

# CONWY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT RECORD FORM

Name of Policy / Service / Function	<b>Modernisation of Conwy County Borough Council's Library Service</b> Culture and Information Section, Community Development Service		
Head of Service responsible for the Policy	Marianne Jackson – Head of Community Development Service		
Title of person (s) completing impact assessment form	Business Policy and Performance Support Officer Performance & Personnel Librarian		
Department	Community Development Service Culture and Information	Date of Assessment	August 2011

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT COMPLETED BY:		OUTCOME / ACTION PLAN AGREED BY HoS	
Date	6 December 2011	Date	6 December 2011
Title (s)	Business Policy and Performance Support Officer Performance & Personnel Librarian	Name	Marianne Jackson

Signature(s)		Signature	
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**STEP ONE - THE MAIN AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY, FUNCTION SERVICE OR PROPOSAL**

Note – In this section you should determine the purpose and aims of the policy, service, function, who benefits and who the main stakeholders are.

1. What type of policy, service or function is this?      Existing      New / Proposed      Changing / Updated  
*(Please circle as appropriate)*

2. What is the overall aim of the Policy / Service / Function / Proposal?

To modernise the Library Service of Conwy to provide a modern attractive service that meets its statutory requirements as set by the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS).

3. What are its main objectives?

1. To define the vision of a sustainable, modern library service ensuring equitable service delivery for the people of Conwy.
2. To develop a library strategy to assist the library service in meeting its statutory requirements and the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS), to include:
  - ❖ Reviewing library opening hours to meet changing demand and need
  - ❖ Library buildings fit for purpose which are open longer, especially at times people want to visit them
  - ❖ A wide range of up to date book stock
  - ❖ Staff being more available to help and support customers and to provide specialist and customer focused services
  - ❖ Computers and books being of equal importance; one should not be sacrificed for another;
  - ❖ Zoning being provided, with different environments for different users and needs e.g. space to do homework
  - ❖ Community space for people to use
  - ❖ Introduction of coffee areas, where space permits, to encourage people to stay longer and also generate income
  - ❖ Building partnerships with other service areas e.g. linking to the Older People’s Strategy

3. Review the Mobile Library provision.
4. Review of the Home Library Provision.
5. Review of Library Building Provision.

(source: Modernisation of Conwy County Borough Council's Library Service: Consultation 4 July – 26 August 2011)

We have been failing to achieve the Welsh Public Library Standards (WLPS) for several years now. The Welsh Government wrote to the authority in September 2011 expressing its grave concerns that we had only achieved 6 out of the 14 compared with the Wales average of 9 and we are amongst the weakest in Wales. This is primarily attributable to continuing resource limitations and the need for corporate direction in planning for the future of the service. We have been set a deadline of July 2012 for the review process to be completed and firm decisions to be made on future library provision within the authority. If a decision is not made, the Welsh Government may use its powers under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to take over management of Conwy's library service. These proposals, whilst seeking to improve efficiency, also entail further investment in staff, books and capital to bring the buildings up to standard and to modernise library provision.

It is anticipated that modernising the Library Service of Conwy will offer greater benefits than we are currently able to provide as it will offer greater flexibility/access of provision via mobile library and possible extended opening hours. It will also involve promoting existing facilities for use by the community e.g. Youth Service, IT provision, partnership working.

The original proposal was to retain only 5 or 7 libraries, with the intention of closing the remainder. However, in considering the impact of this on different groups of people in Conwy, and in developing this Equality Impact Assessment, we have established that this proposal would not necessarily meet the needs of our community, even though it might meet the needs of WPLS. Extensive consultation has taken place as this EIA will show, that has led us to an alternative proposal, concentrating on a core service in 5 areas, increased capacity in Mobile and Home Library Service along with a community library model to maintain a presence in those areas previously destined for closure.

4. Who is the policy, service, function or proposal intended to help / benefit (stakeholders)?

All that live, work, study and visit Conwy.  
 Elected members.  
 Culture and Information service staff.  
 Other CCBC departments e.g. Education, Engineering and Design, Information Technology and other sections within Community Development Service.  
 Partnerships.

5. Who are the main consultative groups / communities of interest?

Library users, wider community, Elected Members, protected characteristic representative groups, partnerships including Local Education Authority, further education establishments, neighbouring Local Authorities, services within Conwy County Borough Council, CyMAL (Welsh Government). Town and Community Councils, Young people, Staff and Agencies.

**STEP 2 - CONSIDERING EXISTING INFORMATION & WHAT THIS TELLS YOU** - In this section please provide details of existing equalities and service user information.

