



Directorate Name: Social and Community Services

Library Service Proposals

Service and Community Impact Assessment

Lead Officer: John Jackson

Purpose of the assessment:

This document is a full equality assessment of the impact of the proposed changes to the library service on the communities of Oxfordshire. It has been undertaken in accordance with the Council's [Comprehensive Equality Policy](#)¹ and Service and Community Impact Assessment guidance, along with the Equalities and Human Rights Commission guidance on [making fair financial decisions](#)² and on [assessing the impact on equality of decisions](#)³:

This assessment will be reviewed at least annually and will be updated as the policy is implemented and feedback is received.

This assessment draws on the evidence summarised below, in order to analyse the relevant practical impact of the proposed changes to the library service on the statutory equality needs. It also suggests mitigations for those impacts, where this is consistent with the aims and within the financial constraints of the proposals.

Summary

Oxfordshire County Council is committed to delivering a cost-effective, high-quality library service that is fit for the 21st century. After an extensive consultation process the council is confident that the proposed changes to the library service will deliver a library service that meets and exceeds the needs of Oxfordshire's residents and which satisfies the Council's duty under Section 7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

The proposals are made within the context of facing significant reductions in the funding it receives from Central Government, and the Council decision in February 2011 that, with the exception of fire and rescue services and children's services, all council services would receive lower levels of funding than previously.

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http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/about_yourcouncil/plansperformancepolicy/equality/comprehensiveequalitypolicy.pdf

2 <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty/using-the-equality-duty-to-make-fair-financial-decisions/>

3 http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/EqualityAct/PSED/equality_analysis_guidance.pdf

The Council has approached its duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, by distinguishing between core and non-core (community and community plus) libraries. The core libraries will be supported by mobile, home and online library services.

Under this proposal all libraries will remain open, and in the case of the core libraries will see relatively little change to the service provided. However core libraries may see an increase in usage as a result of changes to other libraries, if users decide to travel further to still have face-to-face dealings with paid members of staff for example.

There is a greater potential impact on libraries in the Community and Community Plus categories, as there will be a reduction in the number of council-paid staff and an increased reliance on volunteers supported by local Friends Groups.

In recognition of the support that Community Plus and Community libraries will need to manage the transition to the new model of working, the full financial effect of the shift in staffing towards volunteers is not built into the libraries budget until 2014. Council-paid library staff will work with Friends Group to manage and support them through the transition period to enable all of these libraries to have a sustainable solution in place by 2014. Conversations have already begun with many Friends Groups and pilot projects will begin in early 2012 with a view to a detailed transition timetable being put together for all Community Plus and Community Libraries by the end of 2012.

Action plan

Actions	Lead	Date of completion	Budget (where known)
Adoption of proposals Cabinet	Cabinet	December 2011	
Approval of budget by Council	Cabinet	February 2012	
Phased transition to new arrangements	Library Service working with Friends Groups	To March 2014	
Full implementation of new proposals	Library Service	April 2014	

Policy / Project / Contract

Oxfordshire Library Service

Introduction

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”) imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions. The restructuring proposal is such a function. The three needs are the need:

- a. to eliminate any conduct which is prohibited by or under the 2010 Act;
- b. to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share any of the protected characteristics listed in section 149(7); and
- c. to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Complying with section 149 may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but only to the extent that that does not amount to conduct which is otherwise unlawful under the new Act.

The need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the need:

- a. to remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to a relevant protected characteristic and which are suffered by persons who share that characteristic,
- b. to take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and which are different from the needs other people, and
- c. to encourage those who share a relevant characteristic to take part in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.

Steps to meet the needs of disabled people which are different from the needs of people who are not disabled include steps to take account of a person’s disabilities.

The need to foster good relations between different groups involves having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding. Compliance with these duties may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that does not permit conduct which would otherwise be prohibited by the 2010 Act.

One way in which the Council can show that it has had due regard to the statutory needs is by assessing the impact of proposed budget and services changes on service users and Council-paid staff, particularly in relation to people with a ‘protected characteristic’. These protected characteristics are:

- Age (people of different age groups)
- Disability (e.g. physical or sensory impairments, long-term illnesses and conditions, hidden impairments such as a heart condition, frailty, learning disabilities or mental health problems)
- Gender (men/women) and Gender Reassignment
- Ethnicity (including Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic groups, Gypsies & Travellers)
- Religion/belief (different faiths, including people with no religion or belief)
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage/civil partnerships
- Pregnancy & Maternity

In addition to the characteristics above, the Council has also considered the effect of the proposals on rural communities and deprived areas, both in recognition of the make-up of the county and in response to consultation.

