



# 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>	Proposed Closure of Cockerton Library
<b>Lead Officer responsible for this EIA:</b>	Carol Houghton
<b>Telephone:</b>	01325 379623
<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

### What stage has the EIA reached?

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

Stage	Date	Summary of position
<b>Stage 1: Initial Officer Assessment. Whole Population likely to be affected identified</b>	March 2016 (updated November 2016)	Initial officer assessment has been undertaken and as everyone has several protected characteristics the proposal will impact to some extent on the whole population of the residents of Darlington, but in particular the residents of the following Wards; Cockerton Mowden, Pierremont and Brinkburn & Faverdale.
<b>Stage 2: Further Assessment. Target Population likely to be affected identified</b>	March/ April 2016 (updated November 2016)	Further targeted work has been undertaken with the protected characteristics groups affected as listed in the Equality Act 2010. This work continued throughout the consultation stage and included: Older residents of Squires Court. Mount Pleasant, Cockerton and Holy Family Primary Schools, parents and carers of young children attending Baby Rhyme Time sessions.
<b>Stage 3: Further Assessment. Individuals likely to be affected identified</b>	March/ April 2016 (updated November 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 (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
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## 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 its library service. One of the proposed changes is to close the branch library at Cockerton. On 29 June 2016, following a consultation process Council took the preliminary decision to close the library. 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. All decisions in respect of the library service are therefore under review and it is envisaged that any final decisions taken in respect of the library service as a whole will be taken in January 2017. (It should be noted that the Mobile Library Service did cease on 23 September 2016 and remains suspended until such time as Council makes any further decisions in respect of the library service.)

As a result of the review of the decisions taken by Council in June 2016, this Equality Impact Assessment has been updated.

The proposal to close Cockerton library will provide savings of £53,000 per annum (£159,000 by 2020). The range of proposals relating to the library service is financially driven as part of the Council's need to save £10 million, but will deliver a sustainable library service and leisure centre. The proposals include the relocation of the central library from its current site at Crown Street to the Dolphin Leisure Centre and the closure of the mobile library service. It is hoped that in relocating the central library to the Dolphin Centre there will be improved access and facilities for all residents with extended opening hours, improved toilet and baby change provision, updated IT provision and a café. The redevelopment of the Dolphin Centre will aid the family learning experience within the town centre.

Cockerton Library opened in 1970. Over 80,000 books were issued in the last year at the branch and the visitor count was over 39,000 people. Three primary schools visit regularly; Mount Pleasant Primary School, St Mary's Cockerton CE Primary School, Holy Family RC VA Primary School. The library is at the heart of the Cockerton community and is adjacent to a range of shops and a free car park with designated disabled parking bays. The library is heavily used by older people and children.

Whilst it is proposed that the Mobile Library service will cease altogether it is intended that the Housebound service (to be renamed the Home Library Service) will be extended. 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. The service is free of charge and requests to receive it can be made by individuals themselves, relatives, friends or carers.

A Library Needs Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the proposals for the library service, together with a draft library plan setting out the vision for the library service for 2017-2021.

The Darlington Library Service has a mixed performance with the service performing well with regard to the number of active borrowers and number of issues per item, and is 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 only has three, therefore its population per service point 35,133; the average is 21,530.

The information clearly shows that book issues 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 fallen significantly across all sites in the past 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%.

From the Library Consultation Survey completed by 3,265 residents, which represents approximately 3% of the population, 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 would be possible to meet the Council's statutory requirement by providing only one main library within the town centre where approximately 95% of the population are within 30 minutes using public transport.

Whilst Cockerton Library is the only branch library within the Borough and whilst well supported, it is difficult to continue to justify ongoing financial support when a significant number of other Council services are having to be reduced or cut.

Therefore, whilst there is public support for the existing level of service, with falling book issues and usage the Council will be able to meet the overall need by providing one centrally located 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 users of Cockerton Library.

