

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	19 FEBRUARY 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	9
TITLE:	LIBRARY SERVICE OFFER 2018/19: SAVINGS PROPOSALS		
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 A comprehensive review of the Library Service in 2016 delivered £290,000 savings and a new agreed service model was implemented from April 2017. An additional £78,000 of savings were then identified which could be achieved through service efficiencies across 2017/18 and 2018/19 and these have also been delivered.
- 1.2 The need to make further savings from the Library Service has been identified in the Policy Committee report of 17 July 2017 in the document titled "*DENS53 - Reduce costs further in library services*" (DENS53).
- 1.3 This report sets out proposals to deliver the further savings identified in DENS53 but also includes proposals for additional savings to be made to reflect the current financial position of the Council and its need to make more savings, providing such a saving is consistent with the Council's legal duties. These net savings are now in the region of £217,000.
- 1.4 Appendices attached to this report:
- Appendix 1 Draft Consultation Document
  - Appendix 2 Public Consultation outline plan
  - Appendix 3 Equality Impact Assessment

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 As part of the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to deliver an additional £11m of budget savings, Policy Committee agreed a list of further savings at the 17 July 2017 meeting. This included:

*DENS53 - Reduce costs further in library services: to seek further reductions based on the new service model implemented in April 2017, retaining an offer in all service areas through further reductions in branch opening hours and reducing to single staffing in additional libraries through co-location and partnership*

*models. The saving attached to this was to develop options to achieve an indicative £115,000, with a 75% delivery confidence level.*

- 2.2 The Council’s officers have developed the proposals set out at section 2.7 of this report to meet the level of savings identified in July 2017 (DENS53) and reflecting the further change in the Council’s budgetary position, which means that there is less funding available for all services. A needs analysis has been carried out to ensure that there is a comprehensive and efficient library service in Reading. The 2015/16 Libraries Review established a baseline for a future library service offer and this has been updated with the latest demographic and library use data to inform the options detailed below.
- 2.3 A substantial public consultation was carried out as part of the 2015/16 service review, looking at how people used libraries and what residents wanted to see from the service. Phase one of the review was completed in Autumn 2015 and phase two of the review was completed in Spring 2016. Phase one of the review included a six week period of public consultation and a review and statistical analysis of library usage, costs and the demography of identified catchment areas in order to build an understanding of the needs and aspirations of the diverse communities living, working and studying in the Borough in relation to library services. This provided a context for the development of proposals.
- 2.4 Phase two subsequently sought views from the public on a number of specific changes to Reading’s Library Service and included a further study and analysis of visits data in order to inform future opening hours. Following this consultation, and further staff consultation, Policy Committee approved the recommendations for the reconfiguration of the Library Service on 18 July 2016 with the agreed changes being implemented from 1 April 2017.
- 2.5 Data, information and views expressed by users at this time remains relevant and have assisted with the formulation of these proposals for, with updated data for library usage extrapolated from the first half year of 2017/18 after the implementation of the most recent changes to the Library Service, together with the latest general demographic statistics available.
- 2.6 The priority matrix of library branches in Reading, developed as part of the 2015/16 Library Review to inform future service provision, remains the same with information updated. This is based on a range of measures of use and local need.

Overall Ranking 2015	Overall Ranking 2017
1. Central	1. Central
2. Battle	2. Battle
3. Caversham	3. Caversham
4. Whitley	4. Whitley
5. Tilehurst	5. Tilehurst
6. Southcote	6. Southcote
7. Palmer Park	7. Palmer Park

- 2.7 A proposed future library service offer is presented in this report. The recommended options to achieve the savings are as follows:
- A. Reduce opening hours at Central Library by 10 hours per week, from 46 to 36 (£45,000 - profiled £30,000 18/19; £15,000 19/20)
- B. Reduce opening hours at Caversham Library by 8 hours per week, from 35 to 27 hours (£9,000 - profiled £6,500 18/19; £2,500 19/20).

- C. Let/or share space with partner organisations at Battle Library allowing this library to be single staffed (£12,000 - profiled £4,000 18/19; £8,000 19/20).
  - D. Reduce opening hours at Battle Library by 5 hours per week, from 28 to 23 hours (£3,500 - profiled £2,500 18/19 ; £1,000 19/20)
  - E. Reducing opening hours at Whitley Library by 3 hours per week, from 21 to 18 hours (£2,000 - profiled £1,500 18/19 ; £500 19/20).
  - F. Let/or share space with partner organisations at Tilehurst Library allowing this library to be single staffed (£20,000 - profiled £15,000 18/19, £5,000 19/20).
  - G. Reduce opening hours at Tilehurst Library by 5 hours per week, from 28 to 23 hours (£3,500 - profiled £2,500 18/19 ; £1,000 19/20).
  - H. Remove evening and weekend opening all year at Palmer Park Library but opening for 15 hours per week instead of currently 21 per week, using 2x library staff in the College holiday times. This would mean no opening in the evening or at weekends (all year) but would mean daytime opening in school holidays (£9,000 - profiled £6,500 18/19; £2,500 19/20).
  - I. Remove 0.5FTE business support post (£12,000 - profiled £9,000 18/19 ; £3,000 19/20).
  - J. Remove 1.0FTE Digital and Volunteer Lead post (£35,000 - profiled £26,000 18/19, £9,000 19/20).
  - K. Reduce the library stock fund by 30% to reflect lower levels of usage at sites (£46,000).
  - L. Other changes, including deferred delivery of savings already agreed through Policy Committee but not yet realised, contract renegotiation, rates savings (£30,000 - profiled £23,000 18/19; £7,000 19/20).
- 2.8 Southcote Library will move to the extended community centre this year to form a new 'hub' with an already agreed reduction to library staffing. The hub will have one reception and flexible staffing cover with Children's Centre and Library Service staff on site. Opening hours will not therefore be reduced in this location, but staffing arrangements are likely to be reviewed once the hub is live.
- 2.9 It is considered that the service offer proposed in this report would meet and even exceed the legal requirement for the service to be 'comprehensive and efficient', specifically through:
- Reducing opening hours but maintaining a reasonable level of access for people with different lifestyles and availability at different locations throughout Reading
  - Encouraging financial and book donations (introduced in Autumn 2017)
  - Libraries and other services co-locating to make better use of buildings
  - Increasing the use of volunteers and opportunities for creative partnerships
  - Avoiding library closures
  - Continuing to extend and develop the online loans offer

- 2.9 The proposals set out in this report could deliver annual savings of £217,000, assuming such a saving is compliant with the Council's legal duties, with the offer being implemented from Autumn 2018 if agreed. In modelling the budget a reduction in income of £10,000 is expected as a result of further changes and this has been reflected in the savings total.

	2018/19	2019/20	Total
Saving	175,000	52,000	227,000
Income pressure	10,000	0	10,000
Net effect	165,000	52,000	217,000

- 2.10 The options set out in this report are accompanied by the following Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Draft Consultation Document;
- Appendix 2 Public Consultation outline plan; and
- Appendix 3 Equality Impact Assessment (initial draft, subject to review throughout this process)

### 3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 3.1 That Committee endorses a proposal to implement, and where necessary consult on, options to deliver net savings of £217,000 (full year effect) in respect of Reading's Library Service, as set out in section 2.7 above (£165,000 for 2018/19 and £52,000 for 2019/20).

- 3.2 That Committee authorises officers to carry out a public consultation on the following options, using the consultation document at Appendix 3:

- A: Reduce opening hours at Reading Central from 46 to 36 per week
- B: Reduce opening hours at Caversham from 35 to 27 per week
- D: Reduce opening hours at Battle from 27 to 23 per week
- E: Reduce opening hours at Whitley from 21 to 18 per week
- G: Reduce opening hours at Tilehurst from 27 to 23 per week
- H: Reduce opening hours at Palmer Park from 21 to 15 per week

(as listed in section 5.4).

- 3.3 That Committee authorises officers to implement options as follows:

- C: Co-location of external agencies at Battle Library and reduce to single staffing
- F: Co-location of external agencies at Tilehurst Library and reduce to single staffing
- I: Remove 0.5 FTE Business Support post (subject to staff consultation)
- J: Remove 1.0 FTE Digital & Volunteer Lead post (subject to staff consultation)
- K: Reducing library stock fund to reflect lower levels of usage at libraries
- L: Internal changes

(as listed in section 5.4)

- 3.4 That Committee delegates authority to the Head of Housing and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and the Lead Councillor for Culture, Sport and Consumer Services to conclude lease agreements to facilitate co-location at Battle and Tilehurst libraries.

## 4. BACKGROUND

### Service Context

- 4.1 Under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act the Council is obliged to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' Library Service for all individuals who live, work or study within the Borough. Reading Borough Council currently delivers this through a central library; 6 local branch libraries across the Borough; a growing offer of e-books and other online resources; a mobile library and Home Visiting Service for the elderly and housebound; and a cost neutral toy library (currently based at Southcote, this will be moving to Central Library in 2017/18 to improve access across the borough). The service offers a comprehensive range of services which exceed the legal requirements specified in the 1964 Act.
- 4.2 Within the existing Library Service, emphasis is placed on services to disabled, vulnerable and older residents; meeting the diverse needs of Reading's multi-cultural community; and supporting families, the under 5s and improving literacy and attainment. The Library Service is open to all but with a focus on targeting resources to improve outcomes for different groups or communities and meeting the Council's wider strategic priorities.

### Budget Context

- 4.3 This report should be considered in the context of the Council's wider financial position.
- 4.4 As part of the programme to find substantive additional savings across the Council in 2015, Policy Committee in July 2015 agreed to a comprehensive review of the whole Library Service.
- 4.5 Following an initial consultation and survey to understand use and needs, proposals to deliver a saving of £284,000 were presented to Policy Committee (15 February 2016). Final savings of £290,000 were endorsed by Policy Committee on 18 July 2016 following a second phase consultation on the detailed model proposed.
- 4.6 The budget report to Council in February 2017 identified a substantial gap between expenditure and funding over the medium term to 2019/20. In addition the 2017/18 budget relied on the use of reserves up to £11.1m. A list of Council-wide savings proposals were brought forward to Policy Committee on 17 July 2017.
- 4.7 Further savings/changes to the library budget in year 2017/18 were presented to Policy Committee (17 July 2017) which were deliverable without impacting on the service offer:
- DENS49 - income of £18,000 from Berkshire Family History Society (BFHS) to rent space from the library service (£14,000 17/18 ; £4,000 18/19)
  - DENS50 - additional £60,000 savings achieved through new library service offer (£35,000 17/18; £25,000 18/19).

Overall the service is currently on track to deliver these further savings in 17/18 and 18/19 and will have delivered circa £350,000 savings since April 2016.

- 4.10 A further proposal to deliver additional savings to the library budget for year 2018/19 was presented to Policy Committee on 17 July 2017

- DENS53 - £115,000: Reduce costs further in library services: to seek further reductions based on the new service model implemented in April 2017, retaining an offer in all service areas through further reductions in branch opening hours and reducing to single staffing in additional libraries through colocation and partnership models.
- 4.10 In the context of the overall financial challenge facing the Council, savings need to be secured across all services and this includes the Library Service which may also need to take some share of the further reductions required. The Council has considered other options to avoid the need to make these savings as reported previously.
- 4.10 This challenging budgetary position is not unique to Reading Borough Council and in an effort to deliver budget savings, local authorities have been required to reconsider the services they provide, and the way these services are delivered. Changes to the ways in which library services are run have been pursued by a number of authorities including Reading:
- Providing services digitally
  - Making better use of self-service technologies
  - Co-locating libraries with other local services (creating community hubs in some cases)
  - Using library services to deliver other service outcomes and priorities
  - Co-delivering services with community groups and individual volunteers
  - Reducing opening hours
  - Full staffing restructure
- 4.11 In contrast to other areas, Reading has not proposed closure of any branch libraries but has rather sought to optimise use of buildings and develop shared and flexible staffing models to preserve the service offer.
- 4.11 At Reading:
- Opening hours have been reduced by a total of around 33% across all library sites in 2017.
  - Self service kiosks have been introduced at all libraries in 2017 (16 kiosks at 7 sites - these are now handling around 70% of all library issues).
  - The Library Management System has been transferred to another supplier in 2017, making a saving of 60%, allowing further efficiencies and providing a better experience for customers, with further customer enhancements planned.
  - A 'community and learning hub' is now delivered from the Central Library, with the co-location of the Elevate Hub from the third floor, which is a place for 16-24 year olds in Reading to get help, advice and support on employment, work experience, volunteering and mentoring. This has reduced the cost of the Library Service as a result of making better use of the space available and generating a rental income. Reading Voluntary Action, Healthwatch, Reading UKCIC and (from this year) Berkshire Family History Society also operate from the hub, creating wider benefits and synergies.
  - Volunteers already make up 4.5% of hours worked within the Library Service (in the context of an average of 3.8% of hours worked nationally).
  - Wi-Fi is available at all sites, and fixed computers were upgraded in 2015, and Reading Online support digital inclusion through the provision of 1:1 support at regular sessions in branches.
  - New e-book, e-magazine and online learning resources have been introduced.
  - The ability to make donations of money and suitable stock has been introduced.

