

Section 4

# Equality

# Analysis Toolkit

**County Library Service v3**

**For Decision Making Items**

April 2016

## **What is the Purpose of the Equality Decision-Making Analysis?**

The Analysis is designed to be used where a decision is being made at Cabinet Member or Overview and Scrutiny level or if a decision is being made primarily for budget reasons. The Analysis should be referred to on the decision making template (e.g. E6 form).

When fully followed this process will assist in ensuring that the decision-makers meet the requirement of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need: to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other unlawful conduct under the Act; to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard means analysing, at each step of formulating, deciding upon and implementing policy, what the effect of that policy is or may be upon groups who share these protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation or pregnancy and maternity – and in some circumstances marriage and civil partnership status.

It is important to bear in mind that "due regard" means the level of scrutiny and evaluation that is reasonable and proportionate in the particular context. That means that different proposals, and different stages of policy development, may require more or less intense analysis. Discretion and common sense are required in the use of this tool.

It is also important to remember that what the law requires is that the duty is fulfilled in substance – not that a particular form is completed in a particular way. It is important to use common sense and to pay attention to the context in using and adapting these tools.

This process should be completed with reference to the most recent, updated version of the Equality Analysis Step by Step Guidance (to be distributed ) or EHRC guidance at

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/public-sector-providers/public-sector-equality-duty>

This toolkit is designed to ensure that the section 149 analysis is properly carried out, and that there is a clear record to this effect. The Analysis should be completed in a timely, thorough way and should inform the whole of the decision-making process. It must be considered by the person making the final decision and must be made available with other documents relating to the decision.

The documents should also be retained following any decision as they may be requested as part of enquiries from the Equality and Human Rights Commission or Freedom of Information requests.

Support and training on the Equality Duty and its implications is available from the County Equality and Cohesion Team by contacting

[AskEquality@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:AskEquality@lancashire.gov.uk)

Specific advice on completing the Equality Analysis is available from your Service contact in the Equality and Cohesion Team or from Jeanette Binns

[Jeanette.binns@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:Jeanette.binns@lancashire.gov.uk)

## **Name/Nature of the Decision**

To consult on the provision of a future County Library Service

## **What in summary is the proposal being considered?**

The proposal is to consult on the future composition of the Library Service in Lancashire. Currently the County Council has 74 Libraries which is felt not to be financially sustainable. It has been estimated that to provide a Service meeting statutory requirements having one Library in each of 12 Districts could be seen as sufficient whilst under the arrangements set out in the draft Corporate Strategy options for potentially 37 static libraries may be appropriate supported by 7 satellite/self service locations.

The consultation exercise is designed to seek the views of library users and the wider public on what they consider to be an acceptable and sufficient level of library service.

Transitional funding arrangements are to be made to ensure that no changes are made to the Library Service until the consultation has been completed, results analysed and the correct consultations procedures for staff and recognised Trade Unions have been completed.

This updated version of the Equality Analysis reflects the views/outcome of the initial Stakeholder Consultation from 10 December 2015 to 18 January 2016 and the final report of Stage 1 of the Library Consultation which took place from 4 – 31 January 2016.

Is the decision likely to affect people across the county in a similar way or are specific areas likely to be affected – e.g. are a set number of branches/sites to be affected? If so you will need to consider whether there are equality related issues associated with the locations selected – e.g. greater percentage of BME residents in a particular area where a closure is proposed as opposed to an area where a facility is remaining open.

The decision will affect people across Lancashire but may have greater impact in some areas.

**Could the decision have a particular impact on any group of individuals sharing protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, namely:**

- Age
- Disability including Deaf people
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race/ethnicity/nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership Status

In considering this question you should identify and record any particular impact on people in a sub-group of any of the above – e.g. people with a particular disability or from a particular religious or ethnic group.

It is particularly important to consider whether any decision is likely to impact adversely on any group of people sharing protected characteristics to a disproportionate extent. Any such disproportionate impact will need to be objectively justified.

*Some information is available on the age profile of active library users 2014/15, numbers in categories of library users which includes age and disability amongst active borrowers categories; and the gender, disability status and ethnicity or nationality of 80% of registered public users of Lancashire's libraries (397,922 of 495,418 people registered).*

*The registered public users information also provides a useful indication of the types of disability or particular nationalities of library users which gives some indication as to the possible impact of any*

*changes to the Service.*

If you have answered "Yes" to this question in relation to any of the above characteristics, – please go to Question 1.

