

Appendix 3

Addressing Inequalities

Equalities Impact Assessment – Library Public Value Review

Surrey County Council Equality Impact Assessment Template

The implementation of s149 Equality Act 2010 is scheduled for April 2011, and this will be relevant to any changes proposed to take place after that date. This requires the Council to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The current equality duties are as follows:

Section 71 Race Relations Act 1976

The Council shall, in carrying out its functions have due regard to the need (a) to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and (b) to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups

Section 76A Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Council shall, in carrying out its functions have due regard to the need (a) to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and (b) to promote equality of opportunity between men and women

Section 49A Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Council shall, in carrying out its functions have due regard to the need (a) to eliminate unlawful discrimination under the Act; (b) to eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities; (c) to promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons; (d) to take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons; (e) to promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons; (f) to encourage participation by disabled persons in public life

Stage one – initial screening

What is being assessed?	Library Service
Service	Cultural Services
Name of assessor/s	Julia McDonald / Victoria Eade
Head of service	Peter Milton
Date	April 2010
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Existing function

Write a brief description of your service, policy or function. It is important to

focus on the service or policy the project aims to review or improve.

Surrey Libraries

An EIA of the Library Service was completed in March 2008 and is published on the [Surrey County Council external website](#).

Libraries represent a core part of Surrey's cultural and learning offer. They provide free and universal access to books, music, information, the Internet and informal learning. They provide support to families and individuals through reading programmes and by promoting life skills, readiness for economic activity, and wellbeing. They form an important link for the elderly and remote rural communities, through the Housebound Service and Mobile Libraries.

Surrey's Library Service is currently delivered via:

- 52 branch libraries and comprehensive online library, plus a specialist performing arts library, small lending outlet in the Surrey History Centre and a reserve store in Dorking.
- Branches have a core offer comprised of a standard minimum service and opening hours depending on location and size of library. There are three bands of library: A-town, B-district, C-community. 30 libraries are freehold, 17 are leasehold and five are other non-freehold.
- Mobile library service;
- Housebound service delivered by volunteers;
- Telephone-based information service – 'Enquiries Direct' and subscription-based web information service – 'Enquire';
- Countywide service development and delivery teams, including the Virtual Content Team, developing the service's online presence, the Programme Team leading on Health and Wellbeing, Safer and Stronger Communities and Children and Young People and the Information Services Team, which works to develop the provision of information across the library network.
- Property, Environment and Stock Team, which leads on purchasing and managing books and resources for the library network, and works with Estates and Property Management on the design and delivery of new libraries, collocations, refurbishment and community hubs.

The Public Value Review

This screening is being conducted at the beginning of a public value review of the Library Service, as part of the council's three-year programme of Public Value Reviews (PVRs) to look at all services/functions provided by the Council.

The reviews aim to deliver *improved outcomes and value for money for the residents of Surrey*.

Review findings

The review has identified a strategic vision for the library service, options for lowering costs and recommendations for developing the service for the future.

The review has been carried out in the context of a difficult financial climate, and therefore the options being proposed do involve budget reductions, which will impact upon current service levels and service users, if they are adopted.

There will also be an impact on staff if the options are adopted, and a separate EIA screening has been completed on proposals impacting on staff. This will be completed as part of implementation.

The PVR has worked to establish a vision for a relevant and lively service at the heart of local public services and cultural events in the community:

“ At the heart of local communities connecting people to leisure and knowledge through an inspirational world class and innovative service open to all”

The review findings fall into 2 main categories :

- 1) **Recommendations to deliver in the short term.** This includes:
 - Strategic decision to retain a core branch network of libraries, supported by a network of libraries operated in partnership with local organisations, where SCC would continue to provide stock, IT and possibly property, but not staffing. For consultation with local communities.
 - Installing wifi into branches, including those which might be handed over to community partnership
 - Offering more and more content online, with an increasing focus on interactivity and user input
 - Improving quality assurance
 - Delivering a marketing strategy to increase use, with increasing emphasis on targeting communities
 - Determining the business case for introduction of book tagging technology (RFID – Radio Frequency Identification) which could lead to greater efficiencies.

- 2) **Medium and long term recommendations** for developing the service in line with the strategic vision. This includes:
 - Establishing libraries as community and/or cultural hubs as a key aspect of Surrey’s response to localism and the Big Society
 - Piloting community hubs and / or cultural hubs *
 - Continuing to explore ways of sharing and managing services with other library authorities to increase efficiency
 - Looking to join a stock purchasing consortium to lower costs on inter library loans, ensure residents still have access to a wide range of stock and increase efficiency
 - Reducing the reserve stock
 - Working to improve the external presentation of the library
 - Working with partners to deliver commissioned work focusing on children and young people, safer and stronger communities and health and wellbeing.
 - Ensuring the service is ready to benefit from an enhanced IT network in 5 years’ time which will allow libraries to offer a wider range of services from a wide range of public sector organisations.

 - A community hub would see a range of useful services provided from one accessible location. A cultural hub would offer a range of interesting cultural experiences and activities.

