Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA)

> This Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) will enable you to assess the **new, proposed or significantly changed** policy/ practice/ procedure/ function/ service** for equality and human rights implications.
>
> Undertaking this assessment will help you to identify whether or not this policy/ practice/ procedure/ function/ service** may have an adverse impact on a particular community or group of people. It will ultimately ensure that as an Authority we do not discriminate and we are able to promote equality, diversity and human rights.
>
> Before completing this form please refer to the EHRIA guidance, for further information about undertaking and completing the assessment. For further advice and guidance please contact your Departmental Equalities Group or equality@leics.gov.uk
>
> **Please note: The term 'policy' will be used throughout this assessment as shorthand for policy, practice, procedure, function or service.*

Key Details	
Name of policy being assessed:	Barrow upon Soar Library
Department and Section:	Communities & Wellbeing
Name of lead officer/ job title and others completing this assessment:	Nigel Thomas Head of Service Chris Housden Equalities Officer
Contact telephone numbers:	0116 3056947
Name of officer/s responsible for implementing this policy:	Nigel Thomas
Date EIA assessment started:	June 2014
Date EIA assessment completed:	September 2014

Section 1: Defining the policy

Section 1: Defining the policy
You should begin this assessment by defining and outlining the scope of this policy. You should consider the impact or likely impact of the policy in relation to all areas of equality, diversity and human rights, as outlined in Leicestershire County Council's Equality Strategy.

1   What is new or changed in this policy? *What has changed and why?*

1. Leicestershire County Council's (LCC) Communities and Wellbeing Service incorporates the Council's Libraries, Heritage, Arts, Archives and Adult Learning Services. LCC's Policy is determined by the statutory requirements contained in the Library & Museums Act 1964 (see paragraph 8). The Service is subject to a significant reduction in funding and as a result all related services are subject to review.

2. As a result, a package of proposals has been proposed and consulted on which are designed to meet the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) target of £800K from the Communities and Wellbeing Services Budget.

3. The proposals as they affect the Library Service in full are:

    a) 16 major market town and shopping centre libraries funded by the County Council with a 20% reduction in opening hours
    b) The development of an infrastructure support package which would enable local communities to run their local library in partnership with the County Council.
    c) An online library service available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to those with access to the internet
    d) A mobile library service that will provide a regular library service to most villages without a static library.

4. This EHRIA explores the potential Equality and Human Rights impacts on b) as they specifically affect Barrow on Soar Library. The proposal outlined assumes that local communities come forward to provide the management of the library service with a support package from LCC. Should a local community not come forward LCC may have to consider a decision to close the library, or consider alternative means of service delivery if the proposed solution is insufficient to satisfy the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

5. This approach changes the current method of service delivery which sees LCC fully funding a network of 52 libraries across the County.

6. Responsibility for service delivery currently lies principally with the Senior Management Team of the Communities and Wellbeing section, and then through service operational teams. This arrangement would change in

	that there would be a partnership formed by LCC with a local community based on the delivery of the library service.
	7. The service areas are compliant with Leicestershire County Council's Equality Policy.
2	**Does this relate to any other policy within your department, the Council or with other partner organisations?** *If yes, please reference the relevant policy or EHRIA. If unknown, further investigation may be required.*

8. Any decision must bear in mind the statutory provisions of the Library & Museums Act 1964. Under the Act, public library service provision is a statutory duty for local authorities. The requirement is to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service. To comply with the Act, local authorities must:

   • Promote a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons in the area that want to make use of it (Section 7)
   • Promote the 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))

The Government superintends the work of Councils, and has a duty to:

   • Oversee and promote the public library service (Section 1(1))
   • Take action where a local authority fails to perform its duties (Section 10)

9. In addition, any decisions must bear in mind the strategic objectives outlined in the Communities and Wellbeing's own service plan, as follows:

   • To enhance the quality of life and sense of wellbeing of Leicestershire residents by commissioning or providing a choice of community heritage, learning and cultural resources.
   • To contribute to the provision of relevant information and cultural resources
   • To combat worklessness by developing skills and training opportunities as an adult learning provider
   • To enhance the tourism offer of the County

10. The provision of Information and Advice under the terms of the Care Act (to be enacted in 2015) is likely to place greater responsibilities on local authorities for these services. Libraries provide a natural conduit and local resource for this work.

11. Any changes to Library provision must therefore satisfy the requirements of the Equalities & Human Rights Acts as well as the Public Libraries and Museums Act. As the legislative requirements have a different focus, we will be addressing the Equalities and Human Rights duties in this EHRIA document, and the National libraries legislation in a separate online *Community Assessment.* Some of the information required in the two |

