

Equality Impact Assessment



Hampshire
County Council

Library Service Consultation - Generating Income

Accountable officer: Emma Noyce

Email address: emma.noyce@hants.gov.uk

Department: Culture, Communities and Business
Services

Date of
assessment: 08/01/2020

Description of current service/policy

The County Council's Library Service is one of the largest in the country, with over 5.1 million visits per year and over 5 million book issues per year.

The Library Service currently generates income from a number of sources, including fines and charges; events and activities; plus room hire and long-term leases within its buildings. Around £1.1 million was generated during 2018/19 financial year from these sources. The Library Service believes there is potential to generate an additional £355,000 in income to offset costs from these sources and from other income generating opportunities.

Geographical impact: All
Hampshire

Description of proposed change

Alongside potential operational changes and efficiencies, the Library Service will continue to seek ways to generate new income to offset costs. Proposed changes to increase income include increasing the income generated through room hire and leases within council-run libraries; reviewing current fees and charges (e.g. for printing and photocopying, learning activities and other events); and encouraging fundraising, sponsorship and donations, including piloting 'friends' groups' in local communities.

Impacts of the proposed change

This impact assessment covers Service users

Engagement and consultation

Has engagement or consultation been carried out?

Planned

The Library Service will be undertaking a 10-week public consultation to seek customers', residents' and stakeholders' views on the emerging Libraries' Strategy to 2025, proposed changes to the Library Service and the impact of these changes, and any alternative options.

Information on the previous Balancing the Budget Consultation (www.hants.gov.uk/balancingthebudget) is contained in paragraphs 19-22 of the Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage decision reports, which can be accessed here: <http://sites.digital/hants1>, with further details also available in paragraphs 55-60.

Statutory considerations	Impact	Mitigation
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Age:
Low

The majority of income generation opportunities are business- and partnership-focused, such as long-term leases, room hires and sponsorship. Other opportunities are focused on increasing income from events and activities.

Any changes to charges would apply to all age groups. Library services are traditionally accessed more by children and families and by older people. 33% of borrowers are aged 0-17 (above the Hampshire average of 21%) and 32% are over 60 (above the Hampshire average of 25%). As such, these groups would be affected more by the proposed changes than the population as a whole.

A core Library book-lending service will continue to be offered free of charge at the point of delivery. Library Service customers can also access a range of services online, including digital borrowing of eBooks and eAudio; online reservations of stock; and online payment of fines and charges.

Given the nature of the income generation opportunities, and the mitigations outlined above, the impact on age is considered to be low overall.

Disability:
Neutral

Sexual orientation:
Neutral

Race: Neutral		
Religion and belief: Neutral		
Gender reassignment: Neutral		
Gender: Neutral		
Marriage and civil partnership: Neutral		
Pregnancy and maternity: Neutral		
Other policy considerations	Impact	Mitigation

<p>Poverty: Low</p>	<p>A core library service will continue to be offered free-of-charge at the point of delivery, though efforts to increase income generation to achieve savings could disproportionately impact on communities in areas of multiple deprivation or people on low income or benefits. According to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, there are several areas of deprivation in Hampshire within which libraries are situated and could be affected. Consideration will be given as to how charges can be applied in order to minimise impacts on individuals in poverty.</p>	
<p>Rurality: Neutral</p>		

Neutrality statement (if all considerations have a neutral impact)

Any other information

The consultation information pack and response form are also available in Easy Read, large print and audio format. Copies in other languages or formats (such as British Sign Language or Braille) are available on request.