Recommendations to deliver in the short term. This includes:

- Consulting on a proposal to remove the mobile library service

Indicate for each equality group whether there may be a positive impact, negative impact, or no impact.

Equality Group	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Age	X	X		<p>Introduction of alternatives should promote continued independence</p> <p>Older users of branch libraries will be negatively impacted if their nearest branch closures.</p> <p>Younger users of branches and mobiles could be negatively impacted by the removal of services. Surrey's draft Single Equality Scheme suggests places to go are restricted for young people, and this is exacerbated by poor public transport, particularly in isolated rural areas.</p> <p>Libraries currently help promote literacy and love of reading among young people, and no reduction to this service is proposed. However young people would be negatively impacted by local branch closures as they may not be able to travel independently to another branch.</p> <p>Introducing wifi into branches will help promote the library younger audiences</p> <p>Some older people will continue to require support from libraries to use IT and the internet, particularly with an increasing emphasis towards online services and stock</p>

				<p>Moving towards community partnership offers an opportunity to maintain the service for the whole community and encourages local involvement and engagement.</p> <p>Mobile library users include elderly residents who will be negatively impacted by the removal of service. There is a risk some will have a double impact if their mobile library service is lost, and their nearest alternative branch library is closed due to no local organisation being able to take on provision of services there.</p> <p>Introduction of alternatives should promote continued independence</p>
Gender Reassignment				None identified –no information available on library members.
Disability	X	X		<p>Residents with a disability will be negatively impacted by any local branch closures as they may find it more difficult to travel independently to another branch.</p> <p>Some mobile library users have mobility issues and will be negatively impacted by removal or reduction in this service.</p> <p>Residents in residential homes will require support to be able to continue to access books on loan.</p> <p>Providing alternative access will help mitigate this impact.</p> <p>Opportunity to offer a better service to mobile library users who have mobility issues by providing alternatives ways of travelling to a branch library</p>

Sex	X	X		<p>More women will be impacted by any reduction in library services than men.</p> <p>Introducing wifi into branches will help promote the library to male audiences who are less likely to use a library.</p>
Religion and belief				Insufficient information about service users to assess impact.
Pregnancy and maternity	X			Review recommends provision of toilets with changing facilities is built into new library/hub specifications
Race	X			<p>Opportunity to increase use from ethnic minority groups through targeted marketing</p> <p>Insufficient information held about library borrowers.</p>
Sexual orientation				<p>Insufficient information on service users to assess impact</p> <p>The Surrey Draft Equality Schemes suggests 1 in 12 people will be LGB. There are high incidences of mental ill health among the LGB population – Libraries provide access to information and support for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people.</p>
Carers	X	X		<p>Reduction of branches would mean carers have to travel further to get to a local library.</p> <p>Increased focus on working with partners across the council to support health and wellbeing will promote access to information and support.</p> <p>The removal of the mobile library service risks limiting independence if suitable alternatives are not in place.</p>
Other equality issues – please state				Rural communities with limited access to services may be impacted if branch services are reduced.

				<p>Not all library premises have toilets or baby changing facilities.</p> <p>There is a relationship between socio-economic disadvantages and other protected characteristics that libraries have an impact on: race, religion, disability (see above).</p> <p>Libraries offer free information and educational material and programmes help residents with low educational attainment, literacy development and finding employment and developing resilience and life skills.</p> <p>Mobile service impacts positively on elderly but also rural and remote communities.</p> <p>Rural communities with limited access to services may be impacted if mobile services are removed.</p>
HR and workforce issues				Separate EIA required
Human Rights implications if relevant				None identified

If you find a negative impact on any equality group you will need to complete stage one and move on to stage two and carry out a full EIA.

A full EIA will also need to be carried out if this is a high profile or major policy that will either effect many people or have a severe effect on some people.

Is a full EIA required?	Yes	
If no briefly summarise reasons why you have reached this conclusion, the evidence for this and the nature of any stakeholder verification of your conclusion.		
N/A		

Briefly describe any positive impacts identified that have resulted in improved access or services

See above and full EIA.

2008 EIA list positive impacts

For screenings only:

Review date	April 2010 Refreshed November 2010
Person responsible for review	Tracy Waters
Head of Service signed off	
Date completed	

- Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review
- Electronic copy to be forwarded to Equality and Diversity Manager for publishing

Stage 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment - please refer to [equality impact assessment](#) guidance available on Snet

Introduction and background

Using the information from your screening please describe your service or function. This should include:

- **The aims and scope of the EIA**
- **The main beneficiaries or users**
- **The main equality, accessibility, social exclusion issues and barriers, and the equality groups they relate to (not all assessments will encounter issues relating to every strand)**

Objectives of the PVR:

A Public Value Review (PVR) of Surrey's library service commenced in May 2010. with the final recommendations scheduled to go to Cabinet for approval on 1 February 2011.

