

Equality Impact Assessment

The Council is required to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The duty also covers marriage and civil partnership but only with regard to eliminating discrimination. And in Wales we also have to treat Welsh and English on an equal basis as well as promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language.

Further advice on completing impact assessments can be found on StaffNet

http://staffnet.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/corp_cust_services/equalities/equalities_policies_guidance/equality_impact_assessments.aspx

Title and description of the policy, procedure, practice or decision (referred to as “policy” throughout form).	Library Services Review 2013-2014
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Who is responsible for developing and implementing the policy?

Name	Paula Ham
Job Title	Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources
Directorate	Learning and Skills
Division	Strategy Community Learning and Resources

1. Who will be affected by this policy?

These groups will be affected by this policy:

- Library service users across the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Potential library service users across the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Possible specific impacts upon library service users in Dinas Powys, St. Athan, Sully and Wenvoe.
- Possible alteration to working hours and workplace for some employees.
- Voluntary bodies who may be involved in the running of community libraries.

2. Does the policy relate to an area where there are known?

The Vale of Glamorgan seeks to make its library services available and accessible to all residents. Membership data is collected to inform library service provision and assess the extent to which those groups of people with a protected characteristic are able to access relevant services. Such groups include home borrowers, speakers of other languages, those with visual impairments, those with mobility impairments, parents/carers and children.

Examples of how this data is used to inform service provision include:

- Language choice – in relation to the provision of books in community languages.
- Age – in relation to book and other resource purchase for children
- Welsh language – in relation to provision of materials and activities.
- Disability – in relation to the provision of talking books, eAudio service and specialised equipment.
- Concessions – free talking book loans for visually impaired people.

In addition, a drive for access improvements and DDA compliance has ensured that access and facilities at all libraries has improved in recent years.

Every effort is made to ensure accessibility to libraries and their services for all residents across the Vale. These areas will be protected and enhanced by this review.

3. Decisions must be based on robust evidence.

The following evidence has been used to inform the review of library services:

- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Libraries Survey 2012-2013
- Footfall data for all library opening hours 2012-2013
- Books issues data 2012-2013

- Public consultation about the future of library services, November 2013 – December 2013, also distributed to LSB partners and town and community councils.
- Staff consultation about the future of the library services, November 2013
- Equalities monitoring data 2012-2013
- Libraries membership data
- PC sessions data 2012-2013
- Visitor trend statistics
- Equality Impact Assessment – Cessation of Mobile Library Service , July 2009

4. There is a legal duty to consult and involve people and organisations representing the protected characteristics where it is identified that they are potentially affected by the policy (for example men; women; parents; carers; the black and minority ethnic community (including asylum seekers, refugees, economic migrants); disabled people; the Welsh speaking community; the lesbian, gay and bisexual community; transgender people; different faith groups; etc.).

To ensure that stakeholders' views continue to shape the future of the library services in the Vale of Glamorgan, the following consultations have taken place:

Staff consultation

All Vale of Glamorgan libraries staff were invited to attend focus groups about the future of the library services. Five focus groups were held in the week commencing 11 November 2013, at a variety of locations and times to allow as many members of staff as possible to attend. Those members of staff who were unable to attend were invited to send comments and questions via email or post to the Council's Improvement Manager. 53 members of staff participated in the focus groups.

These focus groups aimed to discover which elements of the library service staff deemed most important, any methods of reducing costs and any methods of increasing income generation so as to make the service more sustainable. The findings of these focus groups informed the content of the public consultation.

Public Consultation

A survey, informed by the findings of the staff focus groups, was made available to all residents of the Vale of Glamorgan, identified stakeholders and other interested parties. The consultation period commenced on the 12th November 2013 and was open until 15th December 2013.

The survey was published on the Council website, hard copies were made available in all libraries, as well as large print copies. Interested parties were able to contact the Council to request a hard copy be sent to them. The survey was also sent to the Local Service Board citizen's panel, Vale Viewpoint. Stakeholders were invited to make further comments via email, telephone or post.

2,725 responses to the survey were received. A cross-section of society engaged with the survey, including these people from particular protected characteristic groups:

Age

Under 16 – 2% (48)
16-24 – 2% (57)
25-34 – 6% (169)
35-54 – 28% (755)
55-74 – 46% (1229)
75 + - 15% (396)

Disability – 18% (478)

Deaf/deafened/hard of hearing – 27% (124)
Learning impairment/difficulties – 3% (13)
Long standing illness or health condition – 46% (210)
Mental health difficulties – 8% (36)
Mobility impairment – 38% (175)
Visual impairment – 11% (50)

Wheelchair user – 3% (14)
Other – 8% (37)
Prefer not to say – 12 (3%)

Gender

Male – 36% (949)
Female – 63% (1686)
Transgender – 11
Prefer not to say - 10

Race

White – Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British - 94% (2496)
White – Irish – 1% (25)
Mixed/ multiple ethnic groups – 12
Asian/ Asian British – 1% (19)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British – 10
Other – 3% (71)
Prefer not to say – 2% (40)

During the consultation period, a petition was also received from concerned residents and visitors to Penarth Library, requesting that it be kept open in its current location.

