

**Equality impact assessment form**

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| Directorate | Communities |
| Service area | Libraries |
| Proposal | To cancel the subscription to E newspapers |
| Reason for proposal | Significant reduction to book fund and this is a service with limited uptake |
| Sign off (Director/Head of Service) |  |
| Date of assessment | 23 Jan 2024 |

**Please read the support notes to help you in Appendix 1 on page 4 before completing your assessment**

**The form**

You need to attach the completed form to any report to help councillors and colleagues make their decisions by taking equality implications into account.

**The assessment team or name of individual completing this form**

**Team leader’s name and job title** –

Other team members if appropriate

| **Name** | **Job title** | **Organisation** | **Area of expertise** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark Elliott | Library Service Manager | Derby Libraries | Librarianship |
| Collette Levers | Manager Children Families and Literacy | Derby Libraries | Librarianship |
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**Step 1- setting the scene**

Make sure you have clear aims and objectives on what you are impact assessing – this way you keep to the purpose of the assessment and are less likely to get side- tracked.

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| 1. What are the main aims, objectives and purpose of the decision you want to make? | Objective is to end the subscription to E newspapers |
| 1. Why do you need to make this decision? | There have been significant reductions to the library book fund over the last year and this forces difficult decisions. |
| 1. Who delivers/will deliver the changed service/policy including any consultation on it and any outside organisations who deliver under procurement arrangements? | Derby Libraries. |
| 1. Who are the main customers, users, partners, colleagues or groups affected by this decision? | The service is purchased jointly with a number of other library providers in the East Midlands. There has been a conversation with our partners and the product supplier. Customer use is low with 268 unique user sessions between Jan 2023 – Dec 2023. |

**Step 2 – collecting information and assessing impact**

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| 1. Who have you consulted and engaged with so far about this change, and what did they tell you? Who else do you plan to consult with? – tell us here how you did this consultation and how you made it accessible for the equality groups, such as accessible locations, interpreters and translations, accessible documents. | Traditional library newspaper readers tend to be older people who are happy to read a paper in the library and perhaps talk to others about the news. Our impression is that the E newspaper format does not fit well with this group. However, it was felt that online / remote service like this may come into its own during COVID. It was easy to see that some features, including a very broad list of newspaper titles, translation and magnification of text, could appeal to some potential users. |

1. Using the skills and knowledge in your assessment team or what you know yourself, and from any consultation you have done, what do you already know about the equality impact of the proposed change on particular groups? Also, use any other information you know about such as any customer feedback, surveys, national research or data. Note that this template now includes Socio-Economic Duty (SED) local data can be found [here](https://derby4.sharepoint.com/sites/PolicyandInsight/Policy%20and%20Insight%20Report%20Library/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FPolicyandInsight%2FPolicy%20and%20Insight%20Report%20Library%2FCorporate%20Insight&p=true&ga=1). Indicate by a tick for each protected characteristic group whether this is a negative or a positive impact. Only fill in the mitigation box if you think the decision will have a negative impact and then you’ll need to explain how you are going to lessen the impact.

| **People with protected characteristics** | **What do you already know?** | **Positive impact** | **Negative impact** | **Mitigation - what actions will you take to lessen impact?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age –** older and younger people | E newspapers provided by the library exist within a busy marketplace with lots of alternatives. Many young / old people are not avid consumers of news/current affairs so E newspapers are of no interest to either group. Those that do follow the news tend to turn to the TV first. Hard copy newspapers are generally in decline, particularly amongst the young. Many people look online to keep up to date with the news, but some, particularly young people, use social media and non-traditional news providers rather than traditional newspaper sites. This may partly be because of the paywalls that exist around titles such the Daily Telegraph, The Times etc. Whilst there are lots of barriers out there to gaining free access to news there are still numerous options for both young and old. |  | Yes | We have reached a point with our budgets that it’s not practical for us to implement meaningful mitigating actions beyond signposting customers to alternative providers. Withdrawing this service is about ensuring that what budget we do retain can be used to buy books for older and younger people. |
| **Disability –** the effects on the whole range of disabled people, including Deaf people, hearing impaired people, visually impaired people, people with mental health issues, people with learning difficulties, people living with autism and people with physical impairments | When E newspapers were introduced we felt this group may be keen users but the raw numbers indicate a lack of take up generally. Low take up may be because many people don’t know about the service, but there are also numerous competing services provided by bodies such as RNIB and the NHS |  | Yes | Signposting to alternative providers |
| **Gender identity-** trans and those people who don’t identify with a particular gender, for example, non-binary, genderfluid, genderqueer, polygender and those who are questioning their gender or non-gendered identity. | We don’t believe there are any implications for this particular group. |  |  |  |
| **Marriage and Civil Partnership** | We don’t believe there are any implications for this particular group. |  |  |  |
| **Pregnancy and maternity -** women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers | We don’t believe there are any implications for this particular group. |  |  |  |
| **Race -** the effects on minority ethnic communities, including newer communities, Gypsies and Travellers and the Roma community | The package of newspapers we purchased did include a range of newspapers in a foreign language.  We suspected that awareness of the service is probably very low / non- existent amongst potential target groups. Whatever the reason the take up is low – appendix 1 |  | Yes | Customers could still freely search the Internet at the library to access news from around the world. |
| **Religion or belief or none -** the effects on religious and cultural communities, customers and colleagues | Some of the newspapers will have content about religion and cultural communities |  | Yes | Customers could still freely search the Internet at the library to access news from around the world. |
| **Sex -** the effects on both men and women and boys and girls | We are conscious that some older men do like to visit the library to read a paper and this allows them social interaction. |  | Yes | Other groups and activities are offered in the library that customers can join for social contact. |
| **Sexual orientation -** the effects on lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, pansexual, asexual and those questioning their sexuality | We don’t believe there are any implications for this particular group. |  |  |  |
| **Those who experience socio-economic disadvantages**  Please see notes on page 4 to help with this section | The role of the library is to provide access to information and learning to anyone that wants it. |  | Yes | Whilst its desirable that the library provides newspapers its not mandatory. We have opted to retain the other E services rather than papers. This is partly because they are more popular with customers, but also because the provision of books is prioritised as being core provision. E magazines often appeal to low level / infrequent readers. It was felt that people could be signposted to other sources of news. |