The PVR programme aims to deliver *improved outcomes and value for money for the residents of Surrey.*

Scope of the EIA:

In scope :

Recommendations to deliver in the short term. This includes:

- Strategic decision to retain a core hub of libraries, supported by a network of libraries operated in partnership with local organisations, where SCC would continue to provide stock, IT and possibly property, but not staffing. These are referred to as 'community partnerships' in the report.
- Restructuring the service's supporting functions
- Installing wifi into branches
- Offering more and more content online, with an increasing focus on interactivity and user input
- Improving quality assurance
- Delivering a marketing strategy to increase use, with increasing emphasis on targeting communities
- Determining the business case for introduction of book tagging technology (RFID – Radio Frequency Identification) which could lead to greater efficiencies.
- Consultation on a proposal to remove the mobile library service

Out of scope :

Medium and long term recommendations for developing the service in line with the strategic vision. This includes:

- Establishing the strategic core of libraries as community and/or cultural hubs as a key aspect of Surrey's response to localism and the Big Society
- Piloting community hubs and / or cultural hubs at six locations*
- Continuing to explore ways of sharing and managing services with other

library authorities to increase efficiency

- Looking to join a stock purchasing consortium to lower costs on inter library loans, ensure residents still have access to a wide range of stock and increase efficiency
- Reducing the reserve stock
- Working to improve the external presentation of the library
- Working with partners to deliver commissioned work focusing on children and young people, safer and stronger communities and health and wellbeing.
- Ensuring the service is ready to benefit from an enhanced IT network in 5 years' time which will allow libraries to offer a wider range of services from a wide range of public sector organisations.

The impact assessment focuses on the impact of the options to deliver in the short term, for consultation with Members and the Public.

The review's action plan highlights the actions and timescales for achieving the medium and longer term recommendations, and the EIA action Plan indicates what further consideration of equalities implications will be required as this work is implemented.

The main beneficiaries or users

The libraries are a universal service, so positive change potentially benefit current and future users and potential users of library services in Surrey.

Almost half of all residents in Surrey visited a UK public library in 2009, which places the county in the top quartile when compared with other counties.

Visiting to borrow a book remains the most popular activity, but many people visit the library to browse the stock, use computers, read newspapers, attend an activity or seek information. In 2009/10, there were over 4.3m visits to Surrey libraries.

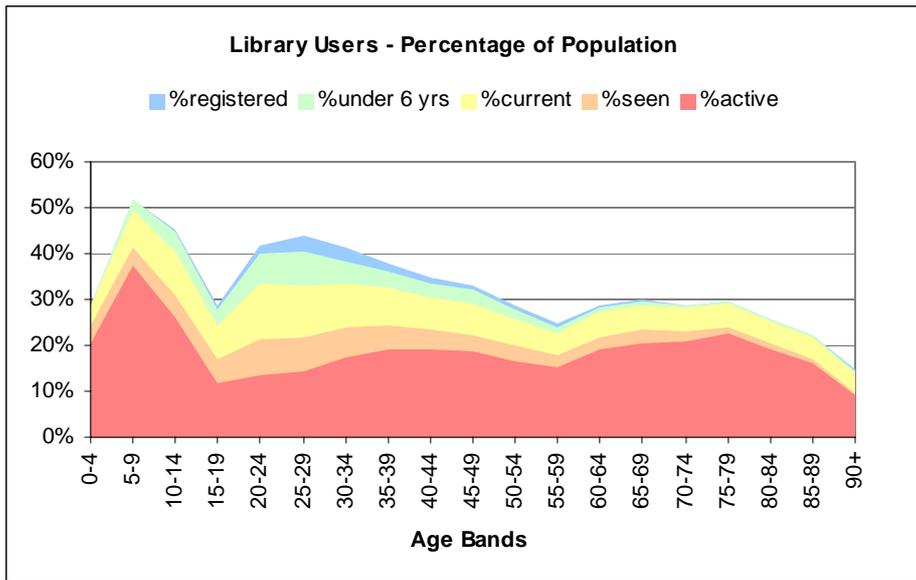
Surrey's library service currently has 220,396 'active' borrowers¹, out of a total of just under 400,000 registered members.

As shown in the chart below, the service has identified that 50% of children aged between 5 and 9 are registered with the library, with 38% of these being active users.

The largest gap between the percentage of users registered and those that are active is among the younger working age population aged 20-30, of which approximately 30-40% are registered with the library, but the percentage of active users varies from 12 – 20%.

