

SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL



EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT: CHANGES TO LIBRARY SERVICES

October 2018

CONTENTS

1. Appendix 4 - Summary of Equalities Impacts	
• Introduction	Page 3
• Summary of impacts for users - Community Library Partnership	Page 4
• Summary of impacts for users - Library Closures	Page 6
• Summary of impacts for staff	Page 10
2. Appendix 4i - Impacts on staff delivering the service	Page 11
3. Appendix 4ii - Impacts on people receiving the service: Community Library Partnership outcome	Page 29
4. Appendix 4iii - Impacts on people receiving the service: Library closure outcome	
a) Bishops Lydeard and surrounding communities	Page 58
b) Bruton and surrounding communities	Page 83
c) Castle Cary and surrounding communities	Page 109
d) Highbridge and surrounding communities	Page 137
e) Milborne Port and surrounding communities	Page 162
f) Nether Stowey and surrounding communities	Page 187
g) North Petherton and surrounding communities	Page 215
h) Porlock and surrounding communities	Page 242
i) Priorswood and surrounding communities	Page 271
j) Somerton and surrounding communities	Page 298
k) South Petherton and surrounding communities	Page 331
l) Street and surrounding communities	Page 356
m) Sunningdale and surrounding communities	Page 390
n) Watchet and surrounding communities	Page 414
o) Wiveliscombe and surrounding communities	Page 441
5. Appendix 4iv – The Public Sector Equality Duty	Page 470
6. Appendix 4v - Background Papers	Page 471

APPENDIX 4: SUMMARY OF EQUALITIES IMPACTS

1. Introduction

1.1. The council, in carrying out its functions (including the function of providing the library service required by the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964), must discharge the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010. An explanation of this duty is provided at Appendix 4iv.

1.2. The aim of this summary document is to provide an overview of the equality impacts identified by the proposed changes to the library service. It is not our full response to the Public Sector Equality Duty but is an overview to support members with their decision making. It will give decision makers a way of identifying the Equality Impact Assessments they may want to look at in more depth to inform their decision. The Equality Impact Assessments produced to support these proposals are attached to this Appendix, as Appendices 4i, 4ii and 4iii(a) to 4iii(o). This document will also help decision makers identify any common themes in the equality impacts.

1.3. The Public Sector Equality Duty makes reference to “protected characteristics”. The Equality Act 2010 defines these as the characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Somerset County Council has further identified certain groups who whose needs are not protected under the Equality Act but which we need to protect. These groups are those with caring responsibilities, those living in socio-economic deprivation, gypsies and travellers and those living in remote locations. For the purposes of the equality impact assessments references to “protected characteristics” include people from these groups. It should be noted that there is often a correlation between low income, rurality and the characteristics defined in the Equality Act.

1.4. For identified impacts we may have also identified some mitigation. Where we have this will be held within the Equality Impact Assessments set out below in Appendices 4i, 4ii and 4iii.

1.5. If members agree the recommendations, then one of two outcomes will happen for each affected library:

- Either a library building will be maintained through a community library partnership (this outcome would be subject to a further decision to enter into a community library partnership)
- Or the library would close, and library services would be provided through alternative means (either mobile library services, library outreach services, or a combination of mobile and outreach services, with digital library services being provided in all cases).

1.6. These different outcomes have very different impacts which have been assessed separately for users of the service. Section 2 below summarises the general, potential impacts of transferring services to community library partnerships, and section 3 summarises the impacts of closing libraries and providing services in other ways. Many

of the identified impacts for staff apply in both outcomes and these are summarised in section 4.

1.7. As part of the budget saving recommended in the covering report, the library service re-design project team plan to reduce costs through a variety of income generation and community support initiatives, in particular at Cheddar, Ilminster, Martock and Langport libraries. These are not expected to have any material adverse impacts for users of the service.

2. Summary of impacts for users - Community Library Partnerships

2.1. This section considers the potential impacts of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships for service users. This is the preferred outcome of the changes recommended to Cabinet.

2.2. Potential impacts are described comprehensively in Appendix 4ii below, alongside mitigating actions. This section provides a summary of the more significant, negative equalities impacts identified in this assessment:

- The general impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnership models may be more likely to impact people with the protected characteristics of Age (older people and children of primary school age), Race (Black and Minority Ethnic Groups and non-British White ethnic groups), Maternity, Sex (Females), and Low Income; because these groups are over-represented within the population of library users. A number (but not all) of the affected libraries are in smaller communities serving more rural populations, and the general impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnership models may impact on people who have the protected characteristic of rurality.
- There is some evidence from the consultation exercise that older people and disabled people may be more anxious about transferring services to Community Library Partnerships, because of a perceived impact on them.
- Community Library Partnerships may not provide the same level of activities and events as libraries currently do (conversely, Community Library Partnerships may provide a wider range of events and activities). Community Library Partnerships may not design and develop activities and events with the needs of particular groups in mind. This could impact on people with the protected characteristics of Age (older people and children), Disability, and Maternity.
- Community Library Partnerships using a predominantly volunteer workforce may not be as effective at supporting people who are digitally excluded, or in providing technical help to use the internet (although conversely, Community Library Partnerships may provide a wider range of digital inclusion activities, and/or may be more effective at helping people to use the internet). This could be more likely to have an impact on some people with the protected characteristics of Age (older people), because older people are more likely to need help using the internet. Feedback from the consultation exercise indicates that some people with the characteristic of Low Income could also be impacted.
- Feedback from the consultation exercise indicates that some people may be less comfortable asking volunteers for help with using the internet because of privacy concerns. In Community Library Partnerships using a predominantly volunteer workforce this could be more likely to have an impact on some people with the

protected characteristics of Age (older people), because older people are more likely to need help using the internet. Feedback from the consultation exercise indicates that some people with the characteristic of Low Income could also be impacted.

- Some (but not all) service users with the protected characteristics of disability, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation and race may have heightened anxiety about libraries transferring to a Community Library Partnership model, because societal responses to people with these protected characteristics may increase nervousness of change, or because the County Council's policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control. Some service users with this protected characteristic may be at a higher risk of discrimination because the County Council's policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control.
- Community Library Partnerships using volunteers may be less effective at supporting people with sensory loss, or other disabilities, because volunteers may have less knowledge or awareness of specialist services available for people with sensory loss, or may be less aware of the issues faced by people with other types of disability. Similarly, Community Library Partnerships using volunteers may be less effective at supporting people whose first language is not English, because volunteers may be less aware of stock available in alternative language formats.
- Community Library Partnerships may reduce or change opening hours (although conversely, Community Library Partnerships may increase opening hours). Opening hours reductions could affect primary school aged children if they are no longer able to visit the library after school.

2.3. We will seek to mitigate the impacts identified through a combination of measures, outlined in detail in the action table at Appendix 4ii. The main, overarching mitigations are summarised here:

- Where Community Library Partnerships are volunteer-run or volunteer-led, we will carry out an extensive training and induction process for volunteers, including:
 - Developing knowledge of how to support users with specific requirements (e.g. customer with sensory loss, customers for whom English is a second language, customers who have difficulty using computers).
 - Building awareness and understanding of equalities and diversity issues, and discrimination.
 - Building awareness and understanding of the importance of privacy and confidentiality.
- This initial support for volunteers will be carried through a transitional phase, and ongoing guidance and supervision will be given to Community Library Partnership volunteers as part of the County Council's 'Core Offer' to Community Library Partnerships.
- Officers from the Library Service will maintain an ongoing relationship with Community Library Partnerships, governed through an agreement, which will enable monitoring and review of any equalities issues associated with Opening hours, activities and events, service development and equality of access.
- Legal agreements will require Community Library Partnerships to comply with the requirements on providing services set out in the Equality Act 2010 enable the County Council to investigate any complaints relating to discrimination, with the

potential sanction of withdrawing the Core Offer if principles relating to equality of access are found to have been repeatedly breached.

- We will endeavour to communicate changes effectively to vulnerable groups and those for whom English is a second language.

2.4. There are also some potential positive impacts of Community Library Partnerships - opening hours could increase, and the range of activities and events could expand under Community Library Partnership models, which could have significant benefits for users with a range of protected characteristics. However, such impacts are not certain and therefore limited weight should be placed on them at this time.

3. Summary of impacts for users - Library Closures

3.1. This section provides a summary of the potential cross-cutting, cumulative impacts on service users of library closures. Library closures are a potential consequence of the recommendations set out in the covering report - we hope to avoid library closures by seeking Community Library Partnerships to keep libraries open. However, decision makers must have regard to the impacts of closing up to 15 library buildings when considering the recommendations, and these impacts are summarised here. A high-level summary of how the level of different impacts varies across different communities where changes are proposed is included at Table 3.5 below.

3.2. There are two potential cumulative impacts that have been identified, but which are not included within the individual library EIAs in Appendix 4iii below, because we have no firm evidence or data to link the impact to a specific library, or because the impact is cumulative:

- We know from consultation feedback, and from our experience of service delivery, that a number of home-schooled children (and their parents) use library buildings from time to time to support learning and study. This group (with the protected characteristic of Age) would potentially be impacted by library closures. Across the 15 affected libraries this impact could be significant, and so we have highlighted it here for decision makers to consider. Many home-schooled children are likely to live in households with either one car or no access to a vehicle; where this is the case, the parent responsible for home-schooling may not have access to a vehicle during the working week. This group may therefore be reliant on walking, cycling or public transport access to library buildings, which makes it more likely that they could be impacted more significantly by library closures. This impact is particularly significant because it is difficult to mitigate (other than through establishing Community Library Partnerships). Library Outreach Services, Mobile Library Services and Digital Library Services are unlikely to provide the range of facilities and services (in particular, study space) that home-schooled children currently use.
- Many of the affected libraries are situated in smaller communities. Although there are some urban or sub-urban libraries at risk of closure from the proposals, many of the libraries serve rural catchments. Cumulatively, there is a potential impact on people living in more rural parts of Somerset; in some areas these people will face longer driving times, or longer public transport journeys, to access library buildings.

3.3. Potential impacts are described comprehensively in Appendix 4iii below, alongside mitigating actions. This section provides a summary of the more significant cumulative and cross-cutting equalities impacts identified for library closures:

- Older people, disabled people and people with the protected characteristic of maternity are more likely to be impacted by the closure of libraries, as these groups are more likely to be socially isolated, and library buildings play an important role in preventing social isolation.
- Older people may find it more difficult to access alternative library buildings, because car ownership decreases with age, and some older people are more likely to have mobility problems which may mean they are less able to walk long distances or cycle.
- Children under the age of 5 are significant users of library buildings, and enjoy structured activities and playing or reading in libraries. This group is less likely to be able to access alternative library buildings, because their principle carer is less likely to have access to a car during the day. The cost of public transport in Somerset is a significant barrier to access for young children, whose parents may be dissuaded from taking them to visit alternative libraries because of the cost this entails.
- Primary school aged children are also significant users of library buildings, and if library buildings close, they are likely to face difficulties in accessing alternative buildings after school, particularly where primary schools are within walking distance of library buildings.
- Older children and teenagers use libraries for study. In areas where this group can currently access a library building independently, they are likely to be significantly impacted by library closures (because, other than establishing Community Library Partnerships, alternative ways of delivering library services do not offer study space facilities).
- Some disabled people may find it more difficult to access alternative library buildings, either because their disability means that they are unable to drive, or because of mobility problems which mean they are less able to walk long distances or cycle.
- Some disabled people may find it more difficult to access alternative library buildings in busier locations, or where alternative libraries are busier. Mental health conditions, learning disabilities and special educational needs can make it difficult for some people to travel into town centres, and feedback in the consultation exercise has highlighted that there are some users who seek out quieter library buildings because of a disability. This impact is likely to be difficult to mitigate effectively.
- People on maternity/shared maternity leave are significant users of library buildings, and enjoy bringing babies to activities and playing or reading in libraries. This group are less likely to be able to access alternative library buildings, because they are less likely to have access to a car during the day. The cost of public transport in Somerset is a significant barrier to access for this group. New parents can be vulnerable to social isolation and poor mental health, and being able to access activities in library buildings can provide important support. The impact of not being able walk to library buildings could be significant for some.
- As noted above, some of the libraries at risk of closure are situated in larger villages / small towns which provide rural hubs where people in more remote rural areas access services. If libraries in these communities close, people with the

characteristic of rurality are likely to be impacted, by having to travel separately to a larger town to access an alternative library building (which may dissuade some from accessing the service).

- People on low incomes may find it more difficult to access alternative library buildings, because this group are less able to afford the costs of car ownership, and are also less able to afford public transport fares, which can be significant in many parts of Somerset.
- People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. For some of the libraries at risk of closure, it is difficult to mitigate this impact effectively.

3.4. We will seek to mitigate the impacts identified through a combination of measures, outlined in detail in the action tables in Appendix 4iii. The main, overarching mitigations are summarised here:

- We will seek to establish or maintain Community Library Partnerships, to maintain a library building in communities.
- We will provide additional Mobile Library Services in many affected communities, to enable access to lending services (including a range of specialist stock) for people who cannot access alternative library buildings.
- The Home Library Service can provide access to lending services, and social contact, for some vulnerable customers.
- The Digital Library Service provides access to e-books, e-audio books and e-magazines for those who can access this service; it can also support customers who live further away from library buildings to plan trips into town around events and activities in the library.
- Library Outreach Services will be provided where there is a high need for certain services, and can mitigate impacts for those at risk of social isolation. These will include public computer access in two locations where this service is heavily used.
- We will communicate changes clearly, and signpost alternative services effectively.
- We will explore the potential to develop quiet times in our busier libraries, to try to mitigate the impact of accessing larger libraries for those who find this distressing as a result of a disability.

3.5. Table 3.5 below sets out a high-level summary of how the level of different impacts varies across different communities where changes are proposed. This is provided primarily as a means to highlight the variable significance of the impacts set out in paragraph 3.3, and to support decision makers in identifying the Equality Impact Assessments they may want to look at in more depth to inform their decision. It should not be used, in itself, as a basis for decision making.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Table 3.5: Summary of most significant impacts, by community / catchment affected:

	Bishops Lydeard	Bruton	Castle Cary	Highbridge	Milborne Port	Nether Stowey	North Petherton	Porlock	Priorswood	Somerton	South Petherton	Street	Sunningdale	Watchet	Wiveliscombe
1. Older People, Disabled People - Social Isolation	Light Blue	Light Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Blue	Blue	Light Purple	Blue	Light Purple	Light Purple	Light Purple	Dark Purple
2. Older People – Access	Blue	Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Blue	Dark Purple	Light Blue	Light Purple	Blue	Light Purple	Blue	Light Purple	Blue	Blue	Light Purple
3. Children under 5	Blue	Light Blue	Blue	Blue	Light Purple	Light Purple	Blue	Blue	Blue	Dark Purple	Blue	Light Purple	Light Blue	Blue	Light Purple
4. Primary School Aged Children	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Light Purple	Light Purple	Light Purple	Blue	Blue	Light Purple	Light Blue	Light Purple	Light Blue	Blue	Light Purple
5. Older Children / Young Adults - study facilities	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Purple	Dark Purple	Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Blue
6. Disabled People - Access	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Dark Purple	Blue	Light Purple	Blue	Blue	Blue	Light Purple	Blue	Light Purple	Light Purple
7. Disabled People - distress / anxiety	Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Purple	Blue	Light Blue	Blue	Blue	Dark Purple	Light Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Dark Purple	Light Blue	Blue
8. Pregnancy & Maternity	Blue	Light Purple	Light Purple	Light Blue	Light Purple	Dark Purple	Light Blue	Blue	Blue	Dark Purple	Light Blue	Dark Purple	Light Blue	Blue	Light Purple
9. Rurality	Blue	Blue	Light Purple	Light Blue	Blue	Light Purple	Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Light Purple	Light Blue	Light Purple	Light Blue	Light Blue	Dark Purple
10. Low income – Access	Blue	Blue	Dark Purple	Blue	Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Light Purple	Light Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Blue	Light Purple
11. Low income - Digital Exclusion	Light Blue	Blue	Light Purple	Light Purple	Light Purple	Blue	Blue	Light Purple	Blue	Light Purple	Light Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Blue	Light Purple
<i>Note: for further detail see Appendix 4iii...</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>o</i>

Key:

- Limited impact: e.g. because of strong mitigations, and/or a low number of users affected, and/or impact is less critical for users
- Moderate impact: e.g. because mitigations are effective to an extent, and/or a moderate number of users are affected, and/or impact creates difficulty for users
- Significant impact: e.g. because mitigations are limited, and/or a significant number of users are affected, and/or impact affects users significantly
- Very significant impact: e.g. because mitigations do not exist, and/or a high number of users affected, and/or impacts affect users very significantly

4. Summary of impacts for staff

4.1. This section provides a summary of the potential impacts on staff providing the service. Some of the impacts on staff are similar for both scenarios contemplated in sections 2 and 3 above - staff may face changes whether or not libraries close or transfer to Community Library Partnerships. This being the case, these scenarios are considered together.

4.2. Potential impacts are described comprehensively in Appendix 4i below, alongside mitigating actions. This section provides a summary of the more significant equalities impacts identified for staff:

- The majority of staff who are likely to be affected by the changes are likely to be female, or over 50, or have lower than average incomes (or they may have a combination of these protected characteristics). 71% of the workforce is over the age of 50. And 83% of frontline staff are female. The recommended changes are likely to lead to a reduction in the size of the workforce, possibly with some compulsory redundancies. This impact will be mitigated as far as possible through the County Council's redundancy policies (including the use of voluntary redundancy and redeployment to minimise compulsory redundancies). However, some residual impact is likely for some staff, and this is more likely to affect groups with the characteristics of Age, Sex and Low Income.
- Recommended changes are also likely to lead to a period of anxiety for many (but not all) staff, which could have health and wellbeing impacts. As above, because females, those aged over 50 and people on low income are over-represented in the library workforce, this is more likely to affect groups with the characteristics of Age, Sex and Low Income. These impacts will be mitigated as far as possible by supporting all staff through workforce and service re-design changes.
- Following previous organisational changes within the County Council we know that some (but not all) staff with the characteristics of Age, Disability, Pregnancy or Maternity, Low Income or Caring Responsibilities may, for reasons associated with that characteristic, have a heightened sense of anxiety over the restructuring process or service re-design changes.
- Feedback received during the staff consultation period suggested that some staff with the characteristics of Age (younger people), Disability, Sex (females), Low Income and Caring Responsibilities may be less able to take up re-deployment opportunities than people without these characteristics, meaning they are more likely to be impacted if the proposals are implemented.

4.3. We will seek to mitigate the impacts identified through a combination of measures, outlined in detail in the action tables in Appendix 4i. The main, overarching mitigations are summarised here:

- We will support staff through good communication, providing access to support services, and identify staff who are particularly anxious to enable extra support to be provided, where possible.
- We will adhere to the county councils' policies and procedures for restructuring, redeployment and relocation.
- We will work discuss any concerns raised by staff working in Community Library Partnership settings with community partners.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4i

Staff Equalities Impact Assessment

APPENDIX 4i: Library Service Consultation – Staff Equalities Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
<p>Baroness Thornton, March 2010</p>			
<p>What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?</p>		<p>Library Service Redesign: Library Staff.</p>	
<p>Version</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Date</p>	<p>05/10/2018</p>
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes recommended. It focuses on potential impacts on staff who are delivering the Libraries Service and should be read in conjunction with the other assessments included within this Appendix, which focus on potential impacts on people who are using, or may wish to use, the library service. These other assessments are set out in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4ii – which considers the potential impacts of transferring library buildings to ‘Community Library Partnerships’ - partnerships between the county council library service and one or more community partners to maintain library buildings which would otherwise close. • Appendix 4iii - which considers the potential impacts of closing a number of libraries and providing library services to communities and the surrounding areas through a combination of Library Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services. <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services in these communities through either a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in these communities (a Community Library Partnership) or library outreach services, or mobile library services, or a combination of library outreach services and mobile library services. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option in each case, but if</p>			

this is not possible, the library building in these communities would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff employed by the County Council or by lead community partners, and some may use a volunteer workforce. At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in each community if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership

There are therefore a number of potential outcomes from the cabinet decision, each of which could affect staff in different ways. The following scenarios are all assessed in this impact assessment:

- Staff being re-deployed or made redundant, because of a library closure, or because a Community Library Partnership maintains a library building through a volunteer-based model, or because of the recommended management team restructure.
- Staff continuing to be employed by the County Council, but in a role where they are working in a Community Library Partnership setting, potentially with a different working pattern or in a different location.
- Staff transferring under TUPE regulations to a lead community partner.

Following the cabinet decision, the libraries service re-design programme will be taken forward by:

- a) Examining the Expressions of Interest received from community partners who wish to support Community Library Partnerships. This process will confirm what the proposed staffing or volunteering arrangements are. Where viable Expressions of Interest are received, the council will develop legal agreements to form community library partnerships, which could include provisions relating to TUPE transfers.
- b) Designing and consulting on a detailed workforce structure, having considered any requirement to supply staff to Community Library Partnerships that may be requested through Expressions of Interest. This is likely to include a restructure of the libraries management team.
- c) Having taken on board feedback from a staff consultation exercise, a structure for the libraries workforce will be determined through a decision and implemented through a selection / redeployment process.

Equalities impacts for staff will be reviewed and re-assessed at each stage (prior to entering into the legal agreements described in [a], as part of the business case for a proposed workforce structure under [b], and to support the decision on the final structure described in [c]).

Section 2A – People or communities that **could be affected**

People and communities that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in separate Equalities Impact Assessments elsewhere in this Appendix – see Appendix 4ii and Appendix 4iii below.

Section 2B – People who are **delivering the policy or service**

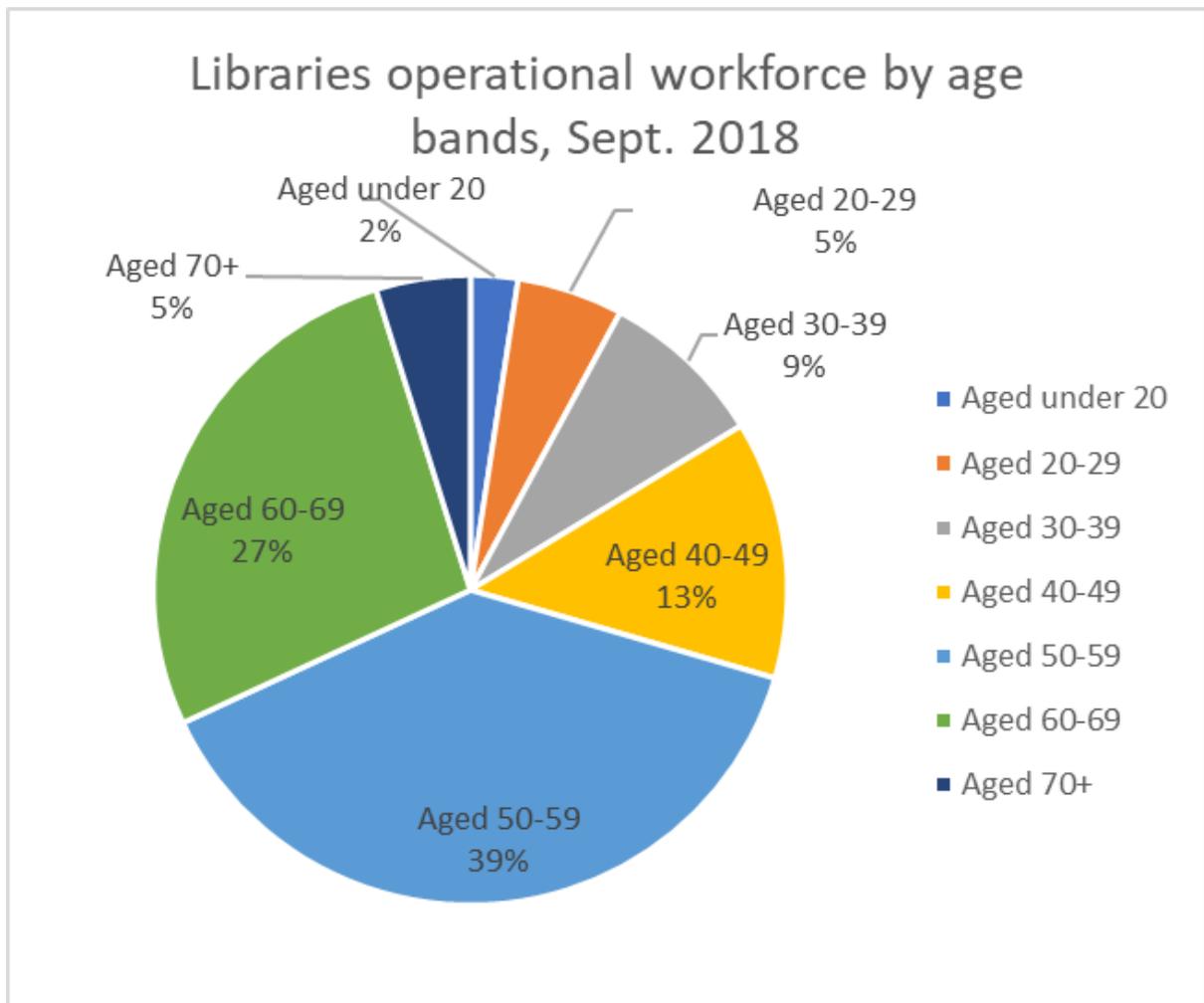
The service is provided by in-house staff in a range of management, back-office and frontline (library & information assistant and cleaner) roles. The service also draws upon hundreds of volunteers directly recruited to work within individual libraries and through the

Home Library Service delivered in partnership with the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS). The group of staff most likely to be impacted by the cabinet recommendations are the frontline workforce of Library and Information Assistants and apprentices (71.5 Full Time Equivalent), Library Supervisors and Assistant Supervisors (13.9 FTE), cleaners and caretakers (4.5 FTE); and more senior library service management staff (6 FTE); a total of 185 people. These figures do not include cleaning staff employed by external contractors, who may also be affected.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment

As at September 2018, and according to the County Council’s HR SAP database records, the various proportions of the Libraries Operational staff (as above) sharing certain relevant protected characteristics were as follows:

- 83% are female; 17% are Male.
- 92% describe themselves as belonging to the ‘White British’ ethnic group; 2% belonging to the ‘White: any other White background’ ethnic group; with the remainder (6%) preferring not to respond to this question.
- 81% said that they did not have a disability, 8% said they did have a disability, with the remaining 11% not responding to this question.
- 70% are aged over 50. The pie chart below shows the age distribution of the frontline workforce:



The County Council's HR SAP database records contain information about other protected characteristics, but we feel that this data is not statistically reliable as staff are not obliged to share further information. Records are not complete and therefore have not been included here.

Library and Information Assistants are paid at one of the Council's lowest pay scale bands and often work part time. We do not hold any information about total household income for our workforce, but it is likely that many frontline staff have lower than average levels of income.

Staff and unions were then consulted on proposals to re-design the libraries service. This consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. The vast majority of staff comments focussed on value of library buildings and the impact of proposed changes on customers and communities, however there was some feedback which is relevant to the impacts of changes proposed on staff:

- Some staff expressed concerns that delivering the proposed outreach services would stretch staff teams if insufficient volunteers came forward. Concerns were also expressed about the impact of 'displaced' customers on staff workload in libraries that remain open, if a nearby library closed.
- Some staff suggested that mixed models of staff and volunteer run libraries could offer a reasonable service to the public at a reduced cost. Some staff were positive about the prospect of communities paying for staff to support volunteers in Community Library Partnership models.
- Other staff (and particularly union representatives in their response) were concerned about the use of volunteers in libraries.
- Staff and union representatives expressed concern about the pressure and strain that the library service re-design programme is having on frontline staff, including:
 - The length of time the process is taking, and the impact this had on staff wellbeing (because of the ongoing uncertainty about job security in the future).
 - Tensions around using volunteers in added value roles and the potential use of volunteers for tasks that overlap with those assumed by paid staff.
 - Anxiety about having to go through an interview process.
 - Unease about how far staff may be expected to travel in a new structure, and the impact this may have on those with caring responsibilities.
 - The strain on frontline staff (particularly in single-staffed libraries) of being asked by members of the public if the library will close / if staff are going to lose their jobs.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. This section provides a summary of the more significant equalities impacts identified for staff:

- The majority of staff who are likely to be affected by the changes are likely to be female, or over 50, or have lower than average incomes (or they may have a

combination of these protected characteristics). 71% of the workforce is over the age of 50. And 83% of frontline staff are female. The recommended changes are likely to lead to a reduction in the size of the workforce, possibly with some compulsory redundancies. This impact will be mitigated as far as possible through the County Council's redundancy policies (including the use of voluntary redundancy and redeployment to minimise compulsory redundancies). However, some residual impact is likely for some staff, and this is more likely to affect groups with the characteristics of Age, Sex and Low Income.

- Recommended changes are also likely to lead to a period of anxiety for many (but not all) staff, which could have health and wellbeing impacts. As above, because females, those aged over 50 and people on low income are over-represented in the library workforce, this is more likely to affect groups with the characteristics of Age, Sex and Low Income. These impacts will be mitigated as far as possible by supporting all staff through workforce and service re-design changes.
- Following previous organisational changes within the County Council we know that some (but not all) staff with the characteristics of Age, Disability, Pregnancy or Maternity, Low Income or Caring Responsibilities may, for reasons associated with that characteristic, have a heightened sense of anxiety over the restructuring process or service re-design changes.
- Feedback received during the staff consultation period suggested that some staff with the characteristics of Age (younger people), Disability, Sex (females), Low Income and Caring Responsibilities may be less able to take up re-deployment opportunities than people without these characteristics, meaning they are more likely to be impacted if the proposals are implemented.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)</p>			
<p>Identified issue drawn from your conclusions</p>	<p>Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?</p>	<p>Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?</p>	<p>How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?</p>
<p>Age</p>			
<p>A significantly higher proportion of frontline library staff are over 50, and there is a risk of indirect discrimination against staff with this protected characteristic. Any reduction in staff numbers could affect those aged over 50 more as this group may find it more difficult to find alternative employment.</p>	<p>Support staff who may potentially be at risk through re-deployment opportunities and access to support services. Use voluntary redundancy to minimise compulsory redundancy, where it is cost effective.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019</p>	<p>Staff are supported as far as possible through workforce changes through regular liaison and communication.</p>
<p>Feedback from the consultation indicates that staff who have been with the service for a long time (who are more likely to be older) may be more likely to be experiencing anxiety about the prospect of being interviewed in a selection process.</p>	<p>Design the selection process to minimise anxiety as far as possible. Ensure all staff are well-supported and identify staff who are particularly anxious to enable extra support to</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - Jan. 2019.</p>	<p>Selection processes are designed following discussions with staff and Unions to try to reduce anxiety whilst offering a fair and objective assessment of ability. Staff (including individuals</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Staff, and in particular, younger staff unable to afford their own car, or who use public transport or who have only limited access to their own vehicle, could potentially be impacted because they may not be able to take advantage of re-deployment to other libraries or alternative roles.</p>	<p>be provided, where possible.</p> <p>Ensure that redeployment policies are followed, particularly regarding the consideration of access issues to alternative work bases.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>needing more support) are supported as far as possible through workforce changes including guidance and training on the interview process. Opportunities to access further support via Care First will also be promoted as well as Mental Health ambassadors within the County Council.</p> <p>Redeployment or re-assignment takes account of individuals' ability to travel as far as possible.</p>
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Some (but not all) disabled staff may be more likely to rely on public transport due to a sensory loss or physical disability and could potentially be impacted because they may be less able to take advantage of re-deployment to other libraries or alternative roles.</p>	<p>Ensure that redeployment policies are followed, particularly regarding the consideration of</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>Redeployment or re-assignment takes account of ability to travel as far as possible. Consideration will also</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
 APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Some (but not all) disabled staff may have a heightened level of anxiety, because of the disability they have over one or more of the</p>	<p>access issues to alternative work bases. We will consider and sensitively deal with people's reasonable adjustments should they move location of work to make this transition as seamless as possible.</p> <p>Support staff who may potentially be at risk through re-deployment opportunities and access to support services. Use voluntary redundancy to minimise compulsory redundancy. Staff will not be selected for redundancy based on the fact they have a disability.</p> <p>Ensure all staff are well-supported and identify staff who are</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Library Services –</p>	<p>be given to accessible parking arrangements, staff facilities etc. and Access to Work support as appropriate.</p> <p>Staff are supported as far as possible through workforce changes.</p> <p>Staff are supported as far as possible through</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>following scenarios, which are likely to arise from the recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working in libraries where community library partnerships are being discussed, or which are likely to close as a result of the recommendations (this anxiety could be compounded by customer enquiries or local campaigns); or • the prospect of going through a selection process; or • uncertainty over job security in the future; or • being re-deployed to a different library or an alternative role. 	<p>particularly anxious to enable extra support to be provided, where possible. The council's commitment as a Disability Confident employer will be reaffirmed with all affected staff.</p> <p>Design a selection process to minimise anxiety as far as possible. Ensure all staff are well-supported and identify staff who are particularly anxious to enable extra support to be provided, where possible.</p> <p>Support staff who may potentially be at risk through re-deployment opportunities and access to support services. Use</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - Jan. 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>service re-design changes.</p> <p>Selection processes are designed to try to reduce anxiety whilst offering a fair and objective test of ability. Staff will be asked to request reasonable adjustments to the process to support them, and these will be considered by service managers.</p> <p>Staff are supported as far as possible through workforce changes reflecting the Council's position as a Disability Confident Employer.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	voluntary redundancy to minimise compulsory redundancy, where it is cost effective.		
Gender Reassignment			
<p>Some (but not all) staff with this protected characteristic may have heightened anxiety about working within a Community Library Partnership setting or being transferred to a different employer. This could be because of societal responses to gender reassignment increasing nervousness of change, or because the County Council's policies on discrimination or harassment may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control.</p> <p><i>(Feedback from the consultation exercise indicates that, in general, staff are not concerned about working alongside volunteers, and so we think this impact is unlikely to apply to any of our workforce, but the potential impact will be kept under review).</i></p>	<p>Ensure that this potential impact is effectively mitigated through equalities provisions in Community Library Partnership agreements, which allow the Council to discuss any concerns with community partners.</p> <p>Ensure volunteer training includes training on equalities and diversity.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>Parties to Community Library Partnership agreements understand their responsibilities to promote tolerance and diversity. The County Council is able to manage any discrimination or harassment towards its staff through legal agreements.</p> <p>Volunteers working in community libraries have an awareness and understanding of equalities and diversity.</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified at this stage.			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Pregnancy and Maternity			
<p>Staff who are on maternity leave prior to or during the workforce restructuring exercise may feel more vulnerable because they are away from the office; they may not become involved in any staff consultation exercise and may feel not feel as supported.</p>	<p>Ensure that staff who are on maternity leave are effectively communicated with and supported throughout any workforce changes, including engaging these staff in any consultation exercises.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - Jan. 2019.</p>	<p>Staff who are on maternity leave are effectively communicated with and supported throughout any workforce changes, including any potential change to their workbase.</p>
<p>Staff who are pregnant may have a heightened sense of anxiety about a restructuring process, or the prospect of transferring to a Community Library Partnership. This could be because of anxiety about the timing of the selection process being close to or after their expected due date. Or anxieties about being re-deployed to another library or alternative role, which may make childcare arrangements more difficult, or being transferred to another employer, who may have different policies on maternity leave and flexible working.</p>	<p>Identify any staff to whom this may apply and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to any selection processes, and / or TUPE and employment rights are clearly explained.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - Jan. 2019.</p>	<p>Somerset County Council's policy on Maternity continues to apply. Those staff who are on maternity leave are effectively communicated with and supported throughout any workforce changes. Selection processes are designed to try to reduce anxiety whilst offering a fair and objective test of ability, with reasonable adjustments made where appropriate.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	<p>Ensure that redeployment policies are followed, particularly regarding the consideration of access issues to alternative work bases, and caring responsibilities.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March. 2019.</p>	<p>Redeployment or re-assignment takes account of ability to travel and caring responsibilities as far as possible.</p>
<p>Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)</p>			
<p>Some (but not all) staff with this protected characteristic may have heightened anxiety about working within a Community Library Partnership setting or being transferred to a different employer. This could be because of societal responses to gender reassignment increasing nervousness of change, or because the County Council's policies on discrimination or harassment may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control.</p>	<p>Ensure that this potential impact is effectively mitigated through equalities provisions in Community Library Partnership agreements, which allow the Council to discuss any concerns with community partners.</p> <p>Ensure volunteer training includes training on equalities and diversity.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services -</p>	<p>Parties to Community Library Partnership agreements understand their responsibilities to promote tolerance and diversity. The County Council is able to manage any discrimination or harassment towards its staff through legal agreements.</p> <p>Volunteers working in community libraries have an awareness and understanding of</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Staff whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes proposed, potentially leading to a situation where re-deployment opportunities are more difficult to access, or where staff are less likely to understand the process of transferring to alternative employers. A lack of ability to understand the changes recommended could cause anxiety and have other mental health and wellbeing impacts.</p> <p><i>(We think this is unlikely to apply to any of our workforce, but there could be some cleaning staff affected, and the potential impact will be kept under review. We will ensure these employees understand the process)</i></p>	<p>Ensure staff whose first language is not English are identified and supported effectively.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Library Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>equalities and diversity.</p> <p>Changes and procedures are effectively understood by those whose first language is not English during the implementation of any changes.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p>			
<p>There could be a potential impact where the recruitment/selection process coincides with a religious festival.</p>	<p>We will ensure any affected staff are offered an alternative date for interview if there is a clash with a religious adherence.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager Library Services - Nov. 2018 – March 2019</p>	<p>All staff are supported throughout the workforce change process.</p>
<p>Sex</p>			
<p>A significantly higher proportion of frontline library staff are women, and there is a risk of indirect discrimination against staff with this protected characteristic, because of the general impact that the changes proposed will have on the libraries workforce. Potential</p>	<p>Support staff who may potentially be at risk through re-deployment opportunities and</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019</p>	<p>Staff are supported as far as possible through workforce changes.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>impacts could include having to relocate to a different work base, being made redundant, or being anxious about change and job security.</p> <p>Women are more likely to have caring responsibilities which may make it more difficult for them to re-locate or travel to alternative work bases. Therefore, they may not be able to take advantage of re-deployment to other libraries if this is an outcome of the consultation exercise.</p>	<p>access to support services. Use voluntary redundancy to minimise compulsory redundancy.</p> <p>Ensure that redeployment policies are followed, particularly regarding the consideration of access issues to alternative work bases and caring responsibilities.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>Redeployment or re-assignment takes account of ability to travel and caring responsibilities as far as possible.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>			
<p>Some (but not all) staff with this protected characteristic may have heightened anxiety about working within a Community Library Partnership setting or being transferred to a different employer. This could be because of societal responses to gender reassignment increasing nervousness of change, or because the County Council's policies on discrimination or harassment may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control.</p> <p><i>(Feedback from the consultation exercise indicates that, in general, staff are not concerned about working alongside volunteers, and so</i></p>	<p>Ensure that this potential impact is effectively mitigated through equalities provisions in Community Library Partnership agreements, which allow the Council to discuss any concerns</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>Parties to Community Library Partnership agreements understand their responsibilities to promote tolerance and diversity. The County Council can manage any discrimination or harassment towards</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p><i>we think this impact is unlikely to apply to any of our workforce, but the potential impact will be kept under review).</i></p>	<p>with community partners.</p> <p>Ensure volunteer training includes training on equalities and diversity.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>its staff through legal agreements.</p> <p>Volunteers working in community libraries have an awareness and understanding of equalities and diversity.</p>
<p>Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc)</p>			
<p>Low Income – frontline library staff are on lower pay scales and, whilst this does not necessarily correlate to low levels of total household income, they may feel more vulnerable to the effects of a workforce re-design process, with heightened sense of anxiety over job security.</p> <p>Staff with lower levels of household income may not be able to take advantage of re-deployment to other libraries, because they may be less able to afford a vehicle or a second vehicle, or because additional childcare costs to cover travel time may not be as affordable.</p>	<p>Ensure staff are effectively supported and engaged throughout the restructure process, including through a staff consultation.</p> <p>Ensure that redeployment policies are followed, particularly regarding the consideration of access issues to alternative work bases, and caring responsibilities.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>All staff affected by potential restructuring arrangements are effectively supported and engaged.</p> <p>Redeployment or re-assignment takes account of ability to travel and caring responsibilities as far as possible.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Carers – staff with caring responsibilities are likely to find it more difficult to re-locate or travel to alternative work bases, and therefore they may not be able to take advantage of re-deployment to other libraries or alternative roles.</p> <p>Staff with caring responsibilities for a disabled person may have a heightened sense of anxiety about a restructuring process, or the prospect of transferring to a Community Library Partnership, either because of anxieties about being re-deployed to another library or alternative role, which may make care arrangements more difficult, or being transferred to another employer, who may have different policies on flexible working.</p> <p>Staff with caring responsibilities for children may also have a heightened sense of anxiety about a restructuring process, or the prospect of transferring to a Community Library Partnership, either because of anxieties about being re-deployed to another library or alternative role, which may make childcare arrangements more difficult, or being transferred to another employer, who may have different policies on flexible working.</p>	<p>Ensure that redeployment policies are followed, particularly regarding the consideration of access issues to alternative work bases and caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Design selection process to minimise anxiety as far as possible. Ensure all staff are well-supported and identify staff who are particularly anxious to enable extra support to be provided, where possible.</p> <p>If relevant, ensure that TUPE and employment rights are clearly explained to any staff who may transfer to alternative employers.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Library Services – Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>Redeployment or re-assignment takes account of ability to travel and caring responsibilities as far as possible.</p> <p>Selection processes are designed to try to reduce anxiety whilst offering a fair and objective test of ability.</p> <p>Staff who may transfer to alternative employers are effectively communicated with and supported</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

			throughout any workforce changes.
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Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment

The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published as and when they are produced to support successive scrutiny and decision reports; each will contribute towards a suite of Assessments that will provide a consistent thread from start to finish and which will demonstrate how due regard to the Council's equality duty has been made through the process.

Completed by:	Sue Crowley / Oliver Woodhams
Date	05/10/2018
Signed off by:	Alyn Jones
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	08/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	Sue Crowley
Review date:	November 2018

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4ii

Community Library Partnerships
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Community Library Partnerships

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p> <p>Baroness Thornton, March 2010</p>			
<p>What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?</p>		<p>Library Service Redesign 2018 – Community Library Partnerships</p>	
<p>Version</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Date</p>	<p>20/09/2018</p>
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council's cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships. This is the preferred outcome of the changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in the following communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bishops Lydeard • Bruton • Castle Cary • Highbridge • Milborne Port • Nether Stowey • North Petherton • Porlock* • Priorswood (north Taunton) • Somerton • South Petherton • Street • Sunningdale (Yeovil) • Watchet • Wiveliscombe 			

**Note that Porlock library is currently operated as a Community Library Partnership, a pilot arrangement which is being recommended to continue.*

The assessment focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, these libraries, and should be read in conjunction with:

- Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff).
- Appendix 4iii - which considers the potential impacts of closing each of these libraries and providing library services to the communities and the surrounding areas through a combination of Library Outreach Services and / or Mobile Library Services, Digital Library Services and access to alternative libraries. This is an alternative outcome of the changes we are recommending, which has been assessed separately because the impacts are quite different.

Library Services in these communities are currently delivered through library buildings operated and funded by the County Council, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding areas. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health conditions, children and young people, and disabled people.

The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services in these communities through *either* a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in these communities (a Community Library Partnership) *or* library outreach services, or mobile library services, or a combination of digital library services, library outreach services and mobile library services. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option in each case, but if this is not possible, the library building in these communities would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in each community if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. At this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, so we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. As individual Community Library Partnership agreements develop, we will complete a more specific Equalities Impact Assessment for each one, prior to entering into formal agreements and implementing changes.

We have developed a minimum standard and 'Core Offer' for Community Library Partnerships, and because of this we know that some aspects of service delivery wouldn't change if services transferred to this delivery model. In particular, Community Library Partnerships will maintain the range of book stock and lending material that the libraries affected currently maintain; Community Library Partnerships will support the Bookstart scheme and the Summer Reading Challenge; and Community Library Partnerships will continue to offer the same range of public computer access

services as the libraries affected currently maintain. These minimum standards will play an important role in minimising the impacts on users, particularly users with sensory loss, children, and those on low incomes.

Through consultation and engagement, and through our work with communities to support groups who are considering a Community Library Partnership, we have identified a series of changes that *could* occur, and these form the focus of this assessment:

- Some Community Library Partnerships are likely to operate using volunteers rather than paid staff, or use a mixture of volunteer and paid staff. Whilst volunteers will be trained, and offered ongoing support and guidance, they will operate outside of the direct control of the County Council. It is possible (but unlikely) that Community Library Partnerships could employ their own staff, who would then also operate outside the direct control of the County Council.
- Opening hours could change; some Community Library Partnerships could reduce opening hours to the minimum 10 hours per week allowed under the County Council's core offer, or to a lesser degree. Other Community Library Partnerships may increase opening hours.
- Whilst the range of borrowing stock and the computer access services offered will not change, the range of activities and events offered may change. We hope that in some Community Library Partnerships the range of activities and events offered may increase (this has happened at Porlock Community Library); however, it could also reduce, or become focussed on certain activities which meet certain needs, but do not meet other needs.
- Community Library Partnerships will, to an extent, be outside of the control of the County Council. The County Council will exercise influence, and some control, through the legal agreement which will regulate Community Library Partnerships; however, it will have less responsibility and influence than it currently exercises over the libraries affected.
- Community Library Partnerships could relocate to alternative buildings.

Following the cabinet decision, the libraries service re-design programme will be taken forward by:

- a) Reviewing Expressions of Interest from community partners who wish to support Community Library Partnerships, which will confirm what the proposed staffing or volunteering arrangements are, and the proposed opening hours.
- b) Where viable Expressions of Interest are received, the council will develop legal agreements to form community library partnerships, which will include monitoring and service quality provisions which the community library will have to meet in order to continue to receive the Council's 'core offer'. These monitoring and service quality provisions will be informed by the mitigations set out in the action plan below.
- c) Once legal agreements are developed, the County Council will take a formal decision to establish the partnership (and other parties are likely to do the same).
- d) Following these decisions, legal agreements would be signed, and the library building would transition to the community partnership model.

Equalities impacts for service users will be reviewed and re-assessed at each stage, but in particular at stage (c). This will enable more specific assessments of equalities impacts to be made, on a case by case basis, with additional mitigations applied if necessary.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Across all the 15 libraries where the Council will be seeking to establish Community Library Partnerships, usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 9,277 active borrowers*;
- 203,925 visits (footfall);
- 2,896 people's network users*;
- 11,343 attendances at events held in the library.

** These figures are maximum values, as some borrowers and people's network users may have used more than one of the affected libraries in the year.*

The library catchment populations and opening hours are set out below:

	Catchment Population*	Opening hours per week
Bishops Lydeard	4,643	11, including Saturday
Bruton	5,066	12, including Saturday
Castle Cary	8,783	19.5, including Saturday
Highbridge	6,964	9.5, including Saturday
Milborne Port	3,400	14.5, including Saturday
Nether Stowey	4,780	20, including Saturday
North Petherton	8,168	21, including Saturday
Porlock	2,214	17.5, including Saturday
Priorswood (north Taunton)	21,704	29, including Saturday
Somerton	19,012	28.5, including Saturday
South Petherton	5,432	16.5, including Saturday
Street	41,614	34, including Saturday
Sunningdale (Yeovil)	5,805	14, including Saturday
Watchet	6,445	17.5, including Saturday
Wiveliscombe	5,806	17.5, including Saturday

**Note that some library catchments overlap, and so some populations are included within more than one catchment area.*

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to the 15 affected libraries a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of:

- All Somerset library service users.
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- All respondents to the public consultation

We have made an assumption that the characteristics of all Somerset library service users are similar to the characteristics of users of the 15 affected libraries. We consider this to be a reasonable assumption because:

- The libraries are a range of rural and urban libraries across Somerset.
- Many library users use more than one library, and so we think using data on all users is likely to be more accurate than trying to combine individual library user data, which would count a significant number of library users more than once.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Somerset population and consultation respondents in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% of Somerset population as a whole	Consultation respondents
0-4	5.42%	5.3%	1.8% (105)
5-11	16.29%	7.7%	
12-17	4.38%	6.8%	
18-64	44.70%	56.0%	57.1% (3,333)
65+	29.20%	24.1%	41.2% (2,404)

Table 2: % active library users, Somerset population and consultation respondents by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members who answered either Male or Female	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents who answered either Male or Female*
Female	63.0%	51.20%	63.0%
Male	37.0%	48.80%	57.0%

* Consultation asked “Do you identify as a man, as a woman or in some other way?”. The percentages shown are the percentage of all respondents answering that they identified as a man or as a woman; Table 8 gives further information which shows the percentage of respondents who identify in some other way.

Table 3: % of active library users, Somerset population and consultation respondents, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents*
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	2.02%	3.21%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	94.64%	96.79%

* Consultation asked “Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?”. Some White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, and any other White respondents may be less likely to have considered themselves to be from a Minority Ethnic Background, and so the percentage of respondents relating to this protected characteristic could be understated.

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems - Somerset population and Consultation respondents across Somerset:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	Long term health problem or disabled	19%	20.4%*
Non-disabled	95%	No long term health problem or disability identified	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders and library users who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Somerset Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership, or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Somerset Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Somerset Libraries, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities and this information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?'. People with Caring Responsibilities for young children are more likely to be frequent users of the library service.

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity for the combined years of 2013 to 2015 showing % South West England’s population, and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	98.3%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.6%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.1%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked ‘Which of the following options best describes your sexual orientation?’

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users of different religious beliefs:

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated		8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We did not ask questions specifically on the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:
% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:

.. as a man or as a woman - **99%** .. in some other way - **1%**
 .. matches their identity at birth - **99%** .. does not match their identity at birth - **1%**

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, affected libraries:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of the affected libraries. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent:

- Table 1 indicates that primary school aged children and people aged 65 or over are more likely to be affected by changes to library services generally because these groups are more likely to use libraries than other groups. Table 2 indicates that females are more likely to be affected by changes to library services because a higher proportion of library users are female.
- Table 3 indicates that Black & Minority Ethnic groups, and non-British white groups, may be more likely to be affected by changes to library services than White British people, because these groups are more likely to use libraries than White British people.
- It is difficult to draw conclusions from Table 4 because the data is not comparable, however, it is likely that a significant number of users have some form of disability. Table 5 seems to indicate that a large proportion of respondents to the consultation had caring responsibilities, which may indicate that changes to libraries are more likely to affect those with caring responsibilities.
- Table 6 could indicate that people who identify as Bisexual, or Gay or Lesbian may be more likely to be affected by changes to library services than people who identify as Heterosexual, because these groups are more likely to use libraries than Heterosexual people.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, affected libraries:

Age:

Some library activities and services are targeted towards certain age groups, and some users of these activities may not be included within the data above (because library service activities and library visits do not require the use of a membership card). Feedback from the consultation and our experience of service delivery shows that certain user groups with the protected characteristic of age are more likely to use activities and events:

- Some events and activities (for example, Baby Boogie and Rhyme time activities) are used by very young children.
- Other events and activities (for example, code clubs, Lego clubs, homework clubs) are used by children of primary and early secondary school age.

- Many events and activities (for example, University of the 3rd Age classes, 'Knit and Natter' and 'Feel better with a book' groups) are mainly (but not exclusively) by older people. Older people are significant users of Digital Inclusion activities.

Other library services are also used more frequently by particular age groups (for example, older children and adults of working age are more frequent users of public wifi for work or study, the summer reading challenge is targeted at primary school children). However, these are not considered to be factors in this equalities impact assessment because these services would continue to be available in Community Library Partnerships, and the quality of service delivery is unlikely to be materially affected for these user groups.

