

Name of proposal/policy	Library Provision in Abington	Budget number (if applicable)	
Service area responsible	Public Health	Cabinet meeting date	11 th December 2018 and 14 th May 2019
Name of completing officer	Emma Gadsby/Dawn Howsam/Ben Dawson/Carl Dorney	Date EqIA created	17 th January 2019 Updated 5 th April 2019
Approved by Director / Assistant Director	Lucy Wightman – Director Public Health	Date of approval	17 th January 2019 and 1 st May 2019

The Equality Act 2010 places a ‘General Duty’ on all public bodies to have ‘Due regard’ to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations

We do this by undertaking equality impact assessments (EqIAs) to help us understand the implications of policies and decisions on people with protected characteristics – EqIAs are our way of evidencing this.

All assessments must be published on the NCC equalities web pages. All Cabinet papers where an EqIA is relevant **MUST** include a link to the web page where this assessment will be published. If you require assistance in getting your EqIA published, please contact equalities@northamptonshire.gov.uk

PART 1 – 17th JANUARY 2019

Description of current provision/policy and main beneficiaries/stakeholders

Northamptonshire County Council currently provides a standard public library service from Abington Library including the provision of a range of printed and non-printed material for information and lending, access to the internet for public use and library staff to deal with enquiries. Additional services provided from the library include Universal Children's Centre provision and support for Blue Badge and Bus Pass applications.

This small library is in an area of high deprivation on a council estate. The area has no shops / facilities and no community resource such as a parish council, although Northampton Cricket Club is close by with a strong community ethos. The Library has an active Friends group who have restored the garden area for activities. The Library provides 1 parking space for disabled drivers but no other parking.

The library provides an NCC staff touchdown facility, in a confidential area, during library opening times.

Some of the activities on offer in 2018:

- For 0 to 4s: Rhymetime, Play and Learn U1s, Play and Learn U5s, Health Visitor Development checks
- Other: Housing Surgery with Northampton Partnership Homes, IT buddy session, Reading Group, Summer Reading Challenge.

Current opening hours:

Tuesday 9 – 6

Thursday 9 – 6

Friday 9 – 6

Description of proposal under consideration/development

In October 2017 a public consultation was held around 3 proposals for the future of Northamptonshire Libraries. Following a Judicial Review in August 2018 the decision to retain 15 libraries under NCC control and offer the other 21 to community groups to be run as independent libraries was quashed. In September 2018, the new Chief Executive of the council conducted a new review of the library service, ensuring NCC are able to deliver their statutory duty to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" library service, whilst achieving necessary savings for the council by identifying opportunities to work with community groups to coproduce community managed libraries where possible. Following meetings with community groups, parishes and Borough and District councils, individual proposals have been identified for each library.

It is proposed that Abington Library no longer forms part of NCC statutory library provision and that elements of the service are run by a community group. A needs assessment has identified that this library is within 2 miles of a library remaining within NCC statutory provision (Weston Favell) and has a relatively low number of physical visits.

We are currently in discussions with a community group about the feasibility of this proposal. This would provide a facility for lending and returning books along with some other community services including Universal Children’s services. As this would be outside NCC’s statutory library provision, if this arrangement becomes unviable, the service would cease.

Data used in this Equality Impact Assessment (general population data where appropriate but each EqIA should contain information on people who use the service under consideration – if this is not applicable to your proposal then you probably do not need to do an EqIA)

Data Source (include link where published)	Please summarise what the data tells us – for example “X number of people use this service, X are male, Y are female etc”				
<p>It is acknowledged that the Library Service Review, NCC’s Section 114 spending controls and reduced opening hours in libraries in 2018 will all have had an effect on library usage. Previous data is available in the EQIAs from October 2017 at https://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/council-and-democracy/budgets-and-spending/Pages/review-of-library-services-in-northamptonshire.aspx</p> <p>The membership data is based on the records of members registered with the library and captures cards which were used in 2017/18. A membership card is only required for a few library services, for e.g. borrowing something, checking your account, renewing and requesting items. Many library services do not require membership and facilitate anonymous use as a community hub, for e.g. visiting the library for any purpose, using the computer, attending activities, reading newspapers etc. There are no administration systems in place able to capture this use on an individual basis, though numbers of visits, attendances and use of some services are available.</p> <p>For this library the above data is based on 1,403 membership records of which 719 are from adults aged 18 and over.</p>	Protected characteristics		All libraries	Abington Library	
	Gender	Female	All Mship: 55%	All Mship: 50%	
			Adult Only Mship: 56%	Adult Only Mship: 53%	
			APLUS: 58%	APLUS: 57%	
		Male	All Mship: 43%	All Mship: 45%	
	Unknown	All Mship: 2%	All Mship: 4%		
	Gender Reassignment		No data collected	No data collected	
	Age	Children 0-10	33%	39%	
		Young adults 11-17	9%	10%	
		Adults 18+	57%	51%	
		(of which aged 60+ for Mship and 65 and over for APLUS)	All Mship: 23%	All Mship: 18%	
	Adult Only Mship: 32%	Adult Only Mship: 28%			
	APLUS: 34%	APLUS: 33%			
	Disability	Disabled	All Mship: 3.7%	All Mship: 2%	
			Adult Only Mship: 5.3%	Adult Only Mship: 3.3%	
APLUS: 24.9%			APLUS: 24.1%		