¹ Defined as a library member who has borrowed at least one item in the previous 12 months

Table – Library users as a percentage of the population



Women are much more likely to be library users than men – see table below:

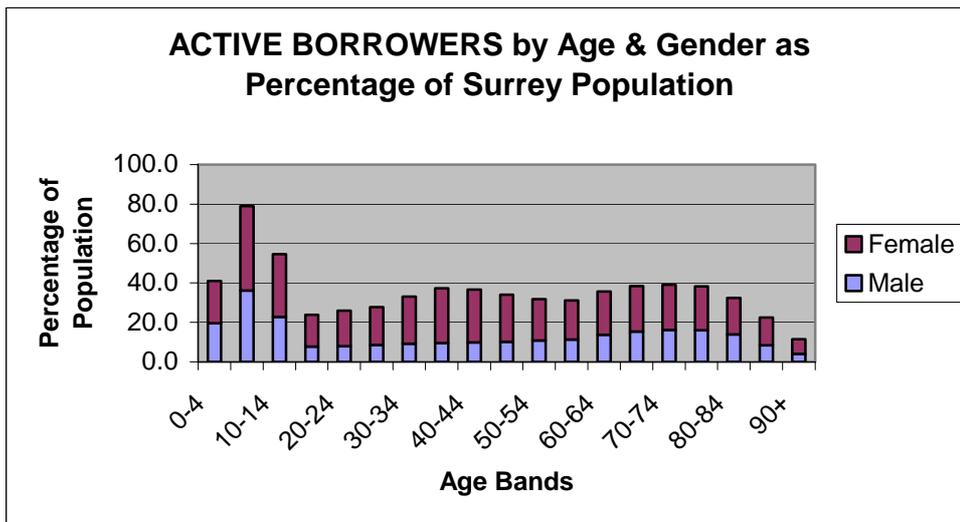


Table – active borrowers by age and gender

Surveys are conducted with users at a sample of libraries, and the results for 2009 at the libraries sampled show:

- 39% of users sampled were in full time or part time employment
- 32% were retired
- 10% were looking after the home
- 8% were self-employed
- 5% were unemployed
- 3% were in full time education and
- 2% were permanently sick/disabled.

From the same survey, 84% of users were White, with the highest ethnic minority group being Indian at Redhill.

A survey of a sample of mobile libraries suggests that 22% of mobile library users consider themselves to have mobility difficulties.

An estimated 96% of Surrey households can currently travel to a Group A or B library within 30 minutes by public transport.

The main equality, accessibility, social exclusion issues and barriers, and the equality groups they relate to (not all assessments will encounter issues relating to every strand)

Equality:

- Encouraging greater use by men and boys
- Supporting more vulnerable elderly and less mobile residents
- Ensuring any community partnered libraries that are introduced meet the universal ethos of the library service as well as specific equality requirements
- Encouraging use by those people who are currently less likely to use the library service, as demonstrated by the launch of ebooks in July 2010, designed to attract a new audience into the library service.
- Ensuring that community partnered libraries continue to meet equality standards

Accessibility:

- Ensuring any reductions in opening hours do not have disproportionate impact on any one equality strand.
- Providing adequate accessibility to services – both physically through branches and online
- Ensuring that community partnered libraries continue to meet accessibility standards
- Consultation on a proposal to remove the mobile library service

Social exclusion:

- Continuing to support anyone at risk of digital exclusion to benefit from the wide range of online features available.
- Supporting unemployed people through the recession and targeting marketing to specific communities so that they can benefit from the service.
- Mitigating the impact on rural communities of any reduction in service levels and / or mobile library provision. This links to the ongoing bus review.

Now describe how this fits into 'the bigger picture' including other council or local plans and priorities.

National steer:

There is no national strategy guiding library services. Culture Minister Ed Vaizey has set out a national vision of libraries as 'facilitators of a national passion for reading; supporting literacy and providing places where anyone can go to access information and entertainment, go online and find out about public services and citizenship'.

The government is currently supporting just under 40 library authorities to explore new ways of delivering the service more efficiently through the Future Libraries Programme, and ideas being explored include transferring control of some library services to communities to run, merging services provided by different authorities into one cross-boundary service and locating libraries in retail stores.

Drivers for change:

There are number of national and technological drivers, which will impact on the future shape and development of the service:

- Technological advances are facilitating new ways of accessing and engaging with library services, demonstrated by the success of the ebook launch.
- The Decentralisation and Localism Bill, published in December 2010 sets out a ‘community right to buy’ whereby communities will be given powers to save local assets threatened with closure, by allowing them to bid for the ownership and management of community assets. There will be a further right to give communities a right of challenge to run local authority services, as a means of empowering local communities to get more involved in public service delivery.
- Drive to decentralise decision making and devolve delivery to local people and local institutions
- National and local long-term trend of decline in book borrowing from libraries
- Budgetary constraints due to economic climate and commitments within the Medium Term Financial Plan, as well as the impact of the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review and associated reductions in local government funding.
- Increased interest from other library authorities at exploring alternative forms of governance as a means of reducing costs and improving performance.
- Efficiency drive towards partnership working and sharing services, such as the SE7 collaboration on IT.
- Improvement and Efficiency South East Asset Review which is seeking to help Surrey’s public sector make better use of its assets.

Public Value Review vision

The review has identified a strategic vision for the library service, options for lowering costs and recommendations for developing the service for the future.

The review has been carried out in the context of a difficult financial climate, and therefore the options being proposed do involve budget reductions, which will impact upon current service levels and service users, if they are adopted.

There will also be an impact on staff if the options are adopted, and a separate EIA has been completed to look at staffing.

