

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Date and Time: - Wednesday, 14 October 2020 at 11.00 a.m.
Venue: - Microsoft Teams Meeting
Membership: - Councillors Cusworth, R. Elliott, Jarvis, Jepson, Keenan, Mallinder, Napper, Steele (Chair), Taylor, Tweed, Walsh and Wyatt.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view [via the Council's website](#). The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair or Governance Advisor of their intentions prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 September 2020 (Pages 1 - 10)

To consider the minutes of meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 16 September 2020 and to approve them as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of items listed on the agenda.

4. Questions from Members of the Public and the Press

To receive questions relating to items of business on the agenda from members of the public or press who are present at the meeting.

5. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.

Items for Pre-Decision Scrutiny

In accordance with the outcome of the Governance Review in 2016, the following items are submitted for pre-scrutiny ahead of the Cabinet meeting on 19 October 2020. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are invited to comment and make recommendations on the proposals contained within the report.

6. Libraries Strategy (Pages 11 - 139)

Cabinet Portfolio: - Cleaner, Greener Communities

Strategic Directorate: - Regeneration and Environment

7. Towns Fund - Town Investment Plan (Pages 140 - 164)

Cabinet Portfolio: - Jobs and the Local Economy

Strategic Directorate: - Regeneration and Environment

8. Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 1st October to 31st December, 2020 (Pages 165 - 172)

To review and identify items for pre-decision scrutiny from the Forward Plan of Key Decisions covering the period from 1st October to 31st December, 2020.

9. Call-in Issues

To consider any issues referred for call-in from recent Cabinet meetings.

10. Urgent Business

To determine any item which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

11. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held on Wednesday 4 November at 11am as a Microsoft Teams Meeting.



SHARON KEMP,
Chief Executive.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
Wednesday, 16th September, 2020

Present:- Councillor Steele (in the Chair); Councillors Cusworth, R. Elliott, Jarvis, Jepson, Keenan, Mallinder, Napper, Taylor, Walsh and Wyatt.

Apologies for absence: - There were no apologies for absence. .

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at: -

<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

210. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 2ND SEPTEMBER 2020

Resolved: -

That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 2 September 2020 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

211. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Cusworth declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 8, Advice Review and Advice Services Service Level Agreement as she was a member of the Rotherham and District Citizen's Advice Bureau Board.

212. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or press.

213. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items requiring the exclusion of the public and press.

214. THE YEAR AHEAD

Consideration was given to a report that was submitted for pre-decision scrutiny ahead of the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 21 September 2020 in respect of the Council's Year Ahead Plan.

The Leader, the Chief Executive and the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement attended the meeting to present the report.

The Leader noted that the Council's Year Ahead Plan had been designed to set out how the council planned to support residents and businesses, helping them to build resilience and adapt during the uncertain times created by the pandemic. It was noted that the document would be the Council's Plan for operating within, and recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, capturing the key actions through to May 2021, and also providing a basis for the development of a longer-term plan for the

borough. The Leader advised that while the plan acted as an interim document that was focussed on enabling recovery from the pandemic in advance of a longer term, plan being developed, it also included details of normal non-pandemic related activities.

The Leader advised that the Year Ahead plan was based around five key themes of

- Thriving neighbourhoods
- Better health and wellbeing
- Economic recovery
- New ways of working
- Confidence and hope in Rotherham.

It was noted that the Year Ahead Plan document outlined the outcomes that each theme would be focussed on delivering as the key activities that would need to take place between September 2020 and May 2021 in order for these outcomes to be delivered. The Leader advised that in addition to the five key themes that the plan also included two cross-cutting strands: climate impact and equalities and social justice. The Leader also noted importance of using the new powers provided by the South Yorkshire Devolution Deal to advance the priorities as detailed in the plan.

The Leader noted the key theme of new ways of working and how that would impact on not only how and where staff worked, but also how customer's interacted with the council. The Leader advised that with new ways of working it was essential that all residents were still able to access the services that they needed in a way that was suitable for them.

Members noted that with new ways of working, and very limited face to face access to services for residents that many residents were being left behind and asked how in light of these changes, that had been accelerated by the pandemic how effective communication with all residents could be enabled. The Leader noted that it was essential that all residents should always receive excellent service regardless of the method that they used to contact the council and advised that since the pandemic had started waiting times for phone enquiries had decreased with many staff who had formally dealt with customers face to face dealing with customers over the phone. The Leader advised that with the Borough's libraries reopening different options for using them to enable face to face access to council services for residents in their local community were currently being looked at.

Members asked how it would be ensured that residents would always be able to get in touch with the council in order to access services. The Leader advised noted the extra staff resource that was now available to deal with phone enquires and noted that while staff resource was an important factor, that if a service was delivered efficiently first time then residents did not need to make repeat contacts regarding the same enquiry. The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement noted that

lessons learned from the operation of the Community Hub helpline during pandemic would be used to develop future plans around customer contact and how customer contact could be managed most effectively. The Chief Executive advised that an analysis of repeat contacts for the same enquiry was taking place and would be fed into subsequent service planning activity.

Members welcomed the focus on community spirit and working together that was contained in the Year Ahead plan.

Members asked for further information on the proposed timescales for the review of how council buildings were used that was taking place. The Chief Executive advised that staff had been surveyed in order to gather information on their experiences of new ways of working over the previous months and noted that these responses would feed into the review, noting that the results of the review would start to come through in early October. The Chair asked how staff were being engaged with and consulted in order to ensure that they had a safe and productive working environment to work in, whether they were working at home or in a council building. The Chief Executive noted that the capacity for council buildings had been reduced in line with government guidance and advised that priority for a return to working in council buildings was being given to teams and individual staff members who needed, for varying reasons to have some time in an office base. The Chief Executive noted that due to the ever-changing situation and guidance around the pandemic, flexibility regarding working practices was needed, but assured members that staff who were working at home would continue to be supported to enable them to work productively. The Chief Executive noted that the staff survey on working practices had not highlighted any major areas of concern from staff.

Members welcomed the proposed review of the councils approach to equalities and noted their approval for how equalities and social justice considerations ran through the entire document. The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement outlined the proposed approach and objectives to the review of the council's approach to equalities. Members agreed that it would be beneficial for a sub-group of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be established to feed into the Council's review of its approach to Equalities.

The Chair thanked the Leader, the Chief Executive and the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement for attending the meeting and answering members' questions.

Resolved: -

- 1) That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
- 2) That the sub-group of the Improving Places Select Commission be established to in order to feed into the planned review relating to

the return to, and use of Council buildings, and that the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be invited to be a member of the sub-group.

- 3) That the sub-group of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on Communications be re-established in order to review how customers access council services.
- 4) That a sub-group of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be established to feed into the Council's review of its approach to Equalities.

215. VOLUNTARY SECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE

Consideration was given to a report that was submitted for pre-decision scrutiny ahead of the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 21 September 2020 in respect of Voluntary Sector Infrastructure.

The Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities and the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement attended the meeting to present the report.

The report stated that in November 2017 Cabinet and Commissioners had approved a review on a renewed approach to the delivery of Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Services in Rotherham and that this had resulted in the awarding of a three-year service level agreement (SLA) with Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) running from April 2018 to March 2021. The SLA brought together working with both VAR and Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA) into a single SLA.

The report made recommendations for the next three-year Infrastructure SLA for the period April 2021 to March 2024 that would take forward the commitments set out in the Rotherham Compact, build on experience gained through the current SLA and take into account research on the impact of COVID 19 in order to set out a aspirational strategic approach for the future of the voluntary and community sector in Rotherham.

The report also provided information on the approach that would be taken in order to enable the Council to achieve an "excellent" accreditation under the Equality Framework for Local Government and for it to be able to address the equalities implications that had arisen from the COVID 19 emergency. The Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities advised that details on the processes and timescales for this work would be provided in a future report to Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member advised that in order to enable this review to take place and also to enable a new SLA for VCS Infrastructure to commence in March 2021 it was being recommended that the equalities component of the current SLA be separated from the future VCS Infrastructure arrangements and incorporated into the equalities review. The Cabinet

Member advised that the recommended approach would protect the services currently provided by REMA around increasing capacity of ethnic minority organisations for at least a year, whilst the Council undertook a wider piece of work to improve equalities but also allow for the wider VCS infrastructure to continue. The Cabinet Member advised that Voluntary Action Rotherham and REMA had been consulted and had advised that they were supportive of the proposed approach.

Members welcomed the proposed approach to reviewing how Voluntary Services would be provided and noted their approval for the integral role that Voluntary Organisations would play in the design process of the new SLA.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities and the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement for attending the meeting and answering members' questions

Resolved: -

That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.

216. ADVICE REVIEW AND ADVICE SERVICES SLA

Consideration was given to a report that was submitted for pre-decision scrutiny ahead of the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 21 September 2020 in respect of the Advice Review and Advice Services Service Level Agreement.

The Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities and the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement attended the meeting to present the report.

The report provided an update on the provision of advice services across council in-house and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) providers and set out a proposed process for a new three-year Service Level Agreement (SLA) through co-design with VCS advice providers for the period 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24. It was noted that it was proposed that this would be done through inviting a lead VCS organisation to work with the Council.

The report noted that the provision of advice services across a range of topics, and especially in relation to benefits and debt, both through council services and the voluntary sector, provided essential support to thousands of vulnerable people in Rotherham each year. The Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities noted that demand for advice services remained high, and was expected to continue to rise, particularly as the economic impact of the COVID emergency, and end of financial support schemes created increased financial difficulties for residents. The Cabinet Member advised that experiences and learning gained from operating the Community HUB throughout the COVID emergency had been captured and would be used to inform the development of improved

referral pathways for advice services. The Cabinet Member advised that it was proposed that all advice service providers that would be delivering services under the SLA would be signatories to the agreement in order to enable them to access further grant funding.

Members asked how the council's in-house advice services were being engaged in the review and the development of a new SLA. The Cabinet Member noted the remit of, and the services provided by the council's in-house advice services and assured members that they would be part of the discussions regarding the development of the new SLA. Members asked for assurances that new SLA for advice services would have the capacity to cope with the projected increase demand for services. The Cabinet Member advised that the design process would include considerations around how services delivery was designed that would enable the SLA to have the capacity to provide for the anticipated increases in demand for services.

The Chair asked whether it was feasible for the proposed annual budget for the SLA not to be increased from the current budget or increase over the period of the SLA given the predicted increase in demand. The Cabinet Member advised that there were no plans to increase the budget allocated for the SLA but noted that the design process could potentially impact on this.

Members asked whether there was a risk of smaller advice organisations being not being included in the new SLA. The Cabinet Member assured members that the new SLA would be an inclusive and a partnership between the council and advice providers.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities and the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement for attending the meeting and answering members' questions.

Resolved: -

That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.

217. ANNUAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Consideration was given to a report that was submitted for pre-decision scrutiny ahead of the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 21 September 2020 in respect of the Annual Housing Development Report.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, the Strategic Director for Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and the Head of Strategic Housing Development attended the meeting to present the report.

The Cabinet Member for Housing noted that the 2020/21 Housing

Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan that had been approved by Council in February 2020 included an additional £65million for housing growth over the next five years, using both existing reserves and HRA borrowing that would bring the total forecast HRA investment in the development of new homes in the Borough to approximately £130million. The Cabinet Member advised that each year a report would be presented to Cabinet that set out a housing programme for the year ahead, with the 2020/21 report being the first of these reports.

The report provided information on the Council-owned sites that were being proposed for inclusion in the annual programme that would be delivered through a combination of direct delivery by the Council, transfer of land to Registered Provider (Housing Association) partners, and by sales of land on the open market. It was noted that whilst the majority of these sites were small garage and infill sites located within existing neighbourhoods, they were capable of delivering small numbers of homes and would be an important part of the Council's housing development programme.

The report also set out proposals for new governance arrangements and delegated powers surrounding housing delivery that would ensure that officers had the ability to act swiftly and ensure that opportunities that would enable the delivery of the objectives set out in the Annual Housing Plan were not missed when they arose. The Head of Strategic Housing Development noted that ward members would be consulted at any early stage regarding the development of garage and infill sites in their wards.

The Head of Strategic Housing Development noted that there had been an error in "Appendix 3b, Strategic pipeline of Council-owned sites – 2021/22 projected schemes" as originally included in the agenda pack, in that it had identified some sites for proposed development in error. The Head of Strategic Housing Development advised that the appendix had now been amended and the error corrected.

Members asked how the Section 106 agreements that were linked to new housing developments would contribute to the delivery of the housing plan. The Cabinet Member advised that Section 106 agreements would play an important role in the council's plan for housing delivery as they enabled via the planning process a simple and easily to administer way to enable housing to replace stock lost through right to buy purchases. Members noted their approval the proposed use of garage sites for infill development and welcomed the plans for working with ward members on the proposals for these sites. Members asked how the council would enable smaller local building companies to have the opportunity to develop these sites. The Cabinet Member advised that the council ran an annual housing developers summit in order to engage with local builders on the council's development plans. The Head of Strategic Housing Development noted that the council also produced a newsletter for smaller local developers and that regular communication was also maintained with them on the council's future development plans. The

Chair noted that it was essential that local businesses be supported by engaging with them on the delivery of housing in the Borough.

Members asked how the changes to planning regulations would impact on the delivery of the council's housing plan. The Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment advised that services were working together regarding the implications of the new planning regulations for the delivery of the housing plan.

The Chair asked how a potential fall in house prices related to the pandemic could impact on the delivery of the housing plan. The Cabinet Member advised that potential variances in house prices had been taken into consideration in the development of the plan, and that thorough preparatory work for each site would ensure that any issues that had the potential to impact on the successful delivery of a site were highlighted and addressed at any early stage. The Head of Strategic Housing Development noted that demand for housing and house prices were currently in healthy position.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Housing, the Strategic Director for Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and the Head of Strategic Housing Development for attending the meeting and answering members' questions.

Resolved: -

That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.

218. TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER, AND A DOG CONTROL PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER

Consideration was given to a report that was submitted for pre-decision scrutiny ahead of the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 21 September 2020 in respect of Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) Proposals – September 2020.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety and the Assistant Director - Community Safety and Street Scene attended the meeting to present the report.

It was noted that the report to Cabinet in July 2020 that had detailed proposals for consultation on the details of the PSPO's had been delayed significantly due to Covid-19 pandemic, and as such a request had been made for the decision to implement the new PSPO's be exempt from call-in in order to prevent a potential gap between the old PSPO's expiring and the new proposed PSPO's coming into force occurring. It was noted that as such the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, in consultation with the Leader of the Opposition had agreed to exempt the decision from the normal call-in procedure.

The report noted that the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 had created powers to introduce PSPO's in order to prevent individuals or groups committing anti-social behaviour in public spaces, and that the introduction of these powers had superseded previous legislation, such as Dog Control Orders. This change of legislation had subsequently enabled the Council's Dog Control Order, that prohibited the fouling of land by dogs, to be transitioned into a PSPO. It was noted that this PSPO was due to expire on 19 October 2020. In addition, on 11 September 2017, the Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision-Making Meeting had agreed the implementation of a new PSPO from 1 October 2017 that prohibited a number of anti-social behaviours in the town centre. It was noted that this PSPO was due to expire on 30 September 2020.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety noted the role that scrutiny had played in the development and consultation process for the new proposed PSPO's. It was also noted that an extensive consultation process had taken place on the proposals. Full details of the consultation process and responses were included in the officer's report and it was noted by the Cabinet Member that the responses from the consultation had been overwhelmingly in favour of the proposals for the renewal of the two PSPO's.

Members noted that some respondents to the consultation had asked for changes to the PSPO's to be made and asked for further information on the changes that they had wanted to see. The Cabinet Member advised that the requests had been regarding extending the area covered by the Town Centre and Clifton Park PSPO. The Assistant Director - Community Safety and Street Scene noted that there had also been requests to increase the penalties for breaching the PSPO's.

Members noted the significant number of complaints that they received regarding dog fouling, on the frequency of dog bins being emptied and on the lack of bins in public spaces. Members agreed that residents must be urged to report incidents of bins not being emptied or being located in unsuitable locations, as well as regarding dog fouling not being cleaned up so that action could be taken to locate bins in the most suitable areas and to deploy enforcement activity in problem areas. The Cabinet Member agreed that only by residents reporting problems could a picture be created of where problem areas were and to enable appropriate deployment of resources. The Cabinet Member stated that 22 penalty notices for dog fouling had issued in the last year and noted that this was a considerable achievement given that enforcement officers had to be on the spot and witness an offence taking place. The Cabinet Member noted that more enforcement officers were being recruited and that the new officers would have links to specific neighbourhoods that would enable them to develop good local knowledge of their areas and to build relationships with local residents and ward members.

The Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities noted that new

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bins were currently being installed but that these bins would be for the replacement of damaged or missing bins, not for creating additional bin locations. The Assistant Director noted that bagged dog waste could be placed in any bin and not just in designated dog fouling bins and advised that where bins were missing that ward members would be consulted on the most suitable site for the replacement bin to be located.

The Chair asked about whether there were any exemptions for fines regarding dog fouling. The Assistant Director advised that owners of assistance dogs were exempt from fines and assured members that in all cases of enforcement activity equality issues were always considered and noted that any enforcement action taken would always need to meet the public interest test in being pursued.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety and the Assistant Director - Community Safety and Street Scene for attending the meeting and answering members' questions.

Resolved: -

That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.

219. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

220. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:

That the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held at 11am on Wednesday 14 October 2020 as Microsoft Teams meeting.

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 19 October 2020

Report Title

The new Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 and Action Plan for the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Zoe Oxley, Head of Operations and Business Transformation
01709 334283 or zoe.oxley@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report sets out the vision and framework contained in the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026. The report also sets out how the Strategy and new service offer will enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duty under the Public Library Act and meet the needs of the community through the delivery of the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service.

The Strategy and service offer has been finalised following feedback from the last phase of consultation, along with the Equalities Impact Analysis. All future delivery changes would be therefore underpinned by the Strategy.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to

1. Endorse the final version of the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 and associated service offer and recommend it to Council.
2. Note the consultation and engagement undertaken and the findings of the Equalities Impact Analysis.
3. Approve the Action Plan for Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs.

4. Note the progress made on the development of a new Library for Rotherham town centre.
5. Approve the transfer of Brinsworth Library to Brinsworth Community Trust, supported by Brinsworth Parish Council and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
6. Approve the relocation of Thurcroft Library from Thurcroft Junior Academy to the Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall site utilising the approved libraries capital allocated.
7. Approve the implementation of self- service technology in order for customers to access library sites independently.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Rotherham Library Strategy 2021-2026
- Appendix 2 Public consultation and engagement on the future of Rotherham Libraries and proposed changes to Brinsworth Library analysis report 2020
- Appendix 3 Equality Screening Assessment and Analysis for the Library Strategy
- Appendix 4 Action Plan for Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs 2020 - 2022

Background Papers

Consultation on a New Library Strategy 2020 – 2025 Cabinet Report– 20 May 2019

<https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s120860/Consultation%20on%20a%20New%20Library%20Strategy%202020%20-%202025.pdf>

Consultation and engagement on a Library Strategy and future service delivery model Cabinet Report – 20 January 2020

<https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=124103>

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
Council – 11 November 2020

Council Approval Required
Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

The new Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 and Action Plan for the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service

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1.	Background
1.1	Following approval from Cabinet on 20 th January, 2020, a final phase of consultation and engagement on the Library Strategy and future service offer took place between 3 rd February, 2020 until 26 th April, 2020.
1.2	The purpose of this consultation and engagement was to seek the views of Rotherham residents in respect of the draft library strategy and future service delivery model including a proposed community managed model for Brinsworth Library.
1.3	The consultation activity and Equalities Impact Assessment have been used alongside the Assessment of Local Need in order to update the Library Strategy. An Action Plan has also been produced to set out how the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service will deliver against the new Strategy in 2020 – 2022.
2.	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The final version of the Library Strategy has been informed by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two phases of consultation and engagement which took place over a 13 month period, as set out in section 4. The report on the final phase is attached at Appendix 2. • The libraries Equalities Impact Analysis, as set out in section 10, attached as an Appendix 3. • Reflections from the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown. • Further consideration of the Libraries Needs Assessment. <p>The key conclusions are as follows:</p>
2.1.1	<p>Vision and Mission:</p> <p>The direction of travel is supported by the majority of those consulted, with 83% approving the vision and mission. This has subsequently been moderately refined to provide better alignment with the Council's work related to customer services and neighbourhood-working.</p>
2.1.2	<p>The Core Offer</p> <p>People want libraries to be the social hub of the community, and consider it important that library buildings are modern, clean and welcoming with improved convenient opening hours. 79% supported the proposed core offer and of this, books and reading are the top priority for both adults and children, including audiobooks and e-books. 88% supported retaining all 15</p>

	libraries, investing in improvements to technology and the buildings (particularly toilets and café facilities). 37% would like to see the Council build on the existing offer. Specifically, this means ensuring books, e-books and materials are updated, that libraries are kept open and opening hours are maintained. There is both a need for more quiet space and providing more groups and activities.
2.1.3	<p>Our Communities and our Customers:</p> <p>Rotherham's libraries are deeply loved by those who use them. Libraries currently engage with over 600,000 people per year and achieve 99.1% customer satisfaction ratings. People value having an easily accessible local library, close to home or easy to get to on public transport. Libraries are seen as a great benefit to children, with many users seeking a wider range of facilities and services catering to children and families. Based on the evidence of the Equalities Impact Assessment, the service is good at engaging women, and children under the age of 11. For children and young people, a wide range of modern and appealing books is a priority, along with a more vibrant environment, with more activities, events and clubs available. The evidence base also suggests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although Rotherham compares well with our nearest neighbours, active borrowing is still bottom quartile when compared to the other authorities in the U.K. • Those who do not use libraries report that they would be encouraged to use them if libraries were in more convenient locations. <p>The Library Service needs to improve in the engagement of men, BAME and young people over the age of 11 years.</p>
2.1.4	<p>Ways of Working: The majority of people approve of recruiting more volunteers in their local library service, though paid staff are viewed as skilled and knowledgeable, and crucial to the service. The consultation highlighted support for moving or sharing buildings with organisations that can help to increase usage and make libraries more sustainable in the community.</p> <p>Library users agree that technology should be used to enhance what is offered by the library, and to reduce costs and offer greater choice. This was borne out by the experience of lockdown. The service has seen a big increase in membership and online usage over the lockdown period with 579 new members joining during lockdown and 904 new users of e-resources. A range of activities and resources for children delivered through social media which has proven to be very popular with excess of 15,000 engagements (likes/comments/retweets) and a reach of over 400,000 on our Facebook and Twitter feeds.</p> <p>The Council needs to continue this online activity even as libraries reopen. There is also a need to continue to build the skills of the library workforce, so that working in partnership, co-production, confidence in working with non-traditional library users and utilising digital media all become part of the</p>

	new normal. The consultation found that 73% of respondents are supportive of greater community involvement in the running of libraries, with volunteers and partners working alongside library staff.
2.2	<p>Strategic and Policy Context</p> <p>The Rotherham Library Strategy is aligned with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Libraries Deliver 2016 – 2021” (which is the latest guidance on best practice for library authorities by the Government Libraries Taskforce) • Rotherham Cultural Strategy in order to support its key goal: to “enable everyone to get active, get creative and get outdoors, more often” • Rotherham’s Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy • The Rotherham Council Year Ahead Plan • Customer Access Strategy • Rotherham’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
2.3	<p>About the Final Strategy</p> <p>The service wants to focus on building the strong community spirit which exists throughout the Borough, particularly post Covid-19 pandemic where it is anticipated that communities will require more support than ever before. It is crucial that Library Services are available to all and are designed around renewed local need. These community hubs will play an essential role in supporting the Thriving Neighbourhoods agenda and will work with partners to ensure the changing community needs are met.</p>
2.3.1	<p>Future Vision and Mission for the Library Service</p> <p>In order to capture the purpose of the Rotherham Library Service along with its goals and values, it is proposed that the following Vision and Mission statements are adopted:</p> <p>Vision:</p> <p>“Libraries are a friendly and welcoming gateway to a world of reading, information, learning and creative activities, at the heart of our neighbourhoods. We seek to build on the strong community spirit that exists throughout the borough, to create access to a wide range of services and to place libraries at the heart of community life. Our libraries and neighbourhood hubs are modern, relevant and innovative facilities that meet the needs of people from all sections of the community”.</p> <p>Mission:</p>

	Our mission is to utilise our libraries to help people to help themselves, to be better informed, and to get active and creative, more often.
2.3.2	<p>Strategic Outcomes</p> <p>There was support from the consultation for the strategic outcomes which reflect both the current national library offer and local strategic priorities. These remain unchanged and are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased reading and literacy • Stronger and more resilient communities • Cultural and creative enrichment • Improved digital access and literacy • Helping everyone achieve their full potential • Healthier and happier lives • Greater prosperity
2.4	Key Improvements
	In summary, the Library Strategy will deliver:
2.4.1	<p>Improvements to Library buildings in Neighbourhoods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrades to ICT: £405k from the Councils Capital Programme has been allocated to improving the Library service I.T provision. All libraries will see improvements to public ICT including new public access PCs across all libraries. • Increased Self-Service: There will be a pilot of technology at Brinsworth and Mowbray Gardens to allow self-service access to the library building. This will promote and encourage ownership and the use of the available space by the community as well as extend opening hours. New self-service library machines will also be installed at sites where this facility is currently available, this allows library users to borrow, return and renew items along with making payments for printing. • Café and Toilet Facilities: Café facilities will be made available at most sites and toilet facilities will be made available at all sites which do not currently house this provision, excluding Kimberworth Library due to the limited size of the space. • Improved décor, furniture and signage: A Capital programme to the value of just over £1m is underway in order to deliver a range of improvements across the 14 locality Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs during the financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22, this includes replacement of furniture and

	signage. Digital screens will also be installed at each site to display consistent corporate messaging along with local information.
2.4.2	<p>More accessible libraries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-location of Kiveton Park Library with Children and Young People's Services: Work is underway in order to redesign the existing space to incorporate both services into one single space. Co-locating the Youth Service brings opportunities for the community to utilise a new facility to improve skills and learning. The library is being modernised with new furniture which will create welcoming flexible space available for the community groups to utilise. • Thurcroft Library relocation to Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall: Due to the limitations of the existing library within the Primary School, it is proposed that the provision is relocated to the Memorial Hall. This will increase opportunities to work more closely with the Parish Council and local community groups along with the potential to increase numbers to the library. • Swinton Library relocation: The redevelopment programme for the Swinton town centre will provide improved community facilities including a refurbished Civic Hall and the existing library being relocated to the former customer service centre. The refreshed community facilities will include a café and meeting spaces. The public realm and accessibility within this area will be improved through a significant landscaping scheme which will open up the site improving visibility of community facilities, safety and accessibility.. • Thorpe Hesley Library: The library offer at the current location is restricted based on the library space available. Investigations have been carried out in order to identify an alternative location, however, to date, this has not been successful. As part of the Capital Improvement Programme, monies have been approved in order to support any development works which will be required at a new location. In the short term, the current site will be improved through the replacement of existing furniture and shelving where this is required.
2.4.3	<p>A new central library:</p> <p>Plans are ongoing to relocate the Central Library from Riverside House to within Rotherham Town Centre as part of the Market's redevelopment. The development would create a new civic building as part of the redevelopment of the wider Rotherham Markets as outlined in the Town Centre Masterplan along with significantly improving the quality of the built environment in the town centre. The proposal has been included in the Council's application to Government via the Future High Street Fund with a decision due in November 2020. The project supports the delivery of the Town Centre Masterplan, the Economic Growth Strategy, the Cultural Strategy and the Rotherham Plan – A New Perspective 2025.</p>

2.4.4	<p>More community involvement in the delivery of Library Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pilot community-managed library at Brinsworth: The consultation results showed that 49% of respondents felt that this proposal would have a positive impact with 24% feeling that it will have a negative impact, whilst 27% don't know what impact it would have. If the proposal is accepted, this pilot will start from April 2021. To provide greater reassurance, the library will continue to form part of the Council's statutory provision and the Council will continue to provide support services including supply and maintenance of stock, access to the Library Management System, specialist library staff support including the training of volunteers. • More volunteering opportunities: although library staff are highly-valued there was recognition that volunteers can bring new skills and ideas to libraries as well as reap the positive benefits that volunteering brings (such as improving mental health and reducing social isolation). The service will continue to seek to increase the number of volunteers working alongside professional staff. • More partnership-working: the library service will continue to build on the number of partners and community groups that it currently works with. This supports a key principle of the Thriving Neighbourhood's agenda which sees frontline services as enablers and not simply providers.
2.4.5	<p>Increased Library Usage by residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More use, more often: the Council will increase library usage by residents through a combination of an improved offer, better marketing of the work of libraries, use of co-production and targeted services. • Engage non-users, particularly those with protected characteristics: This will be undertaken by directly targeting customers particularly those that are unrepresented within Rotherham libraries. This will be achieved by continuing to work with voluntary organisations, community groups, charities and public health. • More readers, to improve literacy: One in six people struggle to read and research shows that when inspired to read for pleasure, they benefit from the greater opportunities in everyday life, education and employment. Rotherham libraries will provide a yearly programme of stimulating events and activities to promote to enjoyment of reading for all. • Increased digital inclusion: in addition to providing free access to the internet in order to help people get online and assisted digital support, the service will work with partners in order to offer digital training to service users.
2.4.6	A Wider Offer:

	<p>Libraries will continue to deliver an improved and diversified activities and events programme, working closely with a range of partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A ‘Libraries First’ approach: Council departments and voluntary sector partners are being encouraged to consider how libraries can deliver their services in neighbourhoods, ensuring that communities see libraries as a ‘one-stop-shop’ for a range of different services beyond their traditional role. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customer Services: Aligned to the Customer Access Strategy, the provision of assisted access for customers needing face to face support which will be available at Aston, Maltby, Rawmarsh, Dinnington and Swinton and at Riverside House. - Advice Services: libraries will continue to build their partnership with Citizens Advice Bureau and other partners to provide advice on matters including welfare benefits and money advice. - Youth Services (Early Help): the new library at Kiveton Park will provide a new co-located service. As well as continue to deliver an active service to children, there will be a range of projects developed to increase usage by young people. - Public Health: libraries will build on their work to support health and wellbeing through working with Public Health, Places Leisure and other partners. For example, the delivery of “Get Healthy Rotherham” project within libraries. - Support to Find Employment: through the delivery of work clubs in conjunction with partners. - Creative and cultural activities: through partnership with Clifton Park Museum, the Civic Theatre, Rotherham Music, Grimm and Co, Flux (a new project supported by Arts Council England) and through bespoke co-commissioning of artists with key target groups.
2.5	<p>The Action Plan:</p> <p>The Libraries Action Plan is attached at Appendix 4. Although the Strategy takes the service to 2026, the plan is initially for 2 years in order to provide sufficient detail. This is a working document and it will be updated on a regular basis.</p>
3.	Options considered and recommended proposal
3.1	<p>The final phase of consultation and engagement reaffirmed the content of the Library Strategy for the period 2021-2026 which can be found in Appendix 1, which supports the findings from the previous phase of consultation. The overall analysis identified that most respondents were in agreement with the Rotherham Vision and the proposal to implement the new 5 year Library Strategy. The strategy supports the Local Authority</p>

	requirements to deliver a comprehensive and efficient Library service in line with the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.
3.2	<p>The Council could choose;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not to endorse the Strategy and/or any of the proposed improvements. b. To approve the attached Library Strategy and the key proposals set out in section two of this report.
3.3	It is recommended that option b. is taken forward: namely, that the Library Strategy 2021-2026 is approved, and the key proposals detailed in section two are taken forward.
4.	Consultation on proposal
4.1	Extensive public consultation and engagement has been undertaken over two phases. The service received 1507 responses overall from public, partners and stakeholders.
4.2	The initial engagement was carried out in Spring/Summer 2019. Feedback from this was combined with a comprehensive local assessment of need and equality analysis, to create the proposals contained within a draft library strategy and associated service offer. These proposals formed a second phase of the engagement and consultation over a twelve week period which was carried out from 3 rd February 2020 until 26 th April, 2020.
4.3	This phase allowed the Service to explore with members of the public, partners and stakeholders, their thoughts on the proposed Library Strategy and associated service offer including the range of proposed improvements. Separate targeted consultation and engagement was also carried out in relation to the Brinsworth Community Managed model. In doing so, this allowed the Council to understand resident and stakeholder views in relation to this approach, and whether there would be collective support from the community to get involved in the delivery of library services. The findings have informed the future proposals to adopt a community-managed model at this site.
4.4	Key findings and a detailed analysis of the consultation and engagement can be found in Appendix 2: Public consultation and engagement on the future of Rotherham Libraries and proposed changes to Brinsworth Library analysis report 2020.
5.	Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1	Feedback from the last phase of engagement has informed the final version of the Library Strategy, which is now being presented back to Cabinet and then Council for consideration.																				
5.2	<p>The key milestone dates for the library strategy and final service offer are detailed below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Milestone</th><th>Date</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Roll out of improvements to neighbourhood sites including furniture, signage and digital screens displaying Council information</td><td>To start October 2020</td></tr> <tr> <td>Approval of the Library Strategy by Council</td><td>November 2020</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mobilisation of new Libraries Action Plan</td><td>To start November 2020</td></tr> <tr> <td>Roll out of Public I.T. improvements including PC's and self service machines</td><td>To start November 2020</td></tr> <tr> <td>Co-location of Kiveton Park Library with Children and Young People's Services</td><td>Completion November / December 2020</td></tr> <tr> <td>Thurcroft Library co-location with Thurcroft Parish Council</td><td>To start January 2021</td></tr> <tr> <td>Swinton Library relocation</td><td>To start January 2021</td></tr> <tr> <td>Roll out of technology to access a library outside staffing opening hours (Mowbray Gardens and Brinsworth)</td><td>To start April 2021</td></tr> <tr> <td>Brinsworth Library transfer to Community Managed delivery</td><td>Completion April 2021</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Milestone	Date	Roll out of improvements to neighbourhood sites including furniture, signage and digital screens displaying Council information	To start October 2020	Approval of the Library Strategy by Council	November 2020	Mobilisation of new Libraries Action Plan	To start November 2020	Roll out of Public I.T. improvements including PC's and self service machines	To start November 2020	Co-location of Kiveton Park Library with Children and Young People's Services	Completion November / December 2020	Thurcroft Library co-location with Thurcroft Parish Council	To start January 2021	Swinton Library relocation	To start January 2021	Roll out of technology to access a library outside staffing opening hours (Mowbray Gardens and Brinsworth)	To start April 2021	Brinsworth Library transfer to Community Managed delivery	Completion April 2021
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6.	Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)																				
6.1	Capital investment has been approved for the existing 14 neighbourhood sites to a value of £1.4m and in a new site for the Central Library currently anticipated to require investment to a value of £5.7m. The town centre proposal is part of the Town Centre Master Plan implementation which itself																				

	<p>is aligned to the forthcoming central government funding opportunity, known as the 'Future High Streets Fund' (FHSF). The outcome of the Council's full submission to the fund will not be known until November 2020, at this point the funding available will become clearer.</p> <p>Subject to the outcome of the FHSF submission, it is anticipated that the capital financing costs of the Council's direct capital investment in a new library and the proposed capital investment to improve library provision across the estate, can be met from the revenue savings generated from the move of the Library from Riverside House to the new site.</p>
6.2	In relation to the improvement and modernisation works, the procurement of any third-party Contractor to supply/deliver this must be undertaken in line with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's own Financial and Procurement and Procedure Rules.
7.	Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)
7.1	The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide "a comprehensive and efficient" public library service "for all persons desiring to make use thereof" (Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964). The Act states that the local authority has a duty to provide facilities for borrowing books and other materials and that it should encourage both adults and children to make full use of the service. The Act does not try to define what a 'comprehensive and efficient Library service' is, but when considering how best to deliver the statutory duty, each library authority is responsible for determining, through consultation, the local needs and to deliver a modern and efficient library service that meets the requirements of their communities within available resources.
7.2	Should the Secretary of State receive a complaint that the library authority has failed to carry out its duties relating to the public library service imposed on it by the Act they can instigate an investigation as to whether such a failure has occurred. If the outcome of that investigation is that the library authority has failed in its duties, then an order can be made declaring the library authority to be in default and setting out directions for the purpose of removing the fault. Should there be a failure to comply with such an order the functions of the library authority can be transferred to the Secretary of State.
7.3	The Council also has to ensure it complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Under section 1 of that Act, the Council must, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage. In addition, under section 149 of the Act, the Council must

	<p>comply with the public sector equality duty which requires it to have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act • Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and • Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. <p>In dealing with this duty, the Council must have due regard in particular, to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant characteristic that are connected to that characteristic • Take steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different to the needs of persons who do not share it; and • Encourage persons who share a relevant characteristic to participate in public life or any other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. Protected characteristics include disability, age, race, sex, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity and sexual orientation.
7.4	Legal Services have prepared a concession agreement under which Brinsworth Community Trust is granted the opportunity (on a concession basis) to operate Brinsworth Library.
8.	Human Resources Advice and Implications
8.1	The transfer of Brinsworth Library to the Community Trust will have implications for Council Library staff currently working at this site. As part of their current Job Profile these staff are required to work at various locations across the borough and therefore all staff will be reallocated to other sites. This means that no job losses are anticipated as a consequence of this proposal. Early discussions have taken place with staff and Trade Unions.
9.	Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults
9.1	The proposed library strategy offers a rich core service provision for children and young people with a wide range of initiatives.

