

# COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANT POLICIES, DECISIONS OR FUNCTIONS

1. **Title of Proposal:** Library Strategy  
**Service:** Library Service  
**Department:** Communities  
**Responsible Officer:** David Boocock  
**Date Completed:** 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**Aims:** Please identify the main aims of the policy, decision or function?

To review the Library Service in light of changing demand and needs of service users, new technical developments, CV-19 impact, economic efficiencies.

Consultation with stakeholders, users and library staff has taken place.

Scope – The areas under review within the Library Service include Archive Service, Schools Library Service, Home Delivery Library Service, Library Estate, Digital Library Service, Arts in Libraries

## 2. Community Impact Assessment

The Community Impact Assessment is aimed at maximising the opportunity to keep St.Helens a strong, prosperous and resilient community. All policies, decisions or functions will have an impact on the local community in St Helens. This tool acts as a prompt to identify what difference the proposal can make, and how we can use any proposal - even a proposal that cuts or removes a resource – as an opportunity to improve community wellbeing.

It provides an opportunity to think about where we might be able to reduce negative impacts, identify missed opportunities and capitalise on positive impacts.

**Community:** Please describe how your work will benefit the council & staff/ local community.

In 2021 and 2022, public consultation on the draft Library Strategy took place:

- Street-based representative survey: 2,022 respondents, gender, age, ethnicity, and location all reflect the Borough's population
- Open online and paper survey: 2,153 respondents, more library users in the sample which attracted more women and older respondents than the representative street survey
- Engagement events: 180 people
  - 26 online from across the Borough (including 11-18-year-olds)
  - 154 at pop-up events in Earlestown Market, Earlestown Wetherspoons and St.Helens town centre
- Library and Arts staff: 52 participants
- A range of Parish Councils and voluntary and community managed organisations were invited to meetings with Council officers and/or attend one of the engagement sessions to discuss being involved in the management of libraries.
  - 4 meetings with Parish Councils, 1 meeting with a Charity and 1 meeting with a Community organisation in 2021
  - 3 meetings with Parish Councils, 1 meeting with a Community Interest Company and 1 meeting with a community organisation

**3. How to use this tool**

**3.1 At the planning stage: *This is the best time to consider the difference this will make to the local community.*** Look down the checklist and identify how what you are doing will impact on people in St Helens. Engage with the Council's Social Value, Health, Environment, and Equality/Human Rights leads, during the planning, drafting, initiation phase of your project / proposal. **NB** use [info4sthelens](#) for key facts and figures about St.Helens

**3.2 Decisions:**

Engage with the Social Value, Health, Environment, and Equality/Human Rights leads to go through the tool and identify how your project will make a difference to the St.Helens community. Work with them. Use the tool identify the impact, inform the project, and record the outcome within the decision-making process. The Social Value, Health, Environment, and Equality/Human Rights implications and how they have been 'taken into account' must be available to the decision maker at the time they make the decision. Therefore, to demonstrate the decision maker was fully aware of the implications, the impact assessments must be attached as an appendix to the tabled report / proposal, when the decision is ratified.

**3.3 Evaluation**

Social Value, Health, Environment, and Equality/Human Rights implications which are integrated within a project effectively helps the project manager to evaluate and demonstrate the impact that the project has had on the community.

**4. Publishing the results of the assessment:**

This Impact Assessment Report must be used to inform Decisions, Scrutiny Reviews, Service Reviews, Policy Reviews, and Commissioning and Contract specifications. The Social Value, Health, Environment, and Equality/Human Rights implications and how they have been taken into account must visible for transparency and scrutiny, so impact assessments must be published as appendices to the decisions they accompany.

**Appendix 1- Further useful information - This is not an exhaustive list**

**Social Value** - The key principles of the St Helens Social Value Strategy are aimed using the council's influence and spending power to keep St.Helens a strong prosperous and resilient community:

- Buy Local – the Council will purchase goods and services from companies and organisations within the borough of St Helens.
- Employ Local – the Council, or any company or enterprise entering into council contracts will agree to source local labour at every opportunity.
- Spend local – any organisation under contract to the council will commit to:
  - Procuring goods and services from within the borough of St Helens, unless the goods or services are not available within the borough or potential savings are great
  - Setting up a base within the borough where appropriate for the task, project or contract
  - Consider commissioning work from small businesses, social enterprises or voluntary sector organisations within the borough unless the services required cannot be found within the borough
- Sustain Local – through the principles of Social Value, the council will seek to sustain and improve:
  - The economy – by stimulating local businesses through the council's spending power, and that of its contractors, to increase economic wellbeing
  - The community – by providing purposeful work, volunteering and learning opportunities for local people to build individual self-worth, foster community cohesion and improve the health and wellbeing
  - The environment – by minimising environmental damage from the transport of goods or services through procurement from businesses as close to the point of need as possible

**Environment** - How can your proposal help the council, its partners and contractors, and the community to do the following?