Reading Borough Council has therefore made considerable progress towards modernising and delivering library services more efficiently.

### Library Service Review Context

- 4.13 As noted above, in October 2015 Policy Committee agreed a thorough review and reorganisation of the whole Library Service, on the basis of objective criteria and the input of those living, working and studying in the borough of Reading.
- 4.14 Consultation during the first phase of the library review in Autumn 2015 process showed that library services in Reading are highly valued by users, with respondents citing the role that they play in:
- Providing local and free access to a wide range of books
  - Supporting educational development - including the development of literacy, language and IT skills
  - Supporting communities and fostering social interaction - especially between young children, their guardians and older people
  - Providing access to IT and thereby tackling digital exclusion (with 12% of respondents reporting that they are reliant on libraries for their access to the internet)
  - Providing a safe space for vulnerable groups
- 4.15 Whilst many respondents were averse to the idea of savings being made from the Library Service, the most recurrent suggestions for delivering savings included:
- Reducing opening hours (this was carried out from 2017)
  - Charging/asking for donations (the latter introduced in 2017)
  - Sharing space within libraries with partner organisations (in place at Palmer Park from 2017, forms part of further proposals outlined above)
  - Making greater use of volunteers (the service's new structure included a post tasked to improve the volunteer offer and make best use of volunteers to support the service - strategy launched 2017)
  - Renting space in libraries (further space rented from 2017 at Central Library)
- 4.16 Completion of the Needs Analysis in 2016, which incorporated data on both library use and the demographic need of the catchment population, also assisted in the development of these proposals for the delivery of further savings. This information and data was used in order to develop a priority ranking of libraries in Reading, to assist with prioritising the use of resources, at the time and for the future. Ranking was completed on the basis of the two data sets, and was subsequently combined and weighted at 40% for use and 60% for demographic need, with rankings as follows in 2015:

Use ranking 2015	Need ranking 2015	Overall Ranking 2015
1. Central	1. Whitley	1. Central
2. Caversham	2. Central	2. Battle
3. Battle	3. Battle	3. Caversham
4. Tilehurst	4. Caversham	4. Whitley
5. Palmer Park	5. Tilehurst	5. Tilehurst
6. Southcote	6. Southcote	6. Southcote
7. Whitley	7. Palmer Park	7. Palmer Park

Whilst absolute use has reduced at all sites since opening hours changed, and is based on predicted use in the current year, the relative ranking remains the same for use. Need and demography data has been updated and is in many cases still

current. The updated information and data has been factored in to determine the latest rankings as set out below. Notwithstanding this, the overall ranking remains the same.

Use ranking 2017	Need ranking 2017	Overall Ranking 2017
1. Central	1. Whitley	1. Central
2. Caversham	2. Central	2. Battle
3. Battle	3. Battle	3. Caversham
4. Tilehurst	4. Caversham	4. Whitley
5. Palmer Park	5. Tilehurst	5. Tilehurst
6. Southcote	6. Southcote	6. Southcote
7. Whitley	7. Palmer Park	7. Palmer Park

## 5. PROPOSED FUTURE SERVICE OFFER

5.1 The Council's aim is to ensure provision of a comprehensive, modern, affordable and efficient service for Reading which reflects local needs and makes the best use of resources.

5.2 There is limited national guidance as to what a library service or branch should deliver and how, and libraries serve different groups within communities with different needs and interests:

*'Most library services already include a range of different kinds of public library - differing by size, range of services offered, location, etc. These are often complemented with smaller book collections and similar arrangements with a wide range of public and community venues. A modern library service is therefore the sum total of a number of different parts which work together.'* 'Community Libraries' 2013 Arts Council England and Local Government Association Report.

5.4 The combined results of the first phase of consultation activity (2015) and the updated priority ranking have informed the development of these proposals which represent a judgement as to what a comprehensive and efficient library should look like in Reading in 2018/19, while acknowledging the need to (among other things) make savings where possible, subject to compliance with the Council's legal duties. In summary the proposals are as follows:

	Proposal	Summary description of change	Total saving p.a	Consultations	
				Public	Staff
A	Reduce opening hours at Central library from 46 to 36 per week	Reduce opening hours at Central library from 46 to 36 per week	45,000	✓ +EIA	✓
B	Reduce opening hours at Caversham from 35 to 27 per week	Would introduce a further closed day to the week - hours were reduced from 50.5 in 2017	9,000	✓ +EIA	✓
C	Colocation of external agencies at Battle, library becomes single staffed	External organisations moving in and sharing the space would allow single staffing of sites.	12,000		✓
D	Reduce opening hours at Battle from 27 to 22 per week	Would introduce a further closed day to the week - hours were reduced from 39.5 in 2017(depends on C above)	3,500	✓ +EIA	✓

E	Reduce opening hours at Whitley from 21 to 18 per week	Would introduce a further closed day to the week - hours were reduced from 34.5 in 2017	2,000	✓ +EIA	✓
F	Colocation of external agencies at Tilehurst, library becomes single staffed	External organisations moving in and sharing the space would allow single staffing of sites.	20,000		✓
G	Reduce opening hours at Tilehurst from 27 to 22 per week	Would introduce a further closed day to the week - hours were reduced from 42.5 in 2017 (depends on B above)	3,500	✓ +EIA	✓
H	Reduce opening hours at Palmer Park library from 21 to 15 per week, with year round opening.	Library currently runs in partnership with Reading College for 15 of 21 hours a week, and 36 weeks per year. Outside these times it is currently double staffed by RBC. Close site for evenings, Saturday mornings but retain opening through the holidays. Hours were reduced from 41.5 in 2017.	9,000	✓ +EIA	✓
I	Remove 0.5 FTE admin hours	Resource was put into this in the restructure in 2017	12,000		✓
J	Remove 1.0 FTE Digital and Volunteer Lead	The service has 3 Development posts, totalling 2.5 FTE that were created at restructure in 2017.	35,000		✓
K	Reducing library stock fund	Usage has reduced at all sites since opening hours reduced.	46,000		
L	Internal changes	Full implementation of the model agreed (including hubs) delivers additional savings; contract renegotiation & reduced consumables.	30,000		
	Income pressure		-10,000		
		Net saving	£217,000		

5.5 The savings total may alter and there is a risk in respect of securing partners to co-locate. The service is also relying on advance scheduled opening dates of extended or remodelled buildings at Whitley, Southcote and Battle - these dates may be delayed. This was reflected in the confidence level of 75% re delivery ascribed to this savings option.

5.6 As detailed later and referenced above, aspects of the proposed service offer would be subject to consultation, specifically to seek views on the reduced hours at affected libraries. Further detail about this is at Appendix 1. Respondents are, however, invited to comment on any aspect of the proposals in addition to matters specifically subject to consultation.

**EACH PROPOSAL CONTRIBUTING TO OR ENABLING THIS LEVEL OF SAVING IS SET OUT BELOW**

Central Library

- 5.7 It is proposed that Central Library's opening hours are reduced from the current 46 to 36 per week. Central Library's hours reduced from 52 per week in April 2017.
- 5.8 Consultation with users on the day/s affected would take place. The consultation would be particularly focused on existing users of the library and the community in the catchment.
- 5.9 The toy library, which is cost neutral, is moving to Central Library under changes agreed as part of the 2016/17 change programme - moving from the current Southcote site.

#### Caversham

- 5.10 It is proposed that Caversham Library's opening hours are reduced from the current 35 to 27 per week. Caversham's hours reduced from 42 per week in April 2017.
- 5.11 Consultation with users on the day/s affected would take place. The consultation would be particularly focused on existing users of the library and the community in the catchment.
- 5.12 If an organisation came forward with proposals to utilise the building and potentially enable access to the service *outside* of core operating hours, this would be explored further as an option to optimise use of the library for the community. Officers would be able to discuss this as a possibility, subject to further approval by members and subject to compliance with the Council's legal duties.

#### Battle and Tilehurst - collocating partners allowing single staffing

- 5.13 The library service advertised potential availability of space to let at Battle\* and Tilehurst branches to the voluntary sector in Reading in August 2017, and has had informal discussions with a number of potential partners who responded to this. (\*available once the library has been extended).
- 5.14 The plan for these sites is to enable a reduction to single staffing due to a partner agency presence in the buildings during opening times. We would also be looking at whether a partner could improve the overall offer for the site by closer working with the service or delivering against wider corporate objectives. This proposal would not be subject to public consultation.
- 5.15 Following an evaluation exercise in line with the Third Sector Premises Policy, the Officer recommendation is that Age (UK) Reading is granted a Lease of the first floor of Tilehurst Library at nil rent but with a contribution to running costs, plus sharing use of parts of the ground floor and that officers are authorised to work through and conclude a Lease agreement with this agency.
- 5.16 The formal process of appraising submissions of interest for Battle Library has not yet begun, given that building of the planned space will not be completed until Autumn 2018.
- 5.17 It is also proposed that opening hours are reduced at both sites from 28 to 23 hours per week. Consultation with users on the day/s affected would take place.

#### Whitley

- 5.18 It is proposed that Whitley's opening hours are reduced from the current 21 to 18 per week. Whitley's hours reduced from 42 per week in April 2017.
- 5.19 Consultation with users on the day/s affected would take place. The consultation would be particularly focused on existing users of the library and the community in the catchment.

### Palmer Park

- 5.20 Palmer Park library is currently open for 21 hours per week (was 41 before 2017 changes). Currently the library opens in partnership with Reading College - there is one member of library staff on duty with College staff and students between 9-5 on open days in term time. Outside of this, for 1 evening/week (2 hours), 1 Saturday morning/week (3 hours) and in the college holiday times, the library is open with 2 members of Reading libraries' staff.
- 5.21 The proposal is that the library opens only at times when the College are present, removing evening and Saturday opening. In holiday times, the same opening hours would be maintained but with 2 members of Council staff providing cover and this reduces opening hours to 15 per week.
- 5.22 Palmer Park library is 1 mile from Central Reading, a 20 minute walk from the Central Library and is within a few minutes of the 17/4/X4 bus routes. Around 60% of Palmer Park's users also use Central and other libraries, and Palmer Park is the bottom ranked library in the prioritisation matrix we have used.
- 5.23 This proposal would be subject to public consultation. The consultation would be particularly focused on existing users of the library and the community in the catchment.

### Library stock fund

- 5.24 Since overall opening hours reduced by 33% in April 2017, library usage has reduced by 14% and issues by 11%. As opening hours are reducing further, it is proposed that the stock fund is also reduced. The current breadth of stock would continue, but less would be spent on each area and spend would be revised and targeted where it can have greatest impact. The popularity and direct improvements to corporate outcomes made by children's books would be reflected in any revised budgeting.

### Removal of Admin post

- 5.25 It is proposed to reduce the hours of admin/business support for the Library Service. A change in handling of interlibrary loans will be introduced as part of the service joining a regional consortium of libraries. This will automate processes from September and will increase efficiency. This proposal will be subject to staff consultation only.

### Removal of Development post

- 5.26 The Digital and Volunteer post was introduced as part of the 2017 restructure when the librarian roles were amended. It is proposed that this post is removed from the 2.5 FTE development team. This would leave a Children's Service lead and the 0.5FTE Local History lead in post, overseen by the development manager as the service and audience development posts in the service. Aspects of the role would be redistributed. Capacity to programme events, to market the library service offer (including through social media) and to develop volunteering in particular will be impacted. This proposal will be subject to staff consultation only.

