

## PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

**Subject:** Plan for Libraries 2017-2020  
**Committee:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Jordan  
**CMT Member:** Andrew Hardingham (Interim Joint Strategic Director Transformation and Change)  
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**Ref:** PFL 2017-2020  
**Key Decision:** No  
**Part:** I

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### **Purpose of the report:**

Plymouth City Council has a statutory obligation under the Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1964 to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' in the area that want to make use of it. Each local authority is responsible for determining how best to deliver this, based around the needs of local communities within available resources.

Plymouth needs a library service fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The proposals set out here aim to show how we can transform the service to extend the reach of our offering across the city and provide value for money

This report details how we have developed the Plan for Libraries 2017-2020. This started with carrying out the initial "Library Conversation" that took place in 2016. This informed our Plan for Libraries proposal that went out for formal public consultation between January and April this year.

The Plan for Libraries proposal and the results of this consultation were taken to the Council's Scrutiny Select Committee which made recommendations. These recommendations have been considered alongside the consultation analysis, other public responses through petitions, emails, letters etc. and feedback from public meetings.

We have developed an amended Plan for Libraries which we feel still meets our aspirations for the future of the Library Service but takes into account the concerns and issues raised through the consultation process.

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### **The Corporate Plan 2016 - 19:**

This report demonstrates how the Plan for Libraries aligns closely to the objectives in the Corporate Plan, most directly Growing Plymouth, Caring Plymouth and Pioneering Plymouth. This project meets our objectives by providing free access to books and literature for all. Through initiatives like Summer Reading Challenge , Bookstart and Reading Ahead, the library service aspires to raising

literacy levels throughout the city. The library service provides space, resources and opportunities to support lifelong learning for all including free access to PC's assists in achieving this objective.

The Library Service offer of information and history ensures that everyone has access to information and services to help them make informed decisions plus providing access to public health information including signposting and referrals contributes to happy, healthy and well connected communities.

Our digital offer is a strategic aim which contributes to corporate objectives by providing free wi-fi and computers with skilled staff on hand to help people make the most of the internet and digital world. An active digital inclusion programme will contribute to ensuring that no-one is left behind.

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### **Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land:**

A summary of the capital investment over the three years of the Plan is set out in Section 6 of the attached Plan. All costs associated with the modernised reconfiguration of the service are contained within the council's MTFS as agreed as part of the 2017/18 budget. As a consequence of the modernisation programme, the council will also be able to realise savings in the running costs of the service. These are also summarised in Section 6 of the Plan for Libraries.

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### **Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:**

These are addressed within the Equality Impact Assessment

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### **Equality and Diversity**

The Council has a duty to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and those who do not.

Equality impact assessments have been produced to provide information on how the proposals will affect people with different protected characteristics to assist the Council in considering this matter.

### **Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? Yes**

A high level summary of the equalities impact of our Plan for Libraries is included as Appendix A to our Plan for Libraries. It responds to the recommendations made by the Select Committee held on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and incorporates the key findings from our detailed Equalities Impact Assessments, which were carried out:-

- On the public consultation in relation to the Plan for Libraries
- On each of our 17 libraries
- On the proposals contained within the Plan for Libraries

It concludes that there are no disproportionate equality impacts from the proposals in our Plan for Libraries, which are not adequately mitigated, and in relation to our wider Public Sector Equality Duty, that the proposals will help to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

The high level (whole service) Equality Impact Assessment is included in the revised Plan for Libraries document in Appendix A, a hyperlink is provided in Background Papers F

The individual Library EIAs can be found in Background Papers G through a hyperlink

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### Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

Cabinet recommends that –

1. Council notes that the statutory 12-week consultation process for the Plan for Libraries has been carried out in line with the Council's duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and guidance in relation to the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964;
  2. Council notes the recommendations of the Scrutiny Select Committee of 15 May 2017 and the Cabinet's response to them
  3. Council adopts the 'Plan for Libraries' as its annual plan for libraries fulfilling the Council's duties under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 which requires Local Authorities to deliver a comprehensive and efficient public library service;
  4. Council approves the outline delivery plan for the new library service, performance measures and outline communication, engagement and marketing plan for the new service.
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### Alternative options considered and rejected:

Alternative options considered are detailed within the original proposals for the Plan for Libraries (see below) consulted on between 25 January and 19 April 2017. Following extensive consultation and scrutiny these proposals have been rejected.