- Connecting and Engaging with Nature through Valuing Green Spaces, Habitats and Biodiversity
- Air Quality - improve air quality and reduce emissions
- Waste - promote the use of reusable resources and increase recycling
- Water - improve water quality, reduce water use, reduce flood risk, assess for multi-use applications/benefits
- Climate Change Resilience - incorporate climate change resilient plants into projects and developments
- Sustainable Energy - improve energy management, incorporate low carbon and renewable energy

**Health** - When considering the health impact of policy's/decisions/functions please consider the questions below. If in doubt check with the public health team who are happy to help:

1. What is the problem that the proposal is designed to address?
2. How does it link with health needs or health and wellbeing priorities?
3. What are the social and economic implications of the proposal?
4. Can we use the proposal to encourage Healthy Lifestyles - increase physical activity, improve diet, Improve emotional health and wellbeing, reducing risk taking behaviour, (smoking, alcohol, drugs, sexual health)?
5. Can we use the proposal to protecting public health – reduce hazards to health, improve public safety?
6. Can we use the proposal to promote any of the following health priorities?
  - Give every child the best start in life
  - Support for young people

## COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANT POLICIES, DECISIONS OR FUNCTIONS

- Obesity and excess weight
- Early detection and effective management of long term conditions
- Reduce unnecessary hospital admissions and readmissions
- Support for people with dementia

**Equality** - These are the questions to ask in the Equality Impact Assessment

1. Compared with previous arrangements, are there any changes to
  - a) the amount of budget or funding?
  - b) the service requirements or delivery specification?
  - c) the number or skill set of the workforce?
2. Will the changes impact upon or affect (i) the service quality, (ii) employment, (iii) equality of service access?
3. Is this a positive impact or a negative impact?
4. If this is a negative impact what are we doing to mitigate (lessen or remove) the impact upon this group?
5. If the negative impact cannot be mitigated, what steps have we made to communicate this to staff, service users, their families/carers, and the public?

**Human Rights** – Here are some examples of situations or circumstances when Human Rights must be considered, there are not an exhaustive list: (i) child protection cases, (ii) restraining children, adults or older people, (iii) Deprivation Of Liberty and detention of people under the Mental Health Act, (iv) using personal data / information, (v) applying for a child curfew order, (vi) closing of a school, (vii) compulsory purchase of property

If there is an issue linked to 'Human Rights', then you must be able to demonstrate that the proposed interference is (i) justified and proportionate to the circumstances and the intended objective, and (ii) is not arbitrary, unfair, or excessive

**COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANT POLICIES, DECISIONS OR FUNCTIONS**

**NB** Only fill in the “Action” column if there is an action which you have identified as a result of completing the Community Impact Assessment. If you add in any “Action”, then you must complete the “Who / When” column. Ensure that the “Action” is completed by the date required. Once the “Action” is completed, then it should be removed from the "Action" column and added to the "How will this be taken into account column."

<b>Checklist - impact on different aspects and sections of Community and Staff Groups</b>			
<b>Add rows as required</b>	<b>How will this be taken into account?</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who / When</b>
<b>SOCIAL VALUE</b> - What have you done to ensure that wherever possible this proposal helps the council, contract providers, partner organisations, and the community to?			
Buy Local – ensure works, goods and services are procured from local organisations and companies?	Commission local artists and authors to deliver activities within libraries. Arts in Libraries, Meet the Authors etc. Support local publishers to get their work into libraries and get authors that they publish to get their work into libraries	Ongoing	Library Services Manager
Employ Local - ensure local labour is sourced at every opportunity? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing purposeful work and volunteering opportunities</li> <li>• Hiring temporary or seasonal staff for short-term contracts</li> <li>• Taking on local apprentices and work experience trainees</li> <li>• Improving access to the workplace for those who are long term unemployed or not in employment, education or training</li> </ul>	The majority of Library Service staff live within the borough.	No further action required	
Spend Local – requires contract providers to use local organisations and companies for works, goods and services?	The Library Service is part of regional frameworks and collectives for purchasing stock which limit local borough spend and maximise value for money – this is the most economic and efficient way of purchasing library materials.	Ongoing	Library Services Manager