### Internal changes

- 5.27 This reflects further previously agreed efficiencies regarding staffing and contract management, which are already in place or working through, chiefly relating to the staffing of the future hub sites, which was picked up in the 2017 restructure but has not yet been fully realised. Changes to other internal spend will deliver some smaller savings and are included here.

### Overall: staffing

- 5.28 The service would work with all staff affected by all of these changes, staff reductions would be part of an overall restructure and would result in an indicative loss of around 5-6 FTEs. A staff consultation would take place. Staff are not contracted to work at a particular location, so it is likely that a full restructure would be needed for these staffing roles, however, the service would work to reduce disruption as much as possible and will work with staff to achieve this.

#### Risks and impacts

- 5.29 The library service has undergone significant, wide ranging change at a rapid pace in the last 18 months, including a full staff restructure; a change of key systems; introduction of self service; and a reduction in opening hours. Sites operate with fewer staff. These further major changes will have a further impact on staffing and on employee stability, although the service will work to reduce this impact as much as possible. Resilience will be reduced.
- 5.30 A 33% drop in opening hours across the service has translated into 14% fewer visits across the libraries and 11% fewer items being borrowed. Further reductions as proposed here and reductions in staffing may mean that these trends continue although the introduction of a hub model across several branches could increase footfall and usage to some extent. The service will continue to work corporately to ensure that efforts are focused where there can be the greatest impact. This is evidenced, for example, by closer working with Education partners and schools meaning that, in spite of service reductions, 4.5% more children took part in the Summer Reading Challenge in 2017 (1,842 children) than 2016 (1,762 children). The service is working with a wider range of RBC and external partners now than 18 months ago - such as being contracted by New Directions for delivery of sessions for adult language learners and Reading Rep Theatre Company for delivery of a £40,000 Arts Council England funded theatrical project for children.

## 6. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 These savings equate to about 17% of the net library budget 2017/18.
- 6.2 To achieve this level of savings, the only other option is closure of some library sites. Based on the prioritisation matrix and the costs at sites, this would equate to closure of at least 3 of Reading's 7 libraries.
- 6.3 The costs in the service are staffing, stock, services and buildings. Since the last restructure and changes, the sites are now run on a very lean basis and further economies are not possible without closures.

## 7. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 7.1 This report directly contributes towards the achievement of the following Corporate Plan priorities:
- 2. Providing the best life through education, early help and healthy living
  - 6. Remaining financially sustainable to delivery these service priorities

## 8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 8.1 Community engagement formed a key part of the Libraries Review which took place in 2016 to inform the vision for the Library Service and the development of savings options.

- 8.2 Subject to Policy Committee endorsement of the proposals outlined in this report, further community engagement will be required to establish views of residents, users regarding changes proposed and consultation with staff where these changes affect staffing levels.
- 8.3 The programme of communications and consultation with the public will begin following Committee and subject to member endorsement of the recommendations laid out in the report, and will include a press release, online publicity, e-communications and publicity materials in libraries and other public buildings. Consultation feedback will be reported back in due course.
- 8.4 The proposed consultation document and plan is attached at Appendix 1 and 2.

## 9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT -

- 9.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 9.2 Relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 9.3 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—
- a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
  - b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
  - c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 9.4 The proposal set out in this report are only proposals, and it will be necessary to consider the equalities impact of any final recommendation once arrived at following consultation.
- 9.10 As outlined in the Equality Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 3, it is considered that recommended changes to the library service may result in some negative impacts upon groups with relevant protected characteristics. However, a number of mitigation measures have been designed in order to avoid or reduce any differential impacts, as well as to encourage persons who share relevant protected characteristics to access library services.

## 10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Local Authorities have a statutory duty under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service for all persons' in the

area that want to make use of it (section 7), taking into account local needs and resources. Furthermore, local councils must:

- have regard to encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the Library Service (section 7(2)(b))
- lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area (section 8(3)(b))
- keep adequate stocks for borrowing/reference 'sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements and any special requirements both of adults and children'

10.2 It is the statutory duty of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to superintend, and promote the improvement of, the public Library Service provided by local authorities in England and secure the proper discharge by local authorities of the functions in relation to libraries conferred on them as library authorities. The Secretary of State has a statutory power to intervene when a library authority fails (or is suspected of failing) to provide the required service (section 10). He/she will only intervene after careful consideration of local authorities' compliance with the terms of the 1964 Act. This power to intervene has been utilised on only one occasion since 1964, with a public inquiry on the Wirral in 2009.

10.3 In October 2014, the Secretary of State, following receipt of a complaint in regards to Sheffield Library Service, issued a 'minded to' letter in October 2014, and in March 2015 issued a final decision letter. The decision letters cited the following observations of Ouseley J in *Bailey v London Borough of Brent* [2011] EWHC 2572 (Admin):

*A comprehensive service cannot mean that every resident lives close to a library. This has never been the case. Comprehensive has therefore been taken to mean delivering a service that is accessible to all residents using reasonable means, including digital technologies. An efficient service must make the best use of the assets available in order to meet its core objectives and vision, recognising the constraints on council resources. Decisions about the Service must be embedded within a clear strategic framework which draws upon evidence about needs and aspirations across the diverse communities of the borough.*

10.4 The letters also noted the view that:

- a wide range of approaches are open to the local authority when deciding how to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service
- the Secretary of State does not seek to proscribe how local authorities discharge their primary duty.

10.5 In determining whether to order an inquiry, the Secretary of State gives consideration to a number of factors, including:

- whether there is any serious doubt or uncertainty as to whether the local authority is (or may cease to be) complying with its legal obligation to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service
- whether the local authority appears to be acting in a careless or unreasonable way
- whether the decision is or may be outside the proper bounds of the local authority's discretion, such as a capricious decision to stop serving a particularly vulnerable group in the local community
- whether the local authority appears to have failed to consult affected individuals or to carry out significant research into the effects of its proposals
- whether the local authority has failed to explain, analyse or properly justify its proposals

- whether the local proposals are likely to lead to a breach of national library policy
- the advantages of local decision making by expert and democratically accountable local representatives
- whether there is any further good reason why a local inquiry should be ordered

10.6 The Secretary of State also noted that, as confirmed by the High Court in R (Green) v Gloucestershire City Council [2011] EWHC 2687 (Admin):

*The availability of resources is highly material to the question of what constitutes a comprehensive and efficient library service. The section 7 duty cannot be exempt or divorced from resource issues and cannot in law escape the reductions which have been rendered inevitable in the light of the financial crisis engulfing the country.*

## 11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Proposals in this report are for a net saving of £217,000, profiled in advance of public consultation and needs assessment:

	2018/19	2019/20	Total
Saving	175,000	52,000	227,000
Income pressure	10,000	0	10,000
Net effect	165,000	52,000	217,000

### Savings and timescales for implementation

The breakdown of savings is as follows

Saving	Amount saved (£)	Est FTE reduction
<b>Staffing</b>	<b>171,000</b>	<b>5.24</b>
<i>Reading Central</i>	45,000	1.50
<i>-Battle</i>	15,500	0.62
<i>-Caversham</i>	9,000	0.32
<i>-Tilehurst</i>	23,500	1.00
<i>-Palmer Park</i>	9,000	0.30
<i>-Southcote**</i>	10,000	
<i>-Whitley**</i>	12,000	
<i>Admin</i>	12,000	0.50
<i>Development</i>	35,000	1.00
Premises (sites moving)	10,000	
Stockfund	46,000	
Income pressure	-10,000	

\*to note that there is only one staffing costcode, it is not split out by site. Table above shows estimated effect of reductions by site on overall total

\*\*Current structure assumes single staffing at Whitley and Southcote due to move - the extra double cover has been absorbed into existing library budgets in 17/18 but is shown here for completeness

Current (17/18 Budget £'000's)	Exp. (Gross)	Income	Net.
LIBRARY SERVICE	£1.395m	£0.224m	£1.171m

NET ANNUAL SAVING 18/19	£165,000
NET ANNUAL SAVING 19/20	£52,000

#### Capital Funding Implications:

11.2 Capital funding provision has been made for works required to community buildings to facilitate the re-location of libraries as part of a wider community hubs programme. This is detailed in the Council's Capital programme. Policy Committee in April 2017 agreed spend approval up to £2m to deliver:

- a) an extension to Battle Library for up to £500,000;
- b) an extension and improvement works to Southcote Community Centre for up to £550,000 and
- c) improvement works to South Reading Youth and Community Centre for up to £750,000
- d) and with an overall programme contingency of £200k.

11.3 Policy Committee also agreed to the disposal of the Whitley and Southcote Library sites on the open market and through the Community Letting Policy process with the marketing results to be reported back to a future meeting of Policy Committee for decision.

11.4 Costs are not included for

- Additional rates/running costs due to extension of premises or savings resulting from disposals of buildings/reduced running costs.
- Any one off costs associated with redundancies.
- Costs of security for any library buildings which the Council ceases to operate pending lease/disposal of the asset.

#### Financial Impact of Proposals

11.5 Reading's current spend is compared below with LAs with similar population densities and population size using the most recent CIPFA data (2016/17 estimates compared with 2017/18 budget for Reading). Clearly this cannot anticipate reductions being made in any of these authorities.

LA	Resident population	Area	Population density	Net expenditure per 1,000 population
Blackpool	139,600	3,485	40.1	11,443
Slough	145,700	3,254	44.8	13,498
Reading (17/18)	161,700	4,040	40.0	10,899
Portsmouth	211,800	4,039	52.4	10,229
Southampton	249,500	4,990	50.0	14,676
Southend-on- Sea	178,700	4,176	42.8	16,206
Bournemouth	194,500	4,618	42.1	21,154

11.5 The table below illustrates the impact of total levels of savings for each option described above on spend per 1,000 population:

Reading	Net spend per 1,000 population (including support costs)
Current 17/18	10,899
Proposed service offer 18/19	9,848
Proposed service offer 19/20	9,526

- Assumes the absolute cost of overheads remains the same. Central support charges could reasonably be expected to reduce reflecting a reduction in premises and staffing levels.

## 12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1 Report to Policy Committee: Proposed Service Offers and Budget Proposals 2016-19 to Narrow the Budget Gap (20 July 2015)
- 12.2 Report to Policy Committee: Library Service Review (8 October 2015)
- 12.3 Report to Policy Committee: Proposed Service Offers and Budget Proposals 2016-19 to Narrow the Budget Gap - Consultation (30 November 2015)
- 12.4 Report to Policy Committee: Library Service Review (15 February 2016)
- 12.5 Report to Policy Committee: Library Service Review (11 July 2016)
- 12.6 Report to Policy Committee: Bridging the Gap -MTFS (17 July 2017)
- 12.7 Report to Policy Committee: Community Hubs Spend Approval (10 April 2017)

Appendix 1

# YOUR LIBRARY SERVICES, YOUR SAY - 2018



# Your Library Services. Your Say

**Consultation** **2018**

**21 February - 21 March**

In 2016 we consulted on changes to the library service. Many of these changes were introduced from 2017 and enabled us to save £290,000 from the library service budget.

We are now launching a further consultation.

Please read this booklet or go to <https://consult.reading.gov.uk/libraryreview2018> for more information and to have your say.

Have your say at

<https://consult.reading.gov.uk/libraryreview2018>

## Why are we consulting?

We know that for people who use library services, they remain important. We also know that the way people use libraries is changing.

People used to rely on their local libraries to access books for information, today people have more choice, ranging from e-books to internet access. Users can even download e-books or order books without stepping foot in a library. Many of you make good use of the free IT and internet now provided at the Borough libraries. You have told us how much you value free events and activities which the Library Service offers, like Rhymetime for example which supports the development of early reading skills.

At the same time, every local Council is having to make major savings as a result of Government cuts in funding and increasing demands for services. We therefore need to prioritise the use of our limited resources across the Council, including those used to deliver library services in Reading. Due to the scale of savings required, these cannot be met through back-office efficiencies alone. The Council is therefore considering ways to save more money from both the universal services for everyone in the town, and specialist services that are targeted to the most vulnerable, including older people, residents with learning disabilities, and children who need our protection or are looked after by us.

We have already made major savings by making the library services more efficient through making better use of technology such as the self service kiosks and changing operating systems. Another way our libraries can contribute towards savings is to make the best possible use of available space and we have already consulted on some plans to bring libraries together with other services in new community centres or 'hubs'.