Disability:

We know from our experience of service delivery, from the consultation exercise, and from the needs assessment exercise, that there are some users of some of the libraries affected who have the protected characteristic of disability, particularly in Priorswood (which is used by school children from nearby Selworthy Special School), Watchet (where there are relatively high numbers of disabled people, according to 2011 census data), and many of the other affected libraries. Some activities and services (for example, 'feel better with a book' groups, some specialist health collections) may be more likely to be used by people with the protected characteristic of disability.

Pregnancy and Maternity:

We do not have any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Library Service users with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity, however from our experience of service delivery we know that a relatively high proportion of people with very young children / babies are likely to be users of the affected libraries, in particular they are likely to use Baby Boogie / Rhyme Time activities.

Rural / urban mix:

Bruton, Castle Cary, Milborne Port, Nether Stowey, Porlock, Somerton, South Petherton, Street and Wiveliscombe libraries all serve rural areas around these communities. Many users of these affected libraries are likely to have the protected characteristic of Rurality.

Income levels:

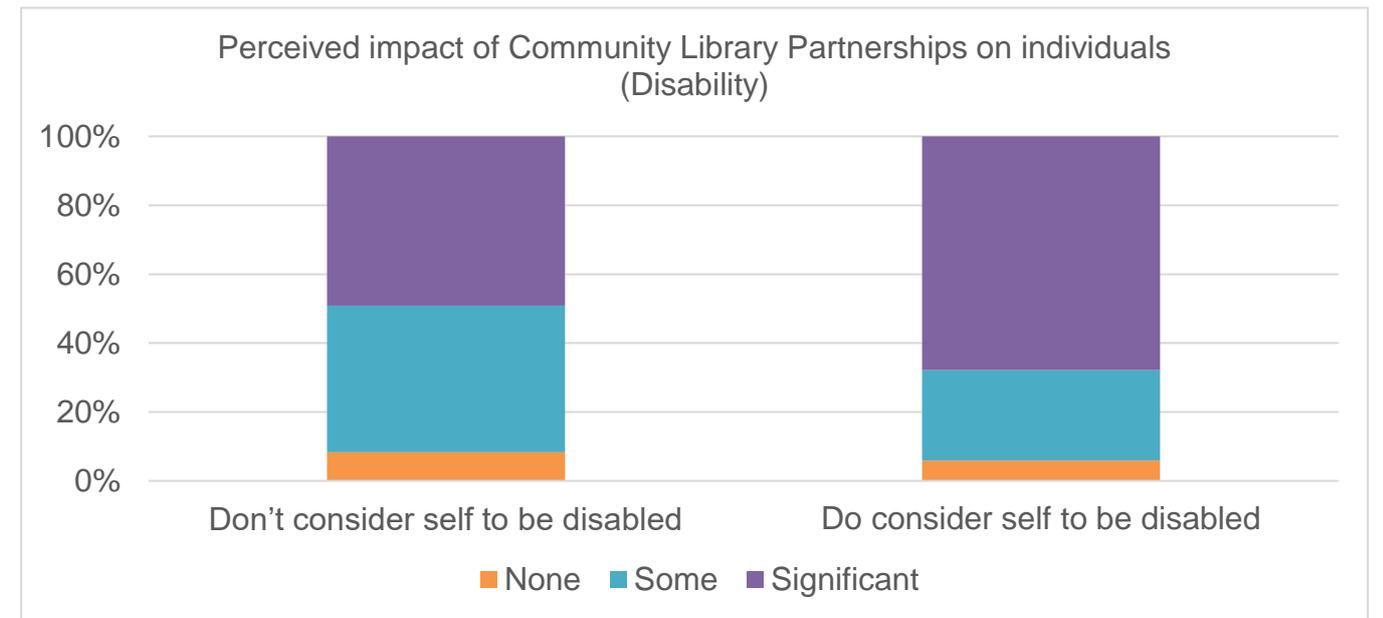
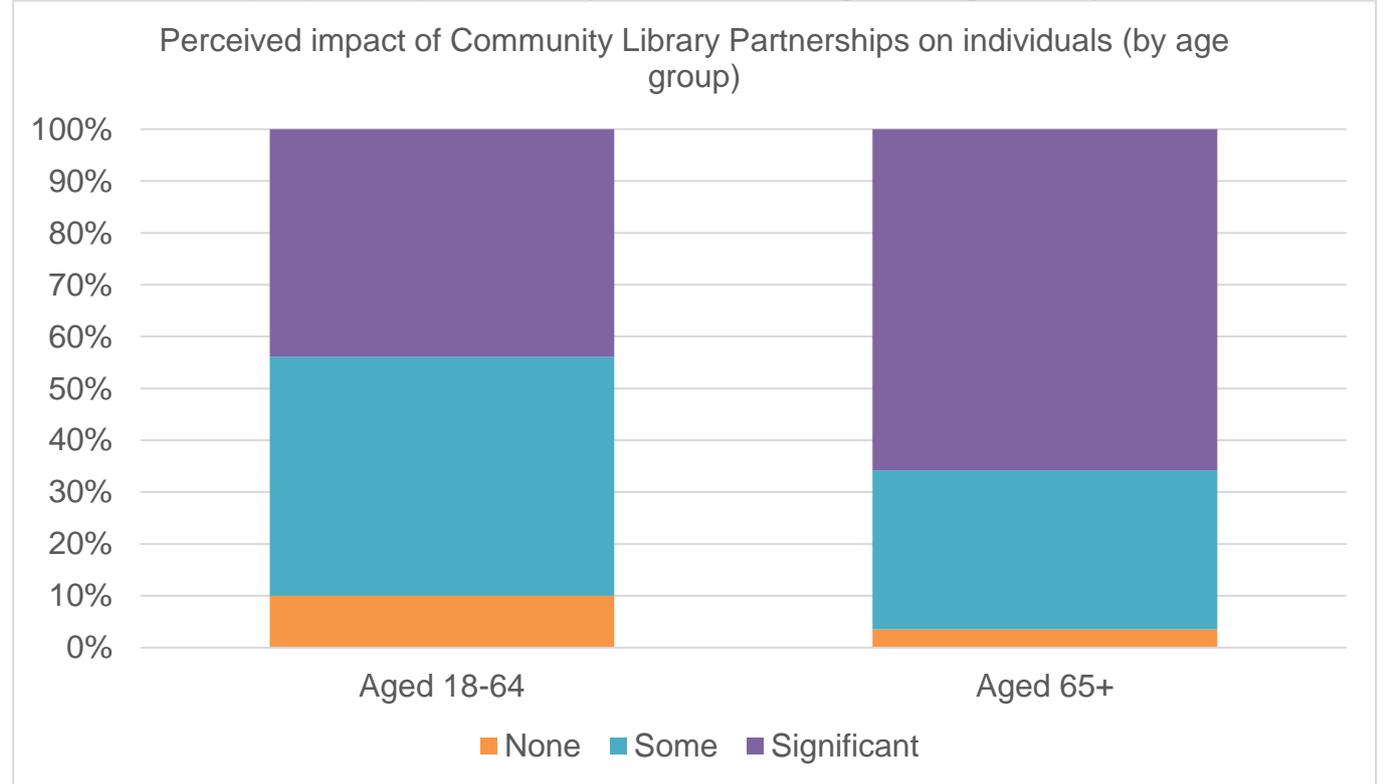
We do not collate any data on the income levels for library customers, however our judgement is that those with low incomes are more likely to use the library service, including the affected libraries considered in this assessment. Many of the services used by people with low incomes would continue to be available in Community Library Partnerships, but changes to staffing models (from staff-led to volunteer-led) may have an impact on the level of support available.

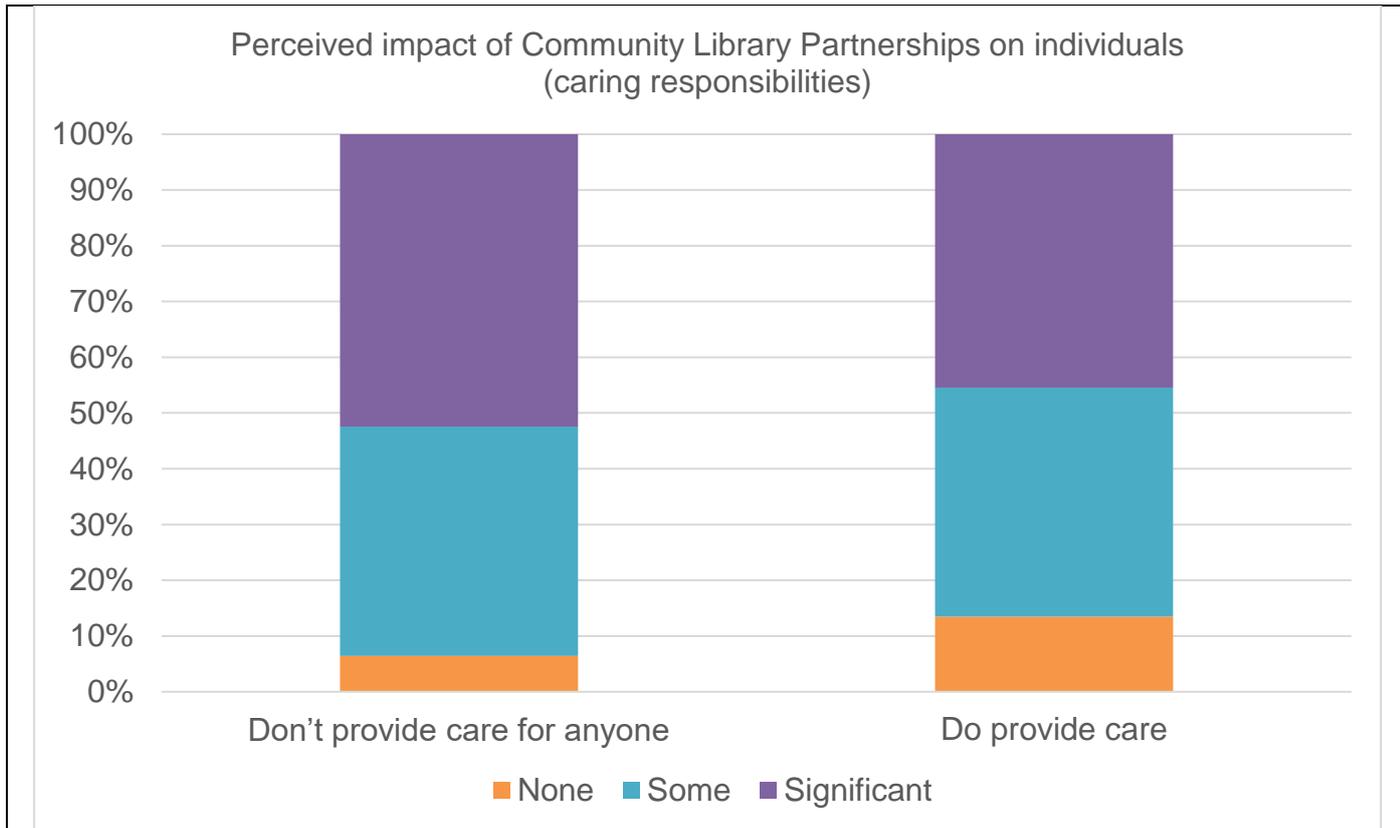
Disabled people and carers are more frequent users of specialist collections (for example, our dementia and autism collections), however, this is not considered to be a factor in this assessment as these services would continue to be available in Community Library Partnerships.

Section 2B – People who are delivering the policy or service
People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4i above.
Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)
<p>Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Religion/faith, Sexual Orientation and Gender Re-assignment, Caring Responsibilities, Rurality and Low Income. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;• a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and• a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data. <p>Relevant information gathered through the public consultation exercise is summarised below in relation to the affected libraries. Data and information gathered through the community engagement exercise, the needs assessment and the access assessment vary from library to library, and cannot be meaningfully summarised for the group of 15 affected libraries as a whole. This information is set out for each library in detail in Appendix 4iii below. It will be used to inform more specific equalities impact assessments which will be carried out for individual libraries prior to any transfers to Community Library Partnerships.</p> <p><i>Relevant quantitative evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:</i></p> <p>In Phase 2 of the public consultation, respondents using the affected libraries were asked separate questions about Community Library Partnerships and other options for library service delivery. In all communities, across all protected groups, there was a significant preference for Community Library Partnerships over mobile or outreach delivery models when respondents were asked to state a preference. No differences in stated preferences are observable for groups with different protected characteristics, across the affected libraries.</p> <p>Respondents were also asked about the impact of different options, for themselves as individuals, and for their families and the community. For the protected characteristics of Race, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment and Sexual Orientation there were no significant differences in perceived impact for groups with protected characteristics amongst respondents using the affected libraries. For Age, Disability and Caring Responsibilities there were some observable differences in the perception of the impact of Community Library Partnerships on individuals with different characteristics.</p> <p>The graphs below illustrate these differences in answers to the question <i>“Please tell us about the impact you feel [a proposal to maintain a library building through a Community Library Partnership] will have on you as an individual”</i>. To summarise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A greater proportion of people aged 65 or over felt that the proposal would have a significant impact, compared to people aged 18-64.• A greater proportion of disabled people felt that the proposal would have a significant impact, compared to people who did not have a disability.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
 APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

- A lower proportion of people with caring responsibilities felt that the proposal would have a significant impact, compared to people who did not have caring responsibilities. The question did not distinguish between positive and negative impacts, but analysis of comments shows that most people interpreted this question as relating to a negative impact.





Qualitative responses

A very large number of comments were made through the survey by respondents and a number of letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, 19 drop-in events were held, as well as focus groups for disabled people and children. Although respondents overwhelmingly preferred the concept of Community Library Partnerships compared to alternative mobile library or library outreach services, many respondents had concerns about Community Library Partnerships.

The most common themes in feedback about Community Library Partnerships were:

- concerns about their sustainability or viability, often referring to the challenges in recruiting volunteers.
- general concerns about the loss of professional staff (and the replacement of staff with volunteers)
- concerns about a degradation of service (whether through a reduction in quality or opening hours reductions), and
- concerns about a perceived unfairness of asking communities to pay, through local parish or town council taxation, for libraries which many respondents felt should be provided by the County Council.

Within and in addition to these general common concerns, there was some more detailed feedback on Community Library Partnerships which relates to protected characteristics. There was also some feedback on aspects of library service delivery which is relevant to this assessment, though it was not provided specifically in relation to proposals about Community Library Partnerships. The main points that are relevant to this assessment are summarised below:

Age:

- A number of comments from individual respondents and groups identified the value of activities provided by libraries for older people, particularly single older people.
- Similarly, many respondents highlighted the value of activities for children and younger people.
- Many respondents highlighted the value of visiting the library after school for children. Feedback from children's focus groups indicates that doing after school activities at the library is important to some children.

Disability

- Some respondents noted the value of staff expertise for people with sensory loss:
 - *“having the librarians’ help to choose audio books they would relate to has made a huge difference [to two members of a ‘Feel Better with a Book’ group with severe sight problems]”*
- Feedback from the Compass disability workshops identified the value of activities for disabled people.
- Feedback from the staff consultation highlighted the difficulties volunteers may have providing services to some people with mental health problems.
- Feedback from one group highlighted the value of paid staff in supporting people with learning disabilities.

Pregnancy / Maternity

- Some respondents noted the importance of activities targeted at parents and young children in supporting the wellbeing of people with the protected characteristic of maternity.

Low income

- Some comments highlighted concerns about volunteers being able to support the needs of unemployed people:
 - *“Many residents need help navigating a range of internet functions, including those such as job searches, managing Universal Credit contracts and updating income and benefit details. The involvement of volunteers in assisting with these and other highly personal and confidential transactions could well risk lapses in security.”*

Other protected characteristics:

There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of Race, Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status and no comments relating to these groups were made in respect of Community Library Partnerships.

No impacts of Community Library Partnerships have been identified through analysis of qualitative consultation feedback for people with the characteristics of Rurality or Caring Responsibilities.

Finally, a wide range of information has been gathered on how different communities are likely to try to operate community library partnerships. Whilst this is not clear or firm at present, we have

developed our understanding of how community library partnerships are likely to operate in Somerset, and this has informed the assessment set out here.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. This section provides a summary of the more significant, negative equalities impacts identified in this assessment:

- The general impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnership models will be more likely to impact adversely people with the protected characteristics of Age (older people and children of primary school age), Race (Black and Minority Ethnic Groups and non-British White ethnic groups), Maternity, Sex (Females), and Low Income; because these groups are over-represented within the population of library users. A number (but not all) of the affected libraries are in smaller communities serving more rural populations, and the general impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnership models may impact on people who have the protected characteristic of rurality.
- There is some evidence from the consultation exercise that older people and disabled people may be more anxious about transferring services to Community Library Partnerships, because of a perceived impact on them.
- Community Library Partnerships may not provide the same level of activities and events as libraries currently do (conversely, Community Library Partnerships may provide a wider range of events and activities). Community Library Partnerships may not design and develop activities and events with the needs of particular groups in mind. This could impact on people with the protected characteristics of Age (older people and children), Disability, and Maternity,
- Community Library Partnerships using a predominantly volunteer workforce may not be as effective at supporting people who are digitally excluded, or in providing technical help to use the internet (although conversely, Community Library Partnerships may provide a wider range of digital inclusion activities, and/or may be more effective at helping people to use the internet). This could be more likely to have an impact on some people with the protected characteristics of Age (older people), because older people are more likely to need help using the internet. Feedback from the consultation exercise indicates that some people with the characteristic of Low Income could also be impacted.
- Feedback from the consultation exercise indicates that some people may be less comfortable asking volunteers for help with using the internet because of privacy concerns. In Community Library Partnerships using a predominantly volunteer workforce this could be more likely to have an impact on some people with the protected characteristics of Age (older people), because older people are more likely to need help using the internet. Feedback from the consultation exercise indicates that some people with the characteristic of Low Income could also be impacted.
- Some (but not all) service users with the protected characteristics of disability, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation and race may have heightened anxiety about libraries transferring to a Community Library Partnership model, because societal responses to people with these protected characteristics may increase nervousness of change, or because the County Council's policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control. Some service users with this protected characteristic may be at a higher risk of discrimination because the County

Council's policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control.

- Community Library Partnerships using volunteers may be less effective at supporting people with sensory loss, or other disabilities, because volunteers may have less knowledge or awareness of specialist services available for people with sensory loss, or may be less aware of the issues faced by people with other types of disability. Similarly, Community Library Partnerships using volunteers may be less effective at supporting people whose first language is not English, because volunteers may be less aware of stock available in alternative language formats.
- Community Library Partnerships may reduce or change opening hours (although conversely, Community Library Partnerships may increase opening hours). Opening hours reductions could affect primary school aged children if they are no longer able to visit the library after school.

There may also be some positive impacts of Community Library Partnerships - opening hours could increase, and the range of activities and events could expand under Community Library Partnership models, which could have significant benefits for users with a range of protected characteristics. However, such positive impacts are not certain and therefore limited weight should be placed on them at this time.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts, you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>Although people of all ages use libraries, people aged 65 or over and children of primary school age are more likely to be affected by changes to library services because a higher proportion of library users are in these age groups. This means that the general impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnership models may be more likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Age.</p> <p>A greater proportion of people aged 65 or over responding to the consultation felt that changes to library services from the current service to a Community Library Partnership would have a significant impact, compared to people aged 18-64. This could indicate a greater level of anxiety about Community Library Partnerships for older people.</p> <p>Library activities such as ‘Feel better with a book’ groups and a wide range of social activities are important for older people, particularly those living alone who are vulnerable to social isolation. Community Library Partnerships may not provide the same range of activities and events as are provided at present (although conversely, Community</p>	<p>No specific actions can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>Ensure that any transfers to Community Library Partnerships are communicated effectively to customers.</p> <p>Community Library Partnerships will not be obliged to offer activities, and so the risk of this impact</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - April 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Library Services - April 2019 onwards.</p>	<p>Customers (including older people) understand the services that will be provided through Community Library Partnerships, and are able to raise and discuss concerns.</p> <p>The council, through its monitoring role, supports Community Library Partnerships to run activities and</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Library Partnerships may provide a wider range of activities and events). Community Library Partnerships may not develop and design events with the needs of older people in mind.</p>	<p>cannot be mitigated through agreements. The council will take an active role in supporting and monitoring activities and events and will exercise influence through monitoring arrangements. Through its monitoring role, the council will encourage and support Community Library Partnerships to design activities and events with the needs of a wide range of customers in mind.</p>		<p>events, and encourages Community Library Partnerships to design activities and events with the needs of a wide range of customers in mind.</p>
<p>Older people are significant users of digital inclusion activities, and some (but not all) older people may need more help when using public computer access facilities. Community Library Partnerships may not be as effective at supporting people who are digitally excluded, or in providing technical help to use the internet (although conversely, Community Library Partnerships may provide a wider range of digital inclusion activities, and/or may be more effective at helping people to use the internet). Older people could, in some circumstances, be less comfortable asking volunteers (rather than staff) for help because of concerns about confidentiality.</p>	<p>Ensure volunteer training includes training on digital inclusion, supporting people to use the internet, and privacy issues. Design volunteer roles to and work with Community Library Partnerships to try to ensure volunteers with</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - April 2019.</p>	<p>Volunteers working in Community Library Partnerships are able to support people (including older people) to be digitally included, and to use the internet. Volunteers maintain confidentiality and are sensitive to privacy issues.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
 APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Library activities such as Rhyme Time and Baby Boogie are important for pre-school children and babies; activities such as code clubs, Lego clubs and many others are important for older school-age children. Community Library Partnerships may not provide the same range of activities and events as are provided at present (although conversely, Community Library Partnerships may provide a wider range of activities and events). Community Library Partnerships may not develop and design events with the needs of children in mind.</p>	<p>appropriate skills are recruited.</p> <p>Community Library Partnerships will not be obliged to offer activities, and so the risk of this impact cannot be mitigated through agreements. The council will take an active role in supporting and monitoring activities and events and will exercise influence through monitoring arrangements. Through its monitoring role, the council will encourage Community Library Partnerships to design activities and events with the needs of a wide range of customers in mind.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services - April 2019 onwards.</p>	<p>The council, through its monitoring role, supports Community Library Partnerships to run activities and events, and encourages Community Library Partnerships to design activities and events with the needs of a wide range of customers in mind.</p>
<p>Community Library Partnerships may reduce or change opening hours (although conversely, Community Library Partnerships may increase opening hours). Opening hours reductions could affect primary school aged children if they are no longer able to visit the library after school.</p>	<p>If opening hours reductions impact on primary school children, explore the feasibility of providing</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services - April 2019 onwards.</p>	<p>Wherever possible, primary school aged children are able to access library services.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Community Library Partnerships may not open on Saturdays; if this happened this would disproportionately affect people of working age and children, because they are more likely to be unable to visit the library because of work commitments / parental work commitments.</p> <p>Community library partnerships may improve services to older people and children by increasing the range of activities for these groups, or by extending opening hours and enabling more children to use library services after school or in the evenings.</p>	<p>a mobile library stop for primary school children.</p> <p>The council will only enter into Community Library Partnership agreements which do not require Saturday opening where there is good access to alternative libraries on Saturdays.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - Feb. 2019.</p>	<p>People (including people of working age and children) are able to access library buildings on Saturdays.</p>
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>A greater proportion of disabled people responding to the consultation felt that changes to library services from the current service to a Community Library Partnership would have a significant impact, compared to people who did not have a disability. This could indicate a greater level of anxiety about Community Library Partnerships for disabled people.</p>	<p>Ensure that any transfers to Community Library Partnerships are communicated effectively to customers.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - Feb. 2019.</p>	<p>Customers (including disabled people) understand the services that will be provided through Community Library Partnerships, and are able to raise and discuss concerns.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Library activities such as ‘Feel better with a book’ groups and other social activities are important for disabled people, particularly those who are vulnerable to social isolation, or who have dementia, learning disabilities or poor mental health. Community Library Partnerships may not provide the same range of activities and events as are provided at present (although conversely, Community Library Partnerships may provide a wider range of activities and events). Community Library Partnerships may not develop and design events with the needs of disabled people in mind</p>	<p>Community Library Partnerships will not be obliged to offer activities, and so the risk of this impact cannot be mitigated through agreements. The council will take an active role in supporting and monitoring activities and events and will exercise influence through monitoring arrangements. Through its monitoring role, the council will encourage Community Library Partnerships to design activities and events with the needs of a wide range of customers in mind.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services - April 2019 onwards.</p>	<p>The council, through its monitoring role, supports Community Library Partnerships to run activities and events, and encourages Community Library Partnerships to design activities and events with the needs of a wide range of customers in mind.</p>
<p>Some (but not all) disabled service users may have heightened anxiety about libraries transferring to a Community Library Partnership model, because societal responses to some disabilities may increase nervousness of change, or because the County Council’s policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council’s direct control. Some service users with this protected characteristic may be at a higher risk of discrimination because the County Council’s policies on</p>	<p>Ensure that this potential impact is effectively mitigated through equalities provisions in Community Library Partnership agreements, which</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>Parties to Community Library Partnership agreements understand their responsibilities to promote tolerance and diversity. The County Council is able to</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control. Community Library Partnerships using volunteers may be less effective at supporting people with some disabilities, because volunteers may have less knowledge or awareness of the issues faced by disabled people.</p> <p>Community Library Partnerships that are operated through volunteers may be less effective at supporting customers with sensory loss, because volunteers may have less knowledge and awareness of services and specialist lending stock available for customers with sensory loss, in particular, blind and partially sighted people.</p>	<p>allow the Council to discuss any concerns with community partners.</p> <p>Ensure volunteer training includes training on equalities and diversity, including an awareness of the particular needs of people with different disabilities.</p> <p>Ensure volunteer training includes training on how to support customers with sensory loss and ensure that Community Library Partnerships are aware of the 'Six Steps' guidance for providing library services to blind and partially sighted people.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>manage any complaints from customers relating to discrimination through legal agreements.</p> <p>Volunteers working in community libraries have an awareness and understanding of equalities and diversity, including an awareness of the particular needs of people with different disabilities.</p> <p>Volunteers working in community libraries, and those responsible for community libraries, have an awareness and understanding of how to provide effective services to people with sensory loss, and an awareness of the 'Six Steps' guidance.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Community Library Partnerships could relocate to other buildings which are less accessible to people with limited mobility or wheelchair users. Conversely, Community Library Partnerships could relocate to buildings that have improved accessibility.</p> <p>Community library partnerships may improve services to disabled people by increasing the range of activities for these groups, or by improving access.</p>	<p>The council will only enter into Community Library Partnership agreements where Community Libraries provide equality of access.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>Community Library Partnerships provide good access for people with limited mobility or wheelchair users.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment</p>			
<p>Some (but not all) service users with this protected characteristic may have heightened anxiety about using Community Library Partnership libraries. This could be because of societal responses to gender reassignment increasing nervousness of change, or because the County Council's policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control. Some service users with this protected characteristic may be at a higher risk of discrimination because the County Council's policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control.</p> <p><i>(Feedback from the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence of this potential impact, but the potential impact will be kept under review).</i></p>	<p>Ensure that Community Library Partnership agreements set clear values for equalities and diversity, and allow the Council to investigate customer complaints and discuss any concerns with community partners.</p> <p>Ensure volunteer training includes training on equalities and diversity.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services -</p>	<p>Parties to Community Library Partnership agreements understand their responsibilities to promote tolerance and diversity. The County Council is able to manage any complaints from customers relating to discrimination through legal agreements.</p> <p>Volunteers working in community libraries have an awareness and understanding of</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

		Nov. 2018 - March 2019.	equalities and diversity.
Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified at this stage.			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
<p>People with the protected characteristic of maternity may be more likely to be affected by changes to library services than White British people because a higher proportion of people with this protected characteristic are library users. This means that the general impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnership models may be more likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of maternity.</p> <p>Library activities such as Rhyme Time and Baby Boogie are important for people with the protected characteristic of maternity. Community Library Partnerships may not provide the same range of activities and events as are provided at present (although conversely, Community Library Partnerships may provide a wider range of activities and events). Community Library Partnerships may not develop and design activities with the needs of new parents in mind.</p>	<p>No specific actions can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>Community Library Partnerships will not be obliged to offer activities, and so the risk of this impact cannot be mitigated through agreements. The council will take an active role in supporting and monitoring activities and events and will exercise influence through monitoring arrangements. Through its monitoring</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Library Services - April 2019 onwards.</p>	<p>The council, through its monitoring role, supports Community Library Partnerships to run activities and events, and encourages Community Library Partnerships to design activities and events with the needs of a wide range of customers in mind.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Community library partnerships may improve services to people with the protected characteristic of maternity by increasing the range of activities for this group.</p>	<p>role, the council will encourage Community Library Partnerships to design activities and events with the needs of a wide range of customers in mind</p> <p>No actions necessary.</p>		
<p>Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)</p>			
<p>Black & Minority Ethnic groups, and non-British white groups, may be more likely to be affected by changes to library services than White British people because a relatively higher proportion of library users are from these ethnic groups. This means that the general impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnership models may be more likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Race.</p> <p>Some (but not all) service users with this protected characteristic may have heightened anxiety about using Community Library Partnership libraries. This could be because of societal responses to race increasing nervousness of change, or because the County Council's policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control. Some service users with this protected characteristic may be at a higher risk of discrimination because the County Council's policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control.</p>	<p>No specific actions can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>Ensure that Community Library Partnership agreements set clear values for equalities and diversity, and allow the Council to investigate customer complaints and</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>Parties to Community Library Partnership agreements understand their responsibilities to promote tolerance and diversity. The County Council is able to manage any complaints from</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p><i>(Feedback from the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence of this potential impact, but the potential impact will be kept under review)</i></p> <p>Community Library Partnerships that are operated through volunteers may be less effective at supporting customers whose first language is not English, because volunteers may have less knowledge and awareness of services and lending stock available in alternative languages.</p>	<p>discuss with community partners.</p> <p>Ensure volunteer training includes training on equalities and diversity.</p> <p>Ensure volunteer training includes training on how to support customers whose first language is not English, and ensure that Community Library Partnerships are aware of services and lending stock available in alternative languages.</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p> <p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>customers relating to discrimination through legal agreements.</p> <p>Volunteers working in community libraries have an awareness and understanding of equalities and diversity.</p> <p>Volunteers working in community libraries have an awareness and understanding of services available for customers whose first language is not English.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p>			
<p>Changes to opening hours could potentially affect people who carry out religious observance on a day other than Sunday (these people could be disadvantaged if opening hours were scheduled on a day of religious observance).</p>	<p>Discuss potential impacts of opening hours changes at an early stage with</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>Any opening hours changes take account of religious observance.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<i>(Feedback from the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence of this potential impact, but the potential impact will be kept under review)</i>	Community Library Partners.		
Sex			
Females are more likely to be affected by changes to library services because a higher proportion of library users are female. This means that the general impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnership models may be more likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.	No specific actions can mitigate this potential impact.		
Sexual Orientation			
Some (but not all) service users with this protected characteristic may have heightened anxiety about using Community Library Partnership libraries. This could be because of societal responses to sexual orientation increasing nervousness of change, or because the County Council's policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control. Some service users with this protected characteristic may be at a higher risk of discrimination because the County Council's policies on discrimination may not apply to volunteers or other staff working outside of the County Council's direct control. <i>(Feedback from the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence of this potential impact, but the potential impact will be kept under review).</i>	Ensure that Community Library Partnership agreements set clear values for equalities and diversity, and allow the Council to investigate customer complaints and discuss any concerns with community partners. Ensure volunteer training includes training on equalities and diversity.	Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019. Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.	Parties to Community Library Partnership agreements understand their responsibilities to promote tolerance and diversity. The County Council is able to manage any complaints from customers relating to discrimination through legal agreements. Volunteers working in community libraries have an awareness and understanding of equalities and diversity.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
<p>Rurality – a number (but not all) of the affected libraries are in smaller communities serving more rural populations. This means that the general impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnership models may be more likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of rurality.</p>	<p>No specific actions can mitigate this potential impact, but proposals have been designed to enable reasonable access to alternative County Council operated libraries from rural areas.</p>		
<p>Low income – people on lower incomes are more likely to be affected by changes to library services because a relatively higher proportion of library users are likely to be on lower incomes. This means that the general impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnership models may be more likely to impact people with the characteristic of Low Income.</p> <p>People on lower incomes are significant users of digital inclusion activities, and some (but not all) people with lower incomes may need more help when using public computer access facilities. Community Library Partnerships may not be as effective at supporting unemployed people who use public computer access services to claim benefits and seek work. Unemployed people could, in some circumstances, be less comfortable asking volunteers (rather than staff) for help because of concerns about confidentiality.</p>	<p>No specific actions can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>Ensure volunteer training includes training on digital inclusion, supporting people to use the internet, and privacy issues. Design volunteer roles to and work with Community Library Partnerships to try to ensure volunteers with</p>	<p>Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services - Nov. 2018 - March 2019.</p>	<p>Volunteers working in Community Library Partnerships are able to support people (including unemployed people and those on lower incomes) to be digitally included, and to use the internet. Volunteers maintain confidentiality and are sensitive to privacy issues.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	appropriate skills are recruited.		
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Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment

The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published as and when they are produced to support successive scrutiny and decision reports; each will contribute towards a suite of Assessments that will provide a consistent thread from start to finish and which will demonstrate how due regard to the Council's equality duty has been made through the process.

Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams
Date	28/09/18
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	04/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	Oliver Woodhams
Review date:	Regular review at project board meetings

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(a)

Bishops Lydeard
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Bishops Lydeard

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Bishops Lydeard	
Version	2	Date	4/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in Bishops Lydeard and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Bishops Lydeard library, and should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii – which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Bishops Lydeard Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Bishops Lydeard are currently delivered through a library building in Bishops Lydeard, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that a large number of people living in Bishops Lydeard and the surrounding area use Taunton Library. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Bishops Lydeard and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Bishops Lydeard (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> through a Mobile Library Service and Digital Library Service, to compliment access to other libraries. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred</p>			

option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Bishops Lydeard would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Bishops Lydeard if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Bishops Lydeard library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Bishops Lydeard, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Bishops Lydeard Library and providing library services to Bishops Lydeard and the surrounding communities in different ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Bishops Lydeard library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 220 active borrowers;
- 3,267 visits (footfall);
- 40 people's network users;
- 200 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 4,643.

Bishops Lydeard library is open for 11 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Bishops Lydeard library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of:

- Bishops Lydeard library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Bishops Lydeard library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Bishops Lydeard Library most frequently,

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user populations and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data Analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Bishops Lydeard catchment; Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Bishops Lydeard Library the most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Bishops Lydeard	% of Bishops Lydeard Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Bishops Lydeard Library
0-4	5.35%	6.2%	4.6%	5.3%	0%
5-11	16.07%	19.0%	8.8%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	3.7%	7.8%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	40.5%	54.8%	56.0%	70.3%
65+	28.81%	29.3%	24.1%	24.1%	29.7%
Unknown	1.35%	1.2%			

Table 2: % active library users, Bishops Lydeard catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Bishops Lydeard library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library users	% Active library users – Bishops Lydeard	% of Bishops Lydeard Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Bishops Lydeard Library*
Female	61.88%	62.4%	51.2%	51.2%	69.7%
Male	36.38%	35.1%	48.8%	48.8%	30.3%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	2.5%			

* Consultation respondents who identified as some other way totalled 0.0% of responders to this question.

Table 3: % of active library users, Bishops Lydeard catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Bishops Lydeard library most by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Bishops Lydeard	% of Bishops Lydeard Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Bishops Lydeard Library*
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	0.0%	1.2%	2.02%	3.1%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	1.3%	1.8%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	98.7%	97.0%	94.64%	96.6%

*The Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Bishops Lydeard catchment and Somerset population:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - Bishops Lydeard	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Bishops Lydeard catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation Respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	1.2%	Long term health problem or disabled	17%*	19%*	20.4%
Non-disabled	95%	98.8%	No long term health problem or disability identified	83%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked: 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1 to 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Bishops Lydeard users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Bishops Lydeard Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery, we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Bishops Lydeard Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Bishops Lydeard Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity for the combined years of 2013 to 2015 showing % South West England's population, and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole*	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded at registration:

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
	% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Bishops Lydeard library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of Bishops Lydeard library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent users of this library:

- The proportion of the catchment population of primary and secondary school age is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range. The proportion

of users of Bishops Lydeard Library who are of primary school age is higher than the proportion of all Somerset library users in this age range.

- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Bishops Lydeard library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The proportion of users of Bishops Lydeard library who are disabled is lower than the proportion of users with this protected characteristic across Somerset as a whole. The proportion of consultation respondents who identified as being disabled is in line with the proportion of the Somerset population with this protected characteristic.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Bishops Lydeard library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Bishops Lydeard Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Bishops Lydeard catchment serves a small, relatively sparsely populated rural area around Bishops Lydeard. Analysis of library usage data indicates that the majority of users in this area use Taunton Library (see Table 10 below), although some use Bishops Lydeard library (we anticipate that many will use both libraries). Usage of Bishops Lydeard library is largely concentrated in the built-up area of Bishops Lydeard. Although some users of Bishops Lydeard library are likely to have the protected characteristic of Rurality, the majority of users are likely to live in Bishops Lydeard, a large village.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower layer Super Output areas in the Bishops Lydeard library catchment is 8, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a lower proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average is likely to mask significant variations in income levels within the catchment population. No significant pockets of low income populations have been identified within the catchment through the needs assessment exercise, which did not identify income deprivation as a significant problem for Bishops Lydeard or Bishops Lydeard library catchment, compared to other areas of Somerset.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Bishops Lydeard library is limited, with 200 attendances at events held in the library in 2017/18.

Section 2B – People who are delivering the policy or service

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4i above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Bishops Lydeard library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Bishops Lydeard on 18th October 2017. It was noted that the library was likely to be used by older people and children, particularly after school, and that there were some areas of relatively high deprivation within walking distance of the library. It was also noted that access to Taunton was relatively good, with a bus service serving Bishops Lydeard, and Cotford St. Luke. The Wivey Link community transport service provided transport within the area (including in Bishops Lydeard). Many people living in Bishops Lydeard work in Taunton.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a relatively small number of consultation responses received by users of Bishops Lydeard Library.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Bishops Lydeard library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Bishops Lydeard library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Bishops Lydeard library.
- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly.

Qualitative responses

A number of comments were made through the survey by users of Bishops Lydeard Library, and a small number of letters were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In

addition, a drop-in event was held with 32 attendees. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Bishops Lydeard would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *"I used to use Taunton Library but I have no car now, so I am reliant on Bishops Lydeard. I use it practically every day. Lugging 2 or 3 books around is too much."*
 - *"I do not want to have to travel into Taunton, paying for petrol and parking, to get books! And what of the elderly and infirm, a majority in our village, who do not / cannot drive?"*
- Comments about the impact on older people highlighted the impact on loneliness and social isolation for older people who used the library for social purposes. There were comments at the drop in about difficulty carrying books back from Taunton on the bus.
- A similarly significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *"my children borrow lots of books, broadening their repertoire of reading material. They request books which supports them reading material that they enjoy."*
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities, (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Bishops Lydeard, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Bishops Lydeard library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *"if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are homeschooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics"*
 - *"it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources"*
 - *"my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close"*

Disability

- Some respondents using Bishops Lydeard library noted general impacts on disabled people.

- “*Serious impact on elderly with mobility and or health problems who are unable to travel easily into Taunton.*”
- “*As a growing village (planning recently granted for a further 176 houses!) with an increasingly elderly population, and many families with young children, traveling on expensive public transport is just not an option to gain access to library services.*”
- Other respondents were concerned about the range of stock available on the mobile library service:
 - “*My concern with a mobile bus is that room for a large print books (on which I am becoming more reliant) will be limited, if allowed at all.*”
- Although this impact did not come across from users of Bishops Lydeard library, other consultation respondents (including some staff) noted that using busy, town centre libraries presented difficulties for some customers with mental health or learning disabilities, who preferred a quieter, less busy environment.

Pregnancy / Maternity

- There were no comments made from Bishops Lydeard regarding this characteristic.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Bishops Lydeard library. Some responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- No specific impacts were highlighted by individual Bishops Lydeard users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Low income

- Very few specific impacts were highlighted by individual Bishops Lydeard users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicate higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Bishops Lydeard catchment:

	Bishops Lydeard catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	3	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	8	6

Further explanation of these measures is set out in Appendix 2 to the covering decision report.

All of the measures in table 9 indicate that, on average for these measures, there is a lower level of need in Bishops Lydeard catchment, with the corollary that (on average), there is likely to be a lower proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Bishops Lydeard catchment are less likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset but are more likely to have the characteristic of Rurality.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Bishops Lydeard catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Taunton	320	80	20
Bishops Lydeard	220	30	10
Mobile Library	10	0	0
Williton	10	0	0
Wiveliscombe	10	0	0
Wellington	0	0	0

Table 10 shows that the vast majority of library users in Bishops Lydeard catchment currently use Taunton Library as an alternative to Bishops Lydeard library. This provides evidence that Taunton Library is very likely to be the alternative library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the consultation proposals, there ceased to be a

library building in Bishops Lydeard. This assessment will therefore consider access to Taunton Library from the catchment.

In our analysis of library catchments work it is very unusual for more users within a library's catchment to use a different library to the catchment library – in fact, Bishops Lydeard catchment is the only non-urban catchment where this is the case. This would suggest that access to Taunton is convenient, and that many people from the catchment visit Taunton regularly to use the Library.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Bishops Lydeard built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Taunton	14 minutes	6 miles
Wellington	18 minutes	10 miles
Williton	20 minutes	10 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Bishops Lydeard catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Bishops Lydeard catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	10%	16%
Households with one vehicle	37%	43%
Households with 2-4 vehicles	53%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 28 links Bishops Lydeard with Taunton and Williton, providing good public transport access to alternative libraries in these locations. The service has a 30 minute frequency and takes 24 minutes to get to Taunton and 26 minutes to get to Williton. The adult return fare to Taunton is £5.10 (free for concessionary pass holders). The service is considered to be sustainable. Cotford St. Luke also has good bus links to Taunton, and West Bagborough has a daily shopping service to Taunton (which also links Bishops Lydeard to Taunton via a different route). Other communities in the catchment are not served by regular public transport. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – Bishops Lydeard and some surrounding communities are served by the Wivey Link community transport group and Somerset County Council's slinky bus service – both provide access to Taunton.

Taunton is not within a reasonable walking or cycling distance from the catchment.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Bishops Lydeard Library. Bishops Lydeard library has a small number of users, reflecting a relatively small catchment population, the majority of whom use Taunton library rather than Bishops Lydeard library. This being the case, the impact of closing Bishops Lydeard library is likely to be less significant than the impact of closing some of the other libraries where changes are recommended.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide Mobile Library Services to Bishops Lydeard and some of the surrounding communities, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). Bishops Lydeard has a relatively high level of car ownership, and people in Bishops Lydeard are likely to travel to Taunton for shopping and work purposes regularly. Older people and many disabled people are able to travel to Taunton at no cost, on a relatively convenient and frequent bus service. In conjunction with the good access for most people to the alternative library building at Taunton, the alternative services provided will mitigate the impact of closing Bishops Lydeard library to a significant extent.

However, even with these mitigations, there will be residual impacts for people with some protected characteristics if Bishops Lydeard library closes. The most significant of these impacts are summarised here (fuller descriptions are set out in the action plan table below):

- Primary school children are relatively frequent users of Bishops Lydeard library, through school organised visits and after school. The impact on this group of users can only be partially mitigated through the mobile library service.
- Younger children and parents with the protected characteristic of Maternity living in households in Bishops Lydeard that do not have access to a car, or where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent during the week, are likely to be impacted by the closure of Bishops Lydeard library. The number of people affected is likely to be relatively low, however the cost of accessing the alternative library in Taunton by public transport is fairly significant (currently £5.10 for an adult return fare; free for children under 5) and is likely to be a factor in dissuading or preventing parents from taking young children to the library.
- People in low income households living in Bishops Lydeard are less likely to have access to a vehicle and are less able to afford the cost of public transport. This means that they would be less able to access the library in Taunton, and therefore the impact of closing Bishops Lydeard library would be more significant.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>The impact of a library closure on older people was a strong theme in consultation responses for Bishops Lydeard Library. Some consultation respondents noted specific difficulties associated with transport - e.g. difficulties in carrying books, or a lack of car ownership. Other respondents noted the role library buildings play in reducing social isolation for older people. Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative libraries at Taunton, Wellington or Williton may be more difficult for older people to do. Although public transport from Bishops Lydeard to Taunton is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Taunton, Williton or Wellington may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Bishops Lydeard to Taunton is</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, Mobile Library Services would</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard,</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>generally good, the cost of public transport to Taunton is significant for non-concessionary pass holders. It will be more expensive and less convenient for parents with younger children than the current option of walking to the library. This impact is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in Bishops Lydeard. However, there may be some parents who do not have access to a car, and these parents are likely to find it more difficult and expensive to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p> <p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who currently use Bishops Lydeard Library, either after attending the nearby primary school, or on organised school visits. Those who currently walk from school to the library (perhaps because the household either does not have access to a car, or because the only household car is being used for work purposes) will be particularly impacted. It is possible to get from Bishops Lydeard to Taunton Library on public transport after school, this would be significantly less convenient. Usage of libraries may become significantly more difficult for some primary school children; those from households without access to a car after school are likely to only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays. Although this impact overall is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in Bishops Lydeard, compared to some other affected libraries, because of the low number of users overall, use of the library by the local primary school and primary school children is relatively significant.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to Bishops Lydeard Library. This impact is likely to be limited in Bishops Lydeard, because many children in this age group will be educated at the secondary school in Wiveliscombe, and usage of Bishops Lydeard</p>	<p>be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, we will explore the demand for Mobile Library visits to Bishops Lydeard Church school. If possible, we will provide a monthly mobile library visit to the school site.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, there is no specific action that can</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>more limited mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities. Subject to demand and agreement from the school, a regular mobile library visit will be made to the primary school if a community library partnership cannot be developed.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>library is relatively low amongst this group (and overall). Nonetheless, some younger people may use Bishops Lydeard library for study at certain times, and these customers may not be able to access this service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle).</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Bishops Lydeard Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>		
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Taunton or Williton may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport. Although public transport from Bishops Lydeard to Taunton is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Low floor buses operate between Bishops Lydeard and Taunton, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or mobility scooter/wheelchair access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>The alternative library buildings at Taunton and Williton are wheelchair accessible. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift. We do not consider that disabled customers of Bishops Lydeard Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Bishops Lydeard Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at Bishops Lydeard could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p> <p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism collection) are currently limited in Bishop's Lydeard Library, and comparable facilities are available through the Mobile Library Service.</p>	<p>during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, we will work with our staff to ensure relevant customer are aware of the availability of these collections on the mobile library service.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities in alternative services</p> <p>Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services available at other locations.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Taunton Library is most likely to be used as an alternative library, but this may not be possible for some people with mental health conditions or learning disabilities, who may not cope with the larger library space and busy atmosphere. We have no evidence that this impact would apply to users of Bishops Lydeard library, but it has been noted in relation to other quieter library buildings.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, we will work with our staff to identify vulnerable customers and try to ensure that changes are communicated at an early stage, and new or alternative services are clearly signposted.</p> <p>We will explore the potential for establishing 'quiet times' in larger town centre libraries.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Strategic Manager - Library Services – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers vulnerable to anxiety are communicated with effectively at an early stage and are signposted to alternative quieter libraries (e.g. Williton).</p> <p>The potential and value of 'quiet times' is explored and implemented if feasible.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>			
<p>No impacts identified.</p>			
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Taunton, Wellington, or Williton may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Pregnancy or Maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Bishops Lydeard to Taunton is generally good, the cost of public transport to Taunton is significant for non-concessionary pass holders. It will be more expensive and less convenient for parents with younger children than the current option of walking to the library. This impact is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in Bishops Lydeard. However, there may be some parents who do not have access to a car, and these parents are likely to find it more difficult and expensive to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p>	<p>established in Bishops Lydeard, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)</p>			
<p>The proportion of people in Bishops Lydeard catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in Bishops Lydeard is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p> <p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Bishops Lydeard to individuals and groups</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.</p>		
<p>Religion and Belief</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Sex</p>			
<p>Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Bishops Lydeard, because a higher proportion of Bishops Lydeard library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Bishops Lydeard library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>
<p>Rurality</p> <p>The majority of people in the rural parts of Bishops Lydeard catchment use Taunton library rather than Bishops Lydeard library, and so we have concluded that there is unlikely to be a significant impact on people with the characteristic of rurality.</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income and employment in the catchment as a whole are higher than the average for Somerset, and very few specific impacts related to income were highlighted by individual Bishops Lydeard users or stakeholder groups in respect of the characteristic of Low Income. However, the community engagement exercise highlighted that there were some areas of deprivation within walking distance of the current library site. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and the significant cost of public transport to Taunton for non-concessionary pass holders could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes from accessing Taunton library. Whilst mobile and digital library services would mitigate the impact to some extent, people on low incomes who do not have access to a vehicle are likely to face a more significant impact from the closure of Bishops Lydeard Library.</p> <p>Public access computer use is limited at Bishops Lydeard library, and we have no evidence that this service is used to a significant extent by unemployed people. However, across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. Even</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bishops Lydeard, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made aware of these services.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>though usage is low, there could be a small number of unemployed people or social housing clients in Bishops Lydeard who are significantly impacted by the closure of Bishops Lydeard library, as public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic.</p>			
<p>Military Status</p> <p>Bishops Lydeard library is the nearest library to the Norton Manor Camp barracks, which has a resident population of armed forces personnel. However, analysis of library usage indicates that there are no users of Bishops Lydeard Library living in and around Norton Manor camp; although usage of Taunton library is high in the area. Also, the library in Taunton is a comparable distance away from Norton Manor Camp, accessible by public transport. Having considered this evidence, we do not feel there is likely to be any impact arising as a result of the closure of Bishops Lydeard Library on armed forces personnel or their families.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		

<p>Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment</p>	
<p>The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.</p>	
<p>Completed by:</p>	<p>Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey</p>
<p>Date</p>	<p>1/10/18</p>
<p>Signed off by:</p>	<p>Michele Cusack</p>
<p>Date</p>	<p>11/10/2018</p>
<p>Compliance sign off Date</p>	<p>4/10/18</p>
<p>To be reviewed by: (officer name)</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Review date:

This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(b)

Bruton
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Bruton

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Bruton	
Version	2	Date	04/10/18
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council's cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes to the delivery of Library Services in Bruton and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Bruton library, and should be read in conjunction with the other assessments included within this Appendix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Bruton Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Bruton are currently delivered through a library building in Bruton. The Home Library Service serves some customers in the surrounding area, but there are currently no nearby Mobile Library stops. Table 10 below shows that the majority of current library customers living in Bruton and the surrounding area use Bruton Library, with Frome and Wincanton libraries used by some customers. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Bruton and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Bruton (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> a combination of</p>			

Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services, complimenting access to other library buildings. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Bruton would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Bruton if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Bruton library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Bruton, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Bruton Library and providing library services to Bruton and the surrounding communities in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Bruton library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 366 active borrowers;
- 5,190 visits (footfall);
- 51 people's network users;
- 279 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 5,066.

Bruton library is open for 12 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Bruton library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of

- Bruton library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Bruton library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Bruton Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user populations and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Bruton catchment and Somerset population in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Bruton	% of Bruton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation Respondents using Bruton Library
0-4	5.35%	7.0%	3.8%	5.4%	9.5%
5-11	16.07%	18.8%	9.4%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	6.6%	14.4%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	35.8%	51.1%	56.5%	64.2%
65+	28.81%	29.2%	21.3%	23.5%	26.3%
Unknown	1.35%	2.6%			

Table 2: % active library users, Bruton catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Bruton library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Bruton	% of Bruton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation Respondents using Bruton Library*
Female	61.88%	67.5%	51.2%	51.2%	79.3%
Male	36.38%	30.6%	48.8%	48.8%	19.5%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	1.8%		-	

*Consultation responders who identified in some other way totalled 1.2% of respondents to this question.

