



# Equality Impact Assessment Record Form 2012-16

This form is to be used for recording the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of Council activities. It should be used in conjunction with the guidance on carrying out EIA in **Annex 2** of the Equality Scheme. The activities that may be subject to EIA are set out in the guidance.

EIA is particularly important in supporting the Council to make fair decisions. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Using this form will help Council officers to carry out EIA in an effective and transparent way and provide decision-makers with full information on the potential impact of their decisions. The purpose is to avoid inadvertent disadvantage or discrimination resulting from decisions.

EIA is not a fixed process – it will vary according to the scale and type of activity. The form and guidance are designed to cover all eventualities. Officers should not be discouraged by the form, but should use their discretion in using it flexibly according to the activity they are assessing.

EIA does not happen at a single point in time. It is an ongoing and integral part of the development of the activity or proposal. This EIA template should be kept open and live as a planning document, and updated as the activity or proposal progresses.

## Section 1 – Service Details and Summary of EIA Activity

<b>Title of activity:</b>	Proposal to end the provision of the Mobile Library Service
<b>Lead Officer responsible for this EIA:</b>	Carol Houghton
<b>Telephone:</b>	01325 349623
<b>Service Group:</b>	Neighbourhood Services & Resources
<b>Service or Team:</b>	Community Services - Libraries
<b>Assistant Director accountable for this EIA</b>	Ian Thompson
<b>Who else will be involved in carrying out the EIA:</b>	Marion Ogle / Jennifer Feeney / Natasha Telfer / Victoria Dixon

<p><b>What stage has the EIA reached?</b></p> <p>This table provides a ‘cover note’ of progress to be maintained as the EIA is developed over time. Stage categories 1-3 listed below refer to the funnel model. Note the stage reached and any consultation or engagement carried out. Simple activities may not need all these stages. Provide details of population/individuals affected in Section 2</p>		
Stage	Date	Summary of position
<b>Stage 1: Initial Officer Assessment. Whole Population likely to be affected identified</b>	March 2016 (and updated October 2016)	The Mobile Library service covers the whole borough of Darlington and outlying villages, Pop 105,600 (2011 Census).
<b>Stage 2: Further Assessment. Target Population likely to be affected identified</b>	March 2016 (and updated October 2016)	Library service users and those in particular who use the mobile library service; older people, schoolchildren and pre-school children on the mobile route. Those living further out of town, e.g. Heighington or Middleton St George.
<b>Stage 3: Further Assessment. Individuals likely to be affected identified</b>	March 2016 (and updated October 2016)	Those library members or users with a protected characteristic in order to identify how they may be impacted by the proposal.
<b>Stage 4: Analysis of Findings</b>	March/ April 2016 (and updated November 2016)	An analysis of the findings following engagement and public consultation can be seen at Section 6
<b>Stage 5: Sign-Off</b>	December 2016	Signed off by Ian Thompson, Assistant Director
<b>Stage 6: Reporting and Action Planning</b>	Ongoing	An action plan can be found at Section 9, with actions to be monitored on an ongoing basis. This Equality Impact Assessment will be presented to members along with a report on the proposals affecting the library service

## Section 2 – The Activity and Supporting Information

### Details of the activity (including the main purpose and aims)

The Council is currently proposing several changes to the library service. One of the proposed changes is to terminate the mobile library service altogether. On 29 June 2016, following a consultation process Council took the preliminary decision to stop the mobile library as of 23 September 2016. However the Council has embarked upon a further period of consultation in respect of the relocation of the central library to the Dolphin Centre and the library service as a whole. It is envisaged that any final decisions taken in respect of the library service as a whole will be taken in January 2017.

The library network in Darlington includes the central library at Crown Street and one branch library in Cockerton, and until 23 September 2016, the Mobile Library.

The proposal to close the Mobile Library service is financially driven as part of the Council's need to save £10.2 million by 2020. It is envisaged that closing the mobile library service will provide savings of £56,000 per annum (£224,000 up to 2020).

The mobile library service has been running in Darlington since 1951. The service visits 90 locations across the borough and outlying villages on a three-weekly rota, providing opportunities for residents who cannot easily access either Crown Street or Cockerton Libraries. A Library Needs Assessment has been completed in respect of the library service as a whole in order to help Members make an informed decision in this respect.

In 2015/16 11,900 people accessed the mobile library and 52527 books were issued. The service is heavily targeted at older people and children. The mobile library has a lift providing good access to the vehicle. It has a small targeted collection of materials reflecting its use by specific groups, namely children and those over the age of 60.

The mobile library takes part in events across the town including the Community Carnival, the Arts Showcase event and previously, the 'Festival of Thrift'. 6,499 people visited the mobile via an event in the past year.

The termination of the mobile library service may also be affected by other proposals relating to the Council's library service; namely the relocation of the central library from its current site at Crown Street to the Dolphin Leisure Centre and the closure of Cockerton Library.