As an example, the Active Borrower figures\* for 2014/15 for Cockerton Library (\*those who have borrowed at least one book/audiobook in a one-year period) show the following groups accessed the library to borrow books: 532 adults, 523 senior citizens (aged 60 years and above), 11 people who are visually impaired, 2 playgroups, 8 school classes, 1 home educated young person and 690 children aged between 0-17 years.

**Individuals**

Engagement will target users of the library and also those belonging to specific protected characteristic groups

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

The key information for this activity is:

- Ward data
- Usage by local schools
- Cipfa statistics
- Cockerton Library monthly statistics
- Darlington Library Service Survey - results 2016
- Darlington Library Service Survey - comparison between 2016 and 2011 results
- Travel information for bus services from Cockerton into Town Centre
- Disability data for the Borough
- IMD Stats on Deprivation 2015
- Book Start stats/research
- Cultural Commissioning Programme – Reading Well Books on Prescription
- Draft Library Plan
- Library Needs Assessment
- Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964
- Library Proposals Consultation Survey (October-November 2016)
- Arts Council Report 'Community libraries: Learning from experience: Summary briefing for Local Authorities (Jan 2013)

**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
Age	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	<p>There may be an impact on older people with physical impairment or limited mobility who are unable to access the town centre library, due to difficulty in using bus services into the town centre, the location of town centre bus stops in vicinity of proposed new library within the Dolphin Centre and walking distances from town centre bus stops to the central library.</p> <p>There may be an impact on older people with physical impairment(s) or limited mobility who utilise Cockerton Library due to the free car parking that is in close proximity of the library.</p> <p>There may be a potential impact on older people's health and wellbeing, including those with dementia or visual impairment, which could contribute to a loss of independence, increased loneliness and isolation. In addition, older bereaved spouses who may lack other social support use the library for social interaction.</p> <p>The proposal to close Cockerton Library could potentially impact on working age people who currently use the Library to access computer and internet facilities who do not have home internet access.</p> <p>There is a potential for impact on primary school children attending the library, particularly in respect of the three local primary schools who visit on foot, including a group of children from the Autism Unit at Mount Pleasant Primary School. Schools will be unlikely to walk children to the town centre and are unlikely to accept the additional cost of transport. This will particularly impact on children of families who do not use the library. For some this is their only opportunity to use the library. The school provided feedback on the proposal, inviting a member of staff to attend a School Council meeting and hearing the children's views.</p> <p>There is one registered home educated young person who accesses Cockerton Library. This individual will need to travel into town to access library facilities.</p> <p>They may be a potential impact on all children and young people who may wish to attend the library after school/college to study or for homework purposes. Apart from schools there is no other venue in the local area of Cockerton that provides</p>

								<p>free, quiet study space. Libraries play an important role in reducing barriers to learning, particularly for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. The children from the local area can walk to Cockerton after school, it is unlikely they would be able to walk to town especially during winter months.</p> <p>There may potentially be an impact on children who attend free holiday activities at the library. There are few if any, other providers of free holiday activities in the Cockerton area so access to wider learning and social activities is reduced. This will particularly impact on low income families through additional transport costs. Cockerton is one of the most deprived areas in Darlington (IMD Deprivation Statistics 2015).</p> <p>There may be an impact on babies and young children attending the Baby Rhyme Time sessions with their parents/carers. Research has shown that if children know eight nursery rhymes by the time they're 4 years old, they're usually among the best readers by the time they're 8 years old. The sessions provide an opportunity for new mothers to get out with their babies and meet other local mothers, to socialise and potentially prevent isolation. Interaction with the local community is important and valued by families.</p>
<b>Race</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. However, Cockerton Library is a designated safe place. There is no other designated safe place in this part of town.</p> <p>Families of ethnic minority medical staff working at the nearby hospital use the library in the evenings.</p> <p>Anecdotal evidence from staff suggests that recent arrivals from eastern Europe use the library heavily with their children.</p> <p>The 2011 census for Darlington showed 3.76% of people identifying themselves as an ethnic minority.</p>
<b>Sex</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	<b>M</b>	L	nil	<p>When carrying out the library survey in February 2016, twice as many survey forms were returned from women as from men. This indicates that women will be affected to a greater extent than men. In particular women are more likely to be carers for young children and older relatives and more likely to access the library regularly. For mothers accessing the central library via public transport with a large buggy may be difficult.</p> <p>Women are more likely to be carers either of children or of adults and to be responsible for accompanying children of the person they care for to the library. If they need to access the central library this could present difficulties in terms of</p>