Further consultation will be carried out with regard to community supported/managed libraries and the relocation of St. Athan Library.

5. Will this policy have a significant effect on how services are delivered?

Yes No

Planned changes to opening hours, the removal of overnight security from Barry Library and a 20% reduction in cleaning costs may

result in changes to working patterns for some members of staff, either based within the library services or within building and cleaning services. There is also the potential for redundancies and pay reductions for some. The impact of these actions cannot be fully assessed until plans have been finalised.

The introduction of four community supported or managed libraries across the Vale may change the way in which certain libraries deliver their services. Each library, Dinas Powys, St. Athan, Sully and Wenvoe, may adopt a different model of service delivery. A location specific Equality Impact Assessment for each library will highlight any significant effects on service delivery.

6. Will this policy have a significant effect on how other organisations operate?

Yes No

We may be calling on other organisations to assist us in introducing community supported or managed libraries. We do not foresee any significant impact on how these organisations operate, but this will be further investigated in location specific Equality Impact Assessments.

7. Will the policy impact upon other policies or practices?

Yes No

Please detail:

In order to make the best use of the reduced book fund, the potential uses for the available budget will have to be set. Reductions will be proportional and will not impact adversely upon any of the protected characteristics groups. For example, there will still be materials available in other languages. Children's books, audiobooks and large print books will still be accessible.

8. Have you identified any evidence that the policy could directly or indirectly discriminate against or have an adverse impact on people in any of the protected groups?

Yes No

The staff and public consultations highlighted particular areas for concern. These included concerns about reduced accessibility if libraries are relocated, with specific references being made to public transport routes, parking spaces and access on foot. A number of comments highlighted a worry that there may not be access to Council facilities, for example food recycling bags, in outlying areas of the Vale if libraries are relocated or closed. Respondents to the public consultation also highlighted libraries as a valuable learning resource with access to online and printed materials – there were concerns that any changes to the library services may impact negatively on educational opportunities for members of all ages. In addition, libraries are seen to provide a safe environment for everyone, including children who can be left there on their own without parental supervision. Respondents did not want changes to opening hours and movements towards more community based services to remove this indiscriminate facility.

These concerns will be given due consideration in location specific Equality Impact Assessments for each of the proposed community libraries and the relocation of St. Athan. These concerns will not be realised at Barry, Cowbridge, Penarth and Llantwit Major libraries where opening hours will be adjusted to mirror footfall patterns.

Recommendation One - The Council develops a phased approach to the development of community supported/managed libraries and that this is applied to the libraries at St Athan, Dinas Powys, Sully and Wenvoe.

The Council recognises that a fair, equitable and non-discriminatory service will still need to be provided. This concern has been echoed in some consultation responses and certain issues have been highlighted through undertaking this Equality Impact Assessment.

Specific Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken for each proposed community library. The following things will need to be considered in each Equality Impact Assessment:

- Will the same facilities be available in community libraries, such as talking books, large print books, Welsh/other language books?
- Will the service be provided in a neutral and indiscriminate manner?
- Will people of working age be able to access community libraries if opening hours are adjusted?
- Will the book prescription services still be available?
- Will NEETs be able to access job clubs/computer facilities?
- Will there be a reliance on more elderly members of the population to support these?

- Will services still be available specifically for children/parents/carers?
- Will there be opportunities to expand facilities and provision?

Recommendation 2 - The library service increases data collection to demonstrate how it contributes to the poverty agenda and that it uses data analysis to support applications for learning and development grants.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics.

Recommendation 3 - Charges for library services are increased with immediate effect in line with the schedule set out in Appendix I and that further work be undertaken on the development of other income generation and grant funding opportunities.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics. Weekly sessions for children, parents and carers will continue to run at no cost.

Recommendation 4 - A 'Friends Group' is established at all libraries to increase opportunities for the library service to be further embraced by the community but also to raise funding and apply for external grants.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics. There may be positive impacts with increased fundraising helping to support the library service to remain accessible to all.

Recommendation 5 - Library services work closely with other departments responsible for lifelong learning, arts and culture and explore opportunities to increase digital inclusion and education further.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics. There may be positive impacts with increased opportunities for people with protected characteristics.

Recommendation 6 - Library opening hours across the Vale of Glamorgan are adjusted to more closely track library user footfall thereby ensuring that the efficiency of our libraries is improved.

Changes to opening hours will be made based on footfall numbers. The proposed changes to opening hours will only have a limited adverse impact as the libraries will be closed when footfall is lowest. There will be some adverse impacts on individuals who will not be able to access a library out of their working hours during the week. This impact will be mitigated through weekend opening and an extension of the online services available. A concern was raised about the lack of a safe environment available to children after school.