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	There is an attempt to keep spend in NW Region where opportunities exist Inter library loans – NW network of library stock can be accessed – efficient and effective sharing of stock		
Sustain Local - stimulates local businesses, community interest companies and social innovation etc. through council spending power, and that of its contractors, to increase environmental, economic and social wellbeing?	The provision of the Business and Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) in St Helens Library provides support and training for local businesses and entrepreneurs  Providing meeting spaces with libraries for local groups and organisations	Ongoing	Library Services Manager
<b>ENVIRONMENT – How can your proposal help the council, its partners and contractors, and the community to do the following?</b>			
Connecting and engaging communities with nature through valuing green spaces, habitats, and biodiversity	Summer Reading Challenge 2021 theme was Wild World Heroes – a partnership with the World Wildlife Fund – events and activities to encourage reading about nature and animals  The Library Service links with the Sports Development Team to plan health walks from the library around the local area which increases knowledge of what is on offer including parks and open spaces.	Ongoing	Library Services Manager
Climate change resilience e.g. incorporating climate change resilient plants/trees & natural habitat creation into projects & developments	Environment element in the Arts in Libraries programme Programming artists who can help focus on environment	Ongoing	Library Services Manager

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Water – improving water quality, reduce water use, building flood risk management and sustainable drainage solutions into projects	N/A		
Waste – reducing consumption, promoting the use of reusable resources (e.g. reusable coffee cups), recycling, encouraging people to grow their own food and make their own compost	All sites recycle all waste materials that can be recycled. Old book stock is also sent for recycling.  Eco Bio PVC Library Cards introduced in 2022	Ongoing	Library Services Manager
Sustainable energy e.g. design and build with use of micro-generation technology in mind, improve energy management, incorporate low carbon and renewable energy.	General age and energy performance of the library building stock is poor	Any new locations will be designed to be energy efficient e.g. St.Helens Library which opened in 2020 has energy efficient lighting.	Library Services Manager
Improving air quality & reducing emissions e.g. encouraging walking, cycling, use of public transport etc. Use of ultra-low emission vehicles or electric vehicles as standard for Council business operations.	Plans for library fleet to become electric Arts in Libraries events – Cultural Hubs – reducing car use by encouraging people to walk or use public transport to get to library venues	Electric vehicles dependent on capital funding and work being undertaken by colleagues in Place	Library Services Manager
<b>HEALTH AND WELLBEING - How can your proposal help the council, its partners and contractors, and the community to do the following?</b>			
Increase or improve employment, skills, income or economy	Access to PCs and Wi-Fi in libraries enable people to access Universal Credit benefits, complete job searching and job applications, study and educational needs satisfied.	Ongoing	Library Services Manager

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	<p>Book stock that is current and up to date; satisfies demands of the national curriculum</p> <p>Business and Intellectual Property Centre in St Helens Library opened in 2021, helping support small business start-up – Led by the British Library and working in partnership with the Chamber and Combined Authority – providing access to business patent databases and copyright ownership etc.</p>		
Improve living and working conditions	N/A	No action required	
Improve Public Health, promote healthy lifestyles, and reduce risk taking behaviour (e.g. Promote healthy eating, physical activity, sexual health. Reduce domestic abuse, obesity, smoking, drugs and alcohol)	<p>A venue for many Public Health Projects for ways to reach people – e.g. Health and Wellbeing messages shared by library digital networks</p> <p>Library staff have received training on – suicide prevention, domestic violence, prevent, safeguarding, first aid, mental health awareness.</p> <p>Reading Well Collection of books on a range of physical health and mental health issues – e.g. self-esteem, depression, anxiety.</p> <p>Social Prescribing - in partnership with CCG – GP referral to Reading Well</p>	Indicators measuring the impact of mental health and wellbeing activities will be developed and reported.	Library Services Manager

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	collections or Creative Alternatives Arts in Library programme		
Improve mental health and mental wellbeing	<p>Archive is relevant to the present as well and the past – e.g. current project on recording reflective accounts of experiences of the Coronavirus Pandemic. Oral History Project – also focuses on marginalised groups – e.g. LGBT, BAME, Refugees and Asylum Seeker.</p> <p>Arts in Libraries programme offers mental health programme</p>	Continue to plan activities and events	Library Services Manager
Improve public safety and reduce hazards	N/A		
Prevent unequal geographic/spatial impact on different council wards	<p>Does the library service require an equal geographical presence? What is the catchment area for a modern library building? Accessibility needs to consider the trio of delivery options - virtual/online, library building/estate, and physical outreach (school/home delivery/children’s centres etc) Accessibility of library buildings – ease of access- public transport routes, cost of public transport, walking distance</p>	<p>Key is understanding the impact of removing the traditional library service from its present geographical locations.</p> <p>Locality Delivery model to be used to place libraries in areas of greatest need.</p> <p>Work with organisations on the Community Managed Library offer</p>	Library Services Manager