Yes

If you have answered "No" in relation to all the protected characteristics, please briefly document your reasons below and attach this to the decision-making papers. (It goes without saying that if the lack of impact is obvious, it need only be very briefly noted.)

## Question 1 – Background Evidence

What information do you have about the different groups of people who may be affected by this decision – e.g. employees or service users (you could use monitoring data, survey data, etc to compile this). As indicated above, the relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability including Deaf people
- Gender reassignment/gender identity
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race/Ethnicity/Nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership status (in respect of which the s. 149 requires only that due regard be paid to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation or other conduct which is prohibited by the Act).

In considering this question you should again consider whether the decision under consideration could impact upon specific sub-groups e.g. people of a specific religion or people with a particular disability. You should also consider how the decision is likely to affect those who share two or more of the protected characteristics – for example, older women, disabled, elderly people, and so on.

Service information has been identified relating to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender and ethnicity of library users.

The Age data comes from information on active library users (i.e. those who had visited or obtained material from a library) for the 2014/15 period) It is as follows:

0-4 years old	8981people
5-9 years old	25665 people

10-15 years old	21741 people
16-24 years old	8886 people
25-34 years old	10640 people
35-44 years old	13254 people
45-54 years old	13983 people
55-64 years old	16062 people
65-74 years old	21858 people
75-84 years old	13736 people
85-94 years old	4674 people
Over 95	358 people
Unknown	4446 people
Total	164248 people

A separate active borrowers data which uses fewer categories and may indicate transactions as it relates mainly to exemptions for loans and other charges provides an age profile of:

Junior under 12	406,429
Junior 12-14	74,106
Junior 15	12,660
Adult 16-17	18,607
Adults 18 and over	474,058
Adults 65 and over	327,264

The indications (particularly from the first set of data) are that Libraries are particularly visited by children and older people. There is a tapering off in users between the ages of 16 to 34 before the numbers gradually increase again towards an "adult high point" in the 65-74 age range. The Service also had almost 5000 active users who are over the age of 85. Although Libraries are used across the range of ages,



children and early teenagers and older people may be disproportionately affected by any changes/reductions to the Service.

The figures for gender, disability and ethnicity are based on 397,992 registered public users of the library service – there are 495,418 people registered but information is not given by almost 20% of those registered.

#### Gender

222,689 registered users are female and 175,303 are male. This indicates that women are more likely to be registered library users than men so women may be disproportionately adversely affected by any reductions to the Service.

#### Disability

There is data available for both active borrowers and registered public users of the library service. In this area, people may appear both in terms of having a disability and again in particular impairment categories which are used – i.e. a visually impaired person may be counted as both being visually impaired and as being a disabled person but it is unclear in how many instances this happens, if at all. The information does give an indication of usage by the disability protected characteristic which is of use.

The active borrowers information identifies 27 16-17 year old borrower/transactions with a disability and 16,386 disabled borrowers/transactions aged over 18. It separately categorises: blind children under 12 21; 19 blind 12-14 year olds; 24 blind 16-17 year olds and 5,099 blind borrowers or transactions for those over 18.

In terms of the registered public users of the library there is more detailed information including:

Deaf/deafened borrowers	681
Hard of Hearing borrowers	5
Disability Yes	10467
Borrowers with a Learning Disability	2897

Borrowers with Mental Health Difficulties	1501
Borrowers with Physical Disabilities	5829
Borrowers with a Visual Impairment	1480

This gives an indication of the range of disabled people who use the library service. Given that libraries often have materials which are of particular use to people with some disabilities (e.g. spoken word recordings, large print materials), are seen as a safe and welcoming space and host a number of exhibitions and awareness raising or community events related to disability or health conditions, any changes or reductions in Service could disproportionately impact this group and the impact may be greater than for some other groups.

