

**QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR****Question submitted by: Councillor Ian Poyser****To Cabinet Member:** Councillor Pat Patel**Question:**

*FTAO Cllr Patel The question is in relation to correspondence that I have received from a Plympton Chaddlewood resident following the receipt of information via an FOI request, also attached. The resident is happy for me to share his correspondence with you on your request as it cannot be attached using this online form. Given the enormous financial challenges the council faces in the coming years, please can you confirm that Plympton residents will be given sufficient consultation on the future of its library services should service reductions or closures be proposed i.e. anything less than pre-pandemic service levels. Will an impact study be completed so that wider social, environmental and economic implications can be considered before undertaking consultation with the community?*

**Response:** ( for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members)

The current opening schedule of Plympton Library is not connected to Covid19, nor is it related to the various ways that services were provided at Plympton Library during the pandemic, including at times being closed, offering a Select and Collect service, and operating strict social distancing and other Covid health and safety protocols. Rather, Plympton Library opens now, in the main without Covid-related restrictions, according to available staffing resources.

When formulating and delivering library service strategies, in addition to the Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964), by which local authorities are obligated by statute to 'provide a comprehensive and efficient library service' to all people who live, work or study in the area, councils have other legal obligations in respect of, for example, equalities and best value legislation. With this in mind, the most recent Plan for Libraries strategy, from which the last great change (including six closures) to library service in Plymouth took place in 2017, was carried out in accordance with the Council's statutory duties and involved an analysis of evidence around local needs and comprehensive public consultation. I am pleased to say that any future plans that include major changes to library strategy, which might concern, for example, alternative delivery models and changes to library locations, will be undertaken in the same way: according to various legal obligations; in consultation with communities; and through analysis of evidence-based local needs.

**Signed:****Dated:** 16/09/2022