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### Published work / information:

[Plan for Libraries - original proposal](#)

[The Library Conversation analysis](#)

[EIA on Consultation process](#)

[Consultation Analysis](#) (Pages 1-58)

[Original EIAs on individual Libraries](#) (Pages 59 – 260)

[Guidance on Libraries as a Statutory Service](#)

[Local Inquiry into the Public Library Service Provided by the Wirral Metropolitan Borough council](#)

[Independent Library Report for England](#)

[Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016 to 2021](#)

### Background papers:

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### Sign off:

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Originating SMT Member - Andrew Hardingham													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report? Yes													

## I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In March 2014 Cabinet approved the recommendations within the report “Creating a Sustainable Library Service”, which included the specific reference to “This purpose is achieved through a mix of services and buildings but it is not dependent on those buildings for its success”.
- 1.2 Between June and September 2016 the Council held the “Library Conversation” to gather views on what people wanted from the library service (see background papers B). We received 3,327 responses through a highly successful engagement programme. The Council’s Scrutiny Select Committee reviewed the outcomes from the conversation and gave positive feedback on the way it had been carried out. These outcomes were then used to develop the Plan for Libraries that was presented for 12 weeks of formal public consultation between January and April 2017 (see background papers A).
- 1.3 This comprehensive and highly successful consultation received 3,748 responses (1.4% of general population and 7.8% of active library users (defined as having taken out a book or used a PC in a library in the last 12 months)). Paper copies of the consultation (including large print versions) were available on displays in all 17 libraries and at the Council’s First Stop shop, 157 stakeholders were contacted by e mail and invited to take part at both the start and at the midway point of the consultation. Over 50,000 e mails were sent out to people subscribed to the library service.
- 1.4 A mailing was sent to all learning disability, physical disability, faith and religious organisations, with the offer of 1:1 support or setting up specific information sessions if they experienced any difficulties in accessing the information and completing the questionnaire. A mailing was also sent out to all primary and secondary schools and other educational service providers across the city, inviting them to take part in the consultation.
- 1.5 After week four and again after week eight of the consultation period a review of people responding to the questionnaire (as part of the Equalities Impact Assessment) took place in order to make further efforts to contact underrepresented groups of people.
- 1.6 Three canvassers were recruited for a five week period to seek responses to the questionnaire, mainly in the City Centre targeting underrepresented groups.
- 1.7 In addition 378 people attended 20 public sessions, we received 183 letters, 61 emails, 51 comments (through Plymouth Library Facebook and Twitter accounts) and 2,317 signatures on six petitions.
- 1.8 Regular Plymouth City Council communications were undertaken which promoted the consultation. There was also extensive coverage of the proposal in the local newspaper.
- 1.9 The results of the consultation were analysed and reported on independently (by Marketing Means- see background papers D) and these were considered by the Council’s Scrutiny Select Committee on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017.
- 1.10 This Committee then made its recommendations from that analysis and the witnesses who gave evidence. Section 5 of this document details how those recommendations have informed our revised plan.
- 1.11 Having carefully considered the feedback from the public consultation, recommendations from the Council’s Scrutiny Select Committee and having listened to the views of the people of

Plymouth the Plan for Libraries has been amended. The revised Plan for Libraries is contained within this document (background papers F).

- 1.12 This revised plan reduces the impact on our current visitors to 6.07% (down from the original proposal of 20%) with the closures we have detailed and those who cannot use an alternative library will still benefit from our online or outreach offer (including our Home Delivery Service).