### Ethnicity

The ethnicity data includes over 80 nationalities which can be summarised using the main Census categories as:

Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	864 people
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3962 people
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	10118 people
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	802 people
Black or Black British – African	668 people
Black or Black British – any other black background	234 people
Black or Black British – Caribbean	393 people
Chinese	659 people
Mixed – any other mixed background	581 people
Mixed - White and Asian	599 people
Mixed – White and Black African	265 people
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	624 people
Other ethnic group, e.g. Traveller, Romany	365 people

Polish 3082 people

White British 195,250 people and additionally

7012 people described as English, 346 as Scottish, 122 as Welsh,

White Northern Irish 101 people

White Irish 1931 people

Polish has been added due to the comparatively high number of registered users who identify as Polish.

Other nationalities with over 500 registered public users are Latvian (748), Lithuanian (535), Italian (516) and Hungarian (514) whilst there are 473 American registered users and 440 who are Spanish.

## **Question 2 – Engagement/Consultation**

How have you tried to involve people/groups that are potentially affected by your decision? Please describe what engagement has taken place, with whom and when.

(Please ensure that you retain evidence of the consultation in case of any further enquiries. This includes the results of consultation or data gathering at any stage of the process)

*A Stakeholder Consultation was carried out between 10 December 2015 and 18 January 2016 where an email letter from the Leader of the County Council outlining the County Council's financial position alongside a link to a full list of budget proposals and a further link to an on-line questionnaire was circulated to 334 partners and*

*stakeholders and was also published on the Council's Have Your Say webpage so that anyone could complete it. Email responses were also accepted as an alternative to using the on-line questionnaire. The questionnaire went to partners including:*

- *Lancashire County Council Elected Members;*
- *The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner;*
- *The Lancashire Combined Fire Authority;*
- *Recognised Trade Unions;*
- *Borough, City and Unitary Councils in Lancashire;*
- *Third Sector Lancashire;*
- *Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC);*
- *Lancashire Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards;*
- *Lancashire Care Association;*
- *Lancashire Parent Carer Forum;*
- *The Older People's Forum;*
- *The Chamber of Commerce;*
- *The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership;*
- *Healthwatch Lancashire;*
- *The Clinical Commissioning Groups;*
- *Young People's Engagement Forums;*
- *Members of Parliament in Lancashire;*
- *The Society of Local Council Clerks;*
- *Members of the European Parliament representing Lancashire/North West;*
- *NHS Hospital Trusts;*
- *Higher and Further Education establishments;*
- *Commissioners on the Lancashire Fairness Commission.*

*There were 357 submissions to the on-line questionnaire, with 252 providing a response. 19 more responses were received by email. 765 comments and queries were also received by other channels and 173 of these responses particularly mentioned Libraries.*

*Whilst the Stakeholder Consultation related to the proposed budget as a whole, comments relating to Libraries were included in the Consultation Summary report presented to the Executive Scrutiny*

*Committee on 19 January and County Council Cabinet on 21 January 2016. The summary of the responses generally raised concerns about the impact of library closures on local communities and because of this did not want libraries to close. Libraries were described as a community hub, providing a range of services (e.g. Workclub), access to on-line facilities and areas for community groups to meet. Mitigations suggested by respondents included reducing opening hours or number of days open, libraries remaining in urban areas and using volunteers/community groups.*

*A public consultation on Stage 1 of the Library Consultation which focussed on service design, need and use of libraries, began on 4 January 2016 for a 4-week period to 31 January 2016. This included hosting an on-line consultation on the Have Your Say webpage and hard copy consultations being available in all 74 libraries. This analysis has used the results from 10,566 respondents.*

*The consultation was available in hard copy format and also on line. In terms of responses 5959 were received on line and 4,607 were received in paper based format.*

*There were in terms of their protected characteristics:*

*69% of questionnaire respondents were female and 31% were male. There is a disproportionately high percentage of females who completed the consultation in terms of the Lancashire population and the registered public users information.*

*14% of questionnaire respondents considered themselves to have a disability or to be a Deaf person. This may be less than in the population overall but given the possible difficulties of completing an on-line questionnaire and the low numbers of some disability groups likely to engage in traditional types of consultation, it is a significant response. The percentage of participants identifying as having a disability has risen between the analysis carried out in February immediately after the consultation closed which suggests that a greater proportion on disabled respondents submitted their responses in paper format.*

*2% of participants also responded that there was a young person*

*aged 20-25 in their household, and some responses may reflect the views or requirements of these young people.*