6. What do you already know about the relevance of the policy? What are the main issues you need to consider ? (also see Equality Relevance Assessment)

Protected Groups	Relevance of the policy / function by Protected Groups
Race	We strive to ensure that the stock offered for customers in libraries includes a diverse range of reading material. Free Internet access allows customers to access a wide range of information in other languages. We regularly take part in joint funded projects for all North Wales libraries which provides diverse cultural information, eg, Exhibition on Slavery. We use the 'Big Word' to provide a translation and interpretation service as and when requested by our customers. We also host in our Llandudno Library the North Wales Race Equality Network Drop-In-Centre for people who have migrated to North Wales who seek guidance and support relating to availability of public services and human rights and employment issues. We are not aware of any other issues affecting people from

	different races.
Disability	<p>24% of the population of Conwy have a limiting long term illness, which could be linked to a disability. However, for the 65+ age group, this rises to 51% of that group. 8.6% of the population have a learning, sensory and/or physical disability (2009).</p> <p>There are currently access issues to some of the buildings we identified in our original plan to close. These access issues include a lack of automatic/assisted power doors in some library buildings, narrow doorways, not all buildings have public toilets or accessible toilets and there is not always enough turning space to manoeuvre wheelchairs/mobility scooters. We will need to consider this if the community library model results in them being retained.</p> <p>Some geographical areas have poor public transport provision.</p> <p>There may be additional transport costs associated with having to access services further away.</p> <p>Although there is wheelchair access, customers using mobility scooters will find it difficult getting into the mobile library.</p> <p>In seven libraries there is computerised assistive technology as well as large screen monitors and adjustable height desks, we have trackball mice that can be operated with just one finger that are of benefit to people suffering from physical difficulties such as arthritis. We also have Big-key Keyboards which are larger than the average keyboard and much easier to see. There is a Dolphin LunarPlus Magnification &amp; Screen Reading Software, which will enlarge the image on a computer screen to make things clearer, and this also has the ability to read out the on-screen text. We also have Texthelp, the predictive text features of this software can support people with dyslexia as it speeds up typing and can help with spelling</p> <p><b><u>Other Possible Impact of Closure :</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Withdrawal of services could impact on social inclusion and access to specific support services e.g. Bibliotherapy books for people with mild to moderate emotional or psychological issues.</li> <li>❖ Loss of room hire for disability user groups</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Loss of the opportunity to signpost information on medical issues e.g. cochlear implant hearing problem.</li> <li>❖ Loss of opportunity to offer promotional material, including sign posting to appropriate services e.g. chronic illness support groups.</li> <li>❖ Loss of access to assisted computerised technology and the provision of specialist furniture.</li> <li>❖ Loss of stock being returned and increase in fines due to greater distance and access to return books.</li> </ul>
Sex	<p>There are more females than males using our service – this is borne out by the number of people providing feedback in our 2011 consultation (65% female, 35% male) and our public library users survey (58% female, 42% male)</p> <p>We know in Conwy there are more older people who are women and these proposals could therefore have a greater impact on them.</p>
Age	<p>At 28% of the population, Conwy County Borough has the largest proportion of post-retirement age residents in Wales.</p> <p>The number of older people in the county is projected to increase significantly over the next 10 years as a result of increased life expectancy and the baby boom generation entering retirement. This will increase the number of people over the age of 65 by 30% and the number of people over the age of 85 by 60% by 2025.</p> <p>Currently it is estimated that one in five households is occupied by lone pensioners, but by 2025 this is expected to increase to one in four households, an increase of over 4,000.</p> <p><b><u>Other Possible Impact of Closure:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Any closures to libraries would have a significant impact on the elderly. Elderly people could lose some services i.e. internet / senior railcards/bus passes and other CCBC services provided.</li> <li>❖ Any closures to libraries would have a significant impact on young people. Young people could lose some services i.e. internet / story time / holiday activities/homework and other CCBC services provided.</li> <li>❖ Many elderly people are unable to travel to other sites and would be without access to a</li> </ul>

	<p>suitable library. The proposals could pose greater distance to travel in some instances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Could lead to loss of social networks/increased social isolation especially given higher percentage of older people in Conwy.</li> </ul>
Religion & Belief	<p>Stock offered for customers in libraries is diverse for people of different backgrounds. Free Internet access allows customers to access a wide range of information.</p> <p>We are not aware of any specific issues affecting people from different religion or beliefs</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>We are not aware of any specific issues affecting people differently because of their sexual orientation</p>
Gender Reassignment	<p>We are not aware of any specific issues affecting people because of gender reassignment</p>
Welsh Language	<p>Census figures show that around 29% of the population of Conwy aged 3 years old or over are Welsh speakers; considerably above the all-Wales figure of 20.5%. Only slightly more than half of the population of the County Borough were born in Wales (54%), which in part accounts for the lower proportion of the population who are able to speak Welsh when compared to the neighbouring districts to the West (Gwynedd contains 69% Welsh speakers).</p> <p>In general, the incidence of both Welsh speakers and those born in Wales increases towards the west, and as one travels inland. Ability to speak Welsh is at a peak in the rural southern ward of Uwchaled (74% Welsh speaking), and at its lowest in the eastern coastal community of Towyn and Kinmel Bay (less than 11%).</p> <p>The service adheres to Conwy County Borough Council Welsh Language Scheme. In most service points Welsh is used as a working language, there is a wide range of Welsh language materials, all customer information is provided bilingually. Events are arranged in Welsh and English and a translator was provided at all the stakeholder workshops.</p> <p>The mobile library service will enhance the service to rural areas where there is an increase of Welsh speaking communities.</p>