## **2. WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT FROM A LIBRARY SERVICE? THE “LIBRARY CONVERSATION”**

- 2.1 During the summer of 2016, we held an open conversation with the people of Plymouth to find out what they wanted from libraries, now and in the future. We received 3,327 responses and you can see the complete response in background papers B.

### **2.2 Key findings**

- 66% of respondents visit the library at least once a month. 35% visited infrequently or never.
- 88% of respondents used Central, Plympton and Plymstock Libraries.
- Most respondents walked to their library (62%) or travelled by car (44%)
- The most used services currently are books (92%), computers (78%), the 24/7 library (76%) and Wi-Fi (68%).
- Digital skills training (71%), help with job seeking (72%), access to council services (63%) and finding health information (62%) were the services respondents could see themselves using in the future.
- 90% said the current library opening hours were convenient.
- Of those who identified as non-users 76% had used library services in the past.
- 86% of non-users last visited between one and ten years ago.
- 57% of non-users think that they don't have need to visit the library
- Free membership (85%) and free books to borrow (84%) were the most recognisable of the library offers. Awareness was low of online resources.

## **3. OUR DRIVERS FOR CHANGE**

### **3.1 To reinvest in the library service estate to ensure sustainability for the future**

Commitment to providing attractive and modern buildings in key areas across the city including the redevelopment of the St Budeaux site to ensure people in the west of the city have a facility that they can be proud of.

### **3.2 To reflect the changing needs of our users**

Traditional book lending has reduced significantly over the last decade. The public expect library buildings to be *more* - a flexible community space with a wide range of services including digital, advice and information, health and wellbeing.

### **3.3 To improve the reach of our services**

We need to engage with communities to raise awareness of our offer (*more* than just books). Reaching out and understanding each community's needs will help us to define an offer specific to their needs (not a one-size fits all approach).

### **3.4 To make the most of evolving technology and the digital world**

Enhance our online offer appreciating that users don't need to visit a physical building to make the most of library services.

### **3.5 To support the Council in streamlining the delivery of services and to work with partner agencies to support health and wellbeing, advice and information**

Accessing a range of Council services and partner agencies within a community setting.

### **3.6 To ensure sustainability in light of unprecedented budgetary challenges**

Consolidating our estate where possible to reduce building and resource costs while investing in key areas to enhance our offer.

### **3.7 To align the library service to the Plymouth Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy**

Delivering a new approach for providing essential and accessible community facilities, hosting a range of modern services that inspire learning and improve health and wellbeing.

The health and wellbeing of individuals is influenced by the communities in which they live and people's health can be affected by the nature of their physical environment. Improving access to good quality facilities such as libraries or places of worship, strengthening community relations, promoting a sense of pride and improving access to green spaces all impact positively on an individual's physical and mental health and overall feelings of safety.

Plymouth City Council is leading on the development and implementation of a single strategic vision for Health & Wellbeing Hubs<sup>1</sup>. Libraries are a crucial part of the network of services that will deliver this vision, working together with the VCSE and statutory sectors to make the best use of community assets. Libraries will provide high quality and effective information and signposting, as well as support partners to deliver targeted interventions in their venues.

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<sup>1</sup> Strategic Commissioning Framework 2016 – 2020. Health and wellbeing hubs  
Revised June 2016

## **4. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 Method**

The public were invited to put forward their views regarding the Plan for Libraries (see background papers A) between 25 January 2017 and 29 April 2017 in a range of ways:

1. By completing a questionnaire. The questionnaire was available online through the Plymouth City Council consultation portal. Paper copies were also available in each of the 17 libraries in Plymouth and through our First Stop Shop.
2. To attend public meetings which were held in each of the 17 libraries.
3. To make comments and raise questions through the Plan for Libraries email address.
4. To make comments through Plymouth Libraries Facebook page and Twitter account.

