



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Equality Impact Assessment Home Delivery Library Service

To inform the development of policy
or service decisions

This form is to be used for recording the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of Council activities. EIA is particularly important in supporting the Council to make fair decisions. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Using this form will help Council officers to carry out EIA in an effective and transparent way and provide decision-makers with full information on the potential impact of their decisions. The purpose is to avoid inadvertent disadvantage or discrimination resulting from decisions.

EIA is not a fixed process – it will vary according to the scale and type of activity. The form and guidance are designed to cover all eventualities. Officers should not be discouraged by the form but should use their discretion in using it flexibly according to the activity they are assessing.

EIA does not happen at a single point in time. It is an ongoing and integral part of the development of the activity or proposal. This EIA template should be kept open and live as a planning document and updated as the activity or proposal progresses.

Section 149 of the Equality Act states:

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

(2) A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1).

(3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

(a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

(b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

(c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

(4) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

(5) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

(a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

(6) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

(7) The relevant protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

(8) A reference to conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act includes a reference to:

(a) a breach of an equality clause or rule; (b) a breach of a non-discrimination rule.

Section 1 – Service Details and Summary of EIA Activity

Title of activity:	Home Delivery Library Service	
Lead Officer:	Paul Williams	
Directorate:	Place Directorate Communities Department	
Service or Team:	Library Service	
Head of Service	David Boocock	
Director:	Tanya Wilcock	
Executive Director:	Lisa Harris	
<p>What stage has the EIA reached? This table provides a ‘cover note’ of progress to be maintained as the EIA is developed over time. Note the stage reached and any consultation or engagement carried out. Simple activities may not need all these stages. Provide details of population/individuals affected in Section 2</p>		
Stage	Date	Summary of position
<p>Stage 1: Initial Officer Assessment. Whole Population likely to be affected identified</p>	March 2023	<p>The Home Delivery Library Service is available to residents (both children and adults) with Special Educational Needs (SEND) with a care plan and those who are unable to leave their homes due to medical conditions.</p> <p>The draft Library Strategy and Delivery Plan outlines how the service is expected to transform over the next five years, with outcomes focussed on increasing access to the Home Delivery Library Service to children and adults with medical issues preventing them from using a library. The strategy also outlines a reduction in the number of library buildings, and this may result in an increase in referrals to the Home Delivery Library Service.</p>
<p>Stage 2: Further Assessment. Target Population likely to be affected identified</p>	March 2023	<p>This equality impact assessment using library membership and local demographic data, has identified there will be high impact on two protected characteristics age and disability who may wish to self-refer onto the Home Delivery Library Service if the proposed library closures go ahead.</p> <p>A reasonable adjustment checklist will be used to determine eligibility for future self-referrals from disabled people. The specific criteria will be based upon the following principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They are disabled. 2. The disability creates a barrier to them leaving their home. <p>The Home Delivery Library Service will be offered as a reasonable adjustment providing the criteria above is met. This will ensure those residents with disabilities that create a barrier to leaving their home will continue to receive a library service should the proposals to close libraries be adopted and will signpost other residents who do not meet the criteria to the network of 7 statutory libraries across the borough that are available to all residents to access.</p>