**Reading Borough Council needs to sustain an affordable but comprehensive library service. We want your feedback to help us achieve that. The proposals here in total would save £220,000 of the library budget, assuming that this would still enable the Council to meet its legal duties.**

# What you told us and what we did

in the previous consultation, you told us:

- You continue to value library services in Reading.
- More than half of you use more than one of the borough's libraries.
- Most of you used the library which was closest to your home, work or children's schools.
- More than half of you visit Central Library.

When considering how to find the savings needed, the most common suggestions were:

a) *reducing opening hours*

We reduced opening hours by 30% in April 2017

b) *asking for donations/charging for activities*

We introduced voluntary donations in 2017

c) *sharing space with other services or partner organisations*

Central library already hosts a range of complementary services on the third floor and in 2017 the Berkshire Family History Society also joined us which is a great fit with our Local History service. Last year we agreed to move library services in Southcote and Whitley into refurbished community facilities, co-located with other local services and offering access to toilets and refreshments facilities. We also entered into a partnership with Reading College to run Palmer Park Library, offering students a great opportunity to get work experience in a public service.

We have also reduced staffing levels, reflecting reduced workload through the introduction of new self-serve kiosks in every branch.

## Understanding community needs

The Council has also taken a close look at information we hold on visits to individual libraries, library catchment areas and what people are using libraries for. This helps us understand the individual needs of local communities.

We have reviewed changed patterns of use since the library opening hours were reduced in April 2017. Some of the things we found were:

- About **11%** of Reading residents currently borrow books from libraries in Reading. Around **5%** solely use computers. This means around 26,000 (**16%**) of the town's population either borrow or use IT every year. Many people also use libraries for other reasons - to study or to attend activities for instance.
- Visits and issues have gone down since the changes in 2017.
- Central Library remains the best used library.
- Central, Caversham and Battle are the top three most visited libraries. Whitley, Palmer Park and Southcote libraries were the least visited.
- Central, Caversham and Whitley Libraries serve the largest catchment areas. Southcote and Palmer Park serve the smallest populations.

# Proposals overview

The main changes proposed now are summarised below:

Proposal A	Retain Caversham Library, reduce opening hours	p9
Proposal B	Retain Palmer Park Library, reduce opening hours	p10
Proposal C	Retain Central Library, reduce opening hours	p11
Proposal D	Retain Tilehurst Library, reduce opening hours and share space	p12
Proposal E	Retain Battle Library, reduce opening hours and share space	p13
Proposal F	Retain Whitley Library, reduce opening hours	p14
Proposal G	Other proposals	p15

## How can I have my say?

- Respond to the online questionnaire at <https://consult.reading.gov.uk/libraryreview2018>
- or complete and return the questions included at the end of this consultation document to any Reading Library or the Civic Offices.
- Email: [libraryreview@reading.gov.uk](mailto:libraryreview@reading.gov.uk)
- Write to: Library Review  
Reading Borough Council  
Bridge Street  
Reading  
RG1 2LU

# What would the service look like if proposals were implemented?

Under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act the Council must provide a ‘comprehensive and efficient’ library service for everyone who lives, works or studies within the borough.

No decisions as to the future of our library service have been taken. The outcome of this consultation will be taken into account when reaching any decisions about the future of the service. The desired level of savings may or may not be achievable, depending on the outcome of the consultation exercise, needs analysis and service review.

The Council presently considers that if the following proposals were to be implemented then local provision should continue to exceed the legal requirement of a ‘comprehensive and efficient’ library service, striking an appropriate balance between delivering savings whilst ensuring the provision needed across our communities.

The proposals would reduce opening hours at six sites but we consider that reasonable access for people with different lifestyles and availability should be maintained. No library branches would close.

These proposals will also be complemented by plans for continuing to develop the use of volunteers and exploring opportunities for creative partnerships in the future.

## Further information

For further information visit <https://consult.reading.gov.uk/libraryreview2018> where the following documentation is available:

- Information from previous review
- Updated prioritisation matrix information for the service
- Strategic Vision for the library service
- Full list of proposals for 2018/19
- Equality Impact Assessment for proposals for 2018/19

This information is also available in libraries.

## Further information: what will this tell me?

### 2015/16 Consultations: Results and Feedback - and prioritisation matrix

This document includes a detailed analysis of the consultation feedback received through the first phase of public consultation on the library service review. This particularly asked about how people use libraries, how they would like to use the service in the future and how they thought the Council should make savings required. This, together with the needs analysis, has informed the current service offer and future changes proposed, by creating a prioritisation matrix which has been updated with library usage and demography - included at page 8 in this document

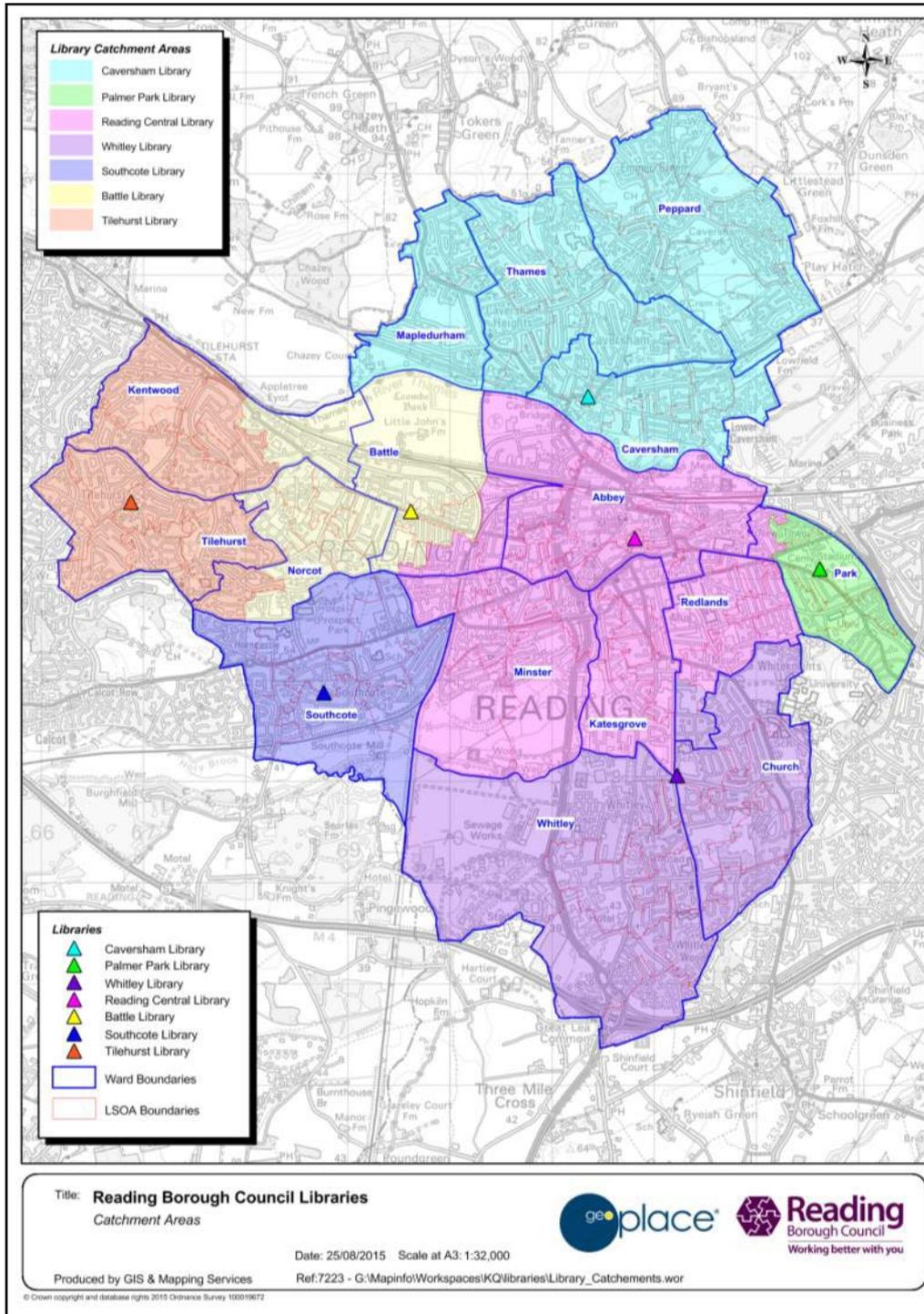
### Strategic Vision

A vision document has been developed which reflects the national agenda and Reading Borough Council’s strategic priorities. This provides an outline strategy and a blueprint for developing the Library Service in the future. The vision document underpins the proposed new service offer.

## Equality Impact Assessment updated for these proposals

In line with the Council's 'Equality Duty' (under the Equality Act 2010), a detailed Equality Impact Assessment has been completed in order to explore how these proposals might impact on groups differently, assuming that they were to be adopted which is presently unknown. The Equality Impact Assessment will be refined and developed in the light of feedback and any other evidence gathered through the consultation process and will be considered in appraising the options at the time decisions are taken.

## Reading Libraries



Prioritisation matrix - this was created for the 2016 review as a way of illustrating library usage data and demographic statistics in the borough.

Data has been updated with the latest available, including projections of library usage for 2017/18 following the changes to opening hours in April 2017.

The order of libraries in the matrix has not changed.

<b>Use ranking 2015</b>	<b>Need ranking 2015</b>	<b>Overall ranking 2015</b>
1. Central	1. Whitley	1. Central
2. Caversham	2. Central	2. Battle
3. Battle	3. Battle	3. Caversham
4. Tilehurst	4. Caversham	4. Whitley
5. Palmer Park	5. Tilehurst	5. Tilehurst
6. Southcote	6. Southcote	6. Southcote
7. Whitley	7. Palmer Park	7. Palmer Park

<b>Use ranking 2017</b>	<b>Need ranking 2017</b>	<b>Overall ranking 2017</b>
1. Central	1. Whitley	1. Central
2. Caversham	2. Central	2. Battle
3. Battle	3. Battle	3. Caversham
4. Tilehurst	4. Caversham	4. Whitley
5. Palmer Park	5. Tilehurst	5. Tilehurst
6. Southcote	6. Southcote	6. Southcote
7. Whitley	7. Palmer Park	7. Palmer Park

## **Changes made in 2017 to Reading Library Service**

As part of savings totalling £290,000, in 2017 Reading Libraries have

- a) reduced opening hours by around 30% across the 7 libraries
- b) introduced self service issue and return kiosks
- c) reduced staffing in the service establishment from 37 to around 28
- d) changed the library computer system to a better, cheaper alternative
- e) In year savings of £60,000 have also been made through further efficiencies.
- f) Leased part of Central library to an outside organisation for a rental income

Since these changes, usage and visits have gone down at all sites - with visits reducing by 14%, issues 11%, IT sessions by 10% and attendance at activities by 12%.

We estimate that the service will still have around 550,000 visits in 2017/18 and issue over 560,000 items, with circa 26,000 individuals using the service over a year.

	Battle	Caversham	Central	Palmer Park	Southcote	Tilehurst	Whitley
Opening hours/week	27	35	46	21	21	27	21
Projected 2017/18 visits	52,178	88,924	290,938	19,982	25,350	47,999	19,461
Projected 2017/18 issues	51,119	122,162	226,949	30,330	25,243	86,133	27,647
Individuals borrowing	1,371	3,101	9,662	792	882	2,286	1,095
Computer and wifi hours used	5,112	3,904	80,564	2,176	992	2,002	1,500

\* Issue and visit figures are projected for 2017/18

# Proposals in detail

## Proposal A

### Retain Caversham Library, reduce opening hours

Caversham Library occupies a central and prominent position within Caversham, opposite a supermarket and other local shops. The Grade 2 listed building has limited space for additional uses or activities.

We are proposing to retain Caversham library whilst reducing opening hours from 35 to 27 hours per week.

#### Why are we proposing to do this?

After Central Library, Caversham is the most actively used library in the network, and serves the largest catchment population as well as the greatest number of residents aged 65+ of all Reading's branch libraries. Opening hours would be longer than for any other neighbourhood branch in the service, reflecting local demand and volume of use.

Caversham Library is also relatively small and offers little opportunity for developing the site into a wider 'community hub'. Reducing opening times by 8 hours would deliver a saving of £9,000 a year, whilst maintaining local provision of library services in the North of the borough.