Pregnancy and Maternity	Parents with young children in buggies / pushchairs may have difficulty getting to and around the mobile library.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	We do not believe people will be affected differently because of this protected characteristic
Other (please state)	<p>Promoting existing services/outreach, volunteering within community library or applying for funding/social enterprise. If this happens it could improve confidence and self esteem for those who are unemployed. Mobile Library Service route can be designed to stop where it is most needed.</p> <p>Identify best practice from other areas that do not have library provision. Opportunities to improve current facilities/best use of facilities. Link to existing outreach facilities/adding value/enhanced e.g. schools.</p> <p>Customers can receive basic skills support in some libraries.</p> <p><b><u>Other Possible Impact of Closure:</u></b></p> <p>Loss of neutral local community facility to engage with excluded groups i.e. young offenders / intergenerational practice.</p> <p>Geographical deprivation; loss of library access to people living in e.g. Communities First areas; Kinmel Bay, Rhiw and Tudno wards.</p>

7. Please summarise the main data, research and performance management information you already have.

<p>DATA / INFORMATION</p> <p><b><u>County overview</u></b></p> <p>Conwy County Borough (Conwy CB) is centrally located in North Wales. The County Borough has an area of 113,000 hectares and a population of 111,400 residents (mid-2009 estimate). About 38% of its area and 4% of its population are within the Snowdonia National Park. Its economy relies heavily upon tourism. Rural areas and their communities are dependent on agricultural and forestry activities, even though these sectors do not provide a high level of direct employment.</p>
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The narrow coastal belt contains over 80% of the County Borough's population with Llandudno and Colwyn Bay as the two main settlements in terms of population numbers. Rural Conwy is an attractive, mainly agricultural area with limited alternative employment and few development pressures. Its population is widely dispersed and is predominantly Welsh speaking. The main settlement in terms of population numbers is the market town of Llanrwst.

Specific data on different protected groups is outlined in question 6 above.

### **Current Library Provision**

Public libraries have changed their role, function, facilities and services over a long period from their beginnings in the nineteenth century. From the circulating libraries, working men's libraries and the 1d Boots libraries up to the mid twentieth century, the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act placed a duty on each Local Authority to run a free public library service with special emphasis on books. Each Authority interpreted its duty differently and placed libraries in towns and villages, even in some cases in very small villages. Differing policies covering different parts of what is now Conwy County Borough Council have resulted in the inconsistency that can be seen in the location, size and services offered by the current library provision.

Libraries have always placed an emphasis on providing free books for adults and children for leisure, learning and information. The service has adapted over the years with the development of new formats and new ways of learning, new technologies and community needs including providing IT for public use.

In 2009-10 libraries in Conwy received half a million physical visits, loaned out over half a million books and provided over 90,000 hours of internet access via their public computers. Based on a study commissioned by Welsh Government (WG), it is believed that with an increased investment in books, the number of loans and visits to libraries in Conwy would increase.

The Library Service in Conwy is currently delivered through 12 libraries, a mobile library vehicle and home library vehicle. The provision of facilities and services within these libraries is very different due to building and financial constraints.

Main Libraries:

- Llandudno
- Colwyn Bay
- Llanrwst
- Abergele
- Conwy

Satellite Libraries:

- Cerrigydrudion
- Deganwy
- Kinmel Bay
- Llandudno Junction
- Llanfairfechan
- Penmaenmawr
- Penrhyn Bay

- Mobile Library Service
- Home Library Service

In 2006, Conwy Library Service undertook a review of the Service through widespread consultation with users and non-users. The results of the consultation, together with the requirements of the Welsh Public Libraries Standards (WPLS), are the key drivers for the Library Modernisation programme. Retaining the library service in its current form is not sustainable without significant investment.

