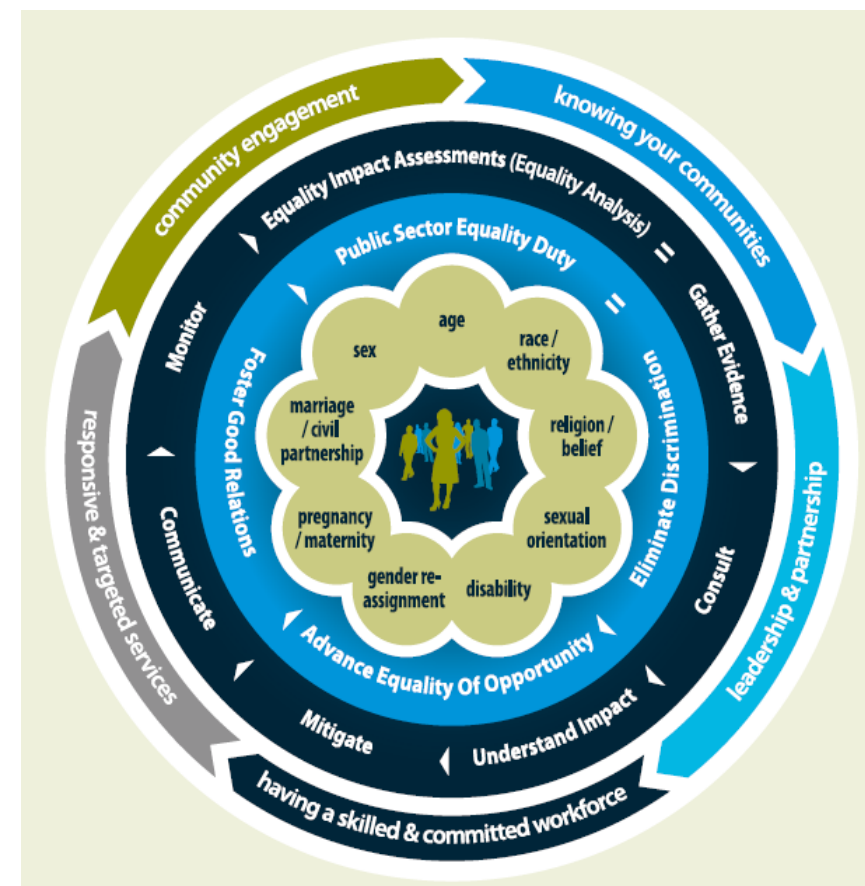


Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Template

EqIAs make services better for everyone and support value for money by getting services right first time.

EqIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then create an action plan to get the best outcomes for staff and service-users¹. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010². They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached them.³

An EqIA needs to be completed **as a project starts** to identify and consider possible differential impacts on people and their lives, inform project planning and, where appropriate, identify mitigating actions. It must be completed **before** any decisions are made or policy agreed so that the EqIA **informs that decision or policy**. It is also a live document; you should review and update it along with your project plan throughout.



Full guidance notes to help you are embedded in this form – see the End Notes or hover the mouse over the numbered notes. If your project/proposal relates primarily to staff – e.g. a restructure – there is a specific EqIA template for this [here](#)

Please share your initial EqlA with the equalities team, equalities@hertfordshire.gov.uk and the final/updated version at the end of the project. Key EqlAs should be reviewed by the relevant Head of Service. Examples of EqlAs can be seen in the [EqlA Library](#).

1. Who is completing the EqlA⁴ and why is it being done?

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| Title of service / proposal / project / strategy / procurement you are assessing⁵ | Delivering Library Services through Public Service Mutual |
| Names of those involved in completing the EqlA | Andrew Bignell Rachel Bilton Tobias Barker |
| Head of Service or Business Manager | Andrew Bignell |
| Team/Department | Libraries & Heritage Services |
| Lead officer contact details | Tobias.Barker@hertfordshire.gov.uk |
| Focus of EqlA – what are you assessing?⁶ What are the aims of the service, proposal, project? What outcomes do you want to achieve? What are the reasons for the proposal or change? Do you need to reference/consider any related projects? | <p>The County Council is exploring an alternative delivery model for Hertfordshire Libraries as the best means of delivering the ambitions of the Inspiring Libraries Strategy, achieving required budget savings and minimising reductions to the service in future.</p> <p>A multi-disciplinary working group has been established to further explore the business case for establishing an alternative delivery model, and independent professional support and advice sought through the DCMS Mutuals Support Programme.</p> <p>A consultation document was published online and in libraries 8 January to 18 February 2018 in order to seek feedback on the principle of creating an alternative delivery model from customers, partners, stakeholders, library staff and volunteers. The results of the consultation will help to inform a recommendation to Cabinet in the spring 2018.</p> <p>The purpose of this equality impact assessment is to consider what the impact would be if Hertfordshire Libraries adopted an alternative delivery model and delivered library services through a Public Service Mutual.</p> <p>This equality impact also identifies the new operating model, Public Service Mutual as a potential mitigation against disadvantageous and unequal access.</p> |