Stage 3: Further Assessment. Individuals likely to be affected identified	August 2023	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Index of personal impact: demographic & other groups</th> <th>A significant effect</th> <th>Some effect</th> <th>No effect whatsoever</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="2">All active users</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Nearest library closing</td> <td>126</td> <td>83</td> <td>34</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="6">Age</td> <td>Under 18*</td> <td>93</td> <td>100</td> <td>130</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18-24*</td> <td>107</td> <td>82</td> <td>109</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-34</td> <td>104</td> <td>90</td> <td>107</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35-44</td> <td>94</td> <td>108</td> <td>108</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45-54</td> <td>96</td> <td>110</td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55-64</td> <td>92</td> <td>107</td> <td>118</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Gender</td> <td>65 or over</td> <td>107</td> <td>93</td> <td>86</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>100</td> <td>99</td> <td>101</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="6">Disability</td> <td>Male</td> <td>96</td> <td>106</td> <td>104</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disabled/impairment</td> <td>114</td> <td>76</td> <td>93</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Learning Disability/Difficulty*</td> <td>116</td> <td>79</td> <td>82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Long-Standing Illness or Health Condition</td> <td>106</td> <td>89</td> <td>101</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mental Health Condition</td> <td>105</td> <td>86</td> <td>108</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Physical Disability</td> <td>133</td> <td>58</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Sexual orientation</td> <td>Sensory Impairment (Hearing, Sight or Both)*</td> <td>91</td> <td>82</td> <td>171</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LGBTQ+</td> <td>98</td> <td>87</td> <td>133</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Ethnic group</td> <td>Straight</td> <td>95</td> <td>106</td> <td>106</td> </tr> <tr> <td>White</td> <td>96</td> <td>103</td> <td>107</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Faith/religion</td> <td>Ethnic minorities</td> <td>116</td> <td>79</td> <td>82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Christian (inc RC)</td> <td>98</td> <td>104</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Other faiths/beliefs</td> <td>111</td> <td>77</td> <td>103</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*Unreliable small samples</p> <p>Key: Most unlikely Average Most likely</p> <p>The general outcome of the consultation has identified significant impact on disabled people who may wish to self-refer onto the Home Delivery Library Service if the proposed library closures go ahead.</p>	Index of personal impact: demographic & other groups		A significant effect	Some effect	No effect whatsoever	All active users		100	100	100	Nearest library closing		126	83	34	Age	Under 18*	93	100	130	18-24*	107	82	109	25-34	104	90	107	35-44	94	108	108	45-54	96	110	95	55-64	92	107	118	Gender	65 or over	107	93	86	Female	100	99	101	Disability	Male	96	106	104	Disabled/impairment	114	76	93	Learning Disability/Difficulty*	116	79	82	Long-Standing Illness or Health Condition	106	89	101	Mental Health Condition	105	86	108	Physical Disability	133	58	60	Sexual orientation	Sensory Impairment (Hearing, Sight or Both)*	91	82	171	LGBTQ+	98	87	133	Ethnic group	Straight	95	106	106	White	96	103	107	Faith/religion	Ethnic minorities	116	79	82	Christian (inc RC)	98	104	100		Other faiths/beliefs	111	77	103
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Stage 4: Analysis of Findings	August 2023	<p>The consultation exercise has reinforced the importance and need for the Home Delivery Library Service and consequently it is now proposed to double its capacity.</p> <p>Click and Collect</p> <p>The consultation exercise has identified an opportunity to develop a further reasonable adjustment, a click and collect service where residents can call or email the service requesting books which can then be collected by a friend, relative or neighbours.</p>																																																																																																										
Stage 5: Reporting and Action Planning	September 2023	<p>A detailed action plan has been produced. This has been informed by the Consultation exercise</p>																																																																																																										
Stage 6: Sign-Off	October 2023	<p>To be completed following all other stages</p>																																																																																																										

What Council proposal is being assessed? (including the main purpose and aims)

St Helens Borough Council's statutory Library Service currently operates 13 libraries, as well as the Archive Service, Home Delivery and Schools Library Services.

The draft Library Strategy and Delivery Plan outlines how the service is expected to transform over the next five years, with outcomes focussed on increasing access to digital services, expanding outreach activity in partnership and offering the Home Delivery Library Service to children and adults with medical issues preventing them from using a library. The strategy also outlines a reduction in the number of library buildings.

The Home Delivery Library Service is available to disabled residents (both children and adults) with Special Educational Needs (SEND) with a care plan and those who are unable to leave their homes due to medical conditions.

This eligibility criteria is not going to change under the proposed draft Library Strategy.

In relation to the proposal being assessed, please set out the following.