		documents will overlap. For example, transport links are important in understanding how local communities inter-relate, but also help to inform the difficulties that people with disabilities (particularly mobility related) may have in accessing alternative provisions.
3		**Who are the people / groups (target groups) affected and what is the intended change or outcome for them?** 12. Potentially everyone in the locality who uses the library, or may do so in the future. Educational establishments and individuals looking for volunteering opportunities may particularly be affected. **2012/13 data on users:** The total number of visitors at Barrow on Soar was 20,750, of which 1,247 were active borrowers, the 5th highest figure of the 36 Community libraries. As of 31/12/2013, there were 1,527 live members, broken down in age range as follows: Age band Number 0-4 157 5-17 563 18- 49 404 50- 64 165 65+ 238 The two highest age groups as a percentage of total members are 5-17 (37%) and 18-49 (26%). Just under half of the total is under 18. There were 83 attendees at 6 events in the library. Barrow on Soar has the 10th highest number of individual PC users out of the 36 Community Libraries. 13. Key protected groups (see Section 2C) for which the proposals may impact are: • Younger people • Older people • People with disabilities • Pregnancy and maternity • Race. • Religion • Other groups • Community Cohesion 14. A different governance arrangement, as is being proposed may have an impact on access to a range of services. For Barrow on Soar these include:

Automatic Doors	Audio/Talking Books	DVDs for Hire
Local /Tourism Information	Reference books/Information services	Access to courses/classes
Newspapers/magazines	Study space/Homework help	Exhibition/Display space
Home Library Service	Local Studies/Family History	Children's area
Children's stories on CD	Fax Machine	Internet taster sessions
Bookstart	Parent led story time	Photocopier
Scanner	Printer	

15. Barrow on Soar library current opening hours are:

Monday	Closed am	2pm - 5pm
Tuesday	Closed all day	
Wednesday	10am - 1pm	2pm - 5pm
Thursday	Closed all day	
Friday	10am - 1pm	
Saturday	10am - 1pm	Closed pm

Transport links

The nearest market town library is Loughborough. The distance between Barrow and Loughborough is 4.1 miles by road. The No. 2 Kinchbus service between Leicester and Loughborough (via Barrow) runs every 30 minutes during current library opening times (weekdays and Saturdays) and the journey takes 30 minutes. Alternatively, users could choose to travel by rail from Barrow to Loughborough.

This may impact on some protected groups, e.g. young people, older people and people with disabilities.

Will this policy meet the Equality Act 2010 requirements to have due regard to the need to meet any of the following aspects? **(Please tick and explain how)**

	Yes	No	How?
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation		**X**	
Advance equality of opportunity between different groups	**X**		The Library seeks to provide free reading and audio material to groups who may not otherwise have access, such as children from low income families. Library services are also made available to people with restricted mobility, via the Home Library Service.

	Foster good relations between different groups	X		The library is open to everyone and helps to attract people from different backgrounds to the wider opportunities offered within the Community Centre.

Section 2: Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) Screening

Section 2: Equality and Human Rights Assessment Screening
The purpose of this section of the assessment is to help you decide if a full EHRIA is required.

If you have already identified that a full EHRIA is needed for this policy/ practice/ procedure/ function/ service, either via service planning processes or other means, then please go straight to Section 3 on Page 7 of this document.

Section 2
A: Research and Consultation

		Yes	No*
5.	Have the target groups been consulted about the following?		
	a) their current needs and aspirations and what is important to them;		X
	b) any potential impact of this change on them (positive and negative, intended and unintended);		X
	c) potential barriers they may face		X
6.	If the target groups have not been consulted directly have representatives been consulted or research explored (e.g. Equality Mapping)?		X
7.	Have other stakeholder groups/ secondary groups (e.g. carers of service users) been explored in term of potential unintended impacts?		X
8.	*If you answered 'no' to the questions above and feel that consultation is not necessary, please use the space below to explain why.		
	Consultation has been undertaken between 5th May and 7th July 2014. This is an essential element of assessing local need, what the library does to meet this, and how it might be met in the future. It will take account of the needs of different groups and of access and deprivation issues. The opinions of local people are essential in collecting this data. Consultation with all stakeholders will take place when realistic proposals for the future of the library have been established in the context of the County-wide service.		

Section 2 B: Monitoring Impact				
8.	Are there systems set up to:	**Yes**		**No**
	a) monitor impact (positive and negative, intended and unintended) for different groups;	**X**		
	b) enable open feedback and suggestions from different communities	**X**		

Note: If no to Question 8 you will need to ensure that monitoring systems are established to check for impact on the protected characteristics.

Section 2 C: Potential Impact

9.

Use the table below to specify if any individuals or community groups who identify with any of the 'protected characteristics' may potentially be affected by this policy and describe any positive and negative impacts, including any barriers.

	Yes	**No**	**Comments**
Age	**X**		**Data for usage by age group is reflected above. It is evident that younger people would be disadvantaged if some of the services were discontinued, such as Parent-led story time, Homework help, Bookstart, Summer Reading Challenge, the children's area and children's audio books, and these could not be provided elsewhere. Hall Orchard primary school and a local pre school also regularly visit the library.**
Disability	**X**		**If the Home Library Service was discontinued, this would disadvantage people with poor mobility and unable to reach the library unaided. Travelling distances between libraries in a reduced network may reduce access for people with physical mobility difficulties or other problems with travel as a result of mental health conditions or learning difficulties. The public transport links for Barrow to the nearest market**

