

Summary of Equality Analysis of Library and Information Service

Analysis of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service: Research Proposals and Details

The Council has a statutory duty (under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964) to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service to residents and those who work or are in full-time education in the Borough.

Proposals for future service delivery have taken account of:

- Consultation on what Rotherham people liked about libraries and what their priorities were for the future
- An assessment of local need for the service
- The service's contribution to corporate outcomes
- Key national, regional and local strategies
- The experiences of other local authorities
- Options presented by the review of customer services
- An analysis of current budgets.

ASSESSMENT OF NEED

An assessment of local need (*Executive summary – Appendix A*) for the service has been undertaken which describes local needs in Rotherham for a Library and Information Service, including the general and specific needs of adults and children who live, work and study full time in the borough.

The needs assessment draws on a wide range of data to establish the demographic composition of communities, the way that communities in Rotherham use their local libraries, how those libraries are managed by the Council, and library users' and non-users' views of the Library and Information Service.

Each substantive section of the assessment details a different aspect of need as follows:

- the borough: need based on social conditions and access; and
- the current service model: need as demand, service usage and performance.

It also draws on other data such as surveys of users and non-users and national performance indicators. It identifies key areas where the library service could have greatest impact and it considers resources available, including staff, buildings and stock.

The needs assessment concludes that there is a need for access to a library service in every community in Rotherham.

Libraries:

- Promote a love of reading and help to improve literacy.
- Provide a space where people can engage in informal learning, develop skills and improve their lives.
- Provide children and young people with a safe, inspiring place to learn, explore their creativity and find their talent.
- Support businesses and contribute to the sustainability and regeneration of our local communities.

- Are welcoming spaces, open for all to use to improve their lives and their communities.
- Offer information and reading services that can improve the health and well being of customers.
- Bridge the digital divide and are, for many people, an essential point of access to online knowledge resources.

However, every community is different. We have therefore considered if the service could be delivered differently in some places, as appropriate, within the overall aim of delivering a modern, vibrant and efficient library service across the Borough. For example, not every community necessarily needs to have a service run from a library building and the present library hours may not be necessarily as appropriate as they once were.

This equality analysis has been undertaken on the proposals, which includes reference to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, identity, race, sexuality and religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership. In addition, the proposals have considered the impact on other groups e.g. the unemployed and those with literacy needs.

PROPOSED FUTURE SERVICE PROVISION

- Customers need buildings and services which are accessible, safe, welcoming and well maintained.
- In order to serve all communities, and taking into account the travel habits of current customers, we will continue to aim to provide a library within 2 miles of every resident, with a range of opening hours to suit local need.
- We will close two libraries at Kimberworth and Kimberworth Park. However, There will be minimal impact on the numbers of residents who live within 2 miles of a library.
- We will change opening hours, prioritising a number of libraries in the north, south and town centre and improving access to other Council services.
- Opening hours at the remaining libraries will be set according to actual and potential usage. Some may be open less than they are now.
- Where opening hours are reduced, we will work with partners and communities to increase opening hours where possible in the future.
- We will refocus the mobile library service to improve access to services across the Borough.
- We will spend £386,193 on books and other materials, reducing the spend per head of population from £1.98 to £1.52, in line with the changes to service provision. We believe that this means we will be able to continue to provide a wide range and choice of books.
- We will refocus the roles of staff to support the delivery of a modern, vibrant service.
- We will continue to deliver services to our most vulnerable communities, including children, young people, families, and the elderly.
- We will continue to improve e-enabled services.
- The proposals mean it will cost around £500,000 less to deliver the library service.

The proposals have implications in terms of alternative delivery to replace the service offered from 2 present library buildings, opening hours, stock and staffing.

What will this mean for each library?