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| | <p>This could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings, if Hertfordshire Libraries did not adopt an alternative delivery model and continued to deliver services as they are currently.</p> |
| <p>Stakeholders Who will be affected? Which protected characteristics (<i>see end-notes 11-20</i>) is it most relevant to? Consider the public, service users, partners, staff, Members, etc</p> | <p><u>Internal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and volunteers in Libraries and Heritage Services • Hertfordshire County Councillors <p><u>External:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library customers and potential customers, including people from hard to reach groups and people who commonly experience barriers to participation (e.g. some people with protected characteristics) <p><u>External Organisations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Council departments and other partners. (e.g. Schools, Children's Centres, local colleges, Citizen Advice, local groups who use library facilities such as reading groups, local history societies etc). • Community Library Steering Groups |

2. List of data sources used for this EqlA *(include relevant national/local data, research, monitoring information, service user feedback, complaints, audits, consultations, EqlAs from other projects or other local authorities, etc.)*

A range of useful local data on our communities can be found on [Herts Insight](#) and on the [Equalities Hub](#)

[illegible]

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| <p>chances are improving over time (particularly for child poverty and educational attainment), family homelessness and hospital admissions among young people for both substance misuse and self-harm show worsening trends.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Children’s Life Chances” JSNA recommends that the County Council should improve linkages between services and strategies in order to address life chances issues. | | |
| <p><u>“Ageing Well” JSNA 2014</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “Aging Well” JSNA highlights the fact that social isolation amongst older people can lead to depression and ill-health. Volunteering opportunities for older people improves health and wellbeing and diverts people away from health and social care services and towards community-based services and self-sufficiency. The provision of advice and information can support older people in relation to falls prevention, dementia, warmth and mental wellbeing. | 2014 | |
| <p><u>Equality and Diversity” JSNA 2015</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Equality and Diversity” JSNA says that service providers need to be aware of the prominent health inequalities experienced by Hertfordshire’s diverse communities, and consider their impact when planning, commissioning and delivering services. This should involve considering new ways to engage with these communities; to understand their needs and to identify and eliminate the barriers they face to accessing services. | 2015 | |