1 What must the LA provide under statute?

2 Any discretionary element of provision?

3. What is currently provided under that discretion?

4. What could change as a result of the proposal and how could it change?

5. What is being consulted on?

1. What must the LA provide under statute?

Local authorities (unitary, county or metropolitan borough councils) have a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' for all those who live, work or study in the area (section 7). In providing this service Local Authorities must, among other things:

- encourage both adults and children to make full use of the library service (section 7(2)(b))
- lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area (in accordance with section 8(3))

2. Any discretionary element of provision?

The statutory duty referred to above is not prescriptive in how local authorities should provide their library services, although library buildings in St Helens enable adults and children to access books and other resources free of charge. For this reason, the delivery mechanisms and geographical spread of service provision is discretionary in nature.

The St Helens Borough Library service offers a number of discretionary elements of provision outlined at point 3.

3. What is currently provided under that discretion?

The statutory Library Service in St Helens provides discretionary elements of provision. The Home Delivery Library Service is one of the discretionary elements. The Home Delivery Library Service is available to residents (both children and adults) with Special Educational Needs (SEND) with a care plan and those who are unable to leave their homes due to medical conditions. This eligibility criteria is not going to change under the proposed draft Library Strategy.

The process for assessing eligibility is twofold:

1. Referrals from partner organisations e.g., St Helens Eye Hospital
2. Self- referrals.

A member of the library team will contact the person either by phone or by visiting their home to outline the service and to discuss reading choices. There is currently no assessment of eligibility for self-referrals.

4. What could change as a result of the proposal and how could it change?

A reasonable adjustment checklist will be used to determine eligibility for future self-referrals. The Library Service will honour existing Home Delivery Library Service arrangements for current service users.

5. What is being consulted on?

No consultation is planned specifically in relation to the Home Delivery Library Service, however consultation is planned on the overall draft Library Strategy.

Details of the activity (including the main purpose and aims)

The draft Library Strategy and Delivery Plan outlines how the service is expected to transform over the next five years, with outcomes focussed on increasing access to digital services, expanding outreach activity in partnership and offering the Home Delivery Library Service to children and adults with medical issues preventing them from using a library. The strategy also outlines a reduction in the number of library buildings.

The Home Delivery Library Service is available to residents (both children and adults) with Special Educational Needs (SEND) and/or those who are unable to leave their homes due to medical conditions.

This eligibility criteria is not going to change under the proposed draft Library Strategy. A reasonable adjustment checklist will be used to determine eligibility for future self-referrals from disabled people. The Library Service will honour existing Home Delivery Library Service arrangements for current service users.

Who will be affected by the activity?

Provide details of the groups and numbers of people affected below, updating the table as the EIA develops and the understanding of who will be affected emerges in more detail.

Whole population

There are 150 current service users as of February 2023.

Percentage of people disabled under the Equality Act with day-to-day activities limited:

St Helens = 22.3%

England = 17.3%

Source: Census 2021

Disability by Local Authority data set: St Helens

Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a lot	10.93%
Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a little	11.35%
Not disabled under the Equality Act: Has long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities are not limited	6.95%
Not disabled under the Equality Act: No long term physical or mental health conditions	70.77%

Source: Census 2021

20,030 people (10.93%) are disabled under the definition and therefore could request a Home Delivery Library Service. A reasonable adjustment checklist will be used to determine eligibility for future self-referrals from disabled people. The specific criteria will be based upon the following principles:

3. They are disabled.
4. The disability creates a barrier to them leaving their home.
5. The Home Delivery Library Service will be offered as a reasonable adjustment.

Protected Characteristics

Age

Age breakdown for St Helens Borough:

0-15: 17.8%

16-65: 61.6%

65+: 20.5%

Source: Census 2021

Disability

Percentage of people disabled under the Equality Act with day-to-day activities limited:

St Helens = 22.3%

England = 17.3%

Source: Census 2021

Disability by Local Authority data set: St Helens

Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a lot	10.93%
Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a little	11.35%
Not disabled under the Equality Act: Has long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities are not limited	6.95%
Not disabled under the Equality Act: No long term physical or mental health conditions	70.77%

Source: Census 2021

Gender reassignment

The Library Service does not collect Gender Reassignment membership data. Therefore, we will use the most recent population statistics as a proxy to better reflect the current and potential users of the service that may hold this protected characteristic.

