



# Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (January 2021)

## **Section 1: Your details**

**EIA Lead Officer:** Tom Arthur

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**Head of Section:** Andrew McCartan

**Chief Officer:** Nicola Butterworth

**Directorate:** Neighbourhood Services

**Date:** 13/6/23

## **Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?**

The Libraries New Operating Model was approved at the TCCL Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The agreed option was to retain 15 sites (10 staffed- 5 self-service) plus ancillary services (such as Digital Services, Home Reader Service).

Staffed: Bebington Central, Birkenhead Central, Wallasey Central, West Kirby, Eastham, Heswall, Moreton, Upton

Self Service: Beechwood, Leasowe, Ridgeway, St James, Seacombe.

This assessment will continue to be reviewed regularly.

## **Section 2a: Will this EIA be submitted to a Committee meeting?**

**Yes / No**                      **If 'yes' please state which meeting and what date**

Tourism Communities Culture & Leisure Committee 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023

**Hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published on the Council's website**

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

**Section 3: Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick relevant boxes)**

- Services**
- The workforce**
- Communities**
- Other** (please state eg: Partners, Private Sector, Voluntary & Community Sector)

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk) for publishing)

**Section 4:**

Could the proposal have a positive or negative impact on any protected groups (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals.

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All	Negative – Reduction in provision of library services results in less spaces open to the community	Co-location opportunities have been explored for 5 “unstaffed libraries” now designated as “Community Partner Libraries”. Service Level Agreements are being developed.	Andrew McCartan	On Going	Capital expenditure to improve remaining libraries. New Mobile Van would cost circa £213K plus ongoing revenue costs for a Driver.
All	Negative – Self-service library services can be inaccessible and harder to use. If there are any faults or problems, residents may struggle without staff there to help them	Volunteers have been deployed in 2 libraries and staff can be contacted during operational hours from other sites. A team of	Andrew McCartan	On Going	Staffing

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
		peripatetic support has also be planned.			
<b>Disability</b> – physical, sensory & mental impairments	It may be more difficult for customers with additional needs or disability (e.g. mobility issues) to access remaining libraries if the closest library is further away from their home than at present.	Provision of new Library Mobile van service – but will need to ensure that access to the vehicle is as easy as possible and that any special design features are considered to facilitate this	Andrew McCartan	Ongoing	New mobile van
<b>Age Group</b> - specify e.g.: older, younger etc)	<p>A reduction in number of libraries may make it more difficult for older customers to access the Service as they may need to travel further from their home to get to the next closest library</p> <p>Younger children might also be affected as their parents/carers would need to take them to the library and the increased distance could make this difficult</p> <p>Older and younger people may need assistance in using the services and assurances that the library will remain a safe and welcoming environment.</p>	<p>New Mobile Van</p> <p>Outreach sessions by Strategic Team in new community venues</p> <p>We will mitigate this by providing information guides, well trained staff and volunteers to support local people to use the technology.</p>	Andrew McCartan	Ongoing	New mobile van

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
	It is not expected that the proposed changes will have a negative or positive impact upon any other equality target group.				
<b>Workforce</b>	<b>Positive</b> No redundancies needed with reduction in libraries. As of 2/5/23 there are 8 FTE equivalent vacancies	Recruitment process undertaken – June 2023	Peter Aspinall/ Mark Payne	June / July 2023	Library Management Team supported by HR

**Section 4a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?**

The above actions will be continuously monitored by the Lead Officer .

**Section 4b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?**

We have ensured that there continues to be library service coverage for all residents. The reduction in number of libraries has had limited impact in all groups as 98% of residents will still live within a 2-mile radius of a staffed library.

In addition to the 15 libraries, the Digital Library Service continues to be developed. This gives 24/7 accessibility functionality to an e-library of 20,000 items (now including e-newspapers and e-magazines) plus large print, spoken word, access to online databases' family history and reference materials.

The Home Reader Service, delivering to housebound residents and those whose needs are greatest, will continue and opportunities to extend this service will be explored where resources allow.

The Library Service will continue to provide appropriate materials to all residents.

**Section 5: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?**

Public consultation  
Needs Analysis  
Benchmarking data

**Section 6: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council proposal?**

~~Yes / No~~ – (please delete as appropriate)

If 'yes' please continue to section 7.

If 'no' please state your reason(s) why: Consultation has already been undertaken with public 21/2/22 – 18/4/22 and with staff 12/10/22 – 25/11/22

(please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk) for publishing)

**Section 7: How will consultation take place and by when?**

Not Applicable

**Section 8: Have you remembered to:**

- a) **Select appropriate directorate hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published** (section 2a)
- b) **Include any potential positive impacts as well as negative impacts?** (section 4)
- c) **Send this EIA to [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk) via your Chief Officer?**
- d) **Review section 4 once consultation has taken place and sent your updated EIA to [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk) via your Chief Officer for re-publishing?**