### **4.2 Response**

- 3748 responses – 1.4% of general population of Plymouth and 7.8% of the Active User (borrowed or renewed a book or used a library PC in the last 12 months)
- 378 people attended 20 public sessions
- 183 letters and 61 emails received
- 51 comments received
- There were also a number of petitions at Efford, Estover, North Prospect and Stoke plus two online petitions (2317 signatures in total)
- This section of the paper focuses on the 3,748 Plan for Libraries questionnaires received during the consultation period. Questionnaires were either completed online or as paper copies. Other information received from the public can be found in Appendix D.
- Marketing Means, an independent market research company, collated all questionnaire responses and created a report of the findings (see background papers D).
- Equality Impact Assessment for the consultation can be found in background papers C.

### **4.3 Key Findings of Report supplied by Marketing Means**

#### **4.3.1 SPECIFIC LIBRARIES**

##### **Proposed open libraries**

Respondents agreed that the proposed 7 libraries (Central, Crownhill, Devonport, Plympton, Plymstock, Southway, and St Budeaux) should remain open (agree percentages over 50%), with an average figure of 66% agreement.

Agreement figures were among the highest in the Wards where the library was located; at least 75% of respondents from the Ward agreed with keeping that library open. Interestingly, respondents from Peverell and Moor View (location of Estover library) Wards were mostly likely to disagree with the proposal to keep the 7 open (19% and 17% of respondents respectively disagreed with the proposals).

### **Proposed closed libraries**

For the proposed 10 libraries to close (Efford, Eggbuckland, Ernesettle, Estover, Laira, Peverell, North Prospect, Stoke, Tothill, and West Park), over half of respondents disagreed with the proposal to close North Prospect and Peverell (55% and 54% respectively). Efford (50%) and Estover (49%) were close behind.

Over 80% of respondents from Wards directly affected (Ham, Peverell, Efford and Lipson, and Moor View), disagreed with the proposal to close their particular library; feeling was strongest in Moor View (91%) and Peverell (88%). Only 8% of respondents identified that the library is an important local resource to the community (311 respondents), while only 7% stressed the importance of having a local library due to transport issues (279 respondents; more likely to affect respondents from Moor View due to the relative isolation of the area in regards to public transport).

It is important to note that over 50% of respondents use 5 libraries (Central: 19%, Peverell: 14%, Plympton: 8%, Estover: 7%, and Stoke: 6%) while 8% do not use a library or the library service. 10% of respondents came from Peverell Ward, 6% from Stoke Ward, and 5% from Moor View Ward.

### **4.3.2 SPECIFIC PROPOSALS:**

**Enhancing the Online service** was backed by 43% of respondents, particularly amongst men (48%) and those under the age of 25 (57% agreed with the proposal). Respondents who identified themselves as disabled (46%) or have children under the age of 16 (41%) were more likely to disagree with this part of the proposal. Respondents who use libraries proposed for closure were more likely to disagree with the proposal (excepting West Park, Laira and Eggbuckland).

19% of respondents were concerned that the online service was not accessible by all (in particular the elderly), and 14% preferred physical books or online services.

**Enhancing the In-Library service** was backed by 75% of respondents, particularly among the under 25yrs (75%) and men (79%). Respondents who identified themselves as disabled (17%) or have children under 16 (13%) were more likely to disagree with the proposal. The majority of respondents who use libraries proposed for closure agreed with the proposal, registering agreement percentages over 50%. However those who use Ernesettle Library had the highest number of respondents disagreeing with the proposal: approximately 30%.

**Enhancing the Outreach service** was backed by 55% of respondents, particularly among the over 65yrs (58%). Respondents with children under 16 were more likely to disagree with the proposal (29%). The majority of respondents using libraries proposed for closure were more likely to agree with an enhanced outreach service (bar Efford and Peverell); circa 60% of respondents who used Eggbuckland or Tothill libraries agreed with the proposal.

12% of respondents thought that the Outreach proposals would be good for improving access to the library service, particularly for disabled, elderly, and vulnerable residents. Churches, community centres, and schools were most considered by respondents for Outreach locations.

**The assessment criteria** 31% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the criteria used in the assessment whilst 37% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed). Respondents over 50 were more likely to agree with the criteria (25%) as were men (44%). 44% of disabled



respondents disagreed with the criteria, as did 37% of respondents with children under 16. The majority of respondents using libraries proposed for closure were more likely to disagree with the criteria.