RESEARCH OR COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

**Carers**

The high proportion of elderly residents has led to the county having one of the highest dependency ratios in Wales. According to the 2001 Census, over 12,000 people in Conwy Borough provide unpaid care and over a quarter of these carers (more than 3,200 people) provide 50 or more hours of care a week. Such high levels of unpaid care provision will have a huge impact on the economic and social well-being of the carers as well as those being cared for.

**Living in isolation**

Geographical access to key services forms part of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2008 (WIMD 2008), which is the official measure of deprivation in Wales. This domain of the WIMD considers the average travelling time by foot or public transport to access a range of services considered necessary for day-to-day living. These include: public library, food shops, leisure centres, GP surgeries, NHS dentist, primary schools, secondary schools, post office, transport nodes.

Six areas in Conwy County Borough feature in the 10% most deprived in Wales for access to services i.e. Uwch Conwy, Eglwysbach, Llangernyw, Uwchaled, Llansannan, Betws yn Rhos. These areas cover a population of about 9,500 people.

Isolation within the rural community is a particular issue for those who are older, younger or on lower incomes, and can contribute to other health and wellbeing problems. Isolation for the elderly is, of course, not limited to rural communities with one in five households in Conwy County Borough occupied by a single pensioner, a significant number of whom may not have local family support, having moved to the area to retire.

**KEY FINDINGS OF PREVIOUS CONSULTATIONS AND SERVICE USER FEEDBACK**

**Twelfth Man research (2006) which informed the Modernising Libraries vision stated that:-**

Library buildings need to be fit for purpose and open longer, especially at times people want to visit them:

- A wide range of up to date book stock;
- Staff being more available to help and support customers and to provide specialist and customer focused services;
- Computers and books being of equal importance: one should not be sacrificed for another;
- Zoning being provided, with different environments for different users and needs e.g. space to do homework;
- Community space for people to use;
- Introduction of coffee areas, where space permits, to encourage people to stay longer and also generate income;
- Building partnerships with other service

Without major change and sufficient promotion, it was felt that non-users would not be attracted to libraries, an essential requirement if libraries are to be seen as ‘centres of learning’ and ‘community builders’.

**The Modernisation of Conwy County Borough Council’s Library Service Consultation - 4th July and 26 August 2011. (Full response and feedback to this will be published on the Conwy County Borough Council website.)**

The consultation questionnaire asked for equalities information by language, gender, ethnicity, age group, disability. Not all respondents chose to complete this section, from the respondents who did the breakdown is as follows:-

<b>Language</b>	English	Welsh	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>528</b>
	%	%		<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
				65.50%	34.50%

<b>Cases</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>91.80%</b>	<b>8.20%</b>
Abergele	90.60%	9.40%
Carrigydrudion	49%	51%
Colwyn Bay	95.90%	4.10%
Conwy	96.40%	3.60%
Deganwy	93.10%	6.90%
Kinmel Bay	100%	0%
Llandudno	95.80%	4.20%
Llandudno Junction	91.20%	8.80%
Llanfairfechan	96.90%	3.10%
Llanrwst	71.40%	28.60%
Penmaenmawr	100%	0%
Penrhyn Bay	98.80%	1.20%
Mobile Library Service	100%	0%
Home Library Service	80%	20%

**Disability**

From 485 respondents  
29.30 % declared that  
they had a disability

<b><u>Age</u></b>	<b><u>Cases</u></b>	<b><u>525</u></b>
Under 12	2.50%	
12 to 15	0.80%	
16 to 24	2.50%	
25 to 34	8.20%	
35 to 44	8.60%	
45 to 54	10.50%	
55 to 64	20.80%	
Over 65	46.30%	

<b><u>Nationality</u></b>	<b><u>Cases</u></b>	<b><u>523</u></b>
British	44.20%	
English	20.50%	
Irish	0.20%	
Scottish	0.80%	
Welsh	32.70%	
Other to include:		
Canadian	1.70%	
Half Welsh half English		

<b><u>Ethnicity</u></b>	<b><u>Cases</u></b>	<b><u>500</u></b>
Mixed - White and Asian	0.40%	
Mixed - Other - Ango/Irish	0.20%	
Other - Celtaidd	0.40%	
White	98.80%	

Citizen of the world  
 Citizen of the UK  
 Polish  
 Portuguese  
 Celt  
 Australian  
 American

**Conwy County Borough Council  
Public Library Users Survey, combined weighted Authority and service point report.**

The Public Library Users Survey – PLUS – is a national model for surveying users of public libraries concerning various aspects of the service. It includes questions about the staff, the stock and the building, and it asks about user satisfaction as well as some questions about the individuals themselves. It proposes a uniform methodology and uniform questions in order to achieve consistency for valid national, regional and local comparisons.