			town library (Loughborough) are outlined in section 1 (3) above.
Gender Reassignment		X	**No disadvantage identified.**
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X	**No disadvantage identified**
Pregnancy and Maternity	X		**The library is an information point for women in pregnancy and during maternity. Similar information may be provided elsewhere. Travelling may be difficult for women in advanced pregnancy or with babies, so the comments regarding travelling (listed under disability above), may equally apply to this group.**
Race	X		**In common with other libraries within the network, Barrow is committed to providing a culturally and racially appropriate range of reading and audio material. This must be retained in any revised provision.**
Religion or Belief	X		**As above.**
Sex		X	**Nothing identified.**
Sexual Orientation	X		**See Race (above).**
Other groups e.g. rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities	X		**The particular needs of Barrow, as determined by its demographic and socio-economic profile will need to be fully analysed to assess the value of the provision to its locality. Any difficulties specific to Barrow identified from local knowledge or through consultation may inform the EHRIA but may be equally relevant to the Community Assessment to be prepared for Barrow.**

		Yes	No	Comments
	Community Cohesion	X		**Many of the services provided (e.g. support for reading groups, promoting community use of the library) contribute towards the promotion of community cohesion.**

10.	Are the human rights of individuals <u>potentially</u> affected by this proposal? Could there be an impact on human rights for any of the protected characteristics? **(Please tick)** Explain why you consider that any particular <u>article in the Human Rights Act</u> may apply to your policy/ practice/ function or procedure and how the human rights of individuals are likely to be affected below: [NB. Include positive and negative impacts as well as barriers in benefiting from the above proposal]

	Yes	**No**	**Comments**
Part 1: The Convention- Rights and Freedoms			
Article 2: Right to life		X	
Article 3: Right not to be tortured or treated in an inhuman or degrading way		X	
Article 4: Right not to be subjected to slavery/ forced labour		X	
Article 5: Right to liberty and security		X	
Article 6: Right to a fair trial		X	
Article 7: No punishment without law		X	
Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life	X		**The library makes a significant contribution to family life. Promoting interest in an area in this way nurtures self respect and pride in a locality that may not readily arise from elsewhere.**
Article 9: Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	X		**Libraries are a vital source of information, particularly for marginalised groups (e.g. from minority cultures) who may not have this readily available from other sources (e.g. local retail outlets). In this sense, the service promotes the rights contained in Article 9.**
Article 10: Right to freedom of expression	X		**As for Article 9.**

Article 11: Right to freedom of assembly and association		**X**	
Article 12: Right to marry		**X**	
Article 14: Right not to be discriminated against	**X**		**The shortfalls that may occur, as identified for Articles 8 & 9, are more likely to discriminate against certain groups, e.g. BME or people from minority faiths.**
Part 2: The First Protocol			
Article 1: Protection of property/ peaceful enjoyment		**X**	
Article 2: Right to education	**X**		**The educational functions of libraries are a strong aspect of their provision, and added value comes from the Summer Reading Challenge, Bookstart, and the study / homework support. It is recognised that this is not part of mainstream statutory education provision, but an important enhancement**
Article 3: Right to free elections		**X**	

Section 2
D: Decision

11.	Is there evidence or any other reason to suggest that:	**Yes**	**No**	**Unknown**
	a) this policy could have a different effect or adverse impact on any section of the community;	**X**		
	b) any section of the community may face barriers in benefiting from the proposal	**X**		

12.	Based on the answers to the questions above, what is the likely impact of this policy?
	This is to be assessed in a full EHRIA.

No Impact ☐ Positive Impact ☐ Neutral Impact ☐ Negative Impact or Impact Unknown ☒

Note: If the decision is 'Negative Impact' or 'Impact Not Known' an EHRIA Report is required.

13.	Is an EHRIA report required?	Yes	X	No	

Section 3: Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) Report

Section 3: Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment Report

This part of the assessment will help you to think <u>thoroughly</u> about the impact of this policy and to critically examine whether it is <u>likely</u> to have a positive or negative impact on different groups within our diverse community. It is also to identify any barriers that may detrimentally affect under-represented communities or groups, who may be disadvantaged by the way in which we carry out our business.

Using the information gathered either within the EHRIA Screening or independently of this process, this EHRIA Report should be used to consider the impact or likely impact of the policy in relation to all areas of equality, diversity and human rights as outlined in Leicestershire County Council's Equality Strategy.

Section 3
A: Research and Consultation

When considering the target groups it is important to think about whether new data needs to be collected or whether there is any existing research that can be utilised.