								<p>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. Cockerton library may be an important source of reading for children from poorer families.</p>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	<b>M</b>	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 whether they are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment. However it is worth bearing in mind that Cockerton 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 Cockerton library as a social outlet</p> <p>Cockerton Library is a designated safe place. It is important for people who have just 'come out' about their sexuality to feel comfortable in their communities. The library is perceived as a safe, neutral space. Without such spaces there is a danger transgender people may become isolated and lonely. There is no other designated safe place in this part of town.</p>
<b>Disability (summary of detail on next page)</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>There are a number of groups that would potentially be affected by this proposal, which are detailed in Section 3.</p> <p>19.63% of Darlington residents have a long term health problem or disability which limits their day to day activities. The national average is 17.9% (2011 Census).</p> <p>Darlington has a 1.00% recorded prevalence of mental health diagnosis compared to the national average of 0.88%.</p> <p>Darlington has a recorded prevalence for dementia of 0.96% compared to the national average of 0.74%.</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 Cockerton Library provides a safe reporting place for hate crime.</p> <p>There is no other designated safe place in this part of town.</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 provides a safe reporting place for hate crime. However, the Cockerton Library provides a safe space reporting facility for any resident who cannot travel to report hate crime. It may be a social outlet for vulnerable people, close to where they live. There is no other designated safe place in this part of town.</p>
<b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	<b>M</b>	L	nil	<p>Although there is no monitoring of diversity of registered Cockerton 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 closure of the branch 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. Closure of the library would also impact on their ability to meet other local mothers and neighbours.</p> <p>The loss of the baby rhyme time session at the library may have an impact on new mothers.</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>Cockerton library is a safe, easy to access building for those with limited mobility. It is a single level building with an automatic door. The closure of the library would result in the need to travel into town, possibly by public transport. Some wheelchair users may find it difficult to access public transport. There is a free car park with dedicated disabled parking spaces next to Cockerton library.</p> <p>People with mobility impairment may be unable to access the town centre library, due to difficulty in using bus services into the town centre, location of town centre bus stops in vicinity of proposed new library within the Dolphin Centre and walking distances from town centre bus stops to the central library. The alternative is to use a car park and pay the costs of parking. The cost of acquiring a Blue Badge permit is £10.00. There may be cumulative disadvantage experienced by those with mobility impairments with the proposals in the MTFP concerning charging Blue Badge holders for use of off street car parks. . It is intended that these charges will be introduced in June 2017.</p>
<b>Visual impairment</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	<b>H</b>	M	L	nil	<p>As above. Cockerton library is all on one level with an automatic door making access easy. The adjacent free car park and bus stop are additional other advantages. For someone with visual impairment, the extra effort required to get to the proposed new library in the Dolphin Centre might be a strong deterrent to using the town centre library. Individuals with visual impairments learn where obstacles are on a route. This negative impact will reduce over time.</p> <p>The number of people registered blind or partially sighted in Darlington is 670.</p>
<b>Hearing impairment</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	M	<b>L</b>	nil	<p>Loss of a convenient library location for those individuals with a hearing impairment who live in the local area. Individuals with a hearing impairment may find the Dolphin Centre location more difficult as there is likely to be more external noise.</p>