**Equality monitoring information from Conwy Adult PLUS Survey September 2009:-**

**Conwy County Borough Council**

		CASES
AGE		
Under 24	10%	180
25 – 44	22%	511
45 – 64	35%	803
65 – 74	19%	480
75 OVER	14%	435
FEMALE	58%	1,382

		CASES
RELIGION		2,279
No religion	28%	
Buddhist	1%	
Christian	69%	
Hindu	0%	
Jewish	0%	
Muslim	1%	
Other	1%	

MALE	42%	893			
ETHNICITY					
Mixed	1%	8			
White	96%	2,342			
Asian	2%	30			
Black	1%	12			
Other	0%	5			
DISABILITY		1,558			
Permanently sick/disabled	4%				

SEXUAL ORIENTATION				2,099	
Heterosexual/straight	98%				
Gay/Lesbian	1%				
Bisexual	1%				
Other	1%				

**Public Library Users Survey, combined weighted Authority and service point report.**

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**Equality monitoring information from the Children’s Plus Survey September 2008:-**

		CASES
AGE		
Under 5	25%	175

		CASES
<b>Nationality</b>		719
British	62.50%	

5 – 10	40.60%	317
11 – 15	33.50%	240
16 – 18	9%	6
		737
GIRL	53.30%	
BOY	46.70%	
ETHNICITY		703
Mixed	4.20%	
White	90.40%	
Asian	2.70%	
Black	2.30%	
Other	0.50%	

Irish	1.40%	
Welsh	42.60%	
Indian	1.10%	
African	1.40%	
Caribbean	0.20%	
Pakistani	0.30%	
Bangladeshi	1.10%	
Chinese	0.40%	
Other	3.20%	

8. What consultation and involvement of those affected has already taken place?

Protected Group	What has taken place, with whom and when. Outline briefly the responses gained and associated documents
	<p>In 2006/7 users and non-users were consulted.</p> <p>Between 8 June and 26 August 2011 a Modernisation of Conwy County Borough Council's Library Service Consultation took place. This included stakeholder workshops and a public consultation questionnaire. The results and responses have been published on the Conwy County Borough Council website.</p> <p>We have identified that the biggest potential impact is on Disabled people, Age – older/younger people and carers.</p> <p>The service approached organisations from the Equalities groups specifically Chwarae Teg, Conwy Access Group and Stonewall and comments received have been taken into account in these proposals.</p>
Race	
Disability	
Sex	
Age	
Religion & Belief	
Sexual Orientation	



Gender Reassignment
Pregnancy and Maternity
Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Welsh Language
Human Rights
Other (please state)

9. What are the impacts or effects of the policy or function for communities / protected groups?

<p><b>RACE / ETHNICITY</b> There have no issues raised in consultation which present any adverse impact to users from this group</p>	<p>BME groups Gypsies / Travellers</p>
<p><b>SEX</b> Single mums Indirect adverse impact on older women who live longer</p>	<p>Men Women Transgender LGB gender issues</p>
<p><b>AGE</b></p> <p>The proposed changes relating to some Library building closures would have a significant impact on the older people/young people and the Evergreen Wales members (elderly people living alone in isolated) in rural properties.</p> <p><b>Older People</b> Would lose access to the internet, learning about PC/software, purchasing senior railcards/bus passes and other CCBC services provided. There may be a loss of social networks/increased social isolation, especially given higher percentage of older people in Conwy.</p> <p>Travelling further and unable to travel independently. Some disabled people are unable to drive and using public transport to access an alternative library is not always a viable option.</p> <p>Many older people are unable to travel to other sites and would be without access to a suitable library. Those who can travel would have a greater distance to access the library service.</p> <p><b>Young People</b> Some use this service for homework, story telling sessions, summer reading programme, good social time which encourages and develops children skills and to read more, some do not have computers at home.</p> <p><b>Carers</b> Access to the internet, learning about PC/software, a social opportunity whose work is a solitary occupation. For carers that are unable to drive there would be the extra cost of travelling on public transport.</p>	<p>Older People Children Young People</p>
<p><b>DISABLED PEOPLE</b></p> <p>The proposed changes relating to some Library building closures will affect wheelchair users who are unable to travel to any other libraries and in inclement weather would not be able to visit the mobile library. The current 4 week wait for a home library visit is</p>	<p>Mobility Dexterity Blind / Visually impaired Mental Health Learning Disabilities</p>

