

Name of proposal/policy	Library Provision in Higham Ferrers	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 Higham Ferrers 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.

The Library is in a very old building which was recently renovated with disabled public toilet with baby changing facilities. It is next to an industrial estate and a housing estate, behind main market square and town centre. It has a Friends group. The former Children's Centre space is occupied by Cando care. It provides a meeting room for hire, an 'adult school' community room and 2 parking spaces.

Volunteers are currently supporting some core opening hours enabling the building to be open and access to a reduced range of library services.

Some of the activities on offer in 2018:

- For 0to4s: Bounce and rhyme, Rhymetime, Play and learn U1s, Play and learn U5s
- Other: Knit and Knatter, Mapestry Girls, Nene Valley Writers Group, Reading Group, Summer Reading Challenge, U3A Playreaders, Yoga.

Current Opening hours:

Tuesday 10 – 6

Thursday 10 – 6

Friday 10 – 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 Higham Ferrers 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 (Rushden) and is not well used.

We are in discussions with a community group about the feasibility of this proposal, including the temporary running of a community library in the current location until relocation of the community run library to a new multi-use building in the town.

This will 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>	Protected characteristics		All libraries	Higham Ferrers Library
	Gender	Female	All Mship: 55%	All Mship: 53%
			Adult Only Mship: 56%	Adult Only Mship: 55%
			APLUS: 58%	APLUS: 56%
		Male	All Mship: 43%	All Mship: 45%
	Unknown	All Mship: 2%	All Mship: 2%	
	Gender Reassignment		No data collected	No data collected
	Age	Children 0-10	33%	30%
		Young adults 11-17	9%	9%
		Adults 18+	57%	61%
(of which aged 60+ for Mship and 65 and over for APLUS)		All Mship: 23%	All Mship: 29%	
Adult Only Mship: 32%	Adult Only Mship: 42%			
APLUS: 34%	APLUS: 38%			

<p>For this library the above data is based on 1,184 membership records of which 717 are from adults aged 18 and over.</p> <p>2) In 2016, 146 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.</p>	Disability	Disabled	All Mship: 3.7%	All Mship: 2.5%	
			Adult Only Mship: 5.3%	Adult Only Mship: 3.3%	
			APLUS: 24.9%	APLUS: 24.7%	
		Not disabled/blank/ prefer not to state	All Mship: 96.3%	All Mship: 97.5%	
			Adult Only Mship: 94.7%	Adult Only Mship: 96.7%	
			APLUS: 75.1%	APLUS: 75.3%	
	Race & Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British	All Mship: 2.5%	All Mship: 0.4%	
			Adult Only Mship: 2.1%	Adult Only Mship: 0.3%	
			APLUS: 2.7%	APLUS: 1.4%	
		Black or Black British	All Mship: 2.5%	All Mship: 0.8%	
			Adult Only Mship: 2.0%	Adult Only Mship: 0.8%	
			APLUS: 2.0%	APLUS: 0%	
		Mixed	All Mship: 1.6%	All Mship: 0.8%	
			Adult Only Mship: 0.8%	Adult Only Mship: 0.1%	
			APLUS: 1.6%	APLUS: 0%	
		White	All Mship: 56.6%	All Mship: 54.2%	
			Adult Only Mship: 56.1%	Adult Only Mship: 50.5%	
			APLUS: 79.0%	APLUS: 94.5%	
	Blank/ prefer not to say/ other	All Mship: 36.8%	All Mship: 43.8%		
		Adult Only Mship: 39%	Adult Only Mship: 48.3%		
APLUS: 14.7%		APLUS: 4.1%			
Sexual Orientation: From APLUS only	Heterosexual/ Straight	82.2%	80.2%		
	Gay / Lesbian / Bisexual / Other	2.1%	0.5%		

		No response	15.7%	19.3%	
	Religion Or Belief	Blank/ Prefer not to state/ no religion	All Mship: 82.8%	All Mship: 89.9%	
			Adult Only Mship: 83.1%	Adult Only Mship: 89.7%	
			APLUS: 46.1%	APLUS: 35.6%	
		Christian	All Mship: 14.9%	All Mship: 8.3%	
			Adult Only Mship: 14.9%	Adult Only Mship: 8.9%	
			APLUS: 48.8 %	APLUS: 58.2%	
	Other religion	All Mship: 2.4%	All Mship: 1.8%		
		Adult Only Mship: 2.1%	Adult Only Mship: 1.4%		
		APLUS: 5.1%	APLUS: 6.2%		
Pregnancy And Maternity		No data collected	No data collected		

Nearest alternative library provision

Statutory library - Rushden 1.5 miles
Statutory library - Irthlingborough 2.3 miles

Public transport in the area and car ownership

- 14.34% of households in the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) which mention Higham Ferrers have no car / van in the household. The County % is 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
Higham Ferrers	42%	3%	48%	1%	0%	7%
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 222 activities for 0to4s with 4,723 attendances, an average of 21 per activity • 55 activities for 5-19s with 731 attendances, an average of 13 per activity • 142 activities for adults with 3,187 attendances, an average of 22 per activity, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 2 activities targeting Library Visitors / Local Community, with 1,590 attendances o 16 activities targeting Older people, with 116 attendances
LSOA data	The Library's postcode is in East Northamptonshire 007A LSOA which is ranked 16,891 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</p>	<p>The proposed community managed library service is within 2 miles of Rushden Library (NCC statutory) and within 5 miles of Irthlingborough Library (NCC statutory) with good public transport, which mitigates the negative impacts to some extent.</p>