<b>Learning Disability</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	<b>M</b>	L	nil	<p>Loss of a convenient library location for those individuals with a learning disability and their carers who live in the local area, and who feel comfortable in using in a safe and familiar place. This group of customers may find it hard to adapt to a change in personnel and place. Children from the autism unit at Mount Pleasant school visit Cockerton library regularly as part of the general class visits. The children have produced posters and written letters to Jenny Chapman MP and Bill Dixon, Leader of the Council, urging them to save the library. The visits to the library give them some ownership over the books they choose</p>
<b>Mental Health</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	<b>M</b>	L	nil	<p>People with dementia, accompanied by spouse or family member, visit the library regularly as a safe, familiar place in which they feel comfortable. In many cases they have established friendships with staff in the library. For the carer, this often provides a social outlet, when combined with adjacent free parking and local shops.</p> <p>Darlington has a recorded prevalence for dementia of 0.96% compared to the national average of 0.74%.</p> <p>People with a range of mental health issues visit the library as a safe, familiar place in which they feel comfortable and in many cases have established friendships with staff in the library. The library has a collection of books on prescription that deal with mental health issues, including anxiety and depression.</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	H	<b>M</b>	L	nil	<p>People with long term limiting illness and chronic illness visit the library as a safe, familiar place in which they feel comfortable, partly due to ease of access. The library building is all on one level and is therefore accommodating for wheelchairs and mobility scooters. It is a useful rest place to sit down after shopping in the village, before the journey home. Getting to the library gives people a chance to interact with others and a reason to get out of the house, reducing the fear and loneliness which can accompany long term illness.</p> <p>19.63% of Darlington residents have a long term health problem or disability which limits their day to day activities. The national average is 17.64% (2011 Census).</p>
<b>Multiple</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</p>

<b>Impairments</b>								loneliness if they are unable to access the library for a variety of services, including online access to Council and Central Government services.
<b>Other - Specify</b>	P	<b>N</b>	NA	H	M	<b>L</b>	nil	<p>Whilst not a protected characteristic, it is identified that Carers may be impacted by the proposal to close Cockerton 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>

## Cumulative Impacts

**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>Change activities</b>	<b>Potential cumulative impacts</b>
Combination of cessation of the Mobile Library service and the potential closure of Cockerton Library.	The removal of both of these parts of the library service, and at the same time, would reduce the service's ability to respond to individuals' requirements. Existing customers of the Mobile Library and Cockerton Library would be required to travel into town in order to access library services including online access to Council and Government services. The housebound service ( to be renamed Home Library Service) would be available to those who due to illness, disability or frailty were unable to access the proposed new library.
Potential removal of the companion bus pass for support workers/carers who accompany people with learning disabilities on public transport.	The removal of the companion bus pass may mean that the support worker/carer cannot accompany the individual with learning difficulties and the individual would therefore be unable to travel on their own to the central library. This would limit their opportunities for social interaction and independence. This may also apply to the travel companions of older people. Increased cumulative negative impact. This proposal is currently being looked at and a consultation is underway with service users in respect of the introduction of a charge.
Proposal to charge Blue Badge holders for off street parking.	The proposal in the MTFP to charge Blue Badge Holders for parking in off street car parks will increase the disadvantage for those with disability or mobility problems. It is intended that these charges will be introduced in June 2017.

## 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.**

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

**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 closure of Cockerton library 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>
Although people with Protected Characteristics are not being treated differently from other people, as the proposed closure of Cockerton Library would affect all individuals because the service would no longer be available at that location, 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>• Children attending local schools who visit the library monthly with their classes.</li><li>• Children/young people using the library for study and homework</li><li>• Parents with young children who can easily access the library either by walking or by using the free car park adjoining the library.</li><li>• Older people who can access the library either by walking or using or by using the free car park adjoining the library.</li><li>• People with disabilities, including those with a visual impairment, who can access the library either by walking or via wheelchairs/mobility scooters or by using the free car park adjoining the library.</li><li>• For vulnerable people living in the Cockerton area, the library is the only designated 'safe place'.</li><li>• People from low income groups, or who are unemployed, who do not have computer or internet access at home and will be at risk of digital exclusion.</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.**

## Involvement and Engagement Plan

Which organisations, groups and individuals do you need to involve or engage and how?