The 2021 Census shows that 0.36% of people aged 16 and over in St Helens Borough had a gender identity different to the sex registered for them at birth. This compares to 0.54% for England and Wales.

The table below shows a breakdown of the answers to the Census 2021 Gender Identity question for the St Helens Population aged 16 years and over.

Census 2021 St Helens Population Gender Identity Data	Percentage
Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth	95.48%
Gender identity different from sex registered at birth, but no specific identity given	0.17%
Trans woman	0.06%
Trans man	0.08%
Non-binary	0.03%
All other gender identities	0.02%
Gender identity not answered	4.15%

Marriage and civil partnership

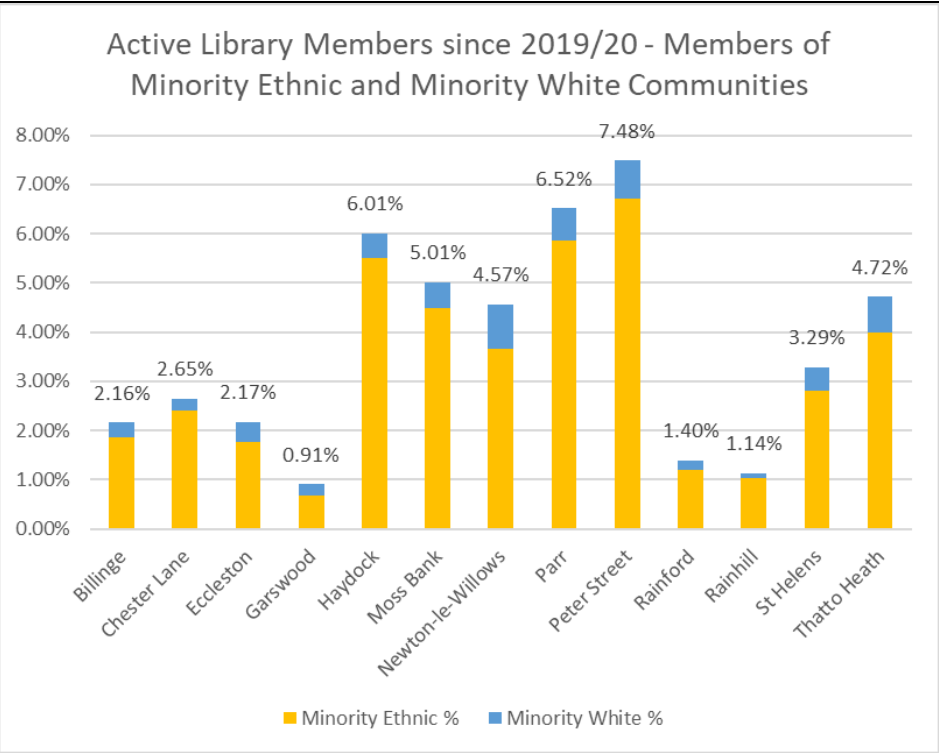
The Library Service does not collect Marriage and civil partnership membership data.

Pregnancy and Maternity

The Library Service does not collect pregnancy membership data.

Race

The Library Service does not hold full and comprehensive data on race of its members and wider customer base. The Library Membership form asks residents to provide this information, however there is no obligation to disclose this. Therefore, we will use the most recent ward and borough population by Ethnicity (Census 2021) to better reflect the current and potential users of the service that may hold this protected characteristic.



Religion and Belief

The Library Service does not collect religion membership data. Therefore, we will use the most recent census data to better reflect the current and potential users of the service that may hold this protected characteristic.