*The age groups do not exactly match the information available on registered library users or active borrowers. It is not surprising that under 19s are only 3% of respondents when they are a much greater proportion of library users – but their views and requirements may be reflected in other age groups. 9% of respondents were aged 20-34. 46% of respondents are in the 35-64 age range where library usage begins to increase again in other data and also where the on-line consultation method might be most popular whilst 27% of respondents were 65-74 and 16% were over 75. Between the February and April versions of the analysis – where the paper based responses had been incorporated – there were reductions in the percentages of respondents in the 20-34 and 35-64 age groups and a similar rise in the percentage of respondents in the 65-74 and particularly the 75+ age group .*

*To address the element of children using the library, use can be made of the questionnaire's question about the age of children in the respondents' household. 68% of respondents had no children or young people under 20 in the household (up from 62% in February), 12% had children aged under 5 and 12% had children aged 5-8, 9% had children in the 9-11 age group, 8% had children in the 12-16 age group and 5% had young people aged 17-19 in the household. 2% of respondents were pregnant and had no other children in their household at this time.*

*The ethnicity of consultation respondents was as follows:*

*White 98% (9855 people)*

*Asian or Asian British 1% (140 people)*

*Black or Black British 0% (16 people)*

*Mixed – e.g. White and Asian 0% (40 people)*

*Other 0% (37 people).*

*The questionnaire allowed respondents to disclose their religion or*

*belief, sexual orientation, whether they were married or in a civil partnership and if they were transgender which would allow any impact or views to be assessed in terms of these protected characteristics although there is no information on registered public users or active borrowers for these protected characteristics.*

*Of those who responded to the religion question 73% identified as Christian, 24% as having no religion, 2% under "other religion" and 1% each as being Muslim or Buddhist. There were small numbers of respondents who identified as being Hindu (18 people), Jewish (20 people) or Sikh (3 people) but these were insufficient to record a percentage.*

*62% of respondents identified as married, 2% were in a civil partnership and 33% of those who responded to the question were "none of these". 4% preferred not to say.*

*89% of respondents who completed the sexual orientation question identified as Straight or Heterosexual, 1% of respondents identified in each of the Bisexual, Gay Man and Lesbian/Gay Woman categories. 9% preferred not to say and 42 people identified as "other".*

*1% of respondents identified themselves as Transgender which may be quite a significant percentage in terms of disclosure.*

*The questionnaire asked respondents about their library usage and frequency of visits, the reasons for visiting and not visiting, what they did on their last visit, their use of on-line library services, the importance of specific library services, future library service provision and usage times and any suggestions or comments about the service.*

*96% of respondents are current library users and 3% have used libraries, so any conclusions in terms of possible impact on protected characteristics groups are based on people who use the service and are familiar with it. 28% use a library more than once a week and 93% of respondents use the library at least once a month. 5% had used the mobile library in the last year and 6% had used the Home Library Service – it is likely that usage of older and disabled people*

*will be disproportionately high for the Home Library Service.*

*The elements mentioned below are those which seem to have most relevance to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty and this analysis. The consultation report was able to identify some elements where the age or ethnicity responses differed significantly from the respondent profile as a whole.*

*28% of library users visit a library more than once a week, 68% visit once a week or more and 93% have visited a library within the last month. Although 15% of library users are aged over 65 and 10% are from black and minority ethnic groups the consultation indicated that older and black and minority ethnic respondents visited the library more frequently than other respondents, 83% of Asian respondents visited the library once a week or more (53% visited more than once a week) whilst 73% of 65-74 year old respondents visited the library once a week or more and 77% of over 75 year old respondents.*

*More than half of respondents (56%) had last visited a library alone, 27% visited with children or young people and 24% visited with other adults. 32% of women respondents visited the library with children and 16% of male respondents. Older respondents were more likely to visit alone – 67% of those aged 65-74 and 76% of respondents over 75 visited alone.*

*Respondents who hadn't visited a library in the last 12 months were asked why this was, 13% identified difficulty getting to the library (31% of those aged 75 or over) or that the library is too far away. This may be an indication of difficulties for some people in the age or disability protected characteristics groups. Those aged 75 or over were also more likely to say they did not find what they were looking for on their last visit as a reason for no longer visiting, 31% of those aged over 75 against 10% of all respondents to this.*

*A similar question on what might make people visit the library included 12% of people saying if a library was nearer to them, 6% if a library was nearer to a bus stop and 2% if there were baby changing facilities. These may again be indicators of particular concerns for people from protected characteristics groups. 24% said*