9.2	The service is currently well used by children up to the age of 11 years. Support for literacy is very strong for pre-school and Early Years children and their families through Bookstart, Story Times, Rhymetimes, Chatterbooks reading groups, class visits and the Summer Reading Challenge. This support has been tailored during the closure of Libraries due to COVID-19 and transferred, where possible, online.
9.3	The service is aware that the number of young people aged between 11 and 18 accessing their library provision is low. Building on the information already collated throughout all phases of engagement, the service will be looking to improve the offer for this age group with the development of programmes including code clubs, young readers groups, makerspaces and volunteering in libraries.
9.4	The Library Service will be a key player in supporting young people in their ambition to create a programme of events and activities to "make all of Rotherham's cultural destinations, libraries, leisure centres and green spaces child-focused, family-friendly and safe for everyone, young and old." in order to deliver against the Children's Capital of Culture initiative.
9.5	Co-location of Kiveton Park Library with Children and Young People's Services brings opportunities for the community to utilise a new facility to improve skills and learning for example using the new catering kitchen to deliver food hygiene courses in order to equip Children with essential life skills.
9.6	The Schools' Loan Service, which offers resources to support reading, literacy and the wider curriculum in schools will continue to be delivered by the Library Service.
9.7	Increased volunteering opportunities will be available to both young people and adults including those who are older, vulnerable or disabled. Evidence suggests that volunteering benefits people by helping to alleviate social isolation and loneliness.
9.8	As part of a commitment to widening access, the library service will continue to provide vehicle-based services, mainly to older people who might otherwise be unable to get to a library.
10.	Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications
10.1	Equality Analysis and Screening Assessment for the Library Strategy is attached at Appendix 3. The Equalities Analysis has been used to inform the Assessment of Local Need, as a way of embedding equalities in the core planning activity for the service.

10.2	<p>The key findings of the Equalities Impact analysis have identified both strengths and weaknesses of engagement within the library service whereby the service can seek to maintain and develop as the service evolves. In addition to having an exceptional high rate of customer satisfaction it is evident from this analysis that libraries are engaging well with; Females borough wide, White British people, those who do not declare themselves as disabled, age groups of 4-11, 26-40, 41-65 and 65 and over. It is proposed that the Service will work with the wider Council and community/voluntary partners to focus on this utilising cross cutting agendas including Thriving Neighbourhoods, Health and Wellbeing agenda, Building Stronger Communities vision and the Creative Recovery Programme in order to target those areas where engagement is falling short which includes, males of all ages, BAME individuals, those who self-declare as disabled and ages 0-3, 12-17 and 18-25.</p>
10.3	<p>To this end, the Action Plan includes commitments and milestones to proactively address barriers to engagement, through, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing targets for engagement and positive action as part of service monitoring • Working with partners such as Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR), Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA), Early Help and Rotherham School Improvement Partnership (RoSIS) in order to devise new engagement activities • Further consultation with disabled users/non-users to understand if there are any barriers to accessing services and carry out a review of all library sites to ensure they are easily accessible and DDA compliant • A review of stock and ensure all stock is inclusive to meet the needs and interests of those with protected characteristics where engagement is low • Review the demographics against services at each location to ensure it is the right fit for the surrounding community.
11.	Implications for Ward Priorities
11.1	<p>The Rotherham Library Strategy and action plan supports the outcomes which are set out in 'Thriving Neighbourhoods', our neighbourhood strategy for 2018/2025.</p> <p>Thriving Neighbourhoods is about the Council and residents working together to achieve better outcomes and improve quality of life. Libraries will assist in bringing communities together to make a positive difference, by contributing to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>People getting involved in their neighbourhood and help each other out</i>

	<p>Libraries will improve communication about library activities, especially those which are free and low cost and promote cohesion and community spirit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People from different backgrounds have the chance to interact Delivery of Fun Palaces and other events in libraries, working with colleagues in the wider service to co-ordinate and grow.• Vulnerable people are protected Offer a safe space for the most vulnerable residents and ensure they feel welcome and part of the community.• People feeling less lonely and isolated Individual sites to work closely with local community groups and partners to ensure that the service offer meets the needs of each community, reaching out to those who are lonely and isolated.• Local assets being harnessed for the benefit of the community All library sites will remain open and accessible to all, offering groups and activities to benefit the community.						
11.2	In reviewing the ward plans for Rotherham, both the strategy and action plan supports priorities within these plans.						
12.	Implications for Partners						
12.1	A wide range of partners and Council services are working with the Library service. This has resulted in co-location and joint delivery of services. Future opportunities will continue to be explored.						
12.2	Consultation and engagement is ongoing between the Library Service and Asset Management in order to identify opportunities in relation to relocation or colocation of services and in regard to One Public Estate.						
13.	Risks and Mitigation						
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14.	Accountable Officers								
	Polly Hamilton, Assistant Director of Culture, Sport and Tourism Zoe Oxley, Head of Operations and Business Transformation								

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services	Judith Badger	05/10/20

(S.151 Officer)		
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	05/10/20

*Report Author: Zoe Oxley, Head of Operations and Business
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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).



ROTHERHAM'S LIBRARY STRATEGY

2021-26

www.rotherham.gov.uk/libraries

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WELCOME TO OUR LIBRARY STRATEGY 2021-2026

Welcome to our new Library Strategy 2021 – 2026

We are pleased to present our new Library Strategy. We have spent the last 18 months talking and listening to over 1500 people to understand what matters most to local people about their libraries. We have learned what libraries should be focusing on over the next few years and what we need to do to improve residents' experience of using our libraries.

We have also learned that libraries are a vital part of our neighbourhoods and that they have the power to change the lives of those who use them. We heard that our libraries and neighbourhood hubs have helped people into work, strengthened local community networks, inspired people to read and provided a wealth of free activities for children and families. During the COVID-19 lockdown, 579 new people joined our libraries. There were 904 new online users, over 15,000 engagements with online library activities and a Facebook and Twitter reach of over 400,000.

We have learned that over 99 % of customers love our libraries – and we need more people in Rotherham to enjoy their benefits.

To make this happen, residents can expect to see:

- Improvements to library buildings, to make them more accessible and to create a warmer welcome
- More help to get people reading and to enjoy free books and reading materials
- Better ICT provision to enable more people to get online
- More advice and support services being delivered through libraries – bringing the Council and voluntary sector partners even closer to communities, helping people help themselves
- More activities for children, families and vulnerable people – right on your doorstep

We will spend the next five years working to put our new Strategy into practice. We hope you will join us – either online or at a library near you.



Councillor Allen

Cabinet Member for Cleaner,
Greener Communities

**“ Stories are the secret reservoir of values:
change the stories individuals and nations live by and tell themselves,
and you change the individuals and nations. ”**

BEN OKRI

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964) to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for people who want to use it.

In this Strategy we present a vision and framework for our Libraries service over the next five years, which we believe will meet the needs of people in Rotherham.

There are 15 libraries across the borough. Currently 98 % of Rotherham residents are able to access a library within 2 miles of their home.

As part of a commitment to widening access, the library service provides vehicle-based services, mainly to older people who might otherwise be unable to get to a library, and a Schools' Loan Service, which offers resources to support reading, literacy and the wider curriculum in schools.

There is also a digital library provision, which enables people to access the service online. Users can join the library, along with enjoying online activities and events.

In order to produce a strategy to meet the future needs of the community the service has:

- ✓ carried out consultation with the public, members of library staff and partners
- ✓ examined usage, performance and demand for the service
- ✓ assessed the Service's contribution to corporate outcomes and priorities
- ✓ taken into account key national, regional and local strategies

- ✓ benchmarked the service against other local authorities: taking account of innovation, good practice and lessons learned
- ✓ reviewed available resources, including staff, buildings and stock

What will the strategy achieve?

For our communities:

- ✓ more people will enjoy the benefits of reading
- ✓ more people will get active and creative, taking part in library activities and groups as a way to stay healthy and well
- ✓ more people will have the opportunity to volunteer and become employment ready
- ✓ more people will feel part of their community and feel happier and less isolated as a result.
- ✓ more people see libraries as essential community and cultural hubs, a first point of contact for Council services

For our service:

- ✓ there will be increased financial sustainability, ensuring that libraries have a bright future at the heart of our town and neighbourhoods
- ✓ our staff and volunteers will be proud to work for us
- ✓ other organisations will want to be our partners because of our great reputation
- ✓ our buildings will be better equipped and more welcoming



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The way that people use their library is changing, and with it, their expectations and demands of their library service.

Nationally, traditional usage of libraries is generally on the decline, however, more recently Rotherham saw an increase in both the numbers of people who borrowed books and in those who visited libraries across the borough.

Our offer of digital resources is also showing a positive increase in usage as a result of Covid-19 lockdown. In recent years, we had an increase of over 70 percent in total e-resource downloads which is reflective of the national trend of moving towards digital services, as more and more people have access to technology and the internet.

Not only are attitudes to technology changing, but also the needs of the people of Rotherham. With more children coming from lower-income families and increasing social isolation and loneliness across all ages, our library service must play a vital role in reaching out to every single person in the Borough regardless of age, gender or social and economic background.

The library service needs to offer something for everyone, whether this is a space for quiet study or reading, or exciting activities, events and groups which bring people together.

This strategy identifies improvements needed in order to tackle the challenge of providing more modern and sustainable services in the face of increasingly complex demands.

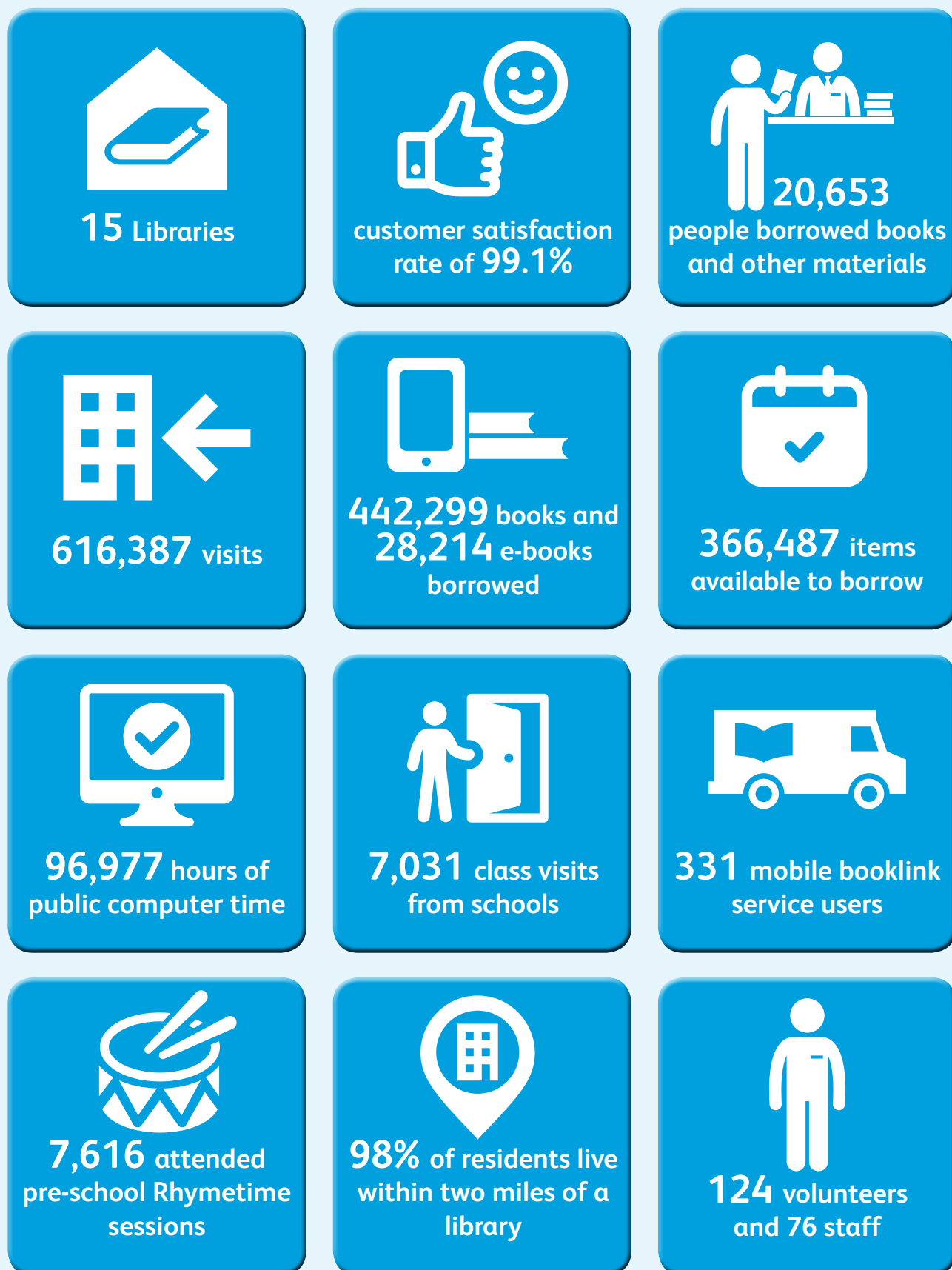
Locally, there are clear opportunities for this library strategy to provide a framework for cross- council work in the following areas:

- ✓ Rotherham's School Improvement Service (RoSIS), by improving reading and literacy attainment levels for children
- ✓ Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy, by giving opportunities for people to come together, to get involved in their local neighbourhood and to participate in interesting, enjoyable and creative events and activities

- ✓ Cultural Strategy, by offering a programme of cultural and artistic activities and events that provides everyone with the opportunity to enjoy some form of creative experience
- ✓ Economic Growth Plan, by supporting individuals to become job-ready
- ✓ Delivery of the Building Stronger Communities action plan, by providing opportunities for neighbourhood engagement and a visible, well-used and vibrant community hub
- ✓ Children and Young People's Plan, by providing opportunities for informal and intergenerational learning in a safe, attractive space
- ✓ Health and Wellbeing Strategy, by reducing social isolation and maintaining good mental health, using the Five Ways to Wellbeing as a framework for activities
- ✓ Supporting Adult Social Care and Housing in providing safe, trusted community-based places for service users and increasing opportunities for independent living
- ✓ Supporting the Customer Access Strategy through providing free Wi-Fi and digital assistance, so that customers who need help feel supported and able to access the services they need



Figure 1: **Key facts** about Rotherham Library Services



READING PICTURES, SEEING STORIES

“Reading Pictures, Seeing Stories”, a regional visual literacy project funded by the Arts Council, was delivered in autumn 2018 at Wath library. It focussed on the power of illustrations in books with Michael Morpurgo’s book “War Horse” as the theme in commemoration of the end of the Great War. Library staff delivered the Arts Award to school-children and Wath Central Junior School created an exciting exhibition in the Library.

Children’s author and illustrator Liz Million led workshops to inspire children in their own art work on the Great War theme.

Over 300 children were involved, and the exhibition in Wath Library was visited by nearly 100 people. One visitor commented: “What a fantastic exhibition. You can clearly see a lot of hard work has been undertaken by the children of Wath Central to create such a thought-provoking display. Well done to all!”



LEGO CLUBS

Thurcroft Library started a regular Lego Club for families in spring 2018 and it proved so popular that clubs were quickly extended to all our libraries. Library staff encourage children to use their imagination in creating and sharing stories using their models and to work together on projects.

The sessions are suitable for young people with all levels of ability and the overall response is excellent, particularly with children who have special educational needs and disabilities.

Some of those attending, children and their parents/carers, have shared what they think about the Lego clubs:

“All of my friends come now to the Library, we had never been until the Lego club started!”

“It’s a great way to do something free as a family, we love it”

“I forgot how much I loved Lego, now my son and I can enjoy it together like I did with my father when I was younger”



“ Libraries allow children to ask questions about the world and find the answers. And the wonderful thing is that once a child learns to use a library, the doors to learning are always open. ”

LAURA BUS

Figure 2: **Services and facilities** delivered by Rotherham Libraries



WE LISTENED - WHAT DID YOU TELL US?

Over the last 18 months, Rotherham Council has undertaken consultation about our libraries in two phases. We have heard from over 1500 members of the public, stakeholders and partners to find out what people think of Rotherham libraries. People have told us what is most important to them and what their priorities are for library services in the future. A summary of the consultation findings is available as a supporting document to this strategy.

Top four public priorities



Key points from the consultation were as follows:

- **Books and reading** are the top priority for both adults and children, including audiobooks and e-books.
- Libraries are seen as a great **benefit to children**, with many users seeking a wider range of facilities and services catering to children and families.
- For **children and young people**, a wide range of modern and appealing books is a priority. They also want a more vibrant environment, with more activities, events and clubs available.
- People approve of recruiting **more volunteers** in their local library service, though paid **staff are viewed as skilled and knowledgeable**, and crucial to the service.
- People value having an **easily accessible** local library, close to home or easy to get to on public transport. Those who do not use libraries report that they would be encouraged to use them if they were in more convenient locations.
- People want libraries to be the social hub of the community, and consider it important that library buildings are **modern, clean and welcoming** with improved convenient opening hours.
- Library users agree that **technology**, should be used to enhance what is offered by the library, and to reduce costs and offer greater choice.
- People agree that **moving or sharing buildings** with organisations can help to increase usage and make libraries more sustainable in the community.
- Those who do not use libraries feel that they do not offer any services or facilities that they want to use. Many **people buy their own books and access information online** at home.

Since the new Library Strategy has been out for final consultation in 2020, there has been the opportunity to consider further feedback in light of learning from the lockdown period due to COVID-19 pandemic. It should be noted that the way in which the library service delivers its offer moving forward will be different to the way it was prior to lockdown, particularly in relation to its online offer and how services are delivered through physical library sites. The service has had to reconsider the implications of reinstating a full service and must adapt in order to protect staff and the community.

OUR VISION

Libraries are a friendly and welcoming gateway to a world of reading, information, learning and creative activities, at the heart of our neighbourhoods. We seek to build on the strong community spirit that exists throughout the borough, to create access to a wide range of services and to place libraries at the heart of community life. Our libraries and neighbourhood hubs are modern, relevant and innovative facilities that meet the needs of people from all sections of the community.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to utilise our libraries to help people to help themselves, to be better informed, and to get active and creative, more often.



OUR STRATEGY

Over the next few pages we set out how we will make our vision real for local people...



CORE OFFER

Our Libraries

- Located in the heart of Rotherham's communities, our libraries will be recognised as neighbourhood hubs that are welcoming and safe and places to access information along with recreational, cultural and learning activity.
- Our library buildings will bring together Council services and partners in order for people to access a range of services at a local level.
- Our Libraries will carry an up-to-date and wide selection of books and reading material, including e-books, e-magazines, spoken word and large print.
- Our libraries will be easily accessible and offering ease of access for people with disabilities. They will be well used, with up-to-date facilities and be responsive to changing requirements, using available technology and resources effectively.

Our People

- We will provide a level of service which is enjoyed and valued by those who visit the library, so they want to come again and tell others about their experience.
- We will engage with library users and partners in meaningful ways, automating processes where possible to release time for genuine co-working with community groups, voluntary organisations and internal departments to deliver more efficient and better services.
- Our staff are our most valued resource: we will invest in their knowledge and skills and give them opportunity to develop and apply their expertise with regular reviews of training needs, a programme of workforce development and specialist development where appropriate.

- Volunteers play a vital role in supporting and enhancing Rotherham libraries and will continue to do so in the future. The service recognises the added value that volunteers bring by offering their time, skills, experience and commitment. We will ensure our volunteers feel valued and get something worthwhile from the time they give us. In order to do this, we will continue to work closely with Voluntary Action Rotherham to ensure their interests and skills are well matched to our opportunities and that they are fully trained and properly supported by our paid staff.

Our Activities

- **Reading:** this is key to taking advantage of opportunities in life, so we will inspire Rotherham's children, young people and their families to enjoy reading, enabling them to improve their quality of life and realise their full potential.
- **I.T.:** we will encourage and support people to help themselves wherever possible, equipping them with the knowledge and means to get online using up-to-date I.T. equipment, and access information and services independently.
- **Activities:** we will provide a wide range of activities, events, groups, clubs and courses to inspire and enable people to get more active and creative, more often.
- **Learning and Information:** we will provide support, advice and resources to enable people to learn, develop skills and enjoy healthy lifestyles.
- **Community:** we will be genuine neighbourhood hubs, bringing people and services together and encouraging people to build the support networks and partnerships they need to thrive.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES – LOCAL IMPACT

National Priorities for Libraries

Library services across the country are delivered in different ways as services are shaped by local policy, customer need and available resources.

Libraries Connected (a membership organisation advocating for the power of libraries, representing heads of library services in England, Wales and N. Ireland) has developed a package of Universal Offers which helps to underpin national and local priorities, providing a framework for future service developments around the key areas of:

- ✓ Reading
- ✓ Digital and Information

- ✓ Culture and Creativity
- ✓ Health and Wellbeing

Each of these key areas are underpinned by the Children's Promise which aims to ensure that Children are involved in decisions about the services that affect them as well as being offered opportunities to volunteer and the Six Steps Promise ensuring that the library service supports people with vision impairments.

Also, the Libraries Taskforce 2016 report "Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021", presents a vision of excellence including **seven key outcomes** which our Library Strategy supports.

“ Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life. Libraries change lives for the better. ”

SIDNEY SHELDON



OUR ACTIONS

The seven outcomes presented in Libraries Deliver 2016-2021 by the Libraries Taskforce are incorporated within our goals as a Library Service and also have a broader application in the priorities presented in the Rotherham Council Plan. This strategy aligns closely to the Rotherham Cultural Strategy in order to support its key goal to enable everyone to get active, get creative and get outdoors, more often. Our Action plan follows the seven key themes of the Libraries Deliver report:

1. Cultural and creative enrichment

- ✓ We will offer a programme of cultural and artistic activities and events that provides everyone with the opportunity to enjoy some form of cultural experience. This will be supported through our partners, such as the Arts Council and Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance.
- ✓ We will seek funding to extend our cultural offer and engage with a wider range of interests, in particular supporting the local and regional cultural sector.
- ✓ We will seek to bring art, dance, music and theatre into the library space, with particular emphasis on bringing stories to life.
- ✓ We will improve our communication about library activities, especially those which are free and low cost.

Case Study:

FUN PALACES

Fun Palaces is an ongoing campaign celebrating culture at the heart of community, using arts, science, craft, tech, digital, heritage and sports activities as a catalyst for community engagement. 2019 saw the third year of Fun Palaces in Rotherham Libraries with successful events over the first weekend in October at the Central Library in Riverside House, Wath and Maltby libraries.



Since the first year Rotherham took part in this national initiative, interest and enthusiasm has grown with a steady year-on-year increase in those taking part and visiting the

events. Everyone who attended said they would recommend the events to others; they generated a sense of community and pride in where they lived, as well as a positive mood-boosting benefit.

Activities have been wide-ranging, with community groups and individuals coming to share their skills and pastimes with great enthusiasm. Indian dancing, Morris dancing, music and singing, papercraft, book-folding, painting, stamp-collecting and much more. One little girl who had made a paper flower returned to show her friend how to do it. This is what Fun Palaces are all about, learning something new and passing it on!

In April 2019 the central Fun Palaces team announced National Lottery funding which will support the work of the Fun Palaces campaign over the next 5 years. As a part of this, Rotherham Council will be included in the expanded programme with a Rotherham Fun Palaces Ambassador to help create and lead local cultural and community activities.

2. Increased reading and literacy

- ✓ We will encourage and support everyone, especially children and young people, to develop a life-long love of reading; for example, through continuing our partnership work with places where children go and organisations which work with them, such as schools and Grimm & co.
- ✓ We will offer a wide range of reading items, including e-books, large print, audio-books, newspapers and magazines, to support the personal literacy development of individual readers.
- ✓ We will continue to develop readers' groups, including online, themed and targeted groups.
- ✓ We will participate in national and regional reading events that encourage participation, especially among children, such as the Summer Reading Challenge.

Case Study:

SHARED READING

Rotherham Libraries partnered with Sheffield and Doncaster in the 'Shared Reading' project, led by 'The Reader' and funded by Arts Council England.

Reading groups met to improve connection and wellbeing, especially among people feeling isolated or vulnerable, through sharing thoughts, memories and stories inspired by reading aloud. Several volunteers became Reader Leaders to run groups themselves and

the project is expanding from the initial six groups to new locations in the Borough.

Some of the people attending groups have shared how it benefits them with the following comments:

"It's a way of making new friends"

"It welcomes people from all walks of life and also provides a good cuppa and nice biscuits!"

"It encourages people not to be afraid to read out aloud"



3. Improved digital access and literacy

- ✓ We will continue to offer free Wi-Fi access in all our library buildings and we will offer customers the facility to print from their own devices.
- ✓ We will provide up-to-date computer equipment for people to use free of charge.
- ✓ Through trained staff, volunteers and partners we will support people getting online and using I.T. with confidence.
- ✓ We will encourage digital literacy among children through developing such things as makerspaces and code clubs.

Case Study:

INVESTING IN DIGITAL

People who are ‘digitally literate’ are more likely to experience good employment, better health and make savings in household costs. There are still too many people in Rotherham who are digitally-excluded. The reach of libraries within Rotherham means that our library staff and partners are uniquely placed to help people get online, particularly in areas of deprivation. Library staff are there to support and upskill people to become

independent users of the internet. This helps people to access services more easily, to learn, and to interact with others.

In recognising the importance of supporting Digital inclusion, £405k from the Council’s Capital Programme has been invested in order to upgrade the public I.T. provision which includes new public access PCs across all libraries. Free Wi-Fi across all libraries will continue and the delivery of activities such as code clubs and provision of makerspaces will increase.



4. Helping Everyone Achieve their Full Potential

- ✓ We will continue to offer a wide-ranging stock of materials for loan or reference in various formats, both traditional and digital.
- ✓ We will ensure library staff are trained to support customers to make the best use of the full range of library resources, along with encouraging the take up sector specific qualifications.
- ✓ We will increase the number of new apprenticeships available within the service.
- ✓ We will support children with homework, students with their studies and adults with access to online information in relation to such things as jobs and benefits.
- ✓ Supported by Voluntary Action Rotherham, we will offer a range of volunteering opportunities to individuals and community groups in supporting delivery of the library service.

Case Study:

VOLUNTEERING TO SUPPORT THE LIBRARY SERVICE

Laura was appointed as a Library Volunteer at Riverside House. Having done her own family tree, she was enthusiastic to help other people by starting a weekly family history group. With the support and help of Library staff, she produced flyers and distributed these to local businesses in the town centre. The group started with just a couple of members but grew as word spread and it now sees up to eight people on a regular basis and meets twice a week in the Library.



Following this, Laura then helped with an event for The Big Read, when the author Mari Hannah came to Riverside Library to run a book group as part of Harrogate International Festivals Programme. During the summer she helped to

promote volunteering at the annual Volunteers Walk organised by Voluntary Action Rotherham and then in autumn worked at Rotherham College during Freshers Week, promoting both volunteering and library services' public consultation.

As part of the annual Fun Palace event in October, Laura introduced adults and children to playing the ukulele and it was so popular that she is starting a ukulele group once a month in the central Library at Riverside.

After applying for a post as a library assistant, she has been successfully appointed and will now be working across the borough in all fifteen libraries - a good news story both for Laura and the library service.

Laura says: "Volunteering with the library has opened up so many opportunities for me. Not only has it led to a paid job with the library, but I've also had the chance to start a ukulele group and a family history group which will be great experience to further my career. I have managed to work my volunteering around my studies as well."

Over the next 5 years, Rotherham libraries will create volunteering opportunities for more people, adding value to our services and helping people develop their skills and confidence.

5. Healthier and Happier Lives

- ✓ We will promote reading for pleasure as a positive benefit to health and mental well-being.
- ✓ We will host events, activities and groups whose purpose is to encourage and support a healthier, happier lifestyle.
- ✓ We will provide and support the use of information on physical health and mental well-being, through our own resources and in partnership with others.
- ✓ We will actively seek to reduce social isolation and loneliness through the organisation of reading groups and activities in which people can come together.
- ✓ We will offer a service to those who are potentially lonely and vulnerable through our Booklink and Home Library Services.
- ✓ Libraries will support the Council, suppliers and communities to address the climate change emergency.

Case Study:

LIVE WELL

This project worked with local communities and partners to improve the general health and mental wellbeing of local people.

“Cuppa and a Chat” sessions took place in three Libraries, where around 60 local people and school children chatted about how the ways we communicate have changed. Further events were delivered in partnership with local organisations including “Get Healthy Rotherham” and “Places for People” at five libraries. Topics covered included healthy eating and weight management, relaxation and stress management, exercise and fitness.

Yoga taster sessions were delivered in four libraries, and the response was excellent: *“Yoga was fantastic! Would love to see this being put*

on regularly”. “Would be nice to have more Yoga weekly, or some other form or exercise.” “Excellent, really good”

More books to support healthy living, mental health and well-being have been added to library stock and a “Dark Den” has been provided at Kiveton Park Library to offer a quiet, calm place for children who may be on the autistic spectrum and overwhelmed by the noise and bustle in the library.



6. Greater Prosperity

- ✓ We will offer work clubs in conjunction with partners.
- ✓ We will offer assisted digital support and beginners I.T. sessions to support people getting online and becoming confident computer users.
- ✓ We will work with partners to offer space for Information, Advice and Guidance particularly for those seeking or offering employment and training.
- ✓ Build a new library in Rotherham Town Centre, helping to revitalise the town and supporting the retail and hospitality sectors.

Case Study:

A NEW LIBRARY FOR ROTHERHAM TOWN CENTRE

Over the next five years, the Council will work with partners and the community to create a new community hub.

The hub will be a landmark feature for the community: a bright, welcoming, aspirational

hub, aimed at encouraging people to explore the environment and what it has to offer to Library members. It will offer a state-of-the-art book display, digital technology and dynamic social space in which to meet and learn.

Funding has been sought for this ambitious £5.7m project through the Future High Street Fund scheme.



“ The only thing that you absolutely have to know is the location of the library ”

ALBERT EINSTEIN

7. Stronger More Resilient Communities

- ✓ Our libraries will function as friendly and welcoming community hubs, freely accessible to all. This will include reviewing: if buildings are in the right location; if they can be co-located with other services/partners; if the buildings require refurbishing/ modernising; if the service can host wider cultural and heritage activity.
- ✓ Work with appropriate partners and the community to create a new community hub in the town centre in order to increase engagement and increase footfall. The hub will be a landmark feature for the community: a bright, welcoming, aspirational hub, aimed at encouraging people to explore the environment and what it has to offer to Library members.
- ✓ Where partners express an interest in running a community library, a feasibility study will be undertaken. In cases where there is support from the local community and a sound business case to do so, the Council would look to transition the management of the service over to the community. A comprehensive support package from the Council would be put in place.
- ✓ Our staff and volunteers will be trained to provide excellent customer service to all those who wish to use our services.
- ✓ We will review our opening hours in line with customer and staff feedback and statistical information, and engage with local community groups and seek to implement automated solutions, in order to keep libraries open for more people, for more of the time.
- ✓ We will host a wide range of diverse events and activities that build community identity and cohesion.
- ✓ We will work with local people to shape our future services, extending ownership, responsibility and pride.

Case Study:

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN LIBRARY SERVICES

In 2018, Brinsworth Parish Council was successful in obtaining Big Lottery Funding in order to build a new Brinsworth Resource Centre. In 2019, Brinsworth Parish Council approached the Council to improve library services within the community, specifically with a view to replacing the old 'portacabin' which had housed the library for over 20 years. The pavilion building, next door to the new Resource Centre, was extended in 2020 to accommodate a library that forms part of the new Brinsworth Community Hub.

Placing the library within the hub creates opportunities for daily informal and formal interactions which strengthen community cohesion. In 2021 the library will be managed by Brinsworth Community Trust (of which the

Parish Council is the sole trustee). The library will continue to form part of the Council's statutory provision and the Council will continue to provide support services - including supply and maintenance of stock, access to the Library Management System, and specialist library staff support including the training of volunteers.

The scheme enables increased community involvement in local library services, enabling the community to shape its service to meet local needs. This contributes to achieving a number of strategic priorities, notably, the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018 - 2025.



MONITORING OUR IMPACT

Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs will provide quarterly updates on our progress and publish an Annual Report. We have set targets as follows:

By 2026 we will:

- ✓ Increase the numbers of people who borrow books by 10 percent
- ✓ Increase the number of visits by 10 percent
- ✓ Increase reading for pleasure amongst young people by 25 percent
- ✓ Increase the number and range of activities and groups by 10 percent
- ✓ Increase the number of people using I.T. facilities by 10 percent
- ✓ Increase self-service take up such as online renewals and online requests by 20 percent
- ✓ Increase the number of volunteering hours by 50 percent
- ✓ Maintain our levels of customer satisfaction above 95 percent
- ✓ Trial technology which will allow customers to access libraries without staff being present in order to increase opening hours
- ✓ Be able to evidence the impact and value that libraries bring to communities through case studies and testimonials



“ A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life-raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination. On a cold rainy island, they are the only sheltered public spaces where you are not a consumer, but a citizen instead. ”

CAITLIN MORAN

Appendix 2 - Public consultation and engagement on the future of Rotherham Libraries and proposed changes to Brinsworth Library analysis report 2020

Public consultation and engagement on the future of Rotherham Libraries and proposed changes to Brinsworth Library analysis report 2020

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Introduction

This report provides an analysis of the findings from the final phase of public engagement and consultation which was undertaken by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) between 3rd February 2020 and 26th April 2020 for a period of 12 weeks.

Two separate consultations carried out at the same time:

- The future of Rotherham Libraries

The purpose of the Rotherham libraries consultation followed on from the summer 2019 consultation in order to obtain views from the public on a refreshed draft library strategy that offers a robust vision with clear priorities for the library service going forward

- Proposed changes to Brinsworth Library

This consultation followed on from the summer 2019 consultation in order to obtain views from Rotherham residents regarding Brinsworth Community Trust running the library service at Brinsworth following an expression of interest in the Charity, Brinsworth Community Trust to run the library.

To ensure full engagement with Rotherham residents several methods were utilised;

- Online and paper based surveys, a dedicated mailbox for enquiries, and drop-in sessions were planned at each of the 15 libraries within the Borough.
- Engagement was also carried out either face to face or via email with voluntary and partner services including Parish Councils. Guided sessions with local schools were

cancelled due to the closure of schools, which limited the level of engagement with this target group.

- Correspondence was sent to senior officers within the Council, Elected Members, and MPs, offering an invite to meet, should they have any questions with regards to either of the consultations.

Impact of Covid-19

Library buildings closed to the public on Tuesday, 24th March following the lockdown measures announced by the Prime Minister on Monday, 23rd March, 2020. The closure of the library service was enforced by the introduction of the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restriction) Regulations 2020.

This directly impacted the engagement plan, meaning that some of the targeted engagement sessions had to be cancelled. This included 13 of the 31 drop-in sessions in Libraries and Guided sessions with local schools.

Following analysis of the final 12 weeks of engagement between 3rd February 2020 to 26th April 2020, it was concluded that the Rotherham Library Strategy consultation would need to carry out targeted consultation in two key areas identified where engagement was lower than anticipated:

- BAME community
- Schools (Under 25's)

Whilst there is more to be done, some of this work has begun and is detailed within this report.

Data collected through the online web survey was gathered and has been collated into this final summary report, together with additional data captured through different methods for the targeted areas.