Date of plan entry	Organisation, Group or Individuals	Date of event or activity	Type of activity – venue, channels, method and staffing
January 2016	All Library Members and members of the general public	17/02/16  17/02/16  11/03/16  14/03/16  23/03/16  21/03/16 and 24/03/16  15/04/15	<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, 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 library user groups promoting link to survey and information on libraries website</li> <li>Email drop to all library member who had provided email address on their contact details</li> <li>2 x public consultation events held on 23 March 2016; 2.30 pm in Central Hall, Dolphin Centre, and 6.00 pm at Cockerton Methodist Church. 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 Member, Councillor Nick Wallis on 21 and 24 March 2016 between 11.00 am and 7.00 pm 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	Mount Pleasant Primary School	24/03/16	<p>Staff attended a School Council meeting and had discussions with groups of pupils about the proposed closure of Cockerton Library.</p> <p>The children walk to the library once a month and choose books to take back to school. Discussion with two teachers on any future service involving outreach work or timetabling a visit to the proposed new central library located in the Dolphin Centre after swimming trips.</p>
March 2016	Alaine McCartney, Learning & Skills Service, DBC	29/03/16	The Learning & Skills team deliver courses from Cockerton Library on a Wednesday afternoon when the library has been closed to the public.
March 2016	Parents/Carers attending regular Baby Rhyme Time sessions at Cockerton	14/04/16 19/04/16	The weekly Baby Rhyme Time sessions are hugely popular at Cockerton. In part this is due to the sessions occurring when the library is closed to the public, engendering a sense of

	Library	21/04/16	security in the surroundings.
April 2016	Residents of Squires Court Cockerton	20/04/16	Residents' views as to the proposals were sought through staff attending a communal coffee morning.  Squires Court is adjacent to Cockerton Library and many of the residents use the library primarily to borrow books and audio books but also for computer use and for social interaction.
March 2016	Holy Family Primary School	27/04/16	No feedback to date. Although KS1 children visit the library regularly.
March 2016	St Mary's C of E Primary School	27/05/16	No feedback to date. Cockerton primary school has been walking to the library for over 20 years, enjoying story times and choosing books to take back to school.
March 2016	Cockerton Playgroup	27/04/16	The playgroup visits the library regularly and produces art work which is displayed along the library counter. The children enjoy seeing their work on display and choosing books to take back to playgroup.
April 2016	Representative of GADD <b>(Gay Advice Darlington/Durham)</b>	26/04/16	Carol Houghton spoke to a representative of the transgender community in Darlington, who indicated that the library was a safe reporting place for hate crime and a safe, neutral place to visit for vulnerable people. There is no other designated safe place in the Cockerton area.

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



## Section 6: Engagement Findings

	Date/summary of engagement carried out	Summary of impacts identified
<b>Age</b>	20/04/16 Visit to residents of Squires Court	Residents will no longer be able to walk to the library to borrow books, audio books, use the computers or take part in social interaction. It may remove their only opportunities for inter-generational socialising.
	03/04/16 Results of Darlington Library Service Consultation Survey	Of the 1,211 people who indicated that they visited Cockerton Library, 406 identified themselves as being aged 65 or over.
	03/04/16 Results of Darlington Library Service Consultation Survey	Of the 1,211 people who indicated that they visited Cockerton Library, 328 identified that they visited for the purpose of using computer and internet facilities and 223 valued this service as being one of the most valuable library services to them. The loss of a local library may result in some residents becoming digitally excluded. For those on a low income, they may be unable to afford to travel to the new central library. A consequent impact may be that they will be unable to apply for jobs. One respondent to the survey commented that they didn't have access to the internet at home and use Cockerton library for this, plus there no money to spend on books.
	14/04/16, 19/04/16, 21/04/16 Parents/Carers attending regular Baby Rhyme Time sessions at Cockerton Library	Parents, babies and young children will no longer be able to attend a free, local Baby Rhyme Time (closed) session. Research has shown that if children know eight nursery rhymes by the time they're 4 years old, they're usually among the best readers by the time they're 8 years old. The sessions also promote interaction for new mothers, reducing isolation and vulnerability to mental health issues.  Mothers have indicated that Cockerton Library is a quiet, private place to breastfeed and change baby.  Other impacts identified in relation to the alternative of a central town centre library were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordability of parking in town would prevent attending the town centre library</li> <li>Affordability of bus travel to the town centre</li> <li>Concerns expressed that it is not always possible to get buggies onto buses</li> <li>Wouldn't like to use lifts/fear of lifts (Dolphin Centre)</li> <li>Perception of less privacy for Baby Rhyme Time session at Dolphin Centre</li> <li>Perception of crowded, noisy and hot atmosphere in Dolphin Centre</li> <li>Perception of lack of privacy for breastfeeding</li> </ul>
	24/03/16 Mount Pleasant Primary School	School children from Mount Pleasant Primary School will no longer be able to walk to the library, including a group of children from the Autism Unit from the school. Not known at this stage whether the school will be able to access the new central library proposed for the Dolphin Centre. The school is in an area of high deprivation and it is unlikely that, outside of school swimming lessons, the children would access the Dolphin Centre.
<b>Disability</b>	03/04/16	507 people who responded to the consultation survey identified