#### How could we deliver this?

A reduction in opening hours could be achieved through a combination of later opening and earlier closing or by removing a day of opening from the current timetable.

This is just an example of how the reduced hours could be achieved. As part of this consultation we want your feedback on future opening hours. Examples are designed to show how hours could work across a week and are illustrative.

#### What impact would it have?

Reducing opening hours would decrease the accessibility of library services for some users.

Increased use of volunteers would be likely to be required in order to run activities.

Day	Current (35)	Example A (27)	Example B (27)
Monday	Closed	Closed	Closed
Tuesday	0900-1700	0900-1700	0900-1700
Wednesday	0900-1700	Closed	0900-1300
Thursday	1300-1900	1300-1900	1300-1900
Friday	0900-1700	0900-1700	1300-1700
Saturday	1000-1500	1000-1500	1000-1500

#### How would we minimise negative impacts of this proposal?

Opening times would be scheduled to reflect feedback from the consultation and would ensure access for a range of different users, including school children and those that are working, with access Monday - Saturday.

#### What feedback do we want from you?

- What impact do you think this proposal would have?
- Do you have any comments on opening hours?
- What else could be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal, if adopted?
- Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings?

Palmer Park Library, which is Reading’s smallest branch, is on the edge of the park, close to the local sports stadium. From April 2017, the library has been run in a partnership with Reading College to help provide experience for students with additional needs in the workplace. Hours were reduced to 21 per week. During evening, weekend and College holiday working, the library service provided two members of staff to run the service.

It is proposed that the Council reduces opening hours from 21 to 15 hours per week - the hours that the College are there to support staffing. These pattern of library opening would remain the same and the library would open through College holidays, with two members of library service staff providing cover.

**Why are we proposing to do this?**

On an objective assessment of Reading’s libraries on the basis of library use and demographic need, Palmer Park Library ranks bottom overall. Palmer Park serves the most geographically compact catchment population and a far smaller number of residents and vulnerable individuals than Reading’s other libraries (bar Southcote which is comparatively more deprived) when considered across the network.

Palmer Park has good transport links to the town centre and an equivalent proportion of catchment residents actively borrow from Central Library to those using Palmer Park. There are currently 267 ‘unique users’ of the library - less than any other branch.

Palmer Park is responsible for 4% of the network’s visits, borrowers, 2% of IT sessions and 5% of issues. 58% of users already use another library.

**How could we deliver this?**

Hours would change as follows:

Day	Current 21 hours per week	Proposed 15 hours per week
Monday	Closed	Closed
Tuesday	0900-1200; 1300-1900	0900-1200; 1300-1600
Wednesday	0900-1200	0900-1200
Thursday	0900-1200; 1300-1600	0900-1200; 1300-1600
Friday	Closed	Closed
Saturday	1000-1300	Closed

**What impact would it have?**

Reducing opening hours would decrease the accessibility of library services for some users.

**How would we minimise negative impacts of this proposal?**

We would need to ensure some visibility of library services in East Reading and could see if a local pickup/dropoff point could be established. We would need to heavily promote Central library’s availability.

**What feedback do we want from you?**

- What impact do you think this proposal would have?
- Do you have any comments on opening hours?
- What else could be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal, if adopted?
- Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings?

Central Library is located on Abbey Square/Kings Road and serves the largest number of customers in the network.

We are proposing to retain Central library whilst reducing opening hours from 46 to 36 hours per week. This would deliver a saving of £45,000 per year subject to the outcome of the consultation process.

**Why are we proposing to do this?**

Central is the busiest library for visits and issues in the network, however, reduction of hours here means that the overall spread of hours across the network can be better retained - the size and staffing levels at Central library are also higher which means a reduction in hours here is equivalent to a much greater reduction for a branch library to deliver the same level of saving.

**How could we deliver this?**

A reduction in opening hours could be achieved through a combination of later opening and earlier closing or by removing a day of opening from the current timetable.

This is just an example of how the reduced hours could be achieved. As part of this consultation we want your feedback on future opening hours. Examples are designed to show how hours could work across a week and are illustrative. The aim is to provide a spread of hours to support daytime, after school and evening availability.

Day	Current 46 hours per week	Possible 36 hours per week
Monday	1000-1700	Closed
Tuesday	1000-1900	1000-1900
Wednesday	1000-1700	1000-1700
Thursday	1000-1900	1000-1700
Friday	1000-1700	1000-1700
Saturday	1000-1700	1000-1600

**What impact would it have?**

Reducing opening hours would decrease the accessibility of library services for some users.

**How would we minimise negative impacts of this proposal?**

We would aim to ensure a spread of opening hours across other libraries.

**What feedback do we want from you?**

- What impact do you think this proposal would have?
- Do you have any comments on opening hours?
- What else could be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal, if adopted?
- Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings?

Tilehurst Library is located just along from the shops at the Triangle, next to a health clinic. The building is also the base of the mobile and home library service. Tilehurst is the 3rd busiest library for issues and 4th busiest library for visits in the library network.

We are proposing to retain Tilehurst library whilst reducing opening hours from 27 to 22 hours per week. This would deliver a saving of £3,500 per year subject to the outcome of the consultation process.

### Why are we proposing to do this?

Tilehurst library is 5th of 7 libraries in the priority matrix. We will be reducing running costs by around £20,000 by sharing the office space with another organisation. Further saving is possible by reducing opening hours - opening would still be longer than smaller, less well used branches, reflecting levels of use.

### How could we deliver this?

A reduction in opening hours could be achieved through a combination of later opening and earlier closing or by removing a day of opening from the current timetable.

This is just an example of how the reduced hours could be achieved. As part of this consultation we want your feedback on future opening hours. Examples are designed to show how hours could work across a week and are illustrative. The aim is to provide a spread of hours to support daytime, after school and evening availability.

Day	Current 27 hours per week	Proposed 22 hours per week
Monday	0900-1700	0900-1200
Tuesday	0900-1700	0900-1700
Wednesday	Closed	Closed
Thursday	1300-1900	1300-1900
Friday	Closed	Closed
Saturday	1000-1500	1000-1500

### What impact would it have?

Reducing opening hours would decrease the accessibility of library services for some users.

### How would we minimise negative impacts of this proposal?

We would aim to ensure a spread of opening between Battle and Tilehurst libraries to cover West Reading residents

### What feedback do we want from you?

- What impact do you think this proposal would have?
- Do you have any comments on opening hours?
- What else could be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal, if adopted?
- Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings?

Battle library is located along the Oxford Road, next to the modern Tesco supermarket and adjacent to the old Hospital site. Battle library is a Grade 2 listed building and is 2nd of 7 libraries in the priority matrix. It's the 4th busiest library for issues and 3rd busiest library for visits in the library network.

We are proposing to retain Battle library whilst reducing opening hours from 27 to 23 hours per week. This would deliver a saving of £3,500 per year subject to the outcome of the consultation process.

**Why are we proposing to do this?**

We will be reducing running costs by around £12,000 by sharing the new extended space with another organisation. Further saving is possible by reducing opening hours. Opening would still be longer than smaller, less well used branches, reflecting levels of use.

**How could we deliver this?**

A reduction in opening hours could be achieved through a combination of later opening and earlier closing or by removing a day of opening from the current timetable.

This is just an example of how the reduced hours could be achieved. As part of this consultation we want your feedback on future opening hours. Examples are designed to show how hours could work across a week and are illustrative.

Day	Current 27 hours per week	Proposed 22 hours per week
Monday	Closed	0900-1200
Tuesday	0900-1700	0900-1700
Wednesday	Closed	Closed
Thursday	1300-1900	1300-1900
Friday	0900-1700	Closed
Saturday	1000-1500	1000-1500

**What impact would it have?**

Reducing opening hours would decrease the accessibility of library services for some users.

**How would we minimise negative impacts of this proposal?**

We would aim to ensure a spread of opening between Battle and Tilehurst libraries to cover West Reading residents. It might be possible to extend opening hours through shared use of the space on a self serve basis.

**What feedback do we want from you?**

- What impact do you think this proposal would have?
- Do you have any comments on opening hours?
- What else could be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal, if adopted?
- Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings?

Whitley library is currently located at the Buckland Road circle. It will be moving in June 2018 to occupy part of the South Reading Community Centre, further South along Northumberland Avenue. The library will be part of an extensively refurbished centre which includes a community café and Children’s Centre.

Whilst Whitley is the 6th busiest library in the network for visits, on an objective assessment of Reading’s libraries on the basis of library use and demographic need, the library ranks as 4th.

It is proposed that the Council reduces opening hours from 21 to 18 hours per week. This would deliver a saving of £2,000 subject to the outcome of the consultation process.

**Why are we proposing to do this?**

We anticipate that the new location will mean new library users as the library will be part of a range of services based in the Community Centre hub building. To maintain a spread of opening hours a very small reduction is proposed, not removing any after school opening.

The library is already planned to be single staffed and the structure in place reflects this.

**How could we deliver this?**

A reduction in opening hours could be achieved through a combination of later opening and earlier closing or by removing a day of opening from the current timetable.

This is just an example of how the reduced hours could be achieved. As part of this consultation we want your feedback on future opening hours. Examples are designed to show how hours could work across a week and are illustrative.

Day	Current 21 hours per week	Proposed 18 hours per week
Monday	Closed	Closed
Tuesday	0900-1200; 1300-1900	1300-1900
Wednesday	Closed	Closed
Thursday	0900-1200; 1300-1600	0900-1200; 1300-1600
Friday	0900-1200	0900-1200
Saturday	1000-1300	1000-1300

**What impact would it have?**

Reducing opening hours would decrease the accessibility of library services for some users

**How would we minimise negative impacts of this proposal?**

Once we are on site at Whitley, the possibility of running the library on an entirely self service basis could be explored.

**What feedback do we want from you?**

- What impact do you think this proposal would have?
- Do you have any comments on opening hours?
- What else could be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal, if adopted?
- Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings?

Additional management changes proposed to deliver savings are detailed in the committee report.

These include a reduction in staffing, a reduction in the library service stock fund to reflect reduced use, and implementing other changes which have previously been consulted on but are yet to be implemented.

You can see the full list of proposals at <https://consult.reading.gov.uk/libraryreview2018> or they are available in full from your library if you do not have internet access.

### What feedback do we want from you?

- If you have any comments on these additional proposals these can be included in your consultation response.

## Consultation Questions

This Consultation Document includes a number of questions on the following topics:

- Proposals
- Any other comments
- Library Use
- About You

If you would like to provide feedback on only some of the proposals, questions on proposals can be found on the following pages:

Proposal A	Retain Caversham Library, reduce opening hours	p16
Proposal B	Retain Palmer Park Library, reduce opening hours	p17
Proposal C	Retain Central Library, reduce opening hours	p18
Proposal D	Retain Tilehurst Library, reduce opening hours and share space	p19
Proposal E	Retain Battle Library, reduce opening hours and share space	p20
Proposal F	Retain Whitley Library, reduce opening hours	p21
Proposal G	Other changes proposed	p22

**Proposal A - Retain Caversham library, reduce opening hours**

**1. Do you think this proposal will impact you and your family?**  
(please tick one of the following)

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Positive impact                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Negative impact                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No impact (please skip to question 2)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know (please skip to question 2) |

**2. What impact do you think this proposal will have on you and your family?**

**3. What can be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal?**

**4. Do you have any other comments about the opening hours?**

**5. Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings  
*[in relation to Caversham Library]?***

**Proposal B - Retain Palmer Park library, reduce opening hours**

**6. Do you think this proposal will impact you and your family?**

(please tick one of the following)

- Positive impact
- Negative impact
- No impact (please skip to question 7)
- Don't know (please skip to question 7)

**7. What impact do you think this proposal will have on you and your family?**

**8. What can be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal?**

**9. Do you have any other comments about the opening hours?**

**10. Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings  
*[in relation to Palmer Park Library]?***

**Proposal C - Retain Central library, reduce opening hours**

**11. Do you think this proposal will impact you and your family?**

(please tick one of the following)

- Positive impact
- Negative impact
- No impact (please skip to question 12)
- Don't know (please skip to question 12)

**12. What impact do you think this proposal will have on you and your family?**

**13. What can be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal?**

**14. Do you have any other comments about the opening hours?**

**15. Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings  
*[in relation to Central Library]?***

**Proposal D - Retain Tilehurst library, reduce opening hours**

**16. Do you think this proposal will impact you and your family?**

(please tick one of the following)

- Positive impact
- Negative impact
- No impact (please skip to question 17)
- Don't know (please skip to question 17)

**17. What impact do you think this proposal will have on you and your family?**

**18. What can be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal?**

**19. Do you have any other comments about the opening hours?**

**20. Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings  
*[in relation to Tilehurst Library]*?**

**Proposal E - Retain Battle library, reduce opening hours**

**21. Do you think this proposal will impact you and your family?**

(please tick one of the following)

- Positive impact
- Negative impact
- No impact (please skip to question 22)
- Don't know (please skip to question 22)

**22. What impact do you think this proposal will have on you and your family?**

**23. What can be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal?**

**24. Do you have any other comments about the opening hours?**

**25. Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings  
*[in relation to Battle Library]*?**

**Proposal F - Retain Whitley library, reduce opening hours**

**26. Do you think this proposal will impact you and your family?**

(please tick one of the following)

- Positive impact
- Negative impact
- No impact (please skip to question 27)
- Don't know (please skip to question 27)

**27. What impact do you think this proposal will have on you and your family?**

**28. What can be done to minimise any negative impacts of this proposal?**

**29. Do you have any other comments about the opening hours?**

**30. Do you have any other ideas of how the Council might deliver savings  
*[in relation to Whitley Library]*?**

**Proposal G and Any other**

**comments**

31. We welcome comments about any element of this consultation and on any elements of the proposals that you have not covered so far.