Population Census 2021	Percentage	Population Census 2021	Percentage
Buddhist	0.27%	Other Religions	0.39%
Hindu	0.33%	Christian	62.32%
Jewish	0.03%	No Religion	31.21%
Muslim	0.73%	Religion Not Stated	4.72%

Source: Census 2021

Sex (sometimes referred to as gender)

Sex breakdown in St Helens borough:

Female: 50.9%

Male: 49.1%

Source: Census 2021

Sexual Orientation

The Library Service does not collect sexual orientation membership data. Therefore, we will use the most recent Census statistics as a proxy to better reflect the current and potential users of the service that may hold this protected characteristic.

The 2021 Census shows that 2.7% of the Borough population aged 16 years and over recorded an LGB+ orientation (“gay or lesbian”, “bisexual”, or other sexual orientation). This compares to 3.16% for England and Wales

The table below shows a breakdown of the answers to the Census 2021 Sexual Orientation question for the St Helens Population aged 16 years and over.

Census 2021 St Helens Population Sexual Orientation Data	Percentage
Straight or Heterosexual	91.84%
Gay or Lesbian	1.60%
Bisexual	0.89%
Pansexual	0.15%
Asexual	0.05%
All other sexual orientations	0.01%
Gender identity not answered	5.46%

What data, research and other evidence or information is available which is relevant to the EIA?

The key information for this activity is:

- Census 2021
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Mid-Year Estimates (ONS) 2020
- Library Service performance data 2021/22
- Library membership data
- Locality Profiles

Section 3: EIA Lead Officer Assessment: Home Delivery Library Service

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
Age	Positive	Medium	<p>The draft Library Strategy proposes the closure of 6 libraries. There may be an increase in referrals onto the Home Delivery Library Service if the Strategy is adopted.</p> <p>The Home Delivery Library Service is available to residents (both children and adults) with Special Educational Needs (SEND) with a care plan and those who are unable to leave their homes due to medical conditions.</p> <p>There is a high percentage of older people with a limiting long-term illness in St Helens: Age 65+: 61.7%</p> <p>Age in itself is not a factor influencing the provision of the Home Delivery Library Service. It may be offered to children and older people with a disability, who are unable to leave their homes.</p> <p>The public consultation identified that</p>	<p>A reasonable adjustment checklist will be used to determine eligibility for future self-referrals from disabled people.</p> <p>The specific criteria will be based upon the following principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They are disabled. 2. The disability creates a barrier to them leaving their home. <p>The Home Delivery Library Service will be offered as a reasonable adjustment for these disabled people.</p> <p>The consultation exercise has reinforced the importance and need for this service and consequently it is now proposed to double its capacity.</p> <p>To meet the need of those unable to travel to a library when their local library closes, identified in the consultation, a Click and Collect Service will be introduced where friends and family can collect material on their behalf.</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			a significant proportion of particularly older people stated that access to transport would prevent them accessing a library should their local library close.	
Disability	Positive	High	<p>The draft Library Strategy proposes the closure of 6 libraries. There may be an increase in referrals onto the Home Delivery Library Service if the Strategy is adopted.</p> <p>The statutory Library Service in St Helens provides discretionary elements of provision. The Home Delivery Library Service is one of the discretionary elements.</p> <p>The Home Delivery Library Service is available to residents (both children and adults) with Special Educational Needs (SEND) with a care plan and those who are unable to leave their homes due to medical conditions.</p> <p>This eligibility criteria is not going to change under the proposed draft Library Strategy.</p> <p>The process for assessing eligibility is twofold:</p>	<p>A reasonable adjustment checklist will be used to determine eligibility for future self-referrals from disabled people.</p> <p>The specific criteria will be based upon the following principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They are disabled. 2. The disability creates a barrier to them leaving their home. <p>The Home Delivery Library Service will be offered as a reasonable adjustment for these disabled people.</p>

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Referrals from partner organisations e.g., St Helens Eye Hospital 2. Self- referrals. <p>The census 2021 data informs is that there are 20,030 people (10.93%) in St Helens disabled under the definition and therefore could request a Home Delivery Library Service. However, the Home Delivery Library Service is available only to people with disabilities that prevent them from leaving their home to access library provision.</p>	
Gender reassignment	N/A	N/A	1% of respondents to the consultation stated they had undergone gender reassignment.	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic
Marriage and civil partnership	N/A	N/A	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic	No action proposed
Pregnancy and maternity	N/A	N/A	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic	