Key Findings

The future of Rotherham Libraries

- A total of 365 responses were received. 320 of these were from current library users.
- Of the 365 respondents who answered the question "Do you use Rotherham Libraries" 331 answered yes (91%)., 27 of the respondents don't use Rotherham libraries (7%)
- 302 (83%), of the 365 respondents agree with the new vision for Rotherham Libraries. 289 (79%) agreed with the proposed core offer.
- 322 respondents (88%) agree for 15 libraries to remain open and invest capital funding to make improvements to the buildings and technology
- 134 respondents (37%) would like to see more services or activities take place in libraries that are not offered already
- 291 respondents (80%) agreed that the Council should implement the new Library Strategy

- When asking the question “Would you like to see anything in addition as part of the Library Strategy” 235 said no (64%) whilst 92 answered yes (25%). Of those who answer yes, key themes included: ensuring books, e-books and materials were updated, keep libraries open and maintain opening hours, creating more quiet space, providing more groups, introducing café facilities
- 268 (73%) agree with the intention to better support professional library staff by volunteers, partners and community groups to help deliver services
- When respondents were asked if there are any building improvements or additional equipment that they would like to see in libraries that hasn't been proposed already 93 said yes (25%). Key themes included; IT Equipment, Toilet Facilities and café facilities.

Proposed changes to Brinsworth library

- A total of 88 responses were received, 56 of the 88 respondents (64%) currently use Brinsworth library
- When asking the question “ What impact would the proposal for Brinsworth community trust to deliver the library offer have on you” 43 (49%) feel this will have a positive impact and 21 (24%) feel it will have a negative impact, whilst 24 (27%) selected ‘don't know’. Of the 21 that selected ‘no’, 18 left a further comment. The key theme from these comments highlighted that they would lose confidence in the library if run by volunteers
- 13 of the 88 respondents (15%) would like to get involved in the running or delivery of Brinsworth library.
- Respondents were asked if there any activities or services they would like to see delivered in the new Brinsworth Library, **35** (40%) of the respondents selected yes of which 33 supplied further details. Key themes included; more activities, such as book clubs for children, Local History groups, Craft clubs and author visits.
- Respondents were asked if they support the implementation of technology allowing self- service access outside normal hours. **60** of the 88 respondents (68%) agreed with the implementation.

The future of Rotherham libraries – results and findings

Section 1, ‘Overview of responses’, provides details around the number of responses by week. Section 2, ‘Online data form response analysis and key themes analysis’, breaks down the responses to the questions asked within the online survey followed by a key

themes analysis of the free-form comments provided by the respondents. Section 3, 'discusses the equality and diversity responses from the respondents'.

Section 1 - Overview of responses

Number of online form responses

Week	Dates	Total
1	03/02/20 – 09/02/20	74
2	10/02/20 – 16/02/20	50
3	17/02/20 – 23/02/20	17
4	24/02/20 – 01/03/20	157
5	02/03/20 – 08/03/20	36
6	09/03/20 – 15/03/20	11
7	16/03/20 – 22/03/20	5
8	23/03/20 – 29/03/20	2
9	30/03/20 – 05/04/20	1
10	06/04/20 – 12/04/20	3
11	13/04/20 – 19/04/20	3
12	20/04/20 – 26/04/20	6
Total consultation responses		365

Table 1

Table 1 shows the number of responses captured weekly, with an overall response of **365** for the future of Rotherham libraries

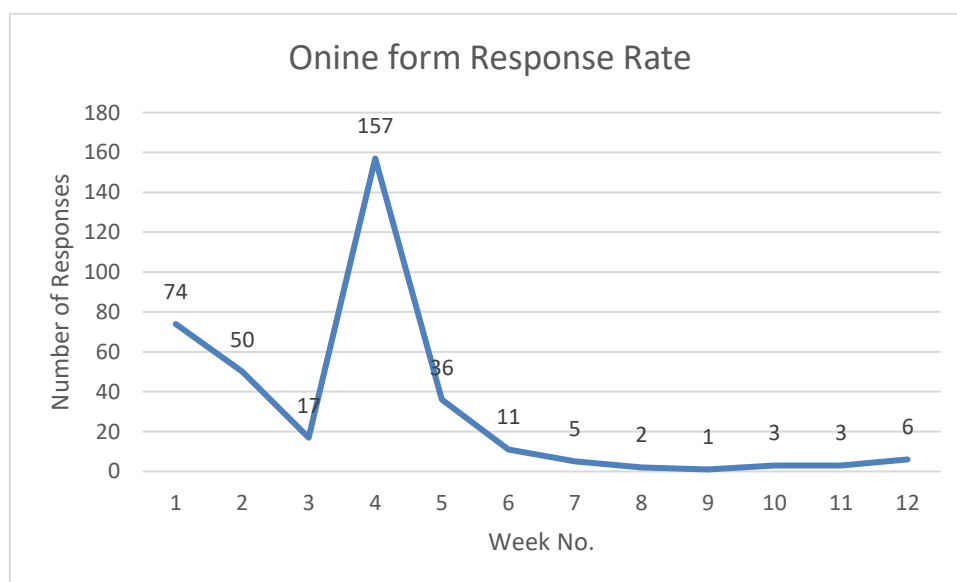


Figure 1

Figure 1 (above) shows that the highest number of responses was received in **week four** with a total of **157** responses. This was followed by a sharp decline in **week five** with **36**

responses, then a steady decline over the next four weeks. The responses remained low for the final 3 weeks. This decline is likely to be due to the COVID-19 outbreak, with safety measures introduced to limit the infection rate and eventually libraries being closed.

Section 2 - Online data form response analysis

The tables below are based on a total response rate of **365**. Some of the questions allowed users to select more than one answer. The percentage figures are rounded up or down to the nearest decimal place and the 'No Response' segment represents where the question has been left blank. Most questions asked were followed with a secondary question providing free text space for respondents to provide an explanation as to why they had selected the answer on the previous question. This enables the service to identify Key Themes which is also detailed below as part of this analysis.

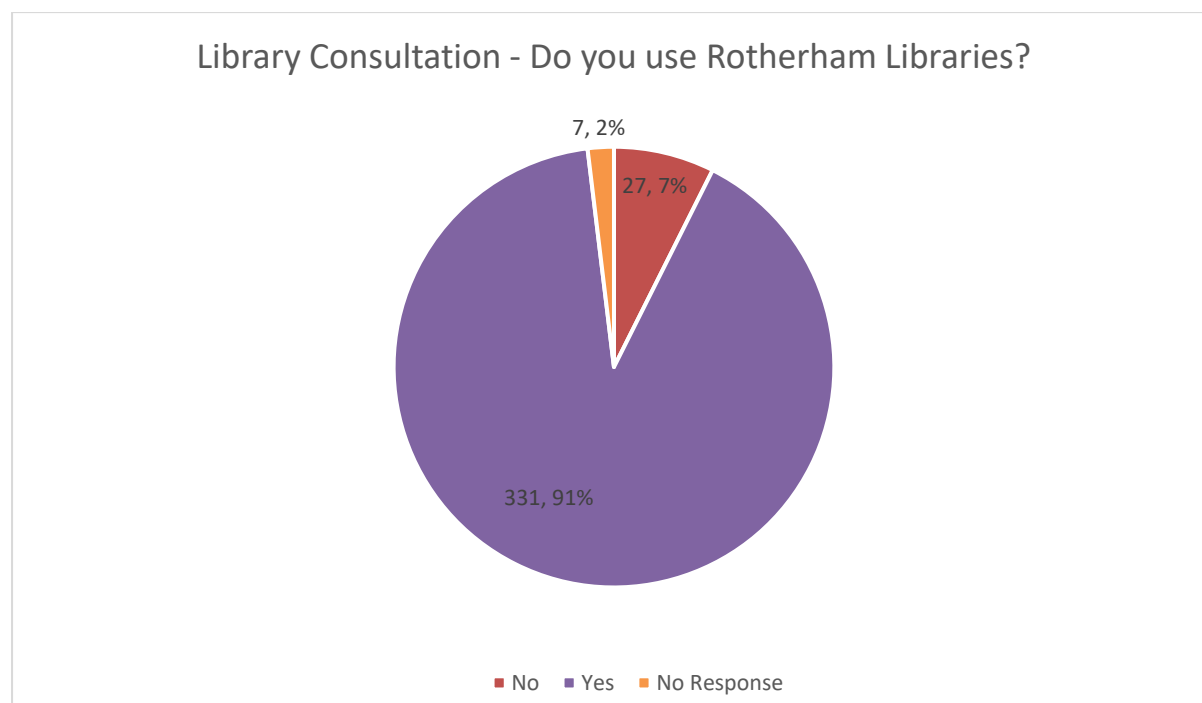


Figure 2

The above chart (figure 2) shows that of the **365** respondents, **331** use Rotherham libraries (**91%**), **27** don't use Rotherham libraries (**7%**) and **7** didn't select a response (**2%**).

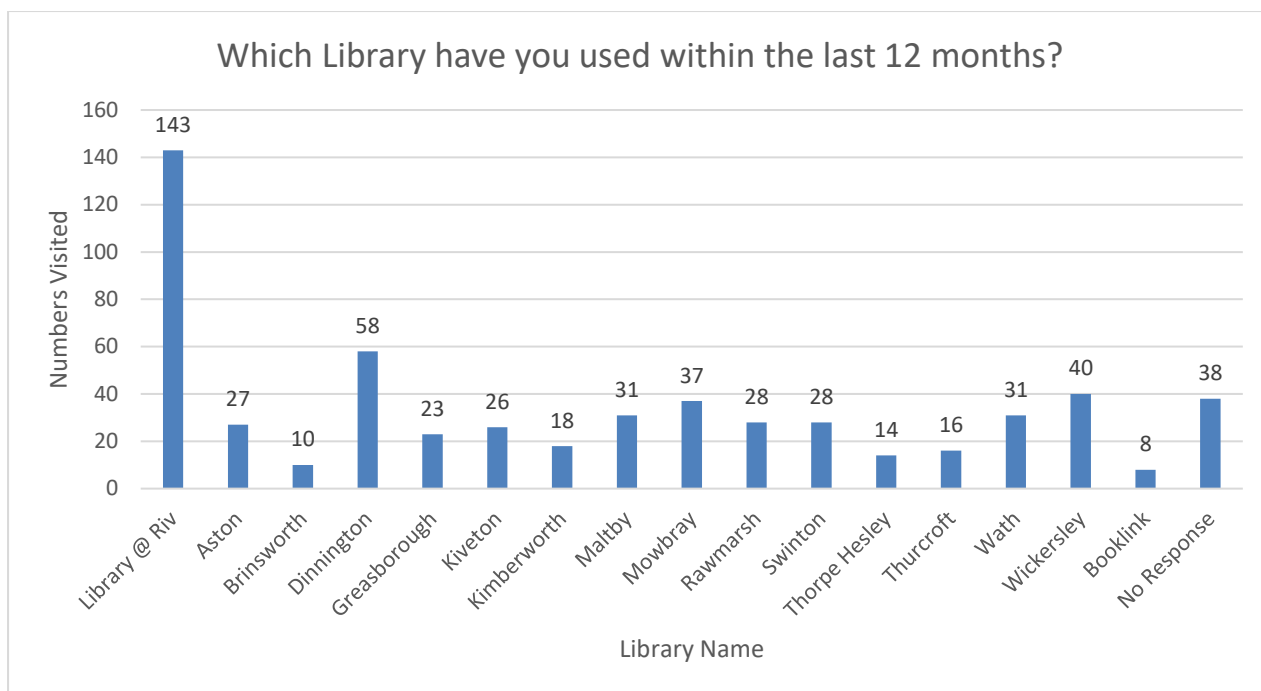


Figure 3

Figure 3 shows the number of visits to each library self-reported by the individual completing this survey. Responses to this question total **576**, which includes the **38** blank responses, this is significantly higher than the total number of respondents for the whole consultation. This response rate is a result of the respondents being provided with the option of selecting multiple answers and demonstrates that some respondents have visited more than one library within the last 12 months.

The most visited library was Riverside Library which, with **143** visits, had more than double the number of visits than the second most visited library, which was Dinnington Library with **58** visits. The least used library of the respondents was the Booklink mobile service, with **8** respondents having used this service.

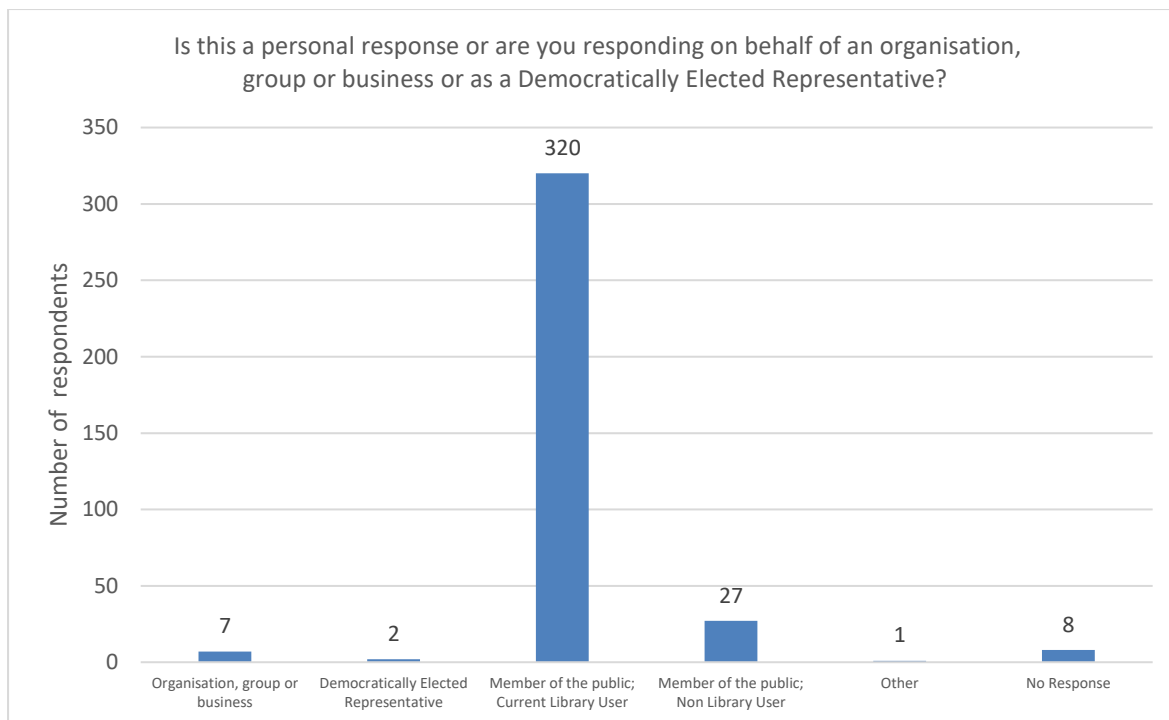


Figure 4

Figure 4 demonstrates who was completing the survey. A multiple choice was provided as to whether the consultation was completed by; An organisation, group or business; Democratically elected representative; Member of the public current library user; member of the public non library user or other. The highest group was completed by **320** members of the public current library users, whilst 'other' was the lowest with just **1**. Respondents were asked to provide detail when 'other' was selected stating 'what or who you are responding on behalf of' however for this **1** return there was no detail and this was left unanswered.

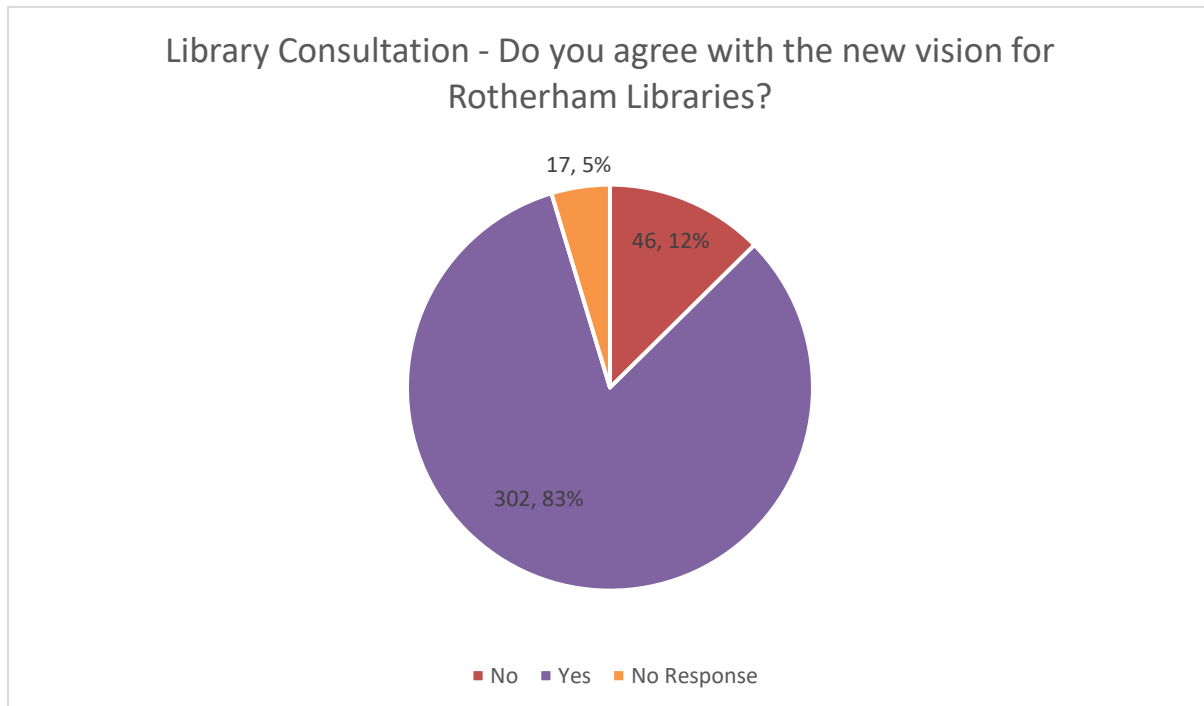


Figure 5

Figure 5 demonstrates that **302** of the 365 respondents (**83%**), agree with the new vision for Rotherham Libraries. Of the 365, **46** disagree (**12%**), and **17** respondents (**5%**) provided no response.

Respondents were asked to give reasons as to why they agree or disagree with the new vision. From the **365** respondents, **205** provided further comments with regards to the answer they provided, whilst the remaining **160** left blank. By providing this free text space we were able to identify some key themes.

These are as follows:

- **Community** – 76 of the 205 comments recorded stated that they feel libraries are an important part of the community . Comments included:
 - ‘I think libraries are a valuable resource for the whole community’
 - ‘I agree with the plans to improve services and widening of opportunities to bring communities together’
 - ‘Libraries are an essential part of our neighbourhood strategy and provide a hub around which the community can come together.’
 - ‘Libraries are a key part of the community, especially as so many other community services have now gone’
- **Books** – 30 comments recorded mentioned books, it varied with regards to using funding to get more books or commenting on the positive impact of reading books. Comments included;
 - ‘the local community would find themselves isolated and without access to books, internet facilities and various local amenities’

- 'Libraries are such a local asset, providing not only books, but a meeting place and hub for the community'.
- 'Yes, providing that more new books are provided and finance is not diverted to other activities'
- 'I feel strongly that our libraries should not only remain but be improved with a greater selection of books and services'

➤ **Children** – 18 comments recorded stated the importance of libraries for children, comments were as follows;

- 'You should specifically include provision for under school age children in terms of the toddler sessions run which encourages children to get into reading'
- 'I want my children to appreciate the written word and the wide variety of books and activities that can come from them'
- 'Libraries should be central to communities. It's really important that all children have access to books.'
- 'I agree that the libraries should be central hubs for encouraging children and enabling adults to read'

Some comments captured from the 12% that disagree with the vision are as follows;

- 'I believe that all libraries should be run with professional staff who are salaried and responsible to the local authority'
- 'In part but I think the libraries could offer more services to the public as the Council are reducing face to face assistance'
- 'I partly agree with the way libraries have to move forward. I don't like the use of volunteers'.

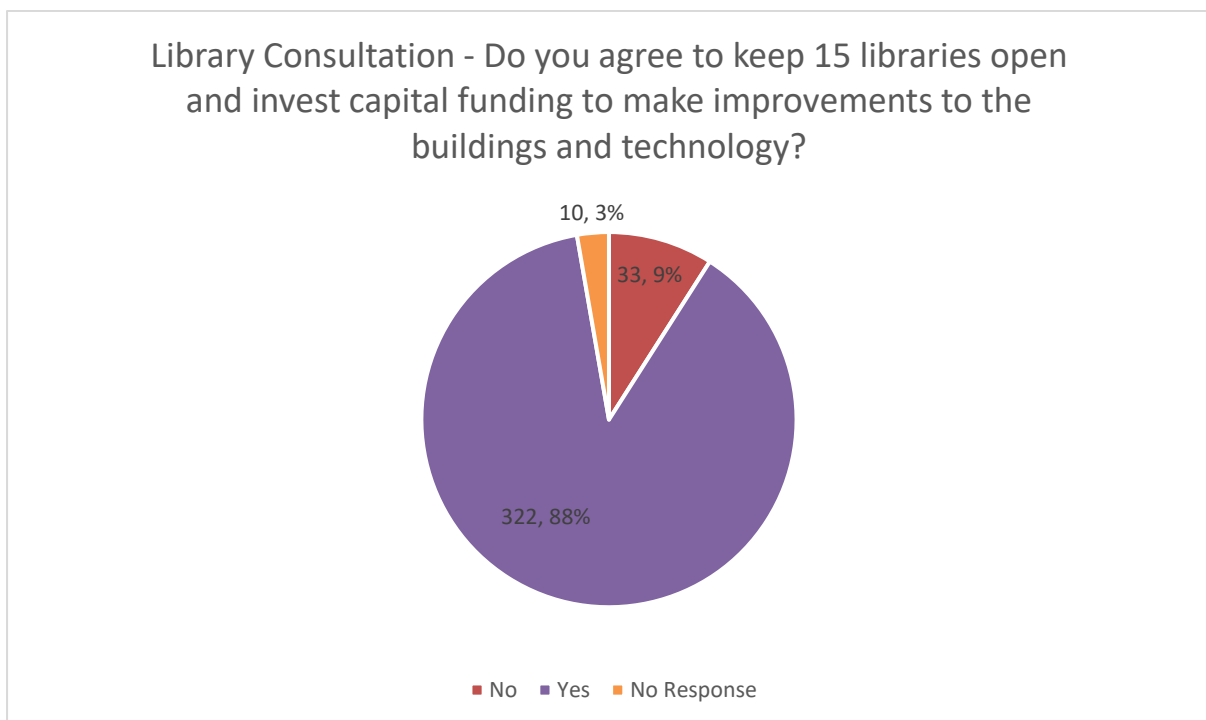


Figure 6

Figure 6 shows that **322** respondents of the **365 (88%)** agree for 15 libraries to remain open and invest capital funding to make improvements to the buildings and technology, whilst **33** selected that that they disagree (**9%**). 10 respondents (**3%**) didn't answer.

Respondents were asked why they either agree or disagree with keeping 15 libraries open, **238** provided further comments whilst **127** of the **365** left this blank. By providing this free text space for respondents to complete we were able to identify key themes from the answers provided. For the **33** that disagreed they felt libraries weren't used, with some comments as follows;

- 'People don't use libraries. Information is available at your fingertips nearly everyone has a smart phone or tablet'
- 'Too many and many underutilised. Have one central library.'

Of the **322** that agreed to keep libraries open comments included;

- 'It is imperative for all our residents to have access to a local library'.
- 'Definitely the technology as it is very slow at the moment and very out of date, Ideally Bluetooth / WiFi printers etc'.
- 'A worthwhile asset to the community. The heart of the village, really useful'.

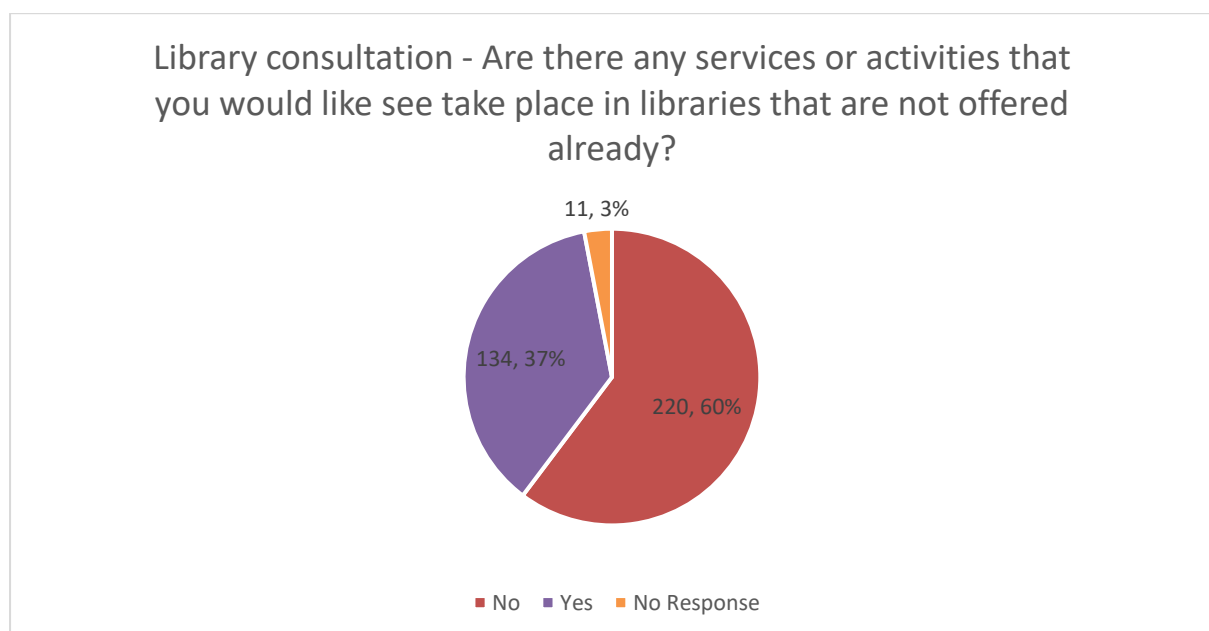


Figure 7

The above chart (figure 7) shows that **134** respondents (**37%**) would like to see more services or activities take place in libraries that are not offered already with **220 (60%)** that don't want to see anymore service or activities. **11** respondents (**3%**) left this unanswered

Respondents were asked to provide further details about activities and services they would like to see. **131** comments were provided, whilst the remaining respondents left this blank. By providing this free text space for respondents to complete, we were able to identify key

themes as to what activities and services they would like to see within Libraries, these were as follows:

- **Children** – 14 comments were around providing a wider range of activities for children or making them more frequent, some comments were;
 - ‘More activities for children as these often get booked up quickly and they are great’
 - ‘Much more emphasis on children’s activities, they are the future users, entice them in !!’
 - ‘More children's activities, perhaps based around specific books.’
- **Clubs and Groups** – 15 comments suggested more groups and clubs, this included varied suggestions such as; author events, poetry, crafts, yoga and photography. Some comments included were;
 - ‘Evening activities that people who work full time can attend e.g. book clubs, craft sessions author sessions or even making the library buildings available to other groups such as Scouts’
 - ‘Hobby based activities e.g. photography club, yoga sessions, language group’

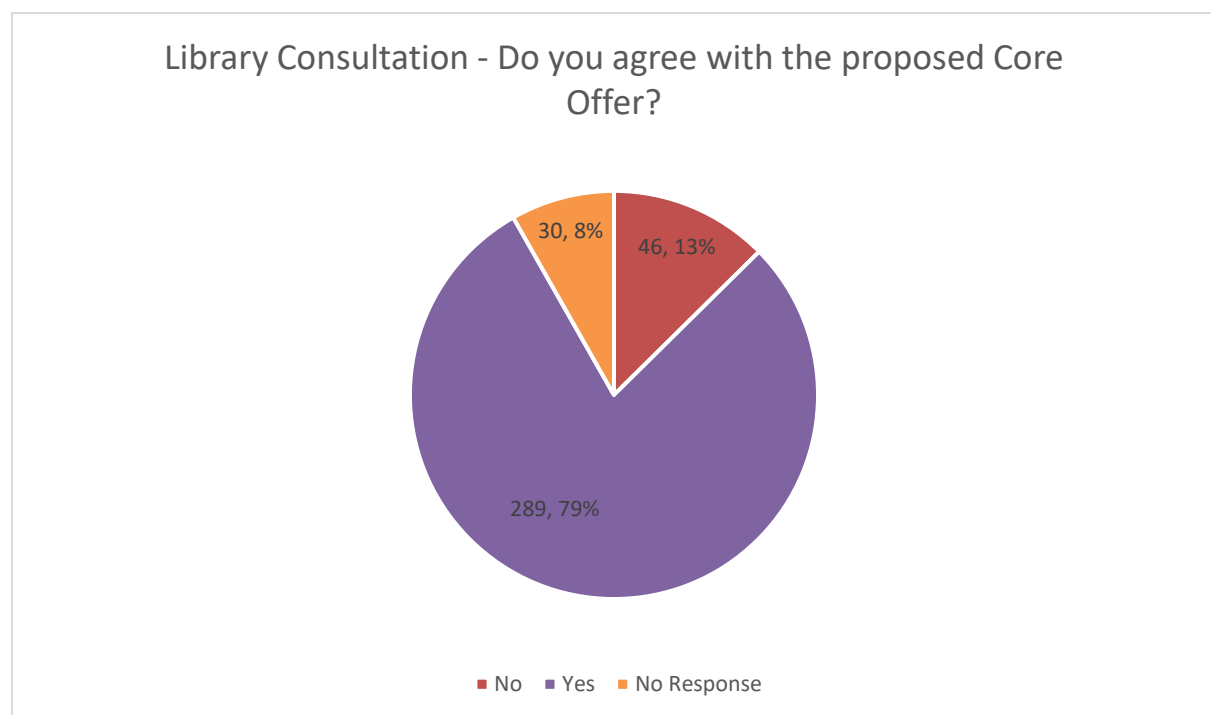


Figure 8

Figure 8 shows that when asked if agreed with the proposed core offer, **289** of the **365** respondents (**79%**) did agree. **46** did not agree (**13%**) and **30** did not respond (**8%**)

Respondents were asked to give reasons as to why they agree or disagree with the proposed Core Offer. By providing this free text space we have been able to identify some key themes from the reasons that were provided. **125** comments were provided, whilst remaining respondents left this blank. These comments varied and most were positive, some comments included;

- 'It will benefit all the community'
- 'I like the idea of them becoming hubs and accessible.'
- 'They seem reasonable and will hopefully play a role in the community and bring an increase in library use.'
- 'Volunteers/staff need more recognition for the work they do. I agree with making libraries more communal and making them provide a variety of activities'

Of the 13% that do not agree with the proposed core offer, some comments provided were as follows;

- 'It probably makes sense to Council people but again it seems mostly just flashy words. Hard to tell what it actually means. But I might have been reading the wrong bit. There's quite a lot of information.'
- 'The Core Offer is PC speak and meaningless.'
- 'I do not agree with proposals to have other organisations run libraries with unpaid workers'

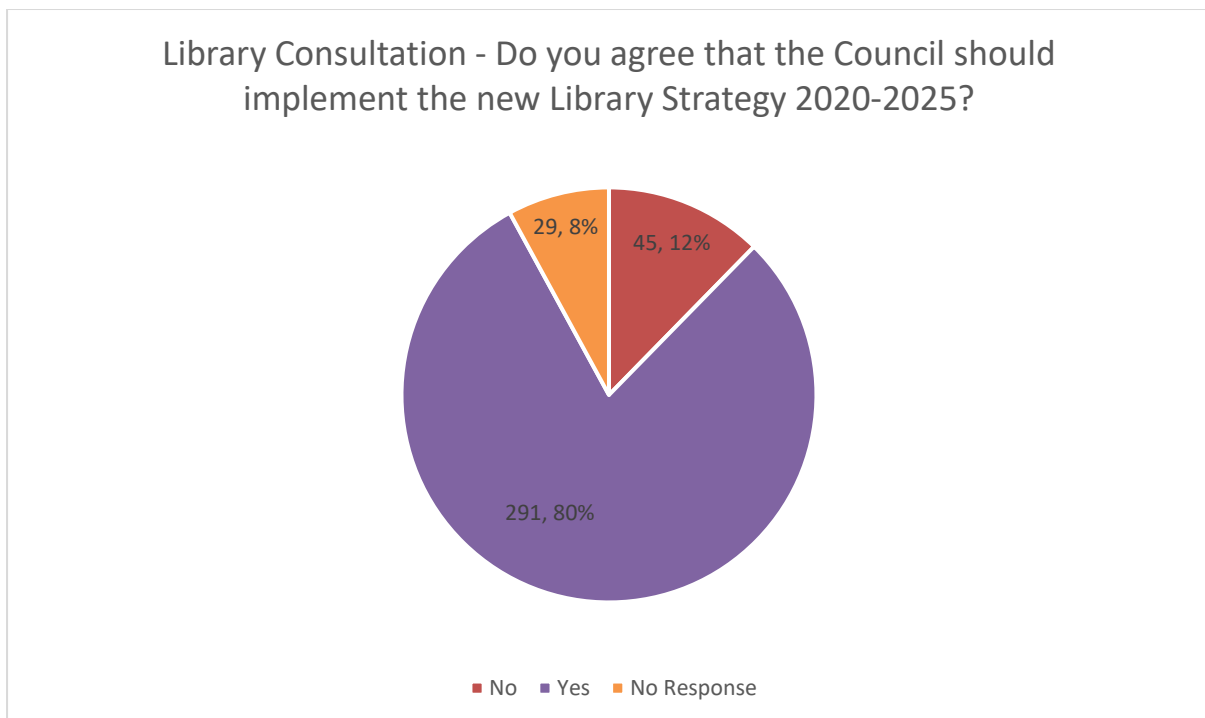


Figure 9

Figure 9 shows if respondents agree that the Council should implement the new Library Strategy **291** out of the **365** responses (**80%**) agreed yes, **45** respondents did not agree (**12%**) and **29** did not answer (**8%**).

Respondents were asked to explain why they had selected their answer. The online survey included a free text field where respondents could advise of the reason as to why they agree or disagree with implementing the new library strategy. There were **150** comments provided out of the **365** respondents that completed the survey. These comments varied and most were positive, comments that included;

- 'Especially the aim of keeping local libraries open and accessible'.
- 'The more use libraries get, the better'.
- 'Anything to improve library services would be a plus.'
- 'To ensure that Rotherham meets its statutory responsibility, to ensure that libraries continue to play their vital role within local communities'

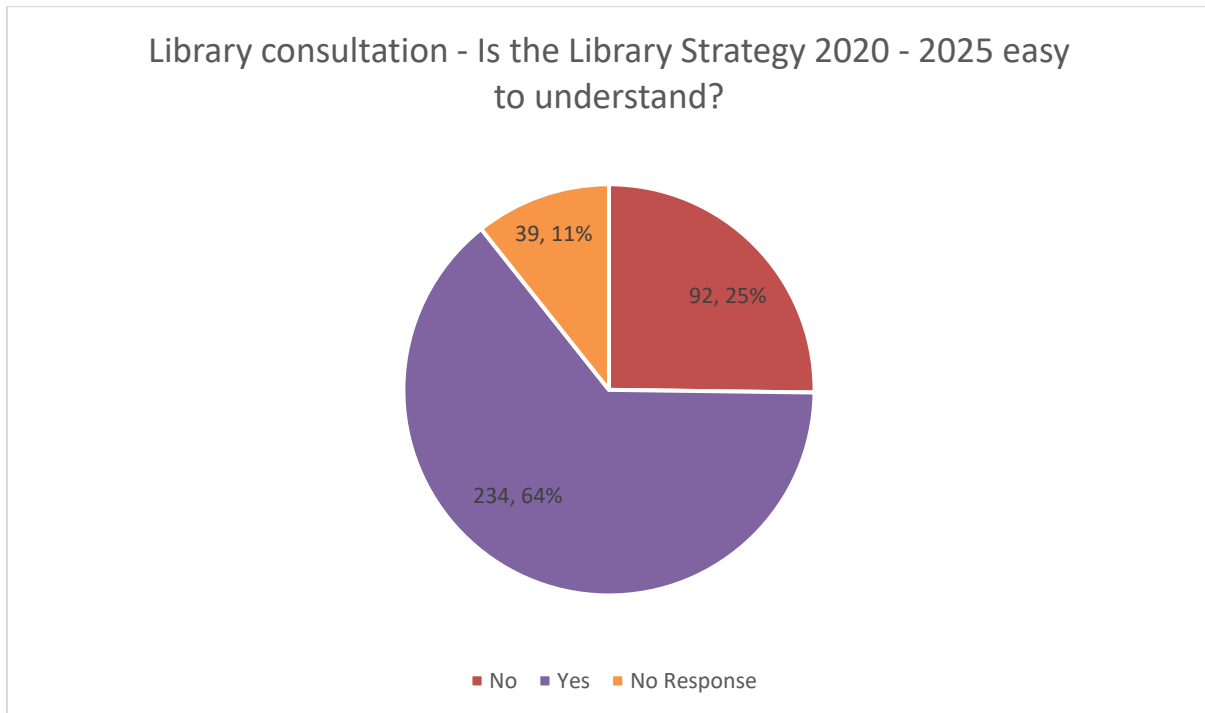


Figure 10

The above chart (Figure 10) demonstrates when asked if the Library Strategy 2020 – 2025 is easy to understand **234** of the **365** respondents agree (**64%**), **92** respondents disagree (**25%**) and **39** did not answer this question (**11%**)

Of the 92 respondents that disagree that Library Strategy 2020 – 2025 is easy to understand, 54 left further comments to explain their answer. The key theme of these comments is the wording and amount of information there is to read. Some comments are as follows;

- 'Too wordy and hard to find which libraries are remaining open and which not.'
- 'In some ways it is, but it may need to be more simplified and straight to the point'
- 'It is too long and overcomplicated. Should have been produced as a number of simple statements.'