**Library use**

32. Have you used a Reading library in the last 12 months?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

33. Which library do you use most frequently? (please tick one of the following)

<input type="checkbox"/>	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Southcote Library
<input type="checkbox"/>	Central Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tilehurst Library
<input type="checkbox"/>	Battle Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whitley Library
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caversham Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mobile Library
<input type="checkbox"/>	Palmer Park Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Library (please specify below)

**34. How frequently do you visit your preferred library?**

(please tick one of the following)

- More than once a week
- Weekly
- Fortnightly
- Monthly
- Less than monthly

**35. Please tick all other libraries used below.**

- |                          |                     |                          |                                      |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | None                | <input type="checkbox"/> | Southcote Library                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Central Library     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tilehurst Library                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Battle Library      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Whitley Library                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Caversham Library   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mobile Library                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Palmer Park Library | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Library (please specify below) |

**36. How frequently do you visit other libraries? (please tick one of the following)**

- More than once a week
- Weekly
- Fortnightly
- Monthly
- Less than monthly

**37. Do you visit the library with, or on behalf of, any of the following groups?**

(please tick all that apply)

- |                          |                         |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Children aged 0-5       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Older persons          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Children aged 6-12      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Disabled persons       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Young people aged 13-18 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) |

## About you

Please be assured that your personal details will be kept strictly confidential and that no individual or organisation will be identified in the reporting of results.

The Equality Act 2010 places an 'Equality Duty' on public bodies, to understand the effect of their policies and practices on equality. This involves looking at evidence, engaging with people, staff, service users and others and considering the effect of what they do on the whole community.

Information gathered through the following questions will therefore help us to find out how proposals may impact on groups differently.

### 1. What is your postcode?

### 2. Are you...?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female

### 3. What age group do you belong to?

<input type="checkbox"/>	0-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	55-64
<input type="checkbox"/>	15-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	65-74
<input type="checkbox"/>	25-34	<input type="checkbox"/>	75-84
<input type="checkbox"/>	35-44	<input type="checkbox"/>	85 or over
<input type="checkbox"/>	45-54		

### 4. Please indicate if you consider yourself to have any of the following disabilities / conditions? (tick all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	None / not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulties using hands/fingers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mobility - getting around	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning disability
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hearing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental health problem
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eyesight	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please state:



**5. What is your employment status? (please tick one of the following)**

- |                          |   |                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Employed in a full-time job (30 hours plus per week)    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Permanently sick / disabled     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Employed in a part-time job (under 30 hours per week)   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wholly retired from work        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Self-employed full or part-time                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Looking after the home / family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | In full-time education at school, college or university | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Unemployed and available for work                       |                          |                                 |

**6. What is your sexual orientation? (please tick one of the following)**

- |                          |                         |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Heterosexual / Straight | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prefer not to say            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Gay or lesbian          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify below) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bisexual                |                          |                              |

**7. What is your religious belief? (please tick one of the following)**

- |                          |           |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Buddhist  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sikh                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Christian | <input type="checkbox"/> | No religion                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hindu     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prefer not to say            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Jewish    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify below) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Muslim    |                          |                              |

**8. What is your ethnicity? (please tick one of the following)**

<p><b>White</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> British</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Irish</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background</p>	<p><b>Asian or Asian British</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Indian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chinese</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background</p>
<p><b>Mixed</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White and Black Caribbean</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other mixed / multiple background</p>	<p><b>Black or Black British</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> African</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black /African / Caribbean background</p>
<p><b>Other Ethnic Group</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Arab</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other ethnic group (please specify below)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say</p>

Have your say at  
<https://consult.reading.gov.uk/libraryreview2018>



**Reading**  
Borough Council  
Working better with you

## Appendix 2

### Libraries Public Consultation outline plan

The full consultation document forms part of the Policy Committee report and public consultation if approved would start immediately following the Policy Committee meeting. An outline of the approach is provided here:

The proposals requiring a public consultation are (with reference letters from report) :

- A. Reduce opening hours at Reading Central from 46 to 36 per week
- B. Reduce opening hours at Caversham from 35 to 27 per week
- D. Reduce opening hours at Battle from 27 to 22 per week
- E. Reduce opening hours at Whitley from 21 to 18 per week
- G. Reduce opening hours at Tilehurst from 27 to 22 per week
- H. Reduce opening hours at Palmer Park from 21 to 15 per week

The areas requiring public consultation are proposals A, B, D, E, G and H. All of these are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

The survey as last time asks about positive and negative impacts on users and families, and how negative impacts can be minimised.

Consultation will consist of

- a) Survey available online via website at <http://consult.reading.gov.uk> promoted via library and RBC social media
- b) All users of each library over last 12 months where we have an email address will be sent a link to the consultation.
- d) Press release highlighting overall changes, specifically highlighting feedback is requested
- c) Drop in sessions where people can speak with services manager and deal with questions about particular sites
- d) Group sessions with RBC consultation groups, as with the changes last time
- e) Survey forms will include some data about how sites have been used following changes in 2017

Consultation will last for 4 weeks and will start immediately following approval of the options in the report, running until mid March. We will then feedback and use the results of the consultation exercise to inform a staffing consultation, aiming to have any changes to hours and staffing in place for July 2018.

Appendix 3 : Equality Impact Assessment

Provide basic details

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed

Recommendations for the future of the library service

Directorate: Directorate of Environment and Neighbourhood Services

Service: Housing and Neighbourhood Services: LIBRARY SERVICE

Name and job title of person doing the assessment

Name: Simon Smith

Job Title: Library Services Manager

Assessment date: February 2018

Scope your proposal

What is the aim of your policy or new service/what changes are you proposing?

As a result of reductions in government grant funding and the changing needs and aspirations of library users and the wider community in Reading, in July 2015, Policy Committee agreed to the completion of a review of library services. Implementation of proposals took place in 2017. Further proposals have been made for 2018:

- A. Reduce opening hours at Reading Central from 46 to 36 per week
- B. Reduce opening hours at Caversham from 35 to 27 per week
- C. Co-location of external agencies at Battle, library becomes single staffed
- D. Reduce opening hours at Battle from 27 to 22 per week
- E. Reduce opening hours at Whitley from 21 to 18 per week
- F. Co-location of external agencies at Tilehurst, library becomes single staffed
- G. Reduce opening hours at Tilehurst from 27 to 22 per week
- H. Reduce opening hours at Palmer Park from 21 to 15 per week
- I. Remove 0.5FTE admin hours
- J. Remove 1.0FTE Digital & Volunteer lead post
- K. Reducing library stock fund
- L. Internal changes

The areas requiring public consultation are proposals A, B, D, E, G and H. All of these are subject to an EIA.

This recommended library service offer has been developed on the basis of:  
- Consultation feedback received during both phases of the two part review of library services in 2015.

- The outcomes of a comprehensive assessment of need for library services in 2015 (including a consideration of both library use and performance since 2017 changes, as well as demographic need data), and
- Further scoping work undertaken by officers to consider viable options for the delivery of savings that are compatible with the delivery of a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service for all individuals who live, work or study within the borough (as required by the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act).
- The principals of ensuring that library services in Reading are affordable and sustainable, as well as being accessible to all, whilst targeting resources in areas of greatest use and need.

The consultation will provide a further means by which the Council can gather information about the potential impact of these proposals on those with protected characteristics. The equalities impact of any final proposal to be arrived at following consideration of all consultation responses which will be carefully considered before and at the time the decision is made.

#### Who will benefit from this proposal and how?

Taken together, the recommendations outlined above will benefit those living, working and studying in Reading as the library service offer will continue to exceed the minimum legal requirement for the service to be deemed 'comprehensive and efficient' and will strike an appropriate balance between delivering the savings and ensuring appropriate provision across communities. The recommended service offer makes good use of community buildings; reflects usage and local needs; and responds to what our communities have told us so far by:

- Maintaining a reasonable level of access for people with different lifestyles and availability, in spite of reduced opening hours across all sites
- Libraries and other services co-locating to make the best use of space and increasing access to spaces for community groups
- Retaining the recently upgraded public access IT and wifi at a local level
- Maintaining access to library services for those that are unable to visit Reading Libraries themselves, by continuing to provide the Elderly and Housebound Service

#### What outcomes does the change aim to achieve and for whom?

The review of the library service has been designed with the aim of delivering a comprehensive and efficient library service for users and Reading in the context of reduced funding. The proposals outlined above support the delivery of a budget saving of c£217,000, subject to compliance with the Council's legal duties, whilst maintaining an accessible service tailored to local need.

#### Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?

The main stakeholders in the Library Service include:

- Library service users generally, and specifically:
  - \* Central and branch library users
  - \* Elderly and Housebound Service users
  - \* Mobile Library users
  - \* Toy Library users (including childcare settings and childminders)
- Staff

- Volunteers
- Partner organisations located in, and delivering activities from, library buildings and their service users/members
- Schools (including those which run class visits to their local library)

Consultation feedback received through both the 2015 and 2016 public consultations has shown that library services in Reading are highly valued for a number of reasons, including:

- Local provision of free access to a wide range of books (adult fiction, non-fiction, large print books, children's books, e-books and audio books).
- Library services are identified as vital local services that support the educational development of people of all ages - including the development of literacy skills, language skills and IT skills, through activities such as reading and Rhymetimes, language and IT classes run by external providers within library premises, and through the provision of reference materials and quiet study space.
- Library services are seen as playing a key role in fostering social interaction, especially for parents and older people, as open and welcoming services at the centre of their communities. Hosting a range of activities and events (especially targeting older people, young children and their guardians, such as Coffee Mornings and Rhymetimes) and public information about the local area/what's going on have also been identified as fundamental to the social dimension of libraries. The Mobile Library / Elderly and Housebound service has also been identified as an extremely important source of social contact for those unable to visit a library building.
- Library services are seen as key to tackling digital exclusion, especially for older people and those on low incomes who may require further assistance and support in order to access the digital world, or may not be able to afford broadband or a computer of their own.
- Libraries have been identified as accessible and safe places for vulnerable groups, including children, older people and people with disabilities (both physical and mental).

When asked for suggestions as to how savings could be made from library services during the 2015 consultation, the following suggestions were received most frequently:

- Reducing opening hours (9%)
- Charging/asking for donations (of stock or for participating in activities in particular) (9%)
- Sharing space within libraries with partner organisations (5%)
- Making greater use of volunteers (4%)
- Renting space in libraries (4%)

5% of respondents suggested that the Council should not make savings in the library service.

Furthermore, when asked about areas for improvement, respondents suggested:

- Increased provision of activities for adults and children and community space (4%)
- IT upgrades including replacement PCs, Wi-Fi in all sites, provision of e-books and self-service facilities (4%)
- Improved selection of books (4%)
- The introduction of café/refreshment facilities within libraries (3%)
- Provision of toilets (1%)

These suggested opportunities for savings, and for improvements, subsequently informed the development of proposals that were subject to public consultation during the second phase of the library review and were implemented in 2017.