The PVR has worked to establish a vision for a relevant and lively service at the heart of local public services and cultural events in the community:

“At the heart of local communities connecting people to leisure and knowledge through an inspirational world class and innovative service open to all”

Evidence gathering and fact-finding

What evidence is available to support your views above? Please include a summary of the available evidence including identifying where there are gaps to be included in the action plan.

Remember to consider accessibility alongside the equality groups

Evidence gathered:

- Assessment methodology for library branches developed, setting out robust criteria for making decisions about library branches based on use, cost, social need, accessibility and proximity to another library.
- Surrey Heatmaps
- Information on language use by Children and Adults across the County
- Mapping including information on deprivation, car use, public transport use and coverage.
- Accessibility maps
- Library performance and usage data
- Mosaic data
- Customer feedback and surveys.
- Neighbourhood Survey
- Research information, see references provided in the document.
- Buildings database
- Public library user surveys (PLUS and e-PLUS).
- Manifesto for a networked nation report
- Report from focus groups run by Ipsos Mori in 2008
- GIS mapping completed for the review
- Local profiles of library branches, including accessibility and demographic issues – developed by the review
- Surrey Draft Single Equality Scheme

Gaps in information:

- Equalities information, such as disability or race is not captured when residents join the library, and therefore we only have limited information about these groups from the user surveys. There is currently no policy in place about capturing this information. User surveys capture information about the respondents ethnicity, disabilities and economic activity, but this data is not currently used to identify under use by specific communities at branches, or to develop services or approaches to encourage greater use by underrepresented groups of the service.
- Residents and equality advisory groups have not yet been consulted on the proposed approach, and this will be important to inform the proposals and develop appropriate mitigating actions against negative impact and no final decision will be taken by Cabinet until consultation is completed and the results analysed.
- No electronic record of mobile library users. The mobile libraries do not have computers and therefore users have a separate borrowing card to those used at the branches. The review is addressing this by compiling an electronic

database of records.

How have stakeholders been involved in this assessment? Who are they, and what is their view?

Key stakeholders:

Key stakeholders have been identified as:

- Residents
- Service users – who might not live in Surrey but use Surrey library branches and online services
- Members
- Corporate leadership team
- Staff
- Unions
- Children, schools and families
- Adult social care
- Schools & learning
- SCC corporate services – Finance, Estates, Procurement, Legal, Communications, Corporate Policy and IMT
- District & Borough partners
- Other library authorities
- Voluntary, community & faith sector

Involvement:

- 3 x Focus groups with staff
- 1 x focus group with managers
- Regular meetings with the Elected Member Reference Group
- Mori report on lapsed users in 2008
- Meetings with VCFS partners
- Regular meetings with corporate services colleagues
- Regular meetings with an external expert – Graham Bullpit, Direction of Information Services at the University of Kingston
- Two meetings with Unison representatives
- Report to Corporate Leadership Team
- Staff briefings scheduled for January 2011
- Regular meetings with the Service's Senior Management Team and Head of Service.

The main messages that emerged from the staff focus groups were:

- The need for a clear vision
- The library network is not ideal, with some communities having several libraries and others having none
- Co-locating with other services can increase footfall
- Opening hours can be confusing – with Group C libraries having varied opening hours and adhoc closures due to staff shortages
- The need to develop use of under-used or under-promoted areas of stock and reflect what people want to read
- Volunteers help add value and extend the activities a library can offer
- Library buildings need to be better presented and promoted
- The mobile libraries offer a very personal service but are not well used

- The potential to transport users to libraries

Planned consultation:

Consultation on the recommendations affecting the branch network is planned to begin in February following publication of the report.

Analysis and assessment

**Given the available information, what is the actual or likely impact on minority, disadvantaged, vulnerable and socially excluded groups? Is this impact positive or negative or a mixture of both?
(Refer to the EIA guidance for full list of issues to consider when making your analysis)**

Actual or likely impact from Public Value Review:

The EIA has been completed in the context of the public value review process. It is important to note that the final report from the Public Value Review will present options to for a Cabinet decision as to the shape, scope and size of any reductions they consider it necessary to take.

Options include the potential to retain existing service levels.

Impact is considered in relation to the main review proposals within the scope of this review:

- 1) Engaging with local communities on establishing a community partnership at the lowest scoring libraries. The Council will work to ensure discussions with interested parties are underway by September 2011.**

As part of the PVR, an assessment methodology has been developed to assess branch viability against criteria such as use, cost and local profile. The lowest-scoring libraries will be the libraries put forward as part of an initial phase of consultation regarding the engagement of local organisations in negotiating community transfers.