15.	Based on the gaps identified either in the EHRIA Screening or independently of this process, <u>how</u> have you now explored the following and <u>what</u> does this information/data tell you about each of the diverse groups? a) current needs and aspirations and what is important to individuals and community groups (including human rights); b) likely impacts (positive and negative, intended and unintended) to individuals and community groups (including human rights); c) likely barriers that individuals and community groups may face (including human rights)

1. From April to July 2014 the County Council undertook a County wide public consultation exercise about a range of proposals for libraries which if implemented, would deliver the savings outlined in the MTFS. In total the savings for Communities and Wellbeing totalled £800,000. The consultation contained the following elements:

- Online and hard copy survey
- Stakeholder survey
- Local public consultation meetings
- 4 focus groups were held with two key protected groups: younger and older people. The work of the groups centred around the total proposals outlined in section 1 (1) para 3
- 4 community partnership workshops to enable interested people and groups to further explore the detailed proposals with regard to partnership libraries

2. The full report on the outcomes of the consultation can be viewed in the cabinet report of 19th September via the following link http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=4190&Ver=4

Demographic Analysis

3. The questionnaire included a range of demographic questions. As well as allowing for the profile of respondents to be understood it also makes it possible to understand the views of different groups. Each of the rating questions within the survey has been cross tabulated by a range of respondent groups. The full list can be seen on page 9 of Appendix B of the September cabinet report. Whilst the assessment has considered all 9 protected groups, the following groups have been focussed on as those where it is reasonable to suggest that they might be disproportionately affected by the proposals :

- Gender
- Age
- Children aged 0-10
- Children aged 11-17
- Long term Illness or disability
- Ethnicity
- Religion

4. Breaking down the survey response to each individual library does not give sufficient data to enable all considerations to be informed. However it is reasonable to assume that broad indicative responses from the survey overall can be used allied with local knowledge at each individual site and the responses noted from the individual community public meetings.

5. A demographic sub-group analysis was undertaken as part of the consultation. This can be found as Appendix J of the September Cabinet report. This report analyses the demographic sub-groups within the context of the questions asked as part of the survey.   From this analysis the following groups can be summarised as being most affected when considering the implementation of the proposals:

- Both genders
- People of 75 years or older
- Retired people
- People with children
- People with a disability
- Children and young people

Use and Value

6. From the analysis overall, it is fair to conclude for all libraries that the majority of users come to the library to borrow a book or hire a CD and that this is no different for this library.

7. The following library services were valued a great deal from the general survey :

- Free Books for loan including e-books service (98%)
- 24/7 online renewals and reservations (75%)
- Events and activities for all ages (73%)
- Educational resources and support for children and young people (72%)
- Informal learning (71%)

8. The following services were thought most important from the general survey:

- Free books including the e-lending service (95%)
- Public Computers and public Wi-Fi (47%)
- Educational Resources for Children and young people (34%)
- Face to face advice (34%)
- 24/7 online renewals and reservations (27%)
- Events and activities for all ages (27%)

9. In addition, a representative of Barrow Parish Council completed the stakeholder survey which broadly identified the following service areas:

- Free Books for Loans, including an e-book service online
- Public computers, free public Wi-Fi
- Professional advice and support which helps improve library services in schools
- Educational resources and support for children and young people
- Informal learning - Wriggly readers, work clubs, local studies/history groups

In addition a representative of Barrow upon Soar Community Association (BUSCA) completed the stakeholder survey which broadly identified the following service areas:

- Educational resources and support for children and young people
- Free books for loan, including an e-book service online
- Public computers, free public Wi-Fi
- Events and activities for all ages

In addition a Resident / Local Borough Councillor completed the stakeholder survey

which broadly identified the following service areas:

- Free books for loan, including an e-book service online
- Faxing, printing and photocopying services
- Public computers, free public Wi-Fi
- Mobile library service serving 360 rural communities
- Educational resources and support for children and young people

10. It is valuable to identify what is felt to be "valued a great deal " and "most important" as consideration will need to be given to governance arrangement as part of any new partnerships that might be established following these proposals. If a local group is established to manage a library, it will be important for them to understand these views.

Responses to proposals

11. The detailed analysis of the responses to the questions associated with the proposals for community partnership libraries can be found in Chapter 4 of Appendix B of the September Cabinet Report, and Chapter 4 of Appendix C of the September Cabinet report.

12. The community libraries affected by these proposals are: Anstey, Barrow upon Soar, Barwell, Bottesford, Braunstone Town, Burbage, Castle Donington, Cosby, Countesthorpe, Desford, East Goscote, Enderby, Fleckney, Glenhills, Great Glen, Groby, Hathern, Ibstock, Kegworth, Kibworth, Kirby Muxloe, Leicester Forest East, Market Bosworth, Markfield, Measham, Mountsorrel, Narborough, Newbold Verdon, Quorn, Ratby, Rothley, Sapcote, Sileby, South Wigston, Stoney Stanton, and Thurmaston.

13. In broad terms, the consultation proposed that the County Council would offer a support package (including a contribution towards the infrastructure costs for an initial period of up to 5 years) if a local community organised itself to provide the staffing resource, presumed to be through volunteers.

14. Across all library responses, individuals who were more likely to agree with the proposals included those who had retired, those whose first choice library would be fully funded by the County Council, and those who were interested in running one of the 36 community libraries.

15. Individuals who were more likely to disagree with the proposals included those aged 35-54 years, those of other religion, those living in a town fringe suburb of the County, regular computer users, those who stated that they would not use an alternative library and those who were not interested in helping run one of the 36 community libraries.

16. Those respondents who were more likely to be interested a great deal or a fair amount in getting involved in running a community partnership library included; females, those aged under 35, those aged 55-74, those with no religion, and those using one of the 36 community libraries as their current library.