Table 3: % of active library users, Bruton catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Bruton library most, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Bruton	% of Bruton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation Respondents using Bruton Library
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	2.0%	3.0%	2.02%	1.1%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	5.4%	3.1%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	92.7%	93.9%	94.64%	98.9%

*The consultation asked, 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Bruton catchment and Somerset population and Consultation respondents across Somerset:

Disability status	% Active library users Bruton	% Active library users Somerset	Disability / long term health problem status (2011 census response)	% of Bruton catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	2.4%	5%	Long term health problem or disabled	15.0%	19%	20.4%
Non-disabled	97.6%	95%	No long term health problem or disability identified	85.0%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked, 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation respondents who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Bruton Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual

Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Bruton Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery, we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Bruton Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?'

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity in 2016 showing % UK population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South-West Region population as a whole*	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded to

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves: % of consultation respondents whose gender identity:	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Bruton library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of Bruton library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent users of this library:

- In common with the vast majority of library user groups, the proportion of users of Bruton library in the 5-11 and 65+ age ranges are both significantly higher than the proportion of these age groups in the local catchment population as a whole.
- The proportion of the catchment population of primary and secondary school age is significantly higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, and the usage of Bruton Library is proportionately slightly higher for children of all age groups compared to the proportion of children in these age groups using all Somerset libraries.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Bruton library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as being of a Black and Minority Ethnic background is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, usage of the library by these groups is proportionately in line with usage of all Somerset libraries.
- There is a smaller proportion of library users with disabilities in Bruton than in Somerset as a whole, and a smaller proportion of the population of Bruton catchment is disabled compared to Somerset as a whole (this could be explained by the large population of boarding school children). Neither of these apparent differences are considered significant for the purposes of this assessment, as they illustrate a proportionately lower impact compared to the Somerset position as a whole.

Three large boarding schools are located in Bruton and this has a significant impact on the demographics of the community - in 2011 about 500 out of 3,000 residents in the Bruton built up area lived in an educational communal establishment - nearly 17%. This factor is likely to explain the higher proportion of secondary school age children, and possibly also the higher proportion of people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups. Feedback from the community engagement meetings indicates that these populations may not interact with local services very much (and are unlikely, therefore, to be impacted by changes to Library Service provision).

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Bruton library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Bruton Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Bruton catchment serves a small, relatively sparsely populated rural area around Bruton. Analysis of library usage data indicates that the users in the rural part of the catchment use Bruton Library and also Wincanton and Frome libraries. (See Table 10 below) Considering the short distance to Castle Cary, there are very few users of Castle Cary library. Usage of Bruton library is largely concentrated in the built-up area of Bruton, but a significant minority of library users are likely to have the protected characteristic of Rurality.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower Layer Super Output areas in the Bruton library catchment is 7, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a slightly lower proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole

(where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average is likely to mask significant variations in income levels within the catchment population. No significant pockets of low income populations have been identified within the catchment through the needs assessment exercise. Our needs assessment did not identify income deprivation as a significant problem for Bruton or Bruton library catchment, compared to other areas of Somerset; Bruton has a low number of low-income households compared to other Somerset towns.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Bruton library is low, with only 279 attendances at events held in the library in 2017/18, an increase over the previous year.

Section 2B – People who are delivering the policy or service

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4i above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Bruton library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

Community engagement meetings were held with community representatives from Bruton on 8th September and 9th November 2017 and on 24 April and 30 July 2018. It was noted that there were difficulties for older people in the area, particularly because of poor public transport links and the difficulty in walking up and down the hills in the town. It was also noted that the current library (in common with many buildings in Bruton) had some accessibility issues because of the narrow pavements and busy traffic. However, representatives felt generally that there was little to add to the information provided through initial catchment analysis work.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a relatively small number of consultation responses received by users of Bruton Library, reflecting the relatively low number of library users.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Bruton library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Bruton library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Bruton library.
- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly.

Qualitative responses

A number of comments were made through the survey by users of Bruton Library, and a number of letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, a drop-in event was held at Castle Cary on the 14th March. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Bruton would have a significant impact on older people:
 - *“Bruton has an increasingly ageing population making a fixed (not mobile) library service more important, not less.”*
 - *“there are quite a few elderly people who do not have transport to get in to the Wincanton Library.”*
- Comments about the impact on older people generally highlighted the potential difficulties in accessing alternative libraries, with some respondents also highlighting the impact on social isolation.
 - *“It’s a lifeline for the older people and gives community members ‘something to do’. Invaluable esp. given the loneliness epidemic and the effect that has on mental health.”*
 - *“Some people cannot travel to the next nearest place, that has a library, or only with difficulty, so they would lose these resources as well as opportunities for meeting other people.”*
- Some individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“I know the importance of access to books for all children and many parents would not be able/want to travel out of Bruton to access the services elsewhere.”*
 - *“When our children were young we visited the library every week and it was very influential in making them lifelong readers and academically interested.”*
- One respondent noted the impact on children and people of working age:

- *“This proposal would heavily impact upon the disabled, young, dis-advantaged and people in full time employment who currently use the library on a Saturday morning.”*
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Bruton, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Bruton library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would affect my family as they are home-schooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- Some respondents using Bruton library noted general impacts on disabled people were it to close:
 - *“Both being disabled, it is very difficult to get to other places. Mobile libraries only carry a fraction of the books available plus the library is somewhere nice to sit quietly rather than be stuck in the house.”*
 - *“it impacts mainly on the poorest strata of the community and the young, disabled and dis-advantaged. The ability to borrow books to aid reading skills is a fundamental principle in all civilised countries. That includes the UK.”*

Pregnancy / Maternity

- There were no specific comments on this characteristic from respondents using Bruton library.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Bruton library. Some responses received across the consultation as a whole noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- A few specific impacts were highlighted by individual Bruton users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic:

- “This is a small rural community and closing the Library will affect the most vulnerable and elderly people who do not have the means to get to other Libraries due to lack of public transport”

Low income

- Very few specific impacts were highlighted by individual Bruton users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. One or two comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower incomes.
 - “... it impacts mainly on the poorest strata of the community and the young, dis-abled and dis-advantaged.”

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicating higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Bruton catchment:

	Bruton catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	9	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	3	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	7	6

All the measures in table 9 indicate that, on average for these measures, there is a lower level of need in Bruton catchment, with the corollary that (on average), there is likely to be a lower proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Bruton catchment are less likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset but are more likely to have the characteristic of Rurality.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Bruton catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Bruton	230	20	10
Frome	70	10	0
Wincanton	50	10	0
Castle Cary	40	0	0
Shepton Mallet	20	0	0
Burnham-on-Sea	20	10	0
Wells	20	10	0
Yeovil	10	0	0

Table 10 shows that the majority of library users in Bruton catchment currently use Bruton Library. Frome and Wincanton Libraries are used by a significant number of users. This provides evidence that these libraries are likely to be the alternative library buildings that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the decision proposals, there ceased to be a library building in Bruton. This assessment will therefore consider access to Wincanton and Frome libraries from the catchment.

It is notable that Bruton and Castle Cary library catchments do not overlap significantly. There are only 3 output areas – all close to Bruton – where users use both libraries.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Bruton built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Wincanton	12 minutes	5 miles
Shepton Mallet	17 minutes	8 miles
Frome	23 minutes	11 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Bruton catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Bruton catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	10%	16%
Households with one vehicle	42%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	48%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 667 links Bruton with Wincanton, providing public transport access to this alternative library building. The service has a 90-minute frequency and takes approximately 15 minutes to get to Wincanton. The adult return fare to Wincanton is £3.50 (free for concessionary pass holders). The service is subsidised and may not be sustainable in the longer term. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – Bruton and some surrounding communities are served by the Wincanton Community Accessible Transport (CAT) community transport group, which provides access to Wincanton.

Access to Frome from Bruton by public transport is possible, but expensive and inconvenient (via Castle Cary and Shepton Mallet, changing buses in both). There are no community transport links between Bruton and Frome.

Bruton is not within walking distance, nor a reasonably cycling distance, of either Wincanton or Frome.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Bruton Library. Bruton library has a small number of users, reflecting a relatively small catchment population and low levels of library usage in the town. This being the case, the impact of closing Bruton library is likely to be less significant than the impact of closing some of the other libraries where changes are recommended.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide Mobile Library Services to Bruton and some of the surrounding communities, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). Older people and many disabled people living in Bruton town are currently able to travel to Wincanton at no cost, on a relatively convenient and frequent bus service; however, the sustainability of this service into the future is not certain. In conjunction with the good access for most people to the alternative library building at Wincanton, the alternative services provided will mitigate the impact of closing Bruton library to a significant extent, but this would change in the unlikely event that the bus service ceased to operate.

However, even with these mitigations, there will be residual impacts for people with some protected characteristics if Bruton library closes. The most significant of these impacts are summarised here (fuller descriptions are set out in the action plan table below):

- People aged 65 or over form a high proportion of Bruton Library users, and feedback about the impact on this group came through in the public consultation response. Some older people are likely to suffer increased social isolation if Bruton library closed. This impact would be more significant in the unlikely event that the bus service ceased to operate, although community transport links to Wincanton are good and are likely to be sustainable.
- Younger children and parents with the protected characteristic of Maternity living in households in Bruton that do not have access to a car, or where the sole household

vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent during the week, are likely to be impacted by the closure of Bruton library. The number of people affected is likely to be relatively low, however the impact would be significant if the bus service ceased to operate.

- Decision makers should note that the closure of Bruton Library would mean that people in the community of Batcombe and the surrounding area are unlikely to be able to access an alternative library building within a 20-minute driving time; this impact is related to Rurality.
- Although Bruton has low levels of deprivation generally, there are some people in low income households living in Bruton who are less likely to have access to a vehicle and are less able to afford the cost of public transport (rates of car ownership are relatively low in Bruton). This means that they would be less able to access the library in Wincanton, and therefore the impact of closing Bruton library would be more significant.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>People aged 65 or over form a high proportion of Bruton Library users and the impact of a library closure on older people was a theme in consultation responses for Bruton Library, which highlighted transport difficulties and social isolation as particular issues. Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative library buildings at Wincanton or Frome may be more difficult for older people to do. Although public transport from Bruton to Wincanton is currently good, for users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult and may dissuade some users from using the service, and the service may not be sustainable in the longer term. That said, older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. Many older people using Bruton library travel into Bruton town centre by car from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Bruton Library because other libraries (principally Wincanton, but also Frome) are a relatively short distance away. Wincanton has convenient, free parking adjacent to the library.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Wincanton or Frome may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, Mobile Library</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, more limited mobile</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Although the cost of public transport to Wincanton is lower, public transport from Bruton to Wincanton may not be sustainable in the longer term, and the cost of community transport alternatives would be expensive and less convenient for parents with younger children than the current option of walking to the library. Although usage of Bruton library is relatively high by children of all age groups, this impact is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in Bruton, compared to some other affected libraries, because the overall level of usage is low, and because there are relatively few activities and events. Nonetheless, where they do not have access to a car, some parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so. In the unlikely event that the current bus links to Wincanton ceased in the future, the impact would be more significant.</p>	<p>Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>There was relatively little evidence of significant primary school age usage of Bruton library emerging through the consultation, however, statistical information indicates that usage of Bruton library by this groups is relatively high. Some primary school children may use Bruton Library after attending school, and after school usage of libraries may become significantly more difficult for these users - those from households without access to a car after school are likely to only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays. This impact is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in Bruton, compared to some other affected libraries, because of the relatively low level of usage overall.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, the demand for Mobile Library visits to local primary schools will be reviewed, however, we do not at this stage anticipate putting in place a significant mitigation, based on the evidence coming through from the consultation.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>The demand for Mobile Library visits to local primary schools will be reviewed if a community library partnership cannot be developed.</p>
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Bruton Library. This impact is likely to be limited in Bruton, because usage of Bruton library is relatively low overall, and the library is currently only open for limited opening hours; we do not have any specific feedback on this impact from the consultation. Nonetheless, some younger people may use Bruton library for study at certain times, and these customers may not be able to access this service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle).</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Bruton Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>established in Bruton, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>		
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Wincanton or Frome may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport. Although public transport from Bruton to Wincanton is currently good, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs it is likely to be more difficult, and the bus service may not be sustainable in the longer term. That said, disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, and community transport links are likely to be sustainable. Low floor buses operate between Bruton and Wincanton, so for the time being, public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people. Some disabled people using Bruton</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or mobility scooter access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>library travel into Bruton town centre by car from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Bruton Library because Wincanton and has convenient, free parking adjacent to the library, with easy access.</p> <p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism collection) are currently limited in Bruton Library, and comparable facilities are available through the Mobile Library Service.</p> <p>The alternative library buildings at Wincanton and Frome are wheelchair accessible and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift. We do not consider that disabled customers of Bruton Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Bruton Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at Bruton could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p>	<p>signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, we will work with our staff to ensure relevant customer are aware of the availability of these collections on the mobile library service.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services available at other locations.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities at alternative services.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Gender Reassignment			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified.			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
Accessing alternative library buildings at Wincanton or Frome may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Bruton to Wincanton is generally good, and the cost of public transport to Wincanton is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, it will be more expensive and less convenient for parents of babies than the current option of walking to the library. This impact is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in Bruton. However, there may be some parents who do not have access to a car, and these parents are likely to find it more difficult and expensive to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so. Public transport may not be sustainable in the longer term, which would increase this impact significantly.	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)			
<p>Some consultation responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access. Although the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence that migrant workers are likely to be significantly disadvantaged by the closure of Bruton Library, this could be because of a limited engagement by this group in the consultation exercise. On balance, we feel that this potential impact is unlikely to be a significant issue at Bruton library because of the very low usage of the public computer access.</p> <p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Bruton to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>
Religion and Belief			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Sex			
Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Bruton, because a higher proportion of Bruton library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Bruton library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.	There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.		
Sexual Orientation			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
Caring responsibilities Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.		to these alternative libraries.
<p>Rurality</p> <p>Whilst many rural communities in the catchment would have reasonable transport links to alternative libraries in Wincanton or Frome, public transport and car access to alternative libraries would be more lengthy and time-consuming than access to Bruton for some of the rural communities in Bruton library catchment; particularly those to the north and east of Bruton. However, for the majority of the rural catchment, driving times to access alternative library buildings in Wincanton or Frome would not be too significant. The cost of parking and fuel for car journeys to Wincanton would usually be comparable to Bruton – so many rural users who currently access Bruton library using their own vehicle are likely to be impacted by convenience factors rather than significant barriers to access. Villages with access by public transport to Bruton library would have access, via the same public transport routes, to Wincanton library (although journey times and timetables may be less convenient). In general, impacts relating to the characteristic of rurality are limited, with some exceptions noted below.</p> <p>As part of the consideration and development of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1, we have undertaken a preliminary assessment of rural communities that do not currently have a mobile library service, but which could be impacted by the closure of a nearby library. In this exercise, North / South Brewham and Pitcombe were</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, the Mobile Library network in the area will</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, more limited mobile library services are</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>identified as rural communities with significant usage of Bruton library. We anticipate that, subject to demand, a mobile library service could be provided to these communities as well as Bruton itself if Bruton Library closed. However, people in this part of Bruton catchment are likely to continue to use Bruton as a hub for other local services and would have to travel further to access alternative libraries in Wincanton. Whilst this impact is not directly related to the characteristic of rurality, we have noted it here (alongside mitigating actions) for information.</p> <p>The Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 seeks to design a library network which we estimate will enable access to a library building by car (in normal traffic conditions) in around 20 minutes or less for the vast majority of Somerset users. Our analysis of driving times indicates that this objective would be met for the vast majority of Bruton catchment whether or not a library building could be maintained in Bruton. However, we estimate that residents in the village of Batcombe and surrounding area to the north of Bruton would be around 22 minutes' drive from alternative libraries at Shepton Mallet and Frome. Batcombe is not currently served by a mobile library stop, but the majority of residents currently use Frome library. Nonetheless, some customers would be relatively disadvantaged by the closure of Bruton library, in part due to a characteristic of rurality.</p>	<p>be reviewed. Provision has been made within budgets to provide additional mobile stops in rural communities with high levels of usage of Bruton library. Services would be designed in conjunction with communities and would be communicated to customers.</p> <p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>available in the most rural communities most affected. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income and employment in the catchment as a whole are slightly higher than the average for Somerset, and very few specific impacts related to income were highlighted by individual Bruton users or stakeholder groups in respect of the characteristic of Low Income. The cost of accessing Wincanton by car is relatively inexpensive for people on low incomes who have access to vehicles, although rates of vehicle ownership in Bruton are low in some parts of the town, compared to some other Somerset towns. Nonetheless, because Bruton is one of the least deprived towns in Somerset, it is likely that the impact of closing Bruton library would be lower than in some of the other affected communities.</p> <p>Public access computer use is limited at Bruton library, and we have no evidence that this service is used to a significant extent by unemployed people. However, across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. Even though usage is low, there could be a small number of unemployed people or social housing clients in Bruton who are significantly impacted by the closure of Bruton library, as public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Bruton, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Military Status			
No impacts identified.			

Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment

The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.

Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey
Date	01/10/18
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	03/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(c)

Castle Cary
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Castle Cary

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Castle Cary	
Version	2	Date	04/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in Castle Cary and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Castle Cary library, and should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Castle Cary Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Castle Cary are currently delivered through a library building in Castle Cary, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that library users in Castle Cary and the surrounding area are most likely to use Castle Cary Library, with significant numbers also using alternative libraries. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Castle Cary and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Castle Cary (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> a combination of Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services, together with access to</p>			

alternative library buildings. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Castle Cary would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Castle Cary if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Castle Cary library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Castle Cary, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Castle Cary Library, and providing library services to Castle Cary and the surrounding communities in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Castle Cary library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 567 active borrowers;
- 9,226 visits (footfall);
- 102 people's network users;
- 366 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 8,783

Castle Cary library is open for 19.5 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Castle Cary library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data we compared the characteristics of

- Castle Cary library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Castle Cary library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Castle Cary Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information

is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Castle Cary catchment and Somerset population in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Castle Cary	% of Castle Cary Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Castle Cary Library
0-4	5.35%	5.1%	3.9%	5.3%	0%
5-11	16.07%	13.1%	8.6%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	3.9%	9.2%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	33.7%	52.1%	56.0%	52.8%
65+	28.81%	42.2%	26.1%	24.1%	47.2%
Unknown	1.35%	2.0%			

Table 2: % active library users, Castle Cary catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Castle Cary library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Castle Cary	% of Castle Cary Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Castle Cary Library*
Female	61.88%	68.0%	51.9%	51.20%	74.4%
Male	36.38%	29.4%	48.1%	48.80%	25.6%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	2.7%			

Table 3: % of active library users, Castle Cary catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Castle Cary library most, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users Castle Cary	% of Castle Cary Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Castle Cary Library*
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	0.6%	1.5%	2.02%	2.4%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	3.5%	2.3%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	95.9%	96.2%	94.64%	97.6%

*The consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Castle Cary catchment and Somerset population and Consultation respondents across Somerset:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - Castle Cary	Disability / long term health problem status (2011 census response)	% of Castle Cary catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	4.7%	Long term health problem or disabled	16.4%	19%*	20.4%*
Non-disabled	95%	95.3%	No long term health problem or disability identified	83.6%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Castle Cary Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy /

Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Castle Cary Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Castle Cary Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity in 2016 showing % UK population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of UK population as a whole*	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded on registration.

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

<p>% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:</p> <p>% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:</p>	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Castle Cary library:

The following statistically significant differences in the equalities characteristics of Castle Cary library users / library catchment residents compared to Somerset as a whole have been identified from the tables above:

- The proportion of the catchment population of primary and secondary school age is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, although

these users form a slightly lower proportion of Castle Cary library users compared to the overall population of Somerset library users.

- The proportion of the catchment population aged 65+ is significantly higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, and this age group are a significantly larger proportion of Castle Cary library users than the average for Somerset libraries as a whole.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Castle Cary library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole, of those identifying themselves in this ethnic group.
- The proportion of library users with disabilities in Castle Cary is in line with that of all Somerset library users. There is a slightly lower proportion of disabled people in the catchment than in Somerset as a whole.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Castle Cary library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Castle Cary Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Castle Cary catchment covers a large rural area, extending around 6 miles to the north, east and south of the town – this is reflected in the large number of alternative libraries currently used by people in the catchment. (See Table 10 below) The majority of the catchment population are likely to have the characteristic of rurality, with just under 40% of the catchment population living in the built-up area of Castle Cary / Ansford.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower Layer Super Output Areas in the Castle Cary library catchment is 8, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a lower proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). However, there is evidence of some low-income deprivation in Castle Cary town – the LSOA covering the south and centre of Castle Cary is in the most 40% deprived for income nationally. In the community engagement exercise, it was noted that a high proportion (19%) of children at the primary school were entitled to free school meals, that there were a lot of part time workers, and that wages were relatively low for many people living in the town.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities in Somerset, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Castle Cary library is limited (the space available at the library is very limited), with 366 attendances at events held in the library in 2017/18.

Section 2B – People who are delivering the policy or service

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4i above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Castle Cary library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There was an average level of consultation responses received from users of Castle Cary Library.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Castle Cary library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Castle Cary library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Castle Cary library.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly.

Qualitative responses

A relatively large number of comments were made through the survey by users of Castle Cary Library, and a number of letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, a well-attended drop-in event was held on 14th March 2018. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A significant number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Castle Cary would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *"...libraries help people to maintain a connection with their community and provide vital ICT access to people who .. are retired and living alone."*
 - *"To lose the current library which is open most days of the week would increase loneliness and isolation of the elderly."*
- Comments about the impact on older people highlighted the potential difficulties in accessing alternative libraries, and the impact on loneliness and social isolation for older people who used the library for social purposes.
- A similarly significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *"The computer in Castle Cary Library is of very great importance to the young and old, who have no access to a computer. Especially for the young this is necessary to improve any educational attainment."*
 - *"School children and parents of under 5s are regular users and the little ones benefit enormously from listening to story reading and looking at picture books."*
- A number of respondents highlighted potential difficulties of accessing the mobile library service and that computer access would not be available:
 - *"Only 8 people are allowed in a mobile library at any one time severely limits use"*
 - *"Castle Cary library is a vital part of the community. To replace it with a mobile library would deny access to its services for many users who cannot physically mount the stairs. Also would deny people the use of the currently heavily used computer in the library."*
- The Friends of Castle Cary Library noted the range, importance and popularity of children's activities:
 - *"For young children the reading habit is built up from opportunities to browse and choose books – and parents, grandparents and carers enjoy and benefit from this creative and special time with the children. Not possible in a mobile library."*
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities. The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Castle Cary, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Castle Cary library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *"if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are homeschooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics"*
 - *"it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources"*

- *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- Some respondents commented that a mobile library service would present access difficulties for disabled people. (This sentiment was largely due to a perception that disabled people would be unable to get into the mobile library; in fact, the mobile library service is fully accessible via a tail-lift.)

Pregnancy / Maternity

- There were no significant impacts noted by respondents using Castle Cary Library.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Castle Cary library. Some responses received elsewhere in Somerset noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- Several respondents indicated that people living in the rural areas around Castle Cary would be affected:
 - *“In rural areas it is vital to maintain public services and amenities. The loss of banks, post offices village shops libraries and transport is penalizing and impoverishing many people in areas of life which you have identified (in the Castle Cary area) those on low income; whose educational attainment is relatively low; who suffer from social isolation; digital exclusion.”*

Low income

- A few specific impacts were highlighted by individual Castle Cary users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. One or two comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower incomes.
 - *“proposals will affect detrimentally the least advantaged members of the community most. It will deny people the tools to help themselves.”*

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Castle Cary on 5th October 2017. Local representatives felt that Castle Cary itself probably had a higher proportion of people aged 65 or over than shown in the catchment profile, and that there was a lot of sheltered accommodation for older people. It was noted that a high proportion (19%) of children at the primary school were entitled to free school meals, that

there were a lot of part time workers, and that wages were relatively low for many people living in the town.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicating higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Castle Cary catchment:

	Castle Cary catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	9	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	3	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	7	6

All of the measures in table 9 indicate that, on average for these measures, there is a lower level of need in Castle Cary catchment, with the corollary that (on average), there is likely to be a lower proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Castle Cary catchment are less likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset, but are more likely to have the characteristic of Rurality as people in Somerset as a whole. However, because the catchment is large, these average measures are likely to mask significant variations between different parts of the catchment.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Castle Cary catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Castle Cary	480	50	10
Yeovil	110	30	0
Wincanton	80	10	0
Bruton	70	10	0

Shepton Mallet	40	0	0
Frome	30	10	0
Wells	30	10	0
Glastonbury	20	10	0
Somerton	20	0	0
Mobile Library Services	20	0	0
Street	10	0	0

Table 10 shows that usage of libraries in Castle Cary catchment is split (roughly half and half) between Castle Cary library and a range of other library buildings, with some usage of the Mobile Library. Use of alternative libraries is variable in different parts of the catchment, but overall the majority of users in the catchment access either Wincanton or Yeovil libraries, with significant usage of Shepton Mallet and Frome libraries in the rural north and west of the catchment (usage of Bruton library is concentrated in 3 output areas very near to Bruton – it is notable how little overlap there is between Bruton and Castle Cary catchments). This assessment will consider access to Wincanton, Yeovil and Shepton Mallet libraries as potential alternative library buildings.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries:

11a: from Castle Cary / Ansford built up area (pop. 3,232):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Wincanton	14 minutes	6 miles
Shepton Mallet	18 minutes	8 miles
Glastonbury	26 minutes	15 miles

11b: from North Cadbury built up area (pop. 638):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Wincanton	13 minutes	7 miles
Yeovil	25 minutes	11 miles

11c: from Ditchheat built up area (pop. 370):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Shepton Mallet	14 minutes	6 miles
Wincanton	22 minutes	10 miles
Glastonbury	23 minutes	13 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software, and are given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown. Driving times are shown for light traffic conditions and are likely to be longer at peak times of the day.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Castle Cary catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Castle Cary catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	9%	16%
Households with one vehicle	41%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	50%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 667 links Ansford and Castle Cary with Wincanton, and bus service 1 links these communities with Shepton Mallet and Yeovil. These services also run through some of the nearby settlements in the catchment – service 1 provides access from Dicheat, North Cadbury and Sparkford to Yeovil or Shepton Mallet, and service 667 links Lydford on Fosse and Alford to Street and Wincanton. The 667 service has a 90 minute frequency, providing access to Wincanton in approximately 35 minutes, the 1 has approximately an hourly frequency, providing access to Yeovil in 43 minutes and Shepton Mallet in 35 minutes (all journey times from Castle Cary). Both services run a reduced service on Saturdays. The adult return fare to Wincanton is £4.90, to Yeovil £8.50 and to Shepton Mallet £6.90 (all free for concessionary pass holders). Service 1 is considered to be sustainable, but service 667 may be less sustainable. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – Castle Cary and some surrounding communities are served by the Wincanton Community Accessible Transport community transport group, providing access to Wincanton.

Castle Cary is not within walking distance, nor a reasonable cycling distance, of Wincanton, Shepton Mallet or Yeovil.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Castle Cary Library.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide Mobile Library Services to Castle Cary and some of the surrounding communities, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). In conjunction with access to alternative library buildings at Wincanton, Shepton Mallet and Yeovil, all of these alternative services will mitigate the impact of closing Castle Cary library to a significant extent.

However, even with these mitigations, there will be residual impacts for people with some protected characteristics if Castle Cary library closes. The most significant of these impacts are summarised here (fuller descriptions are set out in the action plan table below):

- People aged 65 or over form a much higher proportion of Castle Cary Library users than elsewhere in Somerset, and feedback about the impact on this group came through strongly in the public consultation response. In particular, many older people are likely to suffer increased social isolation if Castle Cary library closed. Mitigation for this impact is limited, and for those most at risk of social isolation impacts could be significant.
- Although usage of Castle Cary library by parents with children and younger children is relatively low (in particular, there are a limited number of activities for this group of users), access to alternative libraries will be difficult and expensive for families with no access to a car, and mobile library services can only partially mitigate this impact.
- Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some people with the protected characteristics of Disability and / or Maternity, because of factors related to these characteristics, and some people in these groups could therefore be impacted by the closure of Castle Cary Library.
- Decision makers should note that the closure of Castle Cary Library would mean that people in some rural communities in the west of the catchment are unlikely to be able to access an alternative library building within a 20-minute driving time; this impact is related to Rurality.
- People in low income households living in Castle Cary town are less likely to have access to a vehicle and are less able to afford the cost of public transport. This means that they would be less able to access the library in Wincanton or Shepton, and therefore the impact of closing Castle Cary library would be more significant.
- The impact of closing Castle Cary library is more significant for users of the public computer access service, which would not be provided in Castle Cary if the library closed. People on lower incomes are more likely to be users of this service, and as noted above are less likely to be able to access the library in Wincanton. The impact would be particularly significant for people claiming Universal Credit, people claiming other benefits and also clients of social landlords.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>People aged 65 or over form a much higher proportion of Castle Cary Library users than of library users across Somerset as a whole. The impact of a library closure on older people was a strong theme in consultation responses for Castle Cary Library. In particular, impacts were highlighted for socially-isolated older people who would no longer have convenient access to the library. Furthermore, a pocket of high social isolation risk in Castle Cary has been identified through the needs assessment exercise. As noted by many consultation respondents, this impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone, and the impact on socially isolated older people may be more significant for Castle Cary than some other communities.</p> <p>Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative library buildings at Wincanton, Shepton Mallet or Yeovil may be more difficult for older people to do. Although public transport from Castle Cary to Shepton Mallet is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. Many older people using Castle Cary library travel into</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, alternative activities and services which could support socially-isolated older people (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These services would maintain walking</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, customers are made aware of other services which may help, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Castle Cary town centre by car or public transport from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Castle Cary Library because other libraries (Wincanton, Yeovil and Shepton Mallet) are a relatively short distance away and are also accessible by community and public transport. Like Castle Cary town centre, Wincanton has convenient, free parking adjacent to the library.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Wincanton, Yeovil or Shepton Mallet may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Castle Cary to Shepton Mallet is generally good, the cost of public transport to Shepton is more significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset. Public transport routes to Wincanton are more affordable, but not cheap, and may not be sustainable in the longer term. Parents with younger children who do not have access to cars would face more significant difficulties accessing alternative libraries than in some other locations. Castle Cary has a growing population, many of whom live within walking distance of the current library, although activities and events for children under 5 are limited. This impact is likely to affect some people in Castle Cary, but not as many as in some other affected libraries. Where they do not have access to a car, many parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p> <p>There was relatively little evidence of significant primary school age usage of Castle Cary library emerging through the consultation, however, statistical information indicates that usage of Castle Cary</p>	<p>access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, Mobile Library Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, more limited mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>library by this groups is relatively high. Some primary school children may use Castle Cary Library after attending school, and after school usage of libraries may become significantly more difficult for these users - those from households without access to a car after school are likely to only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays. This impact is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in Castle Cary, compared to some other affected libraries, because of the relatively low level of usage amongst this age group.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to Castle Cary Library. This impact is likely to be limited in Castle Cary, because usage of Castle Cary library is relatively low amongst this group, and the facilities for older children are limited because of space constraints. Nonetheless, some younger people may use Castle Cary library for study at certain times, and these customers may not be able to access this service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle, and public transport fares are expensive).</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Castle Cary</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, the demand for Mobile Library visits to local primary schools will be reviewed, however, we do not at this stage anticipate putting in place a significant mitigation, based on the evidence coming through from the consultation.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, there is no specific action that can</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>The demand for Mobile Library visits to local primary schools will be reviewed if a community library partnership cannot be developed.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.	mitigate this potential impact.		
Disability			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Wincanton, Yeovil or Shepton Mallet may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport. Although public transport from Castle Cary to Wincanton and Shepton Mallet is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Low floor buses operate between Castle Cary and Shepton Mallet / Wincanton, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people. Some disabled people using Castle Cary library travel into Castle Cary town centre by car or public transport from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Castle Cary library because other libraries (principally Wincanton, but also Shepton Mallet) are relatively accessible by car or can be accessed by the same public transport routes. Like Castle Cary town centre, Wincanton has convenient, free parking adjacent to the library, with easy access.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. This would maintain walking, mobility scooter/ wheelchair access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter/wheelchair. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, we will work with our staff to ensure relevant customer are</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services available at other locations.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>collection) are currently limited in Castle Cary Library, and comparable facilities are available through the Mobile Library Service.</p> <p>Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some disabled people, as a result of a lack of mobility, difficulty communicating, or anxiety about social contact. A pocket of relatively high social isolation risk in Castle Cary has been identified through the needs assessment exercise and consultation feedback has identified social isolation as a concern. Although the range of structured events and activities at Castle Cary library are limited, many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer, even if they don't take part in an activity. People with the protected characteristic of disability may be impacted more than others by the closure of Castle Cary Library, because some disabled people are more likely to be socially isolated. As noted by many consultation respondents, this impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone, and so the impact is likely to be more significant.</p> <p>The alternative library buildings at Wincanton, Yeovil and Shepton Mallet are wheelchair accessible, and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift. We do not consider that disabled customers of Castle Cary Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Castle Cary Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not currently have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with</p>	<p>aware of the availability of these collections on the mobile library service.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, alternative activities and services which could support socially-isolated disabled people (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, customers are made aware of other services which may help, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, customers with</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at Castle Cary could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p>	<p>customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p>	<p>Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>hearing loss are aware of the facilities in alternative services.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>			
<p>No impacts identified.</p>			
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Wincanton, Yeovil or Shepton Mallet may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Castle Cary to Shepton Mallet is generally good, the cost of public transport to Shepton is more significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset. Public transport routes to Wincanton are more affordable, but not cheap, and may not be sustainable in the longer term. New parents who do not have access to cars would face more significant difficulties accessing alternative libraries than in some other locations. Castle Cary has a growing population, many of whom live within walking distance of the current library, although</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>activities and events for babies are limited. This impact is likely to affect some people in Castle Cary. Where they do not have access to a car, many parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p>	<p>during any library closure.</p>		
<p>Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)</p>			
<p>The proportion of people in Castle Cary catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in Castle Cary is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p> <p>Some consultation responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access. Although the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence that migrant workers are likely to be significantly disadvantaged by the closure of Castle Cary Library, this could be because of a limited engagement by this group in the consultation exercise. On balance, we feel that this potential impact merits highlighting to decision makers because the public computer access service would not be available through other means in Castle Cary if the library closed, and because it is possible that migrant workers may find it more difficult to access alternative public computer access services in nearby libraries, either because of working patterns or the affordability of public transport for those that may not have access to a vehicle. Castle Cary has a large rural catchment, and the proportion of active users in non-British white groups is notable, compared to the population of this group within the catchment as a whole.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If it is not possible to establish a Community Library Partnership in Castle Cary, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of public computer access services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Castle Cary to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Sex</p>			
<p>Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Castle Cary, because a higher proportion of Castle Cary library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

closing Castle Cary library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.			
Sexual Orientation			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, Digital Library Services, Library Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	during any library closure.		
<p>Rurality</p> <p>Whilst many rural communities in the catchment would have reasonable transport links to alternative libraries in Wincanton, Yeovil, Shepton Mallet or Glastonbury, public transport and car access to alternative libraries would be more lengthy and time-consuming than access to Castle Cary for some of the rural communities in Castle Cary library catchment; particularly those to the south and west of Castle Cary. However, for the majority of the rural catchment, driving times to access alternative library buildings would not be too significant, and levels of car ownership are high. The cost of parking and fuel for car journeys to Wincanton and Shepton would be comparable to Castle Cary for rural users in the east and north of the catchment – so many rural users who currently access Castle Cary library using their own vehicle are likely to be impacted by convenience factors rather than significant barriers to access. Villages with access by public transport to Castle Cary library would have access, via the same public transport routes, to either Yeovil, Shepton Mallet, Wincanton or Glastonbury libraries (although journey times and timetables may be less convenient). In general, impacts relating to the characteristic of rurality are limited, with some exceptions noted below.</p> <p>As part of the consideration and development of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1, we have undertaken a preliminary assessment of rural communities that do not currently have a mobile library service, but which could be impacted by the closure of a nearby library. In this exercise, Alhampton and Alford were identified as rural</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, the Mobile Library network in the</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, more limited mobile library services</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>communities with significant usage of Castle Cary library. We anticipate that, subject to demand, a mobile library service would be provided to these communities as well as Castle Cary itself if Castle Cary Library closed. However, people in this part of Castle Cary catchment are likely to continue to use Castle Cary as a hub for other local services, and would have to travel further to access alternative libraries in Yeovil or Wincanton. Whilst this impact is not directly related to the characteristic of rurality, we have noted it here (alongside mitigating actions) for information.</p> <p>The Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 seeks to design a library network which we estimate will enable access to a library building by car (in normal traffic conditions) in around 20 minutes or less for the vast majority of Somerset users. Our analysis of driving times indicates that this objective would be met for the vast majority of Castle Cary catchment whether or not a library building could be maintained in Castle Cary. However, we estimate that residents in the villages of Alford, Lovington, North Barrow and surrounding area to the east of Castle Cary would be over 20 minutes' drive from alternative libraries at Martock and Shepton Mallet. These customers would be relatively disadvantaged by the closure of Castle Cary library, in part due to a characteristic of rurality.</p>	<p>area will be reviewed. Provision has been made within budgets to provide additional mobile stops in rural communities with high levels of usage of Castle Cary library. Services would be designed in conjunction with communities, and would be communicated to customers.</p> <p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>are available in the most rural communities most affected. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Low Income</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Levels of income and employment in the catchment as a whole are higher than the average for Somerset. However, levels of income in parts of Castle Cary town are lower than the County and national average, and the community engagement exercise highlighted that there were some areas of deprivation within walking distance of the current library site. Impacts on people with low incomes were highlighted as a concern by users of Castle Cary library during the consultation exercise. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and the cost of public transport to Shepton Mallet or Wincanton for non-concessionary pass holders could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes from accessing Langport library. Whilst mobile and digital library services would mitigate the impact to some extent, people on low incomes who do not have access to a vehicle are likely to face a more significant impact from the closure of Castle Cary Library.</p> <p>Public access computer use is moderate at Castle Cary library, and some comments from users of Castle Cary library noted the usage of this service by unemployed people. There is a pocket of very significant digital exclusion risk in Castle Cary town. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet, and the closure of this service is likely to impact on people in Castle Cary. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. Some people on low incomes, particularly those claiming universal credit, are likely to be significantly impacted by the closure of Castle Cary library, as</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Castle Cary, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made aware of these services.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic.			
Military Status			
No impact identified	No action necessary.		

Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment	
The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16 th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.	
Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey
Date	01/10/18
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	04/10/18
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(d)

Highbridge Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Highbridge

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Highbridge	
Version	2	Date	04/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are consulting on for the delivery of Library Services in Highbridge and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Highbridge library, and should be read in conjunction with the other assessments included within this Appendix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Highbridge Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Highbridge are currently delivered through a library building in Highbridge, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that a large number of people living in Highbridge and the surrounding area use Burnham-on-Sea Library. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Highbridge and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Highbridge (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> a</p>			

combination of Library Outreach Services and Digital Library Services, to compliment access to the library at Burnham-on-Sea. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Highbridge would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Highbridge library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Highbridge, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Highbridge Library and providing library services to Highbridge and the surrounding communities in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Highbridge library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 262 active borrowers;
- 3,502 visits (footfall);
- 145 people's network users;
- 132 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 6,964.

Highbridge library is open for 9.5 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Highbridge library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of

- Highbridge library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Highbridge library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Highbridge Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Highbridge catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Highbridge library most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Highbridge	% of Highbridge Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Highbridge Library
0-4	5.35%	3.4%	6.7%	5.3%	4.5%
5-11	16.07%	16.7%	7.7%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	4.4%	6.8%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	47.3%	58.5%	56.0%	53.7%
65+	28.81%	28.1%	20.3%	24.1%	41.8%
Unknown	1.35%				

Table 2: % active library users, Highbridge catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Highbridge library most by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Highbridge	% of Highbridge Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Highbridge Library*
Female	61.88%	61.6%	51.20%	51.20%	66.7%
Male	36.38%	36.9%	48.80%	48.80%	33.3%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	1.5%	-	-	-

*Consultation responders who identified as some other way totalled 0.9% of responders to this question.

Table 3: % of active library users, Highbridge catchment and Somerset population, and consultation respondents who use Highbridge library most, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Highbridge	% of Highbridge Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of Consultation Respondents nearest to Highbridge Library
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	3.90%	1.90%	2.02%	6.7%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	3.90%	2.30%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	92.20%	95.90%	94.64%	93.3%

*The Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Highbridge catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents across Somerset:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - Highbridge	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Highbridge catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	1.3%	Long term health problem or disabled	23%	19%	20.4%*
Non-disabled	95%	98.7%	No long-term health problem or disability identified	77%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset

population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Highbridge Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Highbridge Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery, we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Highbridge Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity in 2016 showing % South West population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole*	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded at the time of registration.

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the

protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

<p>% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:</p> <p>% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:</p>	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Highbridge library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of Highbridge library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent users of this library:

The proportion of the catchment population aged under 5 is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range.

- In common with the vast majority of library user groups, the proportion of users of Highbridge library in the 5-11 and 65+ age ranges are higher than the proportion of the catchment population in these age groups.
- The proportion of the working age population in the catchment is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, and forms a higher proportion of Highbridge Library users than Somerset Library service users as a whole.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Highbridge library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- There is a seemingly a higher proportion of library users identifying themselves as 'Black & Minority ethnic groups' in Highbridge than the proportion of the population of Somerset as a whole identifying themselves within this ethnic group.
- The proportion of the catchment population with a disability is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population with this protected characteristic.
- There is seemingly a smaller proportion of library users with disabilities in Highbridge than in Somerset as a whole.

The overall number of library users in Highbridge is very low, and the statistical comparisons above may be skewed as a result.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Highbridge library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Highbridge Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Highbridge catchment serves a small, largely urban area around Highbridge. Analysis of library usage data indicates that the majority of users in this area use Burnham-on-Sea Library (see Table 10 below), although some use Highbridge library (we anticipate that many will use both libraries). Usage of Highbridge library is largely concentrated in the built-up area of Highbridge, with a small number of rural users to the south of the town. Very few users of Highbridge library are likely to have the protected characteristic of rurality.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower layer Super Output areas in the Highbridge library catchment is 4, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a higher proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average is likely to mask significant variations in income levels within the catchment population; the area to the west of the library has a very pronounced level of income deprivation (in the lowest 10% nationally).

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Highbridge library is fairly limited, with 327 attendances at events held in the library.

Section 2B – People who are delivering the policy or service

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4ii above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income, as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Highbridge library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Highbridge and Burnham-on-Sea on 28th September 2017, 28 February and 23 July 2018. It was noted that there was a high level of child poverty in Highbridge – 29%. It was also noted that access to Burnham-on-Sea was relatively good, with a bus service serving Highbridge; the two communities were very mixed, and usage of Burnham-on-Sea library was very high.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a relatively low number of consultation responses received from users of Highbridge Library, reflecting the relatively low number of users.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Highbridge library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Highbridge library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Highbridge library.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly.

Qualitative responses

A number of comments were made through the survey by users of Highbridge Library, and several letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, a drop-in event was held on 15 February 2018.

It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Highbridge would have a significant impact on older people.
 - *“Any closure in Highbridge library will impinge on the elderly, especially non-drivers”*
- A significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“The added value of access to books and all the other services in our community would affect people’s learning and literacy now, and their children and our schools. The facility to borrow and return books teaches honesty to children, which is useful skill.”*
 - *“Devastating to me and my young children”*

- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Highbridge, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Highbridge library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are home schooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- Several respondents using Highbridge library noted general impacts on disabled people particularly the use of the Public Network Computers and the lack of parking at Burnham Library.
 - *“Due to mobility issues and no computer/family at home - I can access H/b library or H/b itself fairly easily rather than bus travel to other libraries. Computer use - essential to me.”*
 - *“Highbridge library is close to on-street and off-street parking, unlike Burnham. Trying to park near Burnham library is nigh on impossible, which makes life awkward for people with mobility problems”*
- The ‘Save Highbridge Library Campaign Group’ response cited:
 - *The consultation appears to give little consideration people with learning disabilities. Two young people, we have met, regularly travel from Weston-Super-Mare to use Highbridge library for study, because it is smaller and quieter ...and close to the railway station.”*

Pregnancy / Maternity

- No specific impacts were highlighted by individual Highbridge users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Highbridge library. Some responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- No specific impacts were highlighted by individual Highbridge users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Low income

- Specific impacts were highlighted by a relatively high number individual Highbridge users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic; low income and deprivation was a theme in consultation responses relating to this library. Several comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower incomes.
 - “Highbridge has one of the highest levels of deprivation in the country- we need a library”
 - “Many local residents have been moved off ESA onto UC and are having to log into their account daily to be seen to be actively chasing work.”
 - “Having a library with free Wi-Fi and computer usage is likely to be a large benefit to them. Some of the long term unemployed will struggle particularly with Burnham being the nearest library. It's not a long way off, but during colder seasons it'll be demotivating for those who have to walk or catch a bus there.”

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicating higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Highbridge catchment:

	Highbridge catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	5	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	5	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	4	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	4	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	6	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	3	6

Table 9 indicate that, on average for these measures, levels of need in Highbridge catchment as a whole are higher than levels of need for Somerset as a whole. This means that on average there is likely to be a higher proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Highbridge catchment are much more likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset, but less likely to have the characteristic of Rurality as people in Somerset as a whole. A more detailed analysis at has identified a significant neighbourhood in Highbridge with a high (top 20% nationally) social isolation risk, as well as some areas with significant disabled populations.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Highbridge catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Burnham-on-Sea	310	140	0
Highbridge	140	70	10
Bridgwater	20	20	10
Taunton	0	0	0

Table 10 shows that the vast majority of library users in Highbridge catchment currently use Burnham-on-Sea Library as an alternative to Highbridge library. This provides evidence that Burnham-on-Sea Library is very likely to be the alternative library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the decision proposals, there ceased to be a library building in Highbridge. This assessment will therefore consider access to Burnham-on-Sea Library from the catchment.

In our analysis of library catchments work it is unusual for more users within a library's catchment to use a different library to the catchment library. This would suggest that access to Burnham-on-Sea is convenient, and that many people from the catchment visit Burnham-on-Sea regularly to use the library.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Highbridge built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Burnham-on-Sea	5 minutes	2 miles
Bridgwater	16 minutes	7 miles
Cheddar	23 minutes	12 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Highbridge catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Highbridge catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	23%	16%
Households with one vehicle	44%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	33%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 21 links Highbridge with Burnham-on-Sea and Bridgwater, providing good public transport access to alternative libraries in these locations. The service has a 30 minute frequency and takes 6 minutes to get to Burnham-on-Sea. The adult return fare to Burnham-on-Sea is £3.60 (free for concessionary pass holders). East Huntspill is served by service 67, 3 times a day, which passes through Highbridge and on to Burnham-on-Sea. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – Highbridge and some surrounding communities are served by Somerset County Council’s slinky bus service – but only on a limited frequency.

Much of the catchment is within walking distance of Burnham-on-Sea library, and well within cycling distance.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Highbridge Library. Highbridge library has a small number of users, reflecting a relatively small catchment population, the majority of whom use Burnham-on-Sea library rather than Highbridge library. This being the case, the impact of closing Highbridge library is likely to be less significant than the impact of closing some of the other libraries where changes are recommended.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide some Library Outreach Services to Highbridge, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). Many people in Highbridge are likely to travel regularly to Burnham for shopping. Older people and many disabled people are able to travel to Burnham at no cost, on a relatively convenient and frequent bus service. Although a long walk, Burnham-on-Sea library is within walking distance and is within a convenient cycling distance for people who are able to cycle. This good, affordable access for most people to the alternative library building at Burnham, alongside the alternative services provided, will mitigate the impact of closing Highbridge library to a significant extent for the majority of groups identified.

Mitigations are therefore relatively strong for impacts identified for users of Highbridge Library. Decision makers may wish to note the following issues, which are the most difficult to mitigate:

- It is a long walk from Highbridge to Burnham-on-Sea, and although the cost of public transport is modest, in the context of the high income deprivation it may not be

affordable for service users who do not have concessionary passes. Parents with children or babies would be able to access activities through outreach provision in Highbridge but would face a long walk to access a library building if they did not have access to a car, or could not afford public transport.