Recommendation 7 - The library service further develops and promotes e-books and other digital services to its members.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics. For some protected characteristics, electronic and online services will be more accessible and will thus have a positive impact. Due regard will be given to providing increased access to e-books and digital services in languages other than English.

Recommendation 8 - The overnight security service provided at Barry Library is replaced with CCTV during 2014/15.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics.

Recommendation 9 - Cleaning costs are reduced by 20% across all libraries in the Vale during 2014/15.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics.

Recommendation 10 - The book fund is reduced from £220,000 by £25,000 to £195,000 with effect from April 2015.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics. Any reduction to the book fund will be proportionate – there will still be access to resources in English, Welsh and other languages, children's books, large print books and audiobooks.

Recommendation 11 - Invest £250,000 during 2014/15 to upgrade and refurbish Llantwit Major Library to ensure the environment and service meets the needs of the community.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics. Positive impacts may arise, such as better

accessibility and access to facilities for disabled people.

Recommendation 12 - Invest £88,000 in 2015/16 to address damp in Penarth Library.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics. Investment will be used to refurbish and remove damp in the children's library and will thus have a positive impact upon children and young people as well as parents and carers.

Recommendation 13 - Upgrade and extend the library Wi-Fi service during 2014/2015.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics. All who use electronic media within libraries should benefit from this improvement.

Recommendation 14 - Progress work to relocate library services in St Athan.

A specific impact assessment will be undertaken which will pay due regard to equality in terms of the proposed location of the new library.

Recommendation 15 - Introduce a 'pop-up library service in Barry during 2014/15 and dependent on its success investigate expanding the service to other areas.

No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to any specific protected characteristics. We will ensure that 'pop up' libraries are accessible to all. Introducing this new scheme will bring the library service closer to some residents, allowing them to access our services without having to travel as far, in response to mobility concerns that were raised in the public consultation. We are committed to reaching those who are unable to travel - we will be taking the 'pop-up' libraries to residential homes as well as continuing to provide our home delivery service to those who have difficulty travelling. Where residents still have difficulty in travelling we will continue to provide the home delivery service.

9. What can be done further to promote equality of opportunity by altering the policy?

The library service is already a service that seeks to promote equality, hosting Holocaust Memorial Day events and running LGBT events amongst other things. These will continue in the future and will not be adversely affected as a result of these proposals.

10. Has the assessment identified the need for future monitoring? If so, what monitoring do you intend to conduct?

Membership data will continue to be collected and will be used in the Council's Annual Equality Monitoring Report. This data will allow us to assess any changes in usage following the implementation of these recommendations. If any adverse changes are identified they will be paid due regard.

11. How often will you analyse and report upon this data, and where will it be reported?

Please detail:

Corporately, the data will be reported annually as part of the Council's Equality Monitoring Report. The data will be collected and monitored by the library service on a quarterly basis.

The Lead Officer for Youth and Community Learning will monitor the implementation and the outcomes of these proposals. He will report progress to the Learning and Skills Directorate Management Team quarterly

12. How will you publish and publicise the policy to ensure equality of access to this information?

Please detail:

The Equality Impact Assessment will be published on the Council's website. Printed copies will be available on request.

Feedback to consultation respondents will also be published on the Council's website. The full report will be made available once it has been agreed by Cabinet, both online and in Vale libraries. The Vale Viewpoint citizens' panel will receive feedback in their next newsletter. Town and community councils will be informed when the report has been approved by Cabinet and will then have access to it.

13. Any recommendations for action that you plan to take as a result of this impact assessment (listed in the sections above) should be included in your Team Plan or Departmental Service Plan.

These actions will be undertaken as a result of this Equality Impact Assessment:

- Location specific Equality Impact Assessments for each proposed community library.
- Equality Impact Assessment for the relocation of St. Athan Library.

14. An equality impact assessment may have four possible outcomes, though more than one may apply to a single policy. Please indicate the relevant outcome(s) of the impact assessment below.

Please tick as appropriate:

No major change – the impact assessment demonstrated that the policy was robust; there was no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken.

Adjust the policy – the impact assessment identified potential problems or missed opportunities. The policy was adjusted to remove barriers or better promote equality.

Continue the policy – the impact assessment identified the potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality. The justification(s) for continuing with it have been clearly set out. (The justification must be included in the impact assessment and must be in line with the duty to have due regard.

Compelling reasons will be needed for the most important relevant policies.)

Stop and remove the policy – the impact assessment identified actual or potential unlawful discrimination. The policy was stopped and removed, or changed.



15. Authorisation

This equality impact assessment must be authorised by the relevant Head of Service or Operational Manager.

Approved by (name)	
Job Title	
Date	

Signature _____

On completion of this form send a signed copy and an electronic copy to the Equalities Section: tsgreaves@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk. For support, ring: 01446 709446