During the second phase of the library review, responses to the question of how any negative impacts of proposals might be reduced indicated that various respondents specifically want:

- Reasonable access to libraries (specifically access after 3pm for school age children, at 9am for parents of young children visiting libraries straight from taking older children to school, and on evenings and weekends for working adults)
- Staff to remain available to support more complex queries
- Support to adapt to the use of self-service technology
- Easy to use and reliable self-service technology
- Continued support for issuing and returning stock for those that are unable to use self-service technology
- To make greater use of volunteers
- Continued access to children's and adults activities, including Rhymetimes and Coffee mornings
- Improved access to the Toy Library
- To retain and enhance the community focus of libraries
- To feel safe and secure in libraries
- Changes to be clearly publicised
- Changes not to be made (including reduced hours, reduced staffing and changes in location)
- Increased income generation and efficiencies to be pursued at the expense of making service cuts



Assess whether an EqlA is Relevant

How does your proposal relate to eliminating discrimination; promoting equality of opportunity; promoting good community relations?

Do you have evidence or reason to believe that some (racial, disability, gender, sexuality, age and religious belief) groups may be affected differently than others? (Think about your monitoring information, research, national data/reports etc.)  
Yes

Is there already public concern about potentially discriminatory practices/impact or could there be? Think about your complaints, consultation, and feedback.

Yes -

A number of respondents to the Council's overall budget consultation and both phases of public consultation on the library service review in 2015 raised concerns regarding the impact of changes to the library service on children and their guardians, as well as young, older and disabled people. Concerns were also raised regarding potential detrimental impacts upon low income families and for the cohesion of communities consisting of people from different cultural backgrounds and ethnicities. Certain of the changes proposed as part of this review would be considered to be similar to those that prompted the original concerns.

If the answer is Yes to any of the above you need to do an Equality Impact Assessment.

Signed (completing Officer):	Simon Smith	Date: February 2018
Signed (Lead Officer):	Sarah Gee	Date: February 2018

### Consultation

A public consultation will be necessary on proposals for Battle (BAT), Caversham (CAV), Central (CEN), Palmer Park (PAL), Tilehurst (TIL) and Whitley (WHI) libraries. These codes are used in the following document.

Relevant groups/experts	How will the views of these groups be obtained	Date
Library users and non-users at the affected sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Proposals regarding opening hours will be available at the affected sites, to seek feedback .</li><li>The service can now directly contact individuals identified as using these libraries within the last year where these individuals have email addresses</li></ul>	February-March 2018
Mobile Library / Elderly and Housebound Service users	No changes affect these users, this service continues as it is now	
Protected groups	The changes proposed are affecting some library sites and not all - unlike previous changes. The forums that were used for the 2016 changes could be contacted and revisited if required.	February-March 2018
Staff	Formal consultation with employees on a staff restructure will follow the confirmation of a final option.	March-April 2018

## Collect and Assess your Data

Using information from Census, residents survey data, service monitoring data, satisfaction or complaints, feedback, consultation responses, research, your knowledge and the knowledge of people in your team, staff groups etc. describe how the proposal could impact on each group. Include both positive and negative impacts.

Proposals	Describe how this recommendation could impact on Racial groups	Evidence	Mitigation measures
<p>Reductions in opening hours (Battle, Caversham, Central, Palmer Park, Tilehurst, Whitley)</p>	<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of BME residents in each catchment has been included as a demographic indicator in determining needs/priorities for libraries in the Needs Assessment that was developed during the first phase of the Library Service review. This has therefore informed the development of recommendations.</li> <li>• In 2011, 25.3% of Reading residents were of Black or Minority Ethnicities. 8.8% of households in Reading had no occupants where English was the main language, and 14.5% of residents aged 3 and over spoke a main language other than English.</li> <li>• We would review responses to consultations carried out, noting that in 2015 there was not seen to be a significant difference in how questions were responded to based on ethnicity.</li> </ul>		
<p>a) Caversham Library</p>	<p>A reduction in staffing and opening hours may have some impact for all users, but may have a disproportionate impact on Black and Minority Ethnic groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restricted opening hours may impact access to books in community languages.</li> <li>• Restricted opening hours may exacerbate existing barriers to engagement with libraries.</li> </ul>	<p>In 2011, 11.51% of residents (3651) in the Caversham Library catchment area are of Black or Minority Ethnicities (less than half the borough average).</p>	<p>Opening times at libraries following changes in 2017 have been scheduled to ensure access for a range of different users, including school children and those that are working, with access on at least one evening and on Saturdays at all libraries.</p> <p>The proposals for Caversham would be informed by usage across the week, whilst applying the principles above.</p>

Proposals	Describe how this recommendation could impact on Racial groups	Evidence	Mitigation measures
b) Palmer Park Library	As above	<p>The Palmer Park Library catchment area is the most ethnically diverse of all Reading library catchment areas. In 2011, 37.87% of residents (3428) in the Palmer Park Library catchment area are of Black or Minority Ethnicities. This is well above the borough average.</p> <p>Rhymetime activities are particularly well attended by families with English as an additional language.</p>	<p>The hours needing reduction means either 2 half days or a full day of closure would be the most likely solutions.</p> <p>For Palmer Park, the opening would be driven by the hours when Reading College are able to support staffing costs, so other options are not available to consult on. The users of this library would be most affected.</p>
c) Central Library	As above	<p>In 2011, 34.86% of residents in the catchment area of Central Library were BME. The catchment area of Central Library is the second most ethnically diverse of the 7 library catchment areas identified and includes the greatest number of BME residents (16,205).</p> <p>As the hub of the network, Central Library also serves the borough as a whole, in addition to the immediate catchment area.</p> <p>Rhymetime activities are particularly well attended by families with English as an additional language</p>	<p>Central Library is within a maximum of 20 minutes journey time on public transport for many Reading households, 30 minutes for the vast majority, and 40 minutes for all remaining households. The changes to opening would, when put with other possible changes to opening, ensure a split of hours across the town.</p> <p>Changes proposed for Tilehurst, Battle and Whitley are in line with the principles to retain a spread of hours and ensure evening and Saturday opening, and maximise after school hours access.</p>
d) Tilehurst Library	As above	<p>In 2011, 12.5% of residents (2300) in the Tilehurst Library catchment area are of Black or Minority Ethnicities (less than half the borough average).</p>	<p>Citizenship study guides and practice tests, as well as language courses can now be accessed online, 24/7 and free</p>
e) Battle Library	As above	<p>In 2011, 31.21% of residents (5570) in</p>	

Proposals	Describe how this recommendation could impact on Racial groups	Evidence	Mitigation measures
		the Battle Library catchment area are of Black or Minority Ethnicities (more than the borough average).	of charge.
f) Whitley Library	As above	In 2011, 27.19% of residents (6427) in the Whitley Library catchment area are of Black or Minority Ethnicities (more than the borough average).	<p>E-books and e-magazines can be borrowed 24/7, free of charge, for 21 days from Reading's 'e-Library' - this offers a growing range of fiction, non-fiction and children's books available to read online, on a smart-phone or tablet and some e-readers.</p> <p>Books can be reserved online from the libraries catalogue. Books can also be ordered over the telephone or in branch. There is a 50p charge for requests for stock out of catchment (from another branch).</p> <p>Books can be renewed online and over the telephone, free of charge, as well as in branch.</p>

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Gender/Transgender (inc. pregnancy and maternity, marriage)	Evidence	Mitigation measures
Reductions in opening hours (Battle, Caversham, Central, Palmer Park, Tilehurst, Whitley)	<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of lone parents in each catchment has been included as a demographic indicator in determining needs/priorities for libraries in the Needs Assessment that was developed during the first phase of the Library Service review. This has therefore informed the development of recommendations.</li> <li>During the first and second phase of public consultation in 2015, there was a higher proportion of female respondents than reflected in the resident population (69.4% and 69.1%, as opposed to 50%).</li> <li>Of responses to both phases of consultation feedback in 2015, it has also become apparent that a greater proportion of women (68.1% and 74.7%) reported visiting libraries with or on behalf of others (children, older and disabled people).</li> </ul>		
a) Caversham Library	<p>A reduction in opening hours may have some impact for all users, but may disproportionately affect women. While there is no significant disparity in gender populations in Reading, women appear to make up a greater proportion of library users and any disproportionate impact may be exacerbated by caring responsibilities.</p>	<p>In 2011, 679 lone parents with dependent children lived within the Caversham Library catchment area. 69% of respondents to the second phase of consultation reporting that they primarily use Caversham Library were female, whilst the remaining 31% were male.</p>	<p>Opening times at libraries following changes in 2017 have been scheduled to ensure access for a range of different users, including school children and those that are working, with access on at least one evening and on Saturdays at all libraries.</p>
b) Palmer Park Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women are more likely to be carers of either children or adults, and tend to be responsible for accompanying children or the person that they care for to the library.</li> </ul>	<p>In 2011, 176 lone parents with dependent children lived within the Palmer Park Library catchment area. 75% of respondents to the second phase of consultation reporting that they primarily use Palmer Park Library were female, whilst the remaining 25% were male.</p>	<p>The proposals for Caversham would be informed by usage across the week, whilst applying the principles above.</p> <p>The hours needing reduction means either 2 half days or a full day of closure would be the most likely solutions.</p>
c) Central Library	<p>Restricted access to libraries due to reduced opening hours could therefore conflict with other caring responsibilities and tasks. The impact</p>	<p>1,181 lone parents with dependent children live within the catchment area of Central Library. 62% of respondents to the second phase of consultation reporting that they</p>	<p>For Palmer Park, the opening would be driven by the hours when Reading College are able to support staffing costs, so other options are not available to consult on. The users of this library</p>

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Gender/Transgender (inc. pregnancy and maternity, marriage)	Evidence	Mitigation measures
	of this may be further exacerbated for lone parents who are more likely to be female.	primarily use Central Library were female, whilst the remaining 38% were male.	would be most affected.
d) Tilehurst library		In 2011, 565 lone parents with dependent children lived within the Tilehurst Library catchment area. 67% of respondents to the second phase of consultation reporting that they primarily use Tilehurst Library were female, whilst the remaining 33% were male.	Central Library is within a maximum of 20 minutes journey time on public transport for many Reading households, 30 minutes for the vast majority, and 40 minutes for all remaining households. The changes to opening would, when put with other possible changes to opening, ensure a split of hours across the town.
e) Battle library		In 2011, 793 lone parents with dependent children lived within the Battle Library catchment area. 77% of respondents to the second phase of consultation reporting that they primarily use Battle Library were female, whilst the remaining 23% were male.	Changes proposed for Tilehurst, Battle and Whitley are in line with the principles to retain a spread of hours and ensure evening and Saturday opening, and maximise after school hours access.
f) Whitley library		In 2011, 793 lone parents with dependent children lived within the Battle Library catchment area. 77% of respondents to the second phase of consultation reporting that they primarily use Battle Library were female, whilst the remaining 23% were male.	Citizenship study guides and practice tests, as well as language courses can now be accessed online, 24/7 and free of charge.  E-books and e-magazines can be borrowed 24/7, free of charge, for 21 days from Reading's 'e-Library' - this offers a growing range of fiction, non-fiction and children's books available to read online, on a smart-phone or tablet and some e-readers.  Books can be reserved online from the

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Gender/Transgender (inc. pregnancy and maternity, marriage)	Evidence	Mitigation measures
			<p>libraries catalogue. Books can also be ordered over the telephone or in branch. There is a 50p charge for requests for stock out of catchment (from another branch).</p> <p>Books can be renewed online and over the telephone, free of charge, as well as in branch.</p>

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability	Evidence	Mitigation measures
Reductions in opening hours (Battle, Caversham, Central, Palmer Park, Tilehurst, Whitley)	<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of residents in each catchment reporting in the 2011 Census that their daily activities are limited by a long-term illness or disability has been included as a demographic indicator in determining needs/priorities for libraries in the Needs Assessment that was developed during the first phase of the Library Service review. This has therefore informed the development of recommendations.</li> <li>During the 2015 consultation, there was a higher proportion of respondents reporting a disability than reflected in the resident population (17.8% and 17.5%, as opposed to 12.9%).</li> <li>3.7% of respondents to the 2015 consultation reported that they visit libraries with or on behalf of disabled persons, thereby indicating that there may be additional, indirect, use of library services by a wider group of disabled persons.</li> </ul>		
a) Caversham Library	A reduction in staffing and opening hours may have some impact for all users, and may disproportionately affect disabled people, including those with:	The table below shows the proportion of respondents to the first and second phase of consultation that reported using Caversham Library, as well as having a disability, against Census data for the	Opening times at libraries following changes in 2017 have been scheduled to ensure access for a range of different users, including school children and those that are

