

Equality Impact Assessment



Hampshire
County Council

Library Service Consultation - Closure of Libraries, Opening Hours Reduction and Changes to Event Officers - Staff Impacts

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Department: Culture, Communities and Business Services

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Description of current service/policy

166 FTE Library Team Assistants (LTAs) support the operation of 48 Libraries in Hampshire. The Service also employs a 0.12 FTE Sunday Team Leader at Winchester Discovery Centre and 3FTE Events Officer

There are currently 28 different sets of opening hours in libraries across Hampshire, which include a range of opening times including evenings and, in 2 libraries, Sundays. Branches are divided into 14 different clusters to support the deployment of staff. Whilst all LTAs have the same Role Profile, there is a large variation in contracted hours (with 89 different contract sizes).

Events Officers plan and organise a range of paid events over one or two geographical areas within Hampshire.

Geographical impact: All
Hampshire

Description of proposed change

The closure of 8 libraries and the reduction in opening hours in all others, together with the standardisation of contracts will mean:

A reduction of 16.55FTE LTAs

Changes in working days

Changes in working times/hours

Changes to lunchtime length (30 minutes)

Changes to work base

A higher proportion of roles will work on a Saturday, due to a reduced number of posts

Staff more likely to work in different libraries within their cluster on a 2 weekly roster basis creating a clear dual workplace, due to increased cluster working

Events Team changes will result in:

Reduction from 3FTE to 1FTE Events Officer, based largely in Winchester (reflecting bulk of workload)

Changes to tasks within role

Impacts of the proposed change

This impact assessment covers HCC Staff (and partners)

Engagement and consultation

Has engagement or consultation been carried out?

Planned

This staff consultation is the culmination of 2 years' of staff and public engagement, including a staff conference in April 2019, further staff briefings and discussions, a 10-week public consultation from 9 Jan-18 Mar 2020 (which provided staff and volunteers the opportunity to respond), and a 2-week public consultation in August 2020 specifically on opening hours (again providing opportunity for a staff and volunteer response).

This is a draft EIA; the contents will be further informed by the feedback from this staff consultation.

Statutory considerations	Impact	Mitigation
Age: Low	31% of Library Service staff are aged 55 and over, compared with 27% for Hampshire County Council. Staff could be required relocate to an alternative branch but the impact of this has been assessed as low as they already work in clusters at up to 6 alternative Libraries to their base location.	

<p>Disability: Low</p>	<p>7% of Library Service staff have disclosed having a disability, compared with 3.5% for Hampshire County Council. Staff could be required relocate to an alternative branch but the impact of this has been assessed as low as they already work in clusters at up to 6 alternative Libraries to their base location. Reasonable adjustments will continue to be made, where appropriate.</p>	
<p>Sexual orientation: Neutral</p>		
<p>Race: Neutral</p>		
<p>Religion and belief: Neutral</p>		
<p>Gender reassignment: Neutral</p>		

<p>Gender: Low</p>	<p>The Library Service employs 483 staff, 87% are female and 13% are male. Although this is a high ratio the service is unable to assess the specific impacts on these staff until the consultation is complete and decisions can be made based on the responses.</p> <p>Women are generally more likely than men to spend time on childcare responsibilities. The range of rotas have been designed to give a number of options for parents with childcare responsibilities – for example, start times of either 9 or 9.30am (to provide scope for school drop-offs) and the retention of part time shifts to support working parents.</p> <p>Dual-workbases provide more certainty on deployment, so parents and those with caring responsibilities can plan arrangements in advance.</p>	
<p>Marriage and civil partnership: Neutral</p>		
<p>Pregnancy and maternity: Low</p>	<p>The Library Service has a number of staff who are pregnant, or on maternity or paternity leave at any one time. All staff will be invited to participate in the staff consultation, staff who are away from work on maternity, paternity or adoption leave will be contacted individually to ensure they have the opportunity to participate and to ask any questions.</p>	
<p>Other policy considerations</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Mitigation</p>

<p>Poverty: Low</p>	<p>Staff continuing to work for the Library Service could be required to relocate to an alternative branch, to work different hours and/or work on different days of the week. Many of the staff working in libraries work part time and are low paid. The cost of public transport to travel between branches or to parking at a branch can be high.</p> <p>Any staff continuing to work for the Library Service from an alternative workbase that is outside of their dual workbase would be able to apply for travel assistance, should the criteria set out in the Hampshire County Council Expenses Policy be met.</p>	
<p>Rurality: Low</p>	<p>Some Library staff live and work in rural areas; they could be required relocate to an alternative branch but the impact of this has been assessed as low as they already work in clusters of up to 6 alternative Libraries to their base location.</p>	

Neutrality statement (if all considerations have a neutral impact)

Any other information

This EIA brings together considerations contained in all other staff related EIAs developed through the period of the Library Service consultation and provides a general summary of impacts for the purposes of the staff consultation.

Opening times have been determined by the responses to the two public consultation exercises, which included staff feedback.

Standardising library opening times has enabled standardising shifts for front line staff which provides:

- A mix of 4 differing opening times instead of 28 across the Hampshire Library Network
- Interchangeable shifts with more consistent start and end times
- More effective and efficient Library Team Assistant (LTA) staffing cover across libraries in each cluster
- A shorter full day shift combined with a shorter break to allow us to maintain larger staff contracts (in terms of hours) and enable full time contracts over a 5-day week in most clusters

- A reduced, but reasonable mix of full time and part time staff within teams to maintain cover across all libraries, and a mix of roles for those 'in scope' to choose a preference.

Impact on staff of the standardisation of opening times

- Closing 8 libraries has led to some changes to previous clusters, although areas remain largely unchanged
- Clusters will be used to create ring-fences for 'in scope staff', therefore libraries which are closing will still appear in the cluster diagram for those staff whose current workplace is closing in January
- Working across clusters has been enhanced to ensure that a good mix of adequate and interchangeable cover is maintained across libraries
- This will likely create dual workplaces for some and we have endeavoured to keep them within a reasonable distance within the cluster.
- Increasing regular work across two or more libraries in a cluster will enable full time staff and those with larger contracts (in terms of hours) to achieve their hours across a shorter working week e.g. 5 days rather than 6 AND prevent working every weekend.
- Standardising opening times provides an opportunity to standardise daily shift lengths and start/end times.
- Libraries currently have 89 different contract sizes across the LTA cohort – this will now be reduced to 49.
- Fixed roster LTA contract sizes range from 4.5 hours per week to 37 hours per week with a good variety between.
- Annualised Hours Contracts (AHC) will mainly remain as before.
- Shifts will become more standardised:
 - o Whole day shifts will be from 09:00/09:30-17:00
 - o Part-day shifts will be either:
 - 09:00 -13:30
 - 12:30 -17:00
 - o A two-week work pattern continues for most
 - o there will be no middle of the day shifts, as lunch cover will now be provided by the crossover of the am/pm shift
 - o Rosters do not require staff to provide cover across two libraries in one day. This would only occur as part of any business continuity issue, as is currently the case.

An Enhanced Voluntary Redundancy (EVR) Offer will be available for colleagues in scope who wish to apply. If staff are not successful in securing a role in the new structure, have not applied for EVR and are unsuccessful in finding a position as a redeployee, they will be made compulsory redundant.

More detail regarding the impact on all protected characteristics will be known after the staff consultation, which will take place between 22 September 2020 and 5 November 2020. At this point the Staff Impact EIA will be updated.