Should the decision to terminate the Mobile Library Service be made final by Council in January 2017, the Council would look to extend the housebound service (to be renamed the Home Library Service) for people who cannot access a library. The Home Library Service will provide materials to those who are unable to use a library due to illness, disability or frailty. The service can be permanent or temporary, for example where someone may be recuperating from an illness or accident. This service is free of charge and requests to receive it can be made by individuals themselves, relatives, friends or carers.

The Library Needs Assessment which has been carried out shows that Darlington's Library Service as a whole has a mixed performance with the service performing well with regard to the number of active borrowers and number of issues per item. It is also one of the lowest cost services in its comparator group, demonstrating that the service is efficient and provides value for money. However with regard to service points it has recently gone from three to just two; Crown Street Library and Cockerton Library with the Mobile Library service ceasing in October 2016. Therefore Darlington's population per service point is 35,133; the average is 21,530.

Darlington's Mobile Library Service is much valued by its customers, but use of the service has declined significantly. The information clearly shows that book issues across the whole of the library service are declining, however the traditional library functions remain important to many customers. Nonetheless the shift towards increasing use of technology will continue to challenge delivery models in the immediate future. This is already being witnessed in the rise of e-book issues and the decline of traditional reference provision, the use of self-service technology and the provision of 24/7 services, accessible without having to visit the library.

Footfall has also fallen significantly across all sites in the last five years; at Crown Street by 35%, Cockerton by 35% (potentially as a result of reduced opening hours), e-library by 19% and the Mobile Library by 68%. The library service overall has seen a reduction in usage of 34%.

The first Library Consultation Survey carried out in Feb-April 2016 (completed by 3,265 residents, representing approximately 3% of the population) showed a significant majority support the existing service and would not wish to see any changes. This support has to be balanced against falling use, reduced book issues and the financial pressure the Council is under.

It is evident there is support for the Mobile Library by those that use it, however with the significant fall in usage it is difficult to continue to support this facility with an ongoing reduction of 65% in the past five years. There will be a need to extend the Housebound Service to cater for those residents that generally are unable to visit the town centre library. This would allow them to continue to be able to access books on a regular basis.

Library staff have been updated on the current position of the library service and will continue to be involved moving forward. Formal consultation on a revised structure and roles will be re-entered into with staff at the appropriate time. Library staff were placed at risk of redundancy and this situation remains unchanged as the revised structure will still result in a number of redundancies. The redundancies are due to a number of factors including the cessation of the mobile library service.

### Who will be affected by the activity?

See the guidance on carrying out equality impact assessment within the Equality Scheme 2012-16. Provide details of the groups and numbers of people affected below, updating the table as the EIA develops and the understanding of who will be affected emerges in more detail.

### Whole population

Whole population of Darlington: 105,600 (2011 Census)

### Target population

Current Mobile Library service users.

Approximately 800 people use the mobile library service per month. Latest Active Borrower figures show that in the last month the service was accessed by the following:

90 adults

269 senior citizens

484 children (through school and nursery visits)

1 person with a 'print denied' status ticket.

We do not collect any data for disability/race/religion.

### Individuals

Older people and those with mobility issues, in wheelchairs or walking frames who struggle to travel to town on public transport, who enjoy the social contact and opportunity to choose some books. Those living in outlying, more rural areas (Bishopton, Sadberge) where there is only a limited bus service. Schoolchildren/ Nursery Children who access the service and may not have another opportunity to visit a library.

Consultation has been arranged with staff affected by all proposals relating to the library service.

### What data, research and other evidence or information is available which is relevant to the EIA?

Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 – The library service is a statutory service, governed under the 1964 Act, which puts local authorities under a duty to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient library service'.

The library service has a significant range of performance information with which to measure its service:

Examination of the hourly breakdown and analysis of library transactions for the mobile library.

Anecdotal data from staff working in the mobile library service.

Ward data

Mobile Library Monthly Statistics

Travel Information including bus services to the town centre.

Disability data for the Borough

Darlington Library Service Survey Feb-Apr 2016

CIPFA stats.2014/15(latest available)

Draft Library Plan

Library Needs Assessment

Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964

Library Proposals Consultation Survey (October-November 2016)

**Check: before proceeding to the officer assessment, have you obtained all the data and information that is currently available?**