**The overall Plan for Libraries proposal** was backed by 26% of respondents, particularly men (35%). Respondents who identified themselves as disabled were more likely to disagree with the proposal (67%) and those with children under 16 (66%). Unsurprisingly, the majority of respondents who use libraries proposed for closure disagreed with the proposal.

7% of respondents wanted all libraries to stay open, while 5% mentioned a specific library that they wished to stay open. It should be noted that although respondents might have agreed with the other service proposals, due to either a particular library or just a library being proposed to close, they have disagreed with the Plan.

#### **4.3.3 DEMOGRAPHICS**

- The majority of respondents were between 31 and 65 (52%), female (62%), white (97%), married (57%) and have children over 16 (55%).
- Disabled respondents form 13% of the total, and 25% of respondents have children under 16.
- 93% of respondents are residents of Plymouth, and 58% used a library in the last week (at the time of completing the questionnaire).

#### **4.3.4 ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

In order to promote the Plan for Libraries consultation, extensive activity took place including:

- Library staff promoting the consultation to all library users.
- 157 stakeholders were contacted by email and invited to take part in the consultation. They were contacted at the launch of the consultation and again at the midway point. Stakeholders were invited to complete the questionnaire, attend the public meetings and if not convenient, to make contact so that visits to the organisations could be arranged.
- A large print version of the full Plan for Libraries information was available on request and in all libraries.
- An easy read version of the Plan for Libraries was produced and was available on request and in all libraries.
- A mailing went to organisations supporting those with learning or physical disabilities and also organisations representing specific faith groups and religions. They were offered 1:1 support or more targeted information sessions if they experienced any difficulties in accessing the information and completing the questionnaire.
- Three canvassers were recruited for approximately five weeks who sought public responses to the questionnaire. They were mainly located around the City Centre.
- A four week and eight week review of the people responding to the questionnaire took place in order to make further efforts to contact underrepresented groups of people.
- Regular Plymouth City Council communications were undertaken which promoted the consultation.

- There was extensive coverage of the proposal in the local newspaper.

## 5. COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee convened on Monday 15 May 2017 and heard from witnesses, Councillors and officers. There was the opportunity to ask questions on the consultation process. Recommendations were made as below:

### **It was agreed that:**

The Committee notes the statutory 12-week consultation and independent analysis of the results and that it has been carried out in line with, and has satisfied, the Public Sector Equalities Duty and guidance in relation to the Libraries Act 1964;

### **The Committee recommended to Cabinet that:**

1. In future consultation exercises, the Council aspires to greatly enhanced consultation activity, with simplified engagement with young people through schools and groups with protected characteristics;

**Cabinet Response:** Noted and will be incorporated in future consultations

2. Needs assessment criteria should be reassessed to reflect context in which the current library estate operates (e.g. opening times, number of computers available should be a consideration in ranking);

**Cabinet Response:** The assessment criteria used for the Plan for Libraries Public Consultation was consistent, wide ranging (10 criteria covering a range of differing data sets), and was based on best practice currently used in many other public consultations in relation to library services. The assessment criteria were defined to clearly show the context of the existing service and we therefore do not believe a reassessment of these criteria is required.

3. Needs assessment criteria should be weighted, with the greater weighting applied to criteria that reflect the aspiration for improved outcomes as a result of the Plan for Libraries;

**Cabinet Response:** As at 2 above and in addition the needs assessment was not weighted to ensure that the unbiased data set was put into the public domain to give the public the true picture for them to make an informed decision. Any weighting could be seen as trying to influence a particular outcome and for this reason we therefore do not believe any changes to the weighting should be applied.

