Combined Worcestershire equality and public health impact assessment (EPHIA) – FULL template

Background information:

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Service area:	Libraries and Culture
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Date assessment commenced:	01/02/2019
Date assessment completed:	21/11/2019

Function, strategy, project, policy or procedure being assessed:

Name of the function, strategy, project, policy or procedure being assessed:	Remodelling of the Worcestershire libraries service (This is an overarching strategy and further, more detailed analysis may be required as individual proposals are identified and developed)
Is this a new or an amended policy?	Amended
Does the policy form part of a wider programme which has already been screened for equality relevance?	No
Population affected - Does the policy affect service users, employees, the wider community, or a combination of these?	A combination of staff, users of current library services and the wider community
Who is formally responsible for the **delivery** of this policy? If different, who is responsible for **leading** on the delivery?	Hannah Needham – Senior Responsible Officer
Who are the main stakeholders?	Everyone who uses library services and facilities; • the wider community; • Council staff; • a range of partners with whom we share premises or who deliver services jointly with the Council.
How will they be involved?	The Council carried out engagement activity with library users early in 2018 and, between October 2018 and February 2019 stakeholder events took place at all library premises. A detailed survey was also conducted at this time. Respondents were able to submit their views online and via email, and hard copies of the survey were also available.

What (if any) previous consultation has been carried out for this policy?	» Public engagement July / August 18 – 2388 responses » Formal public consultation - 1947 responses / 23 public meetings 800 people » Viewpoint questionnaire to attract non-library users – 1468 responses » Staff engagement sessions » Engagement with Council service leads
Who was consulted and when?	Please see reply to previous question.
Is equality monitoring in place for this policy?	Some Equality monitoring is in place

Stage 1 - Please summarise the main objectives, aims and intended outcomes of this policy

Aims/Objectives:	▪ The ongoing delivery of a comprehensive and efficient libraries service in Worcestershire ▪ Ongoing innovation and transformation in the delivery of library-based services across the County ▪ Continuation of partnership working with both statutory agencies and community groups to provide a service which satisfies the requirements of the Council's medium-term financial plan ▪ Evaluation and implementation of a range of agreed service delivery options when planning future library service delivery points across the County
Intended outcomes:	▪ Local need for a library service will continue to be met; ▪ Local communities will be strengthened through the provision of information, resources and guidance which improve reading and literacy, develop skills and promote health and well-being in safe and welcoming community spaces
Please summarise how these outcomes will be achieved?	Implementation of the Library Strategy. ▪ A Library Service for Everyone: raise awareness of library services and their benefits to ensure wider community engagement ▪ Libraries First: Put Libraries at the heart of delivering Council and community services' ▪ Resilient, Independent and Connected Communities: use libraries' trusted brand to deliver services that ensure residents are healthier, have a better quality of life and remain independent for as long as possible ▪ Prosperous Communities: develop new services to support business enterprise, improve skill levels and help more people into work ▪ Sustainable and Innovative Libraries: invest in new library service delivery models and secure new funding stream to future-proof libraries across Worcestershire
Where an existing policy is to be amended please summarise	The role of libraries within Worcestershire communities has been changing for over

| principle differences between the existing and proposed policies? | a decade and continues to evolve within a challenging financial environment. Traditional library services of book borrowing are now delivered alongside computer access, family activities, a comprehensive adult learning programme, targeted reading and literacy schemes, job clubs, job fairs, health and well-being services and a varied volunteering programme.

Considerable progress has been made over recent years in modernising Worcestershire's library services and ensuring value for money. Over £3.9m of efficiency savings has been achieved since 2011/12, when the Libraries Transformation Programme was first launched by Cabinet in May 2011. A range of transformational approaches have been implemented including: a comprehensive property re-modelling programme; a series of staff and management restructures; a reduction in the Mobile Library service; investment in self-service technology; introduction of consortium stock purchasing and direct book delivery.

In October 2018, the Council's Cabinet considered a report which outlined the next phase of Libraries Remodelling. This was set in the context of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan, with the report also describing that decisions made by local authorities concerning libraries should be guided by a strategic review, that in turn is informed by a needs assessment. Therefore, the report in October 2018 presented the findings of Worcestershire's libraries' needs assessment and outlined a set of recommendations, to take out to formal public consultation, for the future delivery of front-line library provision. As a result, Cabinet agreed to launch a formal public consultation exercise.

In July 2019, Cabinet received a report summarising the feedback from the public consultation along with feedback from a Libraries-focused Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review that was held in May 2019. The report outlined proposals and recommendations for how to act on the findings of the consultation and Peer Review and clarified the position in relation to being on track to realise 2019/20 savings. Cabinet agreed to act upon the advice of the LGA Peer Review and take time to consolidate all of the feedback and learning gathered through the needs assessment and public consultation into a Libraries Strategy in order to set out the vision and ambition for the service over the medium to long-term. All future delivery changes would then be underpinned by the Strategy.