3. Analysis and assessment: review of information, impact analysis and mitigating actions

| Protected characteristic group | <p>What do you know⁷? What do people tell you⁸?</p> <p>Summary of data and feedback about service users and the wider community/ public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who uses the service? • Who doesn't and why? • Feedback/complaints? • Any differences in outcomes? Why? | <p>What does this mean – what are the potential impacts of the proposal(s)⁹?</p> <p>- Consider positive and negative impacts - On service users / the public - <i>AND, where relevant, staff*</i></p> <p><i>* if your proposals relate mainly to a staff restructure or reorganisation, you should use the template here</i></p> | <p>What can you do¹⁰?</p> <p>What reasonable mitigations to reduce or avoid the impact can you propose?</p> <p>How will you communicate/engage or provide services differently to create a 'level playing field' – e.g. consultation materials in easy read or hold targeted engagement events</p> <p><i>If there is no current way of mitigating any negative impacts, clearly state that here and consider other actions you could take in the action plan in section 4.</i></p> |
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| Age ¹¹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of National Statistics predicts that by 2021 the number of over 65s will have increased by 22.4% and the number of over 80s will have increased by 28.2%. The number of young people is forecast to increase, with 0-19s up by 11.3% and 0-5s up by 11.7%. • The older population will increase significantly during the lifetime of the library strategy. Currently one out of every five households in Hertfordshire contains only residents that are aged 65+. 59% of these households contain one person living alone. | <p><u>Positive impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertfordshire Libraries provide library services that are accessible to all. A Public Service Mutual model will provide a means of continuing current service provision. • A Public Service Mutual has the potential to mitigate against disadvantageous and unequal access that could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings if the service remains in-house. <p><u>Negative impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger and older people may believe that delivering library services in Hertfordshire through a Public Service Mutual will not reflect or meet their particular service needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the governance of the Public Service Mutual organisation is determined we will ensure that the governance structure and management of the new organisation is: • representative and reflects the interests of |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2011 census found that 8.1% of Hertfordshire residents have never used the internet. In the 2013 public consultation, "The Future of Hertfordshire Libraries" 18% of library users responding to the questionnaire said that they did not have a home computer with internet access. | | <p>people with protected characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> members of the new organisation are fully aware of equalities legislation and act in accordance with the law and best practice the Public Service Mutual organisation adheres fully to the public library ethos and the vision and values of the library service in Hertfordshire and that this is stated clearly in the contractual arrangement between the County Council and the new organisation. We will actively promote the Public Service Mutual and any changes to the service to agencies and community groups representing the interests of older people, children and young people. |
| Disability¹² | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's community profile data shows that 69,000 people in Hertfordshire have a disability. This includes 23,000 people with a severe physical disability. Around 26,000 people have a learning disability. | <p><u>Positive impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hertfordshire Libraries provide library services that are accessible to all. A Public Service Mutual model will provide a means of continuing current service provision. A Public Service Mutual has the potential to mitigate against disadvantageous and unequal access that could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings if the service remains in-house. <p><u>Negative Impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People with a disability may believe that delivering library services in | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the governance of the Public Service Mutual organisation is determined we will ensure that the governance structure and management of the new |

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| | | <p>Hertfordshire through a Public Service Mutual will not reflect or meet their particular needs of the service.</p> | <p>organisation is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – representative and reflects the interests of people with protected characteristics – members of the new organisation are fully aware of equalities legislation and act in accordance with the law and best practice – the Public Service Mutual organisation adheres fully to the public library ethos and the vision and values of the library service in Hertfordshire and that this is stated clearly in the contractual arrangement between the County Council and the new organisation. • We will actively promote the Public Service Mutual and any changes to the service to agencies and community groups representing the interests of people with disabilities. • The service will ensure through its communications planning that publicity for any changes will be available in different formats, including large font, braille, easy read and BSL as needed. |
| <p>Gender reassignment¹³</p> | <p>There is currently a low expectation of the service amongst some of the gender reassignment population.</p> | <p><u>Positive impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertfordshire Libraries provide library services that are accessible to all. A Public Service Mutual model will provide a means of continuing current service provision. • A Public Service Mutual has the potential to mitigate against disadvantageous and unequal access that could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings if the | |

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| | | <p>service remains in-house.</p> <p><u>Negative impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People of gender reassignment may believe that delivering library services in Hertfordshire through a Public Service Mutual will not reflect or meet their particular needs of the service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the governance of the Public Service Mutual organisation is determined we will ensure that the governance structure and management of the new organisation is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – representative and reflects the interests of people with protected characteristics – members of the new organisation are fully aware of equalities legislation and act in accordance with the law and best practice – the Public Service Mutual organisation adheres fully to the public library ethos and the vision and values of the library service in Hertfordshire and that this is stated clearly in the contractual arrangement between the County Council and the new organisation. • We will actively promote the Public Service Mutual and any changes to the service to community groups. |
| Pregnancy and maternity¹⁴ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no unique impacts identified for this characteristic. | <p><u>Positive impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertfordshire Libraries provide library services that are accessible to all. A Public Service Mutual model will provide a means of continuing current service provision. • A Public Service Mutual has the potential to mitigate against disadvantageous and unequal access that could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings if the service remains in-house. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The position will continue to be monitored and action will be taken to address any identified issues. |