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Link your proposal with Health and Wellbeing Strategy Priorities	The role of the service to contribute to Mental Health, Wellbeing and Resilience and Tackling Health Inequalities has been referenced within the Library Strategy and will be reflected in the Public Health Annual Report 2022.	Ongoing	Library Services Manager
<b>EQUALITY</b> - What positive or negative impact might this proposal or function have on the following protected characteristics? – Age, Disability (Including Sensory, Physical and Learning Disabilities, Autism and Mental Health), Sex, Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Gender Reassignment, Marriage & Civil Partnership, Pregnancy & Maternity.			
What opportunity is there to advance equality of opportunity in services and employment (i) access, (ii) quality, and (iii) outcome?	<p>Low demand for translation and interpretation – but service has access to translation and interpretation service.</p> <p>Libraries have stock in different community languages and children’s books to support Education’s English as an Additional Language Service.</p> <p>Experienced at working with the Deafness Resource Centre to promote access, event and activities for the Deaf and Hearing-Impaired communities, education services for children with hearing impairment – e.g., signed read and rhyme times</p> <p>Similar work with the Visual Impairment Team for blind and visual impaired customers</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Include an equality profile (age, gender, disability, and race, sexual orientation, religion etc) linked to the answers to enable disaggregated report to identify outcomes for different protected characteristics.</p> <p>This would enable us to identify if who need, who uses and how to develop services</p>	Library Services Manager

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	<p>Special education needs Bookstart packs available for Early Years.</p> <p>SEND friendly library programme with Designated Clinical Officer Julie Hoodless CCG/Integrated Services</p> <p><b>Measuring Library Use</b>                      Number of visits – visitor counters / Visits to eLibrary                      Number of loans / items issues                      Number of PC bookings                      Number of active library members                      Cost per visit                      Where the membership card is used then demographic information is available for analysis.</p>	<p>The Library Strategy is proposing that libraries are relocated based on the Localities Delivery strategy and co-located with partners</p>	
<p>What opportunities are there to (i) eliminate the risk of discrimination, harassment and victimisation, (ii) report hate crime, (iii) challenge modern slavery and exploitation?</p>	<p>Customer satisfaction is monitored via Contact Centre, on social media, letters, emails, expressions of gratitude etc</p>	<p>Customer Satisfaction KPI measure to be introduced in 2022</p>	<p>Head of Culture and Wellbeing</p>
<p>What opportunities are there to promote community cohesion through (i) valuing local history and heritage (ii) promoting a positive attitude towards disability and autism, (iii) bringing people from diverse backgrounds together to celebrate shared values, (iv) supporting care leavers, carers, lone parents, older people, younger</p>	<p>Libraries engage with both Adult and Children’s Social Care and Local Disability Groups to seek advice on making services as accessible as possible. The impact of this work has been recognised in Ofsted Inspections in recent years.</p>	<p>Continue to work in partnership and to provide activities and events</p>	<p>Library Services Manager</p>

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people, armed forces and veterans, (v) welcoming new communities.	The Arts in Libraries programme provides community cohesion with events tailored to bring people together from different backgrounds and that highlight issues such as race and division.		
<b>HUMAN RIGHTS</b> – What positive or negative impact might this proposal or function have on Human Rights and Children’s Rights? If there is an impact on ‘Human Rights’, the EIA must demonstrate that the interference is (i) justified and proportionate to the circumstances and the intended objective, and (ii) is not arbitrary, unfair, or excessive			
All children have an equal right to (i) participate on all matters that affect them, to be listened to, to freely express their views, and (ii) to be protected from manipulation, violence, abuse, and exploitation	Wide programme of events aimed at Children and Young People	New impact measures to be introduced in 2022/23 that include the voice of the child	Head of Culture and Wellbeing
Does the decision involve Human Rights protected areas e.g. safeguarding, DOLs, detainment or restraint, peaceful assembly, data protection, privacy and private family life, marriage, religion?	No implications on protected areas identified	No further action required	