Likely positive impacts:

- Community partnership gives local communities more control over local library provision, and greater freedom to adapt to local needs. Reducing costs at these libraries will enable the service to focus resources on improving services at its strategic core of libraries - equipped with wifi and an interesting range of events and activities to ensure that the service can continue to be provided and developed in the future

Likely negative impacts:

- If suitable community partnerships cannot be established, survey data from November 2009 suggests between 4% and 10% of service users have mobility issues and will therefore find it more difficult to access an alternative library.
- The same survey suggests that up to 12% of users have hearing problems.
- Whilst library users are predominantly White British, there is a significant degree of local variation reflecting the ethnicity profile of different communities.
- Children, and families without a car are likely to be impacted as they will not be able to easily travel to an alternative library. This may have a bigger impact on younger and school-age children as they may be less able to participate in activities such as Rhymetime and the Summer Reading Challenge.
- Low income groups may not be able to afford to travel to an alternative library

- The development of community managed libraries and ongoing support to them requires clear standards to be in place to avoid a risk of negative impact on any of the equality strands and ensure that a high quality and universal is accessible to all.

Mitigating actions:

- The review has developed a methodology for assessing libraries in relation to cost, use, social need, proximity to another library and suitability of the building.
- The review is proposing that the libraries that are currently in Surrey Priority Areas remain as part of Surrey's strategic core, even if they appear as low scoring libraries. Instead, efforts should be concentrated on promoting the library and its benefits to these communities.
- Surrey's libraries all have hearing loops and are accessible to people with disabilities, although some have extra facilities, such as a disabled toilet.
- Estate management - the service needs to take account of the needs of disabled people whether they have physical, sensory or learning disabilities and including the rights enshrined in the convention on the rights of disabled people to access to information and public spaces.
- The Books on Wheels volunteer service will continue to offer a library service for housebound users. There is the potential to improve this service by working with the WRVS to extend this service to residential homes.
- Public transport modelling suggests that between 94.8% and 95.1% of households would continue to have a journey time of under 30 minutes to a library by public transport, compared to 96% at the moment.
- Over 85% of residents have access to a car.
- Surrey's online library offers 24/7 access to the library catalogue, the user's account and instant access to a range of information and downloadable ebooks. Using online services (such as browsing, finding information and downloading ebooks) is a realistic alternative for some service users, and branches and the telephone based 'Enquiries Direct' service can support users with this.

2) Installing wifi into branches

Likely positive impacts:

- Offer an enhanced service to all and encourage people to stay longer in the library
- Supports students and working age residents to have quicker and easier access to computer facilities
- Allows users with their own laptops and smart phones to use their own equipment, freeing up Public Access Terminals for use by service users who do not have their own technology.

Likely negative impacts:

- None identified.

3) Increasing the online stock for reference, and subsequently reducing hard copies

Likely positive impacts:

- Responds to a publishing trend, offers more cost-effective access to reference material.

Likely negative impacts:

- Some users will be less familiar and less confident with using material online

Mitigating actions:

- Telephone service 'Enquiries Direct' and Library staff can support users with using the online material. Addressing the digital divide is already a key role for libraries. In addition- online reference and information resources, user guides and education, commitment to bring 10,000 digitally excluded people online as part of Race Online 2012 pledge – this is part of the Library Service Action Plan.
- Staff training programme is already supporting staff to increase their internet and IT skills

4) Offering more and more content online, with an increasing focus on interactivity and user input

Overall libraries services provide information and increasingly information technology offers ways in which to provide this information in different ways and so cater for the needs of a wider range of users. However libraries are only one service area and so must connect into a wider approach to digital inclusion in Surrey.

Users will have a range of requirements to be able to access virtual information, including:

- Levels of literacy, visual and hearing impairments, learning difficulties, etc)
- Capacity to use computers to access information
- Capacity to use computer equipment – hardware, but also in terms of cost, transport, etc)
- Accessing the training to be able to use this equipment and software

Libraries are a key service supporting residents to access IT and the Internet and to do so with confidence. Surrey libraries are part of the UK Online network.

Likely positive impacts:

- Surrey's online library offers 24/7 access to the library catalogue, the user's account and instant access to a range of information and downloadable ebooks. The Joint Neighbourhood Survey in 2009/10 quarter four asked residents additional questions about their computer and email use – 86.4% of residents sampled use the internet and email, of whom over 96% use broadband at home. Increasing the range and scope of virtual library services offers the opportunity to enable 24/7 easy access to all residents.
- Ebooks have proved very popular since their launch in July 2010, with over 3,000 new borrowers registering in the first three months since launch.
- Information provided by the office for national statistics suggests an increasing level of regular users in the population, particularly the 16-24 age group. Networking, communication and playing games remain the most popular online activities

Risks of negative impacts:

- 10 million adults in the UK have never used the internet. Four million of those are among the most disadvantaged:

- 39% are over 65
- 38% are unemployed
- 19% are families with children.
- Use of the web decreases with age and increases with income. While only 10% of 16 to 24 year olds are offline, that rises to 50% of 65 to 74 year olds.
- 47% of those living in households earning less than £11.5k do not use the internet compared to only 4% of those with an income of over £30k.
- 48% of disabled people are offline.
- Rural and coastal areas have the highest concentrations of older residents who don't use the internet.
- Lack of motivation, access and skills are the key reasons why people don't get online. Inspiring people and nudging them towards trying the internet for the first time is vital as 59% of people don't see a reason to get online, and this rises to 63% of those 65-74 and over.
- 14% of people cite cost as a barrier, but this increases in younger groups with it being an issue for 51% of those aged 25-34.
- Almost a quarter of people say they don't have the necessary skills, rising to 33% of over 75s.