*a wider range of activities might encourage them to visit the library more, but amongst those with pre-school age children this rose to 44%.*

*15% of respondents had attended a childrens event in the last week and a further 15% in the last month. 33% of women respondents had attended a childrens event in the last month and 20% of male respondents. Not surprisingly, people with pre-school children are most likely to have attended a childrens event in the last month (54% of these respondents). 32% of respondents identified attending a childrens event or activity as one of the services that were most important, with 44% of Asian respondents rating this as most important and more females (38%) than males (19%) of all respondents rating this as most important.*

*19% of respondents had attended a social or group activity at the library in the previous week and 36% attending a social and group activities as one of the most important services in the library service, 39% of females rated this as important compared with 27% of males. When asked what they thought the Library Service should provide 71% of respondents strongly agreed libraries should provide spaces to enjoy culture and learning while 22% tended to agree. In the "suggestions or other comments" question 24% of respondents commented that libraries are a community hub/meeting place and 31% commented that libraries were vital for individual wellbeing and community cohesion – although 1% of respondents said wellbeing and community cohesion was not the role of libraries.*

*Using computers in the previous week was undertaken by 25% of library visitors and 68% and 69% of children and young people had done this whilst 40% of respondents aged 64-75 had used a computer in the library within the last month. 47% of respondents considered this an important element of the library service, 59% of children and 70% of young people considered this the most important feature contrasting with 42% of respondents aged 65-74 and 28% of respondents aged over 75. 18% also consider using the free wifi to be an important feature of the library service (again there is a difference in view in age terms with 32% of children responding*

*and 40% of young people rating this a important compared to 16% of respondents aged 65-74 and 9% of respondents over 75. 21% of all respondents had used this in the previous week and 38% in the last month, 72% of respondents aged 16-19 used wifi contrasting with only 18% of respondents aged over 75. Similarly 19% of respondents had reserved a book on line in the previous week and 19% also considered this to be important. 28% had used an on-line library service in the previous week and 19% considered using this to be important. 64% of respondents strongly agreed that the library service should provide easy to use on-line services and help people reach their potential and live independent lives, 12% commented that access to computers and the internet is good although 1% said these facilities need improving. 74% of Asian respondents rated using a computer in a library as most important and using free Wifi in a library was rated important by 37% of Asian respondents.*

*60% of respondents had borrowed a book from a library in the previous week and a further 25% in the last month. 95% of respondents identified borrowing a book as the most important library service. As the library contains materials in diverse languages, large print and wide range of subjects and genres this is perhaps not surprising. 91% of respondents also strongly agreed that the library service should encourage people to enjoy reading.*

*37% of respondents identified picking up a CD, DVD or talking book as a most important feature of the library service and 14% of respondents had done so in the previous week and 18% in the last month (combined 32%). This may indicate an issue of particular importance to some disabled or older respondents.*

*93% of respondents strongly agreed that helpful and knowledgeable staff is something the Library Service should provide . This can be of value to people with a wide range of protected characteristics but could be of particular importance to those in the age and disability groups.*

*In equality terms it should be noted that a comment amongst the "do you have any other suggestions or comments about the Lancashire County Library Service" the comment "current location/physical*

*access is good" attracted 7% respondents. Around 4% of respondents also commented that "accessing the next nearest library would be difficult" which may be a view prompted by concerns about possible impact on access or distance to travel for some protected characteristics groups.*

*A question was asked about whether respondents agreed that there should be opportunities for people to volunteer to help with library services – 48% of respondents strongly agreed, 31% tended to agree whilst 4% tended to disagree and 2% strongly disagreed whilst 15% had no view either way. There are mixed views about the use the service should make of volunteers in the comments section with 2% of respondents mentioning use of volunteers as positive whilst 1% people cautioned that the service should not use or rely on volunteers.*

*Questions were asked about when they would be more likely to visit a library. On weekdays the period from 10a.m.-11:59 a.m. was most popular (around three quarters of respondents aged 65-74 and over 75 indicated this option) followed by 2 p.m. to 3:59 p.m., lunchtimes and early evening were quite popular, the 4p.m. to 6 p.m. option was popular with 76% of children responding, 54% of young people and 41% of adults aged 20-64 but less so amongst 65-74 year olds (26%) and over 75s (16%). The 6p.m. to 8 p.m. was of interest to 25% of respondents but more so amongst young people (40%) and adults aged 20-34 (37%) but those aged 65-74 only 13% favoured this reducing to 7% of respondents aged over 75. 8 a.m. to 9:59 a.m. was less attractive which could be influenced by travel concessions not being available until 9:30 a.m. on buses and general travel congestion.*