<p>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>There is nothing to suggest anything other than a neutral impact, as a result of their protected characteristics, on the other groups listed above.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Training and support will be offered by NCC to enable the group to deliver additional services, such as blue badge applications, if they choose to offer these.</p> <p>There will be an eight-week consultation period to give people the opportunity to feed back their views on this proposal and indicate if they can identify any negative impacts associated with this proposal.</p> <p>The Library To You service is available to individuals, depending on the availability of volunteers.</p>
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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?										
<p>Needs Analysis – Assessment of Impact of Proposals</p> <p>Quantitative data from consultation questionnaire</p>	<p>Library data</p> <p>Thirty people chose to respond to the questionnaire in relation to Higham Ferrers Library.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Sex</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Did not answer</td> <td>9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Fewer than five respondents said they were pregnant or had had a baby in the last six months.</p>	Sex		Male	5	Female	14	Prefer not to say	2	Did not answer	9
Sex											
Male	5										
Female	14										
Prefer not to say	2										
Did not answer	9										

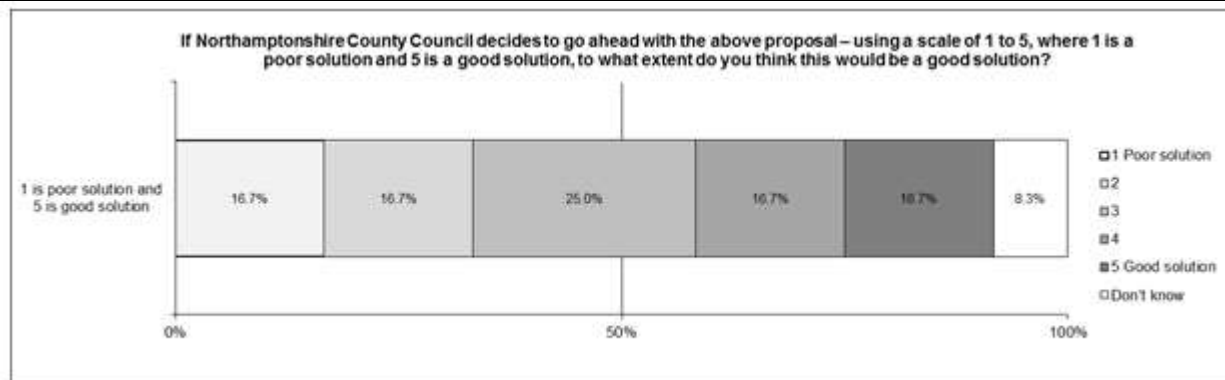
Age	
30-49 years	10
50-64 years	Less than 5
65-74 years	5
Prefer not to say	2
Did not answer	9

Fewer than five respondents said that they had a disability.

Religion	
Christian	12
None	5
Other	Less than 5
Prefer not to say	2
Did not answer	11

Ethnicity	
Mixed / Multiple ethnic Background: White & Black Caribbean	Less than 5
White: White British	18
Did not answer	11

Sexuality	
Heterosexual	16
Prefer not to say	5
Did not answer	9



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

In relation to Higham Ferrers and people with protected characteristics, one respondent who commented as to why they felt this was a poor proposal commented on the importance of being able to read and those that can't read often go to a library for independent help. A couple of respondents also commented on the distance to an alternative library as being too far and not possible to access, with the elderly, young families, and those less mobile being highlighted as those who may experience the greatest difficulties in accessing an alternative library. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution gave a variety of comments, including that the town has few services, and that any further reduction in services risks further isolation of already vulnerable families.

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. They said that libraries offer more services than just book lending, including providing information and blue badge applications, and are the centre of many activities that support families and children and help reduce social isolation, and that the removal of the service would incur further costs in other services. It was also commented that many attendees of these groups are less likely to travel to alternative libraries.

We received one response relating to Higham Ferrers Library by respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, this respondent said they use the library after school and at the weekends to help them with their school homework, either as a place of study or research. They said they also borrow DVDs and have used the IT facilities including the various functions provided by the photocopier machine,

	<p>although they added that a nearby service offers the photocopying service at a cheaper rate. The one thing this respondent said they like best about their local library was that it provides a safe community space for anyone to use. When children and young people questionnaire respondents were invited to make any other comments, this respondent said their local library has a long history and is located in a beautiful building. They praised the staff and were strongly against any possible closure. They added that there are few places that offer the same benefits to the local community, and that Rushden Library is not a viable alternative.</p> <p>A drop-in event was held at Higham Ferrers Library on 12 February 2019, attended by 12 people. One attendee came from a local pre-school, and ran sessions in the library and borrowed a large number of books at a time for pre-schoolers (although they also used other libraries).</p> <p>There was one written response received in relation to Higham Ferrers Library which was from Higham Ferrers Town Council. It said that according to the Indices of Deprivation scoring, Higham Ferrers is only marginally less deprived than Irthlingborough.</p>
Recommended proposal	<p>It is proposed that Higham Ferrers Library becomes a Community Managed Library in the current library building, as a transitional location while plans are developed to relocate the service to a new build community centre. There is the potential for £64,600 S106 money to support this development. A needs assessment has identified that this library is within two miles of a library remaining within NCC statutory provision at Rushden and has a relatively low number of physical visits. NCC will continue to provide the library infrastructure and support to help the group operate as part of the library network. We are in discussions with the Town Council regarding the community managed library remaining in the current building, supported by NCC in the interim period, however, if an agreement cannot be made this library will close.</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 would be able to tailor the opening hours around the needs of the community. There were concerns about moving from the current building and the need for any new facility to be centrally located and this will need to be considered as plans for the new building progress.

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 Higham Ferrers 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.

The close proximity to Rushden Library and 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 two miles of a statutory library. We do, however, acknowledge that these cannot fully mitigate the negative impacts of a library closure.