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
Race	N/A	N/A	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic	We are not aware of any identifiable impact on this protected characteristic however the public consultation will be available for anyone from the protected characteristic to complete.
Religion and Belief	N/A	N/A	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic	We are not aware of any identifiable impact on this protected characteristic however the public consultation will be available for anyone from the protected characteristic to complete.
Sex (gender)	N/A	N/A	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic	We are not aware of any identifiable impact on this protected characteristic however the public consultation will be available for anyone from the protected characteristic to complete.
Sexual orientation	N/A	N/A	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic	We are not aware of any identifiable impact on this protected characteristic however the public consultation will be available for anyone from the protected characteristic to complete.
Employees	Risk of Redundancy	Low	If staff are at risk of redundancy, then the Council will manage this in accordance with its Redundancy Policy. Selection for redundancy is based on clear, fair and justifiable criteria set out within. Selection is not based on age related criteria. Members and Officers making decisions on redundancy must ensure that their decisions are free	Not applicable

Use this table to record your views on the potential impact on **Protected Characteristics**. As the activity and the assessment develop your views may change – record them here.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable	Potential level of impact	Summary of impact	Action and mitigation
			<p>from the influence of discrimination or prejudicial bias because of protected characteristics.</p> <p>St Helens Borough Council's redundancy payments are based on age and length of service criteria. This is not 'unlawful' as the criteria mirror the payments that are set out in a statutory scheme and are therefore exempt from age discrimination legislation.</p>	

Section 4: Engagement Decision

The decision about who to engage with, and how and when to engage, is the key to effective EIA.

Is engagement with affected people with Protected Characteristics required, now or during the further development of the activity?	Yes
If YES, proceed to the next section. If NO, briefly summarise below the reasons why you have reached this conclusion.	
Public consultation took place on the changes to library provision, with specific questions on library closures and changes to opening hours and how these impact on protected characteristics. Both a representative sample and open consultation took place, including consultation with groups. There was both paper and digital consultation forms available. The consultation ran for 12 weeks between 1 st May and 31 st July 2023.	

Any reports to decision-makers during the development of the activity, for example feasibility or options appraisal reports, should include content on the latest thinking and findings of the EIA even though, like the activity, further development of the EIA may be required before final reporting.

The findings of the officer assessment should be included in any reports to decision-makers. These may be feasibility or options appraisal reports where the activity is at an early stage of development, but it is essential that any equality findings are considered in formal decisions at all stages of development of the activity.

Section 5 – Involvement and Engagement Planning

Has the assessment shown that the activity will treat any groups of people with Protected Characteristics differently from other people?

Yes. The Home Delivery Library Service is provided as a reasonable adjustment for disabled people who are unable to leave their homes to access a library building.

Will the differential treatment advance equality for people with Protected Characteristics?

Yes. The Home Delivery Library Service enables disabled people who are unable to leave their homes to access a library building, to continue to receive a library service. The provision of the Home Delivery Library Service as a reasonable adjustment is in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, which allows local authorities to treat disabled people more favourably in order to provide equality of opportunity.

Will the differential treatment cause or increase disadvantage for people with Protected Characteristics?

If yes, please state which groups and how.