Impact if no community partnership came forward

17. For respondents who said that the library they used most often was a community library, a question was asked to ascertain how easy or difficult it would be for them to access alternative library services.

18. The consultation asked people which alternative libraries they would use if Barrow library was unavailable. Loughborough, Mountsorrel and Quorn libraries were the most frequently cited, with other venues being Birstall, Sileby, a non-County Council library and none.

19. Individuals who were more likely to find access to alternative library services either *very or fairly easily* included: males, those aged 55-74, those with no children, those with two or more cars, those who were retired, those living in urban areas of the County and those who were interested in helping to run a community library.

20. Individuals who were more likely to find access to alternative library services either *very or fairly difficult* included those aged 75 years and older, those with children, those with an illness or disability, those living in town fringe areas of the County, those who stated that they would not use an alternative library and those who were not interested in running a community library.

21. Common themes made in free text comments included the following which presented possible barriers faced by communities, particularly if no community partnership was able to be established and a decision to close was a possibility

- **Increased distance to a nearest library**, associated with cost and time, not being able to walk to the local library, and general inconvenience

- **Transport** : Specifically dealing with transport issues such as lack of access to a car, impractical or no suitable bus service.

- Barrow Library's nearest major library is Loughborough. It is 4.2 miles from Barrow to Loughborough Library. Kinchbus service 2 leaves Barrow every 30 minutes, Monday to Saturday and the journey takes approximately 18 minutes to Loughborough.

- **Access of services associated with disabilities/old age**. Respondents were concerned with disabilities and mobility issues often associated with old age and the ability to access library services independently. In addition, this category also included those respondents who expressed concern for these groups or were worried how they would be able to access libraries in the future if they were to develop a disability or mobility issue**.** Comments were made not just about transport in this respect but also the weight of carrying the books.

- **Access of services associated with Children/young people**. Similar to the issues associated with disabilities/old age, particularly for children being able to access the library independently and the time it would take for parents to transport children to a different site at the end of a school day. It is also noted that the library is used regularly by local schools. Comments were also made about the cost / availability of parking in Loughborough for parents wishing to access that library.

- **Access of services associated with rural communities.** Concern over the fact that Barrow is seen as a centre for the other Wolds villages.

22. Should a community partnership library be established, then it is anticipated that the core lending service would be maintained, and the impact of these issues would be mitigated. These become more critical factors should a situation arise where there is no willingness within a community to locally manage the library or a viable partnership library cannot be established, and alternative options which may include closure may have to be considered.

23. An Online interactive dashboard has been produced and is available through the following link:
    https://public.tableausoftware.com/views/LibrariesDashboardFINAL/Page1?:embed=y&:display_count=no:showVizHome=no#

    This collates a community profile of each area and should be used as supplementary information in informing any decisions about the future of each local library should a community partnership not be established.

Barrow Public Meeting

24. Appendix D of the September Cabinet report details the reports from each of the public meetings held across the County. The Barrow meeting took place at the Hall Orchard Primary School on 10th June 2014. The meeting was attended by 54 people

25. A summary of the most significant issues associated with this EHRIA are:

- Concerns over the nearest larger library not being fit for purpose with regard to transport and logistical issues of carrying books for elderly people, young children and vulnerable members of society
- Feeling that Barrow library was also used by many surrounding villages and it would be useful to know what other areas were doing. Felt it would not be fair for Barrow residents to pay through their Parish Council if other villages were using the services as well.
- The knowledge of the existing staff was recognised and there was a feeling that this could not be replicated by volunteers not just for books but also for running a community hub.

26. 40 exit questionnaires were returned after the meeting. 15% of respondents tended to agree or agreed strongly that the proposals provided a reasonable way forward given the resources available. 65% tended to disagree or disagree strongly. With regard to the proposals for the community partnership libraries, 13% tended to support or strongly support the proposals with 68% tending to oppose or strongly oppose. 20% said that they would probably consider getting involved, or would like to get involved in some way in running the local library.

Perceptions of School age and Older Library users

27. As part of the consultation, the Council commissioned independent qualitative research with school age and older library users about the proposals. These two protected groups form significant demographic groups who use all libraries, and the research outcome can be used to inform decision making regarding libraries

generally. The details of the report can be viewed in Appendix F of the September Cabinet Report.

28. A summary of the main points are :

- Participants felt that libraries had a broad social and economic role which impacted on educational opportunities for young people and adults, and benefitted the health and wellbeing of residents with implications at key stages of their lives.
- Accessibility to services was important for school age and older library users-both in terms of proximity and the ease of getting to a venue. School age children wanted to be able to get to a library under their own steam.
- The most important aspect of library services for both groups is access to books for borrowing.
- Knowledgeable staff was seen as important.
- The social aspect of the library, for sharing common interests and meeting friends and acquaintances was seen as important for older children and older library users.
- Library activities in terms of groups and classes were seen as important to both groups.

29. The impact of the proposed changes initially resulted in caution from both groups, mainly associated with the points highlighted in paragraph 28. Once more information was explored about the nature of the proposals against the financial challenges, both groups perceived some value in a library managed by a local community, dependent upon the support package that is made available.