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| <p>Race¹⁵</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Hertfordshire, there is a growing BME community with 20% of the population having defined themselves as being from a non-white British background in the 2011 Census. • Watford, Welwyn, Hatfield and Hertsmere have some of the highest proportions of people from other ethnic groups, while Three Rivers, Stevenage and Broxbourne have relatively high proportions of 'White Other' (i.e. non UK European Union). St. Albans district has the highest proportion of Bangladeshi people in Hertfordshire (1.9%), but in terms of numbers, Watford has the highest number of Pakistani & Bangladeshi people with over 6,000 people. • People from BME communities are likely to experience inequalities in terms of health, including mental health, cancer, heart disease, HIV, TB and diabetes. | <p><u>Positive impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertfordshire Libraries provide library services that are accessible to all. A Public Service Mutual model will provide a means of continuing current service provision. • A Public Service Mutual has the potential to mitigate against disadvantageous and unequal access that could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings if the service remains in-house. <p>.</p> <p><u>Negative impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People from the BME community may believe that delivering library services in Hertfordshire through a Public Service Mutual will not reflect or meet their particular needs of the service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the governance of the Public Service Mutual organisation is determined we will ensure that the governance structure and management of the new organisation is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – representative and reflects the interests of people with protected characteristics – members of the new organisation are fully aware of equalities legislation and act in accordance with the law and best practice – the Public Service Mutual organisation adheres fully to the public library ethos and the vision and values of the library service in Hertfordshire and that this is stated clearly in the contractual arrangement between the County Council and the new organisation. • We will actively promote the Public Service Mutual and any changes to the service to community groups. • Staff will have equalities and diversity training and the resources to provide its |
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| | | | <p>information in different languages as required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The County Council have access to the Interpreting and Translation Service to assist people whose first language is not English and need help. |
| Religion or belief¹⁶ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst there is no formal data at present for the religion or beliefs of the service users there may be some communities who feel isolated from the service. | <p><u>Positive impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hertfordshire Libraries provide library services that are accessible to all. A Public Service Mutual model will provide a means of continuing current service provision. A Public Service Mutual has the potential to mitigate against disadvantageous and unequal access that could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings if the service remains in-house. <p><u>Negative impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People of particular faith or religion may believe that delivering library services in Hertfordshire through a Public Service Mutual will not reflect or meet their particular needs of the service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the governance of the Public Service Mutual organisation is determined we will ensure that the governance structure and management of the new organisation is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> representative and reflects the interests of people with protected characteristics members of the new organisation are fully aware of equalities legislation and act in accordance with the law and best practice the Public Service Mutual organisation adheres fully to the public library ethos and the vision and values of the library service in Hertfordshire and that this is stated clearly in the contractual |

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| | | | <p>arrangement between the County Council and the new organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers will actively promote the Public Service Mutual and any changes to the service to community groups. • Any promotion of service events will be at times when it suits people from all religions (i.e. Muslim communities might find it difficult to attend an event on Friday afternoon, and the same for Jewish communities on Saturdays). |
| Sex/Gender¹⁷ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women in some communities may feel isolated from the service | <p><u>Positive impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertfordshire Libraries provide library services that are accessible to all. A Public Service Mutual model will provide a means of continuing current service provision. • A Public Service Mutual has the potential to mitigate against disadvantageous and unequal access that could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings if the service remains in-house. • This may provide the opportunity for those women interested to get involved in the delivery of services. <p><u>Negative impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women in some communities may believe that delivering library services in Hertfordshire through a Public Service Mutual will not reflect or meet their particular needs of the service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the governance of the Public Service Mutual organisation is determined we will ensure that the governance structure and management of the new organisation is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – representative and reflects the interests of people with protected characteristics – members of the new organisation are fully |

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| | | | <p>aware of equalities legislation and act in accordance with the law and best practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the Public Service Mutual organisation adheres fully to the public library ethos and the vision and values of the library service in Hertfordshire and that this is stated clearly in the contractual arrangement between the County Council and the new organisation. • We will actively promote the Public Service Mutual and any changes to the service to community groups. |
| Sexual orientation¹⁸ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That lesbian, gay and bisexual people are not a single homogenous group must be taken into account. | <p><u>Positive impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertfordshire Libraries provide library services that are accessible to all. A Public Service Mutual model will provide a means of continuing current service provision. • A Public Service Mutual has the potential to mitigate against disadvantageous and unequal access that could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings if the service remains in-house. <p><u>Negative impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesbian, gay and bisexual people may believe that delivering library services in Hertfordshire through a Public Service Mutual will not reflect or meet their particular needs of the service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the governance of the Public Service Mutual organisation is determined we will ensure that the governance structure and management of the new organisation is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – representative and reflects the interests of people with protected characteristics – members of the new organisation are fully aware of equalities legislation and act in |