2) In 2016, 212 adults in this Library took part in a week long visitor survey (the Adult Public library User Survey, or APLUS), where paper questionnaires are offered to all adult library visitors during the survey period.		Not disabled/blank/ prefer not to state	All Mship: 96.3%	All Mship: 98%		
			Adult Only Mship: 94.7%	Adult Only Mship: 96.7%		
			APLUS: 75.1%	APLUS: 75.9%		
	Race & Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British		All Mship: 2.5%	All Mship: 2.1%	
				Adult Only Mship: 2.1%	Adult Only Mship: 1.9%	
				APLUS: 2.7%	APLUS: 4.7%	
		Black or Black British		All Mship: 2.5%	All Mship: 2.1%	
				Adult Only Mship: 2.0%	Adult Only Mship: 1.7%	
				APLUS: 2.0%	APLUS: 1.9%	
		Mixed		All Mship: 1.6%	All Mship: 1%	
				Adult Only Mship: 0.8%	Adult Only Mship: 0.7%	
				APLUS: 1.6%	APLUS: 0.9%	
		White		All Mship: 56.6%	All Mship: 36.1%	
				Adult Only Mship: 56.1%	Adult Only Mship: 42.4%	
				APLUS: 79.0%	APLUS: 87.3%	
	Blank/ prefer not to say/ other		All Mship: 36.8%	All Mship: 58.7%		
			Adult Only Mship: 39%	Adult Only Mship: 53.3%		
			APLUS: 14.7%	APLUS: 5.2%		
	Sexual Orientation: From APLUS only	Heterosexual/ Straight		82.2%	75.1%	
		Gay / Lesbian / Bisexual / Other		2.1%	4.6%	
		No response		15.7%	20.3%	
Religion Or Belief	Blank/ Prefer not to state/ no religion		All Mship: 82.8%	All Mship: %		
			Adult Only Mship: 83.1%	Adult Only Mship: 88.2%		

	Christian		APLUS: 46.1%	APLUS: 35.8%		
			All Mship: 14.9%	All Mship: 10.4%		
			Adult Only Mship: 14.9%	Adult Only Mship: 11.4%		
			APLUS: 48.8 %	APLUS: 59%		
		Other religion		All Mship: 2.4%	All Mship: 14%	
				Adult Only Mship: 2.1%	Adult Only Mship: 0.7%	
			APLUS: 5.1%	APLUS: 5.2%		
Pregnancy And Maternity		No data collected	No data collected			

Nearest alternative library provision Statutory Library – Weston Favell (1.8 miles)

Public transport in the area and car ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22.28% of households in the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) which mention Abington have no car / van in the household. This is higher than the Northamptonshire % of 21.1%. (Source: Northamptonshire Analysis using Census and LSOA data). The following data was gathered from the 2016 Adult Public library User Survey (APLUS): 						
	APLUS 2016:	Private transport, e.g. car, motorbike	Public transport, e.g. bus, train, metro / tram	On foot	Bicycle	Other	Blank
	Abington Library	50%	4%	38%	2%	0%	6%
	Service Average	43%	11%	37%	2%	1%	7%

Details of groups/activities run for people with protected characteristics.