30. Following further discussion it became clear that the existence of a 'library function' was seen as most important rather than the management arrangements for that function. This is important to consider should no community partnership come forward to run the library and should inform future decisions.

16.	Is any further research, data collection or evidence required to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the policy on target groups?

31. The survey and consultation results together with the data already held on Library use and locality data reflecting deprivation was expected to be sufficient to enable us to understand the Equality and Human Rights impacts on Communities and protected groups. However, the Stakeholder responses have raised further issues that need to be explored, i.e.:

a. The proposal to retain core libraries in urban sites was questioned on the grounds that towns have more alternative provisions than rural settings. An alternative would be nominating rural sites as core provision instead. Although this is a valid point, it does not present as an issue for the EHRIA as being a rural dweller is not one of the protected characteristic groups.

b. Participants in the survey requested more information on training of volunteers.

c. More information was requested on funding arrangements, employment status, and running costs. A number of participants felt that their commitment to involvement in the future running of services could only be made with

comprehensive data available.

32. Work is in progress to provide more detail in these areas and for the findings to be reported back to Cabinet in November 2014.

33. In addition, a Scrutiny Review Panel is scheduled for October 2014 to review the information outlined in c. above.

Resource materials that have been consulted so far include:

Leicestershire County Council: Report to Cabinet 19th September 2014. "Outcome of consultation on proposals for changes in the delivery of library services", Includes:

Appendix B: Main consultation survey reports
Appendix C: Stakeholder consultation survey results
Appendix D: Reports from consultation events
Appendix E: Community partnership workshops
Appendix F: Report on qualitative results
Appendix J: Demographic sub group analysis.

Sustaining Cultural Services (produced by Sue Charteris for Leicestershire County Council September 2013)

Optimising library location for six target groups across Leicestershire (LCC Research & Insight 2013)

Creating a Comprehensive Library Service – getting the Equality Duty right (Sue Charteris February 2014)

Leicestershire County Council; Corporate Information Service data on services provided at all 52 library locations.

Leicestershire County Council; Research & Insight data on library usage, membership and issue numbers 2013/14.

2011 Census results for Leicestershire.

Leicestershire County Council; public transport data.

Arts Council England; Community Libraries publications:

- Learning from Experience – guiding principles for local authorities

- Learning from Experience - summary briefing for local authorities

- Community Libraries – 10 case studies

When considering who is affected by this proposed policy, it is important to think about consulting with and involving a range of service users, staff or other stakeholders who may be affected as part of the proposal.

| 17. | Based on the gaps identified either in the EHRIA Screening or independently of this process, <u>how</u> have you further consulted with those affected on the likely impact and <u>what</u> does this consultation tell you about each of the diverse groups? |

34. The potential disadvantages to protected groups identified in Section 2 (part 9) have largely been confirmed by the consultation surveys, community meetings and focus group activity. The resulting observations are carried over into part 19 (below) and will be addressed with any necessary mitigation in the Equalities Improvement Plan.

| 18. | Is any further consultation required to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the policy on target groups? |

35. Depending on the outcome of further work suggested by the questions arising from the survey and consultation (outlined in 16 above), further consultation may be necessary.

| 19. | Based on any evidence and findings, use the table below to specify if any individuals or community groups who identify with any 'protected characteristics' are <u>likely</u> be affected by this policy. Describe any positive and negative impacts, including what barriers these individuals or groups may face. |

	Comments
Age	In Barrow 3.2% of respondents to the survey were aged 16-24, 45.2% of respondents were aged 25-54 and 51.6% of respondents were aged 55-85. The observations made in part 2 above have held through consultation. These mostly relate to services for children and young people, supporting both their educational development and their parent's efforts to ensure good educational opportunities outside of School and term times. In Barrow the library also receives regular visits from the local primary school and childminders. It is also of note that a significant number of responses to the Consultation came from older age groups, reflecting a relatively high level of engagement and concern with the future of Library services from this age group.
Disability	In Barrow 13.8%of respondents to the survey identified themselves as having a long term illness or disability As above, the factors of concern with this group will need to be addressed in the revised service. The principal one being access to Library services in the event of library closure or a reduction in local provision. Consideration of transport links, the pattern of the future

		network, and decisions regarding the Home and Mobile library networks are all therefore material considerations for this EHRIA.
	Gender Reassignment	In Barrow no respondent to the survey identified themselves as having a gender reassignment Nothing was identified in the Consultation
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Nothing was identified in the consultation
	Pregnancy and Maternity	As an information point, Libraries may play an important role in this respect. However, this is an area where alternative sources such as doctor's surgeries would be expected to have a role. Consideration as to impact of changes to the service in respect to children would need to be borne in mind.
	Race	In Barrow 96.6% of respondents to the survey identified themselves as being White and 3.4% respondents as being of Mixed race. The level of engagement with different ethnic groups was largely in line with demographics. There were no counter indicators in the responses.
	Religion or Belief	In Barrow 40% of respondents to the survey stated that they had no religion, 56.7% Christian, 3.3% other. The level of engagement with different religious groups was largely in line with demographics. There were no counter indicators in the responses. Little evidence was presented that suggested that people with different religions or beliefs were disproportionately affected by the proposals
	Sex	In Barrow 80.6% of respondents to the survey were Female and 19.4% Male. Women were disproportionately represented in the overall consultation. Although this is reflected in Adults & Communities services as a whole, in the case of libraries this is likely to reflect the greater role that women have in the provision of child care and the engagement that Libraries offer for young children.
	Sexual Orientation	In Barrow 96.2% of respondents to the survey identified themselves as heterosexual Nothing of note emerged from the consultation.
	Other groups **e.g. rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities**	The consultation event elicited comments which linked the concerns over the potential closure of Barrow library with its position as a hub for more rural areas in the Soar Valley and Wolds area. The comments made for Age groups above are pertinent across the board for rural and deprived communities. Many village libraries are the only place to offer free internet / computer access which is vital to social