No

Section 6: Consultation and Engagement Findings from the 2023 public consultation

	Date/summary of engagement carried out	Summary of impacts identified
Age	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation showed that the 'on street' survey analysis indicates that 65+ year olds and residents of Billinge Garswood, Rainhill and Rainford are most likely to stop using the library service. The open survey results correspond with the latter but suggest that working age adults (aged 25-44) are also amongst those most likely to stop using the service.</p> <p>Amongst those respondents to the open survey, those most likely to cite access transport as the reason for stopping included older people aged 55+, disabled people and those whose local library is Garswood, Rainhill or Rainford.</p> <p>In regards to older people 61.7% have a disability. Therefore it is possible that more disabled older people may request to use the Home Delivery Library Service as a result of the proposed change.</p> <p>In relation to the likely response to library closure the consultation results indicate that whilst there is an overall likelihood for respondents to stop using the service, this is strongest amongst those respondents whose closest library is proposed to close (particularly Rainhill, Rainford and Garswood), adults aged 25-35, disabled people with learning disabilities/difficulties and/or a physical disability.</p> <p>People from age groups 18-24 and 55-64 were most likely to visit another library in the borough People from the age groups 18-24, 45-54 and 65+ were most likely to download books.</p> <p>There are a number of different mitigations identified by the services to support people from different age groups impacted by library closures</p>

		<p>Click and collect - where a family member can pick up books ordered online</p> <p>Improved details of library opening times, parking and public transport routes</p> <p>Home delivery services for those disabled older and younger people unable to access library services because of their disability.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation analysis of the open survey response identified the following groups as most likely to be significantly impacted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> residents whose local library is Billinge, Garswood, Rainhill or Rainford 65+ year olds Disabled people, including those with long standing illness/health condition, people with learning disabilities, people with autism, and mental health conditions and physical disabilities. <p>Therefore, it is possible that more disabled older people may request to use the Home Delivery Library Service as a result of the proposed change.</p> <p>In relation to the likely response to library closure the consultation results indicate that whilst there is an overall likelihood for respondents to stop using the service, this is strongest amongst those respondents whose closest library is proposed to close (particularly Rainhill, Rainford and Garswood), adults aged 25-35, disabled people with learning disabilities/difficulties and/or a physical disability.</p> <p>People with physical disabilities and long standing health conditions were most likely to download books.</p> <p>People with sensory disabilities were most likely to say that the Library Strategy would have no impact whatsoever.</p> <p>There are a number of different mitigations identified by the services to support people from different age groups impacted by library closures.</p>

		<p>Click and Collect - where a family member can pick up books ordered online</p> <p>Improved details of library opening times, parking and public transport routes</p> <p>Home delivery services for those disabled people unable to access library services because of their disability.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the borough's population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic
Race	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p>	The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact

	<p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>for people who share this protected characteristic</p>
Religion and belief	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic</p>
Sex (gender)	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>Public Consultation was undertaken between the 1st May to 31st July 2023.</p> <p>The consultation link was shared with all active library members via email or text where contact details existed. A street survey sought the views of a representative sample of 2,000 people whose age, gender and area in which they lived reflected the boroughs population. Drop-in sessions were also run across the borough. This has generated almost 6,000 responses in total.</p>	<p>The consultation provides no evidence that there will be a disproportional detrimental impact for people who share this protected characteristic</p>

Section 6: Engagement Findings – Continued

Drawing on the engagement findings and your understanding of the effects of the activity, indicate how it will contribute, if at all, to the three strands of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

a) How will the proposal help to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation?

The Home Delivery Library Service is provided as a reasonable adjustment for disabled people who are unable to leave their homes to access a library building. Failure to make this reasonable adjustment would disadvantage people who share this protected characteristic.

b) How will the proposal help to advance equality of opportunity?

The Home Delivery Library Service promotes equality of access for disabled people who are unable to leave their homes to access a library building.

c) How will the proposal help to foster good relations?

The Home Delivery Library Service promotes equality of access for disabled people who are unable to leave their homes to access a library building, helping disabled people to remain included in the library community.

During the engagement process were there any suggestions on how to avoid, minimise or mitigate any negative impacts? If so, please give details.



Community Managed Models

- Meetings have taken place with organisations who are keen to explore running a Community Managed Library and these discussions will progress should the decision be taken to close libraries.

Charging for Services / activities and hires

- The Library Service already charges for some services. Some libraries offer a community room which can be hired and raise revenue.
- No income generation opportunities have been identified that would provide the income to offset operating costs should the decision be taken to close libraries.