59 of the 234 respondents that agree the Library Strategy 2020 – 2025 is easy to understand left further comments. Some comments mentioned the length of the document however, the consensus is that the document is clearly set out and easy to understand. Comments included were as follows;

- 'Once you sit down and read it properly but I dare say a lot of people won't have the time.'
- 'It is very easily presented, and it is easy to understand how libraries can evolve to make then much more accessible to everyone and more utilised so that they are able to stay open in the communities they serve'
- 'Quite a lot to digest which may put people off reading it!'
- 'I am very lucky in that I'm literate, not sure it's brief or bite sized enough for all service users'

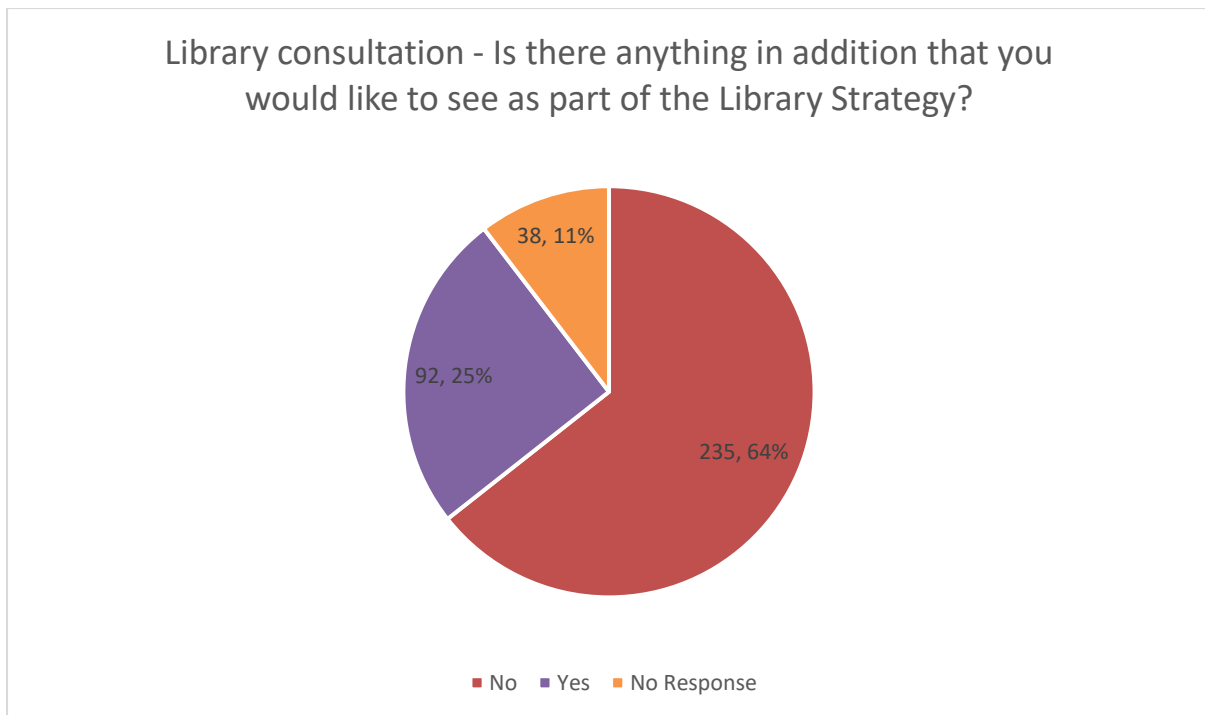


Figure 11

Figure 11 shows whether respondents would like to see anything in addition as part of the Library Strategy of the **365** responses **235** said no (**64%**) whilst **92** answered yes (**25%**) and **38** did not provide a response (**11%**)

Respondents were provided with free text space to add further details to their answer. From the **365** respondents, **116** provided further comments, whilst the remaining respondents left this blank. From this we could establish some key themes as follows:

- **Books** – 16 comments were based on ensuring books, e-books and materials were updated, they were as follows;
 - 'For the library to have more up to date material available'
 - 'Libraries often offer particular services for the visually impaired, large print and e books that can be read in various formats spring to mind'
 - 'A larger e-book and audiobook selection, possibly such as Overdrive. Keeping the IT and books section separate as much as possible'
- **Opening Hours**– 8 comments were encouraging to keep libraries open and maintain opening hours. Some comments included are;

- 'I like my library as it is but this does not mean i will not enjoy change as long as it stays open'
 - 'All local libraries to remain open'
 - 'More opening hours, not less'
- A lot of individual comments were around creating more quiet space, providing more groups, introducing coffee or café facilities, with one respondent who provided persistent comments throughout the whole survey all relating to Skateboarding.

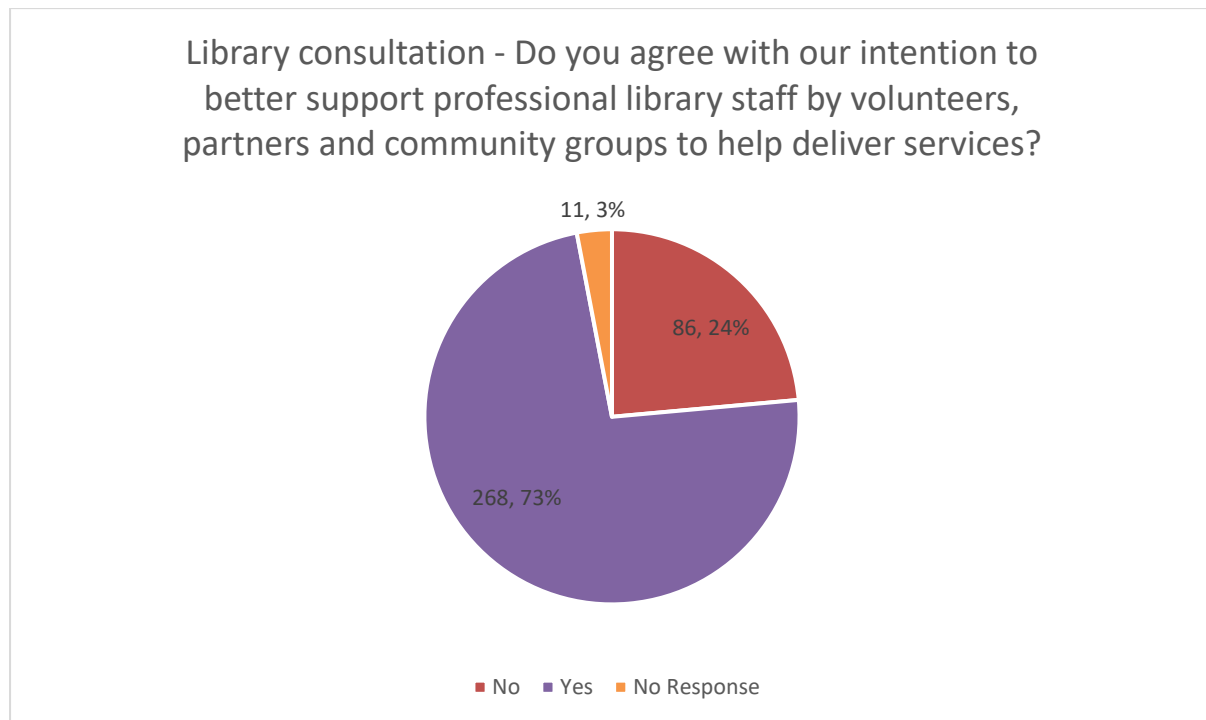


Figure 12

The above chart (figure 12) demonstrates that **268** of the **365** agree (**73%**) with our intention to better support professional library staff by volunteers, partners and community groups to help deliver services, whilst **86** disagree (**24%**) with **11** leaving this unanswered (**3%**)

Respondents were asked to provide reasons as to why they agreed or disagreed with our intention to better support professional library staff with volunteers, partners and community groups. **193** respondents provided further comments, by providing this free text space we were able to identify key themes. Some comments relating to agreeing with utilising volunteers were as follows;

- 'Yes if volunteers help keep library open, no if it's the thin end of a wedge to close libraries'
- 'Generally yes but all activities and services should be run by qualified staff.'
- 'As long as there are sufficient qualified paid librarians in all locations.'

Further comments from those who disagree with utilising volunteers included;

- 'Although I've put 'no', this is difficult to answer as it is a good thing to involve people mentioned above, but not at the expense of removing paid staff who have valuable experience.'
- 'Volunteers are unreliable, stick to well trained dedicated library staff. Ownership of the service promotes enthusiasm and loyalty.'
- 'It is a worry that volunteers are not able to give as good a service as a trained employee and will eventually replace employees'

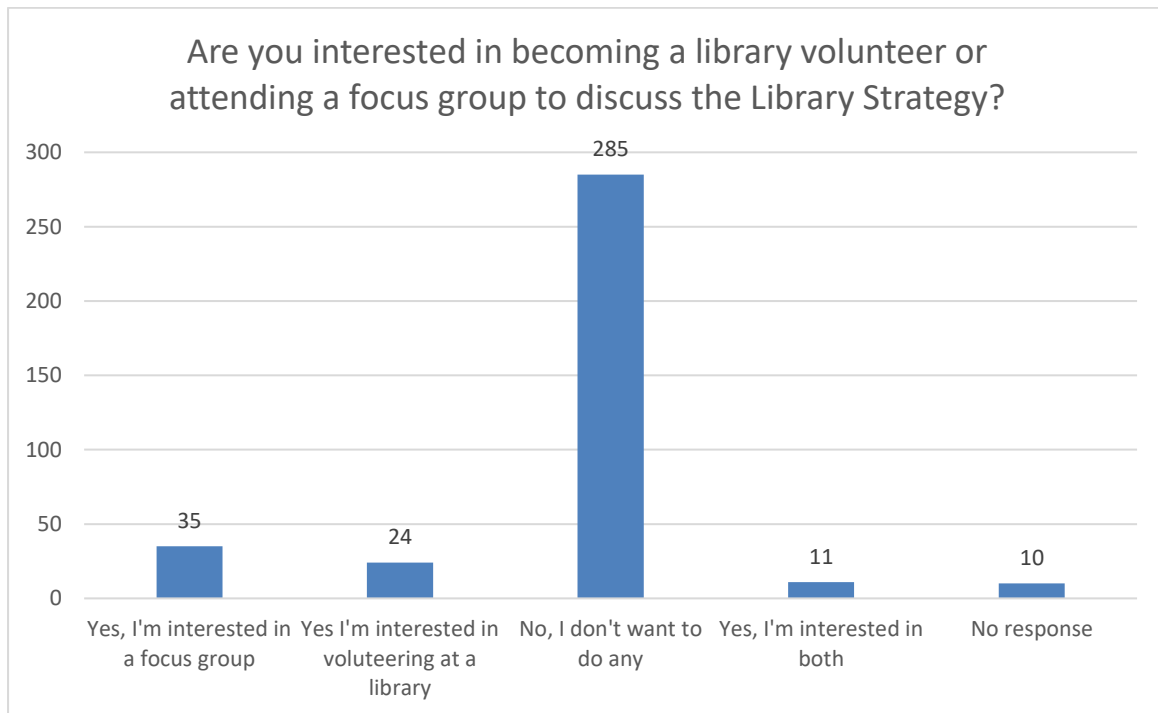


Figure 13

Respondents completing the survey were asked if they are interested in becoming a library volunteer or attending a focus group to discuss the Library Strategy. Figure 13 demonstrates that from the **365** respondents, **285** didn't want to be involved (**78%**). Whilst **35** would like to be involved within a focus group (**10%**), **24** would like to volunteer at a Library (**6%**) and **11** expressed an interest to be involved with both (**3%**). **10** people left this blank (**3%**).

A dedicated space was provided for respondents to provide their Name, telephone number and email address where they expressed an interest to be a volunteer, involved in a focus group or both. In addition, it was asked if there was a specific library they would like to be involved in, all respondents left this blank.

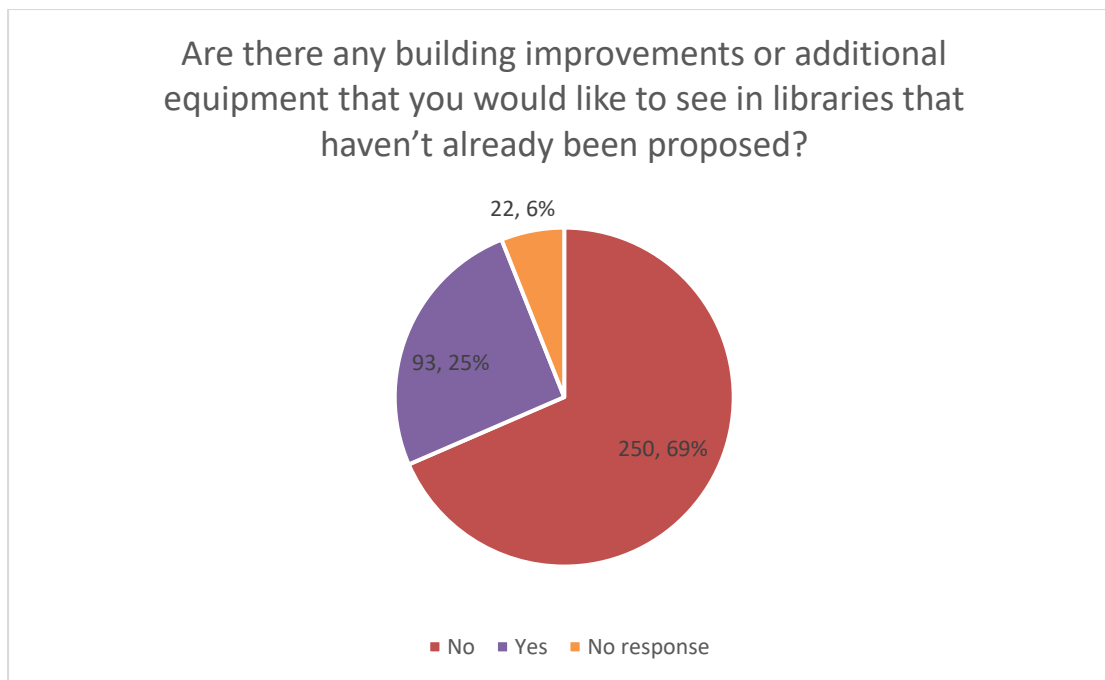


Figure 14

Figure 14 demonstrates that when respondents were asked if there are any building improvements or additional equipment that they would like to see in libraries that has been proposed already. **250** of the **365** respondents said no (**69%**) whilst **93** said yes (**25%**), the remaining **22** left this question blank (**6%**).

127 respondents provided further comments within the free text space that followed this question. This gave the opportunity for respondents to give reason for their answer and allows us to identify key themes from the comments provided, some of these were as follows;

- **IT Equipment** – 17 comments referred to having better IT equipment or up to date technology such as providing Kindles for people to read E-books in the library, comments included;
 - 'New PCs, Tablets, Cafe facilities'
 - 'Maybe have some iPads or kindles to borrow to read on too'
 - 'Increased innovative use of technology to improve access and support the use of services (e.g. for people with dementia, visual problems)'
- **Toilet Facilities** – 14 comments suggested having better toilet facilities within Libraries, some included;
 - 'All libraries need to be refurbished to a high standard and should provide public toilets and cafe's or at least a hot drink machine.'
 - 'A better baby changing area at Dinnington library would be welcomed. The current facilities are within a rather tired disabled toilet'
 - 'The toilet facilities need some updating and improvement.'

The final question as part of the consultation included a free text space giving the opportunity to provide any additional comments with regards to the Library service. **88** respondents provided further commentaries. Overall a lot of comments showed gratitude for the service provided by Libraries, some of those included were;

- 'They provide such a marvellous service and anything that can be done to continue this service, must be given adequate and open-minded consideration.'
- 'Thank you to the library services. I hope it grows and develops to be better suited to users and opens opportunities for all.'
- 'Excellent service, staff and facilities that I appreciate tremendously and would not like to lose.'
- 'I would like to thank the staff in libraries who continue to provide excellent support in a time of financial constraint.'

In addition, a lot of individual comments had a similar theme to those seen throughout the consultation which includes, supporting libraries to stay open, better technology, better IT equipment, more groups, more books and hot drinks facilities. Some further comments are as follows:

- 'Focus on them being community centres and places of gathering is important as well as access to books.'
- 'Please don't close libraries they are valuable for encouraging young children to read and access books they wouldn't be able to.'
- 'Rotherham Library has brilliant facilities - shout about them far and wide so people know what is available to them.'
- 'I visit many libraries across Rotherham and have been impressed with how well Mowbray is run. Approachable friendly staff, a variety of Community groups, facilities, toilets, tables and am impressed with the drinks machine, more libraries should have this facility'

Section 3 - Equality and diversity analysis

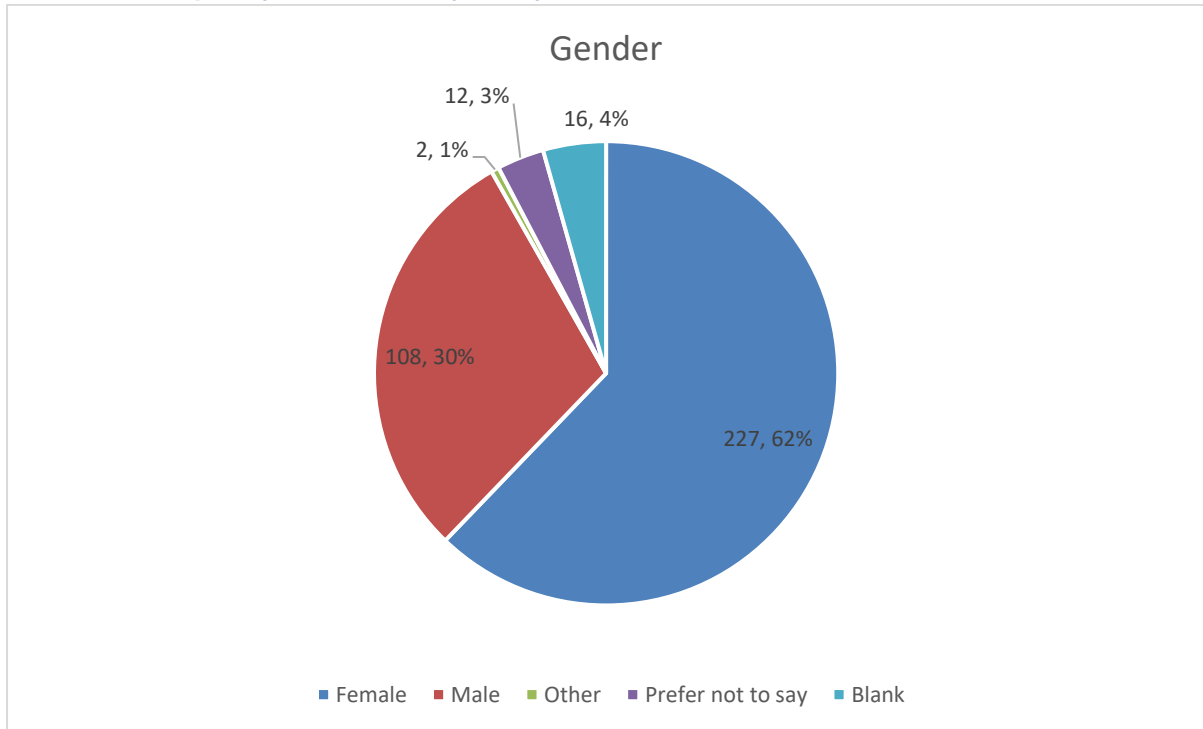


Figure 15

Figure 15 shows that from the **365** respondents for this consultation, **227 (62%)** were Female, **108 (30%)** were Male, **2** people (**1%**) selected other, **12 (3%)** chose not to say whilst **16 (4%)** left this question blank. When other was selected, respondents had the opportunity to provide further details, however from the (1%) shown, this was left blank.

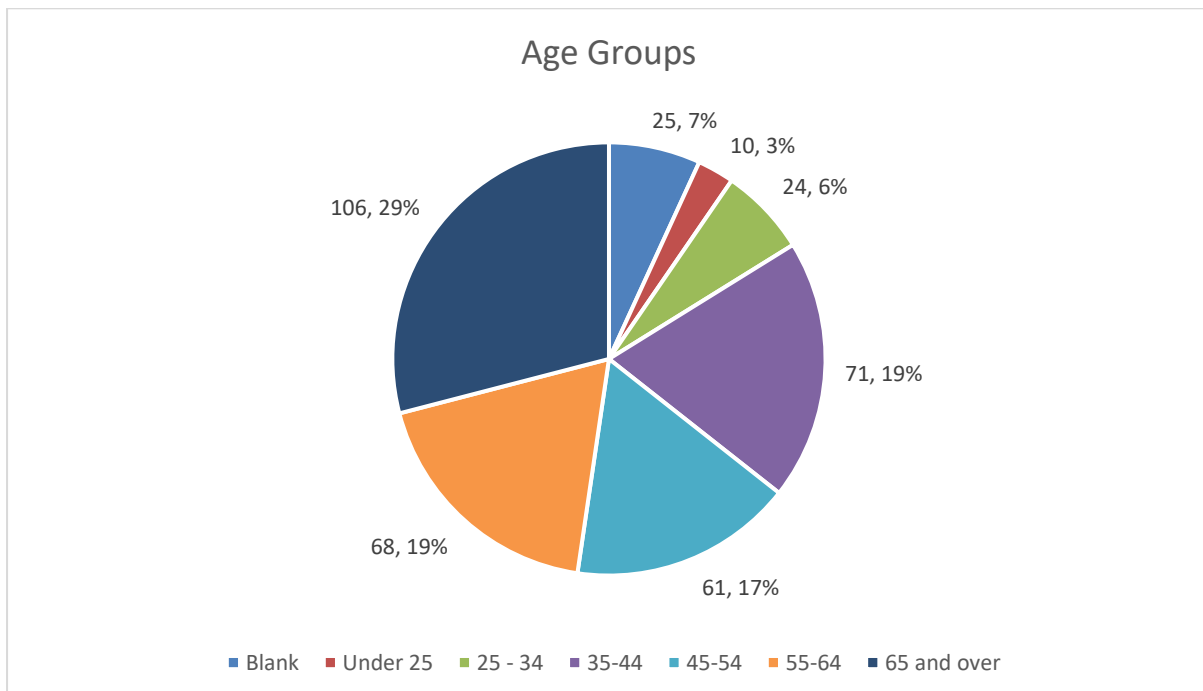


Figure 16

The above (figure 16) shows that the age range that completed this consultation varied from under 25 to over 65. The largest age group captured was '65 and over' with **106**, which is **29%** of the **365** respondents. The smallest age group captured was the Under 25's with **10** (**3%**) of the **365** respondents falling into this age group. **25** people (**7%**) left this question blank. The remaining data shows that **24** people (**6%**) were aged '25-34', **71** (**19%**) were aged '35 – 44', **61** people (**17%**) were aged '45-54' and **68** (**19%**) were 55-64.

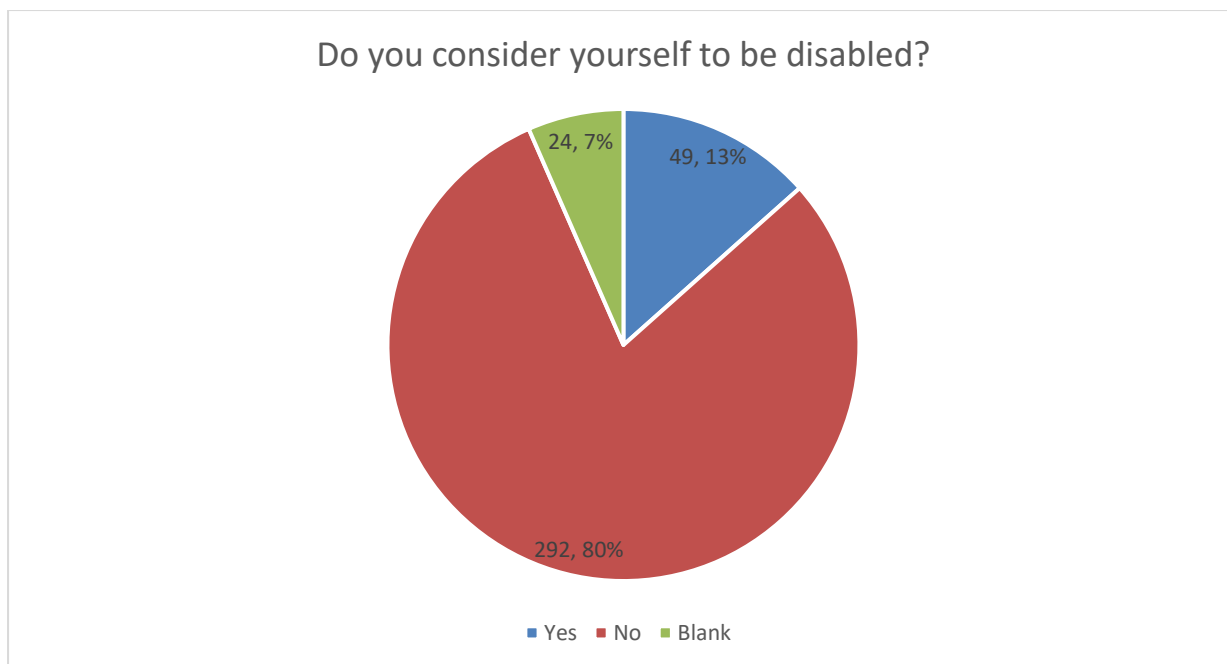


Figure 17

Respondents were asked if they considered themselves to have any disabilities. Figure 17 shows that **292** of the **365** respondents (**80%**) did not consider themselves to be disabled, **49** (**13%**) considered themselves disabled and **24** (**7%**) left this question blank.

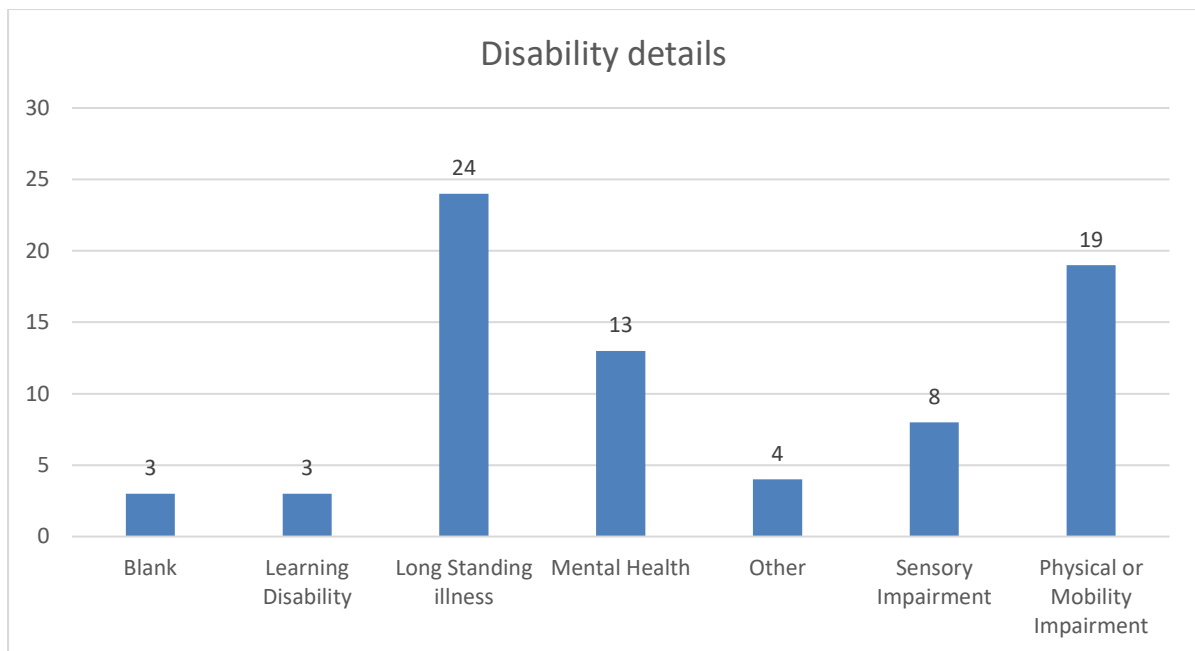


Figure 18

When yes was selected, a box was provided for respondents to provide further information with regards to their disability. Respondents were able to select multiple options when answering this question. Figure 18 enables us to see that of the **49** respondents that selected yes some have multiple disabilities.

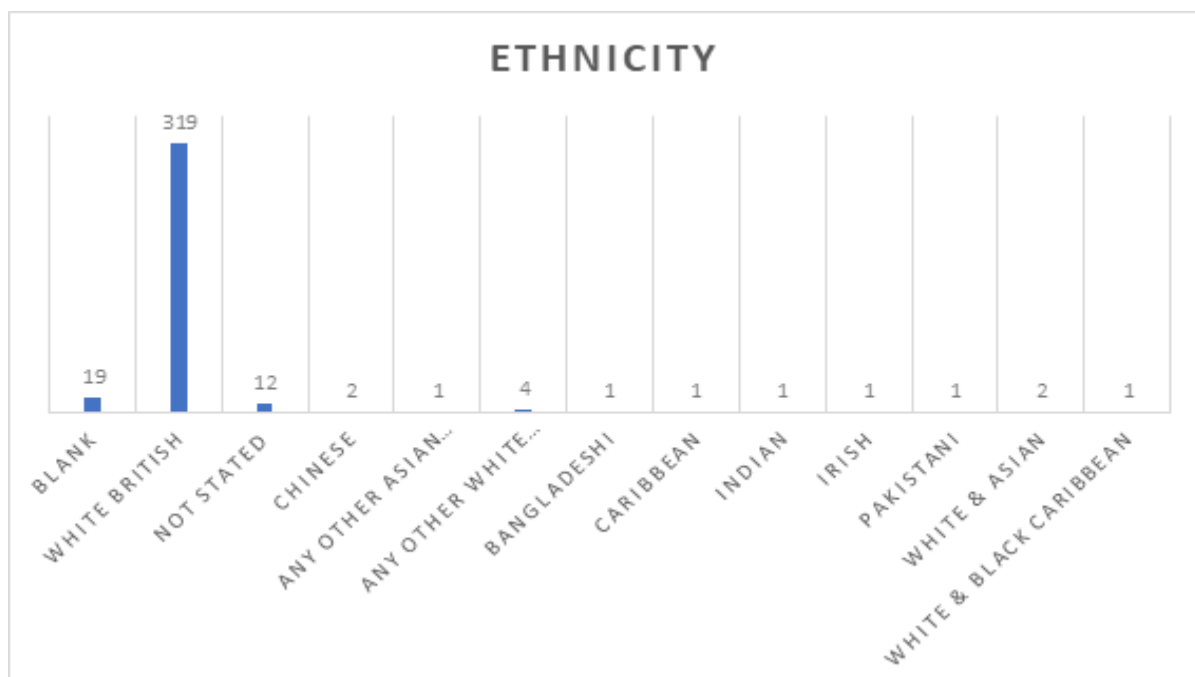


Figure 19 demonstrates a breakdown of the ethnic groups that took part in this consultation. Of the 365 respondents, this graph shows that **319** were White British, **19** people left this question blank and **12** who chose not to disclose their ethnicity with the remaining **15** which is made up of various ethnic backgrounds outside of the White British category.

Section 4 - Other findings

The drop-in sessions that did take place across libraries in Rotherham revealed that respondents wanted the number and range of books available to be improved. This is also reflective of the online survey, which demonstrated that a good range of books is a priority for most library users. Customer also expressed their need for better IT equipment and a faster Wi-Fi, again this can be noted from the online survey where the comments provided are very similar.

Following the analysis from the initial consultation of Future of Rotherham Libraries it was recognised that there were two main areas of low engagement and further work took place between 25th June – 9th July to allow time to specifically target these areas. As aforementioned these groups included Under 25's and BAME community.

The closure of the face to face library provision has limited the way in which the service could target the above groups. Therefore, the response rate during the consultation was considerably low. This also impacted the way in which we could address these gaps as part of further consultation.

Contact was made with relevant services that were identified as having suitable groups that could assist with targeting these identified gaps.

Additional analysis - Under 25's

The Library team worked with the early help participation voice & influence Coordinator in order to set up a Skype meeting with youth cabinet members. In addition, a follow up email sent out to all secondary schools on 12th June encouraging further feedback from young people. The feedback received from Schools was due to COVID-19 this was not on their list of priorities. Young people had previously responded in the last phase of consultation with regards to what they wanted to see in libraries and could be used to form the future service offer.

A skype call took place with some Youth Cabinet Board Members in order to obtain further verbal feedback. Although only 4 individuals attended the age range was varied which included; Year 6, Year 7, Year 10 and 6th form. Although no specific details on the strategy, comments were provided with regards to libraries needing to be more modern as they can appear daunting to kids and that activities need to be publicised more to children in schools. Whilst the group informed that they don't always use the libraries for books, they find libraries peaceful and somewhere to do their school work.

A request was all sent to encourage skype calls with Special Education Needs groups (SEND) lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community (LGBT) and Rotherham United Under 25's.

Feedback from SEND group following a virtual session found that they would like to see more open spaces for wheelchairs, Interesting displays, Anime, cosplay ,cartoon content (displays and figures of popular characters), Interesting objects on display/cupboard and theme book events for teenagers. Another suggestion from a young person in the group, who has a sight impairment, recommended Libraries having the ability to offer different forms of communication where possible such as Makaton / sign language.

No further feedback was obtained from LGBT and Rotherham united under 25's as they informed us participation within groups had been low due to COVID-19 with no participants at all for the LGBT group.

Additional analysis - BAME community

14 of the 365 respondents were of a BAME background, and it's possible that a percentage of BAME individuals could make up part of the 31 respondents who chose 'not to state' or 'leave blank'. BAME individuals make up 6% of the active library users, therefore 3.8% of the 365 respondents to our consultation were of BAME background. These figures were discussed with the community engagement team, who agreed that considering current BAME library users it was a fair representation. The service also identified that, this audience was engaged with in the same way as the previous phase of the consultation and the analysis from Phase 2 identified that 4.8% of respondents were from a BAME background, therefore a similar response rate to this final phase (1% difference which is to be expected due to global pandemic and the cancellation of face to face drop in sessions at some sites).

The library service did attempt to further engagement communication was made with REMA however due to the methods of engagement available not being suitable no further information could be obtained. Working is still ongoing to address this gap.

Proposed changes to Brinsworth Library – results and findings

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Section 1 - Overview of responses

Number of online form responses

Week	Dates	Total
1	03/02/20 – 09/02/20	14
2	10/02/20 – 16/02/20	13
3	17/02/20 – 23/02/20	4
4	24/02/20 – 01/03/20	18
5	02/03/20 – 08/03/20	28
6	09/03/20 – 15/03/20	7
7	16/03/20 – 22/03/20	1
8	23/03/20 – 29/03/20	3
9	30/03/20 – 05/04/20	0
10	06/04/20 – 12/04/20	0
11	13/04/20 – 19/04/20	0
12	20/04/20 – 26/04/20	0
Total consultation responses		88

Table 1

Table 1 shows the number of responses captured weekly, with an overall response of **88** for the proposed changes to Brinsworth library.