## Section 3: Officer Assessment

Use this table to record your views on potential impact on Protected Characteristics. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here. It is important to be searching and honest about this – many Council activities are planned to be of positive benefit to identified target groups but can often have the potential for inadvertent effects on other groups.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable			Potential level of impact				Summary of Impact
<b>Age</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>From the data available we know the Mobile Library Service is used predominantly by older people and parents with small children, and schoolchildren. The Mobile Library visits 5 schools and 14 nurseries/playgroups.</p> <p>The withdrawal of the service may have a negative impact on older people. Many have mobility issues, use a wheelchair or walking frame, or are unable to carry heavy books. They may be unable to access the central library by public transport. The mobile library has a step lift for easy access into the van. The service provides a social outlet and a good choice of books for people who might otherwise become isolated and liable to depression. Some customers are caring for an older relative/spouse and could not leave their caring responsibilities to go into town. Others have access to a car but do not have a blue badge and feel they would be unable to walk from the nearest public car parks to the Dolphin Centre. There is a proposal in the MTFP to charge Blue Badge holders for off street parking. It is intended that these charges will be introduced in June 2017. This would be a cumulative negative impact for those people with a blue badge who access the library.</p> <p>Many bus routes stop at Tubwell Row, just across the market square from the Dolphin Centre. This may be difficult to cross for those with mobility issues as it is a busy road on a slope. Accessing the Dolphin Centre from the market square can be difficult if there is an event taking place in the square.</p> <p>The proposal will also have an impact on children, given that that the Mobile Library visits 5 schools and 14 nurseries/ playgroups regularly. Potentially this will limit access to the library service for children and will place a burden upon parents having to travel to a library site.</p>
<b>Race</b>	P	<b>N</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>There is no monitoring of registered library users in this area of protected characteristic.</p> <p>We have no evidence to suggest the proposal will have a disproportionately negative impact on anyone based on their race. However it is worth bearing in mind that the mobile provides a safe reporting place for hate crime.</p>

<b>Sex</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>The termination of the mobile library service will reduce availability for all users but may have a disproportionate impact on females as more females are active user as evidenced by the Mobile Library membership data.</p> <p>Women are more likely to be carers either of children or of adults and to be responsible for accompanying children or the person they care for to the library. If they need to access the central library this could present difficulties in terms of travel, access and costs.</p> <p>Lone parents are more likely to be women and if they are experiencing socio-economic deprivation this could aggravate their ability to pay for public transport and access library services. The mobile library may be an important source of reading for children from poorer families.</p>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	M	<b>L</b>	nil	<p>There is no monitoring of registered library users in this area of protected characteristic.</p> <p>We have no evidence to suggest the proposal will have a disproportionately negative impact on anyone based on whether a service user has undergone or is in the process of undergoing gender reassignment. However it is worth bearing in mind that the mobile library provides a safe reporting place for hate crime.</p> <p>For people who are vulnerable, suffering social anxiety and isolation, they may be unable to function well in a busy town centre and rely upon the mobile library as a social outlet</p>
<b>Disability (summary of detail on next page)</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>A number of groups may potentially be affected by this proposal. They are detailed in Section 3.</p> <p>Feedback from the Darlington Library Service Survey showed 86 out of 303 people described themselves as having a disability or life limiting illness who used the mobile library service.</p>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	M	<b>L</b>	nil	<p>There is no monitoring of registered library users in this area of protected characteristic.</p> <p>We have no evidence to suggest the proposal will have a disproportionately negative impact on anyone based on their religion or belief. However it is worth bearing in mind that the mobile library provides a safe reporting place for hate crime.</p>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	M	<b>L</b>	nil	<p>There is no monitoring of registered library users in this area of protected characteristic.</p> <p>We have no evidence to suggest the proposal will have a disproportionately negative impact on anyone based on their sexual orientation. However it is worth bearing in mind that the mobile library provides a safe reporting place for hate crime. The mobile library may also be a social outlet for</p>

								vulnerable people, close to where they live.
<b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>Although there is no monitoring of diversity of registered mobile library users in this area, it is recognised that pregnant women may find access to libraries more difficult in later stages of pregnancy and mothers are often responsible for looking after babies and young children.</p> <p>The withdrawal of the service would impact on pregnant women and those at home with pre-school children. From having a service close to their homes, they would have to travel to town with time and expense costs Withdrawal of the service would also impact on their ability to meet other local mothers and neighbours.</p>
<b>Marriage/ Civil Partnership</b>	P	N	<b>NA</b>	H	M	L	<b>nil</b>	<p>There is no monitoring of registered library users in this area of protected characteristic.</p> <p>We have no evidence to suggest the proposal will have a disproportionately negative impact on anyone based on their marital status.</p>

### Section 3: Officer Assessment - continued

The Council must have due regard to disabled people’s impairments when making decisions about ‘activities’. This list is provided only as a starting point to assist officers with the assessment process. It is important to remember that people with similar impairments may in reality experience completely different impacts. Consider the potential impacts and summarise in the Disability section on the previous page. Officers should consider how the ‘activity’ may affect a disabled person.

<b>Mobility Impairment</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>Many of the customers of the mobile library service have mobility problems. They access the mobile van by the step lift. Some have balance issues and could not carry heavy books any distance. A visit to the mobile library may be one of the few things someone with mobility issues will do in their week, contributing to a sense of wellbeing. It provides a reason to get out of the house and meet other people. Those with a mobility impairment may be unable to access the town centre library due to difficulty in using bus services into the town, bus stops in the vicinity of proposed new library within the Dolphin Centre and walking distances from the bus stops to the central library.</p>
<b>Visual impairment</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>The mobile library service offers a very personal service. The staff are available to help choose audiobooks and to give advice. It is a small space, accessible by lift. An individual with visual impairment would soon be able to ‘orientate’ themselves on the van. Withdrawal of the service may mean increased time, effort and cost to travel into town to access the central library. This may lead to withdrawal from social activities and increasing isolation.</p>
<b>Hearing impairment</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	M	<b>L</b>	nil	<p>Withdrawal of the mobile library service may mean the loss of a convenient local library for those with a hearing impairment. Individuals with hearing loss may find the Dolphin Centre location more difficult as there is more likely to be external noise. As with those with a visual impairment, the withdrawal of the mobile library service may lead to increased isolation, increased costs of travel and decreased wellbeing for those with this protected characteristic.</p>
<b>Learning Disability</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>Individuals with a learning disability have always enjoyed using the mobile library. Loss of the service may mean the need to travel into town to the central library, with the additional effect of the cost of travel, including for the support worker if the MTFP proposal to cut the companion bus pass is passed.</p> <p>It is often important that people with learning disabilities have familiarity with their</p>