- Although cycling access to Burnham-on-Sea is reasonable, and relatively affordable, for people with good mobility, there are a significant number of users of the public computer access service at Highbridge Library, and these users would be significantly inconvenienced by having to travel to Burnham, particularly if they were reliant on the public computers to apply for work, to access Universal Credit, or to access social housing services.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts, you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>People aged 65 or over form a reasonably high proportion of Highbridge Library users, and the impact of a library closure on older people was noted in some consultation responses for Highbridge Library. Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing Burnham-on-Sea Library may be more difficult for older people to do. Although public transport from Highbridge to Burnham is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. There is also strong evidence from the catchment mapping data that a larger number of people living close to Highbridge library use Burnham-on-Sea library than Highbridge library, so this impact is likely to be limited to a small number of people.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, we will signpost alternative services (including the Home Library Service and Digital Library Service) through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of alternative services (including the Home Library Service), and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Accessing Burnham-on-Sea Library may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. However, it is possible to walk to Burnham-on-Sea library (though some distance) from most of Highbridge, and there is strong evidence from the</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, Library Outreach Services for children would be</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, alternative activities for children are easily accessible</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>catchment mapping data that a larger number of people living close to Highbridge library use Burnham-on-Sea library rather than Highbridge library. Public transport from Highbridge to Burnham-on-Sea is generally good, and the cost of public transport is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, however, it will be more expensive and less convenient for some parents with younger children than the current option of walking to Highbridge library. There are a limited range of activities children under 5. This impact is likely to be limited; access to Burnham-Sea is good, and usage of the library is low. Nonetheless, where they do not have access to a car, some parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p> <p>There is limited evidence of significant usage by Primary School Children of Highbridge library.</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Highbridge Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>provided. These services would maintain easy walking access to activities and events for younger children. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Accessing Burnham-on-Sea Library may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport. Although public transport from Highbridge to Burnham is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library, or for</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, Digital</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, more</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>disabled users who accessed the library using wheelchairs it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Low floor buses operate between Highbridge and Burnham, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people.</p> <p>The 'Books on Prescription' service at Highbridge library is available to help people manage their own health and wellbeing through reading recommended books. This service would still be available in nearby Burnham-on-Sea library. Having considered this evidence, we do not feel there is likely to be any impact arising.</p> <p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Large print books and spoken word books would be available in Burnham-on-Sea library with a broader range of stock, but the withdrawal of the service in Highbridge could disproportionately affect some people with sensory loss, who may have more difficulty accessing Burnham-on-Sea Library, or for whom alternative digital services may be less effective at meeting their particular needs.</p>	<p>Library Services and some Library Outreach Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or wheelchair access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p>	<p>Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by wheelchair. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, customers are made aware of the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>The alternative library building at Burnham-on-Sea is wheelchair accessible and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. We do not consider that disabled customers of Highbridge Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Highbridge Library closes.</p> <p>Burnham-on-Sea Library is most likely to be used as an alternative library, but this may not be possible for some people with mental health conditions or learning disabilities, who may not cope with the larger library space and busy atmosphere. There is some evidence that this impact would apply to users of Highbridge library, which is a quieter library building.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, we will work with our staff to identify vulnerable customers and try to ensure that changes are communicated at an early stage, and new or alternative services are clearly signposted. We will explore the potential for establishing 'quiet times' in larger town centre libraries.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers vulnerable to anxiety are communicated with effectively at an early stage. If feasible, 'quiet times' are established at Burnham-on-Sea library, and these are communicated to vulnerable customers.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>			
<p>No impacts identified.</p>			
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>			
<p>Accessing Burnham-on-Sea library may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. However, it is possible to walk to Burnham-on-Sea library (though some distance) from most of Highbridge, and there is strong evidence from the catchment mapping data that a larger number of people living close to Highbridge library use Burnham-on-Sea library rather than Highbridge library. Public transport from Highbridge to Burnham-on-Sea is generally good, and the cost of public transport is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset. There are a limited range of activities for children under 5. This impact is likely to be limited; access to Burnham-on-Sea is good, and usage of Highbridge library is low. Nonetheless, where they do not have access to a car, some people with this protected characteristic are likely to find it more difficult to take babies to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, Digital Library Services and Library Outreach Services for very young children would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)			
<p>The proportion of people in Highbridge catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in Highbridge is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		
<p>Some consultation responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access. Although the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence that migrant workers are likely to be significantly disadvantaged by the closure of Highbridge Library, this could be because of a limited engagement by this group in the consultation exercise. On balance, we feel that this potential impact merits highlighting to decision makers because the public computer access service would not be available through other means in Highbridge if the library closed, and because it is possible that migrant workers may find it more difficult to access alternative public computer access services in nearby libraries, either because of working patterns or the affordability of public transport for those that may not have access to a vehicle.</p>	<p>If it is not possible to establish a Community Library Partnership in Highbridge, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of public computer access services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>
<p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the</p>	<p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Highbridge to individuals and groups</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager</p>	<p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	
<p>Religion and Belief</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Sex</p>			
<p>Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Highbridge, because a higher proportion of Highbridge library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Highbridge library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, Digital Library Services and some Library Outreach Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>
<p>Rurality</p> <p>No impacts identified.</p>			
<p>Low Income</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Levels of income in parts of Highbridge town are low - amongst the lowest nationally. The community engagement exercise and the public consultation highlighted areas of significant income deprivation within walking distance of the current library site, and the loss of major local employers. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and the cost of public transport to Burnham-on-Sea for non-concessionary pass holders could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes from accessing Burnham library. However, walking access is possible, and cycling access is good from the majority of the catchment, so this impact is likely to be limited.</p> <p>Public access computer use is fairly significant at Highbridge library, and many comments from users of Highbridge library noted the usage of this service by unemployed people. Across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. As noted above, unemployment levels in Highbridge are relatively high, although</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, Digital Library Services and Library Outreach Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Highbridge, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made aware of these services.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>access to Burnham-on-Sea library is relatively good. Nonetheless, some people on low incomes, particularly those claiming universal credit, are likely to be impacted by the closure of Highbridge library, as public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic.</p>			
<p>Military Status</p> <p>No impacts identified</p>			

<p>Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment</p>	
<p>The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.</p>	
<p>Completed by:</p>	<p>Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey</p>
<p>Date</p>	<p>01/10/18</p>
<p>Signed off by:</p>	<p>Michele Cusack</p>
<p>Date</p>	<p>11/10/2018</p>
<p>Compliance sign off Date</p>	<p>03/10/2018</p>
<p>To be reviewed by: (officer name)</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>Review date:</p>	<p>This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(e)

Milborne Port
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Milborne Port

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Milborne Port	
Version	2	Date	04/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are consulting on for the delivery of Library Services in Milborne Port and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Milborne Port library, and should be read in conjunction with the other assessments included within this Appendix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Milborne Port Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Milborne Port are currently delivered through a library building in Milborne Port, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows most of the services users living in Milborne Port and the surrounding area use Milborne Port Library, with some usage of Yeovil Library. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Milborne Port and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Milborne Port (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> through a Mobile Library Service and Digital Library Service, to compliment access to Yeovil library. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible,</p>			

the library building in Milborne Port would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Milborne Port if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Milborne Port library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Milborne Port, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Milborne Port Library and providing library services to Milborne Port and the surrounding communities in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Milborne Port library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 329 active borrowers;
- 6,163 visits (footfall);
- 54 people's network users;
- 357 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 3,440.

Milborne Port library is open for 14.5 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Milborne Port library, a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data we compared the characteristics of

- Milborne Port library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Milborne Port library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Milborne Port Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Milborne Port catchment and Somerset population in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users Milborne Port	% of Milborne Port Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Milborne Port Library
0-4	5.35%	4.5%	4.6%	5.3%	0%
5-11	16.07%	15.0%	9.4%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	2.6%	6.8%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	28.5%	54.9%	56.0%	46.5%
65+	28.81%	43.1%	26.5%	24.1%	53.4%
Unknown	1.35%	6.4%			

Table 2: % active library users, Milborne Port catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Milborne Port library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Milborne Port	% of Milborne Port Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Milborne Port Library
Female	61.88%	65.5%	50.5%	51.20%	72.7%
Male	36.38%	31.8%	49.5%	48.80%	27.3%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	2.6%			

Table 3: % of active library users, Milborne Port catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Milborne Port library most, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Milborne Port	% of Milborne Port Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Milborne Port Library*
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	0.0%	0.9%	2.02%	9.8%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	2.1%	2.0%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	97.9%	97.1%	94.64%	90.2%

*The consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census/consultation responses on disability / long term health problems – Milborne Port catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents across Somerset:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - Milborne Port	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Milborne Port catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	4.7%	Long term health problem or disabled	18%	19%	20.4%*
Non-disabled	95%	95.3%	No long term health problem or disability identified	81%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked, 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Milborne Port Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Milborne Port Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery, we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Milborne Port Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?'

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity in 2016 showing % UK sub-national population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole*	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded on registration

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:

% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:

.. as a man or as a woman - **99%**

.. in some other way - **1%**

.. matches their identity at birth - **99%**

.. does not match their identity at birth - **1%**

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Milborne Port library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of Milborne Port library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent users of this library:

- The proportion of the catchment population aged 65 or over is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, and people of this age group form a more significant proportion of Milborne Port Library users than of Somerset library service users as a whole.
- In common with the vast majority of library user groups, the proportion of users of Milborne Port library in the 5-11 age range is significantly higher than the proportion of these age groups in the local catchment population as a whole.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Milborne Port library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. The proportion of Milborne Port library users identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the equivalent proportion across all Somerset Libraries.
- A relatively large proportion of consultation respondents using Milborne Port Library consider themselves to be from a Minority Ethnic Background, which seems to be at odds with the very low proportion from non 'White British' backgrounds evident from census and library user data. There was a relatively low response rate to the consultation from users of Milborne Port Library, and it could be that this has skewed the data.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Milborne Port library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Milborne Port Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Milborne Port catchment serves a small rural area around Milborne Port. Analysis of library usage data indicates that there are a small number of rural output areas adjoining the village where usage of Milborne Port is high; however further afield in the rural catchment users are more likely to use Wincanton or Yeovil libraries (we anticipate that many will use more than one library). Usage of Milborne Port library is largely concentrated in the built-up area of Milborne Port and the immediate surrounds; although some users of Milborne Port library are likely to have the protected characteristic of Rurality, most users are not. According to our user records, there are no users of Milborne Port library in the nearby community of Henstridge.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower Layer Super Output areas in the Milborne Port library catchment is 8, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a lower proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average is likely to mask some variations in income

levels within the catchment population. No significant pockets of low income populations have been identified within the catchment through the needs assessment exercise. Our needs assessment did not identify income deprivation as a significant problem for Milborne Port library catchment, compared to other areas of Somerset.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Milborne Port library is moderate, considering the small size of the catchment, as is the use of the free Public Network computers.

Section 2B – People who are delivering the policy or service

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 3ii above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered at this pre-consultation stage, and this is set out below in relation to Milborne Port library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Milborne Port on 17th October 2017. It was noted that the library was likely to be used by children, that the Summer Reading Challenge was a key activity, and that links with the primary schools were growing. It was also noted that, although the population statistics appeared to show that Milborne Port was a relatively wealthy community, there were some households where levels of income were low.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a low number of consultation responses received from users of Milborne Library, reflecting the relatively low number of users.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Milborne Port library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Milborne Port library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Milborne Port library.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly.

Qualitative responses

A low number of comments were made through the survey by users of Milborne Port Library, and a number of letters were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, a drop-in event was held. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Milborne Port would have a significant impact on older people, highlighting the potential difficulties in accessing alternative libraries, the limitations of the mobile library service, and the impact on loneliness and social isolation:
 - *“Elderly people with no transport rely on the library for company”,*
 - *“[A mobile library] provides very little to the community apart from a limited selection of books. Access difficult for elderly and a cramped experience not conducive to browsing or spending time selecting books.”*
- Individual comments also noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“My children have found love of reading through going to that library. Without it we will not go to a library at all because we don't have time to travel. The staff know the children's names and make them feel special every time we go. It would be devastating to lose Milborne Port library.”*
 - *“many children use it for research and school work”*
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Milborne Port, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Milborne Port library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would affect my family as they are home-schooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- Very few specific impacts were highlighted by individual Milborne Port users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

- *A mobile library, even with wheelchair access, is less user friendly for people with mobility problems.*

Pregnancy / Maternity

- No specific impacts were highlighted by individual Milborne Port users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Milborne Port library. Some responses received elsewhere noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- The lack of other facilities in Milborne Port was raised in a number of responses in respect of this protected characteristic.
 - *Going to the library gives vulnerable/lonely people somewhere to go, which can be a problem even in an affluent area.*

Low income

- A few specific impacts were highlighted by individual Milborne Port Library users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. One or two comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower incomes.
 - *"I would be bereft without access to the library at Milborne Port. I would not be able to afford to buy the books I read from the library. It is too expensive for me to travel by bus to Yeovil or Wincanton to access a library there."*

Other protected characteristics:

No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper Data analysis – methodology and data sources, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicating higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Milborne Port catchment:

	Milborne Port catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	9	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
'Access to services' deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	7	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	7	6

Table 9 indicates that, on average for these measures, there is a lower level of need in Milborne Port catchment, with the corollary that (on average), there is likely to be a lower proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Milborne Port catchment are less likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset and are also less likely to have the characteristic of Rurality.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Milborne Port catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Milborne Port	250	40	10
Yeovil	50	30	0
Mobile Library	10	0	0
Wincanton	10	0	0

Table 10 shows that the majority of library users in Milborne Port catchment currently use Milborne Port Library, with some also using Yeovil as an alternative library. This provides evidence that Yeovil Library is very likely to be the alternative (Somerset) library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the consultation proposals, there ceased to be a library building in Milborne Port. Sherborne in Dorset is very nearby to Milborne Port, and it has a library, which is also likely to be used as an alternative by people living in Milborne Port and the surrounding catchment. However, we will not take this into account in the assessment of potential impact, as we have concluded that we should not rely on other authorities to mitigate impacts for Somerset residents. This assessment will therefore consider access to Yeovil Library from the catchment.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Milborne Port built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Yeovil	18 minutes	8 miles
Wincanton	20 minutes	9 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Milborne Port catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Milborne Port catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	10%	16%
Households with one vehicle	44%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	47%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 58 links Milborne Port with Yeovil and Wincanton, providing good public transport access to alternative libraries in these locations. The service has a two-hourly frequency and takes 24 minutes to get to Yeovil and 30 minutes to get to Wincanton. The service also serves Henstridge and Templecombe and provides access to Sherborne (Dorset). The Adult return fare to Yeovil is £6.60 (free for concessionary pass holders). The service is considered to be sustainable. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – Milborne Port and some surrounding communities are served by the Wincanton CAT community transport group.

It is not feasible to walk to Yeovil, and cycling does not provide reasonable access.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Milborne Port Library.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide Mobile Library Services to Milborne Port and some of the surrounding communities, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). In conjunction with access to alternative library buildings at Yeovil and Wincanton, all these alternative services will mitigate the impact of closing Milborne Port library to a significant extent.

However, even with these mitigations, there will be residual impacts for people with some protected characteristics if Milborne Port library closes. The most significant of these impacts are summarised here (fuller descriptions are set out in the action plan table below):

- People aged 65 or over form a much higher proportion of Milborne Port Library users than elsewhere in Somerset, and feedback about the impact on this group came through to a degree in the public consultation response. Some older people may suffer increased social isolation if Milborne Port library closed. Mitigation for this impact is limited. The number of people affected is likely to be small, because Milborne Port serves a relatively small catchment with relatively low risks of social isolation. However, for those impacted, the impact could be significant.
- Although usage of Milborne Port library by parents with children and younger children is relatively low (in particular, there are a limited number of activities for this group of users), access to alternative libraries will be difficult and expensive for families with no access to a car, and mobile library services can only partially mitigate this impact.
- Feedback obtained during the consultation exercise indicates that primary school children use Milborne Port library frequently, and older children occasionally use the library for study. Although the impact of closure on Primary School children could be mitigated to an extent through a mobile library visit to the school, generally this impact is difficult to mitigate effectively.
- Decision makers should note that the closure of Milborne Port Library would mean that people in Milborne Port and the small rural area to the south of the catchment may not be able to access an alternative library building within a 20-minute driving time; this impact is related to Rurality for some users.
- People in low income households living in Milborne Port town are less likely to have access to a vehicle and are less able to afford the cost of public transport. This means that they would be less able to access the library in Yeovil or Wincanton, and therefore the impact of closing Milborne Port library would be more significant.
- The impact of closing Milborne Port library is more significant for users of the public computer access service, which would not be provided in Milborne Port if the library closed. People on lower incomes are more likely to be users of this service, and as noted above are less likely to be able to access the libraries in Yeovil or Wincanton. Although numbers are likely to be small, this impact would be particularly significant for people claiming Universal Credit, people claiming other benefits and also clients of social landlords.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)</p>			
<p>Identified issue drawn from your conclusions</p>	<p>Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?</p>	<p>Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?</p>	<p>How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?</p>
<p>Age</p>			
<p>People aged 65 or over form a much higher proportion of Milborne Port Library users than of library users across Somerset as a whole. The impact of a library closure on older people was a theme in consultation responses for Milborne Port Library. Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing Yeovil or Wincanton libraries may be more difficult for older people to do. Although public transport from Milborne Port to Yeovil is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. Some older people using Milborne Port library travel into Milborne Port town centre by car or public transport from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would also be affected by the closure of Milborne Port Library because other libraries (principally Yeovil, but also Wincanton) are a relatively long distance away by car. Parking charges and traffic congestion in Yeovil could be a barrier for some older people; however, Wincanton library has convenient adjacent parking and is not much further by car.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Yeovil or Wincanton may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be</p>	<p>Director of Economic and</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Milborne Port to Yeovil is generally good, the cost of public transport to Yeovil is significant for non-concessionary pass holders (£6.60 for an adult return fare; under 5s are free, 5-15 year olds pay £4.40). It will be considerably more expensive and less convenient for parents with younger children to access Yeovil library than the current option of walking to the library. Feedback from stakeholder groups indicates that the current library is well used by children under 5. Where they do not have access to a car, many parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p> <p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who are currently able to use Milborne Port Library after attending the nearby primary or infant schools. Those who currently walk from school to the library (perhaps because the household either does not have access to a car, or because the only household car is being used for work purposes) will be particularly impacted. It is technically possible to get from Milborne Port to Yeovil Library on public transport after school, but as noted above the cost is significant. After school usage of libraries may become significantly more difficult for some primary school children - those without access to a car after school are likely to only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays. This impact was noted in the stakeholder engagement exercise and is likely to affect a modest number of users in Milborne Port.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to Milborne Port Library. This impact was noted in anecdotal feedback in the consultation exercise, which indicated that some younger</p>	<p>established in Milborne Port, Mobile Library Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, we will explore the demand for Mobile Library visits to Milborne Port Primary school. If possible, we will provide a monthly mobile library visit to the school site.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, there is no</p>	<p>Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>established in Milborne Port, more limited mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>Subject to demand and agreement from the school, a regular mobile library visit will be made to the primary school if a community library partnership cannot be developed.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>people may use Milborne Port library for study at certain times. These customers would not be able to access this service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle).</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Milborne Port Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>		
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Yeovil or Wincanton may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport. Although public transport from Milborne Port to Yeovil is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Low floor buses operate between Milborne Port and Yeovil or Wincanton, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or mobility scooter/wheelchair access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism collection) are currently limited in Milborne Port Library, and comparable facilities are available through the Mobile Library Service.</p> <p>The alternative library building at Yeovil is wheelchair accessible and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift. We do not consider that disabled customers of Milborne Port Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Milborne Port Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not currently have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at Milborne Port could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p>	<p>during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, we will work with our staff to ensure relevant customer are aware of the availability of these collections on the mobile library service.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services available at other locations.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities in alternative services.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Gender Reassignment			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified.			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
Accessing alternative library buildings at Yeovil or Wincanton may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for most of the week. Although public transport from Milborne Port to Yeovil is generally good, the cost of public transport to Yeovil is significant for non-concessionary pass holders (£6.60 for an adult return fare; under 5s are free). It will be considerably more expensive and less convenient for new parents to access Yeovil library than the current option of walking to the library. Where they do not have access to a car, many parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.
Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>The proportion of people in Milborne Port catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in Milborne Port is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p> <p>Some consultation responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access. Although the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence that migrant workers are likely to be significantly disadvantaged by the closure of Milborne Port Library, this could be because of a limited engagement by this group in the consultation exercise. On balance, we feel that this potential impact merits highlighting to decision makers because the public computer access service would not be available through other means in Milborne Port if the library closed, and because it is possible that migrant workers may find it more difficult to access alternative public computer access services in nearby libraries, either because of working patterns or the affordability of public transport for those that may not have access to a vehicle.</p> <p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If it is not possible to establish a Community Library Partnership in Milborne Port, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Milborne Port to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of public computer access services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities if a library building cannot be maintained.</p> <p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.		
Religion and Belief			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Sex			
Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Milborne Port, because a higher proportion of Milborne Port library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Milborne Port library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.	There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.		
Sexual Orientation			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, Digital Library Services, Library Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>
<p>Rurality</p> <p>As part of the consideration and development of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1, we have undertaken a preliminary assessment of rural communities that do not currently have a mobile library service, but which could be impacted by the closure of a nearby library. In this exercise, no rural communities were identified with</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>significant usage of Milborne Port library. The majority of people in the rural parts of Milborne Port catchment use Yeovil or Wincanton libraries rather than Milborne Port library, and so we have concluded that there is unlikely to be a significant impact on people with the characteristic of rurality.</p> <p>The Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 seeks to design a library network which we estimate will enable access to a library building by car (in normal traffic conditions) in around 20 minutes or less for the vast majority of Somerset users. Our analysis of driving times indicates that this objective would be met for the majority of Milborne Port catchment whether or not a library building could be maintained in Milborne Port. However, Milborne Port and the small rural area to the south are around 20 minutes' drive from Yeovil or Wincanton libraries; traffic congestion in Yeovil is common and journey times could be longer than 20 minutes, particularly in the rural area to the south of Milborne Port, where longer drive times are an impact related to rurality.</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income and employment in the catchment as a whole are slightly higher than the average for Somerset. However, feedback from the community engagement exercise and public consultation has identified that low income could be an issue for some households in Milborne Port, masked by statistical averages in what is a relatively wealthy area overall. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and the cost of public transport to Yeovil or Wincanton for non-concessionary pass holders could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes from accessing alternative libraries.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Whilst mobile and digital library services would mitigate the impact to some extent, people on low incomes who do not have access to a vehicle are likely to face a more significant impact from the closure of Milborne Port Library.</p> <p>Public access computer use is moderate at Milborne Port library, and across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. As noted above, the cost of public transport to Yeovil is high, and there is cycling access to alternative libraries is difficult. Although the numbers affected are likely to be small, there may be some people on low incomes, particularly those claiming universal credit, who are likely to be significantly impacted by the closure of Milborne Port library, as public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic.</p>	<p>access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Milborne Port, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		<p>aware of these services.</p>
<p>Military Status - no impact identified.</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment	
The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16 th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.	
Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey
Date	05/10/18
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	05/10/18
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(f)

Nether Stowey
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Nether Stowey

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
<p>Baroness Thornton, March 2010</p>			
<p>What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?</p>		<p>Library Service Redesign 2018 – Nether Stowey</p>	
<p>Version</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Date</p>	<p>5/10/2018</p>
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are consulting on for the delivery of Library Services in Nether Stowey and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Nether Stowey library, and should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii – which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Nether Stowey Library to a Community Library Partnership) <p>Library Services in Nether Stowey are currently delivered through a library building in Nether Stowey, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that the majority of library users living in Nether Stowey and the surrounding area use Nether Stowey Library. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Nether Stowey and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Nether Stowey (a Community Library Partnership)</p>			

or a combination of Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services, to compliment access to the libraries at Bridgwater and Williton. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Nether Stowey would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Nether Stowey if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Nether Stowey library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Nether Stowey, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Nether Stowey Library, and providing library services to Nether Stowey and the surrounding communities in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Nether Stowey library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 391 active borrowers;
- 2,180 visits (footfall);
- 84 people's network users;
- 2,180 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 4,780.

Nether Stowey library is open for 20 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Nether Stowey library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data we compared the characteristics of

- Nether Stowey library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Nether Stowey library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Nether Stowey Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Nether Stowey catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Nether Stowey library most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users Nether Stowey	% of Nether Stowey Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Nether Stowey Library
0-4	5.35%	8.0%	4.6%	5.3%	0%
5-11	16.07%	18.5%	6.9%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	3.0%	6.0%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	29.0%	52.7%	56.0%	49.7%
65+	28.81%	39.8%	29.9%	24.1%	48.3%
Unknown	1.35%	1.7%			

Table 2: % active library users, Nether Stowey catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Nether Stowey library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Nether Stowey	% of Nether Stowey Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Nether Stowey Library
Female	61.88%	64.9%	51.8%	51.20%	64.9%
Male	36.38%	33.1%	48.2%	48.80%	35.1%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	1.9%			

Table 3: % of active library users, Nether Stowey catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Nether Stowey library most, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Nether Stowey	% of Nether Stowey Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Nether Stowey Library*
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	1.0%	0.5%	2.02%	2.4%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	1.4%	1.8%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	97.6%	97.6%	94.64%	97.6%

*The Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Nether Stowey catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents across Somerset:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - Nether Stowey	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Nether Stowey catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	3.3%	Long term health problem or disabled	19.7%	19%	20.4%*
Non-disabled	95%	96.7%	No long term health problem or disability identified	80.3%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Nether Stowey Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Nether Stowey Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Nether stowey Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity in 2016 showing % South West population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole*	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded on registration:

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the

protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

<p>% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:</p> <p>% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:</p>	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Nether Stowey library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of Nether Stowey library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent users of this library:

- The proportion of the catchment population aged over 65 is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, and a larger proportion of people in this age group are users of Nether Stowey library than is the case for users of Somerset libraries as a whole.
- The proportion of library users under the age of 5, and of primary school age, is higher than the proportion of these age groups using all Somerset libraries.
- The proportion of females amongst users of Nether Stowey library is slightly higher than the proportion of females using all Somerset libraries, and (in common with the vast majority of library user groups), females represent a higher proportion of library users in Nether Stowey than of the population as a whole; these two factors have a cumulative impact on the over-representation of females within the Nether Stowey user population.
- The proportion of library users with disabilities in Nether Stowey slightly lower than that for Somerset libraries as a whole.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Nether Stowey library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Nether Stowey Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Nether Stowey catchment serves a small, relatively sparsely populated rural area around Nether Stowey, as well as the large village of Nether Stowey. Analysis of library usage data indicates that the majority of users in this area use Nether Stowey library (see Table 10

below), although many also Bridgwater Library (we anticipate that many will use both libraries). Usage of Nether Stowey library is concentrated in the built-up area of Nether Stowey, but extends to the south and north into very rural parts of the area. Many users of Nether Stowey library are likely to have the characteristic of Rurality, although the majority of users live in Nether Stowey, a large village.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower Layer Super Output areas in the Nether Stowey library catchment is 7, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a slightly lower proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average is likely to mask significant variations in income levels within the catchment population. No significant pockets of low income populations have been identified within the catchment through the needs assessment exercise.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Nether Stowey library is very extensive, and these events are very well attended by the library users. In 2017/18 there were 2,180 attendances at events held in the library – a very high number considering the small size of the catchment.

Section 2B – People who are *delivering* the policy or service

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4ii above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income, as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Nether Stowey library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Nether Stowey on 24th October 2017 and 12 March 2018. It was noted that the local plan had identified that wealth was reasonably high on average for the Nether Stowey area; the wider area around Nether Stowey was more deprived. It was noted that there were very few people living in the coastal area of the catchment, with very small clusters of population at Shurton,

Burton and Stogursey who came into Nether Stowey for services, as well as the populations in surrounding Quantock villages (Holford, Over Stowey). It was also noted that the bus service provided by EDF ran during the middle of the day and did not give very long in Bridgwater. There was a 'Stowey Shuttle' service provided by volunteers in the Nether Stowey and Over Stowey area, used for essential travel to Bridgwater (e.g. medical appointments). The Stogursey Parish Stagecoach car scheme often ran into Nether Stowey (organised by Stogursey Parish Council). Nether Stowey was an important small hub for the area. The medical centre and shops provided services to communities in the library catchment shown and their catchments were probably very similar to the library catchment.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There was a relatively large number of consultation responses received from users of Nether Stowey Library, reflecting the relatively large number of users and an effective local campaign during the consultation.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Nether Stowey library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Nether Stowey library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Nether Stowey library.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly.

Qualitative responses

A very large number of comments were made through the survey by users of Nether Stowey Library, and a large number of letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, a drop-in event was held on the 14 February 2018 with 102 people attending. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A significant number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Nether Stowey would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *"I live alone, I am in my 60s and it is a place that I get to chat, use computers/printer and enjoy the smiles and kindness of the staff. I would miss this so much."*
 - *"Once a month is totally inadequate. Nether Stowey Library covers a very wide area of small fairly isolated communities with very limited facilities. It*

also has a high proportion of elderly people, many living alone, who are excluded from the online world.”

- Comments about the impact on older people highlighted the potential difficulties in accessing alternative libraries, and the impact on loneliness and social isolation for older people who used the library for social purposes. This was a notably strong theme in responses for Nether Stowey library.
 - *“I personally know of somebody who goes to use the computers who is very isolated, living alone.”*
- A similarly significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“we would be devastated to lose our library. We attend on a weekly basis for storytime with my 4 year old and to borrow books.”*
 - *“Children are home educated for many reasons. Often due to illness, both mental and physical.”*
- The Friends of Nether Stowey Library noted the range, importance and popularity of children’s activities, and the impact on primary school children.
- There were a very large number of letters received from children using the primary school in Nether Stowey, noting the value of the library for these users.
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Nether Stowey, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Nether Stowey library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are homeschooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it closed.”*

Disability

- Some respondents using Nether Stowey library noted general impacts on disabled people. One respondent wrote:
 - *“My husband is severely disabled, partially blind. I need hearing books to keep him entertained. He also has dementia.”*
- Another respondent noted the importance of being able to walk to the library for disabled people. Staff noted the ease of parking, level access and toilet facilities for disabled people.

Pregnancy / Maternity

- No significant impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with this protected characteristic.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Nether Stowey library. Some responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- Some impacts were highlighted by individual Nether Stowey users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. Nether Stowey parish council noted the wide rural area between Bridgwater and Williton in their response.

Low income

- Some specific impacts were highlighted by individual Nether Stowey Library users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. One or two comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower income:
 - *“How would I search for work, I cannot afford to travel in search of work. My lifeline is regularly looking for work by using the library computers and wifi”.*
 - *“one library stop a week is not providing a service, the van would just be a ten minute stop once a week, would not be enough time for me to do job searches on the computers. I do not want local people knowing that I cannot afford to keep a computer. also I am a carer, and cannot afford to take myself and children into Bridgwater, so I can search for work on there computers.”*

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicating higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Nether Stowey catchment:

	Nether Stowey catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	5	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	6	6

Table 9 indicates that, on average for these measures, there is a lower level of need in Nether Stowey catchment, with the corollary that (on average), there is likely to be a lower proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Nether Stowey catchment have the same likelihood to be socially isolated than people in Somerset, and are slightly less likely overall to have the characteristic of Rurality (although this characteristic is likely to apply to people in the north of the catchment).

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Nether Stowey catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Nether Stowey	340	50	20
Bridgwater	150	30	10
Taunton	60	10	0
Williton	50	10	0
Mobile Library	30	0	0
Minehead	10	0	0

Table 10 shows that the vast majority of library users in Nether Stowey catchment currently use Nether Stowey library, with Bridgwater Library being used as an alternative. This provides evidence that Bridgwater Library is likely to be the alternative library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the decision proposals, there ceased to be a library building in Nether Stowey. This assessment will therefore consider access to Bridgwater Library from the catchment.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Nether Stowey built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Bridgwater	17 minutes	9 miles
Williton	22 minutes	10 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Nether Stowey catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Nether Stowey catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	9%	16%
Households with one vehicle	40%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	51%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Currently, Somerset Passenger Solutions (the transport services supplier to Hinkley point) provides a free bus service three times daily linking Nether Stowey with Bridgwater. This service also serves Stogursey, Holford and Combwich. Service 14 provides a peak time only service to Bridgwater, taking 29 minutes to get there. The service is not considered to be sustainable. Stogursey and Nether Stowey have car schemes, but community transport is limited.

Neither Bridgwater nor Williton are within walking or a reasonable cycling distance.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Nether Stowey Library.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide Mobile Library Services to Nether Stowey and some of the surrounding communities, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). In conjunction with access to alternative library buildings at Bridgwater, Williton and Taunton, all of these alternative services will mitigate the impact of closing Nether Stowey library to a significant extent.

The existence of the current free bus service (funded by EDF energy) mitigates the impact of closure to a certain extent for many groups, but this may not be sustainable in the longer term.

There will be residual impacts for people with some protected characteristics if Nether Stowey library closes. A relatively small number of people are likely to be affected, because of the small catchment population; however, the library is well-used for the size of the village. The most significant of these impacts are summarised here (fuller descriptions are set out in the action plan table below):

- People aged 65 or over form a higher proportion of Nether Stowey Library users than elsewhere in Somerset, and feedback about the impact on this group came through strongly in the public consultation response. In particular, some older people could suffer increased social isolation if Nether Stowey library closed, because of the high number of events and activities at the library. Mitigation for this impact is limited, and for those most at risk of social isolation impacts could be significant.
- Usage of Nether Stowey library by parents with children and younger children is relatively high considering the size of the catchment. In particular, there is a well-attended range of activities for this group of users, and usage of the library by the primary school and primary school children is significant. Access to alternative libraries will be more difficult for families with no access to a car, and mobile library services can only partially mitigate this impact. If the current free bus service ceases, access to alternative library buildings for parents and children with no transport would be very difficult, and these users would be more reliant on the mobile library.
- Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some people with the protected characteristics of Disability and / or Maternity, because of factors related to these characteristics, and feedback from the consultation exercise indicates that some people in these groups could be impacted by the closure of Nether Stowey Library.
- Decision makers should note that the closure of Nether Stowey Library would mean that people in some rural communities in the catchment are unlikely to be able to access an alternative library building within a 20-minute driving time; this impact is related to Rurality.
- The impact of closing Nether Stowey library is more significant for users of the public computer access service, which would not be provided in Nether Stowey if the library closed. People on lower incomes are more likely to be users of this service, and may not be able to access alternative libraries if the free bus service ceased. The impact would be particularly significant for people claiming Universal Credit, people claiming other benefits and also clients of social landlords.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>People aged 65 or over form a higher proportion of Nether Stowey Library users than of library users across Somerset as a whole, and the impact of a library closure on older people was a strong theme in consultation responses for Nether Stowey Library. In particular, impacts were highlighted for socially-isolated older people who would no longer have convenient access to activities and events at Nether Stowey library that are well-used by this group. As noted by many consultation respondents, this impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, there is little that can be done to mitigate the impact on socially isolated older people. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, customers are made aware of the Home Library Service, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and any local events and activities that could support socially isolated people</p>
<p>Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative library buildings at Williton or Bridgwater may be more difficult for older people to do. Public transport from Nether Stowey to Williton and Bridgwater exists, but is not considered to be sustainable. For users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult to use existing public transport links, which may not be available in any event into the future. Many older people using</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Nether Stowey library travel to the library by car from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Nether Stowey Library because other libraries (principally Bridgwater, but also Williton) are accessible by car. However, drive times are more significant, which may dissuade some older people from accessing alternative libraries by car. Williton has convenient and affordable parking adjacent to the library building, parking in Bridgwater is further away from the library and more expensive.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Bridgwater and Williton may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Public transport from Nether Stowey to Williton and Bridgwater exists, but is not considered to be sustainable; it is provided free of charge at present and so for the time being there is an inexpensive way for parents with younger children to access alternative libraries. However, this may not be the case in the future. In any event, public transport or driving to alternative libraries is less convenient for parents with younger children than the current option of walking to the library. The consultation response from users of Nether Stowey library detailed a range of impacts on children, including home-schooled children, nursery aged children and children attending the library to do activities. Although the catchment population is small, this impact is likely to affect a modest number of people in Nether Stowey, because the library is well-used.</p> <p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who are currently able to use Nether Stowey Library after attending the nearby schools, or on one of the regular school visits to the library. It is not</p>	<p>services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, Mobile Library Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community</p>	<p>aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, more limited mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>Subject to demand and agreement from the school, a regular</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>feasible to get from Nether Stowey to Williton or Bridgwater Libraries and back on public transport after school, so children in one-car households are likely to be particularly affected and would only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays. The number of letters from primary school children received in the consultation indicates the value of the library to this group.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to Nether Stowey Library. This impact is likely to be limited in Nether Stowey, because of the small catchment population and relatively low level of usage of Nether Stowey library amongst this group. Nonetheless, consultation feedback indicates that some younger people may use Nether Stowey library for study at certain times, and these customers may not be able to access this service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle).</p> <p>Events and activities for children are well-used at Nether Stowey library, and alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. The provision of Library Outreach Services for children in Nether Stowey does not form part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would not be provided by the Library Service if a Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. Activities for children would be available at alternative library buildings, but the access issues noted above may mean that there is a further level of impact on pre-school and primary school children because of the popularity of activities for these groups. In any event, because the regular storytime events are well-used, younger people would be disproportionately impacted by the closure</p>	<p>Stowey, we will explore the demand for Mobile Library visits to Nether Stowey Primary School. If possible, we will provide a monthly mobile library visit to the school site.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure. Limited support (provision of</p>	<p>Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>mobile library visit will be made to the primary school if a community library partnership cannot be developed.</p> <p>Customers are made aware of services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and supported to set up alternative activities in Nether Stowey, if it is not possible to</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>of Nether Stowey Library regardless of whether they are able to access alternatives.</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Nether Stowey Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>guidance) could be provided to any groups wishing to set up replacement activities in Nether Stowey.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>		<p>maintain a library building.</p>
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Bridgwater or Williton may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport. Although public transport from Nether Stowey to these communities exists at present, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs, it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service. The current bus operation uses low floor buses, and is free of charge, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people, for as long as the service exists. Some disabled people using Nether Stowey library travel into Nether Stowey town centre by car or public transport from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Nether Stowey Library because other libraries (Williton and Bridgwater) are accessible by car. Like Nether Stowey, Williton</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or mobility scooter/ wheelchair access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter / wheelchair. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>library has convenient parking adjacent to the library, with easy access (although unlike Nether Stowey there is a small charge). Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism collection) are currently limited in Nether Stowey Library, and comparable facilities are available through the Mobile Library Service.</p> <p>.</p> <p>Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some disabled people, as a result of a lack of mobility, difficulty communicating, or anxiety about social contact. This impact was identified for Nether Stowey library by respondents during the consultation exercise, and Nether Stowey library has a wide range of events and activities. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). This impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone.</p> <p>The alternative library buildings at Williton and Bridgwater are wheelchair accessible, and should present no access difficulties for</p>	<p>during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, we will work with our staff to ensure relevant customer are aware of the availability of these collections on the mobile library service.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, there is little that can be done to mitigate the impact on socially isolated disabled people. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services available at other locations.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, customers are made aware of the Home Library Service, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and any local events and activities that could support socially isolated people.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>people with mobility problems. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift. We do not consider that disabled customers of Nether Stowey Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Nether Stowey Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not currently have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at Nether Stowey could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities in alternative services.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>			
<p>No impacts identified.</p>			
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Bridgwater and Williton may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of pregnancy or maternity to do, particularly for households with no car or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, Digital Library</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, more limited</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Public transport from Nether Stowey to Williton and Bridgwater exists, but is not considered to be sustainable; it is provided free of charge at present and so for the time being there is an inexpensive way for new parents to access alternative libraries. However, this may not be the case in the future. In any event, public transport or driving to alternative libraries is less convenient for parents with babies than the current option of walking to the library. Although the catchment population is small, this impact is likely to affect a modest number of people in Nether Stowey, because the library is well-used.</p> <p>Events and activities for parents and babies are well-used at Nether Stowey library, and alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. Activities for parents and new babies would be available at alternative library buildings, but the access issues noted above may mean that this mitigation is not effective for some people with the protected characteristic of maternity. Furthermore, social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some people with the protected characteristic of maternity, as a result of the sudden change in lifestyle, or poor post-natal mental health. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). People with the protected characteristic of maternity may be impacted more than others by the closure of Nether Stowey Library. Although the catchment population is small, this impact is likely to affect a modest number of people in Nether Stowey, because the library is well-used.</p>	<p>Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure. Limited support (provision of guidance) could be provided to any groups wishing to set up replacement activities for new parents in Nether Stowey</p>	<p>Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>Customers are made aware of services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and supported to set up alternative activities in Nether Stowey, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)			
<p>The proportion of people in Nether Stowey catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in Nether Stowey is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		
<p>Some consultation responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access. Although the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence that migrant workers are likely to be significantly disadvantaged by the closure of Nether Stowey Library, this could be because of a limited engagement by this group in the consultation exercise. On balance, we feel that this potential impact merits highlighting to decision makers because the public computer access service would not be available through other means in Nether Stowey if the library closed, and because it is possible that migrant workers may find it more difficult to access alternative public computer access services in nearby libraries, either because of working patterns or not having access to a vehicle.</p>	<p>If it is not possible to establish a Community Library Partnership in Nether Stowey, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of public computer access services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>
<p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Nether Stowey to individuals and groups whose first language is</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.		
Religion and Belief			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Sex			
Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Nether Stowey, because a higher proportion of Nether Stowey library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Nether Stowey library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.	There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.		
Sexual Orientation			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, Digital Library Services, Library Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>
<p>Rurality</p> <p>Some rural communities in the catchment have reasonable alternative access by car to alternative libraries in Bridgwater,</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Taunton and Williton, however for most rural parts of the catchment car access to alternative libraries would be more lengthy and time-consuming than access to Nether Stowey. The Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 seeks to design a library network which we estimate will enable access to a library building by car (in normal traffic conditions) in around 20 minutes or less for the vast majority of Somerset users. Our analysis of driving times indicates that this objective would generally be met for those living in Nether Stowey village whether or not a library building could be maintained in Nether Stowey. However, Williton is slightly longer than a 20 minute drive away, and driving times to Bridgwater would vary significantly with traffic. Furthermore, we estimate that residents of the rural areas to the north (the village of Stogursey and surrounding area), and in the Quantock hills to the south of Nether Stowey would be around 25 minutes' drive from alternative libraries at Bridgwater, Taunton and Williton. Stogursey is served by a mobile library stop, but more people use Nether Stowey library, which offers a wider range of services than the mobile library. These customers would be relatively disadvantaged by the closure of Nether Stowey library, in part due to a characteristic of rurality.</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income and employment in the catchment as a whole are around the average for Somerset. Nether Stowey village has relatively high levels of income and employment, however the rural catchment to the north has a higher level of income deprivation, which was noted in the community engagement exercise. Because of the poor transport links in the area, and the fact that the public bus is currently free, transport-related impacts for those on low incomes are limited to additional petrol or parking costs, and are unlikely to</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>dissuade people who can currently access Nether Stowey library from accessing other libraries because of a characteristic of low income, for as long as the free bus service is maintained. However, if this bus service ceases, people on lower incomes in Nether Stowey village (who may not be able to afford a car) would be significantly impacted by the closure of Nether Stowey library. This potential impact is likely to affect a very limited number of people, but there is some evidence from the consultation that some people on low income use Nether Stowey library.</p> <p>Public access computer use is moderate at Nether Stowey library, and some comments from users of Nether Stowey library noted the usage of this service by unemployed people. Across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. As noted above, of public transport is currently available to Bridgwater and Williton for free; however, this may not be sustainable and if the bus service ceases, alternative library services are too far for cycling access. Some people on low incomes, particularly those claiming universal credit, could be significantly impacted by the closure of Nether Stowey library, as public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic.</p>	<p>walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Nether Stowey, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		<p>aware of these services.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Military Status			
No impact identified.			

Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment

The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.

Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey
Date	05/10/2018
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	08/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(g)

North Petherton Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for North Petherton

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
<p>Baroness Thornton, March 2010</p>			
<p>What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?</p>		<p>Library Service Redesign 2018 – North Petherton</p>	
<p>Version</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Date</p>	<p>5/10/18</p>
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in North Petherton and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, North Petherton library, and should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring North Petherton Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in North Petherton are currently delivered through a library building in North Petherton, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that the majority of Library Service users living in North Petherton catchment use North Petherton library, but that a significant number also use Taunton and Bridgwater Libraries. The service is a universal one; however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of North Petherton and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in North Petherton (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> through a Mobile Library Service and Digital Library Service, to compliment access to other libraries. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible,</p>			

the library building in North Petherton would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in North Petherton if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring North Petherton library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in North Petherton, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing North Petherton Library, and providing library services to North Petherton and the surrounding communities in different ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

North Petherton library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 471 active borrowers;
- 7,379 visits (footfall);
- 99 people's network users;
- 125 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 8,168.

North Petherton library is open for 21 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to North Petherton library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of

- North Petherton library users
- the wider population in the catchment of North Petherton library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used North Petherton Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, North Petherton catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use North Petherton library most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – North Petherton	% of North Petherton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using North Petherton Library
0-4	5.35%	11.9%	7.9%	5.3%	3.0%
5-11	16.07%	26.1%	9.4%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	3.0%	5.9%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	31.2%	59.7%	56.0%	74.8%
65+	28.81%	26.6%	17.2%	24.1%	22.2%
Unknown	1.35%	1.2%			

Table 2: % active library users, North Petherton catchment and Somerset population by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – North Petherton	% of North Petherton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using North Petherton Library*
Female	61.88%	64.8%	50.4%	51.20%	81.1%
Male	36.38%	32.9%	49.6%	48.80%	18.2%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	2.3%		-	

* Consultation responders who identified in some other way totalled 0.7% of responders to this question.

Table 3: % of active library users, North Petherton catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use North Petherton library most, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users North Petherton	% of North Petherton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using North Petherton Library
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	0.3%	1.55%	2.02%	5.3%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	2.6%	2.6%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	97.1%	95.8%	94.64%	95.2%

*The Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – North Petherton catchment, Somerset population and Consultation respondents across Somerset:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - North Petherton	Disability / long term health problem status	% of North Petherton catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	4.1%	Long term health problem or disabled	17.5%	19%*	20.4%*
Non-disabled	95%	95.9%	No long term health problem or disability identified	82.5%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1-4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of North Petherton Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity.

Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence North Petherton Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of North Petherton Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity in 2016 showing % South West population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole*	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded on registration.

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves: % of consultation respondents whose gender identity:	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, North Petherton library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of North Petherton library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent users of this library:

- The proportion of the catchment population of children under 11 (in both the 0-4 and 5-11 ranges) is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range. The

proportion of library users in these age ranges is also high in comparison to the proportion of users in these age ranges using all Somerset libraries.

- The proportion of people of working age (18-64) in the catchment population is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst North Petherton library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group in comparison to the County average.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, North Petherton library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including North Petherton Library).

Rural / urban mix:

North Petherton catchment serves a small, relatively sparsely populated rural area around North Petherton, as well as North Petherton village itself and the housing estates of Stockland and Wilstock on the southern edge of Bridgwater. Analysis of library usage data indicates that the majority of users in this rural area use either Taunton Library or Bridgwater Library, although usage of North Petherton library is also significant in the rural catchment. (See table 10). We anticipate that many will use more than one library. Usage of North Petherton library is highest in the built-up area of North Petherton. Although some users of North Petherton library are likely to have the protected characteristic of Rurality, the majority of users are likely to live in North Petherton, a small town.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower Layer Super Output areas in the North Petherton library catchment is 6, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a similar proportion of people on lower incomes as Somerset as a whole. The catchment average is likely to mask significant variations in income levels within the catchment population. No significant pockets of low income populations have been identified within the catchment through the needs assessment exercise, although household incomes are below the Somerset average in the southern part of North Petherton.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at North Petherton library is very limited, with only 143 attendances at events held in the library. Some of these events are run for children, and others are used by older people.

Section 2B – People who are **delivering the policy or service**

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4ii above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to North Petherton library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from North Petherton on 9th October 2017. The following relevant points were noted:

- North Petherton was a pilot area for Universal Credit, and also had a high proportion of older people.
- The new estates in Stockmoor and Wilstock had led to a big shift since 2011 in the population mix in North Petherton. There was an increasing trend for younger people to move to these new estates where housing was more affordable, and older people to live in North Petherton. Residents of Stockmoor and Wilstock were more likely to travel to Taunton or Bridgwater to shop, but for older residents North Petherton provided a convenient, self-contained community. It is a popular place to retire because there are a lot of bungalows, there is a doctor's surgery, pharmacy, good bus routes.
- Most or all of the social housing stock in North Petherton had been sold off and house prices were generally too high for younger families – it is increasingly a relatively affluent community.
- Traffic issues and shopping patterns meant that people in the area often looked to Taunton rather than Bridgwater.
- Some older people in the rural catchments looked to North Petherton as a retail destination because of the ease of parking, and the fact that it has a doctor's surgery and pharmacy.
- There were some local traveller and migrant communities working on local farms who were likely to use the library for internet access.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There was a relatively high number of consultation responses received from users of North Petherton Library, relative to the low number of library users. A significant number of responses were generated through a campaign by the local Primary School.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for North Petherton library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the

consultation who used North Petherton library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of North Petherton library, whether they had the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibility, disability, gender reassignment or sexual orientation or not.

- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals either to some degree or significantly, whether they had the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibility, gender reassignment or sexual orientation or not.

Qualitative responses

A relatively large number of comments were made through the survey by users of North Petherton Library, and a number of letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, some people attended a drop-in event held on 12 February 2018. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A significant number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in North Petherton would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *“For the older population of the town, the library is a place where they can spend some time, somewhere to meet new people and help them feel less isolated and lonely. Getting rid of this service will severely impact on the well-being of these people.”*
- Comments about the impact on older people highlighted the potential difficulties in accessing alternative libraries, and the impact on loneliness and social isolation for older people who used the library for social purposes included:
 - *“An elderly lady who has lived in the town for 20 years can no longer drive or take the bus and her daily routine of visiting the library and the local café is very important for her daily life.”*
- A similarly significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“My son really loves going to the library everyday its open, with his friends. If we didn't have the library they will just be hanging around the streets.”*
 - *“Losing this facility will have a major impact on my children, as we will have to travel into Bridgwater to access the library service.”*
 - *“We know which days to visit and borrow books for pre-school children/grandchildren. The language development we have seen due to this service is incredible.”*
- A number of respondents wrote about difficulties accessing a mobile library:
 - *“Will it be wheel chair accessible? How much space for group sessions such as a care home will the bus cater for that?”*
- Evidence from the drop-in event suggested that some older children use North Petherton library for study.

- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to North Petherton, but is likely to apply to primary school children using North Petherton library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are homeschooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- Some respondents using North Petherton library noted general impacts on disabled people.
 - *“I much prefer North Petherton as I can order books online and collect them there and not have to walk too far carrying them. I have a bad back problem so can't walk very far especially carrying something. I would be unlikely to use a mobile service.”*

Pregnancy / Maternity

- No specific impacts were highlighted by individual North Petherton users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race. However, we have received some feedback that migrant workers living in the North Petherton area use the library for internet access.

Caring Responsibilities

- One respondent noted the time pressures of being a carer, and how having a local library was important:
 - *“As a carer (24/7) I would not find it easy to go to the library in Bridgwater whereas now, I can choose/return books very quickly as the library is practically on my doorstep”*

Rurality

- No specific impacts were highlighted by individual North Petherton users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Low income

- Specific impacts were highlighted by individual North Petherton Library users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. One or two comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower incomes.
 - “For those on lower incomes this may be the only computer access they have for education/job applications/basic day to day life.”

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper Data analysis – methodology and data sources, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicate higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, North Petherton catchment:

	North Petherton catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	7	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	8	6

Table 9 indicates that, on average for these measures, levels of need in North Petherton catchment are either in line with or slightly lower than Somerset as a whole. This means that on average, there is likely to be a similar or slightly lower proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in North Petherton catchment are less likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset, and are less likely to have the characteristic of Rurality.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in North Petherton catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
North Petherton	410	60	10
Bridgwater	300	80	10
Taunton	160	40	10

Table 10 shows that the majority of library users in North Petherton catchment currently use North Petherton Library, however, significant numbers also use Taunton and Bridgwater libraries. This provides evidence that Bridgwater and Taunton libraries are very likely to be the alternative library buildings that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of the decision recommendations, there ceased to be a library building in North Petherton. This assessment will therefore consider access to both Bridgwater and Taunton libraries from the catchment.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from North Petherton built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Bridgwater	9 minutes	3 miles
Taunton	16 minutes	8 miles
Burnham-on-Sea	21 minutes	14 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown. Traffic congestion into Bridgwater and Taunton can significantly lengthen these driving times.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in North Petherton catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	North Petherton catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	11%	16%
Households with one vehicle	41%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	48%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 21 links North Petherton with Taunton and Bridgwater, providing good public transport access to alternative libraries in these locations. The service has a 30 minute frequency, and takes 30 minutes to get to Taunton and 14 minutes to get to Bridgwater. The adult return fare to Bridgwater is £3.60 (free for concessionary pass holders). The service is considered to be sustainable. Other communities in the catchment are not served by regular public transport. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – surrounding villages are served by the Sedgemoor Community Voluntary

Service community transport group and Somerset County Council's slinky bus service, which both provide access to Bridgwater.

Neither Bridgwater nor Taunton libraries are within walking distance, but Bridgwater library is within reasonable cycling distance of North Petherton. There is a good cycle path linking North Petherton all the way to the library.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing North Petherton Library.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide a Mobile Library Service to North Petherton, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). Many people in North Petherton are likely to travel to Taunton or Bridgwater for shopping or work. Older people and many disabled people are able to travel to alternative libraries in these communities at no cost, on a relatively convenient and frequent bus service. Bridgwater library is within a convenient cycling distance for people who are able to cycle. This good, affordable access for most people to the alternative library building at Bridgwater, alongside the alternative services provided, will mitigate the impact of closing North Petherton library to a significant extent for the majority of groups identified.