*At weekends Saturday morning between 10 a.m. to 11:59 a.m. was favoured by over half of respondents. Lunchtime and early afternoon were popular with about a third of respondents whilst the early morning and late afternoon/evening slots attracted less than one fifth of respondents each. Generally Saturday opening options were more popular amongst children, young people and working age adults with lower responses from those aged over 65. The best time*

*slot (again 10a.m. until 11:59 a.m.) on Sundays appealed to 21% of respondents and interest was highest amongst children and adults aged 20-34 and lowest amongst those 65 and over – views on Sunday opening may be affected by reductions in bus services in Lancashire which will impact younger , older and disabled people reliant on public transport disproportionately.*

*There have also been 25 e.petitions registered on the County council's website along with other 6 other hard copy written petitions and/or collective letters about libraries, 254 comments/correspondence have been received via the Council's VIPmail system, enquiries have been made by contacting County Councillors, over 100 emails were received by the "Have Your Say mailbox and there were other contacts on social media or other general petition or LCC webpages. Other events were held to "save" libraries or highlight concerns about the proposal.*

*Following on from the Service consultation and any decision on the future service design, need and use of Library provision in the county, the County Council is committed to undertaking correct consultation procedures in relation to its staff and recognised Trade Unions in developing its resulting staffing structure.*

### **Question 3 – Analysing Impact**

Could your proposal potentially disadvantage particular groups sharing any of the protected characteristics and if so which groups and in what way?

It is particularly important in considering this question to get to grips with the actual practical impact on those affected. The decision-makers need to know in clear and specific terms what the impact may be and how serious, or perhaps minor, it may be – will people need to walk a few metres further to catch a bus, or to attend school? Will they be cut off altogether from vital services? The answers to such questions must be fully and frankly documented, for better or for worse, so that they can be properly evaluated when the decision is made.

Could your proposal potentially impact on individuals sharing the protected characteristics in any of the following ways:

- Could it discriminate unlawfully against individuals sharing any of the protected characteristics, whether directly or indirectly; if so, it must be amended. Bear in mind that this may involve taking steps to meet the specific needs of disabled people arising from their disabilities
- Could it advance equality of opportunity for those who share a particular protected characteristic? If not could it be developed or modified in order to do so?
- Does it encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low? If not could it be developed or modified in order to do so?
- Will the proposal contribute to fostering good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, for example by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding? If not could it be developed or modified in order to do so? Please identify any findings and how they might be addressed.

*An initial analysis has revealed that this proposal could impact on many people but may have a disproportionate impact on young people/children, disabled people, older people and people from ethnic minorities because of the types of facilities available at Libraries and*

*use made of them, depending on the final outcome of considerations about the service design, need and use of a future library service.*

*Libraries are used by a wide range of people in the county who come from all protected characteristics backgrounds. Many libraries are in accessible premises in terms of physical access with access budget resources being focussed on improving the physical access features of library branches over many years, this also assists older people and those who are pregnant or have young children. The Service has also prioritised providing a welcoming environment to a wide range of customers and having materials to meet the needs of a wide range of potential users including material in minority languages, large print and spoken word recordings, sensory storytelling sessions and reminiscence events which target a wide range of requirements for people with a range of protected characteristics.*

*The Stakeholder consultation has already identified that facilities such as WorkClub are available through libraries which if they were lost or reduced, could affect people, including those with protected characteristics, in applying for and obtaining skills to gain employment.*

*The individual consultation responses also underline this element given the high usage of computers and free wifi and the value placed on these services by respondents.*

*Activities and events for children and space for social and group events are both well used and rated as important features of the service by respondents and may contribute to advancing equality of opportunity, community cohesion and reducing social isolation or improving wellbeing.*