**Important** - For any of the equality groups you don’t have any information about, then please contact our Lead on Equality and Diversity for help. For help with SED please contact [policyandconsultation@derby.gov.uk](mailto:policyandconsultation@derby.gov.uk). You can also get lots of information on reports completed from organisations’ websites such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Stonewall, Press for Change, Joseph Rowntree Trust and so on. Please don’t put down that the impact affects ‘everyone the same’ – it never does!

**Step 3 – deciding on the outcome**

7 What outcome does this assessment suggest you take? – You might find more than one applies. Please also tell us why you have come to this decision?

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| **Outcome 1** |  | **No major change needed** – the EIA hasn’t identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact and all opportunities to advance equality have been taken |
| **Outcome 2** |  | **Adjust the proposal** to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better advance equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers you identified? |
| **Outcome 3** | **X** | **Continue the proposal** despite potential for negative impact or missed opportunities to advance equality identified. You will need to make sure the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You need to consider whether there are:   * sufficient plans to stop or minimise the negative impact * mitigating actions for any remaining negative impacts * plans to monitor the actual impact. |
| **Outcome 4** |  | **Stop and rethink** the proposal when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination |

Why did you come to this decision?

A key driver for this proposal is the need to save money. The current financial pressure on the Council has meant that the library service has temporarily stopped buying books altogether. Next financial year ( 24/25 ) we expect to be buying books once again, but are currently anticipating a permanent reduction of 48% to the budget. Withdrawing a service that few customers are using seems to be the sensible thing to do so that the saving can be reallocated to buying books for children and adults. We acknowledge that awareness of the service is probably very low amongst some target groups but having said that other e packages are very popular. Customers will still be able to search the Internet for free at library sites to access news. For certain groups e.g. disabled people, there are alternative services provided by organisations like RNIB and NHS.

The intention is to pursue option 3 to safe guard the supply of new books to library sites.

This view was supported by the Council’s EIA group at a meeting on the 25th Jan 2024

If you have decided on **Outcome 3**, then please tell us here the justification for continuing with the proposal. You also need to make sure that there are actions in the Mitigation Box to lessen the effect of the negative impact. This is so important and may face a legal challenge in the future.

If you have decided on **Outcome 4** then if the proposal continues, without any mitigating actions, it may be likely that we will face a legal challenge and possibly a Judicial Review on the process - it is so important that the equality impact assessment is done thoroughly, as this is what the Judge will consider

**Appendix 1**

**Equality impact assessment form– please read this section first before you do the assessment**

This is our equality impact assessment form to help you equality check what you are doing when you are about to produce a new policy, review an older one, write a strategy or plan or review your services and functions. In fact, you need to do an equality impact assessment whenever a decision is needed about our services and functions that affects people and **before** that decision is made. This also includes quick Covid 19 related decisions.

We use the term ‘policy’ as shorthand on this form for the full range of policies, practices, plans, reviews, activities and procedures.

Policies will usually fall into three main categories…

* Organisational policies and functions, such as recruitment, complaints procedures, re-structures.
* Key decisions such as allocating funding to voluntary organisations, budget setting.
* Policies that set criteria or guidelines for others to use, such as criteria about school admissions, procurement methods, disabled facilities grants, on street parking bays.

So why do we need to do equality impact assessments? Although the law does not require us to do them now, the courts still place significant weight on the existence of some form of documentary evidence of compliance with the **Public Sector Equality Duty** when determining judicial review cases. This method helps us to make our decisions fairly, taking into account any equality implications, so yes we still need to complete them.