Mitigations are therefore relatively strong for impacts identified for users of North Petherton Library. Decision makers may wish to note the following issues, which are the most difficult to mitigate:

- Although the cost of public transport is modest, it may not be affordable for service users who do not have concessionary passes. Parents with children or babies would find it more difficult to access an alternative library building if they did not have access to a car or could not afford public transport.
- Use of North Petherton library by primary school children is relatively high, and there was a very significant consultation response from this group of users. Providing a regular mobile library visit to the primary school could go some way towards mitigating this impact, but primary school children would be less able to access the wider range of services available at alternative library buildings.
- Although cycling access to Bridgwater is reasonable, and relatively affordable, for people with good mobility, there are a modest number of users of the public computer access service at North Petherton Library, and these users would be inconvenienced by having to travel to Bridgwater, particularly if they were reliant on the public computers to apply for work, to access Universal Credit, to access social housing services, or to maintain contact with friends and relations overseas.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>The impact of a library closure on older people was a theme in consultation responses for North Petherton Library. In particular, impacts were highlighted for socially-isolated older people. Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative library buildings at Taunton or Bridgwater may be more difficult for older people to do. Although public transport from North Petherton to both of these alternative libraries is very good, for users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. Many older people using North Petherton library travel into North Petherton town centre by car; this group would be less affected by the closure of North Petherton Library because other libraries (principally Bridgwater, but also Taunton) are a relatively short distance away and are also accessible by community and public transport. However, parking and traffic congestion issues may dissuade some older people from journeying into the larger towns.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Taunton or Bridgwater may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, Digital Library Services, Mobile Library Services and Library Outreach Services for older people would be provided. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from North Petherton to Bridgwater is good, and the cost of public transport is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, it will be more expensive and less convenient for parents with younger children than the current option of walking to the library. North Petherton has a growing population, many of whom live within walking distance of the current library, which has a higher proportion of use by children under 5. Many parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p> <p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who are currently able to use North Petherton Library after attending the nearby primary or infant schools. Those who currently walk from school to the library (perhaps because the household either does not have access to a car, or because the only household car is being used for work purposes) will be particularly impacted. It is possible to get from North Petherton to Bridgwater Library on public transport after school, but this is likely to be less convenient and more expensive than walking to the current library. After school usage of libraries may become significantly more difficult for some primary school children - many of whom are likely to only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to North Petherton Library, however, Bridgwater library is within reasonable cycling distance, and public transport fares are more affordable than in other parts of Somerset. Nonetheless, consultation feedback indicates that some younger people use North Petherton</p>	<p>established in North Petherton, Mobile Library Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, we will explore the demand for Mobile Library visits to North Petherton Primary School. If possible, we will provide a monthly mobile library visit to the school site.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, there is no specific action that can</p>	<p>Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>established in North Petherton, more limited mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>Subject to demand and agreement from the school, a regular mobile library visit will be made to the primary school if a community library partnership cannot be developed.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>library for study at certain times, and these customers would find it more difficult to access this service independently if the library closed.</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if North Petherton Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>		
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Bridgwater or Taunton may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport. Although public transport from North Petherton to Bridgwater is very good, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service (indeed, one consultation respondent using North Petherton library has made this specific point). That said, disabled people who are likely to be significantly impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Low floor buses operate between North Petherton and Bridgwater / Taunton, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people. Some disabled people using North Petherton library travel into North Petherton town centre by car or public transport from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of North Petherton Library</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, Digital Library Services, Mobile Library Services and some Library Outreach Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or mobility scooter access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>because other libraries are a relatively short distance away and are also accessible by community and public transport. However, parking and traffic congestion may make access more difficult than it is currently.</p> <p>One consultation respondent noted difficulty in carrying books, possibly because of a disability. We have considered this feedback and conclude that the mobile library service would provide adequate mitigation; it is possible to reserve books for collection on the mobile library (with longer lending periods), and the mobile library stop would be situated very close to the current library building. The availability of the mobile library would be limited in terms of opening hours, but this is not an impact related to the protected characteristic of disability. If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, customers would be made aware of these services.</p> <p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism collection) are currently limited in North Petherton Library, and comparable facilities are available through the Mobile Library Service.</p> <p>The alternative library buildings at Taunton and Bridgwater are wheelchair accessible, and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift. We do not consider that disabled customers</p>	<p>customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, we will work with our staff to ensure relevant customer are aware of the availability of these collections on the mobile library service.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services available at other locations.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>of North Petherton Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if North Petherton Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at North Petherton could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p> <p>Bridgwater and Taunton Libraries are most likely to be used as an alternative library, but this may not be possible for some people with mental health conditions or learning disabilities, who may not cope with the larger library space and busy atmosphere, or the journey into a busy town centre. We have no evidence that this impact would apply to users of North Petherton library, but it has been noted in relation to other quieter library buildings.</p>	<p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, we will work with our staff to identify vulnerable customers, and try to ensure that changes are communicated at an early stage, and new or alternative services are clearly signposted.</p> <p>We will explore the potential for establishing 'quiet</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Strategic Manager - Library Services – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities in alternative services.</p> <p>Customers vulnerable to anxiety are communicated with effectively at an early stage.</p> <p>The potential and value of 'quiet times' is explored, and</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

	times' in larger town centre libraries.		implemented if feasible.
Gender Reassignment			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified.			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
Accessing alternative library buildings at Bridgwater and Taunton may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from North Petherton to Bridgwater is good, and the cost of public transport is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, it will be more expensive and less convenient for parents with babies than the current option of walking to the library. North Petherton has a growing population, many of whom live within walking distance of the current library, which has a high proportion of use by children under 5. New parents may find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)			
<p>The proportion of people in North Petherton catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in North Petherton is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p> <p>The community engagement exercise and consultation responses from stakeholder groups noted a potential impact for migrant workers and members of the Gypsy and Travelling community who use North Petherton Library for internet access. Public computer access service would not be available through other means in North Petherton if the library closed, and it is possible that migrant workers may find it more difficult to access alternative public computer access services in nearby libraries, either because of working patterns or the affordability of public transport for those that may not have access to a vehicle. However, alternative public computer access facilities at Bridgwater are within reasonable cycling distance, and public transport fares are more affordable than in other parts of Somerset. These factors mean that the impact is likely to be mitigated to a reasonable extent by the accessibility of alternative facilities at Bridgwater library.</p> <p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If it is not possible to establish a Community Library Partnership in North Petherton, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>We will carry out targeted communication of</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of public computer access services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p> <p>Changes are communicated effectively to people</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>agreed changes to library services in North Petherton to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>whose first language is not English.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Sex</p>			
<p>Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in North Petherton, because a higher proportion of North Petherton library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing North Petherton library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)</p>			
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. The demands on carer's time and the impact of having services that are more difficult to access were highlighted by one respondent to the consultation. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, Digital Library Services, Library Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>
<p>Rurality</p> <p>Whilst many rural communities in the catchment would have reasonable transport links to alternative libraries in Bridgwater or</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Taunton, public transport and car access to alternative libraries would be more lengthy and time-consuming than access to North Petherton for some of the rural communities in North Petherton library catchment. However, driving times to access alternative library buildings in Bridgwater or Taunton would generally not be too long (unless congestion was significant). Villages with access by public transport to North Petherton library would have access, via the same public transport routes, to either Taunton or Bridgwater libraries. In general, impacts relating to the characteristic of rurality are limited, with some exceptions noted below.</p> <p>As part of the consideration and development of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1, we have undertaken a preliminary assessment of rural communities that do not currently have a mobile library service, but which could be impacted by the closure of a nearby library. In this exercise, North Newton was identified as rural communities with significant usage of North Petherton library. We anticipate that, subject to demand, a mobile library service would be provided to North Newton as well as North Petherton itself if North Petherton Library closed. However, people in this part of North Petherton catchment may continue to use North Petherton as a hub for other local services, and would have to travel further to access alternative libraries in Bridgwater or Taunton. Whilst this impact is not directly related to the characteristic of rurality, we have noted it here (alongside mitigating actions) for information.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, the Mobile Library network in the area will be reviewed. Provision has been made within budgets to provide additional mobile stops in rural communities with high levels of usage of North Petherton library. Services would be designed in conjunction with communities, and would be communicated to customers.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, more limited mobile library services are available in the rural communities most affected. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income and employment in the catchment as a whole are around the average for Somerset, and relatively few specific impacts related to income were highlighted by individual North Petherton users or stakeholder groups in respect of the characteristic of Low Income. The cost of accessing Bridgwater by car, bus or bicycle is relatively inexpensive for people on low incomes who have access to a car or bike. The relative affordability of access to Bridgwater library means that it is likely that the impact of closing North Petherton library on people with lower incomes would be lower than in some of the other affected communities.</p> <p>However, levels of income in parts of North Petherton town are lower than the County and national average. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and the cost of public transport to Bridgwater for non-concessionary pass holders could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes (particularly those less able to cycle) from accessing Bridgwater library. Whilst mobile and digital library services could mitigate the impact to some extent, people on low incomes who do not have access to a vehicle or bicycle are likely to face a more significant impact from the closure of North Petherton Library.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made aware of these services.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Public access computer use is moderate at North Petherton library, and some comments from users of North Petherton library noted the usage of this service by unemployed people. Across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. As noted above, the relatively affordable access to Bridgwater (particularly by bicycle, for those able to do so), means that the impact of closing North Petherton library would be limited. Nonetheless, some people on low incomes, particularly those claiming universal credit who are less able to cycle, are likely to be significantly impacted by the closure of North Petherton library, as public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in North Petherton, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Military Status - no impact identified.</p>			

<p>Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment</p>	
<p>The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.</p>	
<p>Completed by:</p>	<p>Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey</p>
<p>Date</p>	<p>06/10/18</p>
<p>Signed off by:</p>	<p>Michele Cusack</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4 Equalities Impact Assessment

Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	08/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(h)

Porlock
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Porlock

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Porlock	
Version	2	Date	06/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in Porlock and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Porlock library, and should be read in conjunction with the other assessments included within this Appendix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Porlock Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Porlock are currently delivered through a library building in Porlock, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that a majority of users living in Porlock and the surrounding area use Porlock Library, with a significant number also using Minehead Library (many will use both libraries). The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential care home.</p> <p>The proposal considered in this Equalities Impact Assessment is to provide Library Services to the community of Porlock and the surrounding area by <i>either</i> continuing the current partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Porlock (a Community</p>			

Library Partnership) or through a combination of digital library services and mobile library services, to compliment access to the library at Minehead. Porlock library is currently a community-managed library, and continuing this arrangement is the preferred option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Porlock would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Whilst we have a better idea of how a Community Library Partnerships may evolve in Porlock, we propose to move this arrangement on to a more sustainable and long-term footing, which could change the services that are delivered. This being the case, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally at this stage. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of continuing a Community Library Partnership at Porlock. If a renewed, longer-term Community Library Partnership agreement is developed in Porlock, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before signing this agreement and moving the current pilot arrangement onto a longer-term footing.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Porlock Library and providing library services to Porlock and the surrounding communities in different ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

People use the Library Service for many things. Whilst the majority of service users are library members and use their membership cards to access lending and public access computer services, there are other groups of users who come to our libraries to browse newspapers, attend an event or activity, use a Wifi connection, look up information, work or study, socialise, and many more things besides.

Porlock library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 258 active borrowers;
- 5,909 visits (footfall);
- 66 people's network users;
- 410 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 2,214.

Porlock library is open for 17.5 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Porlock library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of

- Porlock library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Porlock library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Porlock Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents. .

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Porlock catchment; Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Porlock library most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Porlock	% of Porlock Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Porlock Library
0-4	5.35%	2.1%	2.6%	5.3%	1.9%
5-11	16.07%	8.9%	5.7%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	2.1%	5.4%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	24.3%	47.4%	56.0%	62.1%
65+	28.81%	59.1%	38.9%	24.1%	36.1%
Unknown	1.35%	3.4%			

Table 2: % active library users, Porlock catchment and Somerset and consultation respondents who use Porlock library most by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users Porlock Library	% of Porlock Library Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Porlock Library
Female	61.88%	66.8%	52.5%	51.20%	66.7%
Male	36.38%	29.8%	47.5%	48.80%	33.3%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	3.4%			

Table 3: % of active library users, Porlock Library catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Porlock library most by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Porlock	% of Porlock Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Porlock Library*
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	0.5%	0.7%	2.02%	4.3%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	0.5%	1.2%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	98.7%	98.1%	94.64%	95.7%

*The Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Porlock Library catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents across Somerset:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - Porlock	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Porlock catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	8.4%	Long term health problem or disabled	22.6%	19%*	20.4%
Non-disabled	95%	91.6%	No long term health problem or disability identified	77.4%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation respondents who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Porlock Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity.

Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Porlock Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery, we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Porlock Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity for the combined years of 2013 to 2015 showing % South West England's population, and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	98.3%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.6%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.1%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

*Of those that responded

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of active library users who responded to a question on religion at the point of registration.

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

<p>% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:</p> <p>% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:</p>	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Porlock library:

The following statistically significant differences in the equalities characteristics of Porlock library users / library catchment residents compared to Somerset as a whole have been identified from the tables above:

- The proportion of the catchment population aged 65 or above is significantly higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, and this group comprise a significantly higher proportion of Porlock library users than the proportion of all Somerset library users aged 65 or over.
- The proportion of children (in all age groups) and people aged 18-64 using Porlock library is lower than the proportion of people in these age groups using Somerset libraries as a whole.
- The proportion of females amongst users of Porlock library is higher than the proportion of females using all Somerset libraries, and (in common with the vast majority of library user groups), females represent a higher proportion of library users in Porlock than of the population as a whole.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group, and usage of the library by ethnic minority groups is correspondingly proportionately low.
- The proportion of library users with disabilities in Porlock is higher than in Somerset as a whole.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Porlock library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Porlock Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Porlock catchment serves a small, very sparsely populated rural area around Porlock. Analysis of the data indicates that usage of Porlock library is largely concentrated in the built-up area of Porlock, (See table 10), however some users of Porlock library are very likely to have the characteristic of Rurality.

Income levels:

We do not collate any data on the income levels for library customers, however our judgement is that those with low incomes are more likely to use the Library Service. We know from the day-to-day experiences of our frontline staff that many homeless people use Somerset libraries; people on low incomes are also more likely to utilise free-at-the-point-of-use borrowing or internet access facilities as an alternative to more expensive purchasing of reading material or computers / internet access at home. Increasingly under the new Universal Credit benefit procedures, people on income-related benefits are using the library to apply for jobs and engage in learning.

The average income deprivation decile across Lower Layer Super Output areas in the Porlock library catchment is 7, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a slightly lower proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average is likely to mask significant variations in income levels within the catchment population. No significant pockets of low income populations have been identified within the catchment through the needs assessment exercise.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Porlock library is very high considering the catchment population, with 410 attendances at events held in the library. Library opening times mean that the service is more difficult to use for those who work, which means that the service is used more frequently by some groups (such as older people, carers and parents on maternity or paternity leave) with protected characteristics. 539 customers across Somerset (as at 31st March 2017) are supported to use Library Services from their own homes/residential homes through the Home Library Service; the majority of this group are elderly, and all have some sort of mobility restriction or long-term health condition.

Section 2B – People who are delivering the policy or service

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4ii above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at library catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Porlock library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Porlock on 30th October 2017. The following relevant points were noted:

- 77% of visitors to the library came on foot
- The bus service to Minehead was infrequent and may not be sustainable.
- The population in Porlock, and the users of the library were mixed. The younger population in Porlock were often very cash-strapped – employment was limited, and wages were low. Some were very poor. However, there were some wealthy retired people living in the area which pushed averages up.
- Household income in Porlock was way below the national average – around £16,000 per working age adult. Earnings were often very low.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a relatively small number of consultation responses received from users of Porlock Library, reflecting the relatively low number of users and the current involvement of volunteers in the running of the library

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Porlock library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Porlock library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Porlock library, whether they had the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibility, disability, gender reassignment or sexual orientation or not.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly, whether they had the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibility, gender reassignment or sexual orientation or not.

Qualitative responses

A low number of comments were made through the survey by users of Porlock Library, and a small number of letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups.

Age:

- A significant number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Porlock would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *“The Library is an important part of village life and is a lifeline for those who live alone, are disabled, elderly, children and young families etc living in a rural community”*
 - *“Porlock is an elderly population & not many have access to broadband other than the library.”*
- A similarly significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“West Somerset has poor social mobility and young people have relatively poor life chance and opportunities. It is a false economy to make short term savings now. If anything, Porlock and the surrounding areas should be prioritised for an expanded library and community / business development service.”*
 - *“Devastating to me and my young children”*
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Porlock, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Porlock library, and is summarised below:

- Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
- Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are homeschooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- Some respondents using Porlock library noted general impacts on disabled people.

Pregnancy / Maternity

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with this protected characteristic.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Porlock library. Some responses received elsewhere noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- Several specific impacts were highlighted by individual Porlock users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.
 - *“Remote locations like Porlock need all the community spirit support they can get to maintain a "heart" to the village.”*
 - *“Have the proposals taken account of the inequal impact on communities in rural areas, older communities, communities where young people have fewer life chances, and communities with poor social mobility?”*

Low income

- Some specific impacts were highlighted by individual Porlock users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. One or two comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people.
 - *“People who need help with computers for job seeking, council house seeking, etc will miss the library. It has the only photocopier in area.”*
 - *“If lost it will deprive the area of essential services, especially those with no computer access due to poor broadband also those less well off cannot always afford internet access and are then denied the chance to apply for better jobs etc.”*

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicating higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Porlock Library catchment:

	Porlock catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	2	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	6	6

Table 9 indicates that, on average for these measures, levels of need in Porlock catchment as a whole are in line with or higher than levels of need for Somerset as a whole. This means that on average there is a higher than average proportion of people with the characteristic of Disability in Porlock catchment, and low incomes were highlighted as a significant issue in the community engagement exercise. The table indicates that the risk of social isolation in Porlock catchment is in line with that for Somerset as a whole, and a significant number of people in the area are likely to have the characteristic of Rurality.

Access to alternative locations:

As with the needs assessment data referred to above, the proposal has also been informed by an analysis of access to alternative library buildings and Library Services in different areas of the County. Access has been considered by reviewing distances and driving times, public transport access, and car ownership levels in different. The driving times used for the analysis below have been increased following feedback from consultation respondents. This has been used to inform the assessment of the impact on certain groups sharing protected characteristics – for example, elderly and disabled groups who are less likely to have access to a car, and those living in rural areas.

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Porlock catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Porlock	210	40	20
Minehead	130	20	10
Mobile Library	10	0	0

Table 10 shows that the majority of library users in Porlock catchment currently use Porlock Library, with Minehead Library being used by a significant number (many will use both libraries). Minehead Library is very likely to be the alternative library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the decision recommendations, there ceased to be a library building in Porlock. This assessment will therefore consider access to Minehead Library from the catchment.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Porlock built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Minehead	14 minutes	6 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Porlock catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Porlock catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	14%	16%
Households with one vehicle	46%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	41%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 10 links Porlock with Minehead, providing some public transport access to the Minehead Library. The service is infrequent (a 2-hourly frequency) and takes 25 minutes to get to Minehead. The adult return fare to Minehead is £6.60 (free for concessionary pass holders). The service is not considered to be sustainable – it is funded by the local parish and town councils, and this funding is currently reviewed each year. Other communities in the catchment are not served by regular public transport. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – Porlock and some surrounding communities are also served by Somerset County Council's Slinky bus service, which provides access to Minehead.

Minehead is not within walking or reasonable cycling distance.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Porlock Library.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained, then the County Council will provide Mobile Library Services to Porlock and some of the surrounding communities, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). In conjunction with access to the alternative library building at Minehead, all these alternative services will mitigate the impact of closing Porlock library to a significant extent.

The existence of the current bus service mitigates the impact of closure to a certain extent for some groups, but this may not be sustainable in the longer term.

There will be residual impacts for people with some protected characteristics if Porlock library closes. A relatively small number of people are likely to be affected, because of the small catchment population; however, the library is well-used for the size of the village. The most significant of these impacts are summarised here (fuller descriptions are set out in the action plan table below):

- People aged 65 or over form a higher proportion of Porlock Library users than elsewhere in Somerset, and feedback about the impact on this group came through strongly in the public consultation response. In particular, some older people could suffer increased social isolation if Porlock library closed, because of the high number of events and activities at the library. Mitigation for this impact is limited, and for those most at risk of social isolation impacts could be significant.
- Usage of Porlock library by parents with children and younger children is relatively low, however, there are a range of activities for this group of users. Access to alternative libraries will be more difficult for families with no access to a car, and mobile library services can only partially mitigate this impact. If the current bus service ceases, access to alternative library buildings for parents and children with no transport would be very difficult, and these users would be more reliant on the mobile library.
- Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some people with the protected characteristics of Disability and / or Maternity, because of factors related to these characteristics. There is some statistical evidence that disabled people form a relatively higher proportion of users for Porlock library. Some people in these groups could be impacted by the closure of Porlock Library.
- Decision makers should note that the closure of Porlock Library would mean that people in some (very sparsely populated) rural communities in the catchment are unlikely to be able to access an alternative library building within a 20-minute driving time; this impact is related to Rurality.
- The impact of closing Porlock library is more significant for users of the public computer access service, which would not be provided in Porlock if the library closed. People on lower incomes are more likely to be users of this service; there is strong evidence from the consultation and engagement exercises that some households in Porlock experience low income, and car ownership is surprisingly low in part of the

village. The impact would be particularly significant for people claiming Universal Credit, people claiming other benefits and also clients of social landlords.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>If you have identified any negative impacts, you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)</p>			
<p>Identified issue drawn from your conclusions</p>	<p>Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?</p>	<p>Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?</p>	<p>How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?</p>
<p>Age</p>			
<p>People aged 65 or over form a much higher proportion of Porlock Library users than of library users across Somerset as a whole. The impact of a library closure on older people was a theme in consultation responses for Porlock Library. In particular, impacts were highlighted for socially-isolated older people who would no longer have convenient access to activities and events at Porlock library that are well-used by this group. The library provides an important social hub in this relatively isolated rural community, and some consultation respondents noted that its existence brings a sense of community 'comfort'. Consultation feedback also indicates that some older people in the area are reliant on Porlock library for internet access. Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative library buildings in Minehead may be more difficult for older people to do. Public transport from Porlock to Minehead exists but is not considered to be sustainable. For users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult to use existing public transport links, which may not be available in any event into the future. That said, older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. A high proportion of users currently walk to the library.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock,</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock,</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Accessing Minehead library may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Public transport from Porlock to Minehead exists, but is not considered to be sustainable, and is expensive and less convenient for parents with younger children than the current option of walking to the library. This impact is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in Porlock, compared to some other affected libraries. However, where they do not have access to a car, there may be some parents who would find it significantly more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so. If the current bus service ceased, children in households with no access to a car would rely on the mobile library service.</p>	<p>there is little that can be done to mitigate the impact on socially isolated older people, or those who depend on the library for internet access. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, Mobile Library Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>customers are made aware of the Home Library Service, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and any local events and activities that could support socially isolated people</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who are currently able to use Porlock Library after school. Those who currently walk from school to the library (perhaps because the household either does not have access to a car, or because the only household car is being used for work purposes) will be particularly impacted. It is not feasible to get to Minehead library and back again by public transport after school. After school usage of libraries may become significantly more difficult for some primary school children - those without access to a car after school are likely to only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays. This impact is likely to only affect a small number of people in Porlock because of the small catchment population and the relatively low level of library usage by children.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to Porlock Library. This impact is likely to be limited in Porlock, because many children in this age group will be educated at the secondary school in Minehead, usage of Porlock library is relatively low amongst this group, and the catchment population is low. Nonetheless, consultation feedback indicates that some younger people may use Porlock library for study at certain times, and these customers may not be able to access this service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle).</p> <p>Events and activities for children are offered at Porlock library, and alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. The provision of Library Outreach Services for children in Porlock does not form part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would not be provided by the Library Service if a</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, Mobile Library Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, we will signpost alternative services</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, more limited mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>Customers are made aware of services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. Activities for children would be available at alternative library buildings, but the access issues noted above may mean that there is a further level of impact on pre-school and primary school children.</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and consultation feedback indicates that some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Porlock Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>through customer engagement during any library closure. Limited support (provision of guidance) could be provided to any groups wishing to set up replacement activities in Porlock.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>supported to set up alternative activities in Porlock, if it is not possible to maintain a library building.</p>
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Minehead may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport, and there are a relatively high proportion of disabled customers using Porlock library. Public transport from Porlock to Minehead exists but is not considered to be sustainable. For users who previously walked to the library or accessed the library in wheelchairs or mobility scooters it is likely to be more difficult to use existing public transport links, which may not be available into the future. That said, many disabled people are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. The buses operating between Porlock and Minehead are not currently low-floor, and so</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or mobility scooter / wheelchair access to (more limited) library services. Alternative</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter / wheelchair. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>some disabled people may be reliant on less frequent demand responsive 'Slinky' services (which are wheelchair accessible). Public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people, for as long as it is available. Some disabled people using Porlock library travel by car or public transport from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Porlock Library because Minehead library is a relatively short distance away.</p>	<p>services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>		<p>buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism collection) are currently limited in Porlock Library, and comparable facilities are available through the Mobile Library Service.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, we will work with our staff to ensure relevant customer are aware of the availability of these collections on the mobile library service.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services available at other locations.</p>
<p>Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some disabled people, as a result of a lack of mobility, difficulty communicating, or anxiety about social contact. Porlock library has a wide range of events and activities. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). This impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, there is little that can be done to mitigate the impact on socially isolated disabled people. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, customers are made aware of the Home Library Service, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and any local events and activities that could support socially isolated people.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>The alternative library building at Minehead is wheelchair accessible and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift. We do not consider that disabled customers of Porlock Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Porlock Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at Porlock could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p> <p>Minehead Library is most likely to be used as an alternative library, but this may not be possible for some people with mental health conditions or learning disabilities, who may find a larger library space and a busy atmosphere less welcoming and more distressing. We have no evidence that this impact would apply to users of Porlock library, but it has been noted in relation to other quieter library buildings.</p>	<p>engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, we will work with our staff to identify vulnerable customers and try to ensure that changes are communicated at an early stage, and new or alternative services are clearly signposted.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities in alternative services.</p> <p>Customers vulnerable to anxiety are communicated with effectively at an early stage.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	We will explore the potential for establishing 'quiet times' in larger town centre libraries.	Strategic Manager - Library Services – Nov. 2018 - June 2019.	The potential and value of 'quiet times' is explored and implemented if feasible.
Gender Reassignment			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified.			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
Accessing Minehead library may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Public transport from Porlock to Minehead exists, but is not considered to be sustainable, and is expensive and less convenient for parents with babies than the current option of walking to the library. This impact is likely to affect a small number of people in Porlock, which has a very small population. However, where they do not have access to a car, there may be some parents who would find it significantly more difficult to take babies to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so. If the current bus service ceased, new in households with no access to a car would rely on the mobile library service.	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Events and activities for parents and babies are offered at Porlock library, and alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. The provision of Library Outreach Services in Porlock for this group does not form part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would not be provided by the Library Service if a Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. Activities for parents and new babies would be available at alternative library buildings, but the access issues noted above may mean that this mitigation is not effective for some people with the protected characteristic of maternity. Furthermore, social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some people with the protected characteristic of maternity, as a result of the sudden change in lifestyle, or poor post-natal mental health. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). People with the protected characteristic of maternity may be impacted more than others by the closure of Porlock Library. This impact is likely to affect a small number of people in Porlock, because of the very small population.</p>	<p>during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure. Limited support (provision of guidance) could be provided to any groups wishing to set up replacement activities for new parents in Porlock.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and supported to set up alternative activities in Porlock, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>
<p>Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)</p>			
<p>The proportion of people in Porlock catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in Porlock is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Some consultation responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access. Although the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence that migrant workers are likely to be significantly disadvantaged by the closure of Porlock Library, this could be because of a limited engagement by this group in the consultation exercise. On balance, we feel that this potential impact merits highlighting to decision makers because the public computer access service would not be available through other means in Porlock if the library closed, and because it is possible that migrant workers may find it more difficult to access alternative public computer access services in nearby libraries, either because of working patterns or the affordability of public transport for those that may not have access to a vehicle.</p>	<p>If it is not possible to establish a Community Library Partnership in Porlock, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of public computer access services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>
<p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Porlock to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Religion and Belief			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Sex			
Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Porlock, because a higher proportion of Porlock library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Porlock library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.	There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.		
Sexual Orientation			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
Caring responsibilities			
Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, Digital Library Services, Library	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, more limited library services are available

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
 APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	<p>Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>
<p>Rurality</p> <p>Whilst many rural communities in the catchment would have reasonable transport links to the alternative library at Minehead, car access to alternative libraries would be more lengthy and time-consuming than access to Porlock for some of the rural communities in Porlock library catchment; particularly those to the south and west of Porlock. The Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 seeks to design a library network which we estimate will enable access to a library building by car (in normal traffic conditions) in around 20 minutes or less for the vast majority of Somerset users, but this threshold is not met by the current network for remote communities on Exmoor. Our analysis of driving times indicates that this objective would be met for the majority of Porlock catchment whether or not a library building could be maintained in Porlock. However, we estimate that residents in the sparsely populated parts</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>of Exmoor to the west and south of Porlock would be around 25 minutes' drive from Minehead library. These customers would be relatively disadvantaged by the closure of Porlock library, in part due to a characteristic of rurality. The community of Simonsbath in the far west of Exmoor lies within Porlock catchment, but usage of Porlock library is very low, and Dulverton library is slightly nearer (still 30 minutes' drive time). Customers in this community are not considered to be disadvantaged by the closure of Porlock library.</p>			
<p>Low Income</p> <p>The community engagement and consultation exercises highlighted that there are households in the area with low incomes, and poverty in this part of Somerset is often masked in geographical statistics because of the sparse population and large disparities in wealth within relatively small communities. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and the cost of public transport to Minehead for non-concessionary pass holders is significant and could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes from accessing Minehead library. If this bus service ceases, people on lower incomes in Porlock village who are not able to afford a car would be significantly impacted by the closure of Porlock Library. Whilst mobile and digital library services would mitigate the impact to some extent, people on low incomes who do not have access to a vehicle are likely to face a more significant impact from the closure of Porlock Library.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made aware of these services.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Public access computer use is fairly significant at Porlock library, and some comments from users of Porlock library noted the usage of this service by unemployed people. Across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. Car ownership levels in parts of Porlock are low, and the cost of public transport to Minehead is expensive and may not be sustainable in the longer term. Some people on low incomes, particularly those claiming universal credit, are likely to be significantly impacted by the closure of Porlock library, as public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be maintained in Porlock, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Military Status</p> <p>No impact identified</p>			

<p>Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment</p>	
<p>The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.</p>	
<p>Completed by:</p>	<p>Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey</p>
<p>Date</p>	<p>06/10/18</p>
<p>Signed off by:</p>	<p>Michele Cusack</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	08/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(i)

Priorswood (Taunton)
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Priorswood

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p> <p>Baroness Thornton, March 2010</p>			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Priorswood	
Version	2	Date	06/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council's cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in Priorswood and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Priorswood library, and should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix: 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Priorswood Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Priorswood are currently delivered through a library building in Priorswood with the Mobile Library and Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that a large number of people living in Priorswood and the surrounding area use Taunton Library. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Priorswood and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Priorswood (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> a combination of Digital Library Services and Library Outreach Services (including public computer network access) to compliment access to other libraries. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Priorswood would close and library services would be provided in other ways.</p>			

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Priorswood if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Priorswood library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Priorswood, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Priorswood Library and providing library services to Priorswood and the surrounding area in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Priorswood library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 889 active borrowers;
- 14,734 visits (footfall);
- 278 people's network users;
- 2,192 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 21,704

Priorswood library is open for 29 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Priorswood library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of

- Priorswood library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Priorswood library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Priorswood Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Priorswood catchment; Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Priorswood library most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Priorswood	% of Priorswood Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Priorswood Library
0-4	5.35%	10.0%	6.9%	5.3%	4.1%
5-11	16.07%	20.2%	8.9%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	4.4%	7.5%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	41.9%	58.8%	56.0%	69.4%
65+	28.81%	21.7%	18.0%	24.1%	26.5%
Unknown	1.35%	1.9%			

Table 2: % active library users, Priorswood catchment; Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Priorswood library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Priorswood	% of Priorswood Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Priorswood Library*
Female	61.88%	63.10%	52.0%	51.20%	78.0%
Male	36.38%	32.50%	48.0%	48.80%	21.3%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	4.40%			

*Consultation responders who identified as some other way totalled 0.7% of responders to this question.

Table 3: % of active library users, Priorswood catchment and Somerset population by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Priorswood	% of Priorswood Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Priorswood Library*
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	1.1%	5.8%	2.02%	5.0%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	3.7%	3.8%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	95.2%	93.3%	94.64%	95.0%

*The Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Priorswood catchment; Somerset population and all consultation respondents.

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Priorswood	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Priorswood catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset
Disabled	5%	2.2%	Long term health problem or disabled	17.6%	19%	20.4%*
Non-disabled	95%	97.8%	No long term health problem or disability identified	82.4%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Priorswood Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Priorswood Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery, we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Priorswood Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity in 2016 showing % South West population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole*	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded on registration.

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves: % of consultation respondents whose gender identity:	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Priorswood library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of Priorswood library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent users of this library:

- The proportion of the catchment population of children under 11 (in both the 0-4 and 5-11 ranges) is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range. The proportion of library users in these age ranges is also high in comparison to the proportion of users in these age ranges using all Somerset libraries.
- A large proportion of consultation respondents using Priorswood library were in the 18-64 age group.
- Priorswood library has a lower proportion of users aged 65 or over, compared to users of all Somerset libraries.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Priorswood library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The proportions of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller or any other White' or of a Black and Minority Ethnic group are higher than the proportions of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in these ethnic groups. A significant number of consultation respondents considered themselves to be from a Minority Ethnic Background.
- The proportion of disabled Priorswood library users is lower than the proportion of disabled users in the library user population across the whole of Somerset.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Priorswood library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Priorswood Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Priorswood catchment mostly serves an urban population in the north of Taunton, however there are some users from the rural area to the immediate north, up to and including Kingston St. Mary village. Analysis of library usage data indicates that the majority of users in this area use Taunton Library (see Table 10 below). Some users of Priorswood library may have the protected characteristic of Rurality, but the vast majority of users live in the Taunton built up area.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the Priorswood library catchment is 5, meaning that the population of the catchment as a whole is likely to contain a higher proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average masks significant variations in income levels within the catchment population, and the area adjacent to the library has much lower levels of average income. The LSOA immediately to the south of Priorswood library is in the 10% most deprived LOSAs nationally for income deprivation, indicating a significant pocket of low income.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Priorswood library is very extensive, with 2,192 attendances at events held in the library in 2017/18.

Priorswood holds collections of books on Autism and Long Term Health Conditions which may be of use to people with certain disabilities. The Long Term Health Condition books are part of our 'Books on Prescription' collections.

Section 2B – People who are delivering the policy or service

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4ii above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income, as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Priorswood library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the community engagement exercise and during the consultation:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Priorswood on 30th October 2017. The following relevant points were noted:

- The public access computers were increasingly essential for universal credit claims – there was a requirement for unemployed people to get online every day and many people used the library for this.
- There were a lot of disabled people living in the area.
- Selworthy Special School is soon to expand, and this will result in more 5-18 year olds with special needs using Priorswood library.
- Access to Taunton town centre was more difficult from Priorswood than other parts of Taunton; it was 30 minutes' walk, and the Taunton cycling group identified Priorswood as a part of the town not well-served by cycling routes. The cost of the bus fare or car parking acted as a barrier for many local people.
- Although the number of people aged 65 or over in the area as a whole was relatively low, Lyngford had a high population of older people.
- There were high levels of under-employment in the area, a lot of people worked in low wage part time jobs.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a relatively low number of consultation responses received from users of Priorswood Library, reflecting the relatively small number of users.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Priorswood library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Priorswood library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Priorswood library.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly.

Qualitative responses

A large number of comments were made through the survey by users of Priorswood Library, and a number of letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, 30 people attended a drop-in event held on the 13th February 2018. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Priorswood would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *“Many elderly people and people without much money cannot buy Kindles or computers to access information & either cannot get out to buy books because they can’t afford them or don’t have means of transport.”*
 - *“It wasn’t until I became old and infirm I realised just what a library meant to the elderly (the computers etc).”*
- Comments about the impact on older people highlighted the potential difficulties in accessing alternative libraries.
 - *“There is of course the main library in town, but for many people, especially the elderly and those on a very low income, it’s not so easily accessible and many will lose the chance to access both books and use the computers.”*
- A similarly significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“I use the library frequently with my children for lego club, which also allows them access to the books, which they read and take out on loan.”*
 - *“A lot of people use computers in the library. Some children do their homework in the library”*
 - *“the library runs a lot of events/activities and engages with children in the area who may not be able to afford books or engage in activities.”*
- Selworthy Special School noted the importance of Priorswood library for their students:
 - *“For us, being able to access Priorswood library has huge benefits. It supports our lower school in the early teaching of phonics and reading. It also allows them to access the community and put into practice the skills such as stranger danger. Our upper school also access the library to support their reading.”*

- Other stakeholders noted that *“We have a high level of residents who are socially isolated and vulnerable within this area who need to be able to access support and information from a library building.”*
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Priorswood, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Priorswood library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are homeschooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- Some respondents using Priorswood library noted general impacts on disabled people.
 - *“Priorswood is a deprived area, to reduce the current services would be highly detrimental. Travel into Taunton is expensive and difficult for the less able.”*
- Stakeholder groups noted the high incidence of mental health problems in the area, and the importance of having a quiet, non-threatening and local facility for people with mental health conditions and learning disabilities.
- Note also the comments from Selworthy Special School above; many of Selworthy School’s students will have the protected characteristic of disability.

Pregnancy / Maternity

- No significant impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with this protected characteristic.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Priorswood library. Some responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- No specific impacts were highlighted by individual Priorswood users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Low income

- Many specific impacts were highlighted by individual Priorswood users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. One or two comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower incomes. This was a notably strong theme in responses for Priorswood library.
 - *“Lyngford and Pyrland/Rowbarton wards have significantly higher proportions of children ... receiving Free School Meals.”*
 - *“The public access computers are increasingly essential for universal credit claims – there is a need for unemployed people to get on line every day and many people use the library for this.”*

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicate higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Priorswood catchment:

	Priorswood catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	5	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	5	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	5	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	5	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	5	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	5	6

All of the measures in table 9 indicate that, on average for these measures, there is a slightly higher level of need in Priorswood catchment as a whole. This means that on average there is likely to be a higher proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Priorswood catchment are more likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset but are less likely to have the characteristic of Rurality. These average measures mask significant differences between different parts of the catchment; as noted above, household incomes are very low in some parts of the catchment and the proportion of disabled people very

high in some areas; a significant part of the catchment is in the lowest decile for social isolation (indicating that a lot of people living nearby to the library are likely to be socially isolated).

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Priorswood catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Taunton	1620	710	160
Priorswood	600	180	30

Table 10 shows that the vast majority of library users in Priorswood catchment currently use Taunton Library as an alternative to Priorswood library. This provides evidence that Taunton Library is very likely to be the alternative library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the consultation proposals, there ceased to be a library building in Priorswood. This assessment will therefore consider access to Taunton Library from the catchment.

In our analysis of library catchments work it is unusual for more users within a library's catchment to use a different library to the catchment library, however, for the 3 'sub-urban' libraries in Somerset this is the case. Usage patterns suggest that access to Taunton town centre is convenient for many.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Priorswood built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Taunton	5 minutes	2 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Priorswood catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Priorswood catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	19%	16%
Households with one vehicle	46%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	35%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus services 1 and 2 link Priorswood with Taunton town centre, providing excellent transport access to Taunton library. Both services have 20 minutes frequency, and take around 13 minutes to get into Taunton town centre. The adult return fare to Taunton is £3.60 (free for

concessionary pass holders). The service is considered to be sustainable. Bus service 23 serves Kingston St. Mary on a 2 hourly service, although this service is subsidised and may not be sustainable. Services 2 and 21 serve Monkton Heathfield. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily in the urban and rural parts of the catchment – Priorswood and some surrounding communities are served by Somerset County Council's Somerset Accessible Transport service and Somerset County Council's Slinky bus service – both provide access to Taunton town centre.

Some of the catchment (including the area immediately around the library) is within walking distance of Taunton Library, and the Winkworth Way cycle link provides a reasonable cycling route into the town centre from Priorswood and Lyngford.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Priorswood Library.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide some Library Outreach Services to Priorswood, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). Many people in Priorswood are likely to travel to Taunton town centre for shopping and many people in the area use Taunton library. Older people and many disabled people are able to travel to Taunton town centre at no cost, on a relatively convenient and frequent bus service. Taunton town centre library is within walking distance of most of the urban catchment (although this is a fairly long walk from the northern outskirts of Taunton). It is within a convenient cycling distance for people who are able to cycle. Furthermore, in order to meet the identified needs in the area and mitigate the most significant impacts of closure, public computer access and activities targeted at young children and new parents would continue to be provided from the current site (although public computer access would be unstaffed, with reduced opening hours). Good, affordable access for most people to the alternative library building at Taunton town centre, alongside the alternative services provided, will mitigate the impact of closing Priorswood library to a significant extent for the majority of groups identified.

Mitigations are therefore relatively strong for most of the impacts identified for users of Priorswood Library. However, there are some identified residual impacts, which decision makers should have particular regard to. Decision makers should also note that Priorswood is a well-used and very successful sub-urban library, with high levels of usage (particularly for activities and public computer access). Some of the impacts identified are therefore likely to affect a significant number of people.

- It is a long walk from some parts of the urban catchment to Taunton town centre, and although the cost of public transport is modest, in the context of high levels of income deprivation in the locality around the library, it may not be affordable for service users who do not have concessionary passes. Parents with children or babies would be able to access activities through outreach provision in Priorswood but would face a long walk to access a library building if they did not have access to a car or could not afford public transport. No mobile library service would be provided.
- Consultation has identified that there is a high incidence of poor mental health, children with Special Educational Needs, people with dementia and people with Learning

Disabilities in the area. Feedback from the consultation exercise also identified a concern, amongst local stakeholders and staff, that some users may not be able to use Taunton library because they could not cope with a busy, town centre environment, as a result of a Disability. It is difficult to mitigate this impact, which could be significant for a small number of users, although we will explore the feasibility of introducing 'quiet times' in larger libraries.

- A specific related impact of the closure of Priorswood library would affect children attending Selworthy Special School, many of whom use the library for school visits, and are likely to have the protected characteristic of disability. This impact would also be difficult to mitigate effectively, although we will explore whether there is any outreach - based support that could mitigate.
- Although cycling access to Taunton town centre is reasonable, and relatively affordable, for people with good mobility, there are a significant number of users of the public computer access service at Priorswood Library, and these users would be inconvenienced by having to travel to Taunton town centre, particularly if they were reliant on the public computers to apply for work, to access Universal Credit, or to access social housing services. Public Computer Access will continue to be provided at the current site, but the availability of this facility is likely to be restricted compared to current library opening hours.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>Consultation respondents highlighted a concern for older people, in particular a view that access would be difficult. Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing Taunton town centre may be more difficult for older people to do. However, public transport from Priorswood and Monkton Heathfield into Taunton Town Centre is generally good, and older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Because of the relative expense of car parking in the town centre, and the good bus service, we have concluded that it is unlikely that there will be a significant impact on older people relating to access to a vehicle (it being comparably convenient, and more affordable, to catch the bus into the town centre). However, older people who currently walk to the library from the adjacent area, or who drive to the library from further afield, would have a more difficult journey into Taunton Town Centre. The cost of car parking would be an impact for those accessing Priorswood library by car. This may dissuade some from accessing the library service.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, public computer access would be available at the current site and the library service would endeavour to provide digital inclusion activities as part the Library Outreach Service provision at the current site. The Digital Library Service would also be available. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, public computer access would be available at the current site and, if possible, we would provide some digital inclusion support through outreach services. These would help address digital exclusion issues for older people locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library building in Taunton town centre.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
 APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Accessing Taunton Town Centre library may be more difficult for younger children to do. It is possible to walk to Taunton library (though some distance) from the urban part of the catchment around Priorswood and Lyngford, and the distance from Monkton Heathfield to Taunton town centre is not significantly greater than the distance to Priorswood library. There is strong evidence from the catchment mapping data that a large number of people living close to Priorswood library use Taunton Town Centre library, and most will make regular trips into the town centre to access other services. Public transport from the urban parts of the catchment into the Town Centre is good, and the cost of public transport is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, however, it will be more expensive and less convenient for some parents with younger children than the current option of walking to Priorswood library. The feasibility of pedestrian access for most affected users will go a long way to mitigating impacts for children, but parents will face a longer walk to access many library services. The distance into the town centre may be too great for younger accompanied children. Children of pre-school and primary school age use Priorswood library in relatively large numbers compared to Somerset libraries as a whole, so although this impact is not considered to be very significant, it is likely to affect a relatively large number of users.</p> <p>Events and activities for children are particularly well-used at Priorswood library, and although activities for children would be available at alternative library buildings, younger people would be disproportionately impacted by the closure of Priorswood Library</p>	<p>any library closure. However, mitigation for this impact is limited.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood Library</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, more</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>regardless of whether they are able to access alternatives. Because of the high needs in the area, the recommendation for Priorswood is to provide events and activities for children and babies as Library Outreach Services, at the current site.</p> <p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who are currently able to use Priorswood Library after attending the nearby primary or infant schools. Those who currently walk from school to the library could be impacted - it is a much longer walk into Taunton town centre. After school usage of libraries may become more difficult for some primary school children. Selworthy School children use Priorswood library regularly within school hours as part of the curriculum; the more significant impact for these students relates mainly to disability and is covered below. Because of the relative proximity of Taunton Town Centre library, we are not proposing to explore primary school mobile library visits in this area.</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Priorswood Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>Outreach Services would be provided at the current site, which would maintain convenient access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>	<p>Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>limited alternative services continue to be provided at the current site. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library building in Taunton town centre.</p>
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Disability			
<p>Accessing the library in Taunton Town Centre may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as the impact of longer walking distances is more likely to present access difficulties for people with restricted mobility. Although public transport from the area around Priorswood into Taunton Town Centre is generally good, for users with restricted mobility who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are more likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Low floor buses operate into the town centre, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people. Some disabled people using Priorswood library travel into Priorswood town centre by car from surrounding suburbs or villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Priorswood Library because Taunton town centre library is a relatively short distance away. Taunton town centre has convenient parking adjacent to the library (free for blue badge holders), with good access.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, Digital Library Services and some Library Outreach Services would be provided. This would maintain easier digital, walking or mobility scooter / wheelchair access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, more limited alternative services are maintained at the current site. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library building in Taunton town centre.</p>
<p>The 'Books on prescription' service available at Priorswood library is targeted in part towards disabled people with certain disabilities, as well as carers for people with certain disabilities. This service would be available in Taunton town centre library, but more difficult access to the service could disproportionately affect some people with the protected characteristic of disability, where that disability makes it more difficult for people to use a busy, town centre library (this could be the case for some people with dementia, autism, mental health conditions or learning disabilities).</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some disabled people, as a result of a lack of mobility, difficulty communicating, or anxiety about social contact. These factors are also likely to make it more difficult for these people to use Taunton town centre library (a much busier library, which is more difficult to access). A pocket of high social isolation risk in Priorswood has been identified through the needs assessment exercise. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). The provision of Health and Wellbeing Library Outreach Services in Priorswood does not form part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would not be provided by the Library Service if a Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. People with the protected characteristic of disability may be impacted more than others by the closure of Priorswood Library, because some disabled people are more likely to be socially isolated and may be less able to use alternative services at Taunton town centre library.</p> <p>The alternative library building in Taunton town centre is wheelchair accessible and has a hearing loop. It should therefore present no physical access difficulties for people with mobility problems, or access difficulties for people with hearing loss.</p> <p>Taunton town centre library is most likely to be used as an alternative library, but this may not be possible for some people with mental health conditions or learning disabilities, who may not cope with the larger library space and busy atmosphere. Feedback in the public consultation exercise indicates that this is likely to be an issue for users of Priorswood library, which is a quieter library building. Further evidence gathered through the consultation exercise shows that the prevalence of dementia, mental health diagnoses, children with</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, we will work with our staff to identify vulnerable customers and try to ensure that changes</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers vulnerable to anxiety are communicated with effectively at an early stage. If feasible, ‘quiet times’ are established at Taunton library, and these are</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>special educational needs, and learning disabilities in the areas immediately surrounding Priorswood library is high, and for some people with these conditions, using Taunton town centre library (which is the 3rd busiest library in the south west, for borrowing) may be impossible, or more difficult, for reasons relating to mental health, rather than physical access. Whilst public computer access and some outreach services supporting digital exclusion would continue to be provided from the current site as Library Outreach Services, the availability of library staff would be very limited, and many other services would cease to be provided altogether.</p> <p>A related impact concerns primary, secondary and sixth-form students at Selworthy Special School, who are regular users of Priorswood library. The majority of these students are likely to have the protected characteristic of disability, and discussions with the school headteacher make it clear that Priorswood library, as a local, quieter facility compared to Taunton library, has particular advantages for these students that are sometimes related to disability. We do not believe that a mobile library visit to Selworthy school is likely to be an effective mitigation, because the value of library use for this group extends beyond outcomes for reading and literacy (however, this will be kept under review). These students are very unlikely to use Taunton town centre library as an alternative, and so closing Priorswood library could have a significant impact for this group.</p>	<p>are communicated at an early stage, and new or alternative services are clearly signposted. We will explore the potential for establishing 'quiet times' in larger town centre libraries.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, we will carry out further engagement with Selworthy School to determine if a Mobile Library visit to the school site, or specific Library Outreach Services at the current site, could mitigate the impact of the library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>communicated to vulnerable customers.</p> <p>The potential for additional mitigating services for Selworthy school students is explored and evaluated. If possible, some services remain available for this group at the current site.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified.			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
<p>Accessing Taunton library may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity to do. It is possible to walk to Taunton library (though some distance) from the urban part of the catchment around Priorswood and Lyngford, and the distance from Monkton Heathfield to Taunton town centre is not significantly greater than the distance to Priorswood library. There is strong evidence from the catchment mapping data that a large number of people living close to Priorswood library use Taunton Town Centre library, and most will make regular trips into the town centre to access other services. Public transport from the urban parts of the catchment into the Town Centre is good, and the cost of public transport is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset. However, it will be more expensive and less convenient for some parents with babies than the current option of walking to Priorswood library. The feasibility of pedestrian access for most affected users will go a long way to mitigating impacts for children, but parents will face a longer walk to access many library services. New parents and babies use Priorswood library in relatively large numbers, so although this impact is not considered significant, it is likely to affect a relatively large number of users.</p> <p>Events and activities for babies are particularly well-used at Priorswood library, and although similar activities would be available at alternative library buildings, people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity would be disproportionately impacted by the closure of Priorswood Library regardless of whether they are able to access alternatives. Because of the high needs in the area, the</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>		
	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood Library Outreach Services would be provided at</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, more limited alternative services continue to be</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>recommendation for Priorswood is to provide events and activities for new parents and babies as Library Outreach Services, at the current site.</p>	<p>the current site, which would maintain convenient access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>provided at the current site. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library building in Taunton town centre.</p>
<p>Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)</p>			
<p>The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as being from minority ethnic groups is higher than the proportion of people from these groups across Somerset as a whole, and the proportion of people responding to the public consultation who identified themselves as being from a minority ethnic group was also notably significant. This means that people from minority ethnic groups could be disproportionately affected by the closure of Priorswood library. This means that the general impacts of closing Priorswood library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Race.</p> <p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p> <p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Priorswood to individuals and groups whose first language is</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.		
Religion and Belief			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Sex			
Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Priorswood, because a higher proportion of Priorswood library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Priorswood library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.	There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.		
Sexual Orientation			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to accompany the people they care for to alternative library buildings.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, Digital Library Services and some Library Outreach Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>
<p>Rurality</p> <p>All rural communities in the catchment would have reasonable transport links to Taunton town centre. However, car access may be more lengthy and time-consuming than access to Priorswood for some of the rural communities in Priorswood library catchment. Driving times would not be too significant, but could be impacted by congestion, and parking charges would generally apply. However, having considered this impact we have concluded that rural users who currently access Priorswood library using their own vehicle are</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>likely to be impacted by convenience factors rather than significant barriers to access.</p>			
<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income and employment in the area surrounding Priorswood library are significantly below than the average for Somerset, and there are high incidences of income and employment deprivation. Impacts on people with low income were a notably strong theme in the consultation responses for Priorswood library. However, the cost of accessing Taunton library is relatively inexpensive for people on low incomes because of the feasibility of walking access; cycling access is good from the areas of low income around Priorswood library to Taunton town centre. For this reason, it is likely that the impact of closing Priorswood library would be limited for the majority of people in households with low income.</p> <p>Public access computer use is significant at Priorswood library, and the usage of this service by unemployed people was a strong theme in consultation responses. Across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. As noted above, access into Taunton library is good, and mitigates this impact to an extent. In order to mitigate the impact further, and address local needs identified through our needs assessment and the consultation exercise, we will also</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, public internet access would be provided as a Library Outreach Service, and the library service would endeavour to provide digital inclusion activities as a further element of the Library Outreach Service provision at the current</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Priorswood, public computer access is still available at the current site and, if possible, some digital inclusion support is provided as an outreach service. These would help address digital exclusion issues for</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>continue to provide some public internet access at the current site. However, the opening hours of this service are likely to be reduced, and the service may not be staffed. There could be residual impacts for some people on low incomes, particularly those who need more support, who are very frequent users of the service, or who have more difficulty accessing Taunton town centre library.</p>	<p>site. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) digital inclusion services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>		<p>people on lower incomes.</p>
<p>Military Status</p> <p>No impact identified.</p>			

<p>Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment</p>	
<p>The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.</p>	
<p>Completed by:</p>	<p>Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey</p>
<p>Date</p>	<p>07/10/18</p>
<p>Signed off by:</p>	<p>Michele Cusack</p>
<p>Date</p>	<p>11/10/2018</p>
<p>Compliance sign off Date</p>	<p>08/10/18</p>
<p>To be reviewed by: (officer name)</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>Review date:</p>	<p>This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(j)

Somerton
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Somerton

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Somerton	
Version	2	Date	03/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in Somerton and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Somerton library, and should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Somerton Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Somerton are currently delivered through a library building in Somerton, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that library users in Somerton and the surrounding area are most likely to use Somerton Library, with significant numbers also using alternative libraries. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Somerton and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Somerton (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> a combination of Library Outreach Services, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services, to compliment access to alternative library buildings in nearby communities. Establishing a Community Library</p>			

Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Somerton would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Somerton if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Somerton library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Somerton, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Somerton Library, and providing library services to Somerton and the surrounding communities in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Somerton library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 1,245 active borrowers;
- 38,203 visits (footfall);
- 260 people's network users;
- 2,639 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 19,012.