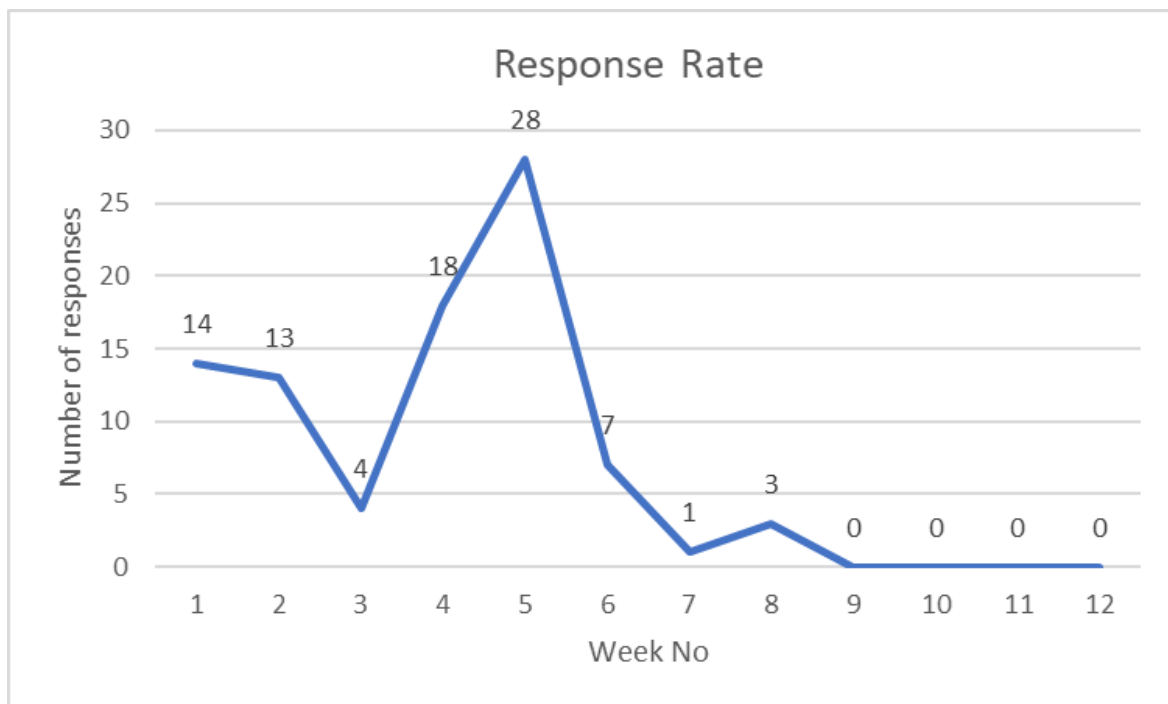


Figure 1

Figure 1 (above) shows that the highest number of responses was received in **week five** with a total of **28** responses. This was followed by a sharp decline in **week six** with **7** responses, this declined further in **week seven** with just 1 response. The responses remained low for the final 5 weeks, with no responses at all in the last four weeks. This decline is likely to be due to the COVID-19 outbreak, with safety measures introduced to limit the infection rate and eventually libraries being closed.

Section 2 - Online data form response analysis

The tables below are based on a total response rate of **88**. Some of the questions allowed users to select more than one answer. The percentage figures are rounded up or down to the nearest decimal place and the **No Response** segment represents where the question has been left blank. Most questions asked were followed with a secondary question providing free text space for respondents to provide an explanation as to why they had selected the answer on the previous question, this enables us to identify Key Themes which is also detailed below as part of this analysis.

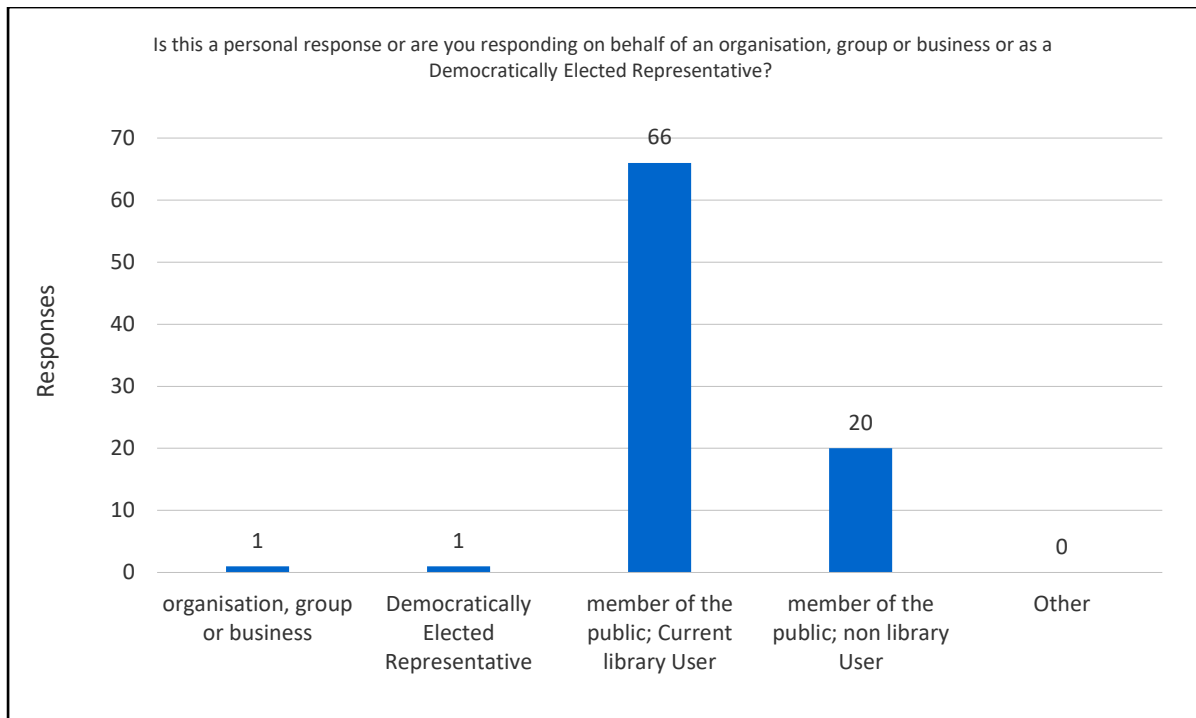


Figure 2

Figure 2 demonstrates who was completing the survey. A multiple choice was provided to select whether the consultation was completed by; An organisation, Group or Business; Democratically elected representative; Member of the public current library user; Member of the public non library user or Other. The highest group was completed by **66** members of the public current library users, whilst both 'organisation, group or business' and 'Democratically elected representative' both had **1**. Respondents were asked to provide detail when 'other' was selected stating 'what or who you are responding on behalf of' there was **0** selected for other.

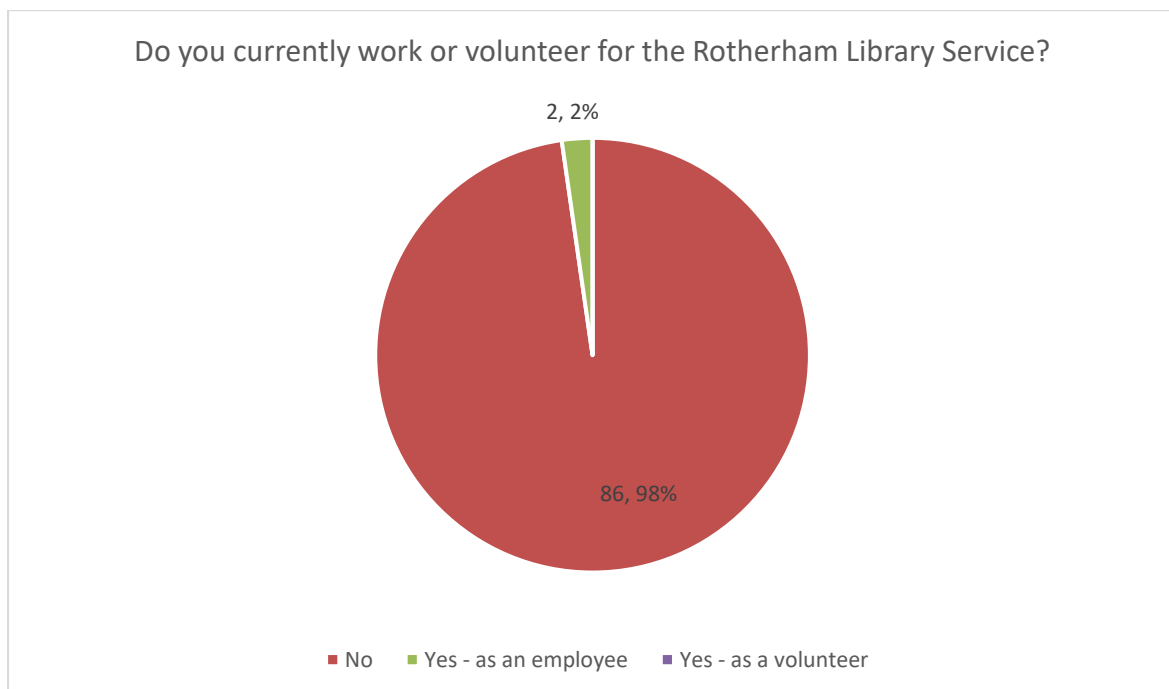


Figure 3

Figure 3 demonstrates that **86** of the 88 respondents (**98%**) do not currently work or volunteer for the Rotherham library service. **2 (2%)** selected that they are a current employee. There was a **0** return from any volunteers for the Rotherham library service.

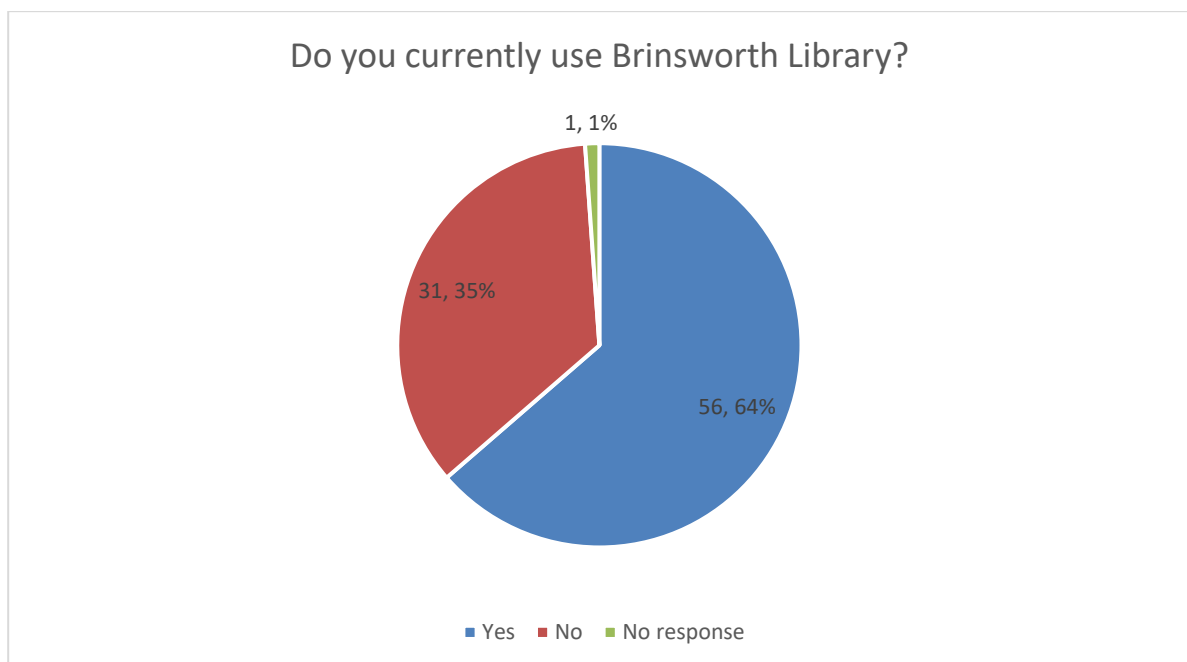


Figure 4

Respondents were asked if they currently use Brinsworth library. Figure 4 (above) demonstrates that **56** of the 88 respondents (**64%**) currently use Brinsworth library. Of the 88, **31** do not use Brinsworth Library (**35%**), and **1** respondent (**1%**) provided no response.

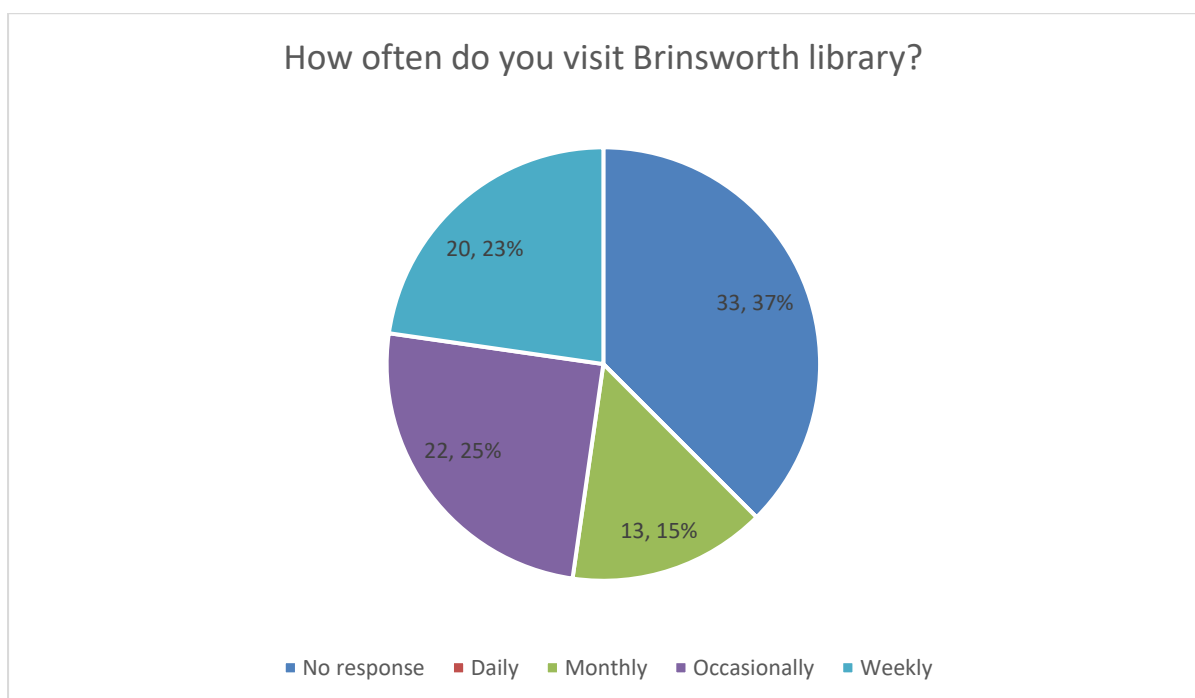


Figure 5

Following on from the question in Figure 4; When yes was selected respondents were then asked how often they use Brinsworth library. Figure 5 shows that **13 (15%)** attend Brinsworth library monthly, **22 respondents (25%)** selected occasionally, whilst **20 (23%)** use it weekly. From the 88 respondents no one selected the option for daily and **33 (37%)** left this question blank.

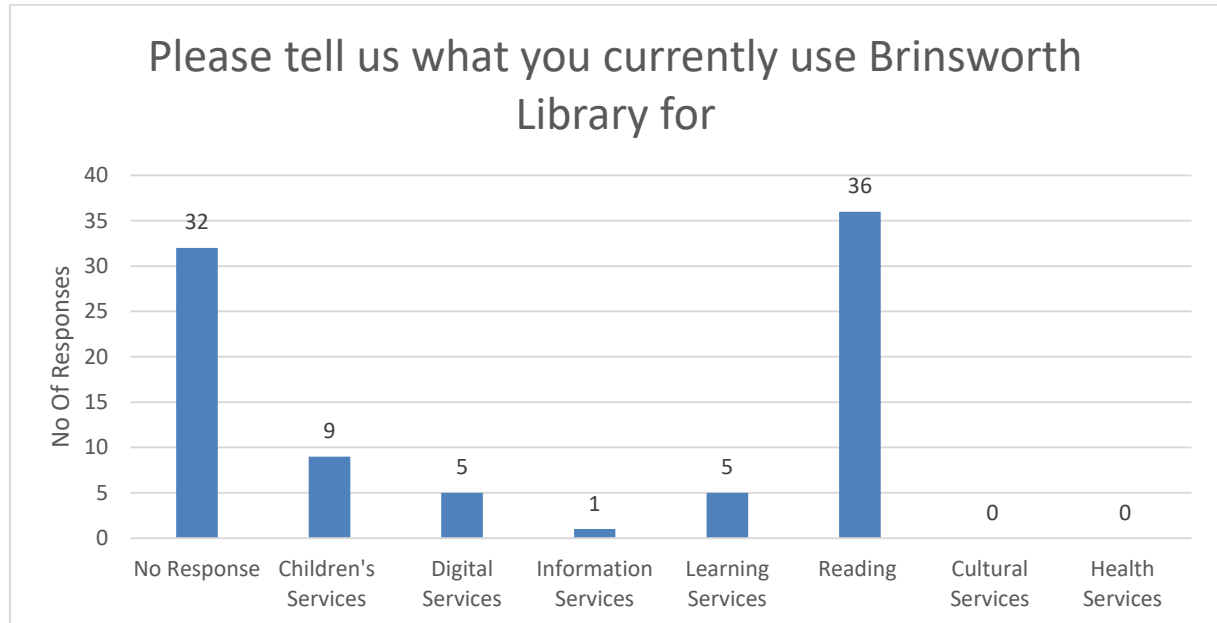


Figure 6

In addition, respondents who selected **yes** were also asked to choose from a list of options what they use Brinsworth library for. The multiple-choice options were;

'Children's Services - to attend activities such as a Rhymetime session or half term activity'; 'Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, access public computers, photocopying, printing or to use our free Wi-Fi'; 'Information Services - to find out about starting your own business, applying for/ renewing a concessionary bus pass/Blue Car Badge'; 'Health Services - to access information and advice regarding health, lifestyle and wellbeing'; 'Cultural Services - to visit local art displays, attend an author visit or visit a mini museum exhibition'; 'Learning Services - to access digital support to help with job searching or to take part in regular skills development activities such as Knit and Natter' or 'Reading - to access our range of books or e-books or to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge'

Figure 6 (above) shows that reading is the most popular use for Brinsworth library, with **36** of the 88 respondents selecting this. **32** left this question blank. Cultural Services and Health Service was the least use for Brinsworth library with no one selecting this option.

If No: Following on from the question asked (shown in figure 4.) When no was selected, respondents were asked to explain why they don't currently use Brinsworth library. By providing this free text space for respondents to complete we were able to identify key themes from the answers provided. Of the 31 that answered no, **28** left further comments.

11 of the comments referred to the old building being outdated and the location, in addition some then went on to add that they will use/join Brinsworth library when the new building opens. Some comments as to why they didn't use Brinsworth library were as follows;

- 'Because it's in a temporary location. I cant wait to join the new improved library'
- 'Never really found the need and found it daunting to attend the old building due to its position'
- 'I feel uncomfortable with the area it is in and would rather not go, so I was over the moon to hear it was moving, will be perfect to just have a walk down without being made to feel uncomfortable.'
- Further comments stated that it wasn't their local library or they preferred to use the town centre location.

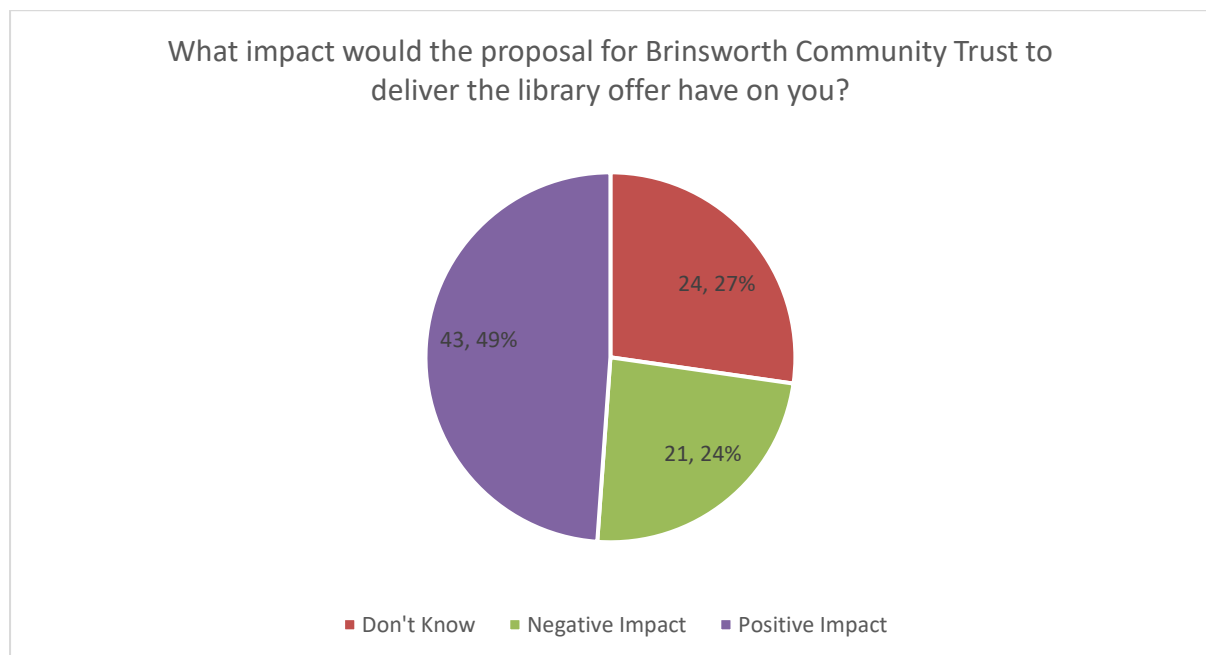


Figure 7

Figure 7 demonstrates what type of impact respondents felt the proposal for Brinsworth community trust to delivery the library offer will have on them. **43 (49%)** feel this will have a positive impact and **21 (24%)** feel it will have a negative impact, whilst **24 (27%)** selected 'don't know'

Respondents were then asked to explain the reasoning for their answer. By providing this free text space we were able to identify key themes from the answers provided.

Of the 21 respondents who selected negative impact, 20 left comments all based around the concerns of losing paid staff, some of these were as follows;

- 'We need trained staff with experience, not volunteers or staff from the Trust with no experience'
- 'I don't think using volunteers can work. The library needs trained, dedicated staff who have experience of working in libraries, Volunteers are likely not to relied upon to keep the library open at the designated times, not have the IT experience.'

24 respondents of the 43 that felt this would be a positive impact for them left further comments, most commended the new building and the new location, some other comments included are;

- 'Input from local community to the running of the library and ideas of what the local community would like and would hopefully support.'
- 'To share on social media when it's open, easy to access in the new location. Bringing in into the community would give the village sense of ownership.'

10 respondents left comments of the 24 that selected 'don't know' some of these comments are as follows;

- 'Worry about loss of jobs but think good opportunity for Trust.'
- 'Depends on level of service and continued support from RMBC.'

34 of the 88 respondents left no further comments.

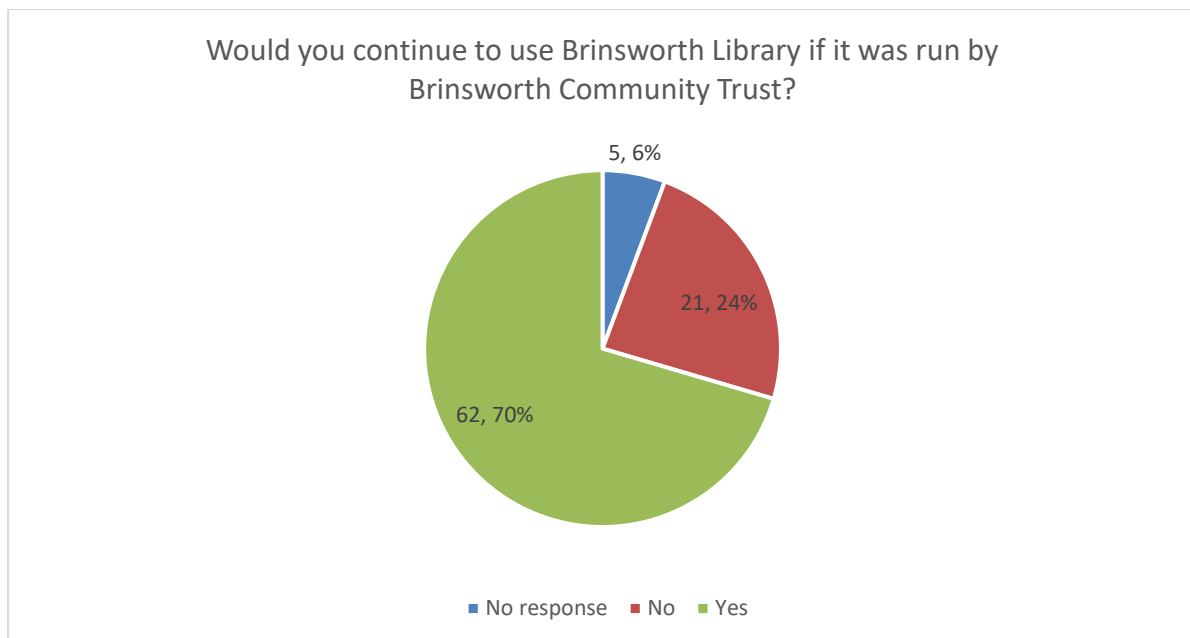


Figure 8

Respondents were asked if they would continue to use Brinsworth Library if it was run by Brinsworth Community Trust. Figure 8 shows that **62 (70%)** would still attend Brinsworth library, however **21 (24%)** said this would stop them attending whilst **5 (6%)** left this blank.

Respondents were then asked to explain the reasoning for their answer. By providing this free text space we were able to identify key themes from the answers provided.

Of the 21 that selected no, 18 left a further comment. The key theme from these comments highlighted that they would lose confidence in the library if run by volunteers. Some of these comments were as follows;

- 'Lack of confidence in the people running it. Too many issues - confidentiality, GDPR, not being reliable.....'

- 'The service given by staff is outstanding. Volunteers wont have the training or the experience that staff have gained over years of work experience.'

18 of the 62 respondents that selected yes, 18 left a further comment. These highlighted that as long as there was no impact on the service and activities provided they would be happy for the library to be run by Brinsworth community trust, however some of these comments, although selected yes, did add concerns on the impact on paid staff. Some comments included are;

- 'Not sure what Brinsworth Community Trust is, or how they would run it, but as long as the same range of books was available I would still use it.'
- 'Not sure this would be a good thing for staff who are currently employed. I would hope this wouldn't result in redundancies. I can see how this would affect the availability of services currently provided.'

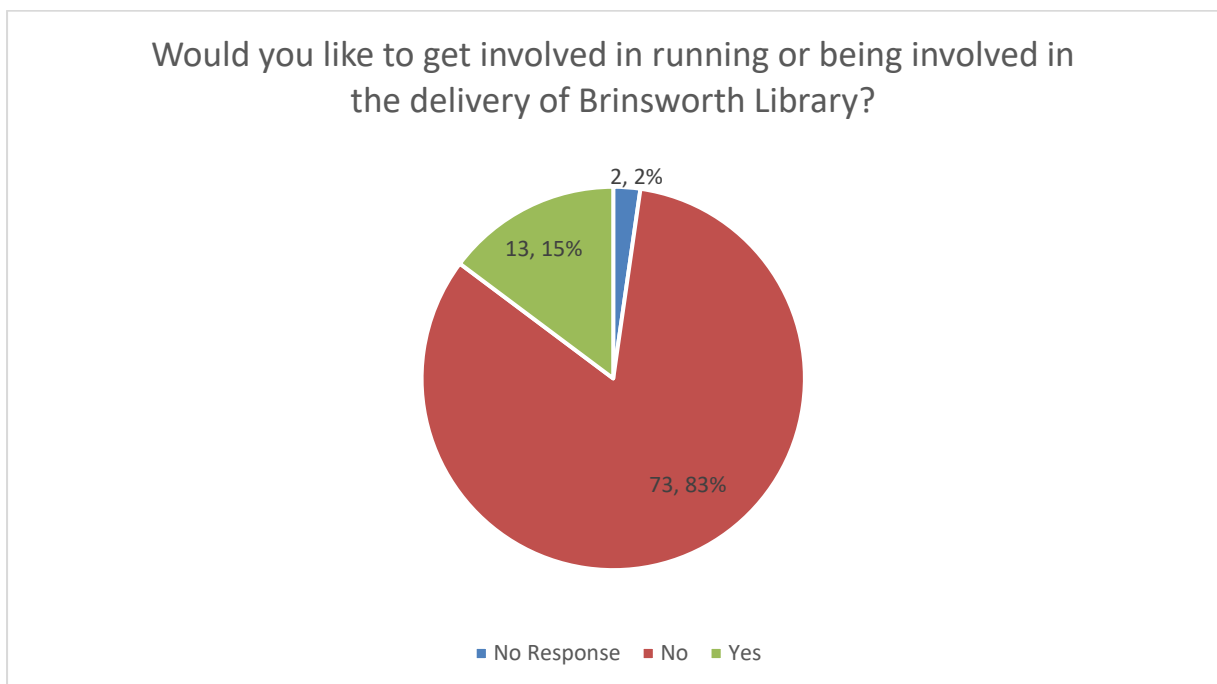


Figure 9

Figure 9 demonstrates that **13** of the 88 respondents (**15%**) would like to get involved in the running or delivery of Brinsworth library. **73 (83%)** do not want to get involved. Whilst **2 (2%)** did not respond.

A dedicated space was provided for respondents to provide their Name, telephone number and email address where they expressed an interest to be involved with Brinsworth Library.

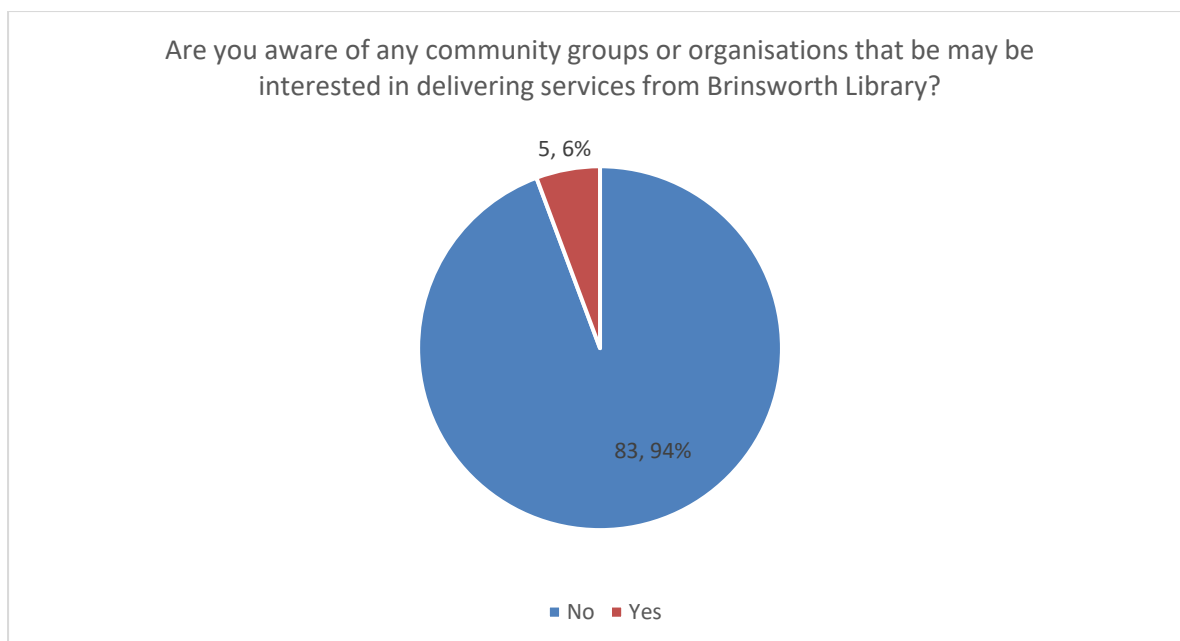


Figure 10

Figure 10 shows that **5 (6%)** of respondents are aware of a community group or organisation that may be interested in delivering services from Brinsworth library, the remaining respondents **83 (94%)** selected no.

When yes was selected, respondents were asked to provide details of any community groups or organisations. Of the 5 that selected yes, they all left further information, these were as follows;

- 'Brinsworth Neighbourhood Watch'
- 'I don't know any services but I think delivery is an excellent idea to get books to people who are less able'
- 'I would reset my community craft group up using the library as its better located for me and is in a safe place.'
- 'Local History group'
- 'Rotherham creative network. That Looks Queer! Social Arts Network. Arts Catalyst.'

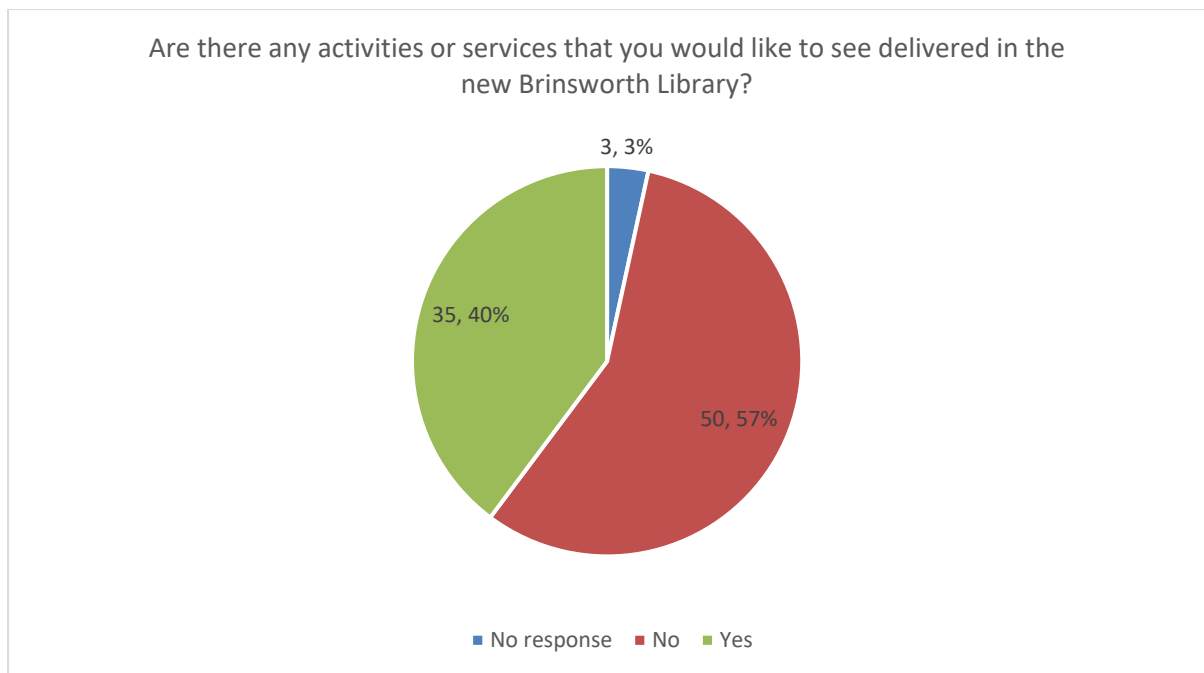


Figure 11

Respondents were asked if there any activities or services they would like to see delivered in the new Brinsworth Library. Figure 11 (above) demonstrates that **50** of the 88 respondents (57%) selected no, with **35** (40%) responding yes, whilst **3** (3%) left this blank.

Respondents were provided with a free text space to offer further details when yes was selected. Of the 35 that selected yes, 33 supplied further details.