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability	Evidence	Mitigation measures						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical disabilities</li> <li>• Learning disabilities</li> <li>• Sensory loss</li> <li>• Mental health problems</li> <li>• Neurological conditions</li> </ul>	<p>catchment area.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Phase One 2015</td> <td>15.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phase Two 2015</td> <td>11.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011 Census</td> <td>13.2%</td> </tr> </table> <p>As shown in the table above, around the catchment average of disabled people therefore appear to use the library.</p>	Phase One 2015	15.4%	Phase Two 2015	11.8%	2011 Census	13.2%	<p>working, with access on at least one evening and on Saturdays at all libraries.</p> <p>The proposals for Caversham would be informed by usage across the week, whilst applying the principles above.</p>
Phase One 2015	15.4%								
Phase Two 2015	11.8%								
2011 Census	13.2%								
b) Palmer Park Library	<p>Individuals with caring responsibilities for disabled children or adults may also be disproportionately affected, as reduced opening hours could conflict with other caring responsibilities and tasks.</p> <p>A reduction in staffing levels may also impact the ability of some disabled users to make full use of the library service unassisted.</p>	<p>The table below shows the proportion of respondents to the first and second phase of consultation that reported using Palmer Park Library, as well as having a disability, against Census data for the catchment area.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Phase One 2015</td> <td>17.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phase Two 2015</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011 Census</td> <td>9.2%</td> </tr> </table> <p>As shown in the table above, more than the catchment average of disabled people therefore appear to use the library.</p>	Phase One 2015	17.1%	Phase Two 2015	18%	2011 Census	9.2%	<p>The hours needing reduction means either 2 half days or a full day of closure would be the most likely solutions.</p> <p>For Palmer Park, the opening would be driven by the hours when Reading College are able to support staffing costs, so other options are not available to consult on. The users of this library would be most affected.</p>
Phase One 2015	17.1%								
Phase Two 2015	18%								
2011 Census	9.2%								
c) Central Library		<p>The table below shows the proportion of respondents to the first and second phase of consultation that reported using Central Library, as well as having a disability, against Census data for the catchment area.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Phase One</td> <td>15.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phase Two</td> <td>15.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011 Census</td> <td>12.6%</td> </tr> </table> <p>As shown in the table above, marginally above the catchment average of disabled people therefore appear to use the library.</p>	Phase One	15.7%	Phase Two	15.7%	2011 Census	12.6%	<p>Central Library is within a maximum of 20 minutes journey time on public transport for many Reading households, 30 minutes for the vast majority, and 40 minutes for all remaining households. The changes to opening would, when put with other possible changes to opening, ensure a split of hours across the town.</p> <p>Changes proposed for Tilehurst,</p>
Phase One	15.7%								
Phase Two	15.7%								
2011 Census	12.6%								

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability	Evidence	Mitigation measures						
d) Tilehurst library		<p>The table below shows the proportion of respondents to the first and second phase of consultation that reported using Tilehurst Library, as well as having a disability, against Census data for the catchment area.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Phase One</td> <td>15.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phase Two</td> <td>21.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011 Census</td> <td>15.5%</td> </tr> </table> <p>As shown in the table above, more than the catchment average of disabled people appear to use the library.</p>	Phase One	15.9%	Phase Two	21.6%	2011 Census	15.5%	<p>Battle and Whitley are in line with the principles to retain a spread of hours and ensure evening and Saturday opening, and maximise after school hours access.</p> <p>Citizenship study guides and practice tests, as well as language courses can now be accessed online, 24/7 and free of charge.</p> <p>E-books and e-magazines can be borrowed 24/7, free of charge, for 21 days from Reading's 'e-Library' - this offers a growing range of fiction, non-fiction and children's books available to read online, on a smart-phone or tablet and some e-readers.</p>
Phase One	15.9%								
Phase Two	21.6%								
2011 Census	15.5%								
e) Battle library		<p>The table below shows the proportion of respondents to the first and second phase of consultation that reported using Battle Library, as well as having a disability, against Census data for the catchment area.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Phase One</td> <td>15.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phase Two</td> <td>13.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011 Census</td> <td>10.5%</td> </tr> </table> <p>As shown in the table above, more than the catchment average of disabled people appear to use the library.</p>	Phase One	15.1%	Phase Two	13.2%	2011 Census	10.5%	<p>Books can be reserved online from the libraries catalogue. Books can also be ordered over the telephone or in branch. There is a 50p charge for requests for stock out of catchment (from another branch).</p>
Phase One	15.1%								
Phase Two	13.2%								
2011 Census	10.5%								
f) Whitley library		<p>The table below shows the proportion of respondents to the first and second phase of consultation that reported using Whitley Library, as well as having a disability, against Census data for the catchment area.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Phase One</td> <td>24.4%*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phase Two</td> <td>5%*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011 Census</td> <td>15.2%</td> </tr> </table>	Phase One	24.4%*	Phase Two	5%*	2011 Census	15.2%	<p>Books can be renewed online and over the telephone, free of charge, as well as in branch.</p>
Phase One	24.4%*								
Phase Two	5%*								
2011 Census	15.2%								

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability	Evidence	Mitigation measures
		*Note, the numbers of respondents reportedly using Whitley Library were extremely low, thereby accounting for significant variances.	

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Sexual orientation (cover civil partnership)	Evidence	Mitigation measures
Reductions in opening hours (Battle, Caversham, Central, Palmer Park, Tilehurst, Whitley)	No differential impacted is predicted on the grounds of sexual orientation.		The library service currently stocks, and will continue to stock, materials available to different groups. This includes literature which may hold greater appeal for LGBTQ groups. The service intends to maintain the diversity in available titles despite possible changes to the way in which the service is run and a reduced stock budget - reductions would be spread over stock areas.

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Age	Evidence	Mitigation measures
Reductions in opening hours (Battle, Caversham, Central, Palmer Park, Tilehurst, Whitley)	<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of residents in each catchment aged 0-17 and 65+, as recorded in the 2011 Census, has been included as a demographic indicator in determining needs/priorities for libraries in the Needs Assessment that was developed during the first phase of the Library Service review. This has therefore informed the development of recommendations.</li> <li>During the 2015 consultation, there was a higher proportion of respondents aged 65+ and fewer respondents aged 0-24 than represented in the resident population.</li> <li>A review of Active Borrowers dates of birth at the point of 1/7/2017, showed that Active Borrowers were more representative of the Reading population as a whole (with a greater proportion of young people amongst Active Borrowers). However, Adults aged 25-64 and 65+ continue to be over represented amongst users.</li> <li>30% of respondents to the 2015 consultation reported that they visit libraries with or on behalf of children aged 0-18 and 12% and 15% of respondents reported visiting with or on behalf of older persons, thereby indicating that there is additional, indirect, use of library services by a wider sample of these age groups.</li> </ul>		

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Age	Evidence	Mitigation measures
a) Caversham Library	<p>A reduction in opening hours may have some impact for all users, and may disproportionately affect families with children, and adults of working age.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A reduction in opening hours may see a reduction in the take-up of library services by school age children whose ability to access libraries is limited by attendance at school and college to afternoons and weekends in term time.</li> <li>A reduction in opening hours may also see a reduction in the take-up of library services by working age adults whose ability to access libraries is limited by work patterns.</li> </ul>	<p>The highest number of 65+ year olds of any library catchment area in the borough live within the catchment area for Caversham Library (5,060). 65+ year olds make up 16% of residents in the catchment, while 23% of residents are aged 0-17 years. From the age profile of active borrowers where 13% of borrowers are aged 0-15 and 33% are 65+. this implies that young people are under-represented amongst borrowers, and older people are over-represented.</p>	<p>Opening times at libraries following changes in 2017 have been scheduled to ensure access for a range of different users, including school children and those that are working, with access on at least one evening and on Saturdays at all libraries.</p> <p>The proposals for Caversham would be informed by usage across the week, whilst applying the principles above.</p> <p>The hours needing reduction means either 2 half days or a full day of closure would be the most likely solutions.</p> <p>For Palmer Park, the opening would be driven by the hours when Reading College are able to support staffing costs, so other options are not available to consult on. The users of this library would be most affected.</p> <p>Central Library is within a maximum of 20 minutes journey time on public transport for many Reading households, 30 minutes for the vast majority, and 40 minutes for all remaining households. The changes to opening would, when put with</p>
b) Palmer Park Library		<p>65+ year olds make up 7% of residents in the catchment, while 20% of residents are aged 0-17 years. From a review of the age profile of active borrowers, where 28% of borrowers are aged 0-15 and 15% are 65+, this implies that young people are over-represented and older people are under-represented.</p>	
c) Central Library		<p>Central Library's catchment area includes the highest number of 0-17 year olds (7,702). 0-17 year olds make up 17% of residents in the catchment, while only 7% are aged 65+. When considering active borrowers, young people are underrepresented (19% are aged 0-24) and older people are overrepresented (15% are aged 65+).</p>	
d) Tilehurst library		<p>65+ year olds make up 16% of residents in the catchment, while 23% of residents are aged 0-17 years. From a review of the age profile of active borrowers, where 11% of borrowers are aged 0-15 and 38% are 65+,</p>	

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Age	Evidence	Mitigation measures
		this implies that older people are over-represented while young people are under-represented.	other possible changes to opening, ensure a split of hours across the town.
e) Battle library		<p>The joint highest proportion of 0-17 year olds of any library catchment area in the borough live within the catchment area for Battle Library.</p> <p>65+ year olds make up 9% of residents in the catchment, while 25% of residents are aged 0-17 years. From a review of the age profile of active borrowers, where 19% of borrowers are aged 0-15 and 16% are 65+, this implies that the catchment and library usage are fairly balanced.</p>	<p>Changes proposed for Tilehurst, Battle and Whitley are in line with the principles to retain a spread of hours and ensure evening and Saturday opening, and maximise after school hours access.</p> <p>Citizenship study guides and practice tests, as well as language courses can now be accessed online, 24/7 and free of charge.</p>
f) Whitley library		<p>The joint highest proportion of 0-17 year olds of any library catchment area in the borough live within the catchment area for Whitley Library.</p> <p>65+ year olds make up 10% of residents in the catchment, while 25% of residents are aged 0-17 years. From a review of the age profile of active borrowers, where 61% of borrowers are aged 0-15 and 9% are 65+, this implies that young people are over-represented amongst borrowers, and older people are under-represented</p>	<p>E-books and e-magazines can be borrowed 24/7, free of charge, for 21 days from Reading's 'e-Library' - this offers a growing range of fiction, non-fiction and children's books available to read online, on a smart-phone or tablet and some e-readers.</p> <p>Books can be reserved online from the libraries catalogue. Books can also be ordered over the telephone or in branch. There is a 50p charge for requests for stock out of catchment (from another branch).</p> <p>Books can be renewed online and over the telephone, free of charge,</p>

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact on Age	Evidence	Mitigation measures
			as well as in branch.

Proposals	Describe how this proposal could impact Religious Belief	Evidence	Mitigation measures
Reductions in opening hours (Battle, Caversham, Central, Palmer Park, Tilehurst, Whitley)			The library service currently stocks, and will continue to stock, materials available to different groups. This includes literature which may hold greater appeal for users of various religious beliefs.
	There are no specific impacts anticipated for this category.		

### Make a Decision

If the impact is negative then you must consider whether you can legally justify it. If not you must set out how you will reduce or eliminate the impact. If you are not sure what the impact will be you MUST assume that there could be a negative impact. You may have to do further consultation or test out your proposal and monitor the impact before full implementation.

#### Negative impact identified or uncertain

As outlined above, proposed changes, subject to consultation, to the library service at the 6 sites may result in some negative impacts upon certain protected groups.

Mitigation measures, as listed above, have also been designed in order to avoid or reduce any differential impacts. This EIA will be revised and reissued.

Signed (completing Officer)	Simon Smith	Date	February 2018
Signed (Lead Officer)	Sarah Gee	Date	February 2018