Somerton library is open for 28.5 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Somerton library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data we compared the characteristics of

- Somerton library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Somerton library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Somerton Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Somerton catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Somerton library most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Somerton	% of Somerton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Somerton Library
0-4	5.35%	6.0%	4.9%	5.3%	1.4%
5-11	16.07%	15.9%	7.3%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	3.4%	6.4%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	29.5%	54.0%	56.0%	46.9%
65+	28.81%	41.8%	27.3%	24.1%	49.7%
Unknown	1.35%	3.4%			

Table 2: % active library users, Somerton catchment; Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Somerton library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Somerton	% of Somerton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Somerton Library [#]
Female	61.88%	65.9%	51.7%	51.20%	72.6%
Male	36.38%	32.2%	48.3%	48.80%	26.5%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	1.9%		-	

[#] Consultation responders who identified in some other way totalled 0.9% of responders to this question.

Table 3: % of active library users, Somerton catchment; Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Somerton library most, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Somerton	% of Somerton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Somerton Library
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	0.5%	1.4%	2.02%	3.2%*
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	3.0%	2.6%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	96.5%	96.0%	94.64%	96.8%

*The consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Somerton catchment, Somerset population and Consultation respondents across Somerset:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - Somerton	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Somerton catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	4.7%	Long term health problem or disabled	19.1%	19%	20.4%*
Non-disabled	95%	95.3%	No long term health problem or disability identified	80.9%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked: 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Somerton Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity.

Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Somerton Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Somerton Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity in 2016 showing % UK population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole*	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded on registration:

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated		8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Somerton library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of Somerton library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent users of this library:

- The proportion of the catchment population aged 65 or over is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range. Also the proportion of Somerton library users aged over 65 is significantly higher than the proportion of users in this age range across all Somerset libraries. A larger proportion of Somerton consultation respondents identified themselves in this age range than the proportion of consultation respondents as a whole. There is a good range of evidence that older people are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to Somerton library.
- The proportion of children under 5 and children aged 5-11 using Somerton library is in line with the proportion of these age groups using all Somerset libraries (slightly higher for the under 5 group). However, pre-school and primary school-aged children are over-represented in the Somerton library user population compared to the Somerset and Somerton catchment populations, suggesting that these groups are more likely to be affected by changes to Somerton library.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Somerton library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The number of disabled users of Somerton library, and the number of consultation respondents identifying themselves as disabled, are in line with catchment and Somerset / Somerset library user populations. However, people with the protected characteristic form a significant proportion of the Somerton library user population and so are likely to be affected by the changes proposed.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group in comparison to the County average. 'White British' users are also over-represented in the Somerton Library user population compared to the population of users across all Somerset Libraries.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Somerton library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Somerton Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Somerton catchment serves a large rural area around Somerton. Analysis of library usage data indicates that significant numbers of users in this area use Somerton Library (see Table 10 below), although many also use alternative libraries (we anticipate that many will use more than one library). Many users of Somerton library are likely to have the protected characteristic of Rurality.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the Somerton library catchment is 7, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a slightly lower proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average is likely to mask significant variations in income levels within the catchment population. No significant pockets of low income populations have been identified within the catchment through the needs assessment exercise, however there is a pocket of relative income deprivation in Somerton where one LSOA is in the 40% most deprived nationally for income deprivation. Our needs assessment did not

identify income deprivation as a significant problem for Somerton or Somerton library catchment, compared to other areas of Somerset.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Somerton library is growing rapidly under the leadership of an excellent staff team; there were 2,639 attendances at events held in the library in 2017/18, over twice the level of attendances in 2016/17. Many of these events are run for children, and others are frequently used by older people.

Somerton holds collections of books on Autism and Long Term Health Conditions which may be of use to people with certain disabilities. The Long Term Health Condition books are part of our 'Books on Prescription' collections.

Section 2B – People who are *delivering* the policy or service

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4i above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income, as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Somerton library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Somerton on 23rd October 2017. It was noted that the community felt that customers would be unlikely to travel to Langport to use the library. It was also noted that Somerton had relatively high levels of employment, although pockets of deprivation did exist. However, Somerton was relatively wealthy compared to some other towns in South Somerset District.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a relatively large number of consultation responses received from users of Somerton Library, reflecting the relatively large number of users and an effective local campaign during the consultation.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Somerton library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Somerton library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Somerton library.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly.
- However, in both phases of the consultation a higher proportion* of consultation respondents who identified themselves as being disabled felt that they would be significantly impacted by the proposals, compared to the proportion of respondents who did not identify themselves as being disabled.

* In phase 1 of the consultation, this proportion relates to users of libraries in Central Somerset as a whole, in phase 2 of the consultation the question was analysed for Somerton users.

Qualitative responses

A very large number of comments were made through the survey by users of Somerton Library, and a number of letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, a well-attended drop-in event was held. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A significant number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Somerton would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *“For the single elderly people it is a lifeline”*
 - *“A mobile library would fail to provide a place for social interaction for ... the elderly and lonely”*
 - *“Any closure in Somerton library will impinge on the elderly, especially non-drivers”*
- Comments about the impact on older people highlighted the potential difficulties in accessing alternative libraries, and the impact on loneliness and social isolation for older people who used the library for social purposes. This was a notably strong theme in responses for Somerton library.
- A similarly significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“Nowhere for young people to go which is free and fun”*
 - *“Devastating to me and my young children”*
- A number of respondents highlighted potential difficulties of accessing the mobile library service, or alternative libraries, for young children in buggies.

- The Friends of Somerton Library noted the range, importance and popularity of children's activities, and the impact on primary school children reliant on public transport to access an alternative library at Langport, as well as the impact of closure on older people who may be living alone, or less able to easily get to alternative libraries.
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Somerton, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Somerton library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *"if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are homeschooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics"*
 - *"it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources"*
 - *"my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close."*

Disability

- Some respondents using Somerton library noted general impacts on disabled people. One respondent identifying themselves as a user of the mobile library service and Somerton Library noted that library buildings provided a range of reading material, which *"enables me to keep mentally fit ... without this facility I would feel increasingly lonely and disadvantaged"*.
- Many respondents commented that a mobile library service would present access difficulties for disabled people. This sentiment was largely due to a perception that disabled people would be unable to get into the mobile library; in fact, the mobile library service is fully accessible via a tail-lift.

Pregnancy / Maternity

- One Somerton library user noted that the library had been a significant factor in overcoming post-natal depression.
- A number of respondents highlighted potential difficulties of accessing the mobile library service, or alternative libraries, for young children in buggies.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Somerton library. Some responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- No specific impacts were highlighted by individual Somerton users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Low income

- Very few specific impacts were highlighted by individual Somerton users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. One or two comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower incomes.

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicate higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Somerton catchment:

	Somerton catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	5	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	4	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	7	6

Table 9 indicates that, on average for these measures, levels of need in Somerton catchment as a whole are in line with or lower than levels of need for Somerset as a whole. This means that on average there is likely to be a lower proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Somerton catchment are less likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset, and as likely to have the characteristic of Rurality as people in Somerset as a whole. A more detailed analysis at has identified a significant neighbourhood in Somerton with a high (top 20% nationally) social isolation risk, as well as some areas with significant disabled populations.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Somerton catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Somerton	1280	140	30
Langport	890	120	30
Street	330	70	20
Yeovil	280	40	10
Taunton	90	30	10
Glastonbury	80	40	10
Mobile Library	50	0	0
Wells	50	10	0
Martock	40	10	0
Bridgwater	20	0	0
Castle Cary	10	0	0

Table 10 shows that the majority of library users in Somerton catchment currently use Somerton Library, with very significant numbers also using Langport Library. The catchments of Somerton and Langport overlap significantly, and many people may use both libraries. There are a large number of other libraries also used by residents within Somerton catchment, a reflection of the rural spread of the catchment and its situation in the centre of Somerset. However, for most people, Langport Library is very likely to be the alternative library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the decision proposals, there ceased to be a library building in Somerton. This assessment will therefore consider access to Langport Library from the catchment, also considering access to Yeovil and Glastonbury from the rural areas to the east of the catchment.

Table 11a: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Somerton built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Langport	12 minutes	5 miles
Glastonbury	20 minutes	8 miles

Table 11b: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Charlton Adam built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Langport	17 minutes	8 miles
Glastonbury	18 minutes	8 miles
Martock	14 minutes	9 miles
Yeovil	17 minutes	10 miles

Table 11c: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Keinton Mandeville built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Langport	22 minutes	9 miles
Glastonbury	21 minutes	8 miles

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Somerton catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Somerton catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	10%	16%
Households with one vehicle	39%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	51%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 54 links Somerton with Langport and Yeovil, providing good public transport access to alternative libraries in these locations. The frequency of the service is every 90 minutes, and it takes 12 minutes to get to Langport and 28 minutes to get to Yeovil. Service 77 links Somerton to Glastonbury and Wells, via Compton Dundon, and provides an alternative service in the other direction to Yeovil – this service also operates on a 90 minute frequency. Between services 54 and 77, there is a bus to Yeovil almost every 45 minutes. Service 77 passes close to Kingsdon in the south of the catchment. Adult return fares from Somerton to Langport are £3.60, to Glastonbury and Yeovil the fare is £5.10 (free for concessionary pass holders). The services are commercial, run on Saturdays, and are considered to be sustainable. Keinton Mandeville in the east of the catchment is served by service 667, providing access to Wincanton and Street (for connections on to Glastonbury); Somerton cannot currently be accessed from Keinton Mandeville by a direct scheduled public bus service. This service is subsidised and may not be sustainable in the future. Community Transport links Long Sutton in the south of the catchment to Martock library. A community car scheme serving the Somerton area is run by South Somerset Association for Voluntary and Community Action, which could provide access to Langport Library for people who cannot access public transport.

Langport is not within walking or reasonable cycling distance from Somerton.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Somerton Library. Somerton library has a large number of users, reflecting a relatively large catchment population, many of whom live within walking distance of the library. This being the case, the impact of closing Somerton library is likely to be more significant than the impact of closing some of the other libraries where changes are recommended. This more

significant impact is one of the reasons why the County Council will provide funding to support a Community Library Partnership in Somerton.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide Mobile Library Services to Somerton and some of the surrounding communities, as well as Digital Library Services, the Home Library Service and Library Outreach Services (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). Library Outreach Services were not proposed for Somerton in the original consultation proposals, however, having considered consultation feedback (set out in Appendix 4) and the needs assessment (set out in Appendix 2), we have changed the original proposal to include the provision of health, wellbeing and reading activities for adults on an outreach basis in order to meet local needs relating to social isolation risks. The location of these outreach services has not been determined, but potential wheelchair accessible venues have been identified that are in accessible town centre locations. In conjunction with access to alternative library buildings at Langport, Martock, Glastonbury, Shepton Mallet and Yeovil, all of these alternative services will mitigate the impact of closing Somerton library to a significant extent.

However, even with these mitigations, there will be residual impacts for people with some protected characteristics if Somerton library closes. The most significant of these impacts are summarised here (fuller descriptions are set out in the action plan table below):

- People aged 65 or over form a much higher proportion of Somerton Library users than elsewhere in Somerset, and feedback about the impact on this group came through strongly in the public consultation response. In particular, many older people are likely to suffer increased social isolation if Somerton library closed. The additional mitigation of targeted outreach services will go some way to reducing this impact, but older people are likely to be more affected than other groups, and impacts for those most at risk of social isolation could still be significant.
- Younger children and parents with the protected characteristic of Maternity living in households in Somerton that do not have access to a car, or where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent during the week, are likely to be impacted by the closure of Somerton library. Although the cost of accessing the alternative library in Langport by public transport is not significant (currently £3.60 for an adult return fare; free for children under 5, £1.80 for children aged 5-15), it could be a factor in dissuading or preventing parents from taking children to the library. Story time activities for younger children are popular at Somerton Library.
- Accessing library buildings independently will be difficult for older children, some of whom are likely to use Somerton Library for studying on occasion. This impact is notable because it is difficult to mitigate.
- Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some people with the protected characteristics of Disability and / or Maternity, because of factors related to these characteristics, and some people in these groups could therefore be impacted by the closure of Somerton Library. Health and Wellbeing activities for adults may mitigate these impacts to an extent for disabled service users affected, but this is less likely to be an effective mitigation for new parents.
- Decision makers should note that the closure of Somerton Library would mean that people in the community of Babcbury and the surrounding area are unlikely to be able to access an alternative library building within a 20-minute driving time; this impact is related to Rurality.

- People in low income households living in Somerton town are less likely to have access to a vehicle and are less able to afford the cost of public transport. This means that they would be less able to access the library in Langport, and therefore the impact of closing Somerton library would be more significant.
- The impact of closing Somerton library is more significant for users of the public computer access service, which would not be provided in Somerton if the library closed. People on lower incomes are more likely to be users of this service, and as noted above are less likely to be able to access the library in Langport. The impact would be particularly significant for people claiming Universal Credit, people claiming other benefits and also clients of social landlords.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>People aged 65 or over form a much higher proportion of Somerton Library users than of library users across Somerset as a whole. The impact of a library closure on older people was a strong theme in consultation responses for Somerton Library. In particular, impacts were highlighted for socially-isolated older people who would no longer have convenient access to activities and events at Somerton library that are well-used by this group. Furthermore, a pocket of high social isolation risk in Somerton has been identified through the needs assessment exercise. As noted by many consultation respondents, this impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone, and so the recommendation for Somerton is to provide additional mitigation (over and above what was originally put forward in the consultation proposal) to address this impact / need through Library Outreach Services.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, Library Outreach Services for older people would be provided and would be designed to try to address social isolation. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, Library Outreach Services help address social isolation issues for older people. Customers are made aware of these services, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative library buildings at Langport, Martock, Yeovil or Glastonbury may be more difficult for older people to do. Although public transport from Somerton to Langport is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said,</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, Digital Library Services, Mobile Library</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, more limited alternative services are</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. Many older people using Somerton library travel into Somerton town centre by car or public transport from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Somerton Library because other libraries (principally Langport, but also Glastonbury) are a relatively short distance away and are also accessible by community and public transport. Like Somerton town centre, Langport has convenient, free parking adjacent to the library.</p>	<p>Services and Library Outreach Services for older people would be provided. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Langport, Martock, Yeovil or Glastonbury may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Somerton to Langport is generally good, and the cost of public transport to Langport is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, it will be more expensive and less convenient for parents with younger children than the current option of walking to the library. A number of consultation responses highlighted the difficulty of accessing alternative libraries using public transport for parents and children in pushchairs. Somerton has a large and growing population, many of whom live within walking distance of the current library, which is well used by children under 5 (in particular, the usage of activities and events targeted at this age range is significant). This impact is likely to affect a relatively large number of people in Somerton, compared to some other affected</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, Mobile Library Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, more limited mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>libraries. Where they do not have access to a car, many parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p> <p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who are currently able to use Somerton Library after attending the nearby primary or infant schools. Those who currently walk from school to the library (perhaps because the household either does not have access to a car, or because the only household car is being used for work purposes) will be particularly impacted. It is technically possible to get from Somerton to Langport Library on public transport after school, but the current timetable is inconvenient and may only allow for a very brief visit to Langport Library within current opening hours. After school usage of libraries may become significantly more difficult for some primary school children - those without access to a car after school are likely to only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays. This impact is likely to affect a relatively large number of people in Somerton, compared to some other affected libraries, because of the population of the town, and the proximity of the junior primary school to the library.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to Somerton Library. This impact is likely to be limited in Somerton, because many children in this age group will be educated at the secondary school in nearby Langport, and usage of Somerton library is relatively low amongst this group. Nonetheless, consultation feedback indicates that some younger people may use Somerton library for study at certain times, and these customers may not be able to access this service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle).</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, we will explore the demand for Mobile Library visits to King Ina Academy school. If possible, we will provide a monthly mobile library visit to the school site.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Subject to demand and agreement from the school, a regular mobile library visit will be made to the primary school if a community library partnership cannot be developed.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Events and activities for children are well-used at Somerton library, and alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. The provision of Library Outreach Services for children in Somerton does not form part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would not be provided by the Library Service if a Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. Activities for children would be available at alternative library buildings, but the access issues noted above may mean that there is a further level of impact on pre-school and primary school children because of the popularity of activities for these groups. In any event, because the weekly storytime events are well-used, younger people would be disproportionately impacted by the closure of Somerton Library regardless of whether they are able to access alternatives.</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Somerton Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure. Limited support (provision of guidance) could be provided to any groups wishing to set up replacement activities in Somerton.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and supported to set up alternative activities in Somerton, if it is not possible to maintain a library building.</p>
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>A higher proportion of consultation respondents who identified themselves as being disabled felt that they would be significantly impacted by the proposals, compared to consultation respondents who did not identify themselves as being disabled. This is evidence that, in addition to the specific impacts identified for disabled people</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, we will work with our staff to identify</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>Customers vulnerable to anxiety are communicated with effectively at an early stage.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>below, people with the protected characteristic of disability are more likely to be significantly impacted by the closure of Somerton library, and / or are more likely to feel anxiety about the potential closure of Somerton library.</p>	<p>vulnerable customers, and try to ensure that changes are communicated at an early stage, and new or alternative services are clearly signposted.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Langport, Martock, Yeovil or Glastonbury may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport. Although public transport from Somerton to Langport is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Low floor buses operate between Somerton and Langport, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people. Some disabled people using Somerton library travel into Somerton town centre by car or public transport from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Somerton Library because other libraries (principally Langport, but also Glastonbury) are a relatively short distance away and are also accessible by community and public transport. Like Somerton town centre, Langport has convenient, free parking adjacent to the library, with easy access.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, Digital Library Services, Mobile Library Services and some Library Outreach Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or mobility scooter access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>The Long Term Health Conditions ‘Books on prescription’ service available at Somerton library is targeted in part towards disabled people with certain disabilities, as well as carers for people with</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>certain disabilities. This service would be available on a more limited basis through the mobile library, but limiting the service could disproportionately affect some people with the protected characteristic of disability.</p>	<p>Somerton, a limited books on prescription service would be provided through other nearby libraries and the mobile library service. These services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Somerton, more limited mobile library services are available. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Whilst large print or no-print formats of books (e.g. talking books, braille books) are available through the mobile library service, Somerton library is likely to carry a wider range of specialist stock than would be readily available on the mobile service. This means that people who experience sensory loss would be impacted more if Somerton Library closed, because alternative mobile or digital services are likely to be less effective at meeting their particular needs.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, large print books and a more limited specialist no-print book service would be provided through other nearby libraries and the mobile library service. These services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, more limited mobile library services are available for people with sensory loss. These customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some disabled people, as a result of a lack of mobility, difficulty communicating, or</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be</p>	<p>Director of Economic and</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>anxiety about social contact. A pocket of high social isolation risk in Somerton has been identified through the needs assessment exercise. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). People with the protected characteristic of disability may be impacted more than others by the closure of Somerton Library, because some disabled people are more likely to be socially isolated. As noted by many consultation respondents, this impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone, and so the recommendation for Somerton is to provide additional mitigation (over and above what was originally put forward in the consultation proposal) to address this impact / need through Library Outreach Services.</p> <p>The alternative library buildings at Langport, Martock, Glastonbury Shepton Mallet and Yeovil are wheelchair accessible, and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift, and potential wheelchair accessible venues for Library Outreach Services have been identified. We do not consider that disabled customers of Somerton Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Somerton Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at Somerton could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p>	<p>established in Somerton, Library Outreach Services for adults would be provided and would be designed to try to address social isolation. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p>	<p>Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>established in Somerton, Library Outreach Services help address potential social isolation issues for disabled people. Customers are made aware of these services, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities at alternative service delivery points.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Gender Reassignment			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified.			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
Accessing alternative library buildings at Langport, Martock, Yeovil or Glastonbury may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Somerton to Langport is generally good, and the cost of public transport to Langport is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, it will be more expensive and less convenient for parents of babies than the current option of walking to the library. A number of consultation responses highlighted the difficulty of accessing alternative libraries using public transport for parents and children in pushchairs. Somerton has a large and growing population, many of whom live within walking distance of the current library, which is well used by parents and babies (in particular, the usage of activities and events targeted at parents and babies is significant). This impact is likely to affect a relatively large number of people in Somerton, compared to some other affected libraries, because of the high usage of Somerton library by this group. Where they do not have access to a car, many new parents are likely to find it more difficult to	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p> <p>Events and activities for parents and babies are well-used at Somerton library, and alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. The provision of Library Outreach Services in Somerton for this group does not form part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would not be provided by the Library Service if a Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. Activities for parents and new babies would be available at alternative library buildings, but the access issues noted above may mean that this mitigation is not effective for some people with the protected characteristic of maternity. Furthermore, social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some people with the protected characteristic of maternity, as a result of the sudden change in lifestyle, or poor post-natal mental health. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). People with the protected characteristic of maternity may be impacted more than others by the closure of Somerton Library. This impact is likely to affect a relatively large number of people in Somerton, compared to some other affected libraries, because of the larger population and the high usage of the library by this group.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure. Limited support (provision of guidance) could be provided to any groups wishing to set up replacement activities for new parents in Somerton</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and supported to set up alternative activities in Somerton, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>
<p>Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)</p>			
<p>The proportion of people in Somerton catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in Somerton is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p> <p>Some consultation responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access. Although the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence that migrant workers are likely to be significantly disadvantaged by the closure of Somerton Library, this could be because of a limited engagement by this group in the consultation exercise. On balance, we feel that this potential impact merits highlighting to decision makers because the public computer access service would not be available through other means in Somerton if the library closed, and because it is possible that migrant workers may find it more difficult to access alternative public computer access services in nearby libraries, either because of working patterns or the affordability of public transport for those that may not have access to a vehicle.</p> <p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>If it is not possible to establish a Community Library Partnership in Somerton, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Somerton to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of public computer access services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p> <p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	appropriate representative groups.		
Religion and Belief			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Sex			
Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Somerton, because a higher proportion of Somerton library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Somerton library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.	There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.		
Sexual Orientation			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
Caring responsibilities			
The 'Books on prescription' service available at Somerton library is targeted in part towards carers for people with certain health conditions. This service would be available on a more limited basis	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in	Director of Economic and Community	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
 APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>through the mobile library, but limiting the service could disproportionately affect some people with caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.</p>	<p>Somerton, a limited books on prescription service would be provided through other nearby libraries and the mobile library service. These services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, Digital Library Services, Library Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019.</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Somerton, more limited mobile library services are available. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Rurality</p> <p>Whilst many rural communities in the catchment would have reasonable transport links to alternative libraries in Yeovil, Glastonbury, Shepton Mallet, Martock or Langport, public transport and car access to alternative libraries would be more lengthy and time-consuming than access to Somerton for some of the rural communities in Somerton library catchment; particularly those to the north and east of Somerton. However, for the majority of the rural catchment, driving times to access alternative library buildings in Langport, Shepton Mallet, Martock, Yeovil or Glastonbury would not be too significant. The cost of parking and fuel for car journeys to Martock and Langport would be comparable to Somerton – so many rural users who currently access Somerton library using their own vehicle are likely to be impacted by convenience factors rather than significant barriers to access. Villages with access by public transport to Somerton library would have access, via the same public transport routes, to either Langport, Glastonbury or Yeovil libraries (although journey times and timetables may be less convenient). In general, impacts relating to the characteristic of rurality are limited, with some exceptions noted below.</p> <p>As part of the consideration and development of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1, we have undertaken a preliminary assessment of rural communities that do not currently have a mobile library service, but which could be impacted by the closure of a nearby library. In this exercise, Long Sutton, Kingsdon and Charlton Mackrell were identified as rural communities with significant usage of Somerton library. We anticipate that, subject to demand, a mobile library service would be provided to these communities as well as Somerton itself if Somerton Library closed. However, people in this part of Somerton catchment are likely to continue to use Somerton as</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, the Mobile Library network in the area will be reviewed. Provision has been made within budgets to provide additional mobile stops in rural</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, more limited mobile library services are available in the most rural communities most affected. Customers are made aware of</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>a hub for other local services, and would have to travel further to access alternative libraries in Langport or Martock. Whilst this impact is not directly related to the characteristic of rurality, we have noted it here (alongside mitigating actions) for information.</p> <p>The Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 seeks to design a library network which we estimate will enable access to a library building by car (in normal traffic conditions) in around 20 minutes or less for the vast majority of Somerset users. Our analysis of driving times indicates that this objective would be met for the vast majority of Somerton catchment whether or not a library building could be maintained in Somerton. However, we estimate that residents in the village of Babcary and surrounding area to the east of Somerton would be around 25 minutes' drive from alternative libraries at Martock and Wincanton. Babcary is served by a mobile library stop, but more people use Somerton library, which offers a wider range of services than the mobile library. These customers would be relatively disadvantaged by the closure of Somerton library, in part due to a characteristic of rurality.</p>	<p>communities with high levels of usage of Somerton library. Services would be designed in conjunction with communities, and would be communicated to customers.</p> <p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		<p>these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income and employment in the catchment as a whole are slightly higher than the average for Somerset, and very few specific</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>impacts related to income were highlighted by individual Somerton users or stakeholder groups in respect of the characteristic of Low Income. The cost of accessing Langport by car is relatively inexpensive for people on low incomes who have access to vehicles, and rates of vehicle ownership in Somerton appear to be relatively high compared to some other Somerset towns. It is likely that the impact of closing Somerton library would be lower than in some of the other affected communities.</p> <p>However, levels of income in parts of Somerton town are lower than the County and national average, and the community engagement exercise highlighted that there were some areas of deprivation within walking distance of the current library site. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and the cost of public transport to Langport for non-concessionary pass holders could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes from accessing Langport library. Whilst mobile and digital library services would mitigate the impact to some extent, people on low incomes who do not have access to a vehicle are likely to face a more significant impact from the closure of Somerton Library.</p> <p>Public access computer use is fairly significant at Somerton library, and some comments from users of Somerton library noted the usage of this service by unemployed people. Across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, there is no</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Somerton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made aware of these services.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. As noted above, car ownership levels in Somerton are relatively high, and the cost of public transport to Langport is relatively low. Nonetheless, some people on low incomes, particularly those claiming universal credit, are likely to be significantly impacted by the closure of Somerton library, as public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic.</p>	<p>specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Military Status</p> <p>Somerton library is the nearest library to the Royal Naval Air Station at Yeovilton, which has a large resident population of armed forces personnel and their families. However, analysis of library usage indicates that there are very few users of Somerton Library living in and around Yeovilton airbase, and usage of Yeovil library is higher in the area. Also, the libraries at Martock and Yeovil are a comparable distance away from Yeovilton, and Yeovil is accessible by public transport from Ilchester. Having considered this evidence, we do not feel there is likely to be any impact arising as a result of the closure of Somerton Library on armed forces personnel or their families.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		

Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16 th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.	
Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey
Date	01/10/18
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	03/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(k)

South Petherton
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for South Petherton

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – South Petherton	
Version	2	Date	07/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council's cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in South Petherton and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, South Petherton library, and should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring South Petherton Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in South Petherton are currently delivered through a library building in South Petherton, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that the majority of users living in South Petherton and the surrounding area use South Petherton Library. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of South Petherton and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in South Petherton (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> through a Mobile Library Service and Digital Library Service, to compliment access to other libraries. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible,</p>			

the library building in South Petherton would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in South Petherton if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring South Petherton library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in South Petherton, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing South Petherton Library, and providing library services to South Petherton and the surrounding communities in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

South Petherton library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 457 active borrowers;
- 7,292 visits (footfall);
- 110 people's network users;
- 0 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 5,432.

South Petherton library is open for 16.5 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to South Petherton library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of

- South Petherton library users
- the wider population in the catchment of South Petherton library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used South Petherton Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, South Petherton catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use South Petherton most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – South Petherton	% of South Petherton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using S. Petherton Library
0-4	5.35%	5.1%	5.0%	5.3%	0%
5-11	16.07%	11.2%	7.2%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	2.8%	5.4%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	27.3%	51.6%	56.0%	50.4%
65+	28.81%	52.8%	30.9%	24.1%	49.6%
Unknown	1.35%	0.8%			

Table 2: % active library users, South Petherton catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use South Petherton most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – South Petherton	% of South Petherton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using South Petherton Library*
Female	61.88%	62.5%	52.2%	51.20%	73.1%
Male	36.38%	36.5%	47.8%	48.80%	25.9%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	1.0%			

*Consultation responders who identified as some other way totalled 1.0% of respondents to this question.

Table 3: % of active library users, South Petherton catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use South Petherton most often, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – South Petherton	% of South Petherton Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using South Petherton Library
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	0.0%	1.1%	1.9%	2.02%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	2.8%	1.8%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	97.2%	97.1%	94.64%	98.1%

*The Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – South Petherton catchment and Somerset population:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - South Petherton	Disability / long term health problem status	% of South Petherton catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents, Somerset*
Disabled	5%	6.5%	Long term health problem or disabled	19.2%	19%*	20.4%
Non-disabled	95%	93.5%	No long term health problem or disability identified	80.8%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1-4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of South Petherton Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of South Petherton Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of South Petherton Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity for the combined years of 2013 to 2015 showing % South West England's population, and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded to the question on registration.

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, South Petherton library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of South Petherton library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent users of this library:

- The proportion of the catchment population aged 65 or over is significantly higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, and the proportion of South Petherton library users aged over 65 is significantly higher than the proportion of all Somerset library service users in this age group.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, children of primary school age form a larger proportion of South Petherton library users than the population in the catchment as a whole. However, compared to the Somerset library service overall this group (and children in other age ranges) form a lower proportion of library users.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst South Petherton library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group in comparison to the County average, and this group are also over-represented in the library user population compared to the Somerset library service overall.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, South Petherton library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including South Petherton Library).

Rural / urban mix:

South Petherton catchment serves a small, rural area around South Petherton. Analysis of library usage data indicates that many users in this area use South Petherton library, although there is also significant use of other libraries (many users will use more than one library). Some users of South Petherton library are likely to have the protected characteristic of Rurality.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower layer Super Output areas in the South Petherton library catchment is 7, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a slightly lower proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average may mask some variation in income levels within the catchment population. No significant pockets of low income populations have been identified within the catchment through the needs assessment exercise.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at South Petherton library in 2016/17 was very limited, however more events have been added recently and space is limited.

Section 2B – People who are **delivering the policy or service**

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4ii above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to South Petherton library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from South Petherton on 23rd October 2017. It was noted that, although South Petherton was a relatively wealthy community on the whole, there were some people on low incomes in the town. House prices in South Petherton were high, which meant that young people often had to leave to get on the housing ladder. This contributed to the age profile of the community. Many people of working age commuted away from the town – during the week the majority of users of the library were likely to be older people. It was also noted that Yeovil and Crewkerne were the main places people went to shop / access other services; Crewkerne was preferred by some because of the relative ease of vehicle access.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

Compared to the relatively low level of usage, there was a relatively large number of consultation responses received from users of South Petherton Library, reflecting an effective local campaign during the consultation.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for South Petherton library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used South Petherton library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of South Petherton library.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly.

Qualitative responses

A relatively large number of comments were made through the survey by users of South Petherton Library, and a number of letters were received from users. In addition, a number of people attended a nearby drop-in event on 28th February 2018. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A significant number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in South Petherton would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *“We have an elderly population who use the library not only for its books but for its computers as they don’t have them at home”*
 - *“For a number of elderly and lonely people the librarian might be the only person they speak to in the day.”*
 - *“People meet, read, join groups, somewhere for lonely people to find company. I use the computers as not online at home. It gets me out of the house,”*
- Comments about the impact on older people highlighted the potential difficulties in accessing alternative libraries, and the impact on loneliness and social isolation for older people who used the library for social purposes. This was a strong theme in responses for South Petherton library.
- A similarly significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“Nowhere for young people to go which is free and fun”*
 - *“It will impact on the local schools, and school age children, who have already been affected by reduced opening hours”*
- Several respondents highlighted potential impacts on primary school children reliant on public transport to access an alternative library, as well as the impact of closure on older people who may be living alone, or less able to easily get to alternative libraries.
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to South Petherton, but is likely to apply to primary school children using South Petherton library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are homeschooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it closed”*

Disability

- Some respondents using South Petherton library noted general impacts on disabled people, but these were generally non-specific.

Pregnancy / Maternity:

- No significant impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with these protected characteristics.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of South Petherton library. Some responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- Some specific impacts were highlighted by individual South Petherton users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.
 - *“A community supported library is so important for rural communities. As a nursing student and mother, I often make use of the services on offer in my local library and would be lost without it.”*

Low income

- A small number of specific impacts were highlighted by individual South Petherton users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.
 - *“The proposals in my view restrict access to the less economically fortunate who happen to live in more rural communities”*

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicate higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, South Petherton catchment:

	South Petherton catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	5	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6

'Access to services' deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	3	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	6	6

Table 9 indicates that, on average for these measures, levels of need in South Petherton catchment is in line with or slightly lower than the level of need within Somerset as a whole. This means that on average there is likely to be a similar proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. People in South Petherton catchment may be slightly more likely to have the characteristic of Rurality.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in South Petherton catchment rounded to the nearest 10:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
South Petherton	360	60	10
Yeovil	160	30	10
Martock	120	20	0
Crewkerne	110	10	0
Ilminster	40	0	0
Langport	20	10	0
Taunton	10	0	0

Table 10 shows that the majority of library users in South Petherton catchment currently use South Petherton library. Yeovil Library is most likely to be used as an alternative, but Martock and Crewkerne libraries are also well-used by people living in South Petherton catchment. This assessment will therefore consider access to Yeovil, Martock and Crewkerne libraries from the catchment.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from South Petherton built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Martock	8 minutes	3 miles
Crewkerne	16 minutes	6 miles
Yeovil	17 minutes	10 miles
Ilminster	16 minutes	9 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in South Petherton catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	South Petherton catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	11%	16%
Households with one vehicle	43%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	46%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 81 links South Petherton to Yeovil, providing public transport access to Yeovil Library. The service has an hourly frequency, and takes 40 minutes to get to Yeovil town centre. The adult return fare is £6.40 (free for concessionary pass holders). The service is considered to be sustainable. Elsewhere in the catchment, Over Stratton currently has a limited service to Yeovil (once per day) on bus service 44, and Seavington is linked to Crewkerne and Ilminster on service 9 (twice daily). These services may not be sustainable. Other communities in the catchment are not served by regular public transport. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – South Petherton and Martock and some surrounding communities are served by the SSVCA community transport group. There is also a Slinky Bus demand responsive service that covers South Pertherton and surrounds, providing access to Martock library.

Neither Yeovil nor Crewkerne are within walking or reasonable cycling distance, however Martock library is within cycling distance of South Petherton.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing South Petherton library. South Petherton library has a relatively small number of users, reflecting a relatively low level of usage across the catchment population, which is not large. Impacts are therefore likely to affect a relatively small number of people.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide Mobile Library Services to South Petherton and some of the surrounding communities, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). People in South Petherton are likely to travel to Crewkerne and Yeovil for shopping or other purposes regularly. Older people and many disabled people are able to travel to Yeovil at no cost, on a public bus service which is considered sustainable; community transport also provides access to nearby Martock library. In the context of relatively low levels of usage, and the proximity of Martock and Crewkerne libraries combined with the public transport access to Yeovil library, the alternative services provided will mitigate the impact of closing South Petherton library to a significant extent.

However, even with these mitigations, there will be residual impacts for people with some protected characteristics if South Petherton library closes. The most significant of these impacts are summarised here (fuller descriptions are set out in the action plan table below):

- Older people are relatively frequent users of South Petherton library, and although public transport to Yeovil would be free for people entitled to a concessionary pass, timetables and journey times are likely to be a barrier to some. The impact on this group of users can only be partially mitigated through the mobile library service, and socially-isolated older people could be impacted significantly.
- Younger children and parents with the protected characteristic of Maternity living in households in South Petherton that do not have access to a car, or where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent during the week, are likely to be impacted by the closure of South Petherton library. The number of people affected is likely to be relatively low, however the cost of accessing the alternative library in Yeovil by public transport is significant (currently £6.40 for an adult return fare; free for children under 5), and is likely to be a factor in dissuading or preventing parents from taking young children to the library. Although Martock library is nearby, it is not within walking distance.
- People in low income households living in South Petherton are less likely to have access to a vehicle and are less able to afford the cost of public transport. This means that they would be less able to access the libraries in Yeovil or Crewkerne; Martock library is within cycling distance. For those on low incomes that do not have access to a vehicle and cannot cycle to Martock, the impact of closing South Petherton library would be more significant.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>People aged 65 or over form a much higher proportion of South Petherton Library users than of library users across Somerset as a whole. The impact of a library closure on older people was identified in consultation responses for South Petherton Library. Impacts were highlighted for socially-isolated older people for whom library visits can fulfil a social function. Although South Petherton is generally a low-need area, social isolation risk is relatively high in the village. Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative library buildings at Crewkerne, Martock or Yeovil may be more difficult for older people to do. Although there is public transport from South Petherton to Yeovil, for users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. Many older people using South Petherton library travel into South Petherton town centre by car or public transport from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of South Petherton Library because other libraries (principally Martock, but also Crewkerne) are a relatively short distance away and are also accessible by community and public transport. Like South Petherton village, Martock has convenient, free parking adjacent to the library.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Martock, Yeovil or Crewkerne may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from South Petherton to Yeovil exists, the cost of reaching Yeovil library is significant (£6.40 Adult return) and will be more expensive and less convenient for parents with younger children than the current option of walking to the library. This impact is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in South Petherton, because of the low usage of the library generally (particularly amongst children), and the very low participation in activities. Nonetheless, where they do not have access to a car, many parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to South Petherton Library. This impact is likely to be limited in South Petherton, because of the low usage and limited current opening hours at the library, which is particularly low amongst this group. Nonetheless, consultation feedback indicates that some younger people may use South Petherton library for study at certain times, and these customers may not be able to access this service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle).</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, Mobile Library Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, there is no</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, more limited mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>children and older people would be impacted more if South Petherton Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>		
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Martock, Yeovil or Crewkerne may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport. Although public transport from South Petherton to Yeovil exists, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Low floor buses operate between South Petherton and Yeovil, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people. Some disabled people using South Petherton library travel into South Petherton town centre by car from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of South Petherton Library because other libraries (principally Martock, but also Crewkerne) are a relatively short distance away and are also accessible by community transport. Like South Petherton village centre, Martock has convenient, free parking adjacent to the library, with easy access.</p> <p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or mobility scooter / wheelchair access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, we will work with our staff to ensure</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter/wheelchair. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>collection) are currently limited in South Petherton Library, and comparable facilities are available through the Mobile Library Service.</p> <p>Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some disabled people, as a result of a lack of mobility, difficulty communicating, or anxiety about social contact. A pocket of relatively high social isolation risk in South Petherton has been identified through the needs assessment exercise. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). People with the protected characteristic of disability may be impacted more than others by the closure of South Petherton Library, because some disabled people are more likely to be socially isolated.</p> <p>The alternative library buildings at Martock, Crewkerne and Yeovil are wheelchair accessible, and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift. We do not consider that disabled customers of South Petherton Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if South Petherton Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at South Petherton could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p>	<p>relevant customer are aware of the availability of these collections on the mobile library service.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>available at other locations.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, customers are made aware of alternative services, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, customers with hearing loss are</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	alternative library buildings.		aware of the facilities in alternative service.
Gender Reassignment			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified.			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
Accessing alternative library buildings at Martock, Yeovil or Crewkerne may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from South Petherton to Yeovil exists, the cost is significant for non-concessionary pass holders, and considerably less convenient for parents with babies who are currently able to walk to the library. This impact is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in South Petherton, because of the relatively low usage of South Petherton library by this group. Nonetheless, where they do not have access to a car, some new parents are likely to find it more difficult to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	during any library closure.		
Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)			
<p>The proportion of people in South Petherton catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in South Petherton is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p> <p>Some consultation responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access. Although the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence that migrant workers are likely to be significantly disadvantaged by the closure of South Petherton Library, this could be because of a limited engagement by this group in the consultation exercise. On balance, we feel that this potential impact merits highlighting to decision makers because the public computer access service would not be available through other means in South Petherton if the library closed, and because it is possible that migrant workers may find it more difficult to access alternative public computer access services in nearby libraries, either because of working patterns or the affordability of public transport for those that may not have access to a vehicle.</p> <p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If it is not possible to establish a Community Library Partnership in South Petherton, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of public computer access services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p> <p>Changes are communicated effectively to people</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>library services in South Petherton to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.</p>	<p>Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>whose first language is not English.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Sex</p>			
<p>Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in South Petherton, because a higher proportion of South Petherton library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing South Petherton library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)</p>			
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>
<p>Rurality</p> <p>South Petherton library has a relatively small rural catchment, and the surrounding villages all have reasonable usage of other libraries - Langport to the north, Ilminster to the west, Crewkerne to the south, and Martock and Yeovil to the east. Community and public transport</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>from these villages is orientated towards Martock, Crewkerne, Ilminster and Yeovil, rather than South Petherton. Driving times to access alternative library buildings would not be too significant. The cost of parking and fuel for car journeys to Martock would be comparable to South Petherton – so many rural users who currently access South Petherton library using their own vehicle are likely to be impacted by convenience factors rather than significant barriers to access. Villages with access by public transport to South Petherton library would have access, via the same public transport routes, to either Martock, Crewkerne or Yeovil libraries (although journey times and timetables may be less convenient). Impacts relating to the characteristic of rurality are limited.</p>			
<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income and employment in the catchment as a whole are slightly higher than the average for Somerset, and very few specific impacts related to income were highlighted by individual South Petherton users or stakeholder groups in respect of the characteristic of Low Income. The cost of accessing Martock by car is relatively inexpensive for people on low incomes who have access to vehicles, and Martock is also within reasonable cycling distance of all of South Petherton village. It is likely that the impact of closing South Petherton library on those from low income households would be relatively limited.</p> <p>However, levels of income in parts of South Petherton town are lower than the County average, and the community engagement exercise highlighted that there were low income households in South Petherton which were likely to be masked in the statistical evidence. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, Digital Library Services and</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, more limited alternative</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>vehicle, and the cost of public transport to Yeovil for non-concessionary pass holders could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes from accessing Yeovil library. Martock library is accessible by bicycle, but only for those who are able to use this form of transport. Whilst mobile and digital library services would mitigate the impact to some extent, people on low incomes who do not have access to a vehicle are likely to face a more significant impact from the closure of South Petherton Library.</p> <p>Public access computer use is moderate at South Petherton library, and some comments from users of South Petherton library noted the usage of this service by unemployed people. Across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. As noted above, the cost of public transport to Yeovil is significant; however, cycling access to Martock library is possible, for those who are able to. Some people on low incomes, particularly those claiming universal credit, are likely to be significantly impacted by the closure of South Petherton library, as public internet access will not be provided</p>	<p>Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in South Petherton, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made aware of these services.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic.			
Military Status			
No impact identified.			

Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment

The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.

Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey
Date	04/10/18
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	08/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(I)

Street
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Street

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Street	
Version	2	Date	08/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in Street and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Street library, and should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Street Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Street are currently delivered through a library building in Street, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that a large number of users living in Street and the surrounding area use Street Library. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Street and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Street (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> a combination of Digital Library Services, Library Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services together</p>			

with access to nearby Glastonbury library. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Street would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Street if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Street library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Street, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Street Library and providing library services to Street and the surrounding communities in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Street library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 2495 active borrowers;
- 58,804 visits (footfall);
- 1,283 people's network users;
- 1,639 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 41,614.

Street library is open for 34 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Street library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of

- Street library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Street library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Street Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Street catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Street library most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Street	% of Street Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Street Library
0-4	5.35%	4.3%	4.7%	5.3%	1.9%
5-11	16.07%	16.5%	7.4%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	3.5%	8.1%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	47.1%	55.8%	56.0%	62.1%
65+	28.81%	27.4%	23.9%	24.1%	36.1%
Unknown	1.35%	1.2%			

Table 2: % active library users, Street catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Street library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Street	% of Street Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Street Library*
Female	61.88%	63.9%	51.5%	51.20%	71.8%
Male	36.38%	34.8%	48.5%	48.80%	27.9%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	1.3%			

*Consultation respondents who identified in some other way totalled 0.3% of respondents to this question.

Table 3: % of active library users, Street catchment and Somerset population by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users Street	% of Street Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Street Library*
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	1.6%	1.96%	2.02%	2.9%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	5.4%	3.2%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	92.9%	94.9%	94.64%	97.1%

*The Consultation asked, 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Street catchment and Somerset population:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - Street	Disability /long term health problem status	% of Street catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	4.9%	Long term health problem or disabled	18.3%	19%	20.4%*
Non-disabled	95%	95.1%	No long term health problem or disability identified	81.7%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked, 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Street Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Street Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery, we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Street Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents*
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity for the combined years of 2013 to 2015 showing % South West England's population, and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole*	% of consultation survey respondents*
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded to question on registration.

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Street library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of Street library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent, either in the catchment population or within the population of users of Street library:

- The proportion of the catchment population of secondary school age is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, although this group is underrepresented amongst Street library users, compared to all Somerset library users.
- The proportion of Street library users of working age (18-64) is slightly higher than the proportion of users in this age group across all Somerset libraries, and the proportion of younger children (under 5) is slightly lower.
- In common with the vast majority of library user groups, the proportion of users of Street library in the 5-11 and 65+ age ranges are both higher than the proportion of these age groups in the local catchment population.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Street library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- As is the case with overall usage of libraries in Somerset, the proportion of library users identifying themselves as 'White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White' in Street is higher than the proportion of people identifying in this ethnic group across the Somerset population. People in this group are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Street library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Street Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Street catchment serves a large rural area around Street, extending across the sparsely populated areas of the Somerset levels to the north and west. Analysis of library usage data indicates that there are a significant number of library users in this area using Street Library, although – because the catchment area is large – there are also significant numbers of users of other libraries. (See Table 10.) Although usage of Street library is largely concentrated in the built-up area of Street, there are likely to be many users with the characteristic of Rurality.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the Street library catchment is 6, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a similar proportion of people on lower incomes to Somerset as a whole. The catchment average is likely to mask significant variations in income levels within the catchment population. In Street itself there are two LSOAs with relatively low income populations (in the most 40% deprived nationally for income deprivation), but the most significant pockets of income deprivation in the catchment are in Glastonbury.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Street library is extensive, with 1,639 attendances at events held in the

library in 2017/8. Many of these events are run for children, and others are frequently used by older people.

Street holds collections of books on Autism and Long-Term Health Conditions which may be of use to people with certain disabilities. The Long Term Health Condition books are part of our 'Books on Prescription' collections.

Section 2B – People who are **delivering the policy or service**

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4i above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income. as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Street library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Street on 11th October 2017. It was noted that Clarks Village drew people in to Street from a wide area, which was likely to explain the large extent of the catchment. It was also noted that although Street was not very deprived, educational attainment was relatively low. Community representatives felt that Street and Glastonbury interlinked much more than they used to but felt that Street had better transport links than Glastonbury.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a large number of consultation responses received from users of Street Library (the highest number for all libraries), reflecting the large number of users and an effective local campaign during the consultation.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Street library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Street library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Street library, whether they had the protected

characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibility, disability, gender reassignment or sexual orientation or not.

- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly, whether they had the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibility, gender reassignment or sexual orientation or not.
- However, in both phases of the consultation, a higher proportion* of consultation respondents who identified themselves as being disabled felt that they would be significantly impacted by the proposals, compared to the proportion of respondents who did not identify themselves as being disabled.

* In phase 1 of the consultation, this proportion relates to users of libraries in Central Somerset as a whole, in phase 2 of the consultation the question was analysed for Street users.