								surroundings. If the mobile library service terminates then this may impact on their use of the library service.
<b>Mental Health</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>Many regular customers of the mobile library are older people and are caring for a spouse with dementia. They visit the library as a safe, familiar space and have established friendships with the staff. For the carer this often provides a social outlet in the week. Travel into town can be difficult to combine with caring responsibilities and especially if using public transport.</p> <p>Darlington has a 0.96% recorded prevalence of dementia, compared to the national average of 0.74 %.</p> <p>Mental health issues are often hidden, but access to a regular and familiar local service can be comforting and easier than travelling into town to access the central library. Loss of the service may mean less social interaction, increased isolation and loneliness contributing to decreased health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The mobile library has a collection of 'Books on Prescription' stock which deal with various health issues including anxiety and depression. This collection will be available within the proposed new library.</p> <p>Darlington has a 1.00% recorded prevalence of mental health diagnosis compared to the national average of 0.88%</p>
<b>Long Term Limiting Illness</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>People with a long term limiting illness or chronic illness visit the mobile library as a safe, familiar place in which they feel comfortable. The mobile library may call at a location close to their home and a lift provides easy access.</p> <p>Loss of the service may mean limited opportunities to visit a library. The Housebound service will be extended but this will be delivered to the Customer's home and the opportunity to browse the book stock will be reduced.</p> <p>Withdrawal of the service may lead to increased isolation.</p>
<b>Multiple Impairments</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>Depending on the individual's circumstances, impacts may include increased isolation or loneliness. They may be unable to travel on public transport and not have access to a car. For those with multiple impairments and living on a low income, the impact from withdrawal of the mobile service would be high.</p> <p>Customers may be unable to access the central library for a variety of services, including online access to Council and Central</p>

								Government services.
<b>Other - Specify</b>	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	<p>Whilst not a protected characteristic, it is identified that Carers may be impacted by the proposal to close the Mobile Library. Carers looking after elderly and/ or disabled service users may find it more difficult to take those for whom they have caring responsibility to an unfamiliar setting or may find it more difficult to escort the person across Tubwell Row and the Market Square to the Dolphin Centre.</p> <p>There may also be an impact on those living in the outlying/ more rural areas of the Borough in respect of the inability to travel further in to town to access the library.</p>

<b>Cumulative Impacts</b>	
<p><b>The officer responsible for this EIA should seek input from the Corporate Equalities Group on the potential for this activity to combine with other recent, current or proposed activities, both Council and in the external environment, to result in more severe impacts on people with Protected Characteristics through their cumulative effects. The Corporate Equalities Group will advise on the content for this section of the EIA.</b></p>	
<b>Change activities</b>	<b>Potential cumulative impacts</b>
<p>Combination of the withdrawal of the Mobile Library Service and the potential closure of Cockerton Library.</p> <p>Potential removal of the companion bus pass for support workers/carers.</p>	<p>Given the present proposals relating to the Library Service, there will be only one central library in the town centre. Residents will need to travel to access the library and online Council and Government Services. Cost of transport and/or parking may be a deterrent for those on low incomes. There is a proposal in the Council's MTFP to charge Blue Badge Holders for off street parking. It is intended that these charges will be introduced in June 2017. This will be a cumulative negative impact for those people who have used the mobile service. Mobility issues may make it difficult or impossible to access the town centre, leading to isolation, loneliness and decreased good health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The proposal to end funding for the companion bus pass may mean a support worker/carer is unable to accompany an individual with specific needs to the central library, which would limit the individual's opportunity for social interaction and independence. This proposal is currently being looked at and a consultation is underway with service users in respect of the introduction of a charge.</p>

## Section 4: Engagement Decision

The decision about who to engage with, and how and when to engage, is the key to effective EIA. Please see Annex 2 of the Equality Scheme for guidance on the engagement decision.