- **Aston Library** – This will operate as a “hub” site for the south of the borough, will take

advantage of opportunities to offer improved and additional services in partnership with Customer Services and Health

- **Brinsworth Library** – We aim to develop a shared building model with the Parish Council, delivered by a Community Management Board, learning from our experiences in Mowbray Gardens
- **Dinnington Library** – This will operate as a “hub” site for the south of the borough, will take advantage of opportunities to offer improved and additional services in partnership with Customer Services and other co-located local services
- **Greasbrough Library** – We aim to increase access to other Council services through direct provision in the library
- **Kiveton Park Library** – We will pilot seasonal opening, recognising the variations in demand for services
- **Maltby Library** – We will take advantages of opportunities to offer improved services in partnership with Customer Services, on a “campus” approach
- **Rawmarsh Library** – We will take advantages of opportunities to offer improved services in partnership with Customer Services, piloting a merged staffing structure and extended opening hours
- **Swinton Library** - We will take advantages of opportunities to offer improved services in partnership with Customer Services
- **Thorpe Hesley Library** - We will build on the existing close links with the community, piloting ways to improve the enlistment, training and use of volunteers to add value to existing services
- **Thurcroft Library** – We will pilot term time/seasonal opening in the present school premises and explore other methods of delivery to improve access to library services
- **Wath Library**- This will operate as a “hub” site for the north of the borough and will take advantage of opportunities to offer improved and additional services in partnership with Council colleagues
- **Mowbray Gardens Library and Wickersley Library** - 2 libraries which are relatively close geographically, but which serve very different communities with different needs. We will learn from the best practice in both Libraries so that the staff share the learning with each other and consider and develop joint approaches to areas such as partnerships, reading and stock, activities, staffing etc
- In **Riverside House** we will continue to provide a flagship service for the whole Borough.

Summary of proposals

Library	Current Hours	Visits per yr	Active borrowers	Proposal
Central	52.5	346335	11499	Increase hours to 55 per week. "Flagship" provision for borough at Riverside House
Aston	44.5	53155	3158	Increase hours to 49 per week. "Hub" site for south of borough. Link to customer services
Brinsworth	26.5	10473	670	Reduce opening hrs to 26 per week. Explore potential for new build/community management model with Parish Council
Dinnington	49.5	72843	3709	Reduce opening hours to 49 per week. "Hub" site for south of borough. Link to customer services
Greasbrough	40	30678	1285	Reduce opening hours to 32 per week. Relocate district office and offer access to additional Council services
Kimberworth	16.5	9942	643	Close: additional provision from mobile library
Kimberworth Park	17.5	10514	603	Close: additional provision from mobile library
Kiveton Park	35.5	29252	1252	Reduce opening hours to 32 per week. Pilot seasonal opening
Maltby	50	45156	3559	Reduce opening hours to 40 per week. Link to customer services on "campus" basis
Mowbray Gardens	32	48655	1508	Increase opening hours to 40 per week. Case study on impact and best practice linked to Wickersley
Rawmarsh	32	20236	1039	Pilot for joint Library & Customer Service Centre, involving temporary increase in hours and during which opening hours will be reviewed
Swinton	44	57682	2639	Reduce opening hours to 40 per week. Link to customer services
Thorpe Hesley	26	12223	661	Retain current opening hrs. Pilot work with volunteers to add value to current service
Thurcroft	26.5	21909	655	Reduce hours to 26 per week, term time only. Additional provision from mobile during school holidays
Wath	46	113794	2979	Increase opening hours to 49 per week. "Hub" site for north of borough. Access to additional Council services
Wickersley	45	66990	3642	Reduce opening hours to 40 per week. Case study on impact and best practice linked to Mowbray Gardens

There is a need for a library service in every community in Rotherham. However, every community is different. We have therefore considered if the service could be delivered differently in some places, as appropriate, within the overall aim of delivering a modern vibrant and efficient library service across the Borough, bearing in mind the resources available.

We believe that the options for consideration will continue to meet the statutory duties of the Council in respect of its library services and provide a modern vibrant library service based on the Library Strategy.

We anticipate a limited impact on service users

Research undertaken for the Assessment of Needs Document, the Statistical information collated in libraries relating to usage, the geographical information used to assess the provision of a static library within a 2 mile radius and the Library Strategy consultation led us to the proposed service model. The Rationale Document outlines how we came to the proposal.