Qualitative responses

A very large number of comments were made through the survey by users of Street Library, and a large number of letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, a very well-attended drop-in event was held on the 8th March 2018. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A significant number of comments from individual respondents set out a concern that closure of the library in Street would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *“Where will the older residents go to read the news and use the IT services with support”*
 - *“There are numerous sheltered housing developments in Street which serve a large number of elderly people who find the library incredibly useful.”*
 - *“Street library provides a quiet haven for people to sit and read, although Glastonbury may not seem that far it will be more difficult for the elderly and disabled to access.”*
 - *“I am an OAP with limited mobility and am only able to access Street Library with relative ease. I use the library regularly and its provides me with a useful and educational range of books, which also adds to my quality of life.”*
 - *“The mobile units would only be available two or three times a month, whereas our library at present is open and accessible to all most days of every week. The library gives many elderly people the chance to go out and meet friends in a warm, safe environment easily accessible to all.”*
- Comments about the impact on older people highlighted the potential difficulties in accessing alternative libraries, and the impact on loneliness and social isolation for older people who used the library for social purposes. This was a notable theme in responses for Street library.
- A similarly significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:

- *“As a family with four children we are regular and frequent visitors to the library. My children love visiting the library to choose books and to attend craft sessions in the holidays.”*
- *“I cannot afford to buy the books I borrow from the library. I have family members who do not have computers or internet @ home & many grateful parents are glad to bring their children to the library.”*
- *“it provides a safe, welcoming environment for young teenagers to spend time reading, learning and exploring books.”*
- A number of respondents highlighted potential difficulties of accessing the mobile library service, or alternative libraries.
- Local stakeholders noted the range, importance and popularity of children’s activities, and the impact on primary school children; they also noted that some children may be from families with low income backgrounds.
 - *“There are 5 schools and a college in Street, more than in Glastonbury, and deprivation figures are weighted due to the parents and pupils of Millfield living in Street – there is a lot of deprivation in Street.”*
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Street, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Street library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are homeschooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- Many respondents using Street library noted general impacts on disabled people.
 - *“I am disabled and I use the library regularly. It would affect my mental health a great deal not having their services.”*
 - *“I use this library at least once a week borrowing dvds for my children or myself, I also use the talking book service as a visually impaired person this is invaluable.”*
- Some respondents commented that a mobile library service would present access difficulties for disabled people.
 - *“20mins is hardly time enough to negotiate manouvering around a crowded van and also choose books. Add a wheelchair to this scenario and chaos would ensue.”*

- *“Taking children or wheelchair users to meet the mobile library at set times is going to be very difficult for some people and many people who use the library will not go”*

Pregnancy / Maternity

- A number of respondents highlighted potential difficulties of accessing alternative libraries, for young children in buggies.
 - *“There is lots of car parking close by and the surrounding area is flat and mainly level, i.e. excellent for disabled access and for pushchairs. Compare this to Glastonbury.”*

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Street library. Some responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- A few specific impacts were highlighted by individual Street users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.
 - *“For those of us in rural areas using buses, Street Library is a godsend as we invariably have to wait 30 minutes or more for a connecting bus.”*
 - *“It is a fallacy to believe that reference material is fully available on-line or that on-line resources are available to all households, especially in the rural areas.”*

Low income

- A number of specific impacts were highlighted by individual Street users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. Several comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower incomes.
 - *“The loss of Street library would be very detrimental to the local population. There is a clear link between lower socioeconomic areas and low attainment in literacy”.*
 - *“The availability and use of computer and internet facilities is important to those who do not have access to such facilities at home;”*
 - *“I am not proud, but there are times I have accessed the library because my chronic pain makes the cold unbearable and I cannot afford to heat my house.”*
 - *“I have to apply for jobs as part of my jobseeker agreement to get my universal credits on a daily basis. If the street library were to close I would have to walk 2 miles to Glastonbury library every day.”*

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the

background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicate higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Street catchment:

	Street catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	4	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	6
'Access to services' deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	4	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	6	6

Table 9 indicates that, on average for these measures, levels of need in Street catchment as a whole are in line with those for Somerset as a whole. This means that there is likely to be a lower proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Street catchment are likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset and are as likely to have the characteristic of Rurality. However, Street has a very large catchment, and these averages will mask significant differences within the catchment. A more detailed catchment analysis indicates that some parts of Street have high proportions of disabled people, and the Lower Level Super Output Area in the north of Street is in the top 10% of LSOAs nationally for risk of social isolation.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Street catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Street	2020	680	140
Glastonbury	1570	810	180
Wells	750	290	70
Somerton	630	80	10
Langport	280	30	10
Mobile Library	150	0	0
Bridgwater	120	20	0
Yeovil	90	10	0
Taunton	70	20	10
Burnham-on-Sea	20	0	0
Castle Cary	10	0	0
Shepton Mallet	10	0	0

Table 10 shows that the majority of library users in Street catchment use Street Library, with significant numbers also using a number of other libraries. The very high use of Glastonbury library is slightly misleading, as Street and Glastonbury library catchments overlap significantly – each community is in the other’s catchment area, and this does not necessarily indicate that many users living in Street also use Glastonbury library. Nonetheless, Glastonbury Library is likely to be the alternative library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the consultation proposals, there ceased to be a library building in Street. Many may also access Wells, which has strong shopping appeal. This assessment will therefore consider access to Glastonbury and Wells Libraries from the catchment, also considering links to Bridgwater and Langport for communities to the south and west of Street.

Table 11a: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Street built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Glastonbury	7 minutes	2 miles
Wells	18 minutes	9 miles

Table 11b: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Catcott built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Bridgwater	18 minutes	8 miles
Glastonbury	22 minutes	9 miles

Table 11c: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Butleigh built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Glastonbury	10 minutes	4 miles
Langport	23 minutes	10 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Street catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Street catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	14%	16%
Households with one vehicle	42%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	44%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus services 29, 376, 77 and 75 link Street with Glastonbury and Wells, providing very good public transport access to these locations. Between these services there is at least 30-minute frequency during library opening hours, and it takes 9 minutes to get to Glastonbury and 26 minutes to get to Wells. All services run on Saturdays. Services 376 and 29 serve suburban areas of Street (to the south and west, including some of the more significant areas of deprivation in Street town). Services 668 and 669 provide additional services between Street and Glastonbury, and commence / terminate at Sainsburys, providing access to the relatively deprived area in the north of Street. (Including a 669 service on Saturdays). These services may be less sustainable. In all cases, the adult return fare to Glastonbury is £3.60 (free for concessionary pass holders).

Many villages in Street catchment are currently able to access Street by public transport (e.g. the Polden villages to the west, the villages along the A361 towards Burrowbridge, and the villages to the south (including the large village of Compton Dundon). All these villages would continue to have good access to Glastonbury library, as all the bus services continue on to Glastonbury and Wells. Moorlinch and Sutton Mallet to the west of Street are currently linked to Bridgwater and Street by service 19 and would have access to Bridgwater Library as an alternative. Users in Barton St. David and Butleigh to the south of Street can currently access Street library on service 667; to access an alternative library they could either take this service in the other direction to Wincanton (90 minute frequency, just over an hour), or change in Street for Glastonbury. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – Street and some surrounding communities are served by the Mendip Community Transport service community transport group and Somerset County Council's Slinky bus service – both would provide access to Glastonbury.

Some (but not all) of Street built up area is within walking distance of Glastonbury library; most of the built-up area is within reasonable cycling distance of Glastonbury, and a cycle route links the two communities.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Street Library. Street library has a large number of users, reflecting a large catchment population, many of whom live within walking distance of the library. This being the case, the impact of closing Street library is likely to be more significant than the impact of closing some of the other libraries where changes are recommended. This more significant impact is one of the reasons why the County Council will provide funding to support a Community Library Partnership in Street.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide Mobile Library Services to Street and some of the surrounding communities, as well as Digital Library Services, the Home Library Service and Library Outreach Services (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). Library Outreach Services will include the provision of public access computer provision, reading and other activities for the under 5s, and health, wellbeing and reading activities for adults in order to meet local needs identified through the needs assessment. The location of these outreach services has not been determined, but potential wheelchair accessible venues have been identified that are in accessible town centre locations. In conjunction with access to alternative library buildings at Glastonbury, Wells, Bridgwater, Langport and Shepton Mallet, all these alternative services will mitigate the impact of closing Street library to a significant extent.

However, even with these mitigations, there will be residual impacts for people with some protected characteristics if Street library closes. The most significant of these impacts are summarised here (fuller descriptions are set out in the action plan table below):

- Concerns about the impacts on older people came through strongly in the public consultation response. In particular, many older people are likely to suffer increased social isolation if Street library closed. The mitigation of targeted outreach services will go some way to reducing this impact, but older people are likely to be more affected than other groups and impacts for those most at risk of social isolation could still be significant. Although public transport access to Glastonbury is good, the bus stops are situated some way away from the library in Glastonbury, which may dissuade or prevent some older people with mobility problems from accessing alternative library facilities. This impact may also affect some disabled people.
- Younger children and parents with the protected characteristic of Maternity living in households in Street that do not have access to a car, or where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent during the week, are likely to be impacted by the closure of Street library. Although the cost of accessing the alternative library in Glastonbury by public transport is not significant (currently £3.60 for an adult return fare; free for children under 5, £2.40 for children aged 5-15), it could be a factor in dissuading or preventing parents from taking children to the library. Activities for younger children are popular and well-used at Street Library; some activities will continue to be provided in Street through outreach services, but these would not replace the full range of services currently available.
- Primary school children use Street library in significant numbers and visiting alternative library buildings after school will be more difficult if Street library closes. Although we would try to mitigate this impact to an extent through the provision of

Mobile Library Services to local primary schools, these would not provide the same level of service as is currently available after school at Street library.

- Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some people with the protected characteristics of Disability and / or Maternity, because of factors related to these characteristics, and some people in these groups could therefore be impacted by the closure of Street Library. Health and Wellbeing activities for adults and reading activities for the under 5s may mitigate these impacts to an extent, but (again) would not replace the full range of services currently available.
- Decision makers should note that the closure of Street Library would mean that people living in some parts of the Somerset levels are unlikely to be able to access an alternative library building within a 20-minute driving time; this impact is related to Rurality.
- People in low income households living in Street town are less likely to have access to a vehicle and are less able to afford the cost of public transport. This means that they would be less able to access the library in Glastonbury, and therefore the impact of closing Street library would be more significant, particularly for people who are unable to cycle to Glastonbury library.
- The impact of closing Street library is less significant for users of the public computer access service, which would continue to be provided in Street if the library closed. People on lower incomes are more likely to be users of this service, and as noted above are less likely to be able to access the library in Glastonbury. The opening hours of the service are likely to be reduced in an outreach delivery model, and staff support would not generally be available. This being the case, there would be some impacts for people on low incomes who need support to use this service, or who are very frequent users of the service, or who have more difficulty accessing Glastonbury library.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts, you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>A large number of people aged 65 or over using Street library responded to the consultation highlighting concerns about the potential closure of the library. More generally, many individuals and stakeholder groups responding in respect of Street library highlighted concerns about the impact of a library closure on older people. In particular, impacts were highlighted for socially-isolated older people who would no longer have convenient access to activities and events at Street library that are well-used by this group. Furthermore, a pocket of high social isolation risk in Street has been identified through the needs assessment exercise. As noted by many consultation respondents, this impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a Mobile library service alone, and so the recommendation for Street is to provide additional mitigation to address this impact / need through Library Outreach Services. This provision will go some way to mitigating the impact of library closures on this group, however, the range of activities provided is likely to be limited, so there will be a residual impact.</p> <p>Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative library buildings at Glastonbury or Wells may be more difficult for older people to do. Although public transport from Street to Glastonbury is very good, for users who previously walked</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Library Outreach Services (including public computer access) for older people would be provided and would be designed to try to address social isolation. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Digital Library</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Library Outreach Services help address social isolation issues for older people. Customers are made aware of these services, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, more limited</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>to the library it is likely to be more difficult and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. Some older people using Street library travel into Street town centre by car or public transport from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Street Library because other libraries (principally Glastonbury, but also Wells, and for some parts of the catchment, Bridgwater and Langport) are within relatively short or reasonable distances. Like Street town centre, Glastonbury has convenient parking very close to the library. Many consultation respondents noted the positioning of the bus stops in Street and Glastonbury, which has an impact related to mobility - this is considered under 'disability' below but was noted in consultation feedback as a concern by or on behalf of older people.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Glastonbury may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Street to Glastonbury is very good, and the cost of public transport to Glastonbury is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, it will be more expensive and less convenient for parents with younger children than the current option of walking to the library. A number of consultation responses highlighted the difficulty of accessing alternative libraries using public transport for parents and children in pushchairs. Street has a large and growing population, many of whom live within walking distance of the current library, which is well used by children under 5 (in particular, the usage of activities and events targeted at this age range is significant). This impact is likely</p>	<p>Services, Mobile Library Services and Library Outreach Services for older people would be provided. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Mobile Library Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, more limited library outreach and mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>to affect a relatively large number of people in Street, so the recommendation for Street is to provide additional mitigation to address this impact / need through Library Outreach Services, as well as Mobile Library Services in a number of locations in Street. Nonetheless, where they do not have access to a car, many parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so. The provision of alternative library outreach and mobile library services would not replace the full range of services currently available.</p> <p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who are currently able to use Street Library after attending nearby schools. Those who currently walk from school to the library (perhaps because the household either does not have access to a car, or because the only household car is being used for work purposes) will be particularly impacted. It is possible to get from Street to Glastonbury Library on public transport after school, but this is likely to be less convenient and will certainly be more expensive. After school usage of libraries may become significantly more difficult for some primary school children - those without access to a car after school are likely to only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays. This impact is likely to affect a relatively large number of people in Street, compared to some other affected libraries, because of the population of the town, and the high level of usage by local primary schools.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to Street Library. This impact is likely to be limited in Street, because many children in this age group will be educated at Millfield School, Crispin School or Strode Academy, all of which have good library and</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, we will explore the demand for Mobile Library visits to primary schools in Street - in particular, Elmhurst Primary school and Hindhayes Infant school which are very close to Street library. If possible, we will provide a monthly mobile library visit to these school sites.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, there is no specific</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Subject to demand and agreement from the school, regular mobile library visit will be made to the primary school if a community library partnership cannot be developed.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>study facilities on-site, in locations very close to Street Library. Usage of Street library is relatively low amongst this group; cycling and (for the Crispin School / Strode college sites) walking access to Glastonbury library will also enable continued (albeit less convenient) access to library facilities. Nonetheless, consultation feedback indicates that some younger people may use Street library for study at certain times, and these customers may find it more difficult to access this service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle).</p> <p>Events and activities for children are well-used at Street library, and alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. As noted above, the provision of Library Outreach Services for children in Street forms part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would be provided by the Library Service if a Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. Activities for children would be available at alternative locations in Street, as well as in alternative library buildings. This provision will go some way to mitigating the impact of library closures on this group, however, the range of activities provided is likely to be limited, so there will be a residual impact.</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young</p>	<p>action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Library Outreach Services for children would be provided. We will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure. Limited support (provision of guidance) could be provided to any groups wishing to set up replacement activities in Street.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, there is no specific</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of outreach services, as well as alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and supported to set up alternative activities in Street, if it is not possible to maintain a library building.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>children and older people would be impacted more if Street Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>		
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>A higher proportion of consultation respondents who identified themselves as being disabled felt that they would be significantly impacted by the proposals, compared to consultation respondents who did not identify themselves as being disabled. This is evidence that, in addition to the specific impacts identified for disabled people below, people with the protected characteristic of disability are more likely to be significantly impacted by the closure of Street library, and / or are more likely to feel anxiety about the potential closure of Street library.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Glastonbury or Wells may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport, and some may be less able to cycle. Although public transport from Street to Glastonbury is very good, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service. Many respondents to the consultation highlighted the position of the bus stops outside Street library, compared to the bus stops situated further away (either up or down a slope) from Glastonbury Library. This could cause further impacts for people with mobility problems who already access Street library by public transport. Disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, we will work with our staff to identify vulnerable customers and try to ensure that changes are communicated at an early stage, and new or alternative services are clearly signposted.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Digital Library Services, Mobile Library Services and some Library Outreach Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or mobility scooter access to (more limited) library</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Low floor buses operate between Street and Glastonbury, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people. Some disabled people using Street library travel into Street town centre by car from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Street Library because Glastonbury library is a relatively short distance away, with convenient parking adjacent to the library.</p>	<p>services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>		
<p>The 'Books on prescription' service available at Street library is targeted in part towards disabled people with certain disabilities, as well as carers for people with certain disabilities. This service would be available in Glastonbury library but more difficult access to the service could disproportionately affect some people with the protected characteristic of disability.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, the books on prescription service would be provided through other nearby libraries and the mobile library service. These services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, the service would be provided through nearby libraries and the mobile library service. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Whilst large print and no-print formats of books (e.g. talking books, braille books) are available through Glastonbury library, Street library is likely to carry a wider range of specialist stock than would be readily available. This means that people who experience sensory loss would be impacted more if Street Library closed, because</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, a more limited specialist no-print book service would be provided through other nearby</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, a more limited service would be available for people with sensory loss. These customers</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>alternative services are likely to be less effective at meeting their particular needs.</p> <p>Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some disabled people, as a result of a lack of mobility, difficulty communicating, or anxiety about social contact. A pocket of high social isolation risk in Street has been identified through the needs assessment exercise. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). People with the protected characteristic of disability may be impacted more than others by the closure of Street Library, because some disabled people are more likely to be socially isolated. As noted by many consultation respondents, this impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone, and so the recommendation for Street is to provide additional mitigation to address this impact / need through Library Outreach Services. This provision will go some way to mitigating the impact of library closures on this group, however, the range of activities provided is likely to be limited, so there will be a residual impact.</p> <p>The alternative library buildings at Glastonbury, Langport and Bridgwater are wheelchair accessible, and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. The library at Wells has a fully wheelchair accessible ground floor but has no wheelchair access to a mezzanine (the full range of services is available on the ground floor) The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift,</p>	<p>libraries and the mobile library service. These services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Library Outreach Services for adults would be provided and would be designed to try to address social isolation. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Library Outreach Services help address potential social isolation issues for disabled people. Customers are made aware of these services, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>and potential wheelchair accessible venues for Library Outreach Services have been identified. We do not consider that disabled customers of Street Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Street Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at Street could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p>	<p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities at alternative service delivery points.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>			
<p>No impacts identified.</p>			
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Glastonbury may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Street to Glastonbury is very good, and the cost of public transport to</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Library Outreach Services for new parents and babies,</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Glastonbury is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, it will be more expensive and less convenient for parents with babies than the current option of walking to the library. A number of consultation responses highlighted the difficulty of accessing alternative libraries using public transport for parents and babies in pushchairs. Street has a large and growing population, many of whom live within walking distance of the current library, which is well used by children under 5 (in particular, the usage of activities and events targeted at this age range is significant). This impact is likely to affect a relatively large number of people in Street, so the recommendation for Street is to provide additional mitigation to address this impact / need through Library Outreach Services, as well as Mobile Library Services in a number of locations in Street. Nonetheless, where they do not have access to a car, many new parents are likely to find it more difficult to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so. The provision of alternative library outreach and mobile library services may not replace the full range of services currently available.</p>	<p>Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Events and activities for children are well-used at Street library, and alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. As noted above, the provision of Library Outreach Services for children in Street forms part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would be provided by the Library Service if a Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. Activities for children would be available at alternative locations in Street, as well as in alternative library buildings. This provision will go some way to mitigating the impact of library closures on this group, however, the range of activities provided is likely to be limited, so there will be a residual impact.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Library Outreach Services for new parents would be provided. We will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure. Limited support (provision of</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and supported to set up alternative activities in Street, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	guidance) could be provided to any groups wishing to set up replacement activities in Street.		
Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)			
<p>Some consultation responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access. Although the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence that migrant workers are likely to be significantly disadvantaged by the closure of Street Library, this could be because of a limited engagement by this group in the consultation exercise. The proportion of library users identifying themselves as 'White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White' in Street is relatively high. We feel that this potential impact merits highlighting to decision makers because of the size of the population in Street, the large rural catchment, the significant usage of public computer access generally and the notable usage by ethnic minority groups. However, public computer access forms part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would be provided by the Library Service if a Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. Alternative public computer access would also be available at Glastonbury, a short distance away and accessible by bicycle for those who are able to use this form of transport. With clear communication and engagement, these mitigations should be effective.</p>	<p>If it is not possible to establish a Community Library Partnership in Street, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of public computer access services at outreach delivery locations and alternative library buildings in nearby communities, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>
<p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to</p>	<p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>Changes are communicated effectively to people</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>library services in Street to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.</p>	<p>Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>whose first language is not English.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Sex</p>			
<p>Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Street, because a higher proportion of Street library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Street library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)</p>			
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>The 'Books on prescription' service available at Street library is targeted in part towards carers for people with certain health conditions. This service would be available on a more limited basis through Glastonbury library and the mobile library but limiting the service could disproportionately affect some people with caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, a limited books on prescription service would be provided through other nearby libraries and the mobile library service. These services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Digital Library Services, Library Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019.</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, more limited mobile library services are available. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
 APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	<p>walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>		<p>communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>
<p>Rurality</p> <p>Street has a large rural catchment, particularly to the west into the Somerset Levels. Whilst many rural communities in the catchment would have reasonable transport links to alternative libraries in Glastonbury, Bridgwater, Wells, Taunton or Langport, public transport and car access to alternative libraries would be more lengthy and time-consuming than access to Street for some of the rural communities in Street library catchment; particularly those to the west and south of Street. For the majority of the rural catchment, driving times to access alternative library buildings in would not be too significant. The cost of parking and fuel for car journeys to Glastonbury, Langport, Shepton Mallet, Wells or Bridgwater would be comparable or only slightly more expensive compared to Street – so many rural users who currently access Street library using their own vehicle are likely to be impacted by convenience factors rather than significant barriers to access. Villages with access by public transport to Street library would have access, via the same public transport routes, to either Langport, Glastonbury or Yeovil libraries (although journey times and timetables may be less convenient, and access from some villages to the south-east of Street to Glastonbury library</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>would involve changing buses in Street). In general, impacts relating to the characteristic of rurality are limited, with some exceptions noted below.</p> <p>As part of the consideration and development of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1, we have undertaken a preliminary assessment of rural communities that do not currently have a mobile library service, but which could be impacted by the closure of a nearby library. In this exercise, Compton Dundon and Walton were identified as rural communities with significant usage of Street library. We anticipate that, subject to demand, a mobile library service would be provided to these communities as well as Street itself if Street Library closed. However, people in these parts of Street catchment are likely to continue to use Street as a hub for other local services and would have to travel further to access alternative libraries in Glastonbury. Whilst this impact is not directly related to the characteristic of rurality, we have noted it here (alongside mitigating actions) for information.</p> <p>The Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 seeks to design a library network which we estimate will enable access to a library building by car (in normal traffic conditions) in around 20 minutes or less for the vast majority of Somerset users. Our analysis of driving times indicates that this objective would be met for the vast majority of Street catchment whether or not a library building could be maintained in Street. However, we estimate that residents in some sparsely populated areas of the Somerset levels and Polden Hills to</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, the Mobile Library network in the area will be reviewed. Provision has been made within budgets to provide additional mobile stops in rural communities with high levels of usage of Street library. Services would be designed in conjunction with communities and would be communicated to customers.</p> <p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, more limited mobile library services are available in the most rural communities most affected. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>the west, north-west and south-west of would be between 20 and 25 minutes' drive from alternative libraries at Glastonbury, Bridgwater and Langport. This area of the county is well-served by mobile library stops, but many people use Street library, which offers a wider range of services than the mobile library. These customers would be relatively disadvantaged by the closure of Street library, in part due to a characteristic of rurality. Decision makers should note that some of these rural districts are already around 20-25 minutes' drive from Street library, and the impact on driving times is generally limited in all areas where the target threshold is exceeded.</p>			
<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income in parts of Street town are lower than the County and national average, and the community engagement exercise highlighted that there were some areas of deprivation within walking distance of the current library site. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and the cost of public transport to Glastonbury for non-concessionary pass holders could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes from accessing this library. However, Glastonbury is within cycling distance of the majority of lower-income districts in Street town, and Mobile Library Services and Library Outreach Services would be provided in Street. These mitigations are likely to be effective for most users, although there would still be a residual impact on people on low incomes who do not have access to a vehicle and cannot cycle to Glastonbury Library.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, Library Outreach Services, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made aware of these services.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Public access computer use is significant at Street library, and the usage of this service by unemployed people was a theme in consultation responses. Across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. As noted above, access into Glastonbury library is good, and mitigates this impact to an extent. In order to mitigate the impact further, and address local needs identified through our needs assessment and the consultation exercise, we will also continue to provide some public internet access through Library Outreach Services in Street. However, the opening hours of this service are likely to be reduced, and the service is unlikely to be staffed. There could be residual impacts for some people on low incomes, particularly those who need more support, who are very frequent users of the service, or who have more difficulty accessing Glastonbury library.</p>	<p>during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, public internet access would be provided as a Library Outreach Service, and the library service would endeavour to provide digital inclusion activities as a further element of the Library Outreach Service provision. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) digital inclusion services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Street, some public computer access remains available locally and, if possible, some digital inclusion support is provided as an outreach service. These would help address digital exclusion issues for people on lower incomes.</p>
<p>Military Status</p> <p>No impact identified</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment	
The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16 th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.	
Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey
Date	08/10/18
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	08/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(m)

Sunningdale (Yeovil)
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Sunningdale

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Sunningdale	
Version	2	Date	08/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in Sunningdale and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Sunningdale library, and should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Sunningdale Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Sunningdale are currently delivered through a library building in Sunningdale, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that a large number of people living in Sunningdale and the surrounding area use Yeovil Library. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Sunningdale and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Sunningdale <i>or</i> Library Outreach Services (events and activities for children, health and wellbeing events for adults, and technology activities for adults), to compliment access to Yeovil Library. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the</p>			

preferred option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Sunningdale would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Sunningdale if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Sunningdale library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Sunningdale, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Sunningdale Library and providing library services to the Sunningdale area in different ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Sunningdale library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 147 active borrowers;
- 3,302 visits (footfall);
- 67 people's network users;
- 0 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 5,805.

Sunningdale library is open for 14 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Sunningdale library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of

- Sunningdale library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Sunningdale library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Sunningdale Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper Data analysis – methodology and data sources, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Sunningdale catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Sunningdale library most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Sunningdale	% of Sunningdale Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Sunningdale Library
0-4	5.35%	11.1%	7.7%	5.3%	0%
5-11	16.07%	26.2%	9.7%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	3.2%	7.6%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	31.7%	56.9%	56.0%	69.0%
65+	28.81%	27.8%	18.1%	24.1%	31.0%
Unknown	1.35%				

Table 2: % active library users, Sunningdale catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Sunningdale library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Sunningdale	% of Sunningdale Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Sunningdale Library*
Female	61.88%	68.3%	51.6%	51.20%	55.6%
Male	36.38%	30.2%	48.4%	48.80%	44.4%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	1.6%			

*Consultation respondents who identified as some other way totalled 0.9% of respondents to this question.

Table 3: % of active library users, Sunningdale catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Sunningdale library most, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Sunningdale	% of Sunningdale Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Sunningdale Library*
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	7.4%	2.5%	2.02%	3.7%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	2.5%	3.3%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	90.1%	94.9%	94.64%	96.3%

*The Consultation asked, 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Sunningdale catchment and Somerset population:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - Sunningdale	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Sunningdale catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5%	4.8%	Long term health problem or disabled	18.6%	19%	20.4%
Non-disabled	95%	95.2%	No long-term health problem or disability identified	81.4%	81%	77.4%

* Consultation asked, 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Sunningdale Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Sunningdale Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery, we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Sunningdale Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity for the combined years of 2013 to 2015 showing % South West England's population, and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded to question on registration.

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Sunningdale library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of Sunningdale library. Usage of Sunningdale library is low, and it is difficult to draw robust conclusions from user data in the tables above as a result. However, users with the following

equalities characteristics have been identified as being likely to be particularly prevalent users of this library:

- The proportion of the catchment population of primary school age is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, as is the proportion of the catchment population aged under 5. Both of these groups form a higher proportion of Sunningdale library users than the equivalent proportion of users for all Somerset libraries.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Sunningdale library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as being in a Black or Minority Ethnic group is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group, and the library is well-used by people with this protected characteristic.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Sunningdale library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Sunningdale Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Sunningdale catchment serves a small, urban area around Sunningdale library in the north of Yeovil. There are unlikely to be any users of the library with the characteristic of rurality.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower Layer Super Output areas in the Sunningdale library catchment is 6, meaning that the population of the catchment is as likely to contain a proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole. This catchment average masks variations in income levels within the catchment population, and the areas closest to the library (where the majority of users live) are in the 20% most deprived nationally for income deprivation.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Sunningdale library is very limited, with no recorded attendances at events held in the library.

Section 2B – People who are **delivering the policy or service**

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4ii above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income as well

as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Sunningdale library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Yeovil on 27th October 2017. It was noted that the library was situated near to areas of relatively high deprivation, and that the impact of universal credit was likely to mean that computer use was a more critical service for some. It was also noted that there were a high number of older people in the area, with a lot of sheltered housing accommodation.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a low number of consultation responses received from users of Sunningdale Library, reflecting the relatively low number of users.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Sunningdale library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Sunningdale library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Sunningdale library, whether they had the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibility, disability, gender reassignment or sexual orientation or not.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly, whether they had the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibility, gender reassignment or sexual orientation or not.

Qualitative responses

A low number of comments were made through the survey by users of Sunningdale Library reflecting the low numbers of users of the library. In addition, 9 people attended a drop-in event on 9th March 2018. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Sunningdale would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *“Remember there are isolated people within Yeovil as well as the countryside. My library is a lifeline for me at ninety years of age.”*
 - *“The library is part of the community and is perhaps the only friendly face many people may see or talk to. I visit the library 2-3 times a week”*
 - *“This library is situated near sheltered accommodation; the users use it for more than a library service.”*
- It was noted at the drop-in that there is a high level of supported housing for older and disabled people in Sunningdale, and so having an easily accessible library was felt to be crucial for this community.
- Some respondents noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“We are sometimes without transport so having a local library I can walk my 2-year-old and my dog to is invaluable.”*
 - *“Sunningdale is close to the school and pre-school and provides a valuable service for both young and older readers, who would not find going into the main library easy or convenient.”*
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Sunningdale, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Sunningdale library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would affect my family as they are home-schooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- Several respondents using Sunningdale library noted general impacts on disabled people.
 - *“My mum has mobility issues. If Sunningdale were to close she wouldn't be able to visit another library.”*
 - *“As I am disabled and spend a great deal of time reading, I consider it extremely important that Sunningdale library should remain open.”*
 - *“This library has been a lifeline to us. My husband has dementia and other mental health problems. The help and support of the librarians has been vital in his fight for recovery of the mental health issues. We feel safe in the library environment.”*

Pregnancy / Maternity

- No specific impacts were highlighted by individual Sunningdale users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Sunningdale library. Some responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- No specific impacts were highlighted by individual Sunningdale users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic.

Low income

- A few specific impacts were highlighted by individual Sunningdale users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. One or two comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower incomes:
 - *“Not everyone can afford to buy books, even from a charity shop, especially with so many reliant on food banks to eat these days.”*
 - *“We use this library a lot. It’s alright you saying about the town library but you have to pay for parking.”*

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence (additional to the data already set out in section 2 above) which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles, (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicating higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Sunningdale catchment:

	Sunningdale catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	5	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	7	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	4	6

Table 9 indicates that, on average for these measures, levels of need in Sunningdale catchment that are in line with those for Somerset as a whole. This means that on average there is likely to be a lower proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Sunningdale catchment are more likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset but are less likely to have the characteristic of Rurality. More detailed analysis of the catchment map indicates that income deprivation, social isolation and rates of disability are all more significant in the areas nearest to the library.

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Sunningdale catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Yeovil	310	90	20
Sunningdale	120	20	0

Table 10 shows that more library users in Sunningdale catchment currently use Yeovil Library rather than Sunningdale library. This provides evidence that Yeovil Library is very likely to be the alternative library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the recommendations, there ceased to be a library building in Sunningdale. This assessment will therefore consider access to Yeovil Library from the catchment.

Sunningdale catchment is small and fairly tightly focussed on the area around Sunningdale library. The fact that more users within this library’s catchment use Yeovil library rather than Sunningdale library would suggest that access to Yeovil town centre is convenient, and that many people from the catchment visit Yeovil town centre regularly to use the Library.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Sunningdale built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Yeovil	5 minutes	2 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Sunningdale catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Sunningdale catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	22%	16%
Households with one vehicle	44%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	34%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus services 51 and 53 provide good access from all parts of Sunningdale catchment into Yeovil town centre. The services have a 20 and 30-minute frequency respectively and take around 18 minutes to get into the town centre. The adult return fare into the town centre is £3.60 (free for concessionary pass holders). The services are commercial and are considered to be sustainable. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – the area around Sunningdale and some surrounding communities are served by the SSVCA community transport group, providing access into Yeovil.

All of the Sunningdale library catchment is within cycling distance of Yeovil town centre, and Yeovil library can be accessed reasonably comfortably on foot from most of the catchment.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Sunningdale Library Sunningdale library has a small number of users, reflecting a relatively small catchment population, the majority of whom use Yeovil library rather than Sunningdale library. This being the case, the impact of closing Sunningdale library is likely to be less significant than the impact of closing some of the other libraries where changes are recommended.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide some Library Outreach Services to Sunningdale, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). Many people in Sunningdale are likely to travel to Yeovil town centre for shopping and regularly. Older people and many disabled people are able to travel to Yeovil town centre at no cost, on a relatively convenient and frequent bus service. Yeovil library is within walking distance and is within a convenient cycling distance for people who are able to

cycle. This good, affordable access for most people to the alternative library building in Yeovil town centre, alongside the alternative services provided, will mitigate the impact of closing Sunningdale library to a significant extent for the majority of groups identified.

Mitigations are therefore relatively strong for impacts identified for users of Sunningdale Library. Decision makers may wish to note the following issues, which are the most difficult to mitigate:

- Walking or cycling from the Sunningdale area to Yeovil library is possible, but more difficult than accessing Sunningdale library, particularly for young children and some people with disabilities. The cost of public transport is modest; however, in the context of the high-income deprivation in the area it may not be affordable for service users who do not have concessionary passes. Parents with children or babies would be able to access activities through outreach provision in Sunningdale but would face a long walk to access a library building if they did not have access to a car or could not afford public transport. Primary school children would also face a more difficult journey to access the library after school, which may not be possible for younger primary school children, or those who return home after school unaccompanied.
- Access difficulties for older people and disabled people with mobility issues were highlighted in the consultation. Although there is a good bus service into Yeovil town centre, some consultation respondents felt that the closure of Sunningdale library would affect them due to access difficulties.
- Using the busy, town centre library in Yeovil may not be possible for some people with mental health conditions, and this impact is difficult to mitigate effectively.
- Library Outreach Services addressing the high risk of social isolation in the area may be effective in supporting users of Sunningdale library, but there could be significant impacts for some older or disabled people who currently access Sunningdale library and receive valuable social contact, but for whom structured activities may not be difficult to access.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts, you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>The impact of a library closure on older people was a strong theme in consultation responses for Sunningdale Library. In particular, impacts were highlighted for socially-isolated older people who would no longer have convenient access to the library. The supported living accommodation in the area nearby was also noted as a particular factor in this community. Furthermore, a pocket of high social isolation risk in Sunningdale has been identified through the needs assessment exercise. Given the consultation feedback and assessed need, the recommendation for Sunningdale is to provide additional mitigation (over and above what was originally put forward in the consultation proposal) to address this impact / need through Library Outreach Services.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, Library Outreach Services for older people would be provided and would be designed to try to address social isolation. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, Library Outreach Services help address social isolation issues for older people. Customers are made aware of these services, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in Yeovil town centre.</p>
<p>Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing Yeovil Library may be more difficult for older people to do. Although public transport from the Sunningdale area to Yeovil town centre is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library it is likely to be more difficult and may dissuade some users from using the service. That said, older people are eligible for</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, Digital Library Services and Library Outreach</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, more limited alternative services are</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group. There is also strong evidence from the catchment mapping data that a larger number of people living close to Sunningdale library use Yeovil library rather than Sunningdale library, so this impact is likely to be limited to a small number of people.</p>	<p>Services for older people would be provided. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in Yeovil town centre.</p>
<p>Accessing Yeovil library may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. However, it is possible to walk to Yeovil library from most of Sunningdale, and there is strong evidence from the catchment mapping data that a larger number of people living close to Sunningdale library use Yeovil library rather than Sunningdale library. Public transport from Sunningdale to Yeovil is generally good, and the cost of public transport is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset (although it will be more expensive and less convenient for some parents with younger children than the current option of walking to Sunningdale library). There are no activities for children under 5 offered at Sunningdale. This impact is likely to be limited; access to Yeovil library is good, and usage of Sunningdale library is low. Nonetheless, where they do not have access to a car, some parents may find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which may dissuade some from doing so.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, Library Outreach Services for children would be provided. These services would maintain easy walking access to activities and events for younger children. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, alternative activities for children are easily accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who are currently able to use Sunningdale Library after attending the nearby primary or infant schools. There was some feedback in the consultation highlighting an impact on primary school children, and proportionately this group forms a high percentage of Sunningdale users. Those who currently walk from school to the library may be particularly impacted. It is possible to get from most of the Sunningdale area to Yeovil town centre library after school on public transport, or (for parents accompanying older primary school children) on foot, but this is more difficult and / or less affordable. After school usage of libraries may therefore become more difficult for some primary school children - particularly those in households without access to a car after school, who may only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays. This impact is likely to affect a small number of people in Sunningdale, because of the very low levels of library usage.</p> <p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism collection) are currently limited in Sunningdale Library, and comparable facilities are available through Yeovil Library.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, we will work with our staff to ensure relevant customer are aware of the availability of these collections in Yeovil library.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services available at other locations.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Disability			
<p>Accessing Yeovil library may be more difficult for some disabled people, as they are more likely to rely on public transport; either because of mobility issues or sensory loss. This issue was noted in consultation responses by users of Sunningdale library. However, public transport from the Sunningdale area to Yeovil town centre is good, and disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge for users. Yeovil library is a relatively short distance away, and for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters is likely to be possible to access Yeovil town centre, albeit with a longer journey. Low floor buses operate between Sunningdale and Yeovil town centre, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people. The number of people likely to be affected by this impact is likely to be low, given the low level of usage of Sunningdale library. Having considered this impact, we have concluded that no specific mitigation is necessary.</p> <p>Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some disabled people, as a result of a lack of mobility, difficulty communicating, or anxiety about social contact. A pocket of high social isolation risk in Sunningdale has been identified through the needs assessment exercise. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). People with the protected characteristic of disability may be impacted more than others by the closure of Sunningdale Library, because some disabled people are more likely to be socially isolated. As noted above (under 'Age'), social isolation was a theme coming through strongly in responses from users of Sunningdale library, and</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, Library Outreach Services for adults would be provided and would be designed to try to address social isolation. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service)</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, Library Outreach Services help address potential social isolation issues for disabled people. Customers are made aware of these services, the Home Library Service, and</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>the recommendation for Sunningdale is to provide additional mitigation (over and above what was originally put forward in the consultation proposal) to address this impact / need through Library Outreach Services.</p> <p>Yeovil library is wheelchair accessible and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. Potential wheelchair accessible venues for Library Outreach Services have been identified. We do not consider that disabled customers of Sunningdale Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at Yeovil library, and customers using this facility at Sunningdale will be advised that it is available in the town centre library, if a Community Library Partnership cannot be established.</p> <p>Yeovil Library is most likely to be used as an alternative library, but this may not be possible for some people with mental health conditions or learning disabilities, who may not cope with the larger library space and busy atmosphere. This impact was noted in respect of a user with dementia in feedback from customers of Sunningdale library.</p>	<p>would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, we will work with library staff to ensure that any customers with hearing loss who use a hearing loop service are advised that this service is available at Yeovil library.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, we will work with our staff to identify vulnerable customers and try to</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>the alternative library buildings in Yeovil town centre.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities available in Yeovil library.</p> <p>Customers vulnerable to anxiety are communicated with effectively at an early stage and are signposted to alternative quieter</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	<p>ensure that changes are communicated at an early stage, and new or alternative services are clearly signposted.</p> <p>We will explore the potential for establishing 'quiet times' in larger town centre libraries.</p>		<p>libraries where possible (e.g. Martock).</p> <p>The potential and value of 'quiet times' is explored and implemented if feasible.</p>
Gender Reassignment			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified.			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
Events and activities for parents and babies are not currently provided at Sunningdale library, and if a Community Library Partnership cannot be established to maintain the library building, we plan to provide this service as a Library Outreach Service in the area. People with the protected characteristic of maternity would be positively impacted by this change and are not considered to face a significant access difficulty given the relative proximity of Yeovil library.			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)			
The proportion of users of Sunningdale library identifying themselves as belonging to Black and Ethnic Minority Groups is higher than the proportion of people using all Somerset libraries identifying themselves in this ethnic group. People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.	We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Sunningdale to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019	Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.
Religion and Belief			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Sex			
Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Sunningdale, because a higher proportion of Sunningdale library users are female. This means that the general impacts of closing Sunningdale library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.	There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Sexual Orientation			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
Caring responsibilities			
Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for and may generally have less time available to make a longer journey into Yeovil town centre. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, Digital Library Services and Library Outreach Services would be provided locally. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019.	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in Yeovil town centre, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.
Rurality - no impact identified.			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income in the Sunningdale area are significantly lower than the County and national average, and the community engagement exercise highlighted that the library is in an area of deprivation. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and the cost of public transport to Yeovil for non-concessionary pass holders could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes from accessing Yeovil library. Feedback from the consultation exercise highlighted parking charges as an impact on those with lower incomes (free parking is available adjacent to Sunningdale library). However, Yeovil library is within reasonable walking and cycling distance of Sunningdale, and usage of the library is low, so this impact is likely to be minimal.</p> <p>Public access computer use is low at Sunningdale library, and there is limited evidence of usage of Sunningdale library by unemployed people. We have concluded that this evidence, in conjunction with the good pedestrian / cycling access to Yeovil library, means the impact of ceasing public computer access provision in the Sunningdale area is unlikely to be significant, although some people could be affected</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, Digital Library Services and Library Outreach Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Sunningdale, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made aware of these services.</p>
<p>Military Status - no impact identified.</p>			

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment	
The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16 th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.	
Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey
Date	08/10/18
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	08/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(n)

Watchet
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Watchet

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Watchet	
Version	2	Date	09/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council’s cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in Watchet and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Watchet library, and should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Watchet Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Watchet are currently delivered through a library building in Watchet, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that library users in Watchet and the surrounding area are most likely to use Watchet Library, with significant numbers also using alternative libraries. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Watchet and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Watchet (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> a combination of Digital Library Services, Library Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services, to compliment access to alternative libraries at Williton and Minehead. Establishing a</p>			

Community Library Partnership is the preferred option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Watchet would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Watchet if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Watchet library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Watchet, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Watchet Library and providing library services to Watchet and the surrounding communities in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Watchet library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 496 active borrowers;
- 8,212 visits (footfall);
- 160 people's network users;
- 388 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 6,445.

Watchet library is open for 17.5 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Watchet library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data, we compared the characteristics of

- Watchet library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Watchet library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Watchet Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Watchet catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Watchet library most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Watchet	% of Watchet Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Watchet Library
0-4	5.35%	7.4%	4.4%	5.3%	3.4%
5-11	16.07%	16.6%	6.1%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	1.8%	5.4%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	33.9%	51.9%	56.0%	41.2%
65+	28.81%	40.0%	32.2%	24.1%	47.5%
Unknown	1.35%	0.2%			

Table 2: % active library users, Watchet catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Watchet library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Watchet	% of Watchet Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Watchet Library
Female	61.88%	62.7%	51.3%	51.20%	75.9%
Male	36.38%	36.9%	48.7%	48.80%	24.1%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	0.4%		-	

Table 3: % of active library users, Watchet catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Watchet library most, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Watchet	% of Watchet Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation Respondents across Somerset
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	0.5%	1.0%	2.0%	1.9%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	2.4%	1.6%	3.3%	
White British	91.4%	97.1%	97.4%	94.6%	98.1%

*The consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Watchet catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users - Watchet	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Watchet catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents Somerset*
Disabled	5.0%	5.8%	Long-term health problem or disabled	25.9%	19%*	20.4%
Non-disabled	95.0%	94.2%	No long term health problem or disability identified	74.1%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1- 4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Watchet Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual

Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Watchet Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery, we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Watchet Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Care	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity for the combined years of 2013 to 2015 showing % South West England's population, and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West region population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.3%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded to question on registration.

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Watchet library:

A wide range of protected characteristics are likely to be represented within the customer base of Watchet library. Users with the following equalities characteristics have been identified from the tables above as being particularly prevalent users of this library:

- The proportion of the catchment population aged 65 or over is significantly higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, and this group also represents a higher proportion of library users than is the case for Somerset libraries as a whole.
- The proportion of Watchet library users aged under 5 is higher than the proportion of users in this age group across all Somerset libraries; however, the proportion of

Watchet library users who are children of secondary school age is lower than the proportion of all Somerset library users in this age range.

- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Watchet library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group in comparison to the County average, and this group is also over-represented in the Watchet library user population compared to Somerset libraries as a whole.
- The proportion of people in the catchment population with a disability is significantly higher than the proportion of the Somerset population with this protected characteristic.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Watchet library:

Pregnancy and Maternity

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Watchet Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Watchet catchment serves a small, relatively sparsely populated rural area around Watchet. Analysis of library usage data indicates that the majority of users in this area use Watchet Library (see Table 10 below), although many also use Williton and Minehead libraries (we anticipate that many use both Williton and Watchet libraries). Usage of Watchet library is largely concentrated in the built-up area of Watchet. Although some users of Watchet library are likely to have the protected characteristic of Rurality, the majority of users are likely to live in Watchet town.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower layer Super Output areas in the Watchet library catchment is 4, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a higher proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average is likely to mask variations in income levels within the catchment population, the area to the south-east of Watchet library has higher levels of income deprivation (in the 30% most deprived nationally).

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Watchet library is relatively limited, with 338 attendances at events held in the library in 2017/18 (up by a third from 2016/17).

Section 2B – People who are **delivering the policy or service**

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4ii above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Watchet library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Watchet on 26th September 2017. The following relevant points were noted:

- The recent closure of Wansborough Paper Mill (with a loss of 200 jobs) was likely to have made the employment / income deprivation figures worse, with a secondary potential knock on impact on health deprivation. Although it was noted that many of those formerly employed at the paper mill had found employment at Hinkley Point.
- Community representatives felt that the Library Service had a key role to play in supporting those seeking employment (through, for example, the provision of People's Network facilities), and in supporting social mobility. Watchet, along with the rest of West Somerset, scored very poorly on assessments of social mobility.
- Community representatives provided further information on local needs from the Coastal Community Economic Plan document, which provided further evidence of deprivation, relatively low levels of income and employment, and relatively high levels of disability / health deprivation in the town.

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a relatively low number of consultation responses received from users of Watchet Library, reflecting the relatively low number of users.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Watchet library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Watchet library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Watchet library.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly.

Qualitative responses

A number of comments were made through the survey by users of Watchet Library, and in addition letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. A drop-in event was held on 7 February with 37 attendees. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Watchet would have a significant impact on older people:
 - *“it literally is a lifeline for some and has helped me integrate into the community as opposed to being a bit of a recluse”*
 - *“Elderly people especially, do not like change we have many here in Watchet and I'm sure the library would lose many, many customers”*
- A stakeholder group noted concerns about the ability of older people to access Williton library.
- A number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“Already an area of deprivation, poor social mobility and lower academic achievement, to remove the opportunity to explore the world the literature seems insane.”*
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Watchet, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Watchet library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are home-schooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*
 - *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
 - *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- A number of respondents using Watchet library noted general impacts on disabled people. One respondent identifying themselves as a user of Watchet Library noted
 - *“Being a disabled pensioner the library plays a huge & important part of my life, without it there would be a void in my everyday being.”*
- A stakeholder group noted concerns about the ability of disabled people to access Williton library.

Pregnancy / Maternity

- No specific impact has been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Watchet library. Some responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- A number of specific impacts were highlighted by individual Watchet users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic:
 - *“loss of computer access for unemployed people - in an area where broadband access is generally poor.”*

Low income

- A few specific impacts were highlighted by individual Watchet users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic:
 - *“Outreach services will not provide the regular service that is needed in Watchet. There are many families that cannot afford books, computers or printing facilities and the library is a life line.”*
 - *“West Somerset is a deprived area. Low social mobility, low educational attainment, low incomes. Council should seek to ensure that they carry out their statutory duty by keeping libraries open.”*
 - *“I think any reduction in services in an area of high social deprivation will have adverse affect on people that need the services the most.”*

Other protected characteristics:

- No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicate higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Watchet catchment:

	Watchet catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	4	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	6	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	4	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	3	6
‘Access to services’ deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	3	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	4	6

All of the measures in table 9 indicate that, on average for these measures, there is a significantly higher level of need in Watchet catchment. This means that on average there is likely to be a higher proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Watchet catchment are more likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset and are more likely to have the characteristic of Rurality.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Watchet catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Watchet	380	90	10
Williton	450	100	20
Minehead	140	50	10
Taunton	80	50	10
Mobile Library	20	0	0

Table 10 shows that the majority of library users in Watchet catchment currently use Williton Library. This provides evidence that Williton Library is very likely to be the alternative library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the recommendations, there ceased to be a library building in Watchet. This assessment will therefore consider access to Williton Library from the catchment.

In our analysis of library catchments work it is unusual for as many users within a library's catchment to use a different library to the catchment library. This would suggest that access to Williton is convenient, and that many people from the catchment visit Williton regularly to use the library. However, it is important to note that usage of Watchet library within the urban

area of Watchet is higher than the usage of Williton library (although usage of Williton library is still significant).

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Watchet built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Williton	7 minutes	3 miles
Minehead	20 minutes	8 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Watchet Map data and routing software and are given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown. Driving times are shown for light traffic conditions and are likely to be longer at peak times of the day.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Watchet catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Watchet catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	17%	16%
Households with one vehicle	46%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	37%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 28 links Watchet with Williton, providing good public transport access to Williton Library. The service has a 30 minute frequency and takes 6 minutes to get to Williton. The service runs on Saturdays. The adult return fare to Williton is £3.60 (free for concessionary pass holders). The service is considered to be sustainable. Community Transport is available for people who cannot access public transport easily – Watchet and the surrounding communities are served by ATWEST community transport group and Somerset County Council’s slinky bus service – both provide access to Williton or Minehead. A limited (thrice daily) free bus service, provided by Somerset Passenger Solutions / EDF, serves Doniford and Blue Anchor in the catchment, providing access to Williton or Minehead for these communities.

Walking access to Williton library is possible from some parts of Watchet, however most of the catchment (including all the urban area of Watchet) is within reasonable cycling distance of Williton Library.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Watchet Library.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide some Library Outreach Services to Watchet, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). Many people in Watchet are likely to travel to Williton or Minehead for

shopping and many people in the area use Williton library. Older people and many disabled people are able to travel to Williton town centre at no cost, on a relatively convenient and frequent bus service. Williton town centre library is within cycling distance of most of the urban catchment, and it is possible to walk to Williton library from the southern / western outskirts of Watchet. Furthermore, to meet the identified needs in the area and mitigate the most significant impacts of closure, activities targeted at young children and new parents, and health and wellbeing activities for adults, would continue to be provided from the current site (although public computer access would be unstaffed, with reduced opening hours). Good, affordable access for most people to the alternative library building at Williton town centre, alongside the alternative services provided, will mitigate the impact of closing Watchet library to a significant extent for the majority of groups identified.

Mitigations are therefore relatively strong for some of the impacts identified for users of Watchet Library. However, there are some identified residual impacts, which decision makers should have particular regard to. Decision makers should note the high incidence of disability in Watchet urban area, the high proportion of older people in the town, and the high level of deprivation (particularly unemployment).