<b>Is engagement with affected people with Protected Characteristics required, now or during the further development of the activity?</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>
<b>If YES, proceed to the next section. If NO, briefly summarise below the reasons why you have reached this conclusion.</b>	

**If you have come to the conclusion that engagement is not required, seek ratification from the Corporate Equalities Group through your service Equalities Co-ordinator.**

**If engagement is not required but the officer assessment has identified changes that should be made to the activity, please complete Sections 7 and 8. If not the assessment can be signed-off at Section 9.**

**Any reports to decision-makers during the development of the activity, for example feasibility or options appraisal reports, should include content on the latest thinking and findings of the EIA even though, like the activity, further development of the EIA may be required before final reporting.**

**The findings of the officer assessment should be included in any reports to decision-makers. These may be feasibility or options appraisal reports where the activity is at an early stage of development, but it is essential that any equality findings are taken into account in formal decisions at all stages of development of the activity.**

## Section 5 – Involvement and Engagement Planning

<b>Has the assessment shown that the activity will treat any groups of people with Protected Characteristics differently from other people Yes / No</b>
<b>If yes, please state which groups and how</b>  It is not envisaged that the termination of the Mobile Library Service will treat any groups of people with protected characteristics differently from other people. The library service as a whole promotes equality of opportunity and follows council guidelines. However there may be service users with protected characteristics who are negatively impacted by the closure. The protected characteristics who look to be impacted are: age, disability and potentially sex (gender).
<b>Will the differential treatment advance equality for people with Protected Characteristics? Yes / No</b>
<b>If yes, please state which groups and how</b>  No differential treatment has been identified.
<b>Will the differential treatment cause or increase disadvantage for people with Protected Characteristics? Yes / No</b>
<b>If yes, please state which groups and how</b>  Although people with Protected Characteristics are not being treated differently from other people, as the proposed termination of the mobile library service would affect all individuals equally, those with protected characteristics may either be unable or less well able to adapt to the alternatives being offered. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Older people with mobility issues who may find travel into town difficult.</li><li>• Those with a disability, including visual impairment.</li><li>• Parents with young children who will need to travel to town</li><li>• Vulnerable people who may feel unable to access the town services.</li><li>• The local schools visited by the mobile. They are too far from town for the children to walk to a central library and may not be willing or able to contribute to the costs of transport.</li></ul>

**From the above, prepare a simple plan using the template overleaf for involving and engaging with the organisations, groups and individuals likely to be affected by the activity.**

**There may be several stages of involvement and engagement, particularly for more complex activities. Initially it may be possible to identify and engage only with stakeholder and representative organisations for the people with Protected Characteristics who may be affected. Further development of the activity may be required before the individuals who will be affected can be identified.**

**The Involvement and Engagement Plan should evolve accordingly, with new engagement proposals added as they are identified.**

<b>Involvement and Engagement Plan</b>			
Which organisations, groups and individuals do you need to involve or engage and how?			
<b>Date of plan entry</b>	<b>Organisation, Group or Individuals</b>	<b>Date of event or activity</b>	<b>Type of activity – venue, channels, method and staffing</b>
Jan 2016	All Library Members and members of the general public.	17/02/16 17/02/16 17/02/16 10/03/16 11/03/16  14/03/16  23/03/16  21/03/16 & 24/03/16  15/04/16	<p>General public consultation involving all available channels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Library Service Consultation Survey: Hard copy surveys available from libraries including the mobile library, customer contact centre, Town Hall and Head of Steam. Online survey available via the budget proposals microsite on DBC website. The consultation survey closed on 3 April 2016.</li> <li>Frequently Asked Questions available on DBC website.</li> <li>Letter sent to parish councils</li> <li>Letter sent to library user groups promoting link to survey and information on libraries website. (including nurseries and residential care homes visited by the mobile library service)</li> <li>Email sent to all schools</li> <li>Email drop to all library members who had provided email addresses on their contact details.</li> <li>2 x public consultation events held on 23 March 2016; 2.30pm in Central Hall, Dolphin Centre and 6.00pm at Cockerton Methodist Church.</li> <li>Both consultation events were attended by Cabinet Member Councillor Nick Wallis, Ian Thompson Assistant Director Community Services, Mike Crawshaw, Head of Culture and Luke Swinhoe, Assistant Director Law &amp; Governance.</li> <li>Drop In sessions with Cabinet Minister Councillor Nick Wallis on 21 and 24 March 2016 between 11.00am and 7.00pm at the Dolphin Centre.</li> <li>Special Place Scrutiny Committee Meeting: Friday 15 April 2016, 9.30am to give consideration to MTFP proposals including the proposals relating to the Library Service.</li> </ul>
March 2016	Individuals and nursery schools from all mobile library routes	Mar-Apr 2016	Jennifer Feeney, Mobile Library Driver/Attendant engaged with customers on all routes covered by the mobile library service. She asked them for feedback on the potential impacts to affect them if the service is withdrawn.
April 2016	Schools visited by the mobile library	27/04/16	Schools emailed. Two responses received.
May 2016	Representative from the transgender community – Gay Advice Darlington/Durham (GADD)	05/05/16	Enquiry to representative of the transgender community (GADD) on likely impact on members of the community of withdrawal of the mobile library service. Reply received 06/05/16