The Library Strategy consolidates and builds on all the changes that have gone before. The Strategy centres around five strategic ambitions which articulate the vision for the Library Service over the next five years and aims to ensure libraries are |
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positioned at the heart of Worcestershire County Council's corporate priorities and remain fit for the future. The five strategic ambitions are:

1. A Library Service for Everyone
2. Prosperous Communities
3. Resilient, Independent and Connected Communities
4. Sustainable and Innovative Libraries
5. Libraries First

In summary, the transformation plan for the new 5-year strategy for Worcestershire libraries will:

- promote the library service and its benefits more widely across the county to reach more residents
- establish libraries as community assets and 'where appropriate' as the front door for council and community services
- tailor libraries' service offer to meet a wider range of council priorities and community needs
- retain the existing 21 public libraries, 2 library links and 1 mobile library
- enhance and provide new ways to access our digital library services
- future-proof Worcestershire libraries by extending the self-service offer through the introduction of 'open+' technology in libraries where there are financial benefits
- increasing community support for libraries through the use of space and volunteering opportunities
- maximise library space by sharing it with other services to generate income
- rightsize staffing and management resource to activity levels and need within all libraries
- establish the Hive as a centre for service innovation and development for all county libraries
- invest in library resources to improve service quality and meet changing customer expectations
- manage libraries more efficiently through cost-saving initiatives and new approaches to funding
- explore opportunities for library service growth in response to Worcestershire's changing development landscape.

Stage 2 - Scoping (information gathering/consultation)

Please give details of data and research which you will use when carrying out this assessment:	The strategic ambitions consider the local, national and financial context described within the Strategy. They have been shaped by 5803 responses from Worcestershire residents to three library consultation and engagement surveys which 23 public consultation meetings which were attended by a total of 800 residents. Specifically, there was strong support from the public of sharing library buildings making this the preferred transformation option. There were also low levels of support for fully Community Managed Libraries so, taking this and the learning from other areas, this option is no longer being considered. The Library Needs Assessment has allowed us to define the need for each library in Worcestershire. We identified four indicators of local need for libraries. These are: - **Deprivation**: the socio economic profile of library catchment populations which indicates their need to access services which improve health & wellbeing, literacy, learning, digital skills and employability **Service isolation**: the distance of each library from the next nearest library which indicates the relative isolation of each library and the accessibility of alternative library provision for customers **Exclusive use of home library site**: visiting patterns of library customers to their home-site library and other Worcestershire libraries, which indicates their reliance on the home site library **Library activity levels**: the number of visits, issues, active users, computer usage, event attendees and adult learners for each library. Each library has been ranked against these four characteristics of need and an overall ranking of libraries has been produced and is included as Appendix one to this assessment. The Needs Assessment uses a combination of socio-economic demographic profiling, indicators of deprivation, distances and travel times between libraries, and performance information. The performance information shows how each library is used and the level of each library's contribution to the overall countywide level of library use.
Do you consider these sources to be sufficient?	Yes
If this data is insufficient, please give details of further research/consultation you will carry out:	N/A

Please summarise relevant findings from your research/consultation:	Detailed reports have been completed for the following: • Needs Assessment inc. Pre-Engagement • Consultation • Viewpoint Survey

Stage 3 – Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment

Based on your findings, please indicate using the table below whether the policy could have an adverse, neutral or positive impact for any groups of people who share characteristics related to the following:

Protected characteristic	Positive	Neutral	Adverse
Age	☑	☐	☐
Disability	☑	☐	☐
Gender reassignment	☐	☑	☐
Marriage and civil partnership	☐	☑	☐
Pregnancy and maternity	☑	☐	☐
Race	☐	☑	☐
Religion and belief	☐	☑	☐
Sex	☐	☑	☐
Sexual orientation	☐	☑	☐

Please provide details of all positive and adverse impact you have identified:	By raising awareness of the full range of library services on offer we will increase the number of local people who benefit from the skills, resources and opportunities available in libraries to improve their quality of life and fulfill their potential through participation, creativity and learning. Our health and wellbeing offer is aligned to Public Health outcomes through a service level agreement and our provision for children and families is aligned to the council's Early Start programme, with a strong focus on looked after children. By aligning library services more closely to a wider range of Council priorities we will help to build more resilient, independent and connected communities, whilst ensuring that the Council and residents get best value from their investment in libraries. Improved skill levels and supporting more people into employment.

Where possible please include numbers likely to be affected:	
Where potential adverse impact has been identified, can continuation of the proposed policy be justified?	Choose an item. If yes, please explain your reasons:
Do you consider that this policy will contribute to the achievement of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty?	Please indicate which of these aims is achieved through this policy: Please explain how the policy contributes to achievement of any aims you have selected:

The Public Sector Equality Duty has the following three aims:
1. To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant Protected Characteristic and persons who do not share it.
3. To foster good relations between persons who share a relevant Protected Characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Public health impact assessment

Factor	Description of impact	Positive	Neutral	Adverse	Specific recommendations and/or mitigation
Social & economic	See PSED Aims above	☑	☐	☐	
Physical Health	See PSED Aims above	☐	☑	☐	
Mental health & well-being	See PSED Aims above	☑	☐	☐	
Access to services	See PSED Aims above	☑	☐	☐	

Stage 4 – Recommendations, action planning and time frames

Please list any actions you will take to mitigate any adverse impact you have identified (regarding equality and/or public health considerations):

Planned action	By who	By when	How will this be monitored
Creation of a Libraries Strategy	Programme Team	December 2019	Libraries Programme Board
Please indicate how these actions will be taken forward as part of your team/service/directorate planning:	Strategy will form the basis of creating a revised service plan.		

Stage 5 - Monitoring & Review

How frequently will proposed action be monitored?	Monthly

How frequently will intended outcomes be evaluated?	TBC	
Who will be responsible for monitoring and evaluation?	Libraries Programme Board	
How will you use the monitoring and evaluation results?	To inform future planning and transformation of the service	

Stage 6 - Publication

Worcestershire County Council requires all assessments to be published on our website. Please send a copy of this assessment to the Corporate Equality and Diversity Team for publication.

	Signature	Date
Completing Officer:	**J Edwards**	12/11/2019
Lead Officer:	**Hannah Needham**	12/11/2019
Service Manager:	**Carol Brown**	12/11/2019