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| | | | <p>accordance with the law and best practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the Public Service Mutual organisation adheres fully to the public library ethos and the vision and values of the library service in Hertfordshire and that this is stated clearly in the contractual arrangement between the County Council and the new organisation. • We will actively promote the Public Service Mutual and any changes to the service to community groups. |
| Marriage and civil partnership¹⁹ | There are no unique impacts identified for this characteristic. | <p><u>Positive impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertfordshire Libraries provide library services that are accessible to all. A Public Service Mutual model will provide a means of continuing current service provision. • A Public Service Mutual has the potential to mitigate against disadvantageous and unequal access that could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings if the service remains in-house. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The position will continue to be monitored and action will be taken to address any identified issues. |
| Carers²⁰ (by association with any of the above) | Carers may be concerned about any possible changes and the impact that this may have on their ability to access library services, when compared with the current provision and support they receive from the County Council. | <p><u>Positive impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertfordshire Libraries provide library services that are accessible to all. A Public Service Mutual model will provide a means of continuing current service provision. • A Public Service Mutual has the potential to mitigate against | |

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| | | <p>disadvantageous and unequal access that could arise through a reduction of service, in order to meet required budget savings if the service remains in-house.</p> <p><u>Negative impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers may believe that delivering library services in Hertfordshire through a Public Service Mutual will not reflect or meet their particular needs of the service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the governance of the Public Service Mutual organisation is determined we will ensure that the governance structure and management of the new organisation is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> representative and reflects the interests of people with protected characteristics members of the new organisation are fully aware of equalities legislation and act in accordance with the law and best practice the Public Service Mutual organisation adheres fully to the public library ethos and the vision and values of the library service in Hertfordshire and that this is stated clearly in the contractual arrangement between the County Council and the new organisation. We will actively promote the Public Service Mutual and any changes to the service to agencies and community groups representing carers, such as Carers in Herts. |
| <p>Other relevant groups²¹ Consider if there is a potential impact (positive or negative) on areas such as health and wellbeing, crime and disorder,</p> | | | |

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| Armed Forces community. | | | |
| Opportunity to advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations²² | | | |
| <p>The new operating model is likely to create further opportunities for partnership working and co-production of services. As an organisation independent from the County Council, there will be the chance to foster positive relations with local communities and greater flexibility to work with partners and suppliers.</p> <p>Depending on the structure and management of the new organisation, there may be an opportunity for communities to be actively involved in the governance of the service, and able to shape services so that they are responsive and meet the needs of local people.</p> <p>Greater experience within the communities of 'community led' initiatives to retain and develop local services may be applied to other areas of community need. Opportunities for volunteering will increase. The sense of community ownership in local libraries will be increased. All these elements will lead a growth in 'social capital'.</p> | | | |
| Conclusion of your analysis and assessment - | | | |
| OUTCOME AND NEXT STEPS | | SUMMARY | |
| i. No equality impacts identified - No major change required to proposal | | | |
| ii. Minimal equality impacts identified - Adverse impacts have been identified, but have been objectively justified (provided you do not unlawfully discriminate) - Ensure decision makers consider the cumulative effect of how a number of decisions impact on equality - No major change required to proposal | | Due to the wide and varied groups and communities that use the library service in Hertfordshire there is the potential for multiple groups to perceive that they are at greater risk of exclusion and isolation from accessing the service once an alternative delivery model, Public Service Mutual has been established. The proposed alternative delivery model would not make any fundamental changes to service delivery. It would largely be 'Business as Usual' once the service has been embedded into the new organisation. Any future service changes would be subject to new EqlAs. | |

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| <p>iii. Potential equality impacts identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take 'mitigating action' to change the original policy/proposal, remove barriers or better advance equality - Set out clear actions in the action plan in section 4. | |
| <p>iv. Major equality impacts identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The adverse effects are not justified, cannot be mitigated or show unlawful discrimination - You must stop and remove the policy [you should consult with Legal Services] - Ensure decision makers understand the equality impact | |
| | |