Mitigating actions:

- An EIA is scheduled to be completed by the service on the role of the virtual library
- Libraries already offer computer buddy sessions and informal learning.
- Web standards for accessibility are in line with the SCC corporate standards

5) Improving quality assurance

Likely positive impacts:

- High quality service for all.
- Community managed libraries continue to meet equality and diversity standards

Likely negative impacts:

- None identified

6) Delivering a marketing strategy to increase use, with increasing emphasis on targeting specific groups and communities

Likely positive impacts:

- Increasing focus on identifying under use by specific communities and equality strands and working to promote the benefits of the library service to them
- The service is already exploring using more targeted campaigns for specific collections
- The more people who use the service, the more people who will benefit from access to reading, IT, information and cultural activities
- Promote the library as a free resource to find information to support with health and wellbeing, for children and young people, to support job seekers and provide a social space.

Likely negative impacts:

- None identified.

7) Determining the business case for introduction of book tagging technology (RFID – Radio Frequency Identification) which could lead to greater efficiencies.

Likely positive impacts:

- Improved customer experience and efficiency through automation
- In the longer-term, ability to pay fines through self-service machines
- Potential to use 'community payback' scheme to mitigate cost of tagging the books – this could provide valuable work experience to offenders.

Likely negative impacts:

- None identified

8) Discontinuing the mobile library service and establishing alternative ways of providing a service to the most vulnerable

Likely positive impacts:

- Report is indicating that a proportion of the savings achieved by removing the mobile library service would be redirected into supporting users to use branch libraries which offer a much wider range of stock and activities – opportunity to improve their experience of the library service, offer greater opportunities for interaction and improve the social experience of using a library. The nature of these alternatives will be informed by consultation with residents.
- 78% of service users should be able to independently access alternative provision, based on mobility data from the 2009 PLUS survey.

Likely negative impacts:

- A representative sample from the November 2009 PLUS survey shows that, of users on suburban and rural routes, 88% were over 65.
- From the same survey, 22% said they considered they had difficulty in getting about. That suggests that around 550 of the 2,648 active users of the suburban and rural routes may not have easy access unless some alternative is provided.
- The same survey found that users are predominantly women, with 78% of users being female at one mobile library sampled, and 89% of users being female at the other vehicle. Whilst women are generally higher library users than men, use of the mobiles appears to have a much higher percentage of female users than the branches. Some elderly women will have different needs to men, such as needing a female volunteer if opting to use the Books on Wheels service.
- The survey also found that up to 15% of users on one mobile library had hearing difficulties, 11% had sight problems and 7% had difficulties using their fingers. These users will require support to enable them to continue to access services as per the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People to access information and public spaces. People with visual impairments can also benefit from RNIB provision, and this needs to be better promoted by the Library Service.
- Routes include some of Surrey's most rural areas, including areas where public transport modelling suggests more than 60 minutes travel time to reach

a branch library.

- Surrey's mobile libraries are wheelchair accessible and some have hearing loops – the service has a good picture of accessibility at its branches and any improvements required to branches will need to be considered as part of designing a suitable and accessible alternative for users.
- Surrey's online library offers 24/7 access to the library catalogue, the user's account and instant access to a range of information and downloadable ebooks.
- Residents with extremely limited mobility will not be able to access a library service unless an alternative arrangement is in place – this has the most effect on residents in Residential Homes and Sheltered Accommodation.

Mitigating actions:

- Consultation will be through a postal survey. Analysis of all mobile library users is currently being completed to enable us to have a better picture of where users are, what their likely needs are, and whether they are able to travel to an alternative branch library. There are acknowledged limitations in the information known about mobile library users.
- Working with Community Transport and Volunteer Car Schemes to understand the costs and potential for supporting the least mobile residents to travel to a library. This will enable them to benefit from a wider range of services than is on offer at a mobile library and ensures they can maintain their independence.
- Promoting the 'Books on Wheels' volunteer service to residents unwilling or unable to travel to a branch library, including those residents in Residential Homes or Sheltered Accommodation.
- Anecdotal evidence from mobile library staff suggests many users are making use of the free bus pass for over 60s to travel to branch libraries
- Over 85% of households in Surrey have at least one car
- The 2009 PLUS survey suggests that between 98% and 100% of users at the mobiles sampled were White British, therefore impact on the grounds of race or religion is considered to be negligible.
- Using online services (such as browsing, finding information and downloading ebooks) is a realistic alternative for some service users, and branches and the telephone based 'Enquiries Direct' service can support users with this.

What can be done to reduce the effects of any negative impacts? Where negative impact cannot be completely diminished, can this be justified, and is it lawful?