Based on the activity data recorded for 2017/18, the Library delivered:

- 233 activities for 0 to 4s with 4,517 attendances, an average of 17 per activity.
- 38 activities for 5-19s with 890 attendances, an average of 19 per activity.
- 110 activities for adults with 1,045 attendances, an average of 10 per activity, for example:
 - 18 x activities targetting language skills, with 63 attendances

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 23 x activities targetting IT skills, with 48 attendances ○ 1 x activity targeting Library Visitors / Local Community, with 310 attendances ○ 1x activity targeting Volunteers, with 3 attendances
LSOA data	The Library's postcode is in Northampton 012B LSOA which is ranked 17,156 out of 32,844 LSOAs. This is amongst the 50% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

Tick the relevant box for each line ✓	Based on the above information, what impact will this proposal have on the following groups?			
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
Sex		✓		
Gender Reassignment			✓	
Age		✓		
Disability		✓		
Race & Ethnicity			✓	
Sexual Orientation			✓	
Religion or Belief (or No Belief)			✓	
Pregnancy & Maternity		✓		
Human Rights (Please see articles in toolkit)			✓	
Other Groups (rural isolation, socio-economic exclusion etc)		✓		

Initial impact	
Explain your findings above	Actions identified to mitigate, advance equality or fill gaps in information
<p>We have assessed the impact for sex, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity and other groups as negative at this time.</p> <p>We acknowledge that a move to a non-statutory community managed library may result in the loss of some services such as blue badge applications. The previous consultation on libraries indicated that this was a particular concern for women, older people, children and young people, disabled people, pregnant women, new mothers and people on low incomes.</p>	<p>The proposed community managed library service is within within 2 miles of Weston Favell Library (NCC statutory) with good public transport, which mitigates the negative impacts to some extent.</p> <p>Training and support will be offered by NCC to enable the group to deliver additional services, such as blue badge appliations, if they choose to offer these.</p>

There is nothing to suggest anything other than a neutral impact, as a result of their protected characteristics, on the other groups listed above.

The EQIAs undertaken in the 2017/18 review are available to view here:

<https://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/council-and-democracy/budgets-and-spending/Pages/review-of-library-services-in-northamptonshire.aspx>

There will be an eight-week consultation period to give people the opportunity to feed back their views on this proposal and the potential negative impacts associated with this proposal.

The Library To You service is available to individuals, depending on the availability of volunteers.

Do you need to undertake further work (e.g. consultation, further equality analysis) based on the impact and actions identified above? If yes, set this out below and then carry out the work and complete Part 2

The consultation on this library, along with seven others that were not ready for consultation immediately after the December Cabinet meeting, will run from 23rd January to 22 March, lasting eight weeks and two days. Consultation on 28 of the libraries began on 12th December and will end on 8th February. The findings for all 36 libraries will be presented to Cabinet in May 2019.

PART 2 – 5TH APRIL 2019

Consultation, follow up data and information gathered from actions identified above

	What does this information tell us?																		
Needs Analysis – Assessment of Impact of Proposals	Library data																		
Quantitative data from consultation questionnaire	<p>46 people chose to respond to the questionnaire in relation to Abington Library.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Sex</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Did not answer</td> <td>17</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Fewer than five respondents said they were pregnant or had had a baby in the last six months.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Age</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>20-29 years</td> <td>Less than 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30-49 years</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50-64 years</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Sex		Male	10	Female	16	Prefer not to say	3	Did not answer	17	Age		20-29 years	Less than 5	30-49 years	6	50-64 years	6
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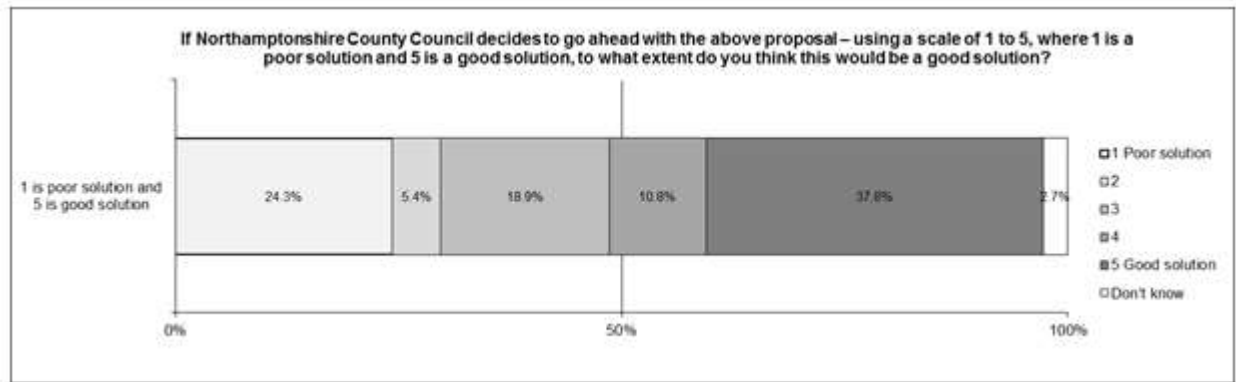
65-74 years	11
75 years +	Less than 5
Prefer not to say	4
Did not answer	17

Ten respondents said that they had a disability – where they gave details, these disabilities related to mental health, physical disability, hearing impairment, learning disability and sight impairment.

