

Equality Impact Assessment

EIA Title

Did you use the EIA Screening Tool? (Delete as applicable)

Yes (please attach upon submission) / No

1. Explaining the matter being assessed

Is this a:

(Delete the ones that don't apply)

- Change to a service or function

Summarise the strategy, policy, service(s), or function(s) being assessed. Describe current status followed by any changes that stakeholders would experience.

Describe the change being assessed in plain English. Give your rationale for writing the EIA. Identify the key stakeholders affected by this change, including residents and staff. Consider what evidence you have gathered on the impact of your proposals.

The library service in Surrey has [a network of 52 libraries](#), including 10 that are Community Partnered Libraries (CPLs). As the library service is required to make budget reductions in order to contribute to the overall medium term financial plan of the council, the service is proposing to make £86,000 worth of savings from 2024/2025.

Since 2018, the library service has made over £3m of savings from its controllable budgets therefore, opportunities to drive further savings in the current model are more limited than previously was the case.

Of the 52 statutory libraries in the county network, Walton Library is the only staffed library that opens on a Sunday. Walton Library opened on Sunday as a pilot when it moved to a new location in 2008. The change being assessed is to cease Sunday opening at this library.

This was originally set up as a pilot following relocation of the library from an out-of-town location to a new retail unit on the 1st Floor of The Heart Shopping Centre in Walton. The library currently opens 11-5pm on a Sunday which is 11 % of its opening hours and 6 more than any other main town centre library. Analysis of use in 22/23 shows that Sunday had an 8.6% share of the weekly visits whereas Saturday had a 20% share therefore 91.4 % of the total visits occur between Monday and Saturday demonstrating that Sunday is the quietest day of the week. For 22/23 the average daily figure is 206.8 whereas Sunday accounts for 132.8 people on average.

Currently there are 3 members of staff who work on a Sunday. 2 staff members are employed as Weekend Assistants to specifically work across Saturday and Sunday would have the six

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hours they work on a Sunday made redundant. For the third member of staff who works their hours throughout the week we would look first at redeploying them to work their 6 hours at another part of the week or to offer them redeployment to alternative vacancies within Surrey Libraries.

This proposal is one of several linked to budget reductions required across the council in 2024/2025. The current proposal would not exacerbate the other proposals as it currently stands.

How does your service proposal support the outcomes in [the Community Vision for Surrey 2030](#)?

Specify which of the ten Vision outcomes this work is linked to.

[Library and Cultural Services Strategy 2020-2025](#) identified five strategic objectives to underpin the development of services and ensure the link with Surrey 2030 and Surrey's Organisation strategy. These reflect the five strategic principles endorsed by the Libraries and Cultural services consultation undertaken in late 2018 and early 2019.

Ambitions for people are:

- Children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident.
- Everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life.
- Everyone lives healthy, active and fulfilling lives, and makes good choices about their wellbeing.
- Everyone gets the health and social care support and information they need at the right time and place.
- Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life.

We want our county's economy to be strong, vibrant and successful and Surrey to be a great place to live, work and learn. A place that capitalises on its location and natural assets, and where communities feel supported, and people are able to support each other.

Our ambitions for our place are:

- Residents live in clean, safe and green communities, where people and organisations embrace their environmental responsibilities.
- Businesses in Surrey thrive.
- Well-connected communities, with effective infrastructure, that grow sustainably.

Are there any specific geographies in Surrey where this will make an impact?

- Elmbridge

Assessment team – A key principle for completing impact assessments is that they should not be done in isolation. Consultation with affected groups and stakeholders needs to be built in from the start, to enrich the assessment and develop relevant mitigation.

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Detail here who you have involved with completing this EIA. For each include:

- Name (will be removed before publishing): Katie Kinnear
- Organisation: Surrey County Council, Library Service
- Role on the assessment team (for example, service user, manager of service, specialist): Service Manager: Libraries and Heritage

- Name (will be removed before publishing): Helen Cronin
- Organisation: Surrey County Council, Library Service
- Role on the assessment team (for example, service user, manager of service, specialist): Area Lead – North East and Learning responsible for managing service provision in a group of libraries in the North East of the county which includes Walton

- Name (will be removed before publishing): Simon Harding
- Organisation: Surrey County Council, Library Service
- Role on the assessment team (for example, service user, manager of service, specialist): Libraries Strategic Manager: Operations responsible for overseeing and managing frontline service delivery

- Name (will be removed before publishing): Susan Wills
- Organisation: Surrey County Council, Cultural Services
- Role on the assessment team (for example, service user, manager of service, specialist): Chartered Librarian responsible for setting strategic direction of Cultural Services

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- Name: Louis Perry
- Organisation: Surrey County Council, Customer and Communities
- Role on assessment team: EIA specialist

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2. Service Users / Residents

Who may be affected by this activity?