**Engagement to identify impacts works best in face-to-face and small group settings**

## Section 6: Engagement Findings

	<b>Date/summary of engagement carried out</b>	<b>Summary of impacts identified</b>
<b>Age</b>	<p>March 2016. Jennifer Feeney (Mobile Library Driver/Attendant) spoke to individuals accessing the service regarding the potential impact upon them if the service is withdrawn. <u>Various routes around the town.</u></p> <p>Jennifer Feeney (Mobile Library Driver/Attendant) spoke to nurseries on the mobile library routes concerning the impact of the proposed withdrawal of the service.</p> <p>Schools visited by the mobile library emailed.27/04/16</p>	<p>41 older customers with very poor mobility expressed concern that they would be unable to travel into town to access the central library. All of them use walking frames and require the lift to access the mobile library. One gentleman stated that he didn't have any family locally to help him and would be unable to travel into town by himself on public transport. Two of the 41 were visually impaired and required support to visit the mobile library. None of them felt they would be able to carry books on buses. Two of the 41 care for a spouse with dementia. They would be unable to combine travel to the central library with their role as Carer.</p> <p>In addition, one older customer from Bishopton identified the lack of buses from Bishopton to Darlington as a barrier to him accessing the central library service. There is only one bus service from Bishopton to Darlington. It is every Monday and returns after two hours.</p> <p>There is an average of 20-30 children in each nursery class. Transport would be needed to take them all to the central library. For some children this is their only opportunity to access the library service and choose their own books.</p> <p>Two responses were received from the schools emailed; Response from <u>Whinfield Primary School</u> 'All pupils are keen to access the service and look forward to the visits. Pupils take the opportunity to borrow both fiction &amp; non-fiction books. It is an excellent way of giving them access to materials that are not available in school for them to loan, such as cookery books and autobiographies. The bus plays an essential role for us to enable pupils who don't have access to a variety of reading materials at home to have some ownership over reading and take pleasure in learning from and exploring books. The pupils are noticeably sad about the prospect of losing the service, as are the staff. It has really inspired a boost in reading for pleasure in our young readers. Getting children interested in reading at this age will hopefully make them keen lifelong readers.'</p> <p>Response from <u>Hurworth Secondary School</u> 'The mobile library is a valuable source of books for our students. Many children have no idea how a library works and this can be a great introduction for them. Many students read loads of books and need this extra range. The mobile library removes barriers the students will automatically put in place (I can't get to the library...etc.) There is regular use by a small but reliable proportion of our students. The number might be small but this in no way means that the service is not extremely valuable. These students should be encouraged and catered for, not stripped of this support because they do not belong to a large group. Their needs are equally important.'</p>
<b>Disability</b>	<p>March 2016</p>	<p>Three older customers of the mobile library identified themselves as having disability impairments. All are in wheelchairs and require assistance to access public transport. This would be a barrier to them accessing the central library in town. Feedback from the Library Survey shows 86 people described themselves as having a disability or life limiting illness who used the mobile service.</p>

<b>Mobility Impairment</b>	March 2016	41 older customers with very poor mobility expressed concern that they would be unable to travel into town to access the central library. All of them use walking frames and require the lift to access the mobile library. One gentleman stated that he didn't have any family locally to help him and would be unable to travel into town by himself on public transport. Two of the 41 were visually impaired and required support to visit the mobile library. None of them felt they would be able to carry books on buses. Two of the 41 care for a spouse with dementia. They would be unable to combine travel to the central library with their role as Carer.
<b>Visual impairment</b>	March 2016	Two customers identified themselves as having a visual impairment. The customers cannot access the mobile library service without help and would need to be taken to the town by car or supported on the bus.
<b>Hearing impairment</b>	03/05/16 Feedback from Action on Hearing Loss Group (based at Crown street Library)	Individuals with a hearing impairment may find the Dolphin Centre more difficult to visit due to increased external noise.
<b>Learning Disability</b>		No customers identified on the mobile library service, but for this group any change in place or personnel can be difficult.
<b>Mental Health</b>	March 2016	West Park Hospital – Patients and residents can access the mobile library. They will not be able to travel into the town centre without staff supervision. A visit to the mobile library gives them back some independence. The Priory Hospital – Around 10 patients/residents use the mobile library. They would be unable to travel into town without staff supervision, in addition one patient is in a wheelchair. Transport and additional staff would be required. Many of the Customers using the mobile library service have said it 'enhances' their lives and they enjoy the social interaction. Withdrawal of the service will have a negative impact on their psychological wellbeing.
<b>Long Term Limiting Illness</b>	Feedback from Jennifer Feeney (Mobile Library Driver/Attendant) consulting with customers regarding likely impact upon them if the service is withdrawn	Many of the mobile library service customers are older with comorbid conditions and often disabilities. The convenience of the service is important to them. Accessibility to a central town library would be difficult for them.
<b>Multiple Impairments</b>		As above.
<b>Other - Specify</b>		
<b>Race</b>	06/05/16 Email received	The mobile provides a safe space reporting facility for any resident. It is a safe place for those who may be suffering social anxiety, isolation, depression or difficulties in their community.
<b>Sex</b>		More women access the mobile library service than men and so will be more affected by its closure. The proposed withdrawal of the service would adversely affect mothers with small children as they would need to travel into the town centre to access the central library.
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	06/05/16 Email from representative of the transgender community	The mobile provides a safe space reporting facility for any resident. It is a safe place for those who may be suffering social anxiety, isolation, depression or difficulties in their community.
<b>Religion or belief</b>	06/05/16 Email received.	The mobile provides a safe place. It is important that the service visits different parts of the town and different communities, so that everyone has a chance to use the service.

