data set: St Helens

Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a lot	10.93%
Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a little	11.35%
Not disabled under the Equality Act: Has long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities are not limited	6.95%
Not disabled under the Equality Act: No long term physical or mental health conditions	70.77%

Source: Census 2021

Gender reassignment

The Library Service does not collect Gender Reassignment membership data. Therefore, we will use the most recent population statistics as a

proxy to better reflect the current and potential users of the service that may hold this protected characteristic.

The 2021 Census shows that 0.36% of people aged 16 and over in St Helens Borough had a gender identity different to the sex registered for them at birth. This compares to 0.54% for England and Wales. The table below shows a breakdown of the answers to the Census 2021 Gender Identity question for the St Helens Population aged 16 years and over.

Census 2021 St Helens Population Gender Identity Data	Percentage
Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth	95.48%
Gender identity different from sex registered at birth, but no specific identity given	0.17%
Trans woman	0.06%
Trans man	0.08%
Non-binary	0.03%
All other gender identities	0.02%
Gender identity not answered	4.15%

Marriage and civil partnership

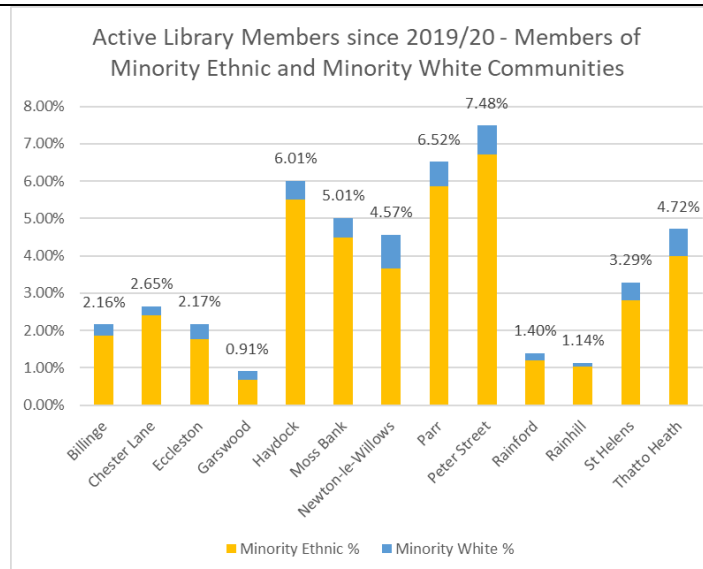
The Library Service does not collect Marriage and civil partnership membership data.

Pregnancy and Maternity

The Library Service does not collect pregnancy membership data.

Race

The Library Service does not hold full and comprehensive data on race of its members and wider customer base. The Library Membership form asks residents to provide this information, however there is no obligation to disclose this. Therefore, we will use the most recent ward and borough population by Ethnicity (Census 2021) to better reflect the current and potential users of the service that may hold this protected characteristic.



Religion and Belief

The Library Service does not collect religion membership data. Therefore, we will use the most recent census data to better reflect the current and potential users of the service that may hold this protected characteristic.

Population Census 2021	Percentage	Population Census 2021	Percentage
Buddhist	0.27%	Other Religions	0.39%
Hindu	0.33%	Christian	62.32%
Jewish	0.03%	No Religion	31.21%
Muslim	0.73%	Religion Not Stated	4.72%

Source: Census 2021

Sex (sometimes referred to as gender)

Sex breakdown in St Helens borough:

Female: 50.9%

Male: 49.1%

Source: Census 2021

Sexual Orientation

The Library Service does not collect sexual orientation membership data. Therefore, we will use the most recent Census statistics as a proxy to better reflect the current and potential users of the service that may hold this protected characteristic.

The 2021 Census shows that 2.7% of the Borough population aged 16 years and over recorded an LGB+ orientation (“gay or lesbian”, “bisexual”, or other sexual orientation). This compares to 3.16% for England and Wales

The table below shows a breakdown of the answers to the Census 2021 Sexual Orientation question for the St Helens Population aged 16 years and over.

Census 2021 St Helens Population Sexual Orientation Data	Percentage
Straight or Heterosexual	91.84%
Gay or Lesbian	1.60%
Bisexual	0.89%
Pansexual	0.15%
Asexual	0.05%
All other sexual orientations	0.01%
Gender identity not answered	5.46%

What data, research and other evidence or information is available which is relevant to the EIA?