<p>too long for some customers.</p> <p>The current provision at some buildings has some access issues which cause problems to customers with mobility impairments.</p> <p>There is a lack of automatic/assisted power doors in some library buildings, narrow doorways, not all buildings have public toilets or accessible toilets and there is not always enough turning space to manoeuvring of wheelchairs/mobility scooters.</p> <p>Some geographical areas have poor public transport provision, some disabled customers would struggle to use transport if the link from public transport to other libraries changes.</p> <p>There may be additional transport costs of accessing services further away e.g. buses, taxi, own vehicle.</p> <p>Customers using mobility scooters will find it difficult getting into the mobile library.</p> <p>Possible closure or withdrawal of services could impact on social inclusion and access to specific support services e.g. Bibliotherapy books for people with mild to moderate emotional or psychological issues.</p> <p>Loss of room hire for disability user groups</p> <p>Loss of the opportunity to signpost information on medical issues e.g. cochlear implant hearing problem, chronic illness support groups.</p> <p>Loss of stock being returned and increase in fines due to greater distance and access to return books.</p>	
<p><b>RELIGION &amp; BELIEF</b> There have no issues raised in consultation which present any adverse impact to users from this group</p>	<p>Faith communities</p>
<p><b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b> There have no issues raised in consultation which present any adverse impact to users from this group</p>	<p>Gay Lesbian Bi-sexual Heterosexual</p>
<p><b>GENDER REASSIGNMENT</b> There have no issues raised in consultation which present any adverse impact to users from this group</p>	<p>A person who proposes to, starts or has changed his or her gender</p>
<p><b>HUMAN RIGHTS</b> The modernisation of libraries will not negatively impact upon the right to education, the right to a private and family life or to the protection of property.</p>	<p>Right to Education, Private and Family Life, Protection of property</p>

<p><b>WELSH SPEAKING COMMUNITIES</b></p> <p>Ability to speak Welsh is at a peak in the rural southern ward of Uwchaled (74% Welsh speaking), and at its lowest in the eastern coastal community of Towyn &amp; Kinmel Bay (less than 11%).</p> <p>Closing Library provision in the rural area would impact the service to those Welsh speaking community.</p>	
<p><b>PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY</b></p> <p>Parents with young children in buggies / pushchairs may have difficulty getting to and around the mobile library.</p>	
<p><b>MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP</b></p> <p>There have no issues raised in consultation which present any adverse impact to users from this group</p>	
<p><b>OTHER SOCIALLY EXCLUDED GROUPS OR COMMUNITIES</b></p> <p>Potential closure to some libraries will cause some customers on low income a burden of additional cost of a bus to reach a library. Loss of neutral community facility to engage with excluded groups e.g. young offenders / intergenerational practice</p> <p>Geographical deprivation; loss of library access to people living in e.g. Communities First areas; Kinmel Bay, Rhiw and Tudno wards.</p>	

### **STEP 3 - PROCUREMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS**

10. Is this policy / function carried out wholly or partly by contractors or in partnership with another organisation(s) ? If yes, what have you done to comply with Equality, Human Rights and Welsh Language Legislation. You will need to think about :

#### **Procurement**

- Tendering and Specifications
- Awards Process and Contract clauses
- Performance & Monitoring measures
- Application of equality, human rights and legislation by contractors

#### **Partnerships**

- Equality Monitoring
- Equality Relevance and Impact Assessment of plans or proposal
- Application of equality, human rights and welsh language welsh language legislation by partners

This review of the library service will be carried out by the local authority but will link in with the Libraries in Corporation (LNC).

We will ensure that we are mindful of equalities legislation and monitoring when undertaking procurement procedures. We will seek to procure from organisations which strongly recognise equalities work and which have an established track record in equalities. To do this we will seek guidance from the Conwy County Borough Council Equalities Officer where appropriate.

If the proposal for community libraries is agreed, we will need to ensure that as part of the Service Level Agreement, we ensure they continue to deliver on the Equality Act 2010 requirements to comply with the General Duty.

## **STEP 4 - ASSESSING THE IMPACT**

Note – In this section the information you have gathered should be used to assess whether there is likely to be a different impact for certain groups or communities, and if so, to decide if this is lawful or not.

11. Is there any evidence of higher or lower take-up or satisfaction with service by any group or community, and if so, how is this explained?

The current library management information system (TALIS) which holds user membership details does not contain equality monitoring data.

The equality monitoring data results from the last Conwy Adult PLUS Survey September 2009 demonstrates that higher take up are from those age groups between the ages 45 and over (68%), compared with a lower take up from those aged 25-44 (22%) in particular (10%) of under 24 age group responded. Female respondents accounted for (58%) and male (42%).

From the Equality monitoring data collected from the modernisation of libraries consultation demonstrated there were a higher level response from female customers (65%) versus males (35%), and (46%) of respondents were aged 65 or over. The lowest take up are from the under 24 age groups (5.8%).

12. Does the geography or demography of service users reveal anything ?

Geographical access to key services forms part of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2008 (WIMD 2008), which is the official measure of deprivation in Wales. This domain of the WIMD considers the average travelling time by foot or public transport to access a range of services considered necessary for day-to-day living. These include: public library, food shops, leisure centres, GP surgeries, NHS dentist, primary schools, secondary schools, post office, transport nodes.