	Results of Darlington Library Service Consultation Survey	themselves as having a disability or long term illness; 175 of those indicated that they visited Cockerton Library.
<b>Mobility Impairment</b>	<p>14/04/16, 19/04/16, 21/04/16 Parents/Carers attending regular Baby Rhyme Time sessions at Cockerton Library</p> <p>20/04/16 Visit to residents of Squires Court</p> <p>03/04/16 Results of Darlington Library Service Consultation Survey</p>	<p>Children with visual impairments like the small group and feel safe in the enclosed space. Parents have indicated that Cockerton is quiet and with less distractions, this aids concentration. Such sessions in familiar surroundings improve confidence and social interaction.</p> <p>For those residents with mobility difficulties, Cockerton provides a convenient and accessible library facility. Public transport can be difficult for this group.</p> <p>The results of the consultation survey highlighted that 75 individuals considered the closure of Cockerton Library would have a negative impact on them due to mobility issues in accessing the town centre.</p>
<b>Visual impairment</b>	<p>March &amp; April 2016 Visually Impaired customers</p>	Feedback from visually impaired customers at Cockerton is that they would feel disorientated in the Dolphin Centre. The Dolphin Centre was perceived to be busy and noisy. Concern was expressed about the number of roads to cross to access the Dolphin Centre. It was also considered that access would be difficult when the funfair or other event was being held in the Market Square.
<b>Hearing impairment</b>	<p>03/05/16 Feedback from Action on Hearing Loss Group (based at Crown Street Library)</p>	Individuals with a hearing impairment may find the Dolphin Centre more difficult due to more external noise.
<b>Learning Disability</b>	<p>24/03/16 Mount Pleasant School (Autism Unit)</p>	The children will find it hard to adapt to a change in personnel and place. They visit the library regularly as part of class visits and were sad to hear that the library might close. Walking to the library provides a free, safe and interesting visit for the children and affords them the opportunity to choose their own books.
<b>Mental Health</b>	<p>03/04/16 Results of Darlington Library Service Consultation Survey</p>	<p>The results of the consultation survey highlighted that 11 individuals considered the closure of Cockerton Library would have a negative impact on their mental health and well-being.</p> <p>In 2015/16 there have been 90 issues of 'Books on Prescription' at Cockerton Library. This is part of a national scheme whereby GPs can recommend suitable texts on anxiety, stress and depression. There is a selection of self-help books available in all libraries nationally.</p>
<b>Long Term Limiting Illness</b>	<p>21/04/16 Parents/Carers attending regular Baby Rhyme Time sessions at Cockerton Library</p>	A grandmother attending this session commented that she lives locally and would be unable to walk to the Dolphin Centre due to a long-term illness. Her grandchild would therefore be disadvantaged as it would be too tiring for the grandmother to get on and off buses and walk to Dolphin Centre with her grandchild.
<b>Multiple Impairments</b>		The library is a safe place to sit and rest when in Cockerton village.
<b>Other - Specify</b>		
<b>Race</b>	<p>03/04/16 Results of Darlington Library Service Consultation Survey</p>	<p>Of the 1,211 people who indicated that they visited Cockerton Library, 36 identified themselves as being from an ethnic minority.</p> <p>A comment received from the survey by an individual who identified themselves as belonging to an ethnic minority group was as follows: "Every community needs its own library as a sanctuary</p>