*The community space available at libraries and events and exhibitions which are often held there contribute significantly to fostering good relations between communities/community cohesion – e.g. for LGBT History Month, Black History Month, Disability History Month, Chinese New Year, work to improve relations between generations such as the "Mind the Gap" project which encouraged older and younger people to exchange skills and information, events which promote awareness of disabilities and how to support people with various conditions such as*

*Dementia Friends work etc. This range of activities assists in fostering good relations between groups with protected characteristics and those who do not share them and assists in better understanding between groups.*

*The frequency of visits to the library and use made of the range of facilities available assists in advancing equality of opportunity for a range of people with protected characteristics and helps combat social isolation and improve wellbeing which are also key issues for the County Council.*

*There are mixed views from the consultation about the reliance or use that the Service should make of volunteers but their use may assist some protected characteristics groups to participate in public life and gain skills towards employment though this may be offset by whether people from protected characteristics groups - .e.g with various disabilities – would find volunteers with the skills and knowledge to assist them as library staff currently have.*

*A different model of library service in the future could reduce the opportunities available for some of this work to be carried out in some local areas which may have particular impacts on particular groups with protected characteristics depending on the final outcome of this process. Comments on reasons why people had not visited a library have already included that the library is too far away or difficulties getting to the library which may be increased if the number of libraries reduces.*

#### **Question 4 –Combined/Cumulative Effect**

Could the effects of your decision combine with other factors or decisions taken at local or national level to exacerbate the impact on any groups?

For example - if the proposal is to impose charges for adult social care, its impact on disabled people might be increased by other decisions within the County Council (e.g. increases in the fares charged for Community Transport and reductions in respite care) and national

proposals (e.g. the availability of some benefits) . Whilst LCC cannot control some of these decisions, they could increase the adverse effect of the proposal. The LCC has a legal duty to consider this aspect, and to evaluate the decision, including mitigation, accordingly.

If Yes – please identify these.

Depending on the final outcome of consultation on the service design, need and use of the library service, this may combine with other decisions around the provision of subsidised bus services to make it more difficult for some users to get to a Library. Other proposals affecting the Museums, Archives, Arts and Community Heritage Services may also increase the adverse impact of this proposal in terms of residents' and students access to cultural information and services within Lancashire, potentially more amongst the 50% of users who had used the library for reference or research in the last month or 50% who consider research and reference services to be the most important feature.

Recent budget proposals concerning the withdrawal of subsidies for bus services may impact on the time and frequency of visits people make to their library. Had the original proposal been implemented over 100 bus routes could have ceased but the allocation of a £3 million fund to support some of these services and recommendations of a Cabinet Working Group on Bus Services resulted in 28 services continuing with County Council support and two services being supported jointly by the County Council and Chorley Borough Council. 40 other services were taken over by commercial operators. This has still resulted in over 40 services ceasing. This may affect the ease with which some people can travel to the library where a route or frequency of service has changed.

The increased reliance or expectation that people will use on-line methods of application for services within the County Council and more widely could increase the impact of the loss of these services in some areas if their local libraries are closed. It is clear that a significant number of people use computers and free wifi at libraries at present and that this is an important and valued facility, particularly



amongst younger people and respondents who were Asian.

### **Question 5 – Identifying Initial Results of Your Analysis**

As a result of your analysis have you changed/amended your original proposal?

Please identify how –

For example:

Adjusted the original proposal – briefly outline the adjustments

Continuing with the Original Proposal – briefly explain why

Stopped the Proposal and Revised it - briefly explain

*The proposal is currently unchanged. The proposal will be considered alongside this analysis and the report of the results of the Stakeholder and Stage 1 public consultation. A Stage Two consultation including more specific proposals is expected to follow in spring.*

### **Question 6 - Mitigation**

Please set out any steps you will take to mitigate/reduce any potential adverse effects of your decision on those sharing any particular protected characteristic. It is important here to do a genuine and realistic evaluation of the effectiveness of the mitigation contemplated. Over-optimistic and over-generalised assessments are likely to fall short of the “due regard” requirement.

Also consider if any mitigation might adversely affect any other groups and how this might be managed.

*Mitigating actions are in the process of being developed and will be informed by the findings of the consultation.*

*The 6 mobile libraries will remain but the outcome of the consultation*

*may mean that their routes need to be revised/reviewed. It is envisaged that 68 routes will be operated with 792 stops serviced by the Mobile Libraries.*

*The Library Service already has in place a Home Library Service which is well established and may be available and appropriate for some users, particularly older and disabled people. Currently there are over 1,000 customers who have deliveries through the Home Library Service.*

*The Library Service have also been developing virtual library services such as through the BorrowBox scheme where e.books and e.audiobooks can be downloaded via an App available on smartphone and tablets for those registered with the Library Service.*

*Both the Schools and Prison Library Services will continue.*

## **Question 7 – Balancing the Proposal/Countervailing Factors**

At this point you need to weigh up the reasons for the proposal – e.g. need for budget savings; damaging effects of not taking forward the proposal at this time – against the findings of your analysis. Please describe this assessment. It is important here to ensure that the assessment of any negative effects upon those sharing protected characteristics is full and frank. The full extent of actual adverse impacts must be acknowledged and taken into account, or the assessment will be inadequate. What is required is an honest evaluation, and not a marketing exercise. Conversely, while adverse effects should be frankly acknowledged, they need not be overstated or exaggerated. Where effects are not serious, this too should be made clear.

*This proposal has emerged following the need for the County Council to make unprecedented budget savings. The Medium Term Financial Strategy reported in the November 2015 forecast that the Council will have a financial shortfall of £262 million in its revenue budget in 2020/21.*

*This is a combination of reducing resources as a result of the*

*government's extended programme of austerity at the same time as the Council is facing significant increases in both the cost (for example as a result of inflation and the national living wage) and demand for its services.*

*The revised position following the financial settlement for 2016/17 is now a budget gap of £200.507m by 2020/21. This revised gap takes into account the impact of the settlement, new financial pressures and the savings decisions taken by the Full Council in 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 regarding the future pattern of council services.*

*We acknowledge that some protected characteristic groups may be negatively affected by the finalised Property Strategy (Neighbourhood Centres) however we will strive to minimise any negative impacts by developing as many mitigating actions as possible including using the agreed methods of scoring and weighting which reflect protected characteristics considerations for premises identified in the consultation documents. It is acknowledged that children and young people, disabled people, older people and some people from ethnic minority communities may be disproportionately negatively affected however we will strive to minimise any negative impacts by developing as many mitigating actions as possible and by taking into account the views from the stages of the consultation.*

### **Question 8 – Final Proposal**

In summary, what is your final proposal and which groups may be affected and how?

To consult on the provision of a future County Library Service
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### **Question 9 – Review and Monitoring Arrangements**

Describe what arrangements you will put in place to review and monitor the effects of your proposal.

<i>Appropriate monitoring procedures will be developed following the implementation of this proposal based on the relevant protected</i>
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*characteristics affected.*

Equality Analysis Prepared By Jeanette Binns

Position/Role Equality & Cohesion Manager

Equality Analysis Endorsed by Saeed Sidat

**EQUALITY & COHESION MANAGER**

Decision Signed Off By

Cabinet Member or Director

**Please remember to ensure the Equality Decision Making Analysis is submitted with the decision-making report and a copy is retained with other papers relating to the decision.**

Where specific actions are identified as part of the Analysis please ensure that an EAP001 form is completed and forwarded to your Service contact in the Equality and Cohesion Team.

Service contacts in the Equality & Cohesion Team are:

Karen Beaumont – Equality & Cohesion Manager

[Karen.beaumont@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.beaumont@lancashire.gov.uk)

Contact for Adult Services ; Policy Information and Commissioning (Age Well); Health Equity, Welfare and Partnerships (PH); Patient Safety and Quality Improvement (PH).

Jeanette Binns – Equality & Cohesion Manager

[Jeanette.binns@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:Jeanette.binns@lancashire.gov.uk)

Contact for Community Services; Development and Corporate Services; Customer Access; Policy Commissioning and Information (Live Well); Trading Standards and Scientific Services (PH), Lancashire Pension Fund

Saulo Cwerner – Equality & Cohesion Manager

[Saulo.cwerner@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:Saulo.cwerner@lancashire.gov.uk)

Contact for Children's Services; Policy, Information and Commissioning (Start Well); Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help (PH); BTLS

Pam Smith – Equality & Cohesion Manager

[Pam.smith@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:Pam.smith@lancashire.gov.uk)

Contact for Governance, Finance and Public Services; Communications; Corporate Commissioning (Level 1); Emergency Planning and Resilience (PH).

Thank you