Six areas in Conwy County Borough feature in the 10% most deprived in Wales for access to services e.g. Uwch Conwy, Eglwysbach, Llangernyw, Uwchaled, Llansannan, Betws yn Rhos. These areas cover a population of about 9,500 people.

Isolation within the rural community is a particular issue for those who are older, younger or on lower incomes, and can contribute to other health and wellbeing problems. Isolation for the elderly is, of course, not limited to rural communities with one in five households in Conwy County Borough occupied by a single pensioner, a significant number of whom may not have local family support, having moved to the area to retire.

13. Do any rules or requirements or the way the service is delivered prevent or reduce the likelihood of any groups or communities from using or accessing the service or create any other barriers for them?

i.e. due to limited income, location, time of day when service available, access to buildings, access to translation service, eligibility rules, dress code, cultural reasons

The Service operates opening times which may hinder some customers to visit.  
The potential closure of library buildings will cause impact as outlined through this impact assessment.

14. Do any of these limitations amount to unlawful discrimination?

Yes  No  Not Sure

If you answered Yes or Not Sure, please state which group(s) it applies to and if possible explain why

14a. If you answered No do the barriers and limitations amount to a differential impact for certain groups?

Yes  No  Not Sure *(please circle as appropriate)*

14b. If you answered Yes or Not Sure to 14a, please give details below.

### **Disabled People**

The proposed changes relating to some Library building closures may affect mobility scooter users who are unable to travel to any other libraries and would not be able to access the mobile library. The current 4 week wait for a home library visit is too long for some customers.

The current provision in some buildings, previously identified for closure may have access issues which cause problems to customers with mobility impairments.

There is a lack of automatic/assisted power doors in some library buildings, narrow doorways, not all buildings have public toilets or accessible toilets and there is not always enough turning space to manoeuvre wheelchairs/mobility scooters. Some geographical areas have poor public transport provision, some disabled customers would struggle to use transport if the link from public transport to other library may change.

There may be additional transport costs of accessing services further away e.g. buses, taxis or own vehicle.

Possible closure or withdrawal of services could impact on social inclusion and access to specific support services e.g. Bibliotherapy books for people with mild to moderate emotional or psychological issues.

Possible loss of room hire for disability user groups.

Loss of the opportunity to signpost information on medical issues e.g. cochlear implant hearing problem, chronic illness support groups.

Loss of stock being returned and increase in fines due to greater distance and access to return books.

## **AGE**

The proposed changes relating to some Library building closures would have a significant impact on the older people/young people and the Evergreen Wales members (elderly people living alone in isolated) in rural properties.

### **Older People**

Would lose access to the internet, learning about PC/software, purchasing senior railcards/bus passes and other CCBC services provided. There may be a loss of social networks/increased social isolation, especially given higher percentage of older people in Conwy.

Travelling further and unable to travel independently. Some disabled people are unable to drive and using public transport to access an alternative library is not always a viable option.

Many elderly people are unable to travel to other sites and would be without access to a suitable library. Those who can travel would have a greater distance to access the library service.

### **Young People**

Some use this service for homework, story telling sessions, summer reading programme, good social time which encourages and develops children skills and to read more, some do not have computers at home.

### **Carers**

Reduced access to the internet, learning about PC/software, a social opportunity whose work is a solitary occupation. For carers that are unable to drive there would be the extra cost of travelling on public transport.

## **OTHER SOCIALLY EXCLUDED GROUPS OR COMMUNITIES**

Customers on low income will find it a burden of additional cost of a bus to reach a library. Loss of neutral community facility to engage with excluded groups e.g. young offenders / intergenerational practice

Areas of deprivation in Communities First areas e.g. Kinmel Bay, Rhiw, Tudno.

15. Do you have enough information to make an informed judgement?

Yes

No

*(please circle as appropriate)*

If you answered Yes please justify

An analysis of the data provided as set out above.

If you answered No, what information do you require about certain communities or equality groups?



16. Is it possible to get the information needed quickly and easily, or should data collection be included in the action plan? Please give details below.

The information can be obtained if required.

**STEP 5 – DEALING WITH ADVERSE OR UNLAWFUL IMPACT AND STRENGTHENING THE POLICY OR FUNCTION** - In this section, you will consider whether there are any measures to reduce or remove any adverse impact. You should also explore other ways of achieving the same goal and / or alternative means of delivering a service to meet the needs of different groups.

