

Appendix 6 Climate Impact Assessment, Library Strategy

| Will the decision/proposal impact...                   | Impact  | If an impact or potential impacts are identified:   |  |   |   |
|--|---------|---|--|---|---|
|  |         | Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions from the Council and its contractors.  | Describe impact or potential impacts on emissions across the Borough as a whole.   | Describe any measures to mitigate emission impacts  | Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out   |
| Emissions from non-domestic buildings?                 | Unknown | Additional activities within library buildings have the potential to generate the requirement to open facilities for longer hours   | The impact will be minimal as many of the buildings utilised already host other activities and are open to the public up to 7 days a week, however, there may be circumstances where increasing the opening hours is required ad hoc | Extra care to be taken to ensure buildings are only heated and lit for the times specifically required for delivery of services and additional activities/events.                           | Monitor timings heating and lighting is utilised.   |
| Emissions from transport?                              | Unknown | Additional activities and events delivered within communities have the potential to generate increased traffic from those wishing to attend. Staffing numbers may also increase at specific times to support delivery so travel may increase. | The impact will be minimal as we only envisage a small number of additional vehicles per week would be used to attend increased activities or events   | Deliver activities within a local area only. Promote active travel measures such as cycling and walking to activities and car sharing where there is a requirement to drive to the session. | Potential to monitor the number of cars used to transport staff where additional cover is needed. Also to monitor the method of transport service users adopt such as walking, cycling or public transport. |
| Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself? | None    | Additional activities and events delivered within communities have the potential to generate increased waste where crafting items and refreshments are used.  | The impact will be minimal as we do not host large scale events and those that are delivered as additional will be attended by small/average numbers.  | Use recyclable materials where possible and avoid single use plastics across all areas of service delivery.   | Potential to monitor the materials used to deliver activities and events and the materials used where refreshments are made available.  |

|   |      |     |     |     |     |
|---|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?  | None | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Emissions from construction and/or development? | None | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?            | None | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Identify any emissions impacts associated with this decision which have not been covered by the above fields:

It is envisaged that the Library Strategy renewal will have little to no impact on carbon emissions for the Council and the town. There are some measures identified that will potentially mitigate against increased emissions, but this is difficult to quantify with only minimal monitoring measures in place.

Additional activities and events within Libraries across the borough have the potential to generate the requirement to open facilities for longer hours- Ensure utilised buildings (if appropriate) are heated and lit for the appropriate times of the activities.

Additional activities also have the potential to generate increased traffic from those wishing to attend and additional staffing if needed - Encouragement of participants to travel to activities by active travel methods. There will be minimal climate impact.

Will the proposal affect Council services' resilience to climate change, or the capacity of people living in the Borough to adapt to climate change?

The strategy supports climate adaptation through community-focused initiatives that build resilience, which includes the following:

- Libraries offer warm or cool, safe spaces during crises (e.g., cost-of-living, pandemic, heatwaves, cold winters), which is vital during extreme weather events or energy shortages.
- Integration with health and wellbeing services helps vulnerable populations adapt to changing social and environmental conditions.
- Creation of green spaces and sensory gardens improving community and environmental resilience.
- Autism-friendly spaces and sensory equipment support diverse needs, while flexible building use (e.g., community kitchens, meeting rooms) enhances adaptability.
- Increased volunteering and community-led events foster local ownership and social cohesion—key elements of climate resilience.
- Training in digital and financial literacy equips residents with tools to navigate climate-related challenges, such as accessing online services or managing energy costs.

Provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

#### 1. Carbon Emissions and Environmental Sustainability

While the briefing does not explicitly quantify carbon emissions reductions, several initiatives contribute to lowering environmental impact and promoting sustainable practices:

- **Refurbishment and Co-location of Libraries:**
  - Over £1 million invested in refurbishing library buildings, improving energy efficiency through modern décor, furniture, and digital infrastructure.
  - Co-location with other services (e.g., Youth Services, Early Help) reduces the need for multiple buildings, potentially lowering the Council's carbon footprint.
- **Digital Access and Inclusion:**
  - Expansion of Open+ technology and self-service kiosks reduces the need for staff travel and physical resources.
  - Growth in digital membership and use of e-resources (eBooks, eMagazines) reduces paper consumption and physical borrowing, contributing to lower emissions.
- **Outdoor Engagement and Green Spaces:**
  - Creation of reading gardens and use of parks and green spaces for events promotes nature-based engagement and supports mental wellbeing.

- These initiatives align with climate adaptation goals by encouraging use of outdoor spaces and fostering community resilience.

## 2. Climate Change Adaptation and Community Resilience

The strategy supports climate adaptation through community-focused initiatives that build resilience:

- **Libraries as Community Hubs:**
  - Libraries offer warm, safe spaces during crises (e.g., cost-of-living, pandemic), which is vital during extreme weather events or energy shortages.
  - Integration with health and wellbeing services helps vulnerable populations adapt to changing social and environmental conditions.
  - Creation of green spaces and sensory gardens improving community resilience as detailed above.
- **Inclusive and Accessible Infrastructure:**
  - Autism-friendly spaces and sensory equipment support diverse needs, while flexible building use (e.g., community kitchens, meeting rooms) enhances adaptability.
- **Volunteering and Outreach:**
  - Increased volunteering and community-led events foster local ownership and social cohesion—key elements of climate resilience.
- **Digital Literacy and Skills Development:**
  - Training in digital and financial literacy equips residents with tools to navigate climate-related challenges, such as accessing online services or managing energy costs.

## Forward-Looking Considerations

The proposed 2027–2032 Library Strategy consultation will explore:

- **Modernisation and Investment Priorities:** Including potential for expanded self-access technology, which could further reduce operational emissions.
- **Libraries as Flagship Cultural and Learning Hubs:** With the new Town Centre Library potentially serving as a model for sustainable design and community engagement.
- **Widening Access and Inclusion:** Ensuring that climate adaptation efforts reach underrepresented groups.

Supporting information:

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|   |  |
|---|--|
| Please outline any research, data or information used to complete this Climate Impact Assessment.   | <i>Not applicable</i>  |
| If quantities of emissions are relevant to and have been used in this form please identify which conversion factors have been used to quantify impacts. | <i>Not applicable</i>  |
| Validation  | Tracking Reference: CIA533<br>Louise Preston<br>Climate Change Manager |