Religion	
Christian	17
Muslim	Less than 5
None	6
Prefer not to say	4
Did not answer	18

Ethnicity	
Other ethnic group	Less than 5
White: White British	21
White: White Irish	Less than 5
Prefer not to say	3
Did not answer	19

Sexuality	
Bisexual	Less than 5
Heterosexual	18
Prefer not to say	8
Did not answer	19



Comments/feedback from questionnaire, letters, emails, and events

In relation to Abington and people with protected characteristics, the majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution felt the library provides services to a wide age range with children, families, and older people being highlighted by some respondents. Respondents were pleased the children’s services activities were remaining. It was commented on the important role the library undertakes with helping to reduce social isolation; enhancing learning opportunities; and access to services, which one respondent felt were lacking elsewhere within the community.

A few respondents commented on the accessibility of Abington Library to all ages of the local community. It was commented that not all residents have cars or the mobility to wait at bus stops to access alternative venues. One respondent said they felt access to Weston Favell Library was difficult due to it being on the upper floor and requiring two lifts to access and a walk through the centre building.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution raised concerns over the potential cessation of the groups that use the library, including children’s services. It was felt the library service funding should continue and that its reduction would have a direct impact on the literacy of the local community, most particularly young people. It was commented that the library should remain as part of NCC’s statutory provision, and that the government should be providing funding to support children’s literacy, and that without which children’s lives and their opportunities are stunted.

Some respondents also commented on the ease of access of the library to the local community. It was felt that Weston Favell Library would be too far, too inaccessible, and too inconvenient for some people to attend as it is not within walking distance for many, including the elderly. At present, parents with pushchairs and children can visit the library on their way home from school and this would not be the case if Abington Library closes and Weston Favell becomes the nearest statutory library. It was commented that some households do not have access to a car to drive to an alternative venue.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution felt that reducing any funding would have an impact on the literacy of the community, especially young people. They added the needs of the elderly and vulnerable to reduce loneliness and to support carers can also be met at the library. It was also commented that many residents do not have the transport to be able to access alternative libraries; and that Abington Library is within walking distance of more than one local school and that restricting its service will have a direct detrimental impact on the local children. It was also commented on that the library serves a local community with some deprivation.

The one respondent who said 'Don't Know' that provided comments said that the service is an important local resource in a deprived area; that children benefit from the workspace, reading material, homework clubs, and the safety the library provides; and that this should be available to the children in the local community.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. It was commented that the closure of the library would have a devastating and detrimental impact on the local community, especially on the children who use the library. One respondent said volunteers would need training and mentoring to support them to identify children, young people and other vulnerable adults and carers who are at risk of harm and will need to know how to handle these situations and the appropriate referrals process. They felt vulnerable people would suffer a loss of support during a crisis. The distance to alternative libraries was commented on with respondents saying that Weston Favell is not within safe walking distance for the majority of pre-school and primary school aged children; that Weston Favell is not easily accessible for anyone with disabilities; and that visiting a library further afield is not convenient for people with mobility issues, including older people, parents, and young people.

Other comments included that the decisions would impact upon children and future generations, that volunteers need to be trained to enable them to identify vulnerable people and provide signposting to further support services, and that the library services goes beyond that of book lending and that it assists with people's mental health and self-sufficiency.

We received four responses relating to Abington Library by respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, respondents for Abington said they talk to the librarians about books and other things and felt this was important; and attend baby and children's groups. One respondent added that they love their library. The one thing children and young people questionnaire respondents said they like best about their local library were the librarians; that the children's area is bright and colourful; the close proximity to respondents home; toys; colouring activities; and books. When children and young people questionnaire respondents were invited to make any other comments, one respondent gave comments and said they did not want their library to close as they valued it highly and enjoyed participating in last year's summer reading challenge.

A drop-in event was held at Abington Library on 19 February 2019, attended by 30 people. One attendee with health problems stated that they enjoyed coming in to Abington Library on a regular basis to enjoy the calmness and to have regular social contact with others.