17. What measures would address any disadvantage and promote good community good relations and cohesion?

**Address the disadvantage**

A 'Modernising of Libraries' report which includes the response from the Consultation is to be presented to Council Members. Once the recommendations are ratified, Culture and Information will begin developing an action plan during 2012. It may be necessary to return to this Equality Impact Assessment as work proceeds on the recommendations agreed in Cabinet on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2011, to consider if there are further options which might reduce any adverse impact.

This report to Cabinet Members recommends:

- **Area Libraries**

The retention of 5 area libraries at Abergele, Colwyn Bay, Llandudno and Llanrwst together with a new / refurbished area library serving the Llandudno Junction, Deganwy and Conwy area. The service currently provided at these libraries will be enhanced and tailored to meet local needs. Opening hours will be extended and will include Saturdays and Sundays. It is proposed that staffing levels, technology and book stock within these 5 facilities together with the Mobile Library and Home Library will enable the Service to meet 8 of the 9 Welsh Public Library Standards.

- **Community Libraries**

It is proposed that discussions take place with community and town councils, library users and community groups at Kinmel Bay, Cerrigydrudion, Penmaenmawr, Llanfairfechan and Penrhyn Bay to determine the potential for establishing Community Libraries in these localities.

It is proposed that at these Community Libraries, the Library Service will provide 15 hours of staff time, new portable fittings and fixtures to Llandudno Library standards, 3,000 books and 4 PCs. These libraries would be co-located within community facilities.

- **Mobile and Home Library Service**

The Mobile Library routes and the Home Library will be reviewed to ensure that services are delivered to people living in rural and urban deprivation.

**Promote good relations and community cohesion**

Once the action plan is developed a communication plan will be put in place.

18. What can be done to improve the policy, service or proposal in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or the effects identified?

To develop an action plan for the modernisation of the library service. This might include a further survey of customers following implementation to review customers views about the revised service and make any necessary adjustments where unfair practices appear to exist.

**STEP 6 – DECISION TO PROCEED** - In this section you will make a decision whether to proceed with the policy, service or function in its current form, in a revised format, or not at all.

19. Using the information you have gathered in steps 1 – 5, are you in a position to continue with the policy, service or function?

Yes	Continue with policy in its current form	Complete the Monitoring and Review (Section 8) to ensure the outcomes are monitored and regularly reviewed
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Continue with policy but with amendments to remove any areas of adverse impact	Complete Action Plan to address any areas of adverse impact and Monitor and Review (Section 8) to continually assess impact
No	Abandon this policy as it is not possible to address the adverse impact, and consider alternative ways of addressing the issues	Complete Action Plan to address any issues resulting from abandoning policy and to deal with the adverse impact identified

**STEP 7 – ACTION PLANNING** - Please outline your proposed Action Plan below :

Type of Action	Proposed action / objective to deal with issues / adverse impact	Targets / Measure	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
Engagement / Involvement (see next page for breakdown)	To improve links with Religious groups in the area and raise awareness of facilities.	Action plan in place.	1st April – 31 July 2012	Culture and Information Management Team
	Consider a method of collecting equality data on our customers when counting visitors in each location			
Mitigation of any adverse impact of the proposed changes to the method or delivering the library and information service	To develop a modernising library action plan which takes into account adverse impact.	Action plan in place.	1st April – 31 July 2012	Culture and Information Management Team
Equality Impact Assessment	To undertake an individual Equality Impact Assessment for each location once Council Members reach a political decision and before a decision is made on the final location of each community library.	Equality Impact Assessment.  Committee minutes.	1st January – 31 March 2015	Culture and Information Management Team
Council Approval	Report on findings from the consultation on the modernisation of Conwy County Borough Council's Library Service to be presented to Cabinet	Council minutes.	13 December 2011	Head of Service and Section Head Culture and Information
Service Level Agreement for Community Libraries	SLA to include provision to ensure General Duty compliance under Equality Act 2010			
Post Change Evaluation	Undertake a further user survey to seek feedback on changes and how they			

	impact on customers			
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If you are intending to carry out consultation to confirm your findings in this assessment or to gain views or feedback as part of your Action Plan, who are you going to consult with and how ?

Race		<p>Undertake further satisfaction survey once changes have been implemented to assess whether measures taken to reduce negative impact, have improved the situation for those groups identified in this EIA.</p>	
Disability			
Sex			
Age			
Religion & Belief			
Sexual Orientation			
Gender Reassignment			
Welsh Language			
Human Rights			

Other (please state)	
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**STEP 8 – ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Please outline below arrangements for future monitoring and review of this policy or function

<b>Agreed Action</b>	<b>Monitoring and Review arrangements</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Added to Operational Plan etc</b>
To be included as part of Community Development Business Planning Process.	As part of the service performance review.	April and September	Culture and Information Management Team/CDS Business Planning Team	