		mobility.
	Community Cohesion	Many of the services provided by the library contribute towards the promotion of community cohesion.

20.	Based on any evidence and findings, use the table below to specify if any particular Articles in the Human Rights Act are <u>likely</u> apply to your policy. Are the human rights of any individuals or community groups affected by this proposal? Is there an impact on human rights for any of the protected characteristics?

	Comments
Part 1: The Convention- Rights and Freedoms	
Article 2: Right to life	N/A
Article 3: Right not to be tortured or treated in an inhuman or degrading way	N/A
Article 4: Right not to be subjected to slavery/ forced labour	N/A
Article 5: Right to liberty and security	N/A
Article 6: Right to a fair trial	N/A
Article 7: No punishment without law	N/A
Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life	As referred to in part 2, the library makes a significant contribution to family life as an estimated 1 in 5 children do not have access to a book at home.
Article 9: Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	Libraries are a vital source of information, particularly for marginalised groups (e.g. from minority cultures) who may not have this readily available from other sources (e.g. local retail outlets). In this sense, the service promotes the rights contained in Article 9.
Article 10: Right to freedom of expression	N/A
Article 11: Right to freedom of assembly and association	N/A
Article 12: Right to marry	N/A
Article 14: Right not to be discriminated against	The shortfalls that may occur, as identified for Articles 8 & 9, are more likely to discriminate against certain groups, e.g. BME or people from minority faiths.

Part 2: The First Protocol	
Article 1: Protection of property/ peaceful enjoyment	N/A
Article 2: Right to education	The educational functions of libraries are a strong aspect of their provision, and added value comes from the Summer Reading Challenge, Bookstart, and the study / homework support. It is recognised that this is not part of mainstream statutory education provision, but an important enhancement.
Article 3: Right to free elections	N/A

Section 3
C: Mitigating and Assessing the Impact

Taking into account the research, data, consultation and information you have reviewed and/or carried out as part of this EHRIA, it is now essential to assess the impact of the policy.

21.	If you consider there to be actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination, please outline this below. State whether it is justifiable or legitimate and give reasons.

36. The intention behind the current proposal is that current services will continue, but operated by local communities with a measure of professional support. In order to satisfy the PSED in respect of potential disadvantages outlined above, it will be necessary for the related services to either continue or be realistically available and accessible to service users elsewhere, but not necessarily in the same format. It will be LCC's responsibility either to ensure that the revised provision meets this need, or to identify the alternatives.

37. For Barrow upon Soar, the services that fall into this category are:

For children & young people

- Providing Homework space / Homework help
- Children's story tapes/CDs
- Bookstart
- Bookstart Treasure Bags
- Summer Reading Challenge
- Study support for children & young people
- School class visits

For people with disabilities:

- Home Library Service for those who cannot leave the home
- Audio and large print books

For unemployed and those on welfare benefits

- Free access to ICT and IT support

38. All parties involved in the running of future Library operations (whether Council run or not) will be informed of EHRIA findings and the PSED duties for each location will be clarified. For council run services the duties & responsibilities will be clear, for Community (i.e. Voluntary) run examples the exact means of discharging responsibilities will need to be established, and may vary between different models.

39. Should communities not come forward to manage local libraries, then further assessment through the EHRIA process in tandem with any issues highlighted through the interactive community dashboard should be considered in order to inform future decision making.

N.B.

i. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is <u>illegal</u>, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.

ii. ii) If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is <u>justifiable or legitimate,</u> you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people.

22.	Where there are potential barriers, negative impacts identified and/or barriers or impacts are unknown, please outline how you propose to minimise all negative impact or discrimination. a) include any relevant research and consultations findings which highlight the best way in which to minimise negative impact or discrimination b) consider what barriers you can remove, whether reasonable adjustments may be necessary, and how any unmet needs that you have identified can be addressed c) if you are not addressing any negative impacts (including human rights) or potential barriers identified for a particular group, please explain why

40. The following comments address points raised during the survey and consultation processes.

- If provision or support is removed, it is unlikely to be reinstated. Therefore, if community volunteers offer to run libraries, some measure of sustainability needs to be established.