The Public Sector Equality Duty is part of the Equality Act 2010 and this Duty requires us as a public body to have ‘**due regard’** to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act. It requires us to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a ‘**relevant protected characteristic’** and people who don’t. The nine protected characteristics are age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Having ‘due regard’ means:

* removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
* taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
* encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where the participation is disproportionately low.

**Assessing Socio-Economic Duty (SED) as part of the EIA**

The Council agreed to voluntarily implement the Socio-Economic Duty alongside our Public Sector Equality Duty categories in May 2022.

We have added a section to this impact assessment template on the Socio-Economic Duty) to make sure we actively consider how our decisions can contribute to reducing inequalities resulting from socio-economic disadvantage.

Areas to actively consider in the decision-making process when assessing the SED include thinking about:

* what are the
* intended aims and/or outcomes of the policy or decision being made?
* whether the assessment of the duty taking place is through all stages of development?
* whether there a particular socio-economic impact for certain groups?
* how people in communities can have an active say in the decision-making process
* whether the policy/decision actively can contribute to reducing inequality outcomes?
* considering how you can engage with people with lived experience of SED?
* collecting and actively considering evidence and stories of residents’ lived experiences in implementing the SED. You can get more information on the [corporate insight](https://derby4.sharepoint.com/sites/PolicyandInsight/Policy%20and%20Insight%20Report%20Library/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FPolicyandInsight%2FPolicy%20and%20Insight%20Report%20Library%2FCorporate%20Insight&p=true&ga=1) pages on SharePoint.

When you consider the SED you need to identify if the decision requires analysis of socio-economic factors such as:

* people who live in deprived areas
* households with low income
* people who are in low paid employment
* people who are homeless or are at risk or homelessness
* people who face barriers to employment such as low levels of educational attainment
* people who are or have been care experienced
* people who care for others
* people who face multiple deprivation through a combination of these factors

This completed form should be attached to any Corporate Leadership, Senior Leadership, Cabinet or Personnel Committee report to help decision makers take the equality implications into account when they make the decision. Equality impact assessments **must be done before** decisions are made.

You’ll find that completing these assessments will help you to:

* understand your customers’ and communities needs
* develop service improvements
* improve service satisfaction
* demonstrate that you have been fair and open and considered equality when working on re-structuring
* make sure you pay due regard to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Unless this is a quick Covid 19 decision, don’t do the form by yourself. Get a small team together and make sure you include key people in the team such as representatives from our Equality Hubs and Forums and employee networks and you could invite trade union representatives too – the more knowledge around the table the better. You also need to decide how and who you will consult with to help inform the equality impact assessment. Our Lead on Equality and Diversity can help with useful contacts – we have a team of people who are used to doing these assessments and can help with information on barriers facing particular groups and remedies to overcome these barriers.

You’ll need to pull together all the information you can about how what you are assessing affects different groups of people and then examine this information to check whether some people will be negatively or positively affected. Then you’ll need to look at ways of lessening any negative effects or making the service more accessible – this is where your assessment team is very useful and you can also use the wider community. Against every negative impact you will need to complete the mitigation section to explain how you will lessen the impact.

Agree an equality action plan with your assessment team, setting targets for dealing with any negative effects or gaps in information you may have found. Set up a way of monitoring these actions to make sure they are done and include them in your service business plans.

Remember, we need to complete these assessments as part of our everyday business, so we get our equality responsibilities right and stay within the law – Equality Act 2010. If in doubt – it’s better and safer to do an Equality Impact Assessment than not to bother! You never know when we may get a legal challenge and someone applies for Judicial Review.

When you have completed the assessment, get it signed by your Head of Service or Service Director and **send it to our Lead on Equality and Diversity for checking and to publish on our website.** It is a public document so must not contain any jargon and must be easy to understand.

**Contact for help**

Ann Webster – Lead on Equality and Diversity

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[Sign Language Service](https://www.derby.gov.uk/signing-service/)

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[Sign Language Service](https://www.derby.gov.uk/signing-service/)

We can give you this information in any other way, style or language that will help you access it. Please contact us on **01332 643722, 07812301144** or **derby.gov.uk/signing-service/**

**Punjabi**

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**Polish**

Aby ułatwić Państwu dostęp do tych informacji, możemy je Państwu przekazać w innym formacie, stylu lub języku. Prosimy o kontakt: **01332 64XXXX** lub [**derby.gov.uk/signing-service/**](http://www.derby.gov.uk/signing-service/)

**Slovak**  
Túto informáciu vám môžeme poskytnúť iným spôsobom, štýlom alebo v inom jazyku, ktorý vám pomôže k jej sprístupneniu. Prosím, kontaktujte nás na tel. č.: **01332 64XXXX** alebo na stránke [**derby.gov.uk/signing-service/**](http://www.derby.gov.uk/signing-service/)

**Urdu**

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