The key information for this activity is:

- Census 2021
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Mid-Year Estimates (ONS) 2020
- Library Service performance data 2022/23
- Library membership data
- Locality Profiles

Section 3: EIA Lead Officer Assessment: Digital Library Service

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
Age	Positive	Low	<p>The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any library member to access, with over 40,000 titles available.</p> <p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.</p> <p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over 	<p>Digital support: This will be targeted at those who most need it. Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed. Some people with this protected characteristic may need assistance to be able to download books, audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices. This support can be provided through libraries and through partnership working to signpost people to the provision and also to any mobile devices for loan.</p> <p>Alternative library provision: There will be a network of 7 statutory libraries across the borough that are available to all residents to access.</p> <p>The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as car parking arrangements and disabled parking bays for each library.</p> <p>Library Light. Library Light means any customer with a library card can access libraries across the Liverpool City Region. https://sthlibrarieswp.koha-ptfs.co.uk/library-light/</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>	<p>Home Delivery Library Service: The consultation results will be analysed to assist with the referrals process onto the Home Delivery Library Service, providing people meet the referral criteria as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures.</p>
Disability	Positive	Low	<p>The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any library member to access, with over 40,000 titles available.</p> <p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as</p>	<p>Digital support: This will be targeted at those who most need it. Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed. Some people with this protected characteristic may need assistance to be able to download books, audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices. This support can be provided through libraries and through partnership working to signpost people to the provision and also to any mobile devices for loan.</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<p>well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.</p> <p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use</p>	<p>Alternative library provision: There will be a network of 7 statutory libraries across the borough that are available to all residents to access.</p> <p>The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as car parking arrangements and disabled parking bays for each library.</p> <p>Library Light. Library Light means any customer with a library card can access libraries across the Liverpool City Region. https://sthlibrarieswp.koha-ptfs.co.uk/library-light/</p> <p>Home Delivery Library Service: The consultation results will be analysed to assist with the referrals process onto the Home Delivery Library Service, providing people meet the referral criteria as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures.</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.	
Gender reassignment	Positive	Low	<p>The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any library member to access, with over 40,000 titles available.</p> <p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.</p> <p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over 	<p>Digital support: This will be targeted at those who most need it. Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed. Some people with this protected characteristic may need assistance to be able to download books, audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices. This support can be provided through libraries and through partnership working to signpost people to the provision and also to any mobile devices for loan.</p> <p>Alternative library provision: There will be a network of 7 statutory libraries across the borough that are available to all residents to access.</p> <p>The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as car parking arrangements and disabled parking bays for each library.</p> <p>Library Light. Library Light means any customer with a library card can access</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>	<p>libraries across the Liverpool City Region. https://sthlibrarieswp.koha-ptfs.co.uk/library-light/</p> <p>Home Delivery Library Service: The consultation results will be analysed to assist with the referrals process onto the Home Delivery Library Service, providing people meet the referral criteria as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	Positive	Low	<p>The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any library member to access, with over 40,000 titles available.</p> <p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages</p>	<p>Digital support: This will be targeted at those who most need it. Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed. Some people with this protected characteristic may need assistance to be able to download books, audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices. This support can be provided through libraries and through partnership working to signpost people to the provision and also to any mobile devices for loan.</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<p>to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.</p> <p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto</p>	<p>Alternative library provision: There will be a network of 7 statutory libraries across the borough that are available to all residents to access.</p> <p>The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as car parking arrangements and disabled parking bays for each library.</p> <p>Library Light. Library Light means any customer with a library card can access libraries across the Liverpool City Region. https://sthlibrarieswp.koha-ptfs.co.uk/library-light/</p> <p>Home Delivery Library Service: The consultation results will be analysed to assist with the referrals process onto the Home Delivery Library Service, providing people meet the referral criteria as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures.</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.	
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive	Low	<p>The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any library member to access, with over 40,000 titles available.</p> <p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.</p> <p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over 	<p>Digital support: This will be targeted at those who most need it. Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed. Some people with this protected characteristic may need assistance to be able to download books, audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices. This support can be provided through libraries and through partnership working to signpost people to the provision and also to any mobile devices for loan.</p> <p>Alternative library provision: There will be a network of 7 statutory libraries across the borough that are available to all residents to access.</p> <p>The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as car parking arrangements and disabled parking bays for each library.</p> <p>Library Light. Library Light means any customer with a library card can access libraries across the Liverpool City Region.</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>	<p>https://sthlibrarieswp.koha-ptfs.co.uk/library-light/</p> <p>Home Delivery Library Service: The consultation results will be analysed to assist with the referrals process onto the Home Delivery Library Service, providing people meet the referral criteria as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures.</p>
Race	Positive	Low	<p>The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any library member to access, with over 40,000 titles available.</p> <p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages</p>	<p>Digital support: This will be targeted at those who most need it. Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed. Some people with this protected characteristic may need assistance to be able to download books, audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices. This support can be provided through libraries and through partnership working to signpost people to the provision and also to any mobile devices for loan.</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.	<p>Alternative library provision: There will be a network of 7 statutory libraries across the borough that are available to all residents to access.</p> <p>The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as car parking arrangements and disabled parking bays for each library.</p> <p>Library Light. Library Light means any customer with a library card can access libraries across the Liverpool City Region. https://sthlibrarieswp.koha-ptfs.co.uk/library-light/</p> <p>Home Delivery Library Service: The consultation results will be analysed to assist with the referrals process onto the Home Delivery Library Service, providing people meet the referral criteria as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures.</p>
Religion and Belief	Positive	Low	The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any library member to access, with over 40,000 titles available.	Digital support: This will be targeted at those who most need it. Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed. Some people with this protected characteristic may need