- The infrastructure support package needs to be clear in order for communities to take an informed decision as to whether a proposed local partnership arrangement is viable. This would include the training of community group volunteers and/or staffing arrangements, a clear partnership agreement established, and the level of professional support available from the County Council once community partnership libraries have been established.

- Should communities not come forward then other local locations, venues, and

the deployment of the mobile library service should be explored in order to ensure access to books for lending, the home library service and supporting children and young people with educational resources in an informal setting.

- E- books and the internet are changing the way that people access books. These mediums may be harnessed to address some of the potential disadvantages identified in this EHRIA.

- Libraries are increasingly being recognised as community hubs which have value for community cohesion and as a means of reducing social and rural isolation.

Section 3 **D: Making a decision**	
23.	Summarise your findings and give an overview as to whether the policy will meet Leicestershire County Council's responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights.
41.	In the event of community libraries either continuing as an LCC provision, or being run voluntarily, the mitigating actions identified below in the Equalities Improvement Plan will be expected to be taken by the responsible body. If similar provision can be identified elsewhere that meets the same need this would be a valid means of meeting the PSED requirement.
Section 3 **E: Monitoring, evaluation & review of your policy**	
24.	Are there processes in place to review the findings of this EHRIA and make appropriate changes? In particular, how will you monitor potential barriers and any positive/ negative impact?
42.	In the case of a continuing provision with LCC involvement, the actions and targets outlined in the Equality Improvement Plan will be periodically reviewed for effectiveness and possible revision.
43.	If a provision is run through commissioning , the Procurement process has its own inbuilt Equality & Human Rights impact mechanism
44.	At present, it is not clear how an EHRIA relating to a community run library would be implemented and reviewed. Establishing this would be a factor to consider when arrangements are drawn up, in conjunction with Legal Services.
25.	How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes? *e.g. policy reviews, annual plans and use of performance management systems*
45.	The decision regarding the future of Barrow upon Soar library, together with all others in the network, will have an impact on the totality of Communities and Wellbeing's services, particularly the proposed Core provision. It will be necessary to establish clear lines of support and responsibilities, particularly what can be expected of any professional staff. The inter dependencies with other services that require clarity include the Home and Mobile Library Services.
46.	As referred to earlier, if mitigation is to be met through an alternative provision

(such as a service referred to in the preceding paragraph) then that service will require periodic review to assess its effectiveness.

Section 3:
F: Equality and human rights improvement plan

Please list all the equality objectives, actions and targets that result from the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These now need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Equality Objective	Action	Target	Officer Responsible	By when
Protect the interests of disabled people in future library provision	Take account of accessibility and public transport provision when establishing the future pattern of the Library network. Take any geographical deficits into consideration when designing revised Mobile Library routes and Home Library provision. Ensure that any organisation taking over the running of a Library is aware of the Equality Act and Disability Discrimination provisions.	Maintain and where possible improve the use of all library sites and services by people with disabilities of any kind.	Nigel Thomas	March 2015

Protecting the interests of different age groups	Ensure, where possible, the continued operation of current services that assist children and parents with educational goals. Where this is not possible, identify alternative sources of similar services or encourage their development.	Maintenance of current support for young people and their parents, particularly those in deprived areas. Maintain engagement with services by people of all age ranges.	Nigel Thomas	March 2015
Protect the interests of minority ethnic groups and all faiths	Ensure that information and materials held in libraries reflect the cultural and faith needs of the locality.	Maintain engagement with services.	Nigel Thomas	March 2015
Preserve and promote community cohesion	Continue support and provision for wider groups through the network of the proposed Council funded libraries. e.g. unemployed, job seekers.		Locality Managers and local officers	Quarterly reviews
Combat the effects of social and rural isolation.	Take account of geographical location of services including mobile libraries when establishing the pattern of future provision. Maintain and develop E-	Prevent the development of unserved areas and inconsistent provision. Consult on mobile library provision	Nigel Thomas	March 2015

	books and Internet services.			
Ensure sustainability of services to protect all protected groups.	Thorough assessment of expressions of interest. Provision of training for volunteers Clarity of Infrastructure support arrangements Clarity of continued professional support for community run sites. Establish clear partnership agreements Clarify legal arrangements	Ensure that people continue to have access to library services who wish to.	Nigel Thomas Derk van der Wardt	March 2015

Section 4: Sign off and scrutiny

Upon completion, the Lead Officer completing this assessment is required to sign the document in the section below.

It is required that this Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) is scrutinised by your Departmental Equalities Group and signed off by the Chair of the Group.

Once scrutiny and sign off has taken place, a depersonalised version of this EHRIA should be published on Leicestershire County Council's website. Please send a copy of this form to louisa.jordan@leics.gov.uk, Members Secretariat, in the Chief Executive's department for publishing.

Section 4
A: Sign Off and Scrutiny

Confirm, as appropriate, which elements of the EHRIA have been completed and are required for sign off and scrutiny.

Equality and Human Rights Assessment Screening ☒

Equality and Human Rights Assessment Report ☒

1st Authorised Signature (EHRIA Lead Officer): …………………………………………………

Date: …………………………..

2nd Authorised Signature (DEG Chair): … *[signature]* …….

Date: ……04.11.14………………………