Officers consider that this assessment does not give rise to any obvious risk that the proposals will result in any conduct which is made unlawful by the 2010 Act.

Context of assessment

The Council has examined the way the library service is run to ensure it can deliver a comprehensive and efficient service that meets its customers' requirements and is high-quality, sustainable and fit for the 21st century.

It has done so in the context of facing significant reductions in the funding it receives from Central Government, and the Council decision in February 2011 that, with the exception of fire and rescue services and children's services, all council services would receive lower levels of funding than previously.

In November 2010 a number of potential models for the future of the library service were considered. These included:

- 1) Leave the services as is - continuing the service as it is would have required the Council to have transferred substantial cuts to other services. The current service was already undertaking a library service transformation programme as it was acknowledged that changes were required to make the service sustainable, relevant and fit the 21st century.
- 2) Reduce opening hours and stock at all libraries - making savings by significantly reducing opening hours and stock at all of our libraries would greatly diminish the quality of library services and would lead to rapidly declining use. The Council reduced library opening hours in 1998/9 by 15% and saw a 20 % drop in book issues.

- 3) Options to close a varying number of libraries, resulting in savings ranging from 40% to 19% reductions in revenue expenditure - It was proposed to withdraw funding from 20 of Oxfordshire's libraries, but in response to public concern and receiving additional money from central government that eased the financial position, this proposal was revised.

In developing a new proposal, and taking into account both the Council's legal obligations and the requirements of its customers, a zero-based quantitative analysis of library requirements was undertaken during Spring 2011. This analysis was based on where people live, work, study and shop. The results of this analysis were used to shape and assess the proposals to develop the library service prior to public consultation. The analysis paper and supporting information are available on the council's [website](#).⁴

In addition to the zero-based analysis, the following information was also considered:

- The Council's current strategic approach to the library service (as set in 2008 and as revised in the Business Strategy, December 2010)
- An audit of the current library service and activities
- Comparisons against other authorities
- Customer feedback (Children's Plus Survey, October 2010; Public Library Users Survey, October 2009; and feedback received from the council's library announcement on 26 November 2010)
- Existing demand from current users
- Opening hours
- Timetable, location and duration of stops of the mobile libraries
- Use of technology
- National studies and reports, including:
 - Museum Libraries and Archives (MLA) MORI national research, 'What do the public want from libraries', November 2010
 - Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), 'Modernisation review of public libraries', March 2010
 - DCMS Local Inquiry into the Public Library Service Provided by Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, 2009
- Dialogue with the MLA regarding our current service, review our methodology and proposed changes
- Capacity within the service to innovate and make service enhancements.

The proposals

The Council proposes to:

- Rationalise management support
- Expand the use of volunteers

⁴ <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/supporting-information>

- Assess current procurement arrangements
- Continue to exploit existing and new opportunities to generate income
- Work collaboratively with other service providers such as Oxford University, voluntary and community organisations
- Work collaboratively with private sector developers and businesses to address changes in future population
- Continue to work with other library authorities to ensure that it benefits from best practice and opportunities to review and develop services.

Under the proposals all libraries will remain open and will:

- Have a good book stock, public access computers and online resources
- Be cost-effective and efficient
- Have self-service as standard
- Have tailored opening hours
- Offer a broad range of supporting services tailored to the community e.g. book clubs
- Work closely with a community support network (e.g. Friends Group)
- Encourage use of library buildings as community space.

Oxfordshire County Council will fully fund and resource all of the libraries that form part of our comprehensive and efficient library service. These core libraries are:

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| • Abingdon | • Chipping Norton | • Littlemore |
| • Banbury | • Cowley | • Neithrop |
| • Berinsfield | • Didcot | • Oxford Central |
| • Bicester | • Eynsham | • Summertown |
| • Blackbird Leys | • Headington | • Thame |
| • Botley | • Henley | • Wallingford |
| • Carterton | • Kidlington | • Wantage |
| | | • Witney |

The County Council will continue to provide a fully supported infrastructure (building, ICT, book stock and the installation of self-service) to those libraries