Improved home delivery service

- Following public consultation, the strategy is being updated to increase capacity within the Home Delivery Library Service.
- Explore the viability of delivering a book loan service to care settings within the borough.

Sharing buildings/ facilities with other users / purposes

- The Library Strategy contains a stated aim to relocate libraries to buildings where they are collocated with both other Council Services and those of partners.
- Provide an outreach offer targeting schools and community settings which serve communities affected by Library closures, to ensure the continued engagement of young people in initiatives such as the Summer Reading Challenge.
- Seek to identify community locations where the service can deliver Library activities such as Read and Rhyme, Digital and Information Literacy, Book Clubs etc

Improved parking (particularly at TWOG)

- The concerns of respondents regarding the car parking arrangement at the World of Glass will be fed back to the buildings managers as this is not within the gift of the Council.
- The importance of car parking facilities is defined within the strategy and will be addressed as opportunities arise at those sites to be retained.

Improved Public Transport

- The finding of this consultation will be shared with the Merseyside Transport Authority to help shape their Public Transport Strategy
- Provide detailed advice on Public Transport Routes and availability to customers of Libraries that will close to help them access other libraries

Better Digital Services

- Review the digital offer to improve accessibility and focus on demand.
- Upgrade Wi-fi and public access computers at the libraries being retained.
- Seek to identify community locations in communities served by libraries that will close where the service can deliver Digital and Information Literacy
- To increase the range of IT devices, particularly touch screen, available to the public within Libraries
- Work with city region partners to deliver the LCR Digital Inclusion Plan

Section 7 – Reporting of Findings and Recommendations to Decision Makers

The findings of the EIA may be reported to decision-makers at several stages during the development of an activity. For example, the initial officer assessment findings may be included in a feasibility report or options appraisal to be considered by the Transformation Board or Chief Officers' Executive.

Any report on formal decisions by the Cabinet or Council should include the latest findings of the EIA, even if these are at a relatively early stage. The report recommending final approval of the activity should await and include the findings of the completed EIA. The report should clearly present the impacts that have been identified through the engagement process, including potential cumulative impacts.

The report may include recommendations based on the findings of the EIA, but these should be separate from the reporting of impacts. Recommendations will be developed separately from the EIA and arise from considering equalities impacts combined with other aspects of the activity such as finance, the benefits of the activity, and so on.

Based on the EIA findings, the report may consider the options in the table below, but the report must contain a clear statement of the impacts so that decision-makers can understand the effects of the decision that is being recommended.

What does the review of the information show?	
a)	No negative impact on people because of their Protected Characteristics - continue with the activity and monitor progress on implementation
b)	Negative impact identified – recommend continuing with the activity; clearly specify the people affected and the impacts, and providing reasons and supporting evidence for the decision to continue
c)	Negative impact identified – adjust the activity in light of the identified impact to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impact
d)	Negative impact identified – stop activity and provide an explanation why

Section 8 – Action Plan and Performance Management

The report to decision-makers, and the decision made may require actions to be taken to avoid, minimise or mitigate the negative impacts of the activity.

Any actions to address equalities impacts should be listed below, with performance management review proposals, to complete the full EIA.

What is the negative impact?	Actions required to reduce/eliminate the negative impact (if applicable)	Who will lead on action	Target completion date
The Library Strategy proposes the closure of 6 libraries. There may be an increase in referrals onto the Home Delivery Library Service if the Strategy is adopted.	A reasonable adjustment checklist will be developed to determine eligibility for future self-referrals from disabled people.	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer / Head of Culture and Wellbeing	January 2024
	The capacity of the home delivery library service will be increased to cope with the forecasted demand identified by the consultation exercise.	Library Support Manager	January 2024

Performance Management	
Date of the next review of the EIA	December 2023
How often will the EIA action plan be reviewed?	Mitigation actions from this EIA will be included within the Library Service Business Plan and reviewed Quarterly until all actions are complete.
Who will carry out this review?	Library Service Management Team