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	06/05/16 Email received from representative of the transgender community	The mobile provides a safe space reporting facility for any resident. It is a safe place for those who may be suffering social anxiety, isolation, depression or difficulties in their community.
<b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>	Feedback from Jennifer Feeney (Mobile Library Driver/Attendant) consulting with customers regarding likely impact upon them if the service is withdrawn	It is convenient for mothers with babies and avoids having to travel into town.
<b>Marriage / Civil Partnership</b>		No comments received.



## Section 6: Engagement Findings – Continued

**Drawing on the engagement findings and your understanding of the effects of the activity, indicate how it will contribute, if at all, to the three strands of the Public Sector Equality Duty.**

### **a) How will the proposal help to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?**

Whilst it is acknowledged that there may be some impacts on those with protected characteristics should the closure of the mobile library take place, it should be kept in mind that the new library service being offered as part of the relocation from Crown Street may help to eliminate discrimination, harassment by allowing those with protected characteristics to integrate more fully in to the service. The service will continue to be run by the Council and therefore expected to operate within Council policies and procedures including Equal opportunities and the Council's Equality Scheme and Equality objectives.

### **b) How will the proposal help to advance equality of opportunity?**

Again, whilst it is acknowledged that there may be some negative impacts on those with protected characteristics should the closure of the mobile library take place, it is envisaged that the relocation and remodelling of the library service as a whole will help to advance equality of opportunity for those with a protected characteristic. The proposed new location for the library enables greater access by people with disabilities, including access to the building itself and increased disabled facilities.

### **c) How will the proposal help to foster good relations?**

Again, whilst it is acknowledged that there may be some negative impacts on those with protected characteristics should the closure of the mobile library take place, overall it is hoped that the relocation and remodelling of the library service as a whole will help to foster good relations. It is hoped that the relocation will help to promote positive attitudes towards those with a disability and will be enhanced by the change in venue as more library users will have access to other services (such as leisure facilities) and this may give rise to opportunities for greater community cohesion. It is also hoped that the relocation of the library to the Dolphin Centre will encourage participation by disabled people and older people in public life. By moving the library to a busier location where other services are being delivered will give these people increased exposure to additional opportunities that they may wish to take advantage of, including positive engagement with people they might otherwise not come into contact with.

### **During the engagement process were there any suggestions on how to avoid, minimise or mitigate any negative impacts? If so, please give details.**

Refer to Section 9.

**This completes the assessment, but there will be further work to do to contribute to the reporting and implementation stages of the activity. First though, it is important to draw a line under the assessment to maintain a separation between assessment of impacts and any proposals to manage those impacts. The assessment should therefore be signed-off at this stage.**

## Section 7 - Sign-off when assessment is completed

Officer Completing the Form:		
Signed	Name:	Carol Houghton
	Date:	Dec 2016
	Job Title:	Lending Manager
Assistant Director:		
Signed	Name:	Ian Thompson
	Date:	Dec 2016
	Service:	Assistant Director – Community Services

## Section 8 – Reporting of Findings and Recommendations to Decision Makers

The findings of the EIA may be reported to decision-makers at several stages during the development of an activity. For example, the initial officer assessment findings may be included in a feasibility report or options appraisal to be considered by the Transformation Board or Chief Officers' Executive.

Any report for formal decisions by Cabinet or Council should include the latest findings of the EIA, even if these are at a relatively early stage. The report recommending final approval of the activity should await and include the findings of the completed EIA. The report should present clearly the impacts that have been identified through the engagement process, including potential cumulative impacts.

The report may include recommendations based on the findings of the EIA, but these should be separate from the reporting of impacts. Recommendations will be developed separately from the EIA and arise from considering equalities impacts combined with other aspects of the activity such as finance, the benefits of the activity, and so on.

Based on the EIA findings, the report may consider the options in the table below, but the report must contain a clear statement of the impacts so that decision-makers can understand the effects of the decision that is being recommended.