4. All libraries currently subject to closure should be ranked to additional criteria which could include:
  - i. an assessment of accessibility for each building, paying regard to areas of growth within the city;
  - ii. information from partner organisations gathered through the consultation;
  - iii. the use of libraries by educational institutions and the impact of any closures on the education of Children and Young People and protected groups;
  - iv. Sustainability and cost of building leaseholds, and previous investment committed to the estate;

**Cabinet Response:** Completed with details below:

Using five additional criteria (Educational Impact on Children and Young People, Aspiration for Improved Outcomes as a Result of the Plan, the Impact of City Growth on the Wards affected, the Ward Population below the age of 17, and the Running Costs of the proposed closures), all the libraries have been ranked, taking into account other factors available (from the Needs Assessment from Appendix J). This additional ranking adheres to Scrutiny recommendation 5.

The fourth recommendation from Scrutiny has been taken into account, with a weighting of 35% attached to the Aspiration for Improved Outcomes criteria. Other criteria have also been ranked, taking into account the evidence presented to Scrutiny; this includes a 25% weighting allocated to the Impact on the Education of Children and Young People, and a 20% weighting to potential City Growth in that area.

As per Table overleaf, there are 4 libraries that could be looked at again; North Prospect, Estover, Efford, and Peverell. Each scores highly in the additional criteria, and each take into account the responses through the consultation and additional information gathered.

Using information gathered from the consultation and in line with the findings borne out through the Scrutiny session, additional information can be allocated to the libraries proposed for closure around the Aspiration for Improved Outcomes; for example, Peverell can have a meeting room allocated in Hope Baptist church, and North Prospect can have an additional room allocated within the Beacon. This improves the rating for those libraries within the Aspiration criteria.

In addition, due to the use of Efford library by Timebank and other health partners (Livewell and Thrive), and an expansion in their use of the facility, scores in this area can be updated to reflect changes in information. It should also be noted that no suitable outreach location has been identified for Laira library and as such Efford library would have to provide that function.

With regard to the City Growth criteria, consideration here has been given to areas that have previously had investment (leading to either purpose built library facilities, or better facilities), and areas that have been identified through the Joint Local Plan (in particular the Plymouth Plan) as being areas for local housing growth. The largest areas of growth in housing will be the North Prospect and Seaton areas (affecting North Prospect and Estover respectively). These areas will then have a knock on effect on the potential impact on Education (although the impact is clearly unknown, assuming a ratio of one child per house built, this could lead to an additional 2,330 children).

Previously libraries have been used as vanguards for Regeneration Schemes (notably Devonport, North Prospect, and Efford), and this should be taken in consideration for further schemes (unknown at present, apart from of the continuation of the scheme at North Prospect).

Consideration has also been given to the viable sustainability of the buildings, looking at the running costs of the facilities, and a more general impact on children and young people within each Ward affected by library closures.

As such, the recommendation is to keep these four libraries at Estover, Efford, Peverell and North Prospect open.

Library	Ward	Impact on Education of Children and Young People Rank	Weighting (25%)	Adherence to aspirations of Improved Outcomes Rank	Weighting (35%)	City Growth Rank	Weighting (20%)	Ward Population 0-17	Weighting (10%)	Running Costs	Weighting (10%)	Positive response from Partner Organisations	Combined Rank	Overall Rank
North Prospect Library	Ham	6	1.50	1	0.35	1	0.20	2	0.20	4	0.40	Yes	3.65	1
Estover Library	Moor View	3	0.75	2	0.70	2	0.40	6	0.60	8	0.80	Yes	4.25	2
Peverell Library	Peverell	1	0.25	4	1.40	4	0.80	5	0.50	6	0.60	Yes	4.55	3
Efford Library	Efford and Lipson	8	2.00	1	0.35	6	1.20	1	0.10	7	0.70	Yes	5.35	4
Stoke Library	Stoke	2	0.50	3	1.05	7	1.40	7	0.70	5	0.50	No	6.15	5
West Park Library	Honicknowle	7	1.75	1	0.35	6	1.20	3	0.30	9	0.90	No	6.50	6
Tothill Library	Sutton and Mount Gould	5	1.25	5	1.75	5	1.00	8	0.80	1	0.10	No	6.90	7
Emesettle Library	Honicknowle	10	2.50	5	1.75	3	0.60	3	0.30	2	0.20	No	7.35	8
Egguckland Library	Egguckland	4	1.00	5	1.75	7	1.40	4	0.40	10	1.00	No	7.55	9
Laira Library	Efford and Lipson	9	2.25	5	1.75	7	1.40	1	0.10	3	0.30	No	7.80	10