Principles for mitigating actions

- Any new arrangements should ensure that they are compliant with both the equality act, the current public sector duty and reviewed against the new public sector duty that will be introduced in April 2011. This will be an ongoing requirement.
- New technologies - care must be taken that they are accessible and meet accessibility criteria for disabilities.

- Information provision - communications around changes to services and any new arrangements will need to be accessible. Design of new online services will be strongly influenced by an ongoing relationship with online service users and potential new online service users.

Where there are positive impacts, what changes have been or will be made, who are the beneficiaries and how have they benefited?

See above

Recommendations

Please summarise the main recommendations arising from the assessment. If it is impossible to diminish negative impacts to an acceptable or even lawful level the recommendation should be that the proposal or the relevant part of it should not proceed.

This EIA has focused only on the short term proposals and excludes assessment of impact on staff.

Recommendations are:

- 1) Complete a separate EIA in relation to staffing issues
- 2) Consider the need for enhancements to access at libraries
- 3) Complete planned EIA on Virtual Services
- 4) EIA required to be updated following consultation phase and as part of implementation plan to consider the impact of the medium and longer term recommendations
- 5) Operational EIAs are completed as identified in the implementation plan as recommendations are implemented
- 6) Set clear standards for community managed libraries to ensure compliance with equalities legislation and Surrey values
- 7) Consultation with users on changes to service will need to reach more vulnerable groups
- 8) Complete data capture on mobile library users

Action Plan – actions needed to implement the EIA recommendations

Issue	Action	Expected outcome	Who	Deadline for action
Complete a separate EIA in relation to	Complete initial EIA	Screening completed.	Vicki Eade - screening	November 2010

staffing issues		Full EIA completed as part of action plan	Rose Wilson, Hilary Ely – Full EIA	In line with implementation plan
Complete data capture on mobile library users update EIA following consultation and use findings from this EIA to inform plans for future provision	Complete database and Mosaic profiling	Better picture of service users and appropriate package of support	Tracy Waters / Gregory Finneron	November 2010 – January 2011 To inform implementation – timescales to be agreed.
If no suitable partner is found for some libraries consider the need for enhancements to access at libraries where access is inferior to existing provision.	Review gaps in provision of hearing loops, wheelchair ramps etc.	Needs to be met. Need to ensure that users disadvantaged by removal of a highly accessible mobile library if this occurs are not redirected to one that cannot meet their needs	Rose Wilson Work with Estates	2011/12
Complete planned EIA on Virtual Services Determine appropriate consultation with affected groups, such as disability empowerment boards, the Surrey Coalition, the Surrey Association for the Visually Impaired, specialist colleagues in adult social care and children's services	Complete EIA Take to DEG	New technologies are accessible and meet accessibility criteria for disabilities PVR recommendations taken into account	Helen Leech, Virtual Content Manager	Within 6 months
EIA required to be updated following consultation phase and as part of implementation plan to consider the impact of the medium and longer term recommendations	Assign responsibility for updating and delivering on the implementation plan Assign responsibility for specific EIAs, e.g. on the design and specification of	Aspects that are out of the scope of this EIA are adequately addressed	Rose Wilson – to delegate in line with implementation plan	As part of implementation plan – timescales to be agreed

	community hubs			
Set clear standards for community partnered libraries to ensure compliance with equalities legislation and Surrey values	Establish clear expectations as part of strategy development	Clear expectations, high quality universal service maintained	Rose Wilson – as per implementation plan	
Consultation with users will need to reach more vulnerable groups	Build in consultation with Equality Advisory Group into Consultation Plan Ensure communications are accessible – e.g. provided in easy read web versions, use equality partners to transmit this information in their newsletters	Consultation is effective and inclusive	Tracy Waters/ Rose Wilson Work with Communications and Corporate Policy	Consultation plan developed, and contact being made with equalities groups

- Actions should have SMART Targets
- Actions should be reported to the Directorate Equality Group (DEG) and incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Action Plan, Service Plans and/or personal objectives of key staff.

Date taken to Directorate Equality Group for challenge and feedback	25 November 2010
Review date	
Person responsible for review	Tracy Waters
Head of Service signed off	
Date completed	
Date forwarded to EIA coordinator for publishing	

- **Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review**
- **Electronic copy to be forwarded to your service EIA coordinator to forward for publishing on the external website**

EIA publishing checklist

- Plain English – will your EIA make sense to the public?
- Acronyms – check that you have explained any specialist names or terminology
- Evidence – will your evidence stand up to scrutiny; can you justify your conclusions?
- Stakeholders and verification – have you included a range of views and perspectives to back up your analysis?
- Gaps and information – have you identified any gaps in services or information that need to be addressed in the action plan?
- Legal framework – have you identified any potential discrimination and included actions to address it?
- Success stories – have you included any positive impacts that have resulted in change for the better?
- Action plan – is your action plan SMART? Have you informed the relevant people to ensure the action plan is carried out?
- Review – have you included a review date and a named person to carry it out?
- Challenge – has your EIA been taken to your DEG for challenge
- Signing off – has your Head of Service signed off your EIA?
- Basics – have you signed and dated your EIA and named it for publishing?