There are 9 protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010) to consider in your proposal. These are:

1. Age including younger and older people
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
6. Religion or belief including lack of belief
7. Sex
8. Sexual orientation
9. Marriage/civil partnerships

Though not included in the Equality Act 2010, Surrey County Council recognises that there are other vulnerable groups which significantly contribute to inequality across the county and therefore they should also be considered within EIAs. If relevant, you will need to include information on the following vulnerable groups (Please **refer to the EIA guidance** if you are unclear as to what this is).

- Members/Ex members of armed forces and relevant family members (in line with the Armed Forces Act 2021 and [Statutory Guidance on the Armed Forces Covenant Duty](#))
- Adult and young carers*
- Those experiencing digital exclusion*
- Those experiencing domestic abuse*
- Those with education/training (literacy) needs
- Those experiencing homelessness*
- Looked after children/Care leavers*
- Those living in rural/urban areas
- Those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage*
- Out of work young people)*
- Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism*
- People with drug or alcohol use issues*
- People on probation
- People in prison
- Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers
- Sex workers
- Children with Special educational needs and disabilities*
- Adults with long term health conditions, disabilities (including SMI) and/or sensory impairment(s)*
- Older People in care homes*
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities*
- Other (describe below)

(*as identified in the Surrey COVID Community Impact Assessment and the Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy)

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All service users including all 9 protected characteristics who are unable to visit the library Monday to Saturday

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

There could potentially be an impact on all service users and residents who are currently unable to visit Walton Library between Monday and Saturday due to their current work/life patterns. There are 11,626 registered members of Walton Library. Users registered at other nearby libraries may also choose to use Walton Library during Sunday hours, however, this information is not recorded.

Users would be impacted in a negative way meaning they could be unable to access physical library services, however, Monday to Saturday opening is in line with the rest of the county offer.

Whilst we do not collect data associated with these groups, there may also be impact on other vulnerable groups who use the library either as a place of safety, a place of warmth, a place in which to access technology or wifi. These groups include those:

- experiencing domestic abuse
- experiencing digital exclusion
- experiencing homelessness
- experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

The library service already offers a range of hours, including a late night and Saturday at Walton library, there are therefore a range of times to suit a variety of different work/life patterns and needs, including those from vulnerable groups.

Whilst users would be unable to access the physical library Surrey Library Service has a rich and varied online library which offers 24/7 access to a range of services including ebooks, eaudio, emagazines, ecomics and other eresources. Surrey Library Service is also a National Data Bank and is able to provide free data to those in need which can be used to access our online library offer.

Prior to the ceasing of Sunday hours, the service will ensure the online library and National Data Bank offer is promoted to Walton Library users through posters, leaflets, email and social media communication. Our Digital Officers will run drop-in sessions offering residents the chance to learn more about our online services and how to access them.

Nearby libraries at Weybridge (2.4miles) and Dittons (5.6miles) will receive new [Super Access](#) technology during early 2024 (Dittons) and early 2025 (Weybridge) which will enable library users to access physical library services anytime from 8am - 8pm Monday to Sunday. Implementation of this technology has been considered for Walton Library, however, due to the limitations of the building this is not currently possible.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

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There are no other changes planned by the Library Service, however, this proposal is one of several linked to budget reductions required across the council in 2024/2025. Likely impacts from these yet to be confirmed. The current proposal would not exacerbate the other proposals as it currently stands.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

Despite use of new technology to provide additional opening hours at nearby libraries this will not be suitable for all users due to personal circumstances such as ability to travel. Therefore, we are unable to mitigate all negative impacts.