11 of these comments were based on providing more activities, such as book clubs for children, further suggestions included Local History groups, Craft clubs and author visits. One suggestion was using the space for drop in sessions. Some of the comments were as follows;

- 'The use of the space for drop-in consultations regarding issues locally and around the borough, as well as potentially the use of the area for councillor surgeries.'
- 'Children's activities and Book clubs.'
- 'Display of artefacts, Local History group'
- 'More availability of craft lessons of an evening'

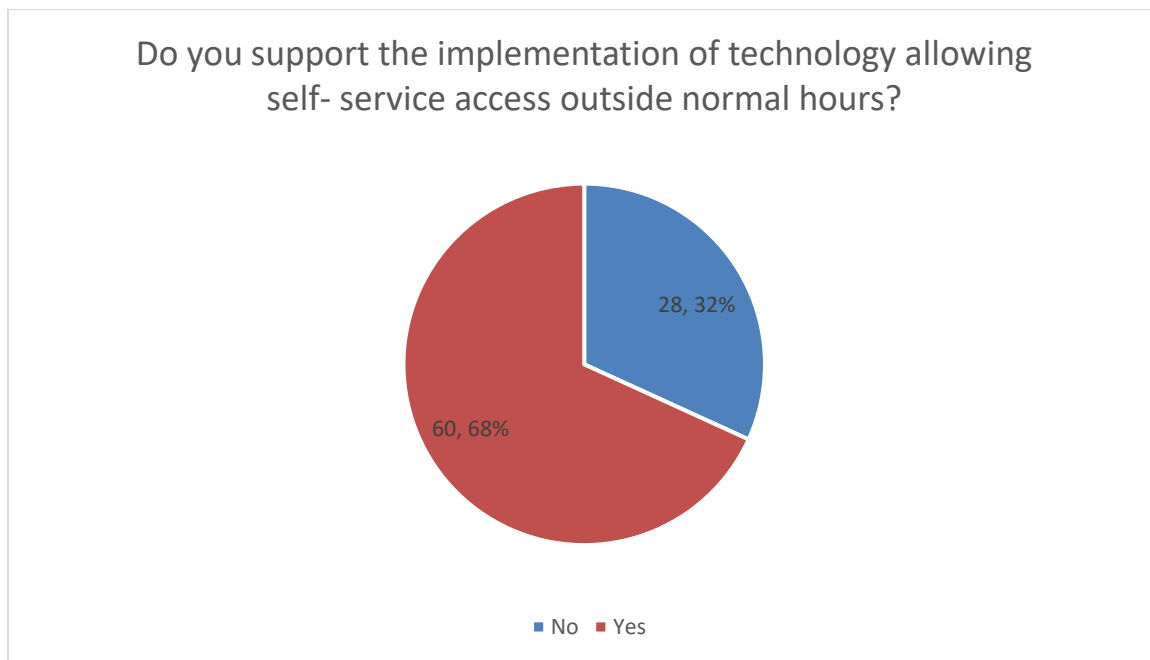


Figure 12

In order to increase the current opening times of Brinsworth Library, respondents were asked if they support the implementation of technology allowing self- service access outside normal hours. **60** of the 88 respondents (68%) agreed with the implementation, whilst **28** (32%) disagreed.

Respondents were provided with a free text space for respondents to provide an explanation as to why they agree or disagree with the implementation of technology. **51** provided further details, with 37 leaving this blank.

Of the 28 respondents that selected no, 21 of these provided comments, some key themes were as follows;

- **Staff** – 5 comments mentioned staff and stated that they wouldn't want to see a reduction of staff by introducing this technology, comments included
 - 'Part of the library experience is having staff there to help if and when you need this. I wouldn't want this to be lost.'
 - 'The staff would lose their jobs, If you need help with services there will be nobody there.'
- **Security** – Remaining comments were based on the lack of security, and concerns around vandalism or not feeling safe being in the library alone, some comments were as follows;
 - 'If there isn't enough security the books will get stolen and the premises will be vandalised.'

- 'It would be open to abuse and vandalism and it should be manned by at least one salaried member of staff'

From the 60 respondents that selected yes, **30** provided further comments, some key themes found were;

- **Opening Hours** – 7 comments were positive for accessing the library at any time to support those who work unsociable hours, some comments included;
 - 'I think this is a good idea for people to access libraries who otherwise can't because of work commitments'
 - 'If I'm able to access out of standard working hours I'll be able to use it more.'
- Additional comments encouraged having the technology in place to support more opening hours and making libraries more convenient for everyone, as well as not having to worry about the building being closed when they need to return a book.

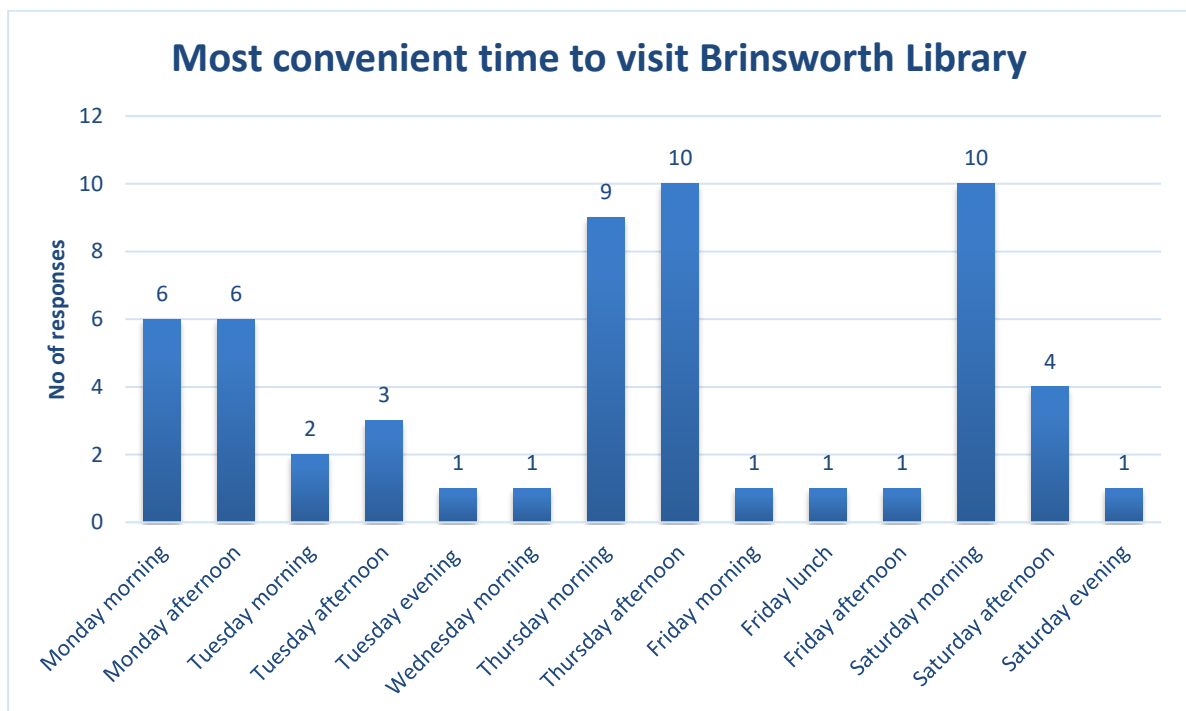


Figure 13

Respondents were asked to provide us with details as to when it is most convenient to visit Brinsworth Library. A check box answer was provided for respondents to complete, this included options of, Monday – Sunday; morning, lunch, afternoon or evening.

Figure 13 demonstrates that of the **56** that responded to this question, Thursday afternoon and Saturday morning is the most convenient time to visit with **10** responses on each, whilst Monday lunch and evening, Tuesday lunch, Wednesday lunch, afternoon and

evening, Thursday lunch and evening, Friday evening, Saturday lunch and Sunday morning, lunch, afternoon and evening were the least convenient as these options were all nil response, therefore are not included within Figure 13. **32** of the overall 88 respondents left this question blank.

Day and Time	No of responses
Monday morning	6
Monday lunch	0
Monday afternoon	6
Monday evening	0
Tuesday morning	2
Tuesday lunch	0
Tuesday afternoon	3
Tuesday evening	1
Wednesday morning	1
Wednesday lunch	0
Wednesday afternoon	0
Wednesday evening	0
Thursday morning	9
Thursday lunch	0
Thursday afternoon	10
Thursday evening	0
Friday morning	1
Friday lunch	1
Friday afternoon	1
Friday evening	0
Saturday morning	10
Saturday lunch	0
Saturday afternoon	4
Saturday evening	1
Sunday morning	0
Sunday lunch	0
Sunday afternoon	0
Sunday evening	0
No response	32

Table 2

Table 2 shows an overall breakdown for all the options that could have been selected. As previously mentioned, 32 respondents left this question blank. Whilst the 56 that did complete this question selected options as shown above in Table 2.

The final question as part of the consultation included a free text space giving the opportunity for respondents to provide any additional comments with regards to the Brinsworth library. **29** of the **88** respondents provided further commentaries. Some of those included praised the new library with some comments as follows;

- 'It is wonderful to see the new library up and running and I wish all involved every success. A great asset to the community'
- 'The new library is an exciting and good thing for the community. It is situated in a lovely setting and we look forward to its future.'
- 'Any positive change to the library is welcome and should be aimed at encouraging children into reading and then working it's way up to adults'

Some respondents utilised this section to express their concerns of losing staff, some comments were as follows:

- 'I strongly feel that the running of Brinsworth library should remain within the remit of Rotherham MBC rather than transferring some responsibility to a new voluntary organisation that does not have democratic oversight.'
- 'I feel saddened that we now have a bright, clean facility that is going to become less effective because of the loss of paid staff who know their job.'
- 'This community has needed a new building for decades. I am pleased this has finally happened, But I don't want the service then to suffer due to lack of professional staff.'

In addition, one comment made, suggested that the access for wheelchair users needs to be better.

Section 3 - Equality and diversity analysis

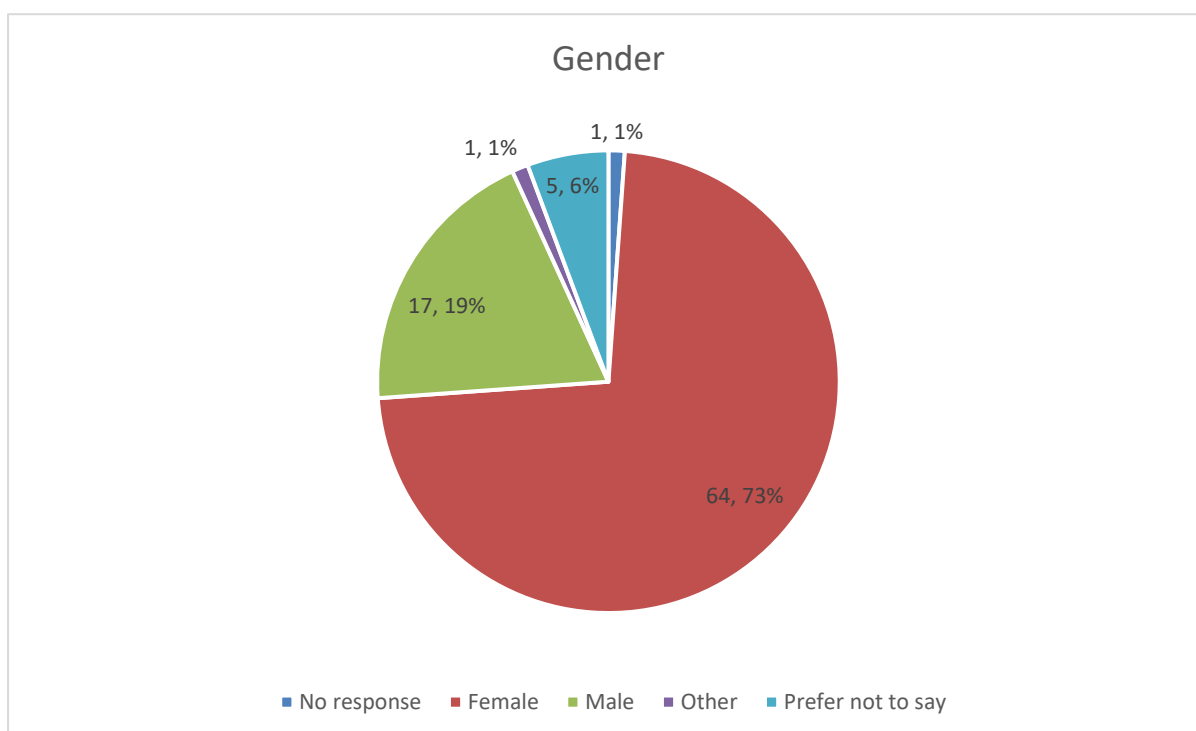
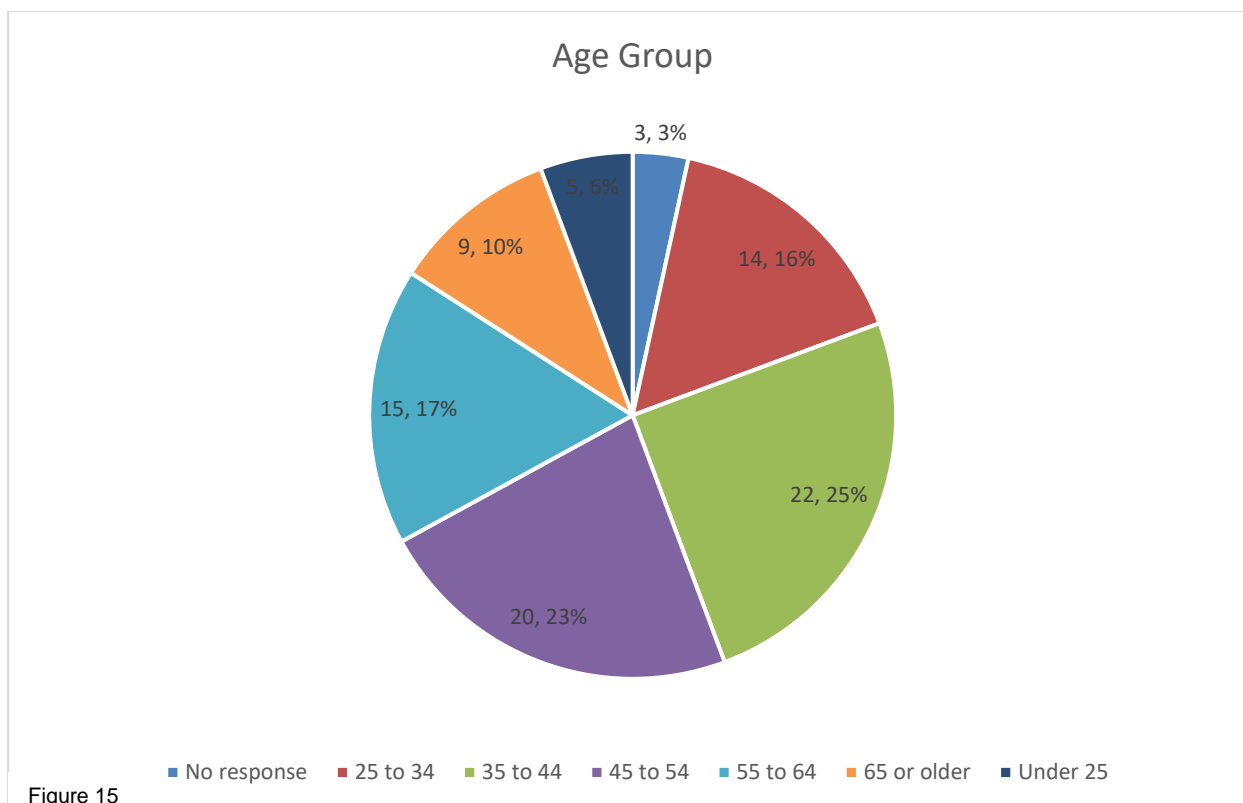


Figure 14

Figure 14 shows that from the **88** respondents for this consultation, **64 (73%)** were Female, **17 (19%)** were Male, **1** respondent (**1%**) selected other, **5 (6%)** chose not to say whilst **1 respondent (1%)** left this question blank. When other was selected, respondents had the opportunity to provide further details, however from the (1%) shown, this was left blank.



The above (figure 15) shows that the age range that completed this consultation varied from under 25 to over 65. The largest age group captured was '35-44' with **22** respondents, which is **25%** of the **88** respondents. The smallest age group captured was the Under 25's with **5 (6%)** of the **88** respondents falling into this age group. **3** people (**3%**) left this question blank.

The remaining data shows that **14** people (**16%**) were aged '25-34', **20 (23%)** were aged '45 – 54', **15** people (**17%**) were aged '55-64' and **9 (10%)** were 65 or older.

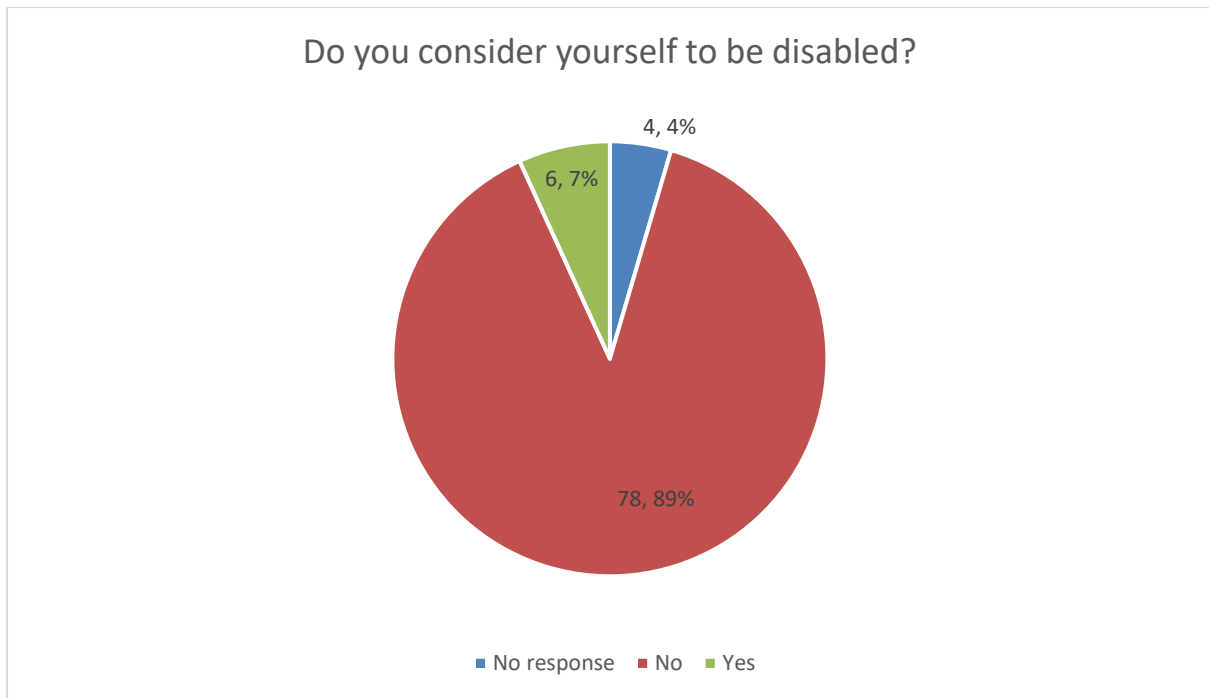


Figure 16

Respondents were asked if they considered themselves to have any disabilities. Figure 16 shows that **78** of the **88** respondents (**89%**) did not consider themselves to be disabled, **6** (**7%**) considered themselves disabled and **4** (**4%**) left this question blank.

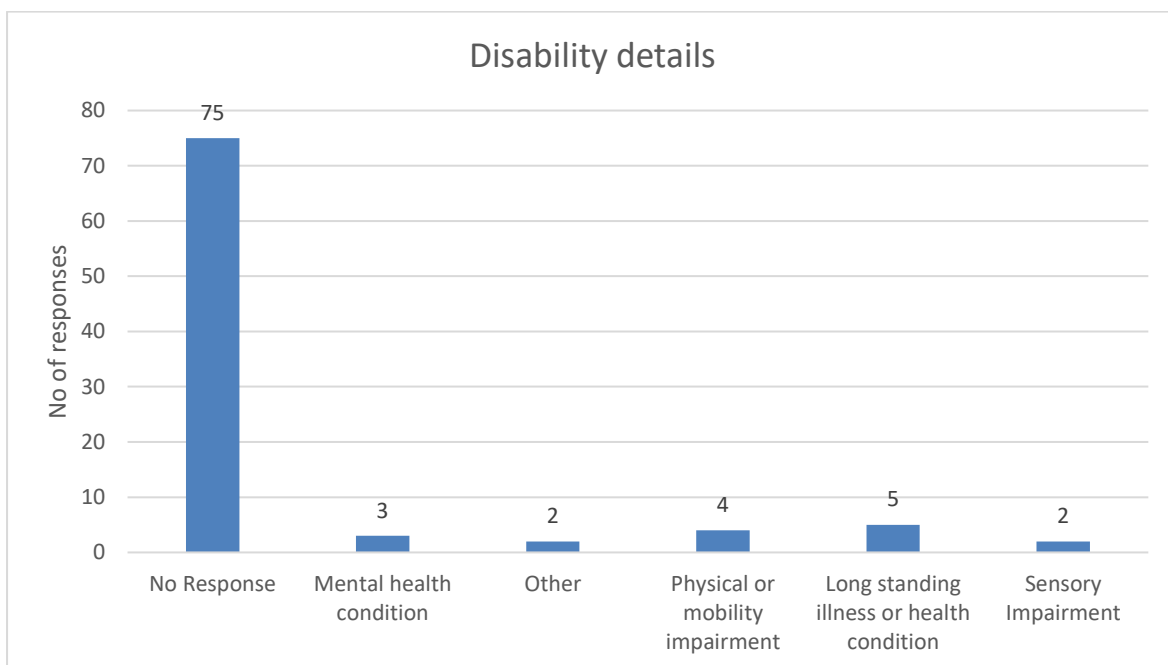


Figure 17

When yes was selected, a box was provided for respondents to provide further information with regards to their disability. Respondents were able to select multiple options when

answering this question. Figure 17 enables us to identify, of the 6 respondents that selected yes some have multiple disabilities.

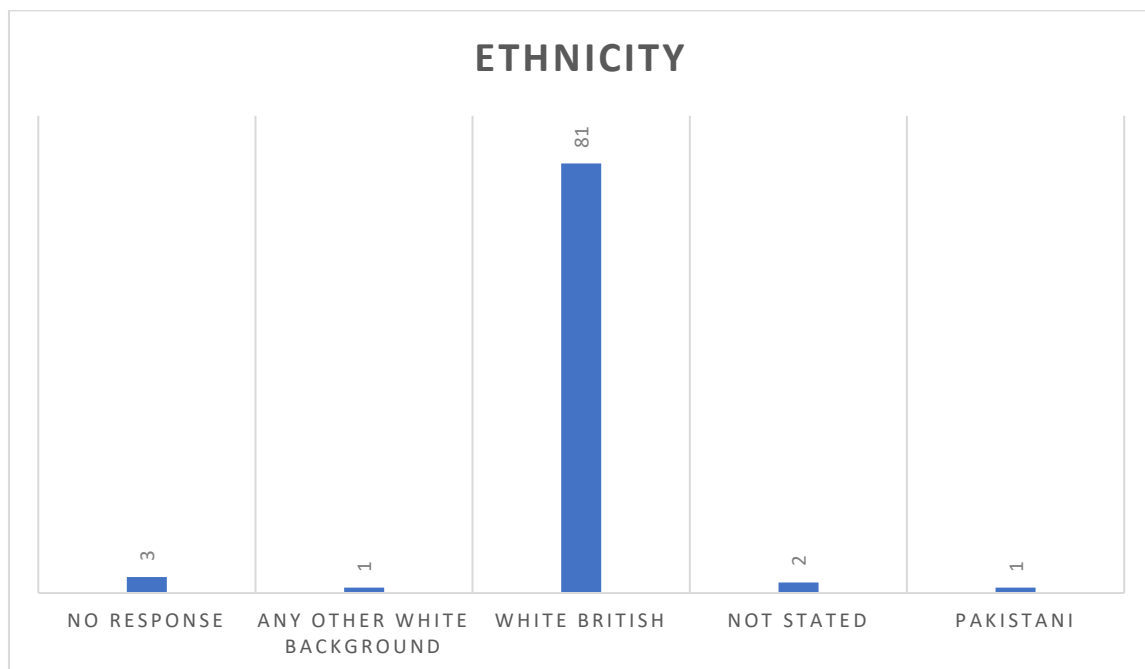


Figure 18

Figure 18 demonstrates the ethnic groups that took part in this consultation. Of the 88 respondents this graph shows a break down which also includes 3 people who left this question blank.

Section 4 - Other findings

The drop-in sessions revealed that respondents wanted the number and range of books available to be improved.. Customer also expressed their need for better IT equipment and a faster Wi-Fi, again this can be noted from the online survey where the comments provided are very similar.

Further questions raised were around the proposal for the library to be delivered by the Community Trust, some customers in full support whilst others expressing their opinion that the library delivery should remain with Rotherham MBC.. Respondents were also keen to understand if the proposed change would result in job losses.

Customers were also keen to understand how the self service technology in order the access the building without the need for staff would operate.



PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

2021-2026 Strategy and future service delivery model

Directorate: Regeneration & Environment

Lead person: Zoe Oxley

Contact number: 01709 334283

Directorate: Regeneration & Environment

Service area: Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs

Is this a:

☒ **Strategy / Policy**
☐ **Service / Function**
☐ **Other**

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The Cabinet report “The new Library Strategy 2021-2026 and Implementation Plan for the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service”

summarises the final stages of public consultation and engagement which was undertaken in order to develop the new Library Strategy for the period 2021 – 2026. The reports concludes by recommending that Cabinet recommends to Council the approval of Rotherham's 5 year Library Strategy. It details the proposed final draft which has been developed following a phased analysis of local need in order to set out the vision and ambition for the service over the medium to long-term. All future delivery changes will be underpinned by the Strategy.

The Cabinet report makes the following recommendations:

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Recommend that Council endorse the final version of the Library Strategy 2021-2026 and associated service offer and recommend its approval by full Council
2. Note the consultation and engagement undertaken and the findings of the Equalities Impact Analysis.
3. Approve the Action Plan for Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs.
4. Note the progress made on the development of a new Library for Rotherham town centre.
5. Approve the transfer of Brinsworth Library to Brinsworth Community Trust, supported by Brinsworth Parish Council and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
6. Approve the relocation of Thurcroft Library from Thurcroft Junior Academy to the Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall site utilising the approved libraries capital allocated.
7. Approve the implementation of self- service technology in order for customers to access library sites independently.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians,

carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.		
Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?	✓	
Could the proposal affect service users?	✓	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?		✓
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?	✓	
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	✓	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?	✓	
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

If you have answered **no** to **all** the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

Yes, an Equality Analysis has been produced and the appropriate approvals received.

- **Key findings**

The Service seeks to ensure that an action plan is developed and maintained as the service evolves, to address areas for improvement, and where we need to widen access and make the customer base more diverse. This will link into the wider strategic agenda of the Council.

As well as having an exceptionally high rate of customer satisfaction, currently the Service is engaging well with the following key areas: Females borough wide, White British people, Those who do not declare themselves as disabled and the following age groups: 4-11, 26-40, 41-65 and 65 and over.

Further work is required in order to engage better with the following; Males of all ages, borough wide, BAME, Disabled People, Ages 0-3, 12-17 and 18-25.

- **Actions**

A robust action plan is to be developed to address the areas where following analysis, the service is falling short in terms of engagement. It is envisaged that the Service will work with the wider Council and community/voluntary partners to focus on this utilising cross cutting agendas including Thriving neighbourhoods, Health and Wellbeing agenda, Building Stronger Communities vision and the Creative Recovery Programme.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	6 th March, 2019 onwards
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	19 th August 2020
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Gina White Operational Manager, Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Steve Eling	Policy Officer	08/09/2020
Polly Hamilton	Assistant Director	08/09/2020
Zoe Oxley	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	08/09/2020

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed	19 th August 2020
Report title and date	2021-2026 Strategy and future service delivery 19/08/20
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Cabinet – report date 19 th October, 2020 Council – report date 11 th November, 2020
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	24 th August 2020. Returned 25 th August 2020.

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Library Strategy 2021-2026	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 18 th August 2020	
Directorate: Regeneration & Environment	Service area: Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs
Lead Manager: Zoe Oxley	Contact number: 01709 334283
Is this a: <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify	

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2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
Zoe Oxley	RMBC	Head of Operations and Business Transformation
Gillian Moss	RMBC	Operational Manager
Gina White	RMBC	Operational Manager

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Aim/Scope

The new Library Strategy covers the period 2021-2026. Since 8th July 2019, Rotherham libraries have undertaken extensive public consultation and engagement to inform the content within the new five-year Library Strategy.

The new Strategy sets out the direction of Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs during this period of transformation, aiming to meet the Council's statutory duty to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" service for all those wanting to use it (Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964), while at the same time implementing the necessary cost efficiencies. As part of the launch of the new strategy the service must consider implications of a revised service offer and how the library service better exercises the Public Sector Equality Duty in line with the new strategy.

Libraries are for everyone and the service is committed to ensuring that Rotherham libraries are inclusive and engaging with all sectors of the community, including people with protected characteristics. The priority is to ensure that all residents are able to enjoy the benefits of Rotherham's Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs. More groups and partner organisations are using the local community library as a valuable local base for their activities.

The financial pressure on the Council budget has not lessened, however, Capital investment has been approved for the existing 14 neighbourhood sites to a value of £1.4m and in a new site for the Central Library currently anticipated to require investment to a value of £5.7m.

A separate Brinsworth consultation was launched alongside the Future of Rotherham Libraries public consultation. This was to seek feedback from the community with regards to piloting a new "community managed" operating model at Brinsworth Library. It is proposed that Brinsworth Community Trust, with support of the Parish Council and the Local Authority will deliver the core offer as defined in the Library Strategy. Brinsworth Library will still form part of the Council's statutory provision and will continue to provide support services including the supply and maintenance of stock, access to the Library Management System and training of volunteers. The partnership will be bound by a contract and a legal framework.

Following the public consultation and engagement between 3rd February 2020 to 26th April 2020, a final analysis report has been written. This provides a full overview of the findings for both sets of consultation.

The consultation results in relation to Brinsworth Community Trust delivering the library service at Brinsworth showed that 49% of respondents felt that this proposal would have a positive impact with 24% feeling that it will have a negative impact, whilst 27% don't know what impact it would have.

The key finding of the future of libraries consultation was the 83% of respondents agreed with the new vision for Rotherham Libraries and 79% agreed with the proposed core offer.

The priorities of the service are aligned to the wider Culture, Sport and Tourism (CST) service and as such, Libraries contribute to the cultural strategy outcomes, whereby a programme of cultural and artistic activities and events will be delivered to provide everyone with the opportunity to enjoy some form of creative experience.

Diversity and equality go hand in hand with the arts and culture, as they encourage individuals from every background and ability to realise their true potential therefore contributing to citizens artistic and cultural talent.

The Arts Council England 'Creative Case for Diversity' is a way of exploring how arts and cultural organisations and artists can enrich the work they do by embracing a wide range of influences and practices. The Council believes that libraries are a critical link between Rotherham communities and the wider cultural agenda. The location of libraries within the heart of communities affords the ideal platform to develop this piece of work.

Libraries occupy a position of trust within local communities, with a customer base which strongly values local proximity and the diverse offer which is available. The thriving neighbourhood strategy works in tandem with a library service offer within a neighbourhood setting which allows the service to tailor community activities with the demographic of each specific community where it is located. In doing so, this has contributed to a current customer satisfaction rating of 99% which is advantageous in contributing to a wide range of agendas

In addition, Libraries play an important role in supporting health and wellbeing. For vulnerable and inactive people, libraries can assist to re-motivate individuals to go outside and walk to their local library, giving purpose to their 'daily exercise'. Reading has been proven to be beneficial to mental health, and libraries have been developing work in this field, recognising that, particularly for people with low-level mental health issues (depression and anxiety), libraries offer a source of solace, respite and self-help. For this latter group, safe engagement with the physical world is an important part of reducing social isolation.

In considering how the service can better exercise the Public Sector Equality Duty it is important to consider this in relation to staff, customers, the complete library offer and the library buildings. The way in which libraries can incorporate this is as follows;

Staff: We will ensure that staff and volunteers are broadly representative of the community we serve. This may mean changes to current processes, and the way in which staff are currently recruited will be challenged and made more inclusive of those with protected characteristics. We therefore need to adopt new ways of working and engage with current staff to ensure they

are comfortable and proactive in working alongside all sectors of the community, inclusive of those that may be different to them such as those with protected characteristics.

A training programme will be explored as part of staff induction which highlights the principles of equalities in the libraries and the workforce as a whole, and how the library offer reflects this. Staff will also complete the mandatory equalities training. It is important that staff and volunteers understand the importance of how those with protected characteristics should feel and that their needs are considered. All staff should be acting as allies and advocates to ensure that equality is our core business.

Customers: The Council's Customer Access Strategy explains how we will meet customer needs and demands using our resources most effectively and make sure all our customers have access to services irrespective of their circumstances. It outlines how we will strengthen customer relationships, improving experience and increasing satisfaction by continuing to work closely with our customers to ensure their needs are met. Libraries will be proactive in working to engage people who are non-users, particularly those with protected characteristics.

Libraries have recognised that there is under-representation in terms of males, young adults and BAME individuals, and are working to improve this over the timeline of the strategy. Libraries are currently collaborating with Early Help as part of the Kiveton Park Library capital project. The Early Help Service proposes to use the library in a variety of ways and for a range of purposes; with a key objective of maintaining a presence in the Kiveton Park locality, as this is important to the children, young people and families within the community. Libraries can capitalise on this partnership by engaging with their clients that wouldn't normally attend libraries and therefore ensure that residents, particularly those under-represented in our services, are involved in decision-making about our activities and services moving forward.

The Offer: Libraries will ensure that the book stock, resources and activity programmes are inclusive and diverse, and that we include books written by people with protected characteristics. It is important that books and other resources are available in diverse formats to address sensory impairments or language barriers. It is also important to focus efforts on underrepresented groups within the service to understand their needs and embrace their requirements to ensure libraries are attractive to everyone. Libraries will work over the five-year strategy to ensure that artists, partners and organisations that we collaborate with are diverse and committed to widening and diversifying engagement. Targeted events, projects and activities will be co-designed in collaboration with the very people we are seeking to work with.

Library Buildings: All Library venues and activities will be accessible to all including those with protected characteristics. The location of libraries was considered as part of the extensive public consultation and engagement carried out to inform the Library strategy. Where it has been identified that buildings could be better placed, libraries will adapt their location either by relocation or co-location (if a refurbishment to improve physical accessibility is not possible) to enhance the libraries position within the community. Libraries will use their position within the neighbourhood to deliver activities, with events such as Fun Palaces, which will support our community to create with, by, and for themselves. Libraries will help to develop local networks, linking individuals and organisations, encouraging staff and partners to co-create with local people, and help small groups to shout about their value as grassroots community activists. It is also important that libraries work in tandem with Fun Palaces and other arts organisations to shine a light on and value everyone's existing creative skills and activities and connect people to people and organisations to collaborate for change in their communities. Libraries will work with other Council services, community and voluntary sector partners to harness the support

we need to make Rotherham libraries make the most of local strengths and assets, including individuals' abilities.

What equality information is available? Include any engagement undertaken and identify any information gaps you are aware of. What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

As a key element of the Library Review, a three-phase consultation was carried out.

An initial Assessment of Local Need describes local needs for a library service, including the general and specific needs of adults and children who live, work and study in the borough. It provides data to inform the consultation and subsequent Library Strategy.

The first phase of consultation in respect of developing a future service delivery model was carried out in April 2019, followed by consultation on more detailed proposals in May 2019, followed by the final phase of consultation and engagement in April 2020. Detailed proposals were shared, including identification of potential improvements to services and efficiencies, in the context of a refreshed Library Strategy.

The following data is available on existing library users which has been obtained from the Library Management System. This information is collated monthly for all sites. By using this data we can make a comparison against the overall Rotherham population in terms of how well we are engaging with those in the community with protected characteristics. This allows us to identify if there is a fair representation within our local libraries to reflect the population by area. By identifying these areas for improvement, the service will target the key gaps within the local community and formulate an action plan to address these as part of the Library Strategy.

Age Profile Users Vs Population

Table 1	2019-2020	
	Active %	Registered %
Age 0-3	2.10	3.97
Age 4-11	17.73	27.46
Age 12-17	10.44	6.68
Age 18-25	8.44	4.21
Age 26-40	20.95	13.92
Age 41-65	24.17	20.48
Age 66+	16.17	23.27

Table 1 breaks down the number of both registered and active borrowers by age. When we compare this to the overall population of Rotherham by age we can recognise where Rotherham libraries members are lacking in terms of age group.

Based on Rotherham as a whole, 19.3% of the population are aged under 16. Rotherham

East has the highest proportion of 0-15 year olds at 25.4% (higher than the England average of 19.1%). When we compare this to the same age group in Table 1, we can see that our active members aged between 0-17 is 30.27%. This highlights that Rotherham Libraries engaging above the average in comparison to the overall population. However, we can see by the above breakdown that 17-25 age group is where the level of users decrease. This highlights an area for improvement. As Rotherham strives to become a child centred borough, libraries are well placed to engage with children and young people, making a significant contribution to giving children the best start in life.

When we make this same comparison with regards to those aged 65 and over. We know that 19.4% of the Rotherham population are aged 65 and over with this age group steadily increasing. Anston and Woodsetts Ward has the highest proportion of residents aged 65 and over at 26.3% (higher than the England average of 18.0%) When we compare this same age group of 66+ in Table 1 we can see that 16.17% are active users of Rotherham Libraries, with a proportion (65 year olds) falling in to another category.

The demographic profile of Rotherham indicates that the borough has an aging population, and there is a demand for library services from the 66+ age group at 22.7% active usage. The Library Service is ideally placed to support older people to live independently and help them to remain actively engaged in their community. Libraries can and do enhance the quality of older people's lives, especially around reducing isolation and increasing socialisation.