4. Prioritised Action Plan²³

| Impact identified and group(s) affected | Action planned Include actions relating to: • mitigation measures • getting further research • getting further data/consultation | Expected outcome | Measure of success | Lead officer and timeframe |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| All protected characteristics | <p>When the governance of the Public Service Mutual organisation is determined we will ensure that the governance structure and management of the new organisation is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – representative and reflects the interests of people with protected characteristics – members of the new organisation are fully aware of equalities legislation and act in accordance with the law and best practice – the Public Service Mutual organisation adheres fully to the public library ethos and the vision and values of the library service in Hertfordshire and that this is stated clearly in the contractual arrangement between the County Council and the new organisation. | <p>Positive engagement and take up of services delivered by Public Service Mutual by people of all protected characteristics in Hertfordshire.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in KPI's evidencing take up of services by people of all protected characteristics. • Positive customer feedback via the Customer Relations Programme e.g. comment cards, library user surveys | <p>Andrew Bignell April 2019</p> |

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| | Officers will actively promote the Public Service Mutual and any changes to the service to agencies and community groups representing people with protected characteristics. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive engagement and take up of services delivered by Public Service Mutual by people of all protected characteristics in Hertfordshire. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in KPI's evidencing take up of services by people of all protected characteristics. Positive customer feedback via the Customer Relations Programme e.g. comment cards, library user surveys | Andrew Bignell April 2019 |
| Review of the EqlA | Officers will review the EqlA 'Delivering Library Services through Public Service Mutual' on a six monthly basis. A separate EqlA will be completed for any significant service changes that may take place as a result of establishing a Public Service Mutual. | EqlA is updated as required. | The interests of all people with a protected characteristic who use libraries in Hertfordshire are represented in the establishment of a Public Service Mutual | Andrew Bignell Six monthly |
| EqlA for TUPE process for staff | An EqlA will be completed to accompany the TUPE process for staff as they transfer from the County Council to a Public Service Mutual organisation. | Effective completion of TUPE process. | Transfer and implementation of Public Service Mutual organisation in Hertfordshire in line with agreed timescales. | Andrew Bignell April 2019 |

This EqlA has been signed off by:

Lead Equality Impact Assessment officer: Tobias Barker

Date: March 2018

Head of Service or Business Manager: Andrew Bignell

Date: March 2018

Review date: August 2018

¹ The following principles explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act when considering the effect of existing and new policies/practices/services on equality. They must all be met or the EqlA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering proposals and **before** a final decision is taken
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the council is responsible for ensuring that anyone who provides services on our behalf can comply with the duty, are required in contracts to comply with it, and do comply in practice. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty – it continues after proposals are implemented/reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

² **Our duties in the Equality Act 2010**

The County Council has a legal duty under this Act to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people with 'protected characteristics' (see end notes 11-20 for details of the nine-protected characteristics). This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees. **If you are creating an 'arms-length' company**, seek advice from the Equality Team or Legal.

We use this template to do this and evidence our consideration. **You must give 'due regard' (pay conscious attention) to the need to:**

- **Avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact:** if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately.
- **Promote equality of opportunity:** by
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by equality groups
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of equality groups
 - Encouraging equality groups to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
 - Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't:** e.g. by promoting understanding.

³ EqlAs **should always be proportionate** to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The size of the likely impact – e.g. the numbers of people affected and their vulnerability

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposal(s) on a protected group (e.g. disabled people) and the more vulnerable the group is, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be. Unless they contain sensitive personal/employee data – EqlAs are public documents. They are published with Cabinet and Panel papers and public consultations and are available on request.

⁴ **Who completes the EqIA:** The person who is making the decision or advising the decision-maker about a policy. It is better to do this as a team, with people involved who understand the implementation of the policy.

⁵ **Title of EqIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing.

⁶ **Focus of EqIA:** A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section. Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time. Also explain if there is a particular focus to your equality analysis:

- What are the main aims or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function? How does it fit with other services?
- What outcomes do you want to achieve, why and for whom? e.g. what do you want to provide, what will change/improve?
- Which aspects are most important to equality and should be the focus of your attention?
- You should state all teams/organisations involved in implementing, carrying out or delivering the policy, practice or service
- What are the **reason(s)** for the proposal or change (financial, service, legal etc)? The Act requires us to make these clear.

⁷ **Data & Information:** Your EqIA needs to be informed by data. You should consider the following:

- What data relevant to the impact on protected groups is available? (is there an existing EqIA?, local service data, national data, community data, similar proposal in another local authority).
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (e.g. further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you know from service/local data about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each characteristic in turn.
- What might any local demographic changes or trends mean for the service or function? Also consider national data if appropriate
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any group(s)?
- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people or groups in the community?