Library staff will continue to monitor comments from users at Walton Library in order to identify needs of those from protected characteristics and vulnerable groups. Should additional evidence come to light this EIA will be updated accordingly. Impact and relevant mitigations will then be considered and implemented where appropriate.

3. Staff

Age including younger and older people

The staff who work at Walton on a Sunday vary in age between xxx and xxx.

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

Walton Library on a Sunday is staffed by Weekend Assistants – who work a Saturday and Sunday and a Library Assistant. This is typically three people although other staff do provide ad-hoc cover as required. As this is a reduction in opening hours, staff will either need to be redeployed to work at other times of the week or work a pattern of reduced hours. For example, a Saturday only.

Weekend Assistants often chose to work on a weekend because they have other commitments during the week, for example younger adults who attend school or college. They may be impacted in a negative way as we may be unable to offer them alternative hours due to the availability of hours at times when they are able to work them e.g., outside of their full-time studies. In this instance, these staff members could be made redundant from a proportion of their role.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

The Library Service will follow Surrey County Councils change management process supported by HR to implement this change. This includes going through a consultation with staff members and supporting redeployment opportunities if required to minimise the chance of redundancy.

The service will work with each staff member to understand their own individual circumstances to see if there are alternative hours or roles that would suit their work/life/study pattern. This would be undertaken by the Area Lead, Group and Branch Manager and will be implemented by 4th March 2024.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

This proposal is one of several linked to budget reductions required across the council in 2024/2025. These include a rationalisation of weekend assistant hours from vacant posts across the Library Service. This revenue reduction exercise will only be completed after discussion with affected Weekend Assistants at Walton Library so as to minimise exacerbation of impacts on them as individuals.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

If suitable alternative hours from existing vacancies cannot be found, then these staff members would be made redundant from a proportion of their role.

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We do not collect workforce data relating to the other 8 protected characteristics or vulnerable groups. If further evidence is identified regarding the needs or individual circumstances of those with protected characteristics and vulnerable groups, then this EIA will be updated accordingly. Impact and relevant mitigations will then be considered and implemented where appropriate.

4. Recommendation

Based your assessment, please indicate which course of action you are recommending to decision makers. You should explain your recommendation below.

- **Outcome Three: Continue the policy/service/function** despite potential for negative impact or missed opportunities to advance equality identified. You will need to make sure the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You need to consider whether there are:
 - Sufficient plans to stop or minimise the negative impact
 - Mitigating actions for any remaining negative impacts plans to monitor the actual impact.

Recommended outcome:

Outcome three. There will be negative impacts of this change but we will mitigate it as much as is possible.

Explanation:

Explain the reasons for your recommendation

We are required to achieve revenue savings and operate within a reduced budget. We therefore propose to go continue with the change to this service as we have identified that this revenue reduction will have impact on the amount of customers and staffing.

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5. Action plan and monitoring arrangements

Insert your action plan here, based on the mitigations recommended.

Involve you Assessment Team in monitoring progress against the actions above.

Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Update/Notes	Open/Closed
1	15/12/2023	Find out age range of staff	Katie Kinnear	February		Open
2	18/12/2023	Alter EIA if new information comes from Walton Library staff	Katie Kinnear	Ongoing		Open
3	18/12/223	Staff change management	Katie Kinnear	March		Open

6a. Version control

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Author	Date
1	Final Version	Louis Perry	15/12/2023

The above provides historical data about each update made to the Equality Impact Assessment.

Please include the name of the author, date and notes about changes made – so that you can refer to what changes have been made throughout this iterative process.

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For further information, please see the EIA Guidance document on version control.

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6b. Approval

Secure approval from the appropriate level of management based on nature of issue and scale of change being assessed.

Approved by	Date approved
Head of Service	1 st December 2023
Executive Director	7 th December 2023
Cabinet Member	15 th December 2023
Directorate Equality Group/ EDI Group (If Applicable) (arrangements will differ depending on your Directorate. Please enquire with your Head of Service or the CSP Team if unsure)	

Publish:

It is recommended that all EIAs are published on Surrey County Council's website.

Please send approved EIAs to: equalityimpactassessments@surreycc.gov.uk

EIA author:

6c. EIA Team

Name	Job Title	Organisation	Team Role

If you would like this information in large print, Braille, on CD or in another language please contact us on:

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