- Levels of car ownership in parts of Watchet are very low, and concerns were raised in the consultation period about the ability of older people and disabled people to access alternative facilities in Williton. Library Outreach Services and a carefully designed Mobile Library Service, together with good public and demand responsive transport links, are likely to mitigate potential access impacts effectively. However, decision makers should note the concerns of local stakeholders.
- Although the cost of public transport is modest, in the context of high levels of income deprivation in Watchet, it may not be affordable for service users who do not have concessionary passes. Furthermore, although it is possible to walk from some parts of the urban catchment to Williton library, Watchet is hilly and the distance to Williton library ranges from 1-3 miles. Parents with children or babies would be able to access activities through outreach provision in Watchet but would face a long walk (in excess of 2 miles for many parts of Watchet) to access a library building if they did not have access to a car or could not afford public transport. Mobile library services would mitigate this impact to an extent.
- Although cycling access to Williton town centre is reasonable, and relatively affordable, for people with good mobility, there are a fairly significant number of users of the public computer access service at Watchet Library, and these users may find it much more difficult to travel to Williton. This will have a particular impact on people who are reliant on the public computers to apply for work, to access Universal Credit, or to access social housing services. This impact is difficult to mitigate, and unemployment deprivation is relatively high in Watchet.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you have identified any negative impacts, you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)			
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
Age			
<p>People aged 65 or over form a higher proportion of Watchet Library users than of library users across Somerset as a whole, and Watchet catchment has a higher proportion of older people within the population, compared to Somerset as a whole. The impact of a library closure on older people was a strong theme in consultation responses for Watchet Library. Impacts were highlighted for socially-isolated older people who would no longer have convenient access to activities and events at Watchet library; although these events are not currently well-used, the number of events and activities is growing under the leadership of a good staff team. Furthermore, the whole of Watchet urban area has a high social isolation risk, identified through the needs assessment exercise. The impact on socially-isolated older people would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone, and so the recommendation for Watchet is to provide mitigation to address this impact / need through Library Outreach Services.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Library Outreach Services for older people would be provided and would be designed to try to address social isolation. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Library Outreach Services help address social isolation issues for older people. Customers are made aware of these services, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative library buildings at Williton or Minehead may be more difficult for older people to do. Car ownership in some parts of Watchet is very low - up to 50% of households in some areas do not have access to a car. Although public transport from Watchet to Williton is generally good, for users who previously walked to the</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Digital Library Services, Mobile Library</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>library it may be more difficult and this may dissuade some users from using the service. Feedback in the consultation exercise highlighted a concern that older people would find it difficult to access Williton library and may stop using a service which is valuable to the community. That said, older people are eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is likely to be affordable for this group, and Somerset County Council's demand responsive transport service is available for users who have more difficulty accessing a bus stop. Like Watchet town centre, Williton has convenient parking adjacent to the library, with a comparable charge, so those who have access to a vehicle are less likely to be impacted. Watchet is hilly and has a high incidence of elderly and disabled people. If required, care will be taken in the design of the mobile library service in Watchet to try to provide good access to people living in different parts of the town. Provision has been made to provide more than one mobile library stop in Watchet, should this be necessary.</p>	<p>Services and Library Outreach Services would be provided. These services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. The design of the mobile library service will take account of local needs, in order to maximise access for people with mobility problems. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Accessing the library building at Williton may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Watchet to Williton is generally good, and the cost of public transport to Williton is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, it will be more expensive and less convenient for parents with younger children than the current option of walking to the library. It is possible to walk to Williton library from some parts of Watchet, but for most residents of Watchet built-up area, walking distances are significant (and, for some parts of Watchet, exceed 2 miles). Distances are likely to be</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Mobile Library Services and Library Outreach Services for children would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, more limited mobile library and library outreach services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>too great for young children to walk. Although usage of Watchet library is relatively low overall, a higher proportion of children under 5 use the library than is the case for all Somerset libraries. Where they do not have access to a car, many parents are likely to find it more difficult to take children to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p> <p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who are currently able to use Watchet Library after attending the nearby primary or infant schools. Those who currently walk from school to the library (perhaps because the household either does not have access to a car, or because the only household car is being used for work purposes) will be particularly impacted. It is possible to get from Watchet to Williton Library on public transport after school, but this would be more expensive and less convenient, which is likely to dissuade parents from taking children to use the service after school. After school usage of libraries may become significantly more difficult for some primary school children - those without access to a car after school may only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be more difficult for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to Watchet Library. This impact is likely to be limited in Watchet, because usage of Watchet library is very low amongst this group, and space for studying is limited. Nonetheless, consultation feedback indicates that some younger people may use Watchet library for study at certain times, and these customers may not be able to access this</p>	<p>services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Mobile Library Services would be provided in Watchet, which would maintain access to (more limited) library services for children locally. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, more limited mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle).</p> <p>Events and activities for children are growing at Watchet library, and alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. Although activities for children would be available at alternative library buildings, younger people could be disproportionately impacted by the closure of Watchet Library regardless of whether they are able to access alternatives. Because of the high needs in the area, the recommendation for Watchet is to provide events and activities for children and babies as Library Outreach Services.</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Watchet Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Library Outreach Services for children and babies would be provided. which would maintain convenient access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, alternative services continue to be provided in the community. Customers are made aware of these services, and activities at the alternative library building at Williton.</p>
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Williton or Minehead may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be</p>	<p>Director of Economic and</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>to rely on public transport. Although public transport from Watchet to Williton is generally good, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs it is likely to be less convenient and may dissuade some users from using the service. Feedback in the consultation exercise highlighted a concern that disabled people would find it difficult to access Williton library and may stop using a service which is valuable to the community. That said, disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge. Low floor buses operate between Watchet and Williton, so public transport is likely to be both affordable and feasible for this group of disabled people; Somerset County Council's demand-responsive 'Slinky' service is also fully accessible. Like Watchet town centre, Williton has convenient parking adjacent to the library, with a comparable charge, so those who have access to a vehicle are less likely to be impacted. Watchet is hilly and has a high incidence of elderly and disabled people. If required, care will be taken in the design of the mobile library service in Watchet to try to provide good access to people living in different parts of the town. Provision has been made to provide more than one mobile library stop in Watchet, should this be necessary.</p>	<p>established in Watchet, Digital Library Services, Mobile Library Services and some Library Outreach Services would be provided. This would maintain walking, mobility scooter or wheelchair access to (more limited) library services. The design of the mobile library service will take account of local needs, in order to maximise access for people with mobility problems. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>established in Watchet, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter / wheelchair. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism collection) are currently limited in Watchet Library, and comparable</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, we will work with our staff to ensure relevant customer are aware of the</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services available at other locations.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>facilities are available through Williton Library and the mobile library service.</p> <p>Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some disabled people, as a result of a lack of mobility, difficulty communicating, or anxiety about social contact. Watchet urban area has a high social isolation risk, and feedback in the consultation exercise highlighted this issue for disabled people. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). People with the protected characteristic of disability may be impacted more than others by the closure of Watchet Library, because some disabled people are more likely to be socially isolated. This impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone, and so the recommendation for Watchet is to provide additional mitigation to address this impact / need through Library Outreach Services.</p> <p>The alternative library buildings at Williton and Minehead are wheelchair accessible and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift, and potential wheelchair accessible venues for Library Outreach Services have been identified. We do not consider that disabled customers of Watchet Library will face any impact related to physical accessibility.</p>	<p>availability of these collections on the mobile library service and at libraries nearby.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Library Outreach Services for adults would be provided and would be designed to try to address social isolation. Alternative services (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Library Outreach Services help address potential social isolation issues for disabled people. Customers are made aware of these services, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
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Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Watchet Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at Watchet could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p>	<p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities in alternative services.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>			
<p>No impacts identified.</p>			
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Williton and Minehead may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Watchet to Williton is generally good, and the cost of public transport to Williton is less significant for non-concessionary pass holders than in some other parts of Somerset, it will be more expensive and less convenient for parents with babies than the current option of walking to the library. It is possible to walk to Williton library from some parts of Watchet, but for most residents of Watchet</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Digital Library Services, Mobile Library Services and Library Outreach Services for children and babies would be provided. These would maintain</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>built-up area, walking distances are significant (and, for some parts of Watchet, exceed 2 miles). Although usage of Watchet library is relatively low overall, a higher proportion of children under 5 use the library than is the case for all Somerset libraries. Where they do not have access to a car, many new parents are likely to find it more difficult to access alternative libraries, which is likely to dissuade some from doing so.</p> <p>Events and activities for parents and babies are growing at Watchet library, and although similar activities would be available at alternative library buildings, people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity may be disproportionately impacted by the closure of Watchet Library regardless of whether they are able to access alternatives. Because of the high needs in the area, the recommendation for Watchet is to provide events and activities for new parents and babies as Library Outreach Services, at the current site.</p>	<p>walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Library Outreach Services would be provided locally, which would maintain convenient access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, more limited alternative services continue to be provided in the town. Customers are made aware of these services, and those available at alternative library buildings at Williton and Minehead.</p>
<p>Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)</p>			
<p>The proportion of people in Watchet catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>Watchet is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p> <p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Watchet to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Sex</p>			
<p>Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Watchet, because a higher proportion of Watchet library users are female. Older females are also likely to be</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Watchet library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.</p>			
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			
<p>Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)</p>			
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Digital Library Services, Library Outreach Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and public transport access to these alternative libraries.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

	during any library closure.		
Rurality - no impact identified			
<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income in Watchet town are lower than the County and national average, and employment deprivation is significant. The community engagement exercise highlighted the recent closure of the paper mill as having a significant effect on economic opportunity in the town, and deprivation, low income and low social mobility were all highlighted as a significant issue in a number of consultation responses. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and the cost of public transport to Williton for non-concessionary pass holders could prevent or dissuade those on lower incomes from accessing Williton library. That said, Williton library is within cycling distance (uphill) of Watchet urban area, and it is possible to walk to Williton library from some parts of Watchet. This access provides some mitigation for people on low incomes who are able to walk or cycle to Williton, but others who do not have access to a vehicle may face a more significant impact from the closure of Watchet Library.</p> <p>Public access computer use is fairly significant at Watchet library. Across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, there is no</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Watchet, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made aware of these services.</p>

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. As noted above, it is possible to cycle from Watchet to Williton library, and possible to walk from some parts of Watchet to Williton. Nonetheless, some people on low incomes, particularly those claiming universal credit, are likely to be significantly impacted by the closure of Watchet library, as public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and this service is more likely to be used by people with this characteristic.</p>	<p>specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Military Status - no impact identified.</p>			

Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment

The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.

Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey
Date	09/10/18
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	09/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018
APPENDIX 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Review date:

This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

Somerset Library Service Redesign 2018

Appendix 4iii(o)

Wiveliscombe
Equalities Impact Assessment

Library Service Consultation – Equalities Impact Assessment for Wiveliscombe

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table			
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be considered rigorously and with an open mind."</i></p>			
Baroness Thornton, March 2010			
What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?		Library Service Redesign 2018 – Wiveliscombe	
Version	2	Date	09/10/2018
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed			
<p>Following on from the agreement of a vision, strategic direction and outcomes framework for the Library Service in November 2017, the County Council held a consultation exercise on specific proposals to shape the future of Somerset Library Services. The consultation ran from 29th January to 13th June 2018. This Equalities Impact Assessment is part of a report to the County Council's cabinet, which recommends a series of changes to the library service.</p> <p>This assessment considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes we are recommending for the delivery of Library Services in Wiveliscombe and the surrounding area. It focuses on impacts that are specific to people who use, or who are likely to use, Porlock library, and should be read in conjunction with the other assessments included within this Appendix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4i – which considers the potential impacts of the proposed changes on Library Service staff (this assessment does not cover potential impacts on staff). • Appendix 4ii - which considers the potential impacts of transferring libraries to Community Library Partnerships (this assessment does not cover the potential impact of transferring Wiveliscombe Library to a Community Library Partnership). <p>Library Services in Wiveliscombe are currently delivered through a library building in Wiveliscombe, with a Mobile Library Service and the Home Library Service serving some customers in the surrounding area. Table 10 below shows that the majority of users living in Wiveliscombe and the surrounding area use Wiveliscombe library, with significant numbers also using Taunton and Wellington libraries. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own homes or in a residential home.</p> <p>The recommendations put to Cabinet are to provide Library Services to the community of Wiveliscombe and the surrounding area through <i>either</i> a partnership with the local community to maintain a library building in Wiveliscombe (a Community Library Partnership) <i>or</i> a combination of Mobile Library Services and Digital Library Services, to complement access to alternative library buildings. Establishing a Community Library Partnership is the preferred</p>			

option, but if this is not possible, the library building in Wiveliscombe would close and library services would be provided in other ways.

These two scenarios have different impacts, and these have been assessed separately. Community Library Partnerships can take several forms, depending on the approach taken by the partners involved and the level of funding available. Some community libraries could operate with paid staff, and some may use a volunteer workforce. Some Community Library Partnerships may relocate to other buildings. Opening hours could increase, or decrease, under a Community Library Partnership.

At this stage, we do not have any firm information on what may happen in Wiveliscombe if the library transfers to a Community Library Partnership. Because, at this stage, we do not know how Community Library Partnerships may evolve in different communities, we have assessed the impact of transferring library buildings to Community Library Partnerships more generally. Appendix 4ii considers the potential impacts of transferring Wiveliscombe library to a Community Library Partnership that we have identified at this stage. If a Community Library Partnership is developed in Wiveliscombe, we will carry out a further equalities impact assessment before the decision to transfer takes place.

This impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Wiveliscombe Library, and providing library services to Wiveliscombe and the surrounding communities in other ways.

Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected

Wiveliscombe library usage levels for the financial year 2017/18 were as follows:

- There were 696 active borrowers;
- 24,880 visits (footfall);
- 97 people's network users;
- 436 attendances at events held in the library.

The library catchment has a population of 5,806.

Wiveliscombe library is open for 17.5 hours a week, including Saturdays.

In order to get a sense of how different groups are likely to be affected by changes to Wiveliscombe library a comparative analysis has been carried out. Where we collect data we compared the characteristics of:

- Wiveliscombe library users
- the wider population in the catchment of Wiveliscombe library
- all Somerset library service users
- Somerset's population as a whole.
- respondents to the public consultation who said they used Wiveliscombe Library most frequently.

Where it is not possible to analyse data at library level, we analysed certain characteristics of the wider library service user population and consultation respondents.

Further details on the methodology and datasets used are set out in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. The information is set out in the tables below, with broad conclusions set out after Table 8.

Table 1: % of active library users, Wiveliscombe catchment, Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Wiveliscombe library most, in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users Wiveliscombe	% of Wiveliscombe Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Wiveliscombe Library
0-4	5.35%	2.9%	3.5%	5.3%	4.2%
5-11	16.07%	18.9%	7.7%	7.7%	
12-17	4.32%	3.5%	7.0%	6.8%	
18-64	44.10%	37.2%	54.4%	56.0%	59.6%
65+	28.81%	33.3%	27.4%	24.1%	36.2%
Unknown	1.35%	4.2%			

Table 2: % active library users, Wiveliscombe catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Wiveliscombe library most, by sex:

Sex	% Active Somerset library members	% Active library users – Wiveliscombe	% of Wiveliscombe Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Wiveliscombe Library*
Female	61.88%	62.8%	50.8%	51.20%	64.8%
Male	36.38%	34.5%	49.2%	48.80%	34.7%
Prefer not to say	1.75%	2.7%			

*Consultation respondents who identified as some other way totalled 0.5% of respondents to this question.

Table 3: % of active library users, Wiveliscombe catchment and Somerset population and consultation respondents who use Wiveliscombe library most, by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users – Wiveliscombe	% of Wiveliscombe Catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% Consultation respondents using Wiveliscombe Library
Black & Minority ethnic groups	2.1%	0.5%	1.4%	2.02%	3.5%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White	6.6%	4.3%	2.9%	3.34%	
White British	91.39%	95.2%	95.8%	94.64%	96.5%

*The Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to be from a Minority Ethnic Background?'

Table 4: % of active library users registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems – Wiveliscombe catchment and Somerset population:

Disability status	% Active library users Somerset	% Active library users Wiveliscombe	Disability / long term health problem status	% of Wiveliscombe catchment population	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation respondents across Somerset*
Disabled	5%	3.2%	Long term health problem or disabled	18.2%	19%	20.4%*
Non-disabled	95%	96.8%	No long term health problem or disability identified	81.8%	81%	79.6%

* Consultation asked 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'

Consultation responders who have declined to answer the question are excluded from tables 1-4 because the proportion is high and would skew comparisons with the Somerset population as a whole; this introduces a degree of potential inaccuracy into these data tables.

We do not have any reliable data or meaningful information on the relative prevalence of Wiveliscombe Library users with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy / Maternity. Neither do we hold any reliable data on the relative prevalence of Wiveliscombe Library users who live in households with low income, rural areas, or who are carers. From our experience of service delivery we feel that a relatively high proportion of people with the protected characteristic of Maternity are likely to be users of Wiveliscombe Library, but we have no reliable data to evidence this judgement. We included questions on some of these characteristics in our consultation survey, however the number of responses at individual library level are too low to publish without infringing data protection rules. The responses and comments of these individuals have been considered in the analysis set out in sections 3 and 4 below.

We are able to publish data on the percentage of consultation respondents overall who identified themselves as carers or as having different sexual identities. This information is set out in tables 5 and 6, compared to information on the proportion of people with these characteristics in Somerset and the South West region respectively. We do not hold any reliable data on the prevalence of people with these protected characteristics amongst the Somerset Library service user population.

Table 5: 2011 census responses on carers of a disabled person, Somerset population and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation:

Carers	% of Somerset population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents
Carer	11%	24%
Non-Carer	89%	76%
Total	100%	100%

* Consultation asked 'Do you provide care for anyone (e.g. a parent, child, other relative, an elderly person, friend or neighbour) who has any form of disability (sensory loss, physical, learning disability, mental health problem) long or terminal illness?

Table 6: ONS experimental research estimates of subnational sexual identity for the combined years of 2013 to 2015 showing % South West England's population, and respondents to the 2018 Library Consultation who responded to that question:

Sexual Orientation	% of South West Region population as a whole	% of consultation survey respondents
Heterosexual	97.4%	96.0%
Bisexual	0.8%	2.7%
Lesbian	1.1%	0.7%
Gay		0.6%
Other	0.5%	
Total	100%	100%

* Of those that responded.

We hold some data on Somerset Library service users of different religions or faiths, and we have set this out in table 7 below, compared to census information taken for the population of Somerset as a whole. We did not ask any questions on religion or belief in the consultation, because we did not identify any significant potential impacts for people with this protected characteristic in our pre-consultation assessment.

Table 7: 2011 census responses on Religion / Faith % Somerset population, and % of Active library users who responded to question on registration.

Religion	% of Active Library Users who responded	% of Somerset population as a whole
Religion not stated	-	8.0%
Buddhist	0.8%	0.3%
Christian	67%	64.0%
Hindu	0%	0.1%
Jewish	0%	0.1%
Muslim	0%	0.3%
Sikh	0%	0.05%
Other religions	0%	0.6%
None	32%	26.6%
Total	100%	100%

We do not hold any reliable data on Somerset library users with the characteristics of Marriage / Civil Partnership, Pregnancy / Maternity, Low income or Rurality, and we did not ask questions specifically on these characteristics in the consultation exercise. We asked two questions on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the consultation, and the results are set out in Table 8 below. We do not hold any comparable data on the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment for the Somerset population or the population of Somerset Library Users.

Table 8: Consultation responses to gender identity questions

% of consultation respondents identifying themselves:	.. as a man or as a woman - 99%	.. in some other way - 1%
% of consultation respondents whose gender identity:	.. matches their identity at birth - 99%	.. does not match their identity at birth - 1%

Conclusions from the statistical evidence about people who use, or are likely to use, Wiveliscombe library:

The following statistically significant differences in the equalities characteristics of Wiveliscombe library users / library catchment residents compared to Somerset as a whole have been identified from the tables above:

- The proportion of the catchment population aged 65 or over is higher than the proportion of the Somerset population in this age range, and this group form a greater proportion of Wiveliscombe library users than is the case for Somerset library users as a whole.
- The proportion of under 5s using Wiveliscombe library is lower than the proportion of this group using all Somerset libraries, and the proportion of the catchment population in this age range is lower than the proportion of the Somerset population who are aged under 5.
- In contrast, Wiveliscombe library has a higher proportion of users of primary school age, compared to the Somerset library service as a whole, and (in common with most Somerset libraries) this group are over-represented amongst Wiveliscombe library users, relative to the catchment population profile.
- In common with most Somerset libraries, women are over-represented amongst Wiveliscombe library users, and are therefore more likely to be affected by any changes.
- The proportion of people in the catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group in comparison to the County average.
- The proportion of Library Service users identifying themselves as being of a 'White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, or any other non-British White' ethnic group is higher than the proportion of people in the catchment from these ethnic backgrounds.

Other considerations about people who use, or are likely to use, Wiveliscombe library:

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Although we do not hold any data about people with the protected characteristic of Maternity using libraries, from our experience of service delivery we know that parents of very young children are frequent users of libraries (including Wiveliscombe Library).

Rural / urban mix:

Wiveliscombe catchment serves a reasonably large, sparsely populated rural area around Wiveliscombe. Analysis of library usage data indicates that the majority of users in this area use Wiveliscombe Library (see Table 10 below), although some use Taunton and Wellington libraries (we anticipate that many may use more than one library). Many users of Wiveliscombe library are likely to have the protected characteristic of Rurality, and access to services from the west and north of the catchment is difficult.

Income levels:

The average income deprivation decile across Lower layer Super Output areas in the Wiveliscombe library catchment is 8, meaning that the population of the catchment is likely to contain a lower proportion of people on lower incomes than Somerset as a whole (where average income deprivation decile is 6). The catchment average is likely to mask significant variations in income levels within the catchment population. No significant pockets of low income populations have been identified within the catchment through the needs assessment exercise.

Other considerations:

A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The number and range of activities and events provided at Wiveliscombe library is reasonable considering the size of the catchment, with 436 attendances at events held in the library during 2017/18.

Section 2B – People who are delivering the policy or service

People delivering the service that could be affected by the proposed change are considered in detail in a separate Equalities Impact Assessments in Appendix 4ii above.

Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

Section 2A above sets out an analysis of equalities data analysed at catchment level relating to the protected characteristics of Age, Sex, Race, Disability, Rurality and Low Income as well as contextual information for the protected characteristics of caring responsibilities, religion/faith, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition to this important dataset, further data and information on equalities issues has been gathered through:

- a community engagement exercise which took place in the Autumn of 2017;
- a public and staff consultation exercise which ran from January to June 2018; and
- a comprehensive needs assessment and access assessment, which was carried out in the summer of 2018 using the latest available data.

This data and information is set out below in relation to Wiveliscombe library:

Relevant evidence gathered through the consultation exercise:

There were a relatively large number of consultation responses received from users of Wiveliscombe Library, reflecting the relatively large number of users and an effective local campaign during the consultation.

Quantitative data analysis

An analysis of consultation responses by people with different protected characteristics has been undertaken for Wiveliscombe library. The following conclusions have been drawn:

- There were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who agreed or disagreed with the proposals. Respondents to the consultation who used Wiveliscombe library overwhelmingly disagreed with proposals which could mean the closure of Wiveliscombe library, whether they had the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibility, disability, gender reassignment or sexual orientation or not.
- In general, there were no apparent significant differences between people with different characteristics who felt they would be impacted by the proposals. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly felt that they or their family would be impacted by the proposals to either to some degree or significantly, whether they had the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibility, gender reassignment or sexual orientation or not.

Qualitative responses

A large number of comments were made through the survey by users of Wiveliscombe Library, and a number of letters and longer, report style responses were received from users and local stakeholder groups. In addition, a very well-attended drop-in event was held on 21st February 2018. It is notable that the majority of respondents (but not all respondents) commenting on the potential impacts of closure were making comments about the impact on other people in the community, rather than themselves. A summary of the feedback gathered is set out below.

Age:

- A significant number of comments from individual respondents identified that closure of the library in Wiveliscombe would have a significant impact on older people, particularly single older people:
 - *“With the recent cuts in public transport accessing Taunton library regularly instead would not be a viable option.”*
 - *“We know that health in older people depends on active minds and social interaction; reading and use of the library is an important leisure pursuit of older people.”*
 - *“A mobile library would fail to provide a place for social interaction for ... the elderly and lonely”*
- Comments about the impact on older people highlighted access difficulties and the impact on loneliness and social isolation. Access difficulties, and in particular the limitations of the bus service to Taunton, were a notably strong theme in responses for Wiveliscombe library.
- A similarly significant number of individual comments noted impacts for children and younger people:
 - *“As a home educating family we depend on the libraries as an important resource for fun and learning. Even our small library is often busy with borrowers, clubs, and computer users.”*
 - *“It would be a devastation if the library was to close as the children really enjoy Visiting, Also some children only have this opportunity to see books.”*
- A large number of primary school children wrote letters expressing concern about the potential closure of Wiveliscombe library.
- Across Somerset we received a large number of letters from school children. We also carried out a series of focus groups and surveys with primary schools in certain communities (we only had the resources to do a limited number of focus groups, but we have used these responses to infer a response on behalf of all schoolchildren). The evidence gathered from these exercises is not specific to Wiveliscombe, but is likely to apply to primary school children using Wiveliscombe library, and is summarised below:
 - Children value being able to walk to the library, reading books (including through the Summer Reading Challenge) and taking part in after school activities at the library.
 - Particular insights gathered through this exercise are summarised in the comments below:
 - *“if the library shuts down it would effect my family as they are homeschooled and use the library quite often and use it for books and their topics”*

- *“it would affect me and my brother because my older brother uses the library for a lunch revision and I want that opportunity too and because it is quiet and has good resources”*
- *“my children are both bookworms and regularly use the library to get books out on their way home from school, they would be devastated if it were to close”*

Disability

- Some respondents using Wiveliscombe library noted general impacts on disabled people. A number cited the infrequent public transport that would cause difficulties accessing alternative libraries:
 - *“the elderly and disabled, in our local area - many people do not have access to a car, and with further cuts to our bus service, would find it extremely difficult to visit a library further afield.”*
 - *“A mobile library could not cater for the numbers of people currently using the library. It would discriminate against the most vulnerable groups in the town including children, disabled people and the elderly.”*

Pregnancy / Maternity

- Some respondents highlighted potential difficulties of accessing the mobile library service, or alternative libraries, for young children in buggies.

Race

- There were very few comments across all responses to the consultation that highlighted impacts on users with the protected characteristic of race, and no comments were made in respect of Wiveliscombe library. Some responses elsewhere received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access.

Rurality

- Specific impacts were highlighted by individual Wiveliscombe users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic particularly those living in the surrounding area; Wiveliscombe was noted by many respondents as a hub for a large rural catchment.

Low income

- Specific impacts were highlighted by a number of individual Wiveliscombe users or stakeholder groups in respect of this protected characteristic. One or two comments noted the impact of losing public internet access on unemployed people, and more general impacts on children from families with lower incomes:
 - *“I, along with many others need the library. Not only for educational purposes but as a person without a PC (thus internet access) I need these facilities for my income. (U.C.) This would have dire consequences for the latter.”*
 - *“Most of us are struggling to cope financially, transport routes are infrequent and look likely to be restricted and the population of Wiveliscombe is growing!”*
 - *Provision of computer services important for jobseeking, benefit claims etc. Bus service totally inadequate - constant cuts, expensive (4 hr round trip Taunton). It is impractical for young families, school students, indeed everyone.”*

Other protected characteristics:

No impacts have been identified through the consultation for people with the protected characteristics of Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or military status.

Relevant evidence gathered through the informal community engagement exercise:

A community engagement meeting was held with community representatives from Wiveliscombe on 25th October 2017. It was noted that Wiveliscombe provided an important local centre to the surrounding rural area, and had a number of facilities that were unique and valued by people in the catchment. It was also noted that transport was a challenge – journey times to Taunton were lengthy, and levels of car ownership amongst elderly people in the town were low. The Wivey Link community transport scheme was good, but expensive for those on low incomes. It was also noted that there was some poverty in the town, particularly in the ex-council estates.

Further catchment level data from needs assessment:

Table 9 below sets out further evidence which has been used in this assessment. This has been derived from the catchment mapping / needs assessment exercise explained in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, referenced in Appendix 4v. All of the measures in Table 9 are expressed as deciles (i.e. from 1 to 10, 1 being in the bottom 10% of all LSOAs and 10 being the top 10%). Higher values indicate lower levels of need, and lower values indicate higher levels of need.

Table 9: selected needs assessment data, Wiveliscombe catchment:

	Wiveliscombe catchment	Somerset
Health decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
Adult Social Care interventions decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	5
Income decile index – average for all LSOAs	8	6
Employment decile index – average for all LSOAs	7	6
'Access to services' deprivation (Barriers to Housing / Services decile index) – average for all LSOAs	3	4
Social isolation index (composite measure of factors likely to lead to social isolation) – average for all LSOAs	8	6

Table 9 indicates that, on average for these measures, levels of need in Wiveliscombe catchment. This means on average there is likely to be a lower proportion of people with the characteristics of Disability and Low Income in the catchment, compared to the proportion for Somerset as a whole. The table indicates that people in Wiveliscombe catchment are less likely to be socially isolated than people in Somerset, but are more likely to have the characteristic of Rurality.

Access to alternative locations:

The information and data set out below provides information relevant to access considerations.

Table 10: usage of different libraries in Wiveliscombe catchment:

Library	Borrowers	PN Users	WiFi Users
Wiveliscombe	540	70	0
Taunton	310	90	30
Wellington	170	30	0
Bishops Lydeard	20	0	0
Williton	10	0	0
Mobile Library	10	0	0

Table 10 shows that the majority of library users in Wiveliscombe catchment currently use Wiveliscombe Library, with Taunton and Wellington Libraries also used by a significant number of users in the catchment. This provides evidence that Taunton Library is very likely to be the alternative library building that people in the catchment might access if, as a result of implementing the recommendations, there ceased to be a library building in Wiveliscombe. This assessment will therefore consider access to Taunton Library from the catchment.

Table 11: driving times and distances to alternative libraries (from Wiveliscombe built up area):

Library	Driving time*	Driving distance
Taunton	25 minutes	11 miles
Wellington	17 minutes	7 miles
Williton	25 minutes	12 miles

* Driving times have been calculated using Open Street Map data and routing software adjusted for traffic at 10am on a weekday, given from the centre of the most central Output Area (OA) in the relevant built up area to the alternative libraries shown.

Table 12: vehicle ownership in Wiveliscombe catchment (compared to Somerset average):

Vehicle ownership in households – average for all LSOAs	Wiveliscombe catchment	Somerset
Households with no vehicles	10%	16%
Households with one vehicle	40%	43%
Households with 2 -4 vehicles	50%	41%

Public and community transport, walking and cycling:

Bus service 25 links Wiveliscombe with Taunton and Dulverton, providing a public transport link to Taunton Library. The service runs on an irregular frequency, and takes 51 minutes to get to Taunton and 40 minutes to get to Dulverton. The adult return fare to Taunton is £6.60 (free for concessionary pass holders). The service is subsidised, but may not be sustainable. This

service also serves Milverton, Langley to the north of Wiveliscombe, and Watterow to the west. Other rural parts of the catchment have no scheduled bus transport, but Community Transport is available into Taunton, provided by the Wivey Link community transport group, which also provides access for people in Wiveliscombe who cannot access public transport easily.

Taunton is not within walking distance, nor reasonable cycling distance, from Wiveliscombe.

Section 4 – Conclusions drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

Potential impacts are described comprehensively in the action plan table below, alongside mitigating actions. As noted in section 1 above, this impact assessment considers the potential impacts of closing Wiveliscombe Library.

If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established, then the County Council will provide Mobile Library Services to Wiveliscombe and some of the surrounding communities, as well as Digital Library Services and the Home Library Service (these terms are all explained in detail in section 4 of Appendix 1 to the covering report). In conjunction with access to alternative library buildings at Wellington and Taunton (and to a lesser extent, Dulverton and Williton), all of these alternative services will mitigate the impact of closing Wiveliscombe library to an extent. However, decision makers should have regard to the long public transport journey times from Wiveliscombe to Taunton; the limitations, expense and inconvenience of this service was a strong theme in consultation responses from Wiveliscombe.

However, even with these mitigations, there will be residual impacts for people with some protected characteristics if Wiveliscombe library closes. The most significant of these impacts are summarised here (fuller descriptions are set out in the action plan table below):

- People aged 65 or over form a higher proportion of Wiveliscombe Library users than elsewhere in Somerset, and feedback about the impact on this group came through strongly in the public consultation response. In particular, many older people are likely to suffer increased social isolation if Wiveliscombe library closed; the library is well-used for events, activities and social contact. Mitigation for this impact is limited, and for those most at risk of social isolation impacts could be significant.
- Although usage of Wiveliscombe library by parents with babies and younger children is relatively low, access to alternative libraries will be very difficult and expensive for families with no access to a car, and mobile library services can only partially mitigate this impact.
- Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some people with the protected characteristics of Disability and / or Maternity, because of factors related to these characteristics, and some people in these groups could therefore be impacted by the closure of Wiveliscombe Library.
- Decision makers should note that the closure of Wiveliscombe Library would mean that people in some rural communities in the west and north of the catchment are unlikely to be able to access an alternative library building within a 20-minute driving time; this impact is related to Rurality.
- People in low income households living in Wiveliscombe town are less likely to have access to a vehicle and the cost of public transport could be a significant barrier for this group. This means that they would be less able to access the library in Taunton or Wellington, and therefore the impact of closing Wiveliscombe library would be more significant.

- The impact of closing Wiveliscombe library is more significant for users of the public computer access service, which would not be provided in Wiveliscombe if the library closed. Although the evidence suggests that this is likely to affect a relatively small number of people in Wiveliscombe, impacts would be very significant for people claiming Universal Credit, people claiming other benefits and also clients of social landlords, given the limitations and cost of public transport.

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)</p>			
<p>Identified issue drawn from your conclusions</p>	<p>Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?</p>	<p>Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?</p>	<p>How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?</p>
<p>Age</p>			
<p>People aged 65 or over form a higher proportion of Wiveliscombe Library users than of library users across Somerset as a whole. The impact of a library closure on older people was a strong theme in consultation responses for Wiveliscombe Library. In particular, impacts were highlighted for socially-isolated older people who would no longer have convenient access to activities and events at Wiveliscombe library that are well-used by this group. As noted by many consultation respondents, this impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively through a mobile library service alone, and the impact on socially isolated older people may be more significant for Wiveliscombe.</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, alternative activities and services which could support socially-isolated older people (including the Home Library Service) would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, customers are made aware of other services which may help, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Data tells us that car ownership decreases with age, therefore accessing alternative library buildings at Wellington or Taunton may be more difficult for older people to do. Although public transport from Wiveliscombe to Taunton exists, journey times are long and the timetable is inconvenient. The limitations of public transport were a strong theme in the response from Wiveliscombe. These issues are likely to dissuade some users who previously walked to the library from accessing alternative libraries. That said, older people are</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made</p>

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
 APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, so public transport is at least likely to be affordable for this group. Community transport exists, but is more expensive (even for concessionary pass holders) and this is likely to dissuade many people from accessing alternative library buildings. Many older people using Wiveliscombe library are likely to travel into Wiveliscombe by car or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Wiveliscombe Library because other libraries (principally Wellington, but also Taunton and Dulverton from some parts of the rural catchment) are accessible by car, within reasonable driving times. Wellington has convenient parking nearby to the library.</p>	<p>services would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Taunton or Wellington may be more difficult for younger children to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Wiveliscombe to Taunton exists, journey times are long and the timetable is inconvenient; the service is also expensive for those who do not have a concessionary bus pass. The limitations of public transport were a strong theme in the response from Wiveliscombe. These issues are likely to dissuade users who previously walked to the library from accessing alternative libraries by public transport; a significant impact on younger children which can only be partially mitigated by a mobile library service. However, this is likely to affect a relatively low number of users, as car ownership in Wiveliscombe catchment is relatively high, and usage of other libraries is significant (both within the catchment as a whole, and in Wiveliscombe town). Many people living in Wiveliscombe are likely to access Taunton or Wellington for other local services. Nonetheless, there are likely to be some families who</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, Mobile Library Services would be provided, which would maintain walking access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, more limited mobile library services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>may be impacted more significantly because they do not have access to a vehicle.</p> <p>A related impact concerns some primary school children, who are currently able to use Wiveliscombe Library after attending the nearby primary or infant schools. Those who currently walk from school to the library (perhaps because the household either does not have access to a car, or because the only household car is being used for work purposes) will be particularly impacted. It is not feasible to visit an alternative library building by public transport after school. After school usage of libraries may become significantly more difficult for some primary school children - those without access to a car after school are likely to only be able to use alternative library buildings on Saturdays. This impact is likely to affect a relatively significant number of people in Wiveliscombe, because of the high levels of usage amongst this group.</p> <p>Accessing alternative library buildings independently will be significantly more difficult and expensive for older children / teenagers who are currently able to walk to Wiveliscombe Library. Consultation feedback indicates that some younger people may use Wiveliscombe library for study at certain times, and these customers may not be able to access this service independently if the library closed (because they are less likely to have access to or use of a vehicle).</p> <p>Events and activities for children have a limited attendance at Wiveliscombe library, however, alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. The provision of Library Outreach Services for children in Wiveliscombe does not form part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would not be provided by the Library Service if a Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. Activities for children would be available at</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, we will explore the demand for Mobile Library visits to Wiveliscombe Primary school. If possible, we will provide a monthly mobile library visit to the school site.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Subject to demand and agreement from the school, a regular mobile library visit will be made to the primary school if a community library partnership cannot be developed.</p> <p>Customers are made aware of services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and supported to set up alternative activities in</p>
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Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>alternative library buildings, but the access issues noted above may mean that there is a further level of impact on pre-school and primary school children.</p> <p>Digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not generally suitable for the very young; and some older people are more likely to be digitally excluded and may not be able to access Digital Library Services. This means that young children and older people would be impacted more if Wiveliscombe Library closed, because they are likely to be less able to access this alternative service.</p>	<p>during any library closure. Limited support (provision of guidance) could be provided to any groups wishing to set up replacement activities in Wiveliscombe.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, there is no specific action that can mitigate this potential impact.</p>		<p>Wiveliscombe, if it is not possible to maintain a library building.</p>
<p>Disability</p>			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Wellington or Taunton may be more difficult for some disabled people to do, as they are more likely to rely on public transport. Although public transport from Wiveliscombe to Taunton exists, journey times are long and the timetable is inconvenient. The limitations of public transport were a strong theme in the response from Wiveliscombe; and the cost of Community Transport alternatives was highlighted as being expensive during the community engagement exercise. Disabled people who are likely to be impacted by this issue are likely to be eligible for concessionary bus passes which enable travel at no charge, and low-floor buses run between Wiveliscombe and Taunton, so public transport is likely to be feasible. Nonetheless, for users who previously walked to the library, or for disabled users who accessed</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. This would maintain walking or mobility scooter / wheelchair access to (more limited) library services. Alternative</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or accessible by mobility scooter. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library</p>

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>the library using mobility scooters or wheelchairs, the limitations of the bus service and the cost of community transport is likely to dissuade people who are unable to access a vehicle from using alternative library services. Some disabled people using Wiveliscombe library travel into Wiveliscombe by car from the outskirts or surrounding villages; this group would be less affected by the closure of Wiveliscombe Library because other libraries (principally Welilngton, but also Taunton and Dulverton from some parts of the catchment) are a reasonable distance away. Wellington has parking close to the library.</p> <p>Some digital library services that are available as an alternative form of service delivery are not suitable for people who experience sensory loss. Specialist collections which can support people with sensory loss or other certain disabilities (such as large print books, no-print collections of braille or talking books, or access to our autism collection) are currently limited in Wiveliscombe Library, and comparable facilities are available through the Mobile Library Service.</p> <p>Social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some disabled people, as a result of a lack of mobility, difficulty communicating, or anxiety about social contact. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). People with the protected characteristic of disability may be impacted more than others by the closure of Wiveliscombe Library, because some disabled people are more likely to be socially isolated. As noted by many consultation respondents, this impact would be difficult to mitigate effectively</p>	<p>services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, we will work with our staff to ensure relevant customer are aware of the availability of these collections on the mobile library service.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, alternative activities and services which could support socially-isolated disabled people (including the Home Library Service)</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>Customers with sensory loss or other relevant disabilities are aware of services available at other locations.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, customers are made aware of other services which may help, the Home Library Service, and the alternative library</p>
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Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>through a mobile library service alone, and so the impact is likely to be more significant.</p> <p>The alternative library buildings at Dulverton and Taunton are wheelchair accessible, and should present no access difficulties for people with mobility problems. Wellington library has assisted wheelchair access via a ramp to the rear of the building. The Mobile Library Service is accessible via a tail-lift. We consider that disabled customers of Wiveliscombe Library will face a limited impact related to physical accessibility, although some customers using Wellington Library as an alternative would require some staff assistance to access the library building.</p> <p>Hearing loops are available at many Somerset Libraries, and we will ensure that this facility is available in nearby alternative libraries if Wiveliscombe Library closes. The Mobile Library Service does not have a hearing loop facility, and so any customers with hearing loss that currently make use of the hearing loop facility at Wiveliscombe could be impacted if using the Mobile Library Service as an alternative.</p>	<p>would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p> <p>We will purchase a portable hearing loop facility for the mobile library and advise customers of its availability, on the mobile library and at alternative library buildings.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, customers with hearing loss are aware of the facilities in alternative services.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			

Marriage and Civil Partnership			
No impacts identified.			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
<p>Accessing alternative library buildings at Wellington or Taunton may be more difficult for people with the protected characteristic of Pregnancy or Maternity to do, particularly for households with no car, or in households where the sole household vehicle is in use for work purposes by one parent for the majority of the week. Although public transport from Wiveliscombe to Taunton exists, journey times are long and the timetable is inconvenient; the service is also expensive for those who do not have a concessionary bus pass. The limitations of public transport were a strong theme in the response from Wiveliscombe. These issues are likely to dissuade users who previously walked to the library from accessing alternative libraries by public transport; a significant impact on new parents which can only be partially mitigated by a mobile library service. However, this is likely to affect a relatively low number of users, as car ownership in Wiveliscombe catchment is relatively high, and usage of other libraries is significant (both within the catchment as a whole, and in Wiveliscombe town). Many people living in Wiveliscombe are likely to access Taunton or Wellington for other local services. Nonetheless, there are likely to be some new parents who may be impacted more significantly because they do not have access to a vehicle.</p> <p>Events and activities for babies have a limited attendance at Wiveliscombe library, however, alternative mobile library or digital services would not provide these activities. The provision of Library Outreach Services for children in Wiveliscombe does not form part of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 and would not</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, we will signpost alternative</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p> <p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning –</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot. Customers are made aware of these services and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p> <p>Customers are made aware of services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and</p>

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>be provided by the Library Service if a Community Library Partnership cannot be developed. Activities for babies would be available at alternative library buildings, but the access issues noted above may mean that there is a further level of impact on pre-school and primary school children. Furthermore, social isolation may apply to a greater extent for some people with the protected characteristic of maternity, as a result of the sudden change in lifestyle, or poor post-natal mental health. Many library service users are less lonely and socially isolated because of visits to the library and the opportunity to interact that these offer (whether through structured events and activities or otherwise). People with the protected characteristic of maternity may be impacted more than others by the closure of Wiveliscombe Library. The public transport access issues would exacerbate this impact.</p>	<p>services through customer engagement during any library closure. Limited support (provision of guidance) could be provided to any groups wishing to set up replacement activities for new parents in Wiveliscombe</p>	<p>Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>supported to set up alternative activities in Wiveliscombe, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>
<p>Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)</p>			
<p>The proportion of people in Wiveliscombe catchment identifying themselves as 'White British' is statistically significantly higher than the proportion of people in Somerset as a whole identifying themselves in this ethnic group. However, the proposed change in Wiveliscombe is not considered to have any potentially disproportionate discriminatory effect on White British people because this is the majority ethnic group in the catchment.</p> <p>Some consultation responses received noted a potential impact for migrant workers who used libraries for internet access. Although the consultation exercise has not provided any evidence that migrant workers are likely to be significantly disadvantaged by the closure of Wiveliscombe Library, this could be because of a limited engagement by this group in the consultation exercise. On balance, we feel that this potential impact merits highlighting to decision makers because the public computer access service would not be available through</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p> <p>If it is not possible to establish a Community Library Partnership in Wiveliscombe, we will signpost alternative services through customer engagement</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Customers are made aware of public computer access services at alternative library buildings in nearby communities, if a library building cannot be maintained.</p>

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>other means in Wiveliscombe if the library closed, and because it is possible that migrant workers may find it more difficult to access alternative public computer access services in nearby libraries, either because of working patterns or the affordability of public transport for those that may not have access to a vehicle.</p> <p>People whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes to library services, potentially leading to a situation where alternative services are not accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to understand and adapt to new ways of providing services could have other mental health and wellbeing impacts. Clear and tailored communications during the implementation of change, particularly face to face communications through frontline library staff, will be key in mitigating any impact.</p>	<p>during any library closure.</p> <p>We will carry out targeted communication of agreed changes to library services in Wiveliscombe to individuals and groups whose first language is not English. This will be done individually by frontline library staff where possible, and more generally through communications to appropriate representative groups.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning & Equalities Manager Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>Changes are communicated effectively to people whose first language is not English.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p>			
<p>No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.</p>			

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

Sex			
Females are likely to be disproportionately affected by changes to library services in Wiveliscombe, because a higher proportion of Wiveliscombe library users are female. Older females are also likely to be disproportionately affected because car ownership is lower amongst this group in Somerset. This means that the general impacts of closing Wiveliscombe library are likely to impact people with the protected characteristic of Sex.	There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.		
Sexual Orientation			
No impacts identified. Although a potential impact for people with this protected characteristic was identified prior to the consultation exercise, evidence gathered through the consultation does not support our previous assumptions.			
Other (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)			
Caring responsibilities Carers may face greater demands on their time as a result of a loss of independent access to library services for the person they care for. Carers may be required to transport the people they care for to alternative library buildings, although public transport may be an alternative option.	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital access to (more limited) library	Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019	If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, more limited library services are available locally. Customers are made aware of these services, the alternative library buildings in nearby communities, and

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

	services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.		public transport access to these alternative libraries.
<p>Rurality</p> <p>Whilst some rural communities in the catchment would have reasonable transport links to alternative libraries in Wellington, Taunton and Dulverton, public transport and car access to alternative libraries would be more lengthy and time-consuming than access to Wiveliscombe for some of the rural communities in Wiveliscombe library catchment; particularly those to the north and west of Wiveliscombe. Villages with access by public transport to Wiveliscombe library would have access, via the same public transport route, to either Taunton or Dulverton libraries (although journey times and timetables may be less convenient). As part of the consideration and development of the Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1, we have undertaken a preliminary assessment of rural communities that do not currently have a mobile library service, but which could be impacted by the closure of a nearby library. In this exercise, Milverton, Huish Champflower and Brompton Ralph were identified as rural communities with potentially significant usage of Wiveliscombe library. We anticipate that, subject to demand, a mobile library service would be provided to these communities as well as Wiveliscombe itself if Wiveliscombe Library closed. However, people in this part of Wiveliscombe catchment are likely to continue to use Wiveliscombe as a hub for other local services, and would have to travel further to access alternative</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, the Mobile Library network in the area will be reviewed. Provision has been made within budgets to provide additional mobile stops in rural communities with high levels of usage of Wiveliscombe library. Services would be designed in conjunction with communities, and would be communicated to customers.</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, more limited mobile library services are available in the most rural communities most affected. Customers are made aware of these services, and the alternative library buildings in nearby communities.</p>

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>libraries in Langport or Martock. Whilst this impact is not directly related to the characteristic of rurality, we have noted it here (alongside mitigating actions) for information.</p> <p>The Library Service Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 seeks to design a library network which we estimate will enable access to a library building by car (in normal traffic conditions) in around 20 minutes or less for the vast majority of Somerset users. Our analysis of driving times indicates that this objective would be met for the majority of Wiveliscombe catchment whether or not a library building could be maintained in Wiveliscombe. However, we estimate that residents in the sparsely populated districts to the north and west of Wiveliscombe would be around 20-30 minutes' drive from alternative libraries at Wellington, Williton, and Taunton. This was a strong theme in feedback from stakeholder groups in Wiveliscombe, who noted the role the town has as a rural hub for a relatively wide area. These customers would be relatively disadvantaged by the closure of Wiveliscombe library, in part due to a characteristic of rurality.</p>	<p>There is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		
<p>Low Income</p> <p>Levels of income and employment in the catchment as a whole are slightly higher than the average for Somerset. However, levels of income in parts of Wiveliscombe town are around the average for the County, and the community engagement exercise highlighted that there were some areas of deprivation within walking distance of the current library site. People in low income households are less likely to have access to a vehicle, and (as has been noted above) the cost of public transport to Taunton for non-concessionary pass holders is significant. Whilst mobile and digital library services would mitigate the impact to some extent, people on low incomes who do not have</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, Digital Library Services and Mobile Library Services would be provided. These would maintain walking or digital</p>	<p>Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning – Nov. 2018 - June 2019</p>	<p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, more limited alternative services are accessible on foot or by digital means. Customers are made</p>

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
 APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

<p>access to a vehicle are likely to face a more significant impact from the closure of Wiveliscombe Library.</p> <p>Public access computer use is relatively low at Wiveliscombe library, and usage of other libraries for public computer access is high, both within the catchment and Wiveliscombe town. Nonetheless, some comments from users of Wiveliscombe library noted the usage of this service by unemployed people, and the significant impact for benefit claimants. Across the consultation as a whole many stakeholder groups, staff and members of the public expressed concern about the impact of library closures on unemployed people and those on low incomes. People on low incomes are more likely to rely on public computer access in libraries than those with higher incomes who are better able to afford smart phones, tablets or other means of accessing the internet. Unemployed people claiming universal credit are particularly reliant on internet access, and the impact of not being able to access the internet can be much more significant for this group. A small number of people on low incomes, particularly those claiming universal credit who do not have access to a car, are likely to be very significantly impacted by the closure of Wiveliscombe library, as public internet access will not be provided through alternative means and public transport access to alternative libraries is expensive and time-consuming.</p>	<p>access to (more limited) library services. Alternative services would be signposted through customer engagement during any library closure.</p> <p>If a Community Library Partnership cannot be established in Wiveliscombe, there is no specific action that can mitigate this impact.</p>		<p>aware of these services.</p>
<p>Military Status - no impact identified.</p>			

Somerset Library Service Consultation 2018
APPENDIX 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

Section 6 - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment	
The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published alongside the scrutiny and cabinet papers on 16 th October; each equalities impact assessment will also be made available as a separate document on the Library Service Redesign web pages.	
Completed by:	Oliver Woodhams / Jackie Swabey
Date	09/10/18
Signed off by:	Michele Cusack
Date	11/10/2018
Compliance sign off Date	09/10/2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	n/a
Review date:	This is a final version of the assessment of the change described in section 1. If necessary, it will be used to develop action plans for library closures, but the assessment will not be reviewed again.

APPENDIX 4iv

The Public Sector Equality Duty

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities “in the exercise of [their] functions, have due regard to the need to—

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under [the] Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

In *Bracking and others v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions* ([2013] EWCA Civ 1345) the court said that the Public Sector Equality Duty applies personally (in other words, it cannot be delegated) to the decision-maker. The decision maker must assess the risk and extent of any adverse impact and the ways in which such risk may be eliminated before the adoption of a proposed policy. It is not enough merely to take the risk into account as a “rearguard action”, following a concluded decision.

The decision maker should:

- (a) be aware of the duty to have “due regard” to the relevant matters in section 149;
- (b) fulfil the duty before and at the time the relevant policy is being considered;
and
- (c) exercise the duty “in substance” rigorously, and with an open mind as opposed to carrying out a tick-box exercise;

The duty is continuous – the decision maker must ensure that due regard is paid throughout the decision-making process. They must also make sure that officers who advise them are rigorous in obtaining and providing the necessary information on equalities impacts to the decision-makers so that they can discharge the duty.

Having properly appreciated the potential impact of the decision on the equality objectives (in paragraphs a) to c) of section 149) and the desirability of promoting them it is for the decision maker to decide how much weight should be given to the various factors which inform the decision, but they must be clear precisely what the equality implications of the decision are when they put them in the balance, and they must recognise the desirability of achieving them.

APPENDIX 4v

Background Papers

Data sources are listed in the background paper *Data analysis – methodology and data sources*, which can be found at <http://somersetlibraries.co.uk/redesign/>

Further data on needs, together with a geographical database of driving time estimates can be explored on the Library Service Re-design catchment mapping tool, at <https://catchments2018.azurewebsites.net/>

A summary of access data is available in the Evidence and Data section at <http://somersetlibraries.co.uk/redesign/>

Further information on needs can be found in Appendix 2 to this report. Further information on the public consultation can be found in Appendix 3.

Full details of recommended service provision can be found in Appendix 1 to this report, and the background papers at: <http://somersetlibraries.co.uk/redesign/>

- Mobile Library Services
- Library Outreach Services

Finally, further information on community library partnerships can be found on the libraries service redesign website at <http://somersetlibraries.co.uk/redesign/>