There was one written response received in relation to Abington Library from an individual who said the library is an asset to the local community. They commented on the diversity and demographics of the local area and how the library is a hub of information, with expert staff. They commented on how the library helps with the integration of people from other countries and that the building should be listed and not sold for housing.

There were also 12 comment cards submitted via the Friends of Abington Library that all began 'I love Abington Library', which were mostly written by small children. The majority of these cards contained the respondents name and age although this information has been redacted for this report. The children expressed their love of the books and activities the library provides and find the library a fun place to be. They said how they enjoy participating in the activities and have made new friends. They like the staff and enjoy playing with the toys and colouring materials. Some said they have been going to the library since they were small, and appreciate having the library near their home. The adult respondent to the comment cards echoed some of the feedback provided by the children. They said how the library is somewhere children can be

	<p>educated and feel loved. They complimented the children’s services provided such as rhymetime, as well as the staff. They said the library is part of their family life and is a source of company, entertainment and help.</p> <p>At the start of the consultation period, 28 libraries were open for consultation, while eight libraries (including Abington) were not. However, respondents could leave a comment in the questionnaire about those libraries. The five respondents who provided comments on Abington Library said that the library was popular and a well-used library in an underprivileged area of Northampton. Respondents were concerned about access to online facilities, stating that vulnerable people would not have access to these if the library closed. They also were concerned about the access to other libraries for those who had limited mobility as they considered that transport was not accessible.</p>
Recommended proposal	<p>It is proposed that Abington Library will become a Community Managed Library run by volunteers from the Friends of Abington Library. It is proposed that Abington Library no longer forms part of NCC statutory library provision as a needs assessment has identified that this library is within two miles of a library remaining within NCC statutory provision at Weston Favell and has a relatively low number of physical visits. During the consultation, discussions were held between the Friends Group and the local Community Centre about the lease and running costs of the property. Discussions are ongoing between NCC, The Friends Group and the Community Centre to find a viable solution. As this would be outside NCC’s statutory provision, if this arrangement becomes unviable, the service would cease.</p>

IMPACT ASSESSMENT IF COMMUNITY MANAGED LIBRARY IS IMPLEMENTED AS PROPOSED

Tick the relevant box for each line ✓	Based on the above information, what impact will this proposal have on the following groups?			
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
Sex			✓	
Gender Reassignment			✓	
Age			✓	
Disability			✓	
Race & Ethnicity			✓	
Sexual Orientation			✓	
Religion or Belief (or No Belief)			✓	
Pregnancy & Maternity			✓	

Human Rights (Please see articles in toolkit)			✓	
Other Groups (rural isolation, socio-economic exclusion etc)			✓	

Final impact analysis (taking the findings from Part 2 into account) – including review date if required

We have re-assessed the impact for sex, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity and other groups as neutral at this time. The exact opening times and range of services, beyond the statutory minimum to be provided by the community group is currently still under discussion but has the potential to improve on the current offer. The group will be able to tailor the opening hours around the needs of the community and are keen to add Saturday opening.

There is nothing to suggest anything other than a neutral impact as a result of their protected characteristics, on the other groups listed above.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT IF COMMUNITY MANAGED LIBRARY IS NOT IMPLEMENTED OR IS NOT SUSTAINABLE

Tick the relevant box for each line ✓	Based on the possibility of the library closing			
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
Sex		✓		
Gender Reassignment			✓	
Age		✓		
Disability		✓		
Race & Ethnicity			✓	
Sexual Orientation			✓	
Religion or Belief (or No Belief)			✓	
Pregnancy & Maternity		✓		
Human Rights (Please see articles in toolkit)			✓	
Other Groups (rural isolation, socio-economic exclusion etc)		✓		

Impact analysis if Library Closes

If no viable community managed proposal for Abington Library is progressed or if it becomes unviable after establishment then the library will close, and therefore the impact would be negative for some groups with protected characteristics. We know that women (particularly new mothers), children and

young people and the elderly, people with disabilities, people on low incomes, people without internet access, those in rural areas and those without access to their own transport would be particularly negatively affected by a library closure.

A number of alternative services would provide some mitigation against potential negative impacts. We will continue to provide and seek to improve online library services including e-books and e-audiobooks. The volunteer-led Library to You service can provide customised book delivery to those unable to access alternative libraries. We are also working on variations to the Library to You service which could provide transport to nearest libraries for those unable to access their local library, as well as bringing a selection of books to a central point in locations where there is no longer a library. Based on the needs assessment, the vast majority of users will be within five miles of a statutory library. We do, however, acknowledge that these cannot fully mitigate the negative impacts of a library closure.