

Equality Impact Assessment

Name of project/proposal T19 Library Service Transformation Plan
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Department Culture, Communities and Business Services
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Description of Service / Policy

Hampshire County Council's Library Service runs 48 libraries across Hampshire, providing residents with access to printed material, computers and digital resources. In April 2016 a new Library Strategy to 2020 was approved and proposals to deliver the savings needed for April 2019 are underpinned by this Strategy. A separate EIA was published alongside the new Strategy.

Geographical impact* All Hampshire

Description of proposed change

Self service technology will be installed in all libraries and vacancy management will continue to be rigorously applied to all staff vacancies, reducing staff numbers as far as possible. It is proposed to undertake a public consultation in 2018 on options to reduce the operating costs of running the Service. The options could include reducing opening hours, transferring libraries to be run by their local community, making greater use of volunteers and making a permanent reduction to the Book Fund.

Engagement and consultation

Has engagement or consultation been carried out? Yes

No specific consultation has been carried out on these possible proposals. However, the County Council carried out a major public consultation exercise over the Summer 2017 on a range of options for finding further budget savings including increasing council tax, using reserves and making changes to the way in which services are delivered, which may mean reducing or withdrawing certain services. The outcome of this consultation will be presented to Cabinet in September 2017.

It is proposed to undertake a public consultation in 2018 on options to reduce the operating costs of running the Service.

Impacts of the proposed change

This impact assessment covers Service users

Statutory considerations

Impact

Age Impact Low
Proportionately more older people use the Library Service and they may find it more difficult to use the self service technology to begin with. Library staff and volunteers will be on hand to assist customers and, from experience elsewhere in the other Hampshire libraries, customers find the self service kiosks easy to use.

Disability Impact	Low Customers with disabilities may find it difficult to use the self service technology to begin with. Library staff and volunteers will be on hand to assist customers and, from experience elsewhere in other Hampshire libraries, customers find the self service kiosks easy to use.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral
Race	Neutral
Religion and Belief	Neutral
Gender Reassignment	Neutral
Gender	Neutral
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral
Other policy considerations	
Poverty	Neutral
Rurality	Neutral

Additional Information

The self service technology is easy to use and customers who are new to it will be shown how to use it. It is already installed in 50% of Hampshire's libraries and is proven to be easy to use.

Whilst there will be fewer staff in the Library Service in the future, customers will be able to take and return books via the self service technology, seeking help from staff when needed. Volunteers will be trained to help and support staff.

In addition the Library Service offers a wide range of digital resources, available all the time, which are constantly being developed and are proving to be increasingly popular.