The proposal includes the closure of 2 libraries, one at Kimberworth and the other at Kimberworth Park. Decisions for this were based on the following:- Their location, both libraries overlap the 2 mile radius of Greasbrough Library, Thorpe Hesley Library and Riverside Central Library, usage and visitor counts, value for money (E.g. Mowbray Gardens cost per visit is £2.34p. Kimberworth Park costs £3.44p per visit and Kimberworth costs £3.21p per visit) and alternative options available. On a survey of Customer distribution, which is shown on the maps in the main Equalities Analysis, we could see that the people living in this area already used other libraries.

The needs assessment showed us that we could deliver the service to people living in the Kimberworth and Kimberworth Park areas in a different way than present. The population maps show clearly that the existing static library buildings are close to other libraries in terms of the 2 mile radius guideline. Local people are already accessing Greasbrough Library and could benefit from the new Riverside House service which is now even nearer than the old Central Library.

Active membership is reducing in both sites: -

Kimberworth

08-09 809 active members

10 – 11 643 active members

Kimberworth Park

08 – 09 738 active members

10 – 11 603 active members

There will be other service options available for Kimberworth such as a Mobile Library stop near to the current Library site and a home delivery service to the people that cannot easily access the mobile vehicle. The same options will be available for Kimberworth Park. However we will monitor the service at regular intervals to ensure equality in service delivery.

We do not anticipate any barriers in service delivery. We believe that Libraries show equality towards all groups of protected characteristic - Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Disability. Age, – Data in the assessment of need shows that people from all the above groups currently use the library service and our proposed service changes will have limited impact on them.

Our Mission Statement - **Our Mission:**

"Everyone who lives, learns, works and plays in Rotherham can enjoy using the Library Service which is right for them - wherever, however and whenever they need."

Improving the service:

The majority of the proposal for changes in Service Delivery came from the Library and Information Service Strategy e.g. seasonal opening times, co-location of services. In the chart above, headed Library provision option, although there are some slight reductions in opening times, some of the libraries will increase opening times. These proposals were based on statistical information collated in libraries over the past 3 years and from the needs assessment.

We also took into consideration how we could use best examples of work from one community library and use this in another community library, whilst monitoring if this has a positive influence. Thus the model used for Mowbray Gardens Library and Wickersley Library within the Library Provision chart in the above report. **Case study on impact and best practise linked libraries.**

Stock:

We consider that the reduction for stock procurement will have a limited impact on our customers and is based on the proposed service model. Our Stock Policy ensures the stock we currently hold is up to date and relevant. We will continue to purchase new material and will ensure that there is a wide range of material available. This is supported by the Library Request Service, which is offered to all customers and means we circulate stock to provide requested items free of charge, "Customers said "a good choice of stock" was important to them during the Adult Library and Information Survey in 2009 and the consultation undertaken for the Library and Information Strategy in 2010.

Staffing:

During the last 18 months leading up to the Library and Information Service Review we have retained vacant posts. All of the staff employed by the Library Service are informed at interview that they could be asked to work at any of the library sites throughout Rotherham. Although it has been a challenge to circulate staff in order to keep the library service open and still provide an excellent service to the public, the staff are working as flexibly as possible to cover the current vacancies until final decisions are made regarding any impact to structures as a result of the Library Review. The review and change of focus for delivering services will give staff an opportunity to express interest in varied posts that will pilot Hub Libraries, libraries linked to customer services, Joint library and customer services, libraries paired together, libraries with seasonal opening and libraries with term time opening. **Because of this we believe there will be limited impact on staff with regards to post reductions.**

Consultation

A full programme of consultation regarding the above proposals will be carried out within all public libraries during July 2012 (*Consultation Plan Appendix E*) and feedback analysed.

What effect will the Policy/Service have on community relations?

No direct issues relating to community cohesion have been identified. As Riverside House Library is closest in terms of proximity to BME users, it does demonstrate diversity in usage of it's premises. Consequently we do not anticipate any cohesion issues arising out of this review. However, we will continue to monitor users and invite periodic feedback.