See background papers E for the revised needs assessment on libraries proposed for closure

5. When final proposals for changes to Library Services are presented to council they should be accompanied by:

- a high level Equalities Impact Assessment for the entire Plan for Libraries;
- draft performance measures for the new library service;
- delivery plan, to include any transitional measures for customers impacted by proposed closures;
- draft capital budget requirements for improvements to the library estate;
- impact assessment for all staff, including temporary staff;
- draft communications and marketing plan for the future of services.

**Cabinet Response:** This has been completed and is contained within the revised plan.

**In addition:** The Council provides a diverse range of services to the community. To operate these services, the Council must be able to efficiently and effectively resource its workforce, including the ability to flex its staffing needs to meet demands using a contingent labour force. Temporary workers are often used to cover vacancies during transitional periods to protect permanent employment for existing workforce, and to mitigate the costs of pensions and redundancy if those posts are no longer needed.

Agency workers are not employees of the Council, but are contracted to work for the Council by our Master Vendor Agency contractor. There is therefore no requirement for Plymouth City Council to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment for those workers.

Together with the existing information this should provide the necessary information to allow the Council to consider the proposed Library Plan in light of its statutory duties to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons and to have regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

6. The Plan for Libraries, subject to agreement by council, is scrutinised on an annual basis by the relevant committee.

**Cabinet Response:** This will be added to the Council's Scrutiny Select Committee forward plan

## **6. OVERVIEW OF THE HIGH LEVEL REPORT EQUALITIES IMPACT STATEMENT (BACKGROUND PAPERS F)**

This is a summary of the high level report that provides the equalities impact for our revised Plan for Libraries. The report has drawn on the evidence from the Libraries Conversation and public consultation, as well as the wider evidence in our summary equality profile. It incorporates the high level findings from our detailed Equalities Impact Assessments produced:-

- On the public consultation in relation to the Plan for Libraries
- On each of our 17 libraries
- On the proposals contained within the Plan for Libraries

It also responds to the recommendations made by the Select Committee held on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017 which considered the draft Plan for Libraries.

### **Cumulative Impact Assessment finds:**

- The adverse impacts on older and younger people are mitigated by the enhanced provision of online and outreach library services.
- The adverse impacts on disabled people are mitigated by our investment in upgrading tier 1 libraries, the majority of which are well served by public transport and which have good parking facilities, and by the closure or downgrading to tier 2, of libraries where access is poor. Also our proposal to offer a 'click and collect' service in outreach locations, and the availability of community transport schemes provide further mitigation.
- The adverse effects on men and women are mitigated by the enhanced provision of online and outreach library services. The proposal to offer a 'click and collect' service at 'pop up' libraries mitigates the increased cost of public transport. The adverse effects on women with young children are mitigated through the provision of 'pop up' libraries.
- As none of the proposals have identified adverse impact for gender reassignment, race, sexual orientation or religion/faith there is no cumulative impact.

The conclusion of the report finds that there are no disproportionate equality impacts from the proposals in our Plan for Libraries which are not adequately mitigated. In relation to our wider Public Sector Equality Duty the proposals in the Plan for Libraries will;-

- Help to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation – through maintaining and extending our 'safe places' network for people with learning disabilities and by establishing tier 1 libraries as Hate Crime Reporting Centres.

- Advance equality of opportunity by ensuring all our citizens are able to access a modern library service based around the Society of Chief Librarians' universal offers of Reading, Digital, Health, Information and Learning.
- Foster good relations – by ensuring that all our communities continue to be able to access library services in community outreach venues in their local area.