What does the review of the information show?	
a)	No negative impact on people because of their Protected Characteristics - continue with the activity and monitor progress on implementation
<b>b)</b>	<b>Negative impact identified – recommend continuing with the activity; clearly specify the people affected and the impacts, and providing reasons and supporting evidence for the decision to continue</b>
c)	Negative impact identified - adjust the activity in light of the identified impact to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impact
d)	Negative impact identified - stop activity and provide an explanation why

## Section 9 – Action Plan and Performance Management

**The report to decision-makers, and the decision made may require actions to be taken to avoid, minimise or mitigate the negative impacts of the activity. Option C in the table in Section 8, combined with mitigation measures that may have been highlighted during engagement and listed in Section 6 (if adopted) will require action planning to implement them.**

**Any actions to address equalities impacts should be listed below, with performance management review proposals, to complete the full EIA.**

What is the negative impact?	Actions required to reduce/eliminate the negative impact (if applicable)	Who will lead on action	Target completion date
<p><b>Disability</b> - impact for those people with a mobility impairment, visual impairment, learning disability, long term limiting illness or multiple impairments, or mental health issues, who rely upon the mobile library for the opportunity to browse and select a choice of books and who may be unable to travel into the town centre. This may create or increase isolation and loneliness and will remove a social outlet.</p>	<p>To promote the Extension of the Home Library service which offers a delivery of library books direct to the customer's door, for those who are unable to use a library due to illness, disability or frailty. The service will be actively promoted both within the libraries and with partners, e.g. Age UK, Darlington Dementia Action Alliance, etc. Additional routes can be added to the schedule as required.</p> <p>To promote e-books and use of the e-library with other online resources.</p>	Carol Houghton	Ongoing
<p><b>Age</b> - impact for older people for whom the journey into town may be a deterrent to using the library, increasing isolation and loneliness.</p>	<p>To promote the Extension of the Home Library service which offers a delivery of library books direct to the customer's door, for those who are unable to use a library due to illness, disability or frailty. The service will be actively promoted both within the libraries and with partners, e.g. Age UK, Darlington Dementia Action Alliance, etc. Additional routes can be added to the schedule as required.</p> <p>To promote e-books and use of the e-library with other online resources.</p>	Carol Houghton	Ongoing
<p><b>Gender &amp; pregnancy and maternity</b> – impact for young mothers with babies who may be unable to travel into the town centre due to lack of time or money.</p>	<p>A volunteer supported model at Cockerton will provide an alternative option for individuals to use the library. It is also proposed to develop the stock collection at the University of Teesside Campus at Central Park.</p>	Carol Houghton	Ongoing
<p><b>Age</b> - impact for those of working age on low incomes who may be unable to afford the fare into the town centre.</p>	<p>If walking is an option, the new Central Library will have extended opening hours to allow more time to visit in the evenings and weekends. The computers will also be available for use for longer hours.</p> <p>A volunteer supported model at Cockerton will provide an alternative option for individuals to use the library. It is also proposed to develop the stock collection at the University of Teesside Campus at Central Park where any library member would be</p>	Carol Houghton	Ongoing

	able to access the stock.		
<b>Age</b> - impact on schoolchildren and children at nurseries on the mobile route. This may be the only chance some of them have to access a library.	More outreach work by the library. Deposit collections left with nurseries and schools.	Carol Houghton/ Suzy Hill	Ongoing
<b>Age &amp; Disability</b> - Negative impact on older people with physical impairment or limited mobility who may experience more difficulty in accessing the Dolphin Centre than Crown Street Library (i.e. walking across Tubwell Row/ Market place). There may be an increased distance for some library users to travel and, if walking some or all of the way, to carry books which means that they either have difficulty in travelling to the library or don't want to. Mitigating actions need to be put in place	<p>Signpost customers to alternative bus stops that would be closer to the Dolphin Centre and promote these prior to any change in location of the town centre library.</p> <p>Library staff would make customers aware of disabled parking spaces in vicinity of the Dolphin Centre: 3 on-street parking spaces where can park up to 3 hours, 7/8 disabled parking spaces on Market Square, 3 disabled parking spaces under the Council Chamber, 40 disabled parking spaces in the new Multi Storey car park behind the Dolphin Centre. In addition, Blue badge holders can park in on-street parking spaces. Provide chair(s) adjacent to the lift in Dolphin Centre for those customers who may need to wait for the lift to become available.</p> <p>To promote the Extension of the Home Library service which offers a delivery of library books direct to the customer's door, for those who are unable to use a library due to illness, disability or frailty. The service will be actively promoted both within the libraries and with partners, e.g. Age UK, Darlington Dementia Action Alliance, etc. Additional routes can be added to the schedule as required.</p> <p>A volunteer supported model at Cockerton will provide an alternative option for individuals to use the library.</p>	Carol Houghton	Ongoing
Age & Disability – some library users may not feel comfortable going to the new library or when they first visit they may not be familiar with the new layout and the way in which the service operates.	<p>As part of the second round of consultation which was undertaken service users and residents were consulted about the layout and design of the library should it be relocated.</p> <p>A programme of familiarisation sessions for library users with staff will take place to assist people with getting to know and feeling comfortable in the new space.</p>	Carol Houghton	Ongoing
<b>Performance Management</b>			
<b>Date of the next review of the EIA</b>	Next review will take place in 6 months' time once the volunteer model at Cockerton Branch Library has developed.		
<b>How often will the EIA action plan be reviewed?</b>	The action plan will be reviewed every three months until the library is relocated and thereafter, within 12 months of the relocation.		
<b>Who will carry out this review?</b>	Carol Houghton		