Gender Profile

Table 2

	2019-2020	
	Registered (%)	Active (%)
Male	41.34	37.47
Female	57.86	59.79
Unknown	0.79	2.74

Table 2 demonstrates that there are more females both registered and active library users in Rotherham than there are male. When this data is compared to the UK national statistics for Rotherham, we can clearly see that this is not a fair representation of the gender split in the borough. We therefore acknowledge that this is an area for improvement and targeted work on engaging with Rotherham males will be carried out as part of the Library strategy. It is important to note that Rotherham libraries are engaging above average with an excellent percentage which is more than that of the Female Rotherham population.

Males	Females
49.2%	50.8%
130,564 persons	134,847 persons

*sourced from UK National statistics for Rotherham

Ethnicity Profile

Table 3

2019-2020	Registered (%)	Active (%)
White	64.89	65.59
Black or Black British	1.53	1.14
Dual Heritage	0.39	0.45
Asian or Asian British	4.09	3.08
Other	1.81	1.00
Chose not to disclose	27.30	28.74

When considering the ethnic profiles of Rotherham libraries in terms of Registered and active users, these are predominately from a white background. Targeted work is required in order to better engage with BAME individuals and communities.

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on public services to avoid discrimination on the grounds of race and religion or belief. Rotherham's population is not homogenous and people with different cultural identities may have different needs or require different approaches to service provision. Changes in international migration patterns have a significant effect on the composition the minority ethnic population and the growth of new migrant communities which in turn can have an impact on demand for local services.

When we compare the overall Rotherham population of those who identify themselves as from a black and minority ethnic group, we know that they make up 8.1% of Rotherham residents (any group apart from white British) in the 2011 census. This compares to making up 5.67% of active library users or 7.82% registered users.

In Rotherham the BAME population is 20,842 people. The BAME population doubled between 2001 and 2011 and continued to increase to an estimated 27,500 or approximately 10.5% of the population in 2016 (latest RMBC estimate). We acknowledge that 1.1% of the population in Rotherham report that they cannot speak English well or at all. This is 2,712 people. This compares with 1.7% for England, and 1.6% for the Yorkshire and Humberside region. Therefore, Rotherham libraries will adapt new ways of how we can engage with this group so that they don't miss out on the opportunity to utilise their local library through the

use of voluntary organisations such as REMA or Clifton Learning Partnership that enhance the engagement with this sector of the community

When considering the BAME Rotherham population figures against those of Table 3, the figures show that we need to do more to engage with those outside of the White British category. Percentage of BAME population by Ward can be found below:

Percentage of BAME Population by Ward:

<i>Ward Name</i>	<i>BME Population 2011</i>
Anston and Woodsetts	2.1%
Boston Castle	36.8%
Brinsworth and Catcliffe	6.2%
Dinnington	3.6%
Hellaby	2.7%
Holderness	3.4%
Hoober	2.9%
Keppel	2.7%
Maltby	3.0%
Rawmarsh	4.2%
Rother Vale	3.4%
Rotherham East	29.7%
Rotherham West	21.7%
Silverwood	3.4%
Sitwell	11.5%
Swinton	2.4%
Valley	7.5%
Wales	3.1%
Wath	3.6%
Wickersley	2.9%
Wingfield	4.1%

In relation to the demographic profile, 8.1% of the population belong to ethnic groups other than White British (6.4% are from non-white groups), well below the UK average of 20.2%. It follows that 91.9% of Rotherham residents are White British.

The Library Service has a central role in co-ordinating and facilitating learning activities to our BAME communities, reducing exclusion and encouraging participation. Support is given to foreign language speakers and to those who wish to improve their English language skills. Cultural events are organised and supported, especially at Mowbray Gardens Community Library, which serves the area with one of the largest populations of BAME residents in the borough.

Disability Profile

2019-2020

Table 4

	Active %	Registered %
Self-declared disabled	1.34%	3.76%

Table 4 demonstrates the figures collated from library users when asked whether they consider themselves disabled. The number of active borrowers who consider themselves disabled is small compared to the overall total number of active borrowers for Rotherham libraries.

Many factors influence health and wellbeing over the course of a lifetime. The whole system for health and wellbeing is focused around achieving positive health outcomes for the population and reducing inequalities in health. Wingfield has the highest percentage of residents who self-report their health to be bad or very bad at 10.2% of the overall Rotherham population, which in comparison to Rotherham Libraries active users is considerably low and work needs to be done in order to better engage with residents.

Living alone can also impact on the health and wellbeing of a person. Many older customers say that a visit to a library helps to reduce social isolation, therefore it is worth noting the percentage of pensioners living alone and how Libraries can impact and improve their Health and Wellbeing. Within Rotherham 31.9% of pensioners live alone, or 14,286 people. Anston and Woodsetts has the lowest proportion of pensioners living alone at 24.4 %. Rotherham East has the highest proportion at 39.8 %.

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

By making the comparison of data from the library management system and Rotherham's demographics overall, we have identified several areas where the number of library users with protected characteristics is lower than that of the representation for Rotherham's population overall. This analysis has allowed Rotherham libraries to recognise the sectors that are underrepresented as part of Library users.

Whilst there are areas that we can clearly see Rotherham Libraries are engaging well such as Females, Children 0-11 and Over 65's, it also indicates that there are groups which could be targeted to ensure Rotherham libraries widen access in order to make the customer base more diverse. These include BAME Individuals, young people aged between 12-25 and those that identify as male. We can also see that the sector that self-declare themselves as disabled is also an area to focus on.

Whilst we know where we have gaps in representation, we still need to learn more about how best to engage and cater for these sectors. Part of our approach involves aligning our needs with other Council departments, such as Early Help and RoSIS to engage with young people, and Adult Social Care in relation to disabled people. This also means strengthening the contribution we can make to the wider strategic priorities of the Council. We can also support other partners in the voluntary and community sector, such as working with Places Leisure to

engage men, with the co-located library at Maltby providing an ideal opportunity to reach male users of the leisure centre. In turn we can enable Places Leisure to reach women who might not otherwise engage with their services, in turn helping to increase levels of physical activity which can improve health outcomes in the borough.

Whilst we have reasonably good data about library usage related to age, sex, disability and ethnicity, we know less about engagement related to: gender reassignment, sexual orientation, faith, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people.

As part of the library strategy over the next five years Rotherham libraries will develop and deliver a robust action plan as to increase our understanding of the issues experienced by people who hold these protected characteristics. We will work to address under-representation in usage and in our workforce across all Rotherham libraries. Our Equalities Impact Assessment EIA Action Plan is a starting point, identifying men, disabled people, young people and BAME sectors as those parts of the community who are currently known to be least-engaged. The expectation is that this work will be rapidly followed up by plans to engage with those who may be less visible, and therefore more disenfranchised.

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

To ensure the service is monitoring the impact of the Library Strategy and how this impacts on those with protected characteristics, it will be imperative that the quarterly monitoring arrangements that we currently have in place to check against the corporate Key Performance Indicator's are broken down further to allow the service to see how it is meeting the needs of those with protected characteristics.

The service currently reports on the following:

- Customer satisfaction
- Visitor numbers
- Active borrowers

We will work with the performance team to monitor this. This can also be explored when looking to implement self-service technology in libraries to gather data around those utilising the service.

The EIA Action Plan will be integrated with the wider Action Plan for the delivery of the Library Strategy. Progress will be monitored:

- Monthly reports to the Culture Sport Senior Management Team
- Performance reports to Directorate Leadership Team
- Quarterly monitoring as part of the Year Ahead/Council Plan
- Quarterly updates to the Cultural Partnership Board.
- Via Personal Development Reviews with Library Managers and staff

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)

Extensive public consultation and engagement has now ended. The service received 1507 responses overall from public, partners and stakeholders.

Please see below the breakdown by protected characteristics for each of the consultations. For those that opted not to respond or left this blank, the numbers are not accounted for.

The BAME column indicates anyone that falls outside of the White British category.

- **01/04/19 – 30/04/19 – 385 responses**

Category	Gender	Age Range	BAME	Self-reported disabled
No. Of persons.	Female 243	Under 16 – 9	67	51
	Male 127	16-25 – 22		
		25-34 – 39		
		35-44 – 77		
		45-54 – 69		
		55-64 – 74		
		65+ - 83		

- **03/06/19 – 14/07/19 – 665 responses**

Category	Gender	Age Range	BAME	Self-reported disabled
No. Of persons.	Female - 423	Under 16 – 8	50	100
	Male - 207	16-25 – 28		
		25-34 – 73		
		35-44 – 123		
		45-54 – 94		
		55-64 – 121		
		65+ - 186		

• **03/02/20 – 26/04/20 – 365 responses (Library Strategy)**

Category	Gender	Age Range	BAME	Self-reported disabled
No. Of persons.	Female - 227	Under 25 - 10	14	43
	Male - 108	25-34 – 24		
		35-44 – 71		
		45-54 – 61		
		55-64 – 68		
		65+ - 106		

• **03/02/20 – 26/04/20 – 88 responses (Brinsworth Community Managed)**

Category	Gender	Age Range	BAME	Self-reported disabled
No. Of persons.	Female - 64	Under 25 – 5	2	6
	Male - 17	25-34 – 14		
		35-44 – 22		
		45-54 – 20		
		55-64 – 15		
		65+ - 9		

• **25/06/20 – 09/07/20 - 4 responses (extended Library Strategy)**

Category	Gender	Age Range	BAME	Self-reported disabled
No. Of persons.	Female - 1	Under 16 - 4	2	-
	Male - 3			

Please see the Report on the Consultation Findings for further information.

Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)

Consultation has taken place with key managers and staff throughout the process and drop-in sessions/workshops were held for staff as follows:

- 8th July 2019 - Riverside House

- 11th July 2019 - Swinton Library
- 12th July 2019 - Aston Library
- 28th November 2019 – Riverside Gallery
- 9th December 2019 - Greasbrough Library

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

The following table gives a breakdown of all the characteristics that Rotherham libraries currently retain with regards to active and registered library users:

Sector:	Area for Improvement
Male	Yes
Female	No
White British	No
BAME	Yes
Disabled	Yes
Not Disabled	No
0-3	Yes
4-11	No
12-17	Yes
18-25	Yes
26 – 40	No
41 – 65	No
66 and over	No

The Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Strategy is intended to fulfil the statutory requirement to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all who want to use it.

It presents the following as fundamental to our service offer:

- Libraries Connected nationally accepted Universal Offers: Reading, Learning, Information, Digital, Health, Culture and Children's.
- DCMS Libraries Taskforce "Libraries Deliver" report: Cultural and creative enrichment, Increased reading and literacy, improved digital access and literacy, Helping everyone

achieve their full potential, Healthier and happier lives, Greater prosperity, Stronger, more resilient communities

- Arts Council England “Envisioning the Library of the Future” report priorities: Place the library as the hub of the community, Make the most of digital technology and creative media, Ensure libraries are resilient and sustainable, Deliver the right skills for those who work in libraries

The Service provides a hub at the heart of the local community and for those areas without access to a local building, there is a mobile and home delivery service.

The stock policy aims to provide a broad range of material in a variety of formats: material in print (hardback and paperbacks, newspapers and magazines) audio visual and electronic formats. The service may focus on particular needs and demands when setting annual priorities, so it is therefore possible to find the same title in ordinary print, large print – for the visually impaired – spoken word CD, downloadable spoken word and e-book.

Every library offers free wi-fi access to the internet and all libraries have computers available free of charge to library members.

The service has invested in online resources including a wide selection of e-books, e-magazines and downloadable spoken word titles. The service participates in a co-operative partnership with a number of other library authorities which has significantly increased the number of e-book titles available to our borrowers at no extra cost to the service.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

As highlighted above these are the groups identified through this equality's analysis where Rotherham libraries are falling short in terms of engagement with these sectors of protected characteristics. Whilst there may be obvious barriers of engagement such as accessibility to buildings which has been acknowledged as part of the consultation and engagement. It is important for the Library service moving forward to acknowledge these priority areas and embark upon an action plan to address these, which may include working with voluntary organisations, community groups, charities and public health. Through this approach we can ensure that we are directly targeting those that are unrepresented within Rotherham libraries.

By setting out this action plan it will allow us to identify any problems or barriers these groups face which prevents being a user of Rotherham libraries. This may include revision of stock to suit the needs of these groups, accessibility to buildings or groups fit for purpose to meet the requirements of those with a protected characteristic.

An internal barrier which could also play a factor with regards to having low engagement with these groups is Rotherham libraries staffing compliment and how this is representative of the Rotherham population and having a presence of staff with protected characteristics within all Rotherham Library sites. Rotherham libraries will contribute to the wider RMBC agenda with regards to fairly representing all protected characteristics within

recruitment. RMBC is submitting a report to cabinet in November for approval seeking accreditation for local government equalities framework. A component of this is around the workforce and key lines of enquiry on this accreditation, therefore Rotherham libraries will strive to be an active participant of this wider piece of work to address having an equal representative of those with protected characteristics.

The criteria going forward with regards to recruiting future library staff needs to ensure it allows all those with a protective characteristic to have an equal opportunity to be part of Rotherham libraries.

The Library Strategy will provide the roadmap for the forthcoming five years' service delivery. As such our core offers, underpinned by nationally accepted minimum standards, will ensure a service that is both comprehensive and efficient, accessible by all those wishing to use it.

This setting of minimum standards is important, given that the service is entering a period of significant change in order to effect savings efficiencies.

Public consultation invited users and non-users of the service to feedback on what they require from a library service. The Strategy reflects this, as it has been revised to meet customer needs while also seeking efficiencies of service delivery.

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

These are yet to be determined, there still needs to be further work on ensuring the service offer is appropriate and accessible for minorities within the overall population but the core service offer ensures all sectors are addressed. This will be done as an ongoing piece of work as the new Strategy is launched to ensure that the service offer within each community promotes community cohesion and has a positive impact on the lives of those accessing the service.

As part of the library strategy Rotherham libraries will seek to:

- Commit to widening access that the library service provides such as vehicle-based services, mainly to older people who might otherwise be unable to get to a library.
- Adapt the service to the changes of technology to meet the needs of the people of Rotherham including those with protected characteristics.
- Focus on children from lower-income families and increase social isolation and loneliness across all ages.
- Play a vital role in reaching out to every single person in the Borough regardless of age, gender or social and economic background.
- Play a part in reducing social isolation and maintaining good mental health, using the Five Ways to Wellbeing as a framework for activities; Supporting Adult Social Care and Housing in providing safe, trusted community-based places for service users and increasing opportunities for independent living

- Libraries will be easily accessible. Offering ease of access for people with disabilities. They will be well used, with up-to-date facilities and be responsive to changing requirements, using available technology and resources effectively
- Encouraging applications from those with protected characteristics for volunteer roles, apprenticeships and library roles.

In addition, targets are set out as part of the library strategy which feeds into addressing these gaps including;

- Increase reading for pleasure amongst young people by 25%
- Increase the number and range of activities and groups by 10%

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

Rotherham libraries intend to undertake a thorough analysis of community feedback, which will enable us to implement appropriate solutions with the resources available to us.

This equalities analysis will inform the action plan and the steps we will take in order to improve engagement with those sectors highlighted throughout this report.

Rotherham libraries have a huge part to play in improving community relations, and since the consultation and engagement begun in 2019, this area of work has formed much of the work we have done.

The service is keen to work closely with other areas within the Council to ensure that community relations are at the forefront of the service offer moving forward, and as such, we will endeavour to cross cut with other service strategies, such as the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy and the Building Stronger Community agenda. Building stronger communities underpins the Council's "One Rotherham" values and behaviours for its workforce, which help define how it works in the best interests of the Rotherham public.

Libraries can make a worthwhile and valued contribution to these areas by:

- Utilising Library buildings within the heart of communities to encourage usage and build up community spirit.
- Giving emphasis across Libraries that Rotherham is a shared community, which values decency, and provides opportunities so that no one is left behind, for example the digital services on offer that can be tailored to those with protected characteristics.
- Promoting the importance of strong, successful and cohesive communities, encouraging use by all. Relocating the Town Centre Library will have a positive impact on this area and draw back the community lost when it relocated from the Civic quarter.
- Working with partners to be proactive in providing opportunities to bring people together, fostering positive relationships between people from different backgrounds and facilitating the range of community voices and resident-led neighbourhood

initiatives.

- Supporting and increasing digital inclusion

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

Title of analysis: Library Strategy 2021-2026
Directorate and service area: Regeneration and Environment, Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs
Lead Manager: Zoe Oxley
Summary of findings:
<p>The Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs Service will continue to fulfil the statutory requirement, however the revised 5 year strategy will take account of public consultation as a key element of the Library Review process. The core Library offer as contained in the Strategy will align with nationally agreed universal offers and delivery of the Library Strategy must take account of service efficiencies and budget limitations. As part of this piece of work, the Assessment of Local Need will also be refreshed to ensure that Service outcomes are in line with the Rotherham demographic. The stock Policy has recently been renewed in line with this.</p> <p>The Service seeks to ensure that an action plan is developed and maintained as the service evolves, to address areas for improvement, and where we need to widen access and make our customer base more diverse. This will link into the wider strategic agenda of the Council.</p> <p>As well as having an exceptionally high rate of customer satisfaction, currently the Service is engaging well with the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Females borough wide• White British people• Those who do not declare themselves as disabled

- The following age groups: 4-11, 26-40, 41-65 and 65 and over

A robust action plan is to be developed to address the areas where following analysis, we are falling short in terms of engagement. It is envisaged that the Service will work with the wider Council and community/voluntary partners to focus on this utilising cross cutting agendas including Thriving neighbourhoods, Health and Wellbeing agenda, Building Stronger Communities vision and the Creative Recovery Programme.

Action/Target

Key area for analysis/protected characteristic	Why?	Actions	Target date (MM/YY)
Males of all ages, borough wide	Across the borough, females make up the majority of the registered/active Library users. This is the case in every area of Rotherham, with some areas having double the number of females using the service than males. This was also reflected in the results of the consultation and engagement carried out as part of the analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify joint working opportunities with other Council departments, Places Leisure, Rotherham United Community Sports Trust, Streetpride and Green Spaces • Consult with male users/non-users to establish barriers to accessing the service • Work with male Library staff to deliver activities to encourage active involvement of males • Review the demographics against services at each location to ensure it is the right fit for that community • Approach community groups with active male involvement and learn from their good practice • Work with HR to consider how to improve recruitment practice in order to encourage more applications from men. 	March 2023

BAME	The % of BAME service users is slightly disproportionate to the overall population in Rotherham, the service would like to increase the number of individuals and families utilising libraries across the Borough but particularly in communities where there is a significant BAME population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with organisations such as REMA and CLP, and train staff, to better understand the needs of BAME individuals • Relocate the Town Centre Library closer to Eastwood/Clifton where the BAME population is higher than other areas of the Borough, and tailor the service offer to meet these needs • Ensure stock is fit for purpose and inclusive of BAME interests and languages (adults and children) • Work with HR to consider how to improve recruitment practice in order to encourage more applications from BAME people 	April 2021 – March 2023
Disabled People	The number of registered and active service users is low across the borough. The service seeks to better understand why this is and explore if there are any barriers that Libraries present currently which are contributing to this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore joint working opportunities with Adult Social Care, Housing and VCS and train staff to better welcome disabled people within libraries • Consult with disabled users/non-users to understand if there are any barriers to accessing services. • Liaise with voluntary groups to find out why disabled people of all ages are reluctant/not accessing Libraries • Review the service offer against the needs of disabled service users • Review all Library locations to ensure all sites are easily accessible and DDA compliant. • Work with HR to consider how to improve recruitment practice in order to encourage more applications from disabled people 	March 2023

Ages 0-3, 12-17 and 18-25	Libraries are falling short in terms of registering and retaining people in these age groups. It is widely known across Libraries that these groups are specifically hard to engage with, and as such a big piece of work is required to address this issue and plug the gap in engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out benchmarking with other LAs and learn from areas of excellence • Explore joint working opportunities with Early Help and RoSIS, RNN Group and VCS. • Deliver capital improvements to Kiveton Library to enable co-location with Early Help. • Work as part of the Children's Capital of Culture partnership to improve the quality and reach of the library activities programme. • Hold focus groups with teenagers and young adults to explore potential barriers/interest • Carry out further work in schools to promote Libraries and reading for pleasure • Review stock levels and how appropriate this is for these age groups • Work with Health Visitors and Children's Centres/local nurseries to encourage 0-3 into Libraries. • Work with HR to consider how to improve recruitment practice in order to encourage more applications from young people 	April 2021 – March 2023
Investigate the needs and aspirations of people holding other protected characteristics:	We have identified the immediate priorities for the Library Service but recognise the limitations of our current data. We need to establish mechanisms for obtaining better quality intelligence on sectors of the	<p>Agree priorities for intervention in collaboration with other Council departments and VCS partners: in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender reassignment, • sexual orientation, • faith, • civil partnerships and marriage, • pregnancy and maternity 	July – Sept 2022

	community with other protected characteristics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • socio-economic groups • parents, single parents and guardians, • carers, • looked after children, • unemployed and people on low incomes, • ex-offenders, • victims of domestic violence • homeless people. <p>Develop an agreed set of tasks for inclusion in the Y2 action plan and ensure integration in the 2022/23 budget planning process.</p>	
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6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
Polly Hamilton	Assistant Director	08/09/2020
Cllr Allen	Cabinet Member for cleaner, greener, communities	08/09/2020
Zoe Oxley	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	08/9/2020

7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date Equality Analysis completed	8 th September, 2020
Report title and date	The new Library Strategy 2021-2026 and Implementation Plan for the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service 19th October, 2020
Date report sent for publication	To be confirmed
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	18 th September, 2020

Objective: CREATIVE AND CULTURAL ENRICHMENT (Champion: Head of Creative Programming & Engagement, Culture, Sport and Tourism)				
Service Offer	Tasks	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Offer a programme of cultural and artistic activities and events that provide everyone with the opportunity to enjoy some form of cultural experience.	Work in partnership with the rest of Culture, Sport and Tourism in order to deliver a programme of group based activities as part of the Rotherham Together programme providing a creative response to recovery from COVID-19 in Rotherham with a focus on offering particular support to those who are bereaved	- Delivery of group-based activities as part of the Rotherham Together programme from October 2020 until April 2021	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	April 2021
Seek funding to extend the cultural offer and engage with a wider range of interests, supporting the local and regional cultural sector.	Work with colleagues in Parks and Green Spaces to extend the Library into the outdoors	- Run a programme of events within parks and green spaces in order to increase the number of engagements	Operational Manager North/South	September 2021
	Target hard to reach communities identified during the recent consultation (BAME, Young people, males and self-identified disabled) and those with protected characteristics	- Work with partner organisations such as Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) to develop a programme	Operational Manager Central	April 2021

	Sustain the increased participation of online activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital training for all Library Staff - Keep the online content refreshed in order to sustain existing participation numbers - Utilise other CST social media platforms to promote the library offer 	Operational Manager Central	April 2021
	Explore regional and national funding opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with neighbouring authorities. - Utilise Libraries connected for opportunities - Apply for at least 2 funding opportunities during 2021/22 	Operational Manager Central	March 2022
The service will seek to increase art, dance, music and theatre into the library space, working with existing partners with emphasis on bringing stories to life.	Deliver a programme of activities through the Flux Capacitor programme which will specifically target those people in communities of lowest engagement including BAME communities and Young people 16 – 25 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and deliver a full programme of activities during 2021/22 - Capture information/statistics in relation to impact including case studies 	Operational Manager North/South	December 2021
	Support the delivery of Fun Palaces at variety of library sites, working with colleagues in the wider service to co-ordinate and grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the delivery of an additional 2 Fun Palaces during 2021/22 - Monitor the uptake by joining with wider services and the impact this has on increased numbers 	Operational Manager North/South	October 2021

	Delivery of the Anne Frank exhibition in the central library, creating an exciting and high-quality experience to those who visit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate exhibition through all available platforms - Increase the number of engagements to this event by 10% based on the previous year that the event was held 	Operational Manager Central	October 2021
Communication about library activities will be improved, especially those which are free and low cost and promote cohesion and community spirit.	Production of a marketing plan in order to encourage the take up of activities across libraries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate an increase in activities by 10% for the year 2021/22. 	Service Development and Communities of Interest Operational Manager	March 2021

Service Offer	Tasks	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
The service will encourage and support everyone, especially children and young people, to develop a life-long love of reading; for example, through continuing partnership work with places where children go and organisations which work with them.	To carry out promotional work in order to encourage increased subscriptions to the Schools Library Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise a schedule of promotion events, having a staff presence around the borough Increase in the subscriptions to the Schools Library Service by 5% 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
	To continue to build on the service offer working in partnership with others such as Grimm & Co, Museum, Green Spaces and Theatres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular communication with partnership organisations and the delivery of joint events during 2021/22 	Operational Manager North/South	June 2021
	Delivery of the Summer Reading Challenge and associated summer activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the take-up of the Summer Reading Challenge by 10% for 2021/22 - Roll out a programme of pop up library events in country parks and woodland space. 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
	Continue to work with the Reading Agency to deliver services to children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery of focussed activities during 2021/22 - Roll out of Bookstart packs 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
	Delivery of a wide range of activities to focus on engaging children of all ages within local communities, particularly those aged 11+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase engagement by 10% 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022

	Work as part of the Rotherham 0-5 Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) Strategic Group in order to deliver key priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training of all Library staff in the SLCN Universal Training Offer. - Library activities and services to be included within the SLCN model pathway - Proactively promote and signpost families with identified SCLN needs 	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	April 2021
Offer a wide range of reading items, including e-books, e-magazines, large print, audio-books, newspapers and magazines to support the personal literacy development of individual readers.	Ensure sufficient budget to fulfil the range of titles and genres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stock budget to be spent for 2020/21 in order to fulfil the wide-ranging offer 	Service Development and Support Team Leader	March 2021
	Ensure stock is distributed according to local need, considering those with protected characteristics within the local demographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review that stock within libraries is relevant to what the communities want and need following consultation 	Service Development and Support Team Leader	March 2021
	Ensure stock is promoted and displayed in an attractive style to encourage reading for pleasure.to all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train all frontline staff how best to fulfil stock and how it can be displayed to attract interest 	Service Development and Support Team Leader	March 2021
The service will continue to develop readers' groups, including online, themed and targeted groups.	Establish new reader groups targeting underrepresented sectors e.g. Males, BAME, Children and disabled. Encourage virtual and face to face groups to grow and support them in building an identity in the community inclusive of all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce a further 2 readers groups. 	All Team Leaders	July 2021

Participate in national and regional reading events that encourage participation, especially among children, such as the Summer Reading Challenge.	Roll out of Summer Reading Challenge 2021	- Increase number of participants during 2021/22 by 10%	Communities of Interest Team Leader	June 2021
	Hold author visits at various times during the year to create excitement around books and reading for pleasure	- Deliver 4 author events during 2021/22	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
	Delivery of pop up and outdoor libraries in order to encourage reading.	- Embrace 4 new locations in various parks and woodlands in order to provide the opportunity to engage with those currently not accessing the service with particular focus on underrepresented groups	All Team Leaders	March 2022
	Support and enable staff to utilise the skills learnt to inform their future practice within Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs in the delivery of activities.	- Work with neighbouring authorities to learn and adopt new skills where it has worked well for other libraries.	Operational Manager North/South	March 2021

Objective: DIGITAL ACCESS AND LITERACY
(Champions: Head of Customer Services, and Head of Digital services, Customer Information and Digital Services)

Service Offer	Tasks	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
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Up-to-date computer equipment will be provided for people to use free of charge along with free Wi-Fi access in all library buildings. There will also be the facility for customers to print from their own devices.	Deployment of new public network PC's across all libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roll out to all sites - Obtain feedback from users on the new equipment 	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	December 2020
	Deployment of Netloan system which enables customers to book PC's and release prints without the need for staff interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roll out to all sites 	Customer Information and Digital Services Senior Officer	December 2020
Encourage digital literacy among children through developing such things as digital makerspaces and after school code clubs.	Delivery of Makerspaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify library sites with facility to host this - Engage with other libraries who already offer makerspace - Provision of Makerspaces at 2 sites 	Operational Manager Central	March 2022
	Further roll out of code clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify sites that require additional code clubs - Roll out at two additional sites during 2021/22 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
Trained staff, volunteers and partners will support people getting online and using ICT with confidence, ensuring that no one is left behind.	Staff and volunteers undertake Libraries Connected e-learning which includes 3 digital modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All library and volunteers staff to complete training (referenced within PDR's) 	Service Development and Support Team Leader	December 2020

	Ensure assisted access is provided in line with Customer Access Strategy	- Staff to continue to work closely with CIDs Customer Service to ensure assisted access is provided in order to deliver against the strategy	Service Development and Support Team Leader Customer Information & Digital services (CIDs) Customer Service Team	April 2021
	Ensure staff can support customers transact digitally	- All frontline staff to be trained in specific Council and partner services which are delivered online in order to offer relevant support	Service Development and Support Team Leader	April 2021
The Libraries workforce will be skilled and knowledgeable in the support they give, focusing on assisted digital processes	Staff to support each other and train volunteers/mentor new recruits	- All staff will be fully trained in how to use new and existing digital technology to ensure they are confident and competent themselves	Service Development and Support Team Leader	April 2021

Service Offer	Tasks	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Continue to offer a wide variety of stock and materials for loan or reference in various formats, both traditional and digital	Ensure that the range of stock is specifically chosen to be inclusive of all Rotherham communities and those with protected characteristic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 210k to be spent on stock for 2020/21 - Obtain feedback from communities to understand the demand. 	Service Development and Communities of Interest Operational Manager	March 2021
Continue to adapt and mould the service offer to meet the needs of the local community, ensuring that no one is left behind as the service shape the refreshed service offer	Ensure that the service offer meets the needs of each community. Working in line with other service strategies, e.g. Thriving Neighbourhoods to cross-cut agendas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All sites to work closely with their local community groups, partners, neighbourhood officers and Ward Councillors 	Operational Managers Central/North/South	March 2021
	Work with the British Library and neighbouring local authorities to become a Business and intellectual Property Centre (BIPC), supporting small business owners and entrepreneurs across Rotherham to start up and grow their businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular meetings with Sheffield Council to plan for rollout at allocated library site - An information specialist will provide advice, deliver training to local staff and arrange partner-led workshops and 1-1s with a specific site 	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	January 2021

Support school age children with homework and college/sixth form students with their studies, working with local education departments to promote this	Allow children/young adults to learn outside the classroom and access additional support in the form of digital and additional resources	- Develop 2 additional after school clubs /homework clubs with dedicated study space	Communities of Interest Team Leader	December 2021
Support adults from all communities to get back into education or work, by offering access to online information and face to face support.	Work with the DWP to assist job coaches becoming closer to communities	- Facilitate Job Coaches operating from Libraries,	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	December 2020
	Support adults to access apprenticeships or further training to enhance employability skills for the future.	- Explore opportunities to delivery virtually - Work with communities to offer this within a suitable space within libraries	Team Leader Central	March 2022
Supported by Voluntary Action Rotherham, the service will offer a range of volunteering opportunities to individuals and community groups to enhance the delivery of the library service.	Increase the number of volunteers within the service	- Work with VAR as our primary partner in order to increase the number of volunteers by 50% during 2021/22.	Operational Manager Central	December 2021
Increase the number of new apprenticeships available within the service.	Increase the number of apprenticeship posts within the Library Service structure	- Appoint 3 apprentices	Operational Manager North/South/ Central	October 2020

Ensure library staff are trained to support customers to make the best use of the full range of library resources, along with encouraging the take up sector specific qualifications.	Staff and volunteers undertake Libraries Connected e-learning which include 3 digital modules.	- Ensure that all library staff and volunteers undertake the training	Operational Manager Central	November 2020
	Undertake the Libraries and Archives Apprenticeship	- 3 staff to undertake this apprenticeship each year	Operational Manager Central	April 2021
	Undertake the Management and Leadership Apprenticeship	- 2 staff to undertake this apprenticeship each year	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	April 2021

Objective: HEALTHIER AND HAPPIER LIVES
(Champion: Head of Public Health, Adult Care Housing & Public Health)

Service Offer	Tasks	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Provide and support the use of information on physical health and mental well-being, through the service's own resources and in partnership with others	Increase the number of books to support healthy living, mental health and well-being	- Review of stock available in each library and increase where required	Service Development and Support Team Leader	March 2021
	Offer a quiet, calm place for children who may be on the autistic spectrum.	- Roll out of equipment to support children within libraries Kiveton Park, Aston and Maltby.	Communities South Team Leader	March 2021
Encourage customers to get healthy, get active and get outdoors by delivering Library services in parks and green spaces	Explore how the service can utilise attractive outdoor spaces across the Borough to deliver "pop-up" libraries and outdoor activities	- Work with Culture, Sport and Tourism teams to find suitable spaces and help promote.	Communities of Interest Team Leader	August 2021
Host events, activities and groups with partners to encourage and support a healthier, happier lifestyle.	Address Health inequalities which have been identified as part of the Health and Wellbeing review e.g. BAME, Children and Young People, women from deprived communities, unpaid carers and older people	- Work with partners to co-design targeted activities to those groups	Team Leader South	October 2021
	Address topics of discussion such as healthy eating, weight management, relaxation, stress management, exercise and fitness.	- Pursue opportunities across the Borough to work with "Get Healthy Rotherham"	Communities of Interest Team Leader	October 2021

	Introduce and grow specific health and wellbeing groups and events e.g. Menopause Café, Musically Minded and Shared Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore how these events could be hosted digitally. - Work with partners to attract interest. 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	October 2021
Actively seek to reduce social isolation and loneliness	Organise reading groups and activities in which people can come together, both face to face and digitally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Cuppa and a Chat” sessions to take place across all libraries. - Programme of reading groups targeted at those with protected characteristics and under-represented groups 	Team Leader South	December 2021
Promote reading for pleasure as a positive benefit to health and mental wellbeing.	Increase promotion and marketing to attract new customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with partners in Public Health to identify groups and communities who would benefit from reading to improve their mental health - Work with NHS partners in Joint Service Centres (Aston, Maltby, Rawmarsh) to promote reading for pleasure and other Library resources that may assist improving people’s mental health. 	Service Development and Communities of Interest Operational Manager	November 2021

Offer a service to those who are potentially lonely and vulnerable	Utilise Booklink and Home Library Services to engage with this group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the community hub in order to identify additional customers who would benefit from the Booklink/Home Library Service 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	November 2020
Support and encourage the staff within the service to stay safe and well at work	Ensure that the importance of health and wellbeing at work/home is prioritised by all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with Public Health to deliver the Wellbeing Champions scheme within Libraries 	Team Leader North	November 2020
	Ensure that all staff have sight and understanding of the corporate wellbeing guide and understand the steps to take to ensure that their own health and wellbeing is important to them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular team meetings to talk over wellbeing guide - Make reference to guide in PDR's where relevant 	All Team Leaders	November 2020
Support the Council, suppliers and communities to address the climate change emergency	Identify books and other resources to enable communities and individuals to understand the issues and take action in line with best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new 'climate change' collection is identified and promoted - A programme of activities are developed, promoting debate and community action with 4 new annual events 	Service Development and Communities of Interest Operational Manager	April 2021 September 2021

Objective: GREATER PROSPERITY
(Champion: Head of Operations and Business Transformation, Culture, Sport and Tourism)

Service Offer	Tasks	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Work with partners to offer space for Information, Advice and Guidance particularly for those seeking or offering employment and training.	Support adults who are not in work or training to take a positive step	- Delivery of the Steps to Work programme to support adults who are not in work or training to take a positive step.	Team Leader Central	March 2021
	Support adults to access apprenticeships or further training to enhance employability skills for the future.	- Offer 3 placements within libraries as part of the National kickstart programme	Team Leader Central	November 2020
Offer work clubs in conjunction with partners.	Roll out of Job clubs within Libraries in partnership with the Job Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with Job Centre, to improve employability and build CV writing skills. - Roll out an additional 3 Job Clubs 	Operational Manager North/South	March 2021
Offer assisted digital support and beginners ICT sessions	Support people getting online and becoming confident I.T. users	- Create and promote beginner's ICT sessions at all libraries	Team Leader South	September 2021
The service will reach out to those who are unemployed and looking for work to assist them to improve their digital skills	Promote and advertise ICT sessions across the borough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilise partners and voluntary organisations to extend reach - Work with the Job Centre Plus and Housing to promote sessions and encourage participation 	All Team Leaders	June 2021

Libraries will work with local colleges to ensure that customers seeking further education are able to seek the right support local to them.	Work in partnership with local colleges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with RNN group and University Centre Rotherham (UCR) to promote higher education and study within Libraries 	All Team Leaders	June 2021
Staff and volunteers will be trained to provide digital support for those seeking employment and have the knowledge to signpost to relevant services if this is outside of the library assisted digital offer.	Staff to be competent and confident to use online resources to offer appropriate digital assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All library staff to undertake training to allow for appropriate sign posting - Build up staff relationships with local educational establishments to build a network of contacts to liaise with to improve partnership working 	All Team Leaders	June 2021

Objective: STRONGER MORE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES
(Champion: Head of Neighbourhoods, Assistant Chief Executive's)

Service Offer	Tasks	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Libraries will function as friendly and welcoming community hubs, freely accessible to all.	Reviewing of buildings to look at if they are in the right location; if they can be colocated with other services/partners; if the buildings require refurbishing/modernising; if the service can host wider cultural and heritage activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilising the approved Capital funding, carry out a two year programme of improvements to library buildings and ICT provision - Complete co-location of Kiveton Park library and the Early Help Services - Complete co-location of Thurcroft library with the Parish Council 	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	March 2022
Work with appropriate partners and the community to create a new community hub in the town centre in order to increase engagement and footfall.	Future high street funding bid (FHSF) currently awaiting a decision – expected Autumn 2020. Library will form part of the Markets redevelopments in line with the Town Centre Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce a design and service offer of the new library 	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	April 2021
Review opening hours in line with customer and staff feedback	Utilise statistical information, and engage with local community groups and seek to implement automated solutions, in order to keep libraries open for more people, for more of the time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to check that opening hours are aligned to customer need. - Deliver self-service Libraries at 2 sites 	Operational Manager Central	April 2021

Generate an income through charging for elements of the service provision	Explore the option to hire out library space and delivery of chargeable services, activities and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New meeting spaces to be developed as part of the refurbishment programme at sites such as Kiveton Park and Dinnington which can be hired out - Continue to charge for some activities and events to sustain a good quality and value service. Income to be reinvested back into activities and events. 	Operational Manager North/South	March 2021
Continue to use the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to support the provision of library services.	Delivery of infrastructure needed to support local development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use this tool as a local authority to assist and support local development 	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	December 2021
Libraries will host a wide range of diverse events and activities	Build community identity and cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of ESOL classes to Brinsworth and 1 other suitable library site within the borough 	Team Leader Central	June 2021
	Promote Fun Palace to give everyone the opportunity to demonstrate their talents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with other CST teams to expand and utilise other spaces within the borough 	Operational Managers	October 2021
Work with local people to shape our future services, extending ownership, responsibility and pride.	Encourage the community to come forward and speak out within their local libraries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrange sessions and promote borough wide - Utilise partners and voluntary organisations to extend reach to all groups of the community 	Team Leaders	December 2021

Staff and volunteers will be trained to provide excellent customer service to all those who wish to use library services	Identify training opportunities suitable for staff to maintain and develop customer service skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training programme to be identified relevant for staff - Ensure staff continually complete other mandatory training. 	Team Leaders	March 2021
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Public Report with Exempt Appendices
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 19 October 2020

Report Title

Town Deal

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Tim O'Connell, Head of RIDO

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Town Deal is a £3.6bn programme seeking to “unleash the economic potential” of 100 places across the country. Rotherham has an opportunity to bid for up to £25m through this fund or up to £50m if it is considered that “exceptional circumstances” apply. Bidding will take the form of a Town Investment Plan.

This report provides an update on the development of the Town Investment Plan and seeks approval for the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the S.151 Officer to submit the Town Investment Plan and any necessary supporting documentation.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet endorses the Town Investment Plan Emerging Project Summary (Appendix 5).

2. That delegated authority is given to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the S.151 Officer, to agree the final content and submit the Town Investment Plan and subsequently to agree the Town Deal Heads of Terms.
3. That approval is given to acquire the freehold interest necessary to enable a Town Deal Accelerator scheme as detailed in Appendix 6, and the Head of Legal Services be instructed to complete the necessary legal documentation once terms for the acquisition have been agreed.
4. That delegated authority is given to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the S.151 Officer, to agree the final Town Deal Accelerator scheme as detailed in Appendix 6, if the preferred scheme is not progressed.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix 2 Town Deal Geography Map
Appendix 3 Town Deal Process
Appendix 4 Town Deal Board Membership
Appendix 5 Town Investment Plan Emerging Project Summary (Exempt)
Appendix 6 Town Deal Accelerator (Exempt)

Background Papers

Town Centre Masterplan
Local Plan

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Name of Committee – Click here to enter a date.

Name of Committee – Click here to enter a date.

Nil

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

An exemption is sought for Appendix 5 –Town Investment Plan Emerging Project Summary (Exempt) and Appendix 6 - Town Deal Accelerator, under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains commercially sensitive information in relation to Rotherham's bid for funding, the projects it aims to fund and property affected by such proposals.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information because release of such information could jeopardise the Council's ability to achieve its aims for Town Deal.

Town Deal

1.	Background
1.1	<p>The Town Deal is a £3.6bn programme seeking to “unleash the economic potential” of 100 places across the country. Rotherham has been given the opportunity to bid for up to £25m through this programme. The Government has advised that bids of up to £50m will be considered in exceptional circumstances for the most ambitious and credible projects.</p> <p>The Fund will focus investment on 3 main areas of activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Urban regeneration, planning and land use</i> – strengthen local economic assets, including site acquisition, remediation and preparation. • <i>Skills and enterprise infrastructure</i> - providing space to support skills and small business development • <i>Connectivity</i> – local transport schemes, plus delivery of improved digital connectivity <p>The ‘bid’ for funding will be a Town Investment Plan.</p>
1.2	<p><i>Town Deal Accelerator</i></p> <p>On the 1st July 2020, the Council was advised of an opportunity to access £1million ahead of the main Town Deal. This money is being made available to accelerate projects which can be delivered before the 31 March 2021 and which fit with the overall aims of the Town Investment Plan.</p>
1.3	<p><i>Town Deal Board</i></p> <p>A requirement of the Town Deal programme was that the Council set up an overarching Town Deal Board. This was established in January 2020. The Town Deal Board serves an advisory function. It is the vehicle through which the vision and strategy for the town is defined and the Town Investment Plan is produced. The role of the Town Deal Board is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and agree an evidenced based Town Investment Plan • Develop a clear programme of interventions • Coordinate resources and influence stakeholders <p>Details of the Board members can be found at Appendix 4. Meeting minutes can be found on the Council’s website: https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=1192</p>
2.	Key Issues
2.1	<p><i>Rotherham’s Town Deal</i></p> <p>The Town Deal will be an agreement in principle between government, the Council and the Town Deal Board. It will set out a vision and strategy for the town, and what each party agrees to do to achieve this vision. The underlying interventions to achieve this vision will be set out in the Town Investment Plan.</p>

2.2	The Town Investment Plan is required to be a long-term strategic document with an evidential and analytical basis for the projects it proposes. It should also set out a vision for Rotherham with a strategy that can set the direction for the economic turnaround of the town over a decade, including reference to economic recovery.
2.3	The Town Investment Plan covers a geography prescribed by MHCLG and detailed in Appendix 2. Potential interventions focussed in the Eastwood, Templeborough and town centre areas have been considered and examined which reflects the Town Deal geography.
2.5	<p>A number of investment opportunities have been identified these are summarised below with further detail available at the virtual public exhibition website https://vpc.tetrachteurope.com/rotherham/</p> <p>Eastwood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade link to Parkgate • Improve connectivity at St Anne's roundabout • Environmental improvements at Fitzwilliam Rd • New housing development at York Rd Netherfield Court and other areas • Refurbishment of selected properties and landscape improvements <p>Templeborough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Agriculture • Business park and innovation centre • Bridge link to Blackburn Meadows • Connectivity improvements to Sheffield Rd, Ickles Roundabout and Bessemer Way • Route cleaning and maintenance • Wayfinding and signage <p>Central and Town centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked water side development sites for residential and supporting uses to create a Riverside community • Outdoor green spaces, squares and water to support, leisure, evening and food & drink diversification • A contracted retail core to strengthen the retail circuit and maximise the benefit of the markets complex • Gateway improvements <p>Additional detail is provided in exempt Appendix 5.</p> <p>These interventions have been developed with advice from a team of multi-disciplinary consultants and in consultation with the Town Deal Board, the Council's Senior Leadership Team, Service Leads, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Jobs & the Local Economy along with input gathered through consultation with local residents, stakeholders and businesses.</p>

2.6	For Eastwood the interventions focus on the need for a more diverse, better quality and secure housing offer and to build on the transport connections such as the new tram/train stop.
2.7	The focus for Templeborough is around supporting and developing the existing innovation and the successful business community through the development of a 'Heart of Templeborough', better links to the new tram/train stop and improved connectivity.
2.8	The town centre proposals build on existing interventions such as Forge Island to provide a new residential community with the aim of increasing footfall and supporting existing businesses as well as interventions to tackle rundown buildings and increase the town's leisure offer.
2.9	Connectivity runs through the proposals as a general theme and focusses on how to provide safer and more pleasant routes around the town and better connectivity into and out of the borough.
2.10	<p>The development of the Town Investment Plan continues to be an iterative process. The emerging proposals detailed in Appendix 5 will be thoroughly tested against deliverability and impact with MHCLG's specialist advisors to ensure a robust Town Investment Plan. The timeframe for development of the Town Investment Plan means proposals will continue to be developed and refined right up to the point of submission. To facilitate this process, and allow the Town Investment Plan to be improved as detailed proposals are developed and feedback received, this report requests delegation to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the S.151 Officer to agree the final content and submit the Town Investment Plan.</p> <p>Until the point of submission regular updates will be provided to the Town Deal Board, the Council's Senior Leadership Team, Service Leads, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Jobs & the Local Economy.</p>
2.11	The Council was awarded a total of £173,000 of revenue funding to enable the production of the Town Investment Plan and subsequent Business Case. To date £156,508 has been committed to facilitate production of the Town Investment Plan.
2.12	<p><i>Town Deal Accelerator</i></p> <p>The £1 million accelerator aims to bring forward relevant projects ahead of the main Town Deal. Schemes must be deliverable by 31st March 2021.</p> <p>Potential projects must respond to the immediate challenges faced by each of the Town Deal towns, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to or new parks and green spaces and sustainable transport links. • Improvements to town centres including repurposing empty commercial properties.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demolition or site remediation where this will have an immediate benefit. <p>A long list of potential projects was produced and evaluated considering risks, benefits and fit with the Town Deal. Details of the preferred scheme and implications can be found at Exempt Appendix 6.</p> <p>The S.151 Officer wrote to MHCLG on 14th August to confirm the preferred proposals.</p>
2.13	Funding for the Town Deal Accelerator is entirely dependent upon the scheme being delivered by 31 st March 2021. In addition to the preferred scheme, further options for the Town Deal Accelerator are being explored should it not be possible to secure the necessary agreements and approvals to allow the preferred scheme to progress to be delivered in time.
3.	Options considered and recommended proposal
3.1	<p><i>Town Investment Plan Options</i></p> <p>The precise content of the Town Investment Plan will be determined following further consultation, testing and analysis of the emerging interventions proposed and described in Appendix 5.</p>
3.2	<p>Options have been considered for the timing of submission of the Town Investment Plan. MHCLG have been clear that the timing of the Council's submission will not impact on its success.</p> <p>A coherent, well tested plan with deliverable projects is required and as such time must be built in after completion of the draft to make best use will be made of MHCLG's central advisory team to check and challenge the draft Investment Plan.</p> <p>The Town Deal guidance is clear that the Town Investment Plan must be aligned with other initiatives and funding streams. The outcome of complementary funding streams, such as the Brownfield fund and Sheffield City Region commitments will be better known by November 2020.</p> <p>Therefore, to ensure Rotherham has a high-quality Town Investment Plan which clearly meets the criteria of the Town Deal Guidance it is proposed that the Plan be submitted in January 2021.</p>
4.	Consultation on proposal
4.1	<p><i>Town Deal Consultation</i></p> <p>Board meetings: The Board has met monthly since 28th February 2020 and has contributed to the development of the projects which will be put forward for Town Deal funding.</p>

	<p>MyTown Portal: A series of questions has been posed on this MHCLG run forum. Responses will be collated and considered when considering which projects should be put forward for Town Deal investment.</p> <p>Virtual consultation: Starting in September and running until November utilising a remote consultation platform, users will be able to virtually explore a 'village hall' set up to view plans. Questions will be posed, and comments gathered.</p> <p>The development of projects will be appraised against comments gathered through the virtual consultation and the MyTown Portal.</p> <p>The consultant team have held sessions with numerous stakeholders and businesses in the Town Deal area in the preparation of the emerging proposals set out in Appendix 5.</p>
4.2	<p><i>Town Deal Accelerator</i></p> <p>The Town Deal Accelerator long list of projects was discussed with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Jobs & the Local Economy in consultation with the Strategic Director, Regeneration & Environment and was tabled at the Housing & Regeneration Programme Board, both on 28th July 2020.</p> <p>Endorsement of the scheme came from the Town Deal Board on 4th August 2020.</p>
5.	Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision
5.1	Refinement of the projects and drafting of the Investment Plan will take place between October 2020 and January 2021, with check and challenge sessions with MHCLG's central support team in December 2020. 21.
5.2	The Town Investment Plan will be submitted in Cohort 3 by the end of January 2021.
5.3	If the bid is successful, then Heads of Terms for the Town Deal will be negotiated and agreed by the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the S.151 Officer
5.4	Post submission of the Town Investment Plan the project team will immediately begin work on the Business Case, with the aim of submitting the Business Case in late 2021 to release funding.
5.4	<p><i>Town Deal Accelerator</i></p> <p>The 'Accelerator Fund' has a requirement to be spent by March 2021. A delivery programme has been prepared and subject to successful negotiation of terms works could start in January 2021.</p>

6.	Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of S.151 Officer)
6.1	The appointment of further external support will be subject to procurement and will be conducted in line with the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
6.2	The planned total estimated capital cost of the Accelerator scheme is £1,000,000 and subsequent Towns Deal Investment Plan made up of a series of constituent projects forming a single programme will be amount in aggregate to between £25m- £50m. Once the investment plan is finalised and a Final Business Case agreed with funding in place the Towns Fund can be included in the Council's Capital Investment Programme
6.3	Approved funding to date for the Towns Deal and for the offer of the 'Accelerator Project' is a revenue grant of £173,000 from MHCLG. It enables the production of the Town Investment Plan and subsequent Business Case. A Final Business Case signed off by all parties is the final stage before award of funding. Existing approved resources within the Directorate of Regeneration and Environment have been applied to working up the scheme, however from submission of the Town Investment Plan to completion of the Business Cases additional external resources will be required.
6.4	The next steps will be to agree the contents of the Investment Plan and then to agree Heads of Terms leading to a Full Business Case and final funding agreement. The cost is greater than the £173,000 originally awarded and is expected to be in the region of £100,000 for 2021-22 but is within scope to be charged to the final scheme and therefore be fully funded. If abortive costs are incurred (that is, development costs for an unfinished scheme) there would be a revenue pressure. While likely much less than £100,000 the Directorate for Regeneration and Environment will mitigate this eventuality from existing 2021-22 revenue budgets
6.5	As at August 14 th 2020 the Council has submitted bid letters, including on behalf of the S.151 officer supporting the Accelerator bid.
6.6	Acquisition of the site intended for the Town Deal Accelerator scheme is expected to result in revenue expenditure in the region of £15k to £30k and will be met from the Council annual property budgets
7.	Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)
7.1	There are no direct legal implications arising from the content of the Report.
8.	Human Resources Advice and Implications
8.1	No direct HR implications arising from this report.

9.	Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults
9.1	There are not considered to be any direct implications for Children & Young People and Vulnerable Adults
10.	Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications
10.1	A copy of the Equality Screening Form is attached at Appendix 1. A further report will be completed upon completion of the Town Investment Plan when the full potential impact of the Town Deal is known.
11.	Implications for Ward Priorities
11.1	The Neighbourhood Ward reports will be considered in the compilation of the Town Investment Plan. The Rotherham East, Boston Castle and Rotherham West Wards will be particularly impacted by any improvements to the town centre, Eastwood Templeborough.
12.	Implications for Partners
12.1	The Town Investment Plan is being developed with the active engagement of partners. The proposals reflect a broad consensus among partners on priorities for investment.
13.	Risks and Mitigation
13.1.	The full content of the Town Investment Plan will not be known at submission to Cabinet - A summary of emerging projects is presented and it is proposed that delegated authority is given to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the S.151 Officer, to agree the final content and submit the Town Investment Plan and subsequently to agree the Town Deal Heads of Terms.
13.2	Community Engagement - Due to Covid restrictions the option of face to face consultation is no longer available. Consultation is instead being conducted through virtual methods. The Council will use newsletters and social media to promote this consultation and encourage the community to engage in the creation of the Town Investment Plan.
13.3	A project specific risk register has been prepared for the Snail Yard development that is reviewed weekly by the established Project Team. There are currently no high-risk items identified.
14.	Accountable Officers
	Simon Moss, Assistant Director Planning, Regeneration & Transport
	Tim O'Connell, Head of RIDO

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Named officer	05/10/20
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Named officer	05/10/20

Report Authors:

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Tim O'Connell, Head of RIDO
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Lorna Vertigan, Senior Programme Manager
07880 480279 or lorna.vertigan@sheffieldcityregion.org.uk

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title

Title: Town Deal

Directorate: Regeneration & Environment

Service area: RIDO

Lead person: Lorna Vertigan

Contact number: 07880480279

Is this a:

☐

Strategy / Policy

☐

Service / Function

☒

Other

If other, please specify this is a Town Investment Plan which will be used as a bidding tool for external funding

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The Town Deal is a £3.6bn programme seeking to “unleash the economic potential” of 100 places across the country. Rotherham has been given the opportunity to access £25m to £50m. A Town Investment Plan will be submitted to government in October 2020. The areas covered in Rotherham are Eastwood, Templeborough and the town centre.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council’s strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	x	
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	x	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>		x
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>		x
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>		x
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		x

If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

The Town Investment Plan, if successful will release £25m-£50m for Rotherham and its residents. Plans are not yet fully developed but aim to better the lives of all Rotherham residents by improving environment, connectivity and providing new and better

opportunities.

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

At the time of writing the Cabinet Report and this assessment the full detail of the projects which will be put forward for funding are not known. Instead work so far has focussed on assessing the need and ambition of the communities, residents and businesses within the Town Deal area and developing the feasibility of projects which will meet these needs and demands.

Consultation with communities has and continues to take place and will provide a tool through which to ensure the Town Deal meets the needs of the communities and considers equality and diversity.

- **Key findings**

Consultation is ongoing and will be very widespread, as required by government as part of the bid development. The findings will be summarised in the Town Investment Plan in September. The development of priority projects will consider and be responsive to this consultation.

- **Actions**

The Town Investment Plan will be submitted to Government in October 2020. At that point the full scope will be known and in turn a more thorough impact assessment can be completed.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	October 2020
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	October 2021
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Lorna Vertigan, Senior Programme Manager

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Lorna Vertigan	Senior Programme Manager	12 th August 2020
Dan Watson	Investment & Economic Initiatives Manager	13 th August 2020
Simeon Leach	Economic Strategy & Partnerships Manager	13 th August 2020

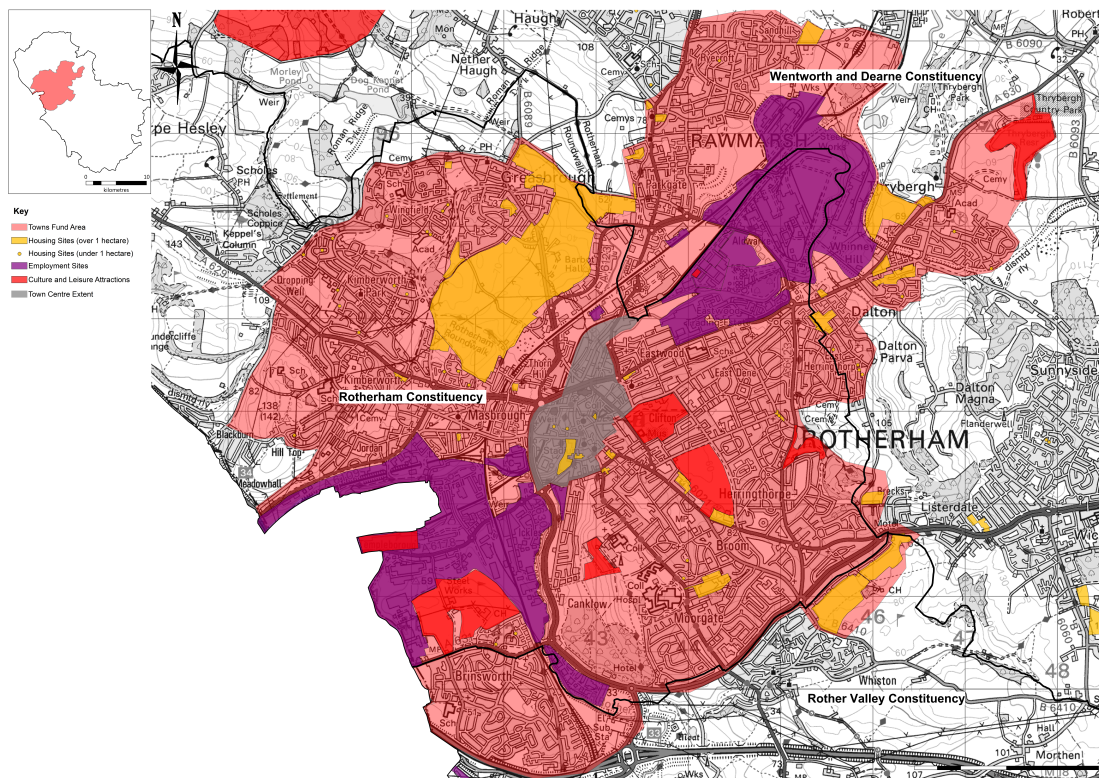
6. Publishing

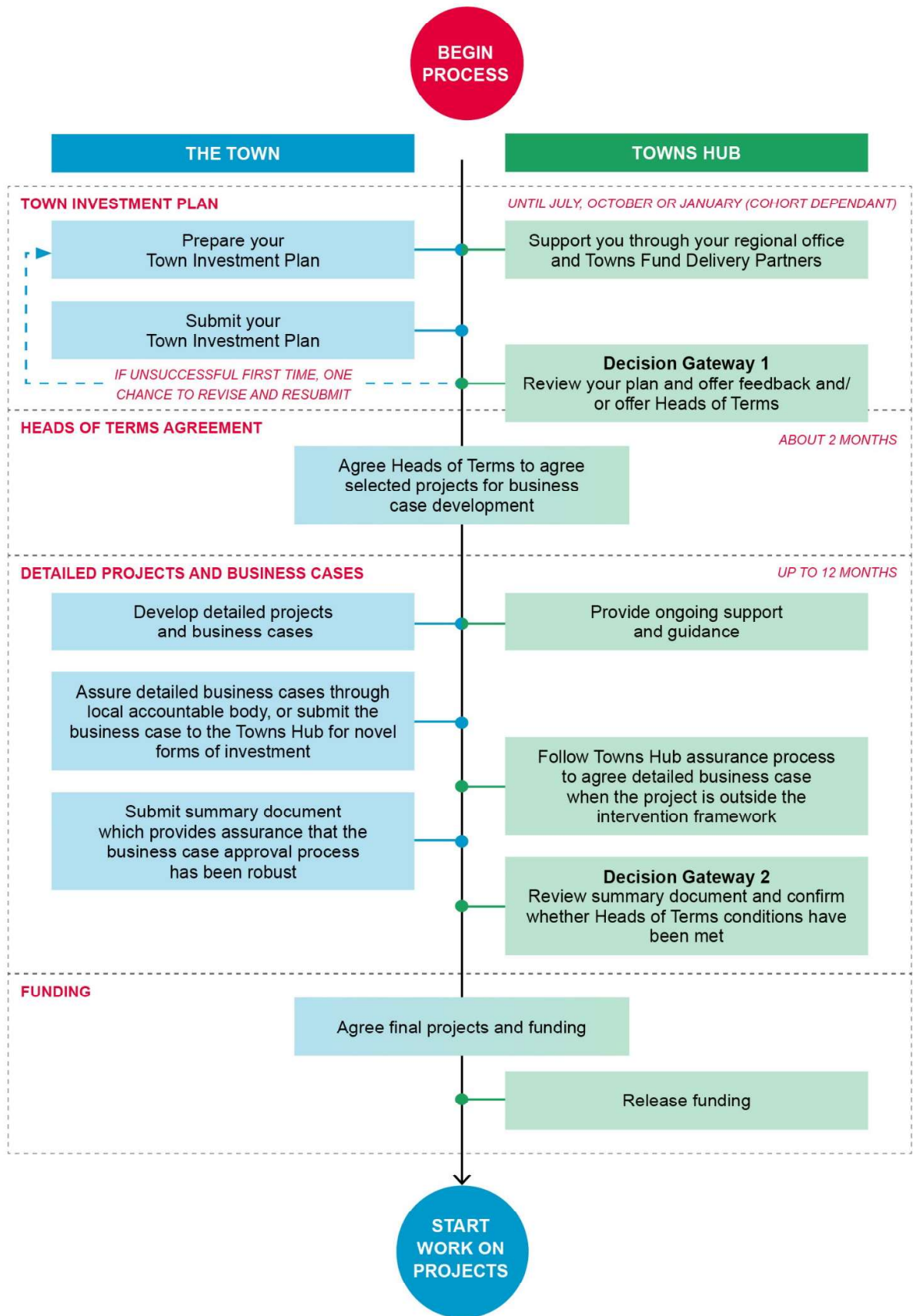
This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed	
Report title and date	Town Deal, 19 th October 2020
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Cabinet 19 th October 2020
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	13 th August 2020





Town Deal Board Members

Member	Organisation	Sector
Neil Baxter - Chair	Engie	Business/private sector
Julia Bloomer - Vice	AESSEAL	Business/private sector
Sarah Champion	Member of Parliament	
Mike Smith	Rotherham NHS	Public Sector
Sharon Thorpe	Department of Work and Pensions	
Andrew Denniff	Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber of Commerce	Business Support
Lizzie Dealey	Canal and Rivers Trust	Charity
Steve Morris	Signs Express	Business/private sector
Colin Blackburn	Combined Authority / LEP	
Cllr Denise Lelliott	Rotherham MBC - Local Councillor	Public Sector
Dan Needham	Muse Developments	Business/private sector
Deborah Bullivant	Grimm & Co.	Charity
Peter Hill	HMP Bespoke Construction Ltd	Business/private sector
Tracey Mace-Akroyd	RNN Group - Rotherham College	Education
Nicolah Jones	AMRC	Education
Stuart Kerr	Willmott Dixon	Business/private sector
Raymond Kinsella	Great Places Housing Association	Voluntary/community sector
Duncan Armstrong-Payne	Harworth Estates	Business/private sector
Paul Woodcock / Simon Moss	Rotherham MBC	Public Sector
Phil Hayes	Rotherham Federation of Communities	Voluntary/community sector
Nick Bussey	Community sector - Rotherham Citizens Advice Bureau	Community sector
Andy Lock	Coalfield Regeneration Trust	Voluntary/community sector
Lisa Pogson	Airmaster	Business/private sector

Observers

Justin Homer	Sheffield City Region - Cities and Local Growth Unit
Tom Hawley	Homes England

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS
1 October 2020 – 31 December 2020**

This is formal notice under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 of Key Decisions due to be taken by the Authority and of those parts of the Cabinet meeting identified in this Forward Plan will be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting will contain confidential or exempt information as defined in the Local Government Act 1972.

Contact Information:-

Democratic Services
Riverside House
Main Street
Rotherham
S60 1AE

Email: governance@rotherham.gov.uk
Tel: 01709 822477

What is the Forward Plan?

The Forward Plan contains all the key decisions the Council expects to take over the next three months. It will be refreshed monthly and will give at least 28 days' notice of any Key Decisions and, if applicable, the Cabinet's intention to discuss an item in private. This gives you the opportunity to submit relevant documents to the decision maker concerning any individual Key Decisions and draws to your attention any relevant constitution process.

What is a Key Decision?

A Key Decision is one which is likely to:-

- relate to the capital or revenue budget framework that is reserved to the Council, or
- result in income, expenditure or savings of £400,000 or greater, or
- have a significant effect on two or more wards

A Key Decision can be made by the Cabinet. The Forward Plan also includes some matters which are not Key Decisions under the heading "Decisions which are not Key Decisions".

What does the Forward Plan tell me?

The plan gives information about:

- what key decisions are to be made in the next three months;
- the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made;
- who will make the key decisions;
- when those key decisions are likely to be made;
- what documents will be considered;
- who you can contact for further information

Who takes Key Decisions?

Under the Authority's Constitution, Key Decisions are taken by the Cabinet. Key Decisions are taken at public meetings of the Cabinet. The Cabinet meets once a month on a Monday at 10.00am. Meeting dates for 2020/21 are:

15 June 2020	21 September 2020	23 November 2020	25 January 2021	22 March 2021	17 May 2021
13 July 2020	19 October 2020	21 December 2020	15 February 2021	19 April 2021	

Further information and Representations about items proposed to be heard in Private

Names of contact officers are included in the Plan.

If you wish to make representations that a decision which is proposed to be heard in private should instead be dealt with in public, you should contact Democratic Services by no later than five clear working days before the meeting. At the end of this document are extracts from the Local Government Act 1972 setting out the descriptions of information which may be classed as "exempt", and the definition of confidential information.

The members of the Cabinet and their areas of responsibility are: -

Councillor Chris Read	Leader of the Council
Councillor Gordon Watson	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Neighbourhood Working
Councillor Saghir Alam	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Finance
Councillor Sarah Allen	Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities
Councillor Dominic Beck	Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor Emma Hoddinott	Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety
Councillor Denise Lelliott	Cabinet Member for Jobs and Local Economy
Councillor David Roche	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Decision title	Date added to the Forward Plan	What is the decision?	Cabinet Portfolio	Who will be consulted	Documents to be considered	Wards affected	Is the decision to be made in private	Directorate and contact for further information
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KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON 19 OCTOBER 2020								
ADULT CARE, HOUSING AND PUBLIC HEALTH								
Adult Care Services - Early Intervention Community Support Services	1 August 2020	To approve the commissioning approach highlighted in the report for the Rotherham Sight & Sound service and for the Dementia Cafes provision.	Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health	Cabinet Member –Adult Social Care and Health, Director of Finance and Legal Services, Head of Procurement, Head of Equalities.	Report	All Wards	Open	Anne Marie Lubanski Tel: 01709 822397 annemarie.lubanski@rotherham.gov.uk
Learning Disability/Autism - Developing Commissioning Solutions	1 August 2020	To approve the commissioning approach for highly specialist service providers for people with a Learning Disability and/or Autism and to create a Dynamic Purchasing System for Learning Disability and/or Autism services.	Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health	Providers People who use services Carers	Report	All Wards	Open	Anne Marie Lubanski Tel: 01709 822397 annemarie.lubanski@rotherham.gov.uk
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES								
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Section 75 Agreement	1 September 2020	Proposal to establish a new Section 75 Agreement for joint commissioning and a pooled fund for the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to replace the existing agreement that expires on 31 st October 2020.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Children's Services & Neighbourhood Working	Relevant officers, stakeholders and members	Report and appendices	All Wards	Open	Sally Hodges Tel: 01709 822677 sally.hodges@rotherham.gov.uk
REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT								
Neighbourhood Road Safety Fund Programme	1 July 2020	Approval of the programme following Ward Member engagement.	Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety	Cabinet member and Ward members	Report and appendices	All Wards	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
Towns Fund – Town Investment Plan	1 July 2020	To approve the submission of the Town Investment Plan	Cabinet Member - Jobs and the Local Economy	Town Deal Board, Relevant officers, members, stakeholders and public	Report and appendices	Boston Castle; Rawmarsh; Rotherham East; Rotherham West; Wingfield	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
Library Strategy	1 August 2020	To approve the Council's Library Strategy	Cabinet Member - Cleaner, Greener Communities	Library customers, non-users, people with protected characteristics, general public and stakeholders	Report, Library Strategy and other appendices	All Wards	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk

The proposed disposal of the Council's freehold interest in the former Oaks Day Centre, Oaks Road, Wath Upon Dearne	1 September 2020	To approve disposal.	Cabinet Member - Jobs and the Local Economy	Portfolio Member, Ward Members and relevant officers.	Report and appendices	Wath	Part exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON 23 NOVEMBER 2020								
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE								
Equalities Review - going for Excellent accreditation	1 September 2020	To consider a review of equalities to incorporate learning from the COVID 19 emergency and agree a programme of action leading to Rotherham securing "Excellent" accreditation under the Equality Framework for Local Government.	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services and Finance	Relevant officers, members and stakeholders	Report	All Wards	Open	Jackie Mould Tel: 01709 823618 jackie.mould@rotherham.gov.uk
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES								
SEN Sufficiency Development Phase 3	1 August 2020	Proposals to address current and future Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) sufficiency issues, as highlighted by SEND data and identified in Rotherham SEND Sufficiency Strategy.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Children's Services & Neighbourhood Working	Relevant officers, stakeholders and members	Report	All Wards	Open	Sally Hodges Tel: 01709 822677 sally.hodges@rotherham.gov.uk
FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES								
September 2020/21 Financial Monitoring	1 September 2020	To note the current revenue and capital monitoring position and agree any required actions	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services and Finance	Relevant officers, members and stakeholders	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk
Medium Term Financial Strategy	1 September 2020	To consider a review and update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and agree any required actions.	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services and Finance	Relevant officers, members and stakeholders	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk

REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT								
Domestic Abuse Recommissioning	1 October 2020	To approve the approach and key outcomes relating to the recommissioning of domestic abuse support services and refuge.	Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety		Report and appendices	All Wards	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
Forge Island enabling - Demolition of Riverside Precinct and 8-18 Corporation Street, S60 1NG	1 October 2020	That Cabinet approves the scheme of works that include the demolition of Riverside Precinct, 8-18 Corporation Street and other remediation as part of enabling development for the Forge Island project.	Cabinet Member - Jobs and the Local Economy	Relevant officers, members and stakeholders.	Report and appendices	Boston Castle	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
NON-KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON 23 NOVEMBER 2020								
FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES								
New Applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief	1 August 2020	To consider the recommendation for a new application for Business Rates discretionary relief.	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services and Finance	Relevant Members, officers and stakeholders	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk
KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON 21 DECEMBER OR LATER								
ADULT CARE, HOUSING AND PUBLIC HEALTH								
HRA Business Plan 2020-21		To approve the 2020 – 21 HRA Business Plan.	Cabinet Member - Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing and relevant ward members.	Report	All Wards	Open	Anne Marie Lubanski Tel: 01709 822397 annemarie.lubanski@rotherham.gov.uk
Housing Rent and Service Charges		To approve rent and service level charges for 2021-21.	Cabinet Member - Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing, and relevant ward members.	Report	All Wards	Open	Anne Marie Lubanski Tel: 01709 822397 annemarie.lubanski@rotherham.gov.uk
NON-KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON 23 DECEMBER OR LATER								

ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE								
Year Ahead Plan - Quarterly Progress Report	1 October 2020	To report on the Council's progress against the Year Ahead Plan in Quarter 2 (July – September 2020).	Leader of the Council	Appropriate officers, members and stakeholders.	Report and appendices	All Wards	Open	Jackie Mould Tel: 01709 823618 jackie.mould@rotherham.gov.uk
FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES								
New Applications for Business Rates Relief		To consider the recommendation for a new application for Business Rates discretionary relief.	Cabinet Member - Corporate Services and Finance	Relevant officers, members and stakeholders.	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 SCHEDULE 12A
ACCESS TO INFORMATION: EXEMPT INFORMATION
PART 1
DESCRIPTIONS OF EXEMPT INFORMATION: ENGLAND

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes –
 - a. to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - b. to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

PART 2
QUALIFICATIONS: ENGLAND

Paragraphs 1-8 repealed.

- 9 Information is not exempt information if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission pursuant to regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.
- 10 Information which –
 - a. falls within any of paragraphs 1 to 7 above; and
 - b. is not prevented from being exempt by virtue of paragraph 8 or 9 above, is exempt information if and so long, as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
SECTION 100A(3) – DEFINITION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Confidential information means –

- a. information furnished to the council by a Government department upon terms (however expressed) which forbid the disclosure of the information to the public; and
 - b. information the disclosure of which to the public is prohibited by or under any enactment or by the order of a court;
- and, in either case, the reference to the obligation of confidence is to be construed accordingly.