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.</p> <p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / 	<p>assistance to be able to download books, audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices. This support can be provided through libraries and through partnership working to signpost people to the provision and also to any mobile devices for loan.</p> <p>Alternative library provision: There will be a network of 7 statutory libraries across the borough that are available to all residents to access.</p> <p>The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as car parking arrangements and disabled parking bays for each library.</p> <p>Library Light. Library Light means any customer with a library card can access libraries across the Liverpool City Region. https://sthlibrarieswp.koha-ptfs.co.uk/library-light/</p> <p>Home Delivery Library Service: The consultation results will be analysed to assist with the referrals process onto the Home Delivery Library Service, providing people meet the referral criteria as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<p>beliefs</p> <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>	<p>they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures.</p>
Sex (gender)	Positive	Low	<p>The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any library member to access, with over 40,000 titles available.</p> <p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.</p> <p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected</p>	<p>Digital support: This will be targeted at those who most need it. Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed. Some people with this protected characteristic may need assistance to be able to download books, audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices. This support can be provided through libraries and through partnership working to signpost people to the provision and also to any mobile devices for loan.</p> <p>Alternative library provision: There will be a network of 7 statutory libraries across the borough that are available to all residents to access.</p> <p>The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as car</p>

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Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<p>characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>	<p>parking arrangements and disabled parking bays for each library.</p> <p>Library Light. Library Light means any customer with a library card can access libraries across the Liverpool City Region. https://sthlibrarieswp.koha-ptfs.co.uk/library-light/</p> <p>Home Delivery Library Service: The consultation results will be analysed to assist with the referrals process onto the Home Delivery Library Service, providing people meet the referral criteria as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures.</p>
Sexual orientation	Positive	Low	<p>The Digital Library Service is available 24/7 for any library member to access, with over 40,000 titles available.</p> <p>Despite the proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised</p>	<p>Digital support: This will be targeted at those who most need it. Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed. Some people with this protected characteristic may need assistance to be able to download books,</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<p>that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.</p> <p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / 	<p>audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices. This support can be provided through libraries and through partnership working to signpost people to the provision and also to any mobile devices for loan.</p> <p>Alternative library provision: There will be a network of 7 statutory libraries across the borough that are available to all residents to access.</p> <p>The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as car parking arrangements and disabled parking bays for each library.</p> <p>Library Light. Library Light means any customer with a library card can access libraries across the Liverpool City Region. https://sthlibrarieswp.koha-ptfs.co.uk/library-light/</p> <p>Home Delivery Library Service: The consultation results will be analysed to assist with the referrals process onto the Home Delivery Library Service, providing people meet the referral criteria as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that</p>

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Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<p>beliefs</p> <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>	<p>they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures.</p>
Employees	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not applicable

Section 4: Engagement Decision

The decision about who to engage with, and how and when to engage, is the key to effective EIA.

Is engagement with affected people with Protected Characteristics required, now or during the further development of the activity?	No
If YES, proceed to the next section. If NO, briefly summarise below the reasons why you have reached this conclusion.	
There are no proposed changes to the Home Delivery Library Service, or the eligibility criteria used to determine access.	

Any reports to decision-makers during the development of the activity, for example feasibility or options appraisal reports, should include content on the latest thinking and findings of the EIA even though, like the activity, further development of the EIA may be required before final reporting.

The findings of the officer assessment should be included in any reports to decision-makers. These may be feasibility or options appraisal reports where the activity is at an early stage of development, but it is essential that any equality findings are considered in formal decisions at all stages of development of the activity.

Section 5 – Involvement and Engagement Planning

Has the assessment shown that the activity will treat any groups of people with Protected Characteristics differently from other people?

Yes. The Digital Library Service is provided as a reasonable adjustment for disabled people or anyone else with protected characteristics who are unable to leave their homes to access a library building and/or unable to access any other library provision.

Will the differential treatment advance equality for people with Protected Characteristics?

Yes. The Digital Library Service enables disabled people who are unable to leave their homes to access a library building, to continue to receive a library service. The provision of the Digital Library Service as a reasonable adjustment is in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, which allows local authorities to treat disabled people more favourably in order to provide equality of opportunity.

Will the differential treatment cause or increase disadvantage for people with Protected Characteristics?

If yes, please state which groups and how.

No

Section 6: Consultation and Engagement Findings from the 2023 public consultation

	Date/summary of engagement carried out	Summary of impacts identified
Age	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>
Disability	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people</p>	<p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over

	<p>whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>
<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that</p>

		active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.
Race	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>
Religion and belief	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>
Sex (gender)	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a</p>	<p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over

	<p>representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation has identified that people with the following protected characteristics are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed library closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 45 – 54 • Age 65 and over • People with a long-standing illness or health condition • People with a physical disability • LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minorities • People with other faiths / beliefs <p>The consultation has also identified that active visitors of Parr Library, Peter Street Library and Thatto Heath Library are more likely to use the Digital Library Service as a result of the proposed closures.</p>

Section 6: Engagement Findings – Continued

Drawing on the engagement findings and your understanding of the effects of the activity, indicate how it will contribute, if at all, to the three strands of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

a) How will the proposal help to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation?

The strategy will seek to address inequalities by distributing provision across the borough where possible locating where it is best placed to serve areas of greatest need within borough and so seek to tackle and eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. We will also mitigate any negative impact for those community members who share protected characteristics, as detailed within the assessment.

b) How will the proposal help to advance equality of opportunity?

The strategy will seek to address inequalities by distributing provision across the borough where possible locating where it is best placed to serve areas of greatest need within borough and so help to advance equality of opportunity. We will promote detailed information on how to access Library Services both digital and physical.

c) How will the proposal help to foster good relations?

The strategy will seek to address inequalities by distributing provision across the borough where possible, locating where it is best placed to serve areas of greatest need within borough and help to foster good relations.

During the engagement process were there any suggestions on how to avoid, minimise or mitigate any negative impacts? If so, please give details.

N/A

Section 7 – Reporting of Findings and Recommendations to Decision Makers

The findings of the EIA may be reported to decision-makers at several stages during the development of an activity. For example, the initial officer assessment findings may be included in a feasibility report or options appraisal to be considered by the Transformation Board or Chief Officers' Executive.

Any report on formal decisions by the Cabinet or Council should include the latest findings of the EIA, even if these are at a relatively early stage. The report recommending final approval of the activity should await and include the findings of the completed EIA. The report should clearly present the impacts that have been identified through the engagement process, including potential cumulative impacts.

The report may include recommendations based on the findings of the EIA, but these should be separate from the reporting of impacts. Recommendations will be developed separately from the EIA and arise from considering equalities impacts combined with other aspects of the activity such as finance, the benefits of the activity, and so on.

Based on the EIA findings, the report may consider the options in the table below, but the report must contain a clear statement of the impacts so that decision-makers can understand the effects of the decision that is being recommended.

What does the review of the information show?	
a)	No negative impact on people because of their Protected Characteristics - continue with the activity and monitor progress on implementation
b)	Negative impact identified – recommend continuing with the activity; clearly specify the people affected and the impacts, and providing reasons and supporting evidence for the decision to continue
c)	Negative impact identified – adjust the activity in light of the identified impact to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impact
d)	Negative impact identified – stop activity and provide an explanation why

Section 8 – Action Plan and Performance Management

The report to decision-makers, and the decision made may require actions to be taken to avoid, minimise or mitigate the negative impacts of the activity.

Any actions to address equalities impacts should be listed below, with performance management review proposals, to complete the full EIA.

What is the negative impact?	Actions required to reduce/eliminate the negative impact (if applicable)	Who will lead on action	Target completion date
<p>The draft Library Strategy proposes the closure of 6 libraries. There may be an increase in usage of the Digital Library Service if the Strategy is adopted.</p> <p>The 2023 consultation results reinforce the need for better promotion of the service.</p>	<p>Better promotion/awareness of the Digital Library Service</p>	<p>Library Support Manager</p>	<p>December 2023.</p>

Performance Management	
Date of the next review of the EIA	December 2023
How often will the EIA action plan be reviewed?	Mitigation actions from this EIA will be included within the Library Service Business Plan and reviewed Quarterly until all actions are complete
Who will carry out this review?	Library Management