⁸ **What have people told you about the service, function, area?**

- Use service user feedback, complaints, audits, and/or the results of specific consultation/engagement
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- Remember, you must engage/consult appropriately and in an inclusive way with those likely to be affected to fulfil the equality duty.
- You can read the County Council's [Consultation](#) and [Engagement](#) toolkits for full advice on this
- For practical tips and advice on consulting with people from protected groups, see this [‘How-to’ guide](#)

⁹ **Impact:** Your EqIA must consider fully and properly **actual and potential impacts** against each protected characteristic:

- The equality duty does not stop changes, but means we must fully consider and address the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be accurate and transparent, but also realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific where you can so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects.
- Questions to ask when assessing whether and how the proposals impact on service users, staff and the wider community:
 - Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
 - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
 - Does the project relate to an area with known inequalities (where national evidence or previous research is available)?
 - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
 - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims?
 - Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so the plan **must** be modified.

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- Does it relate to an area where equality objectives have been set by the County Council in our [Equality Strategy](#)?

¹⁰ **Consider actions relating to the following:**

- That specifically address the impacts you've identified and show how they will remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts
- Explain clearly what any mitigating measures are, and the extent to which you think they will reduce / remove the adverse effect
- Will you need to communicate or provide services in different ways for different groups in order to create a "level playing field"?
- State how you can maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
- If you do not have sufficient equality information, state how you can fill the gaps.

¹¹ **Age:** People of all ages, but consider in particular children and young people, older people and carers, looked after children and young people leaving care. Also consider working age people.

¹² **Disability:** When looking at disability, consideration should be given to people with different types of impairments: physical (including mobility), learning, aural or sensory (including hearing and vision impairment), visible and non-visible impairment. Consideration should also be given to: people with HIV, people with mental health needs and people with drug and alcohol problems. People with conditions such as diabetes and cancer and some other health conditions also have protection under the Equality Act 2010.

¹³ **Gender Reassignment:** In the Act a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. A person does **not** need to be under medical supervision to be protected. Consider transgender people, transsexual people and transvestites.

¹⁴ **Pregnancy and Maternity:** When looking at pregnancy and maternity, give consideration to pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, part-time workers, women with caring responsibilities, women who are lone parents and parents on low incomes, women on maternity leave and Keeping in Touch days.

¹⁵ **Race/Ethnicity:** Apart from the common ethnic groups, consideration should also be given to Gypsy, Roma and Irish Travellers communities, people of other nationalities outside Britain who reside here, refugees and asylum seekers and speakers of other languages.

¹⁶ **Religion and Belief:** Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. As a minimum you should consider the most common religious groups (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jews, Sikh, Buddhist) and people with no religion or philosophical belief(s).

¹⁷ **Sex/Gender:** Consider girls and women, boys and men, married people, civil partners, part-time workers, carers (both of children with disabilities and older cares), parents (mothers and fathers), in particular lone parents and parents on low incomes.

¹⁸ **Sexual Orientation:** The Act protects bisexual, heterosexual, gay and lesbian people.

¹⁹ **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** consider married people and civil partners – e.g. do same sex couple in a civil partnership have the same rights and benefits as married people?

²⁰ **Carers:** From April 2015, carers (people who provide unpaid care to a friend or relative) have been entitled to an assessment of their own needs in the same way as those they care for. Although not a 'protected characteristic' the County Council Diversity Board has agreed that the impact of proposals on carers should also be considered.

²¹ **Other relevant groups:** You should consider the impact on our service users in other related areas, such as health and wellbeing, crime and disorder (e.g. people experiencing domestic abuse), community relations and socio-economic status (e.g. homelessness or low incomes). If the proposal is likely to have an impact on service users in these areas, the County Council Public Health and the County Community Safety Unit may be able to help. Also consider whether your policy or decision will impact current or former Armed Forces personnel living and working in Hertfordshire. The Council is committed to the Hertfordshire Community Covenant, a commitment from public and private organisations in the county to support the active and retired Armed Forces community.

²² **Equality of opportunity and good relations:** summarise anything that will have a potential positive impact over and above the work of your project – e.g. engaging with the community may help raise awareness and community understanding of the needs of certain groups.

²³ **Action Planning:** The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.