		if nothing else. Cockerton is that for many.”
<b>Sex</b>		Whilst the library service is available to all, in general more women than men use libraries. Women with young children are regular users of libraries, as libraries are a safe, cost-free place to take children.
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	26/04/16 Representative of GADD (Gay Advice Darlington/Durham)	Carol Houghton spoke to a representative of the transgender community in Darlington, who identified that as the library was a designated safe place, its closure would have a negative impact on the transgender community.
<b>Religion or belief</b>		Cockerton Library is a designated safe place and the only such in the area.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	26/04/16 Representative of GADD (Gay Advice Darlington/Durham)	Carol Houghton spoke to a representative of GADD in Darlington, who identified that as the library was a designated safe place, its closure would have a negative impact on the transgender community and all vulnerable people in the local area.
<b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>	14/04/16, 19/04/16, 21/04/16 Parents/Carers attending regular Baby Rhyme Time sessions at Cockerton Library	<p>Mothers and their babies will no longer be able to attend a free, local Baby Rhyme Time (closed) session. The sessions also promote interaction for new mothers, reducing isolation and vulnerability to mental health issues.</p> <p>Mothers have indicated that Cockerton Library is a quiet, private place to breastfeed and change baby.</p> <p>Other impacts identified in relation to the alternative of a central town centre library were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordability of parking in town would prevent attending the town centre library</li> <li>• Affordability of bus travel to the town centre</li> <li>• Concerns expressed that it is not always possible to get buggies onto buses</li> <li>• Wouldn't like to use lifts/fear of lifts (Dolphin Centre)</li> <li>• Perception of less privacy for Baby Rhyme Time session at Dolphin Centre</li> <li>• Perception of crowded, noisy and hot atmosphere in Dolphin Centre</li> <li>• Perception of lack of privacy for breastfeeding</li> </ul>
<b>Marriage / Civil Partnership</b>		We have no specific information but do not feel that there is any reason why the impact should be greater on people with this protected characteristic.

## 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.**

<b>a) How will the proposal help to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?</b>
The proposal to close Cockerton Library will not necessarily help eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation. It is acknowledged that there may be some impacts on those with protected characteristics should the closure of Cockerton Library take place. It should be kept in mind however 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 Library 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>b) How will the proposal help to advance equality of opportunity?</b>
The proposal to close the library will not help 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 Cockerton 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.
<b>c) How will the proposal help to foster good relations?</b>
The proposal will not help foster good relations. Again, whilst it is acknowledged that there may be some negative impacts on those with protected characteristics should the closure of Cockerton 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.
<b>During the engagement process were there any suggestions on how to avoid, minimise or mitigate any negative impacts? If so, please give details.</b>
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

<b>Officer Completing the Form:</b>		
<b>Signed</b>	<b>Name:</b>	Carol Houghton
	<b>Date:</b>	December 2016
	<b>Job Title:</b>	Lending Manager
<b>Assistant Director:</b>		
<b>Signed</b>	<b>Name:</b>	Ian Thompson
	<b>Date:</b>	December 2016
	<b>Service:</b>	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)	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
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
Negative impacts as identified in the body of this Equality Impact Assessment	Officers will recommend to Council Members that Cockerton Library should remain open at present whilst officers explore volunteer options in respect of running the library service from this location. Should volunteers be engaged in the running of the Cockerton library in the future, the Council will look to ensure that all volunteers engaged will undertake training on Equality and Diversity, safeguarding, Disability awareness, etc, so that they can better understand and meet library users' needs, specifically in relation to those with protected characteristics.	Ian Thompson and Paul Wildsmith	Ongoing

Performance Management	
Date of the next review of the EIA	
How often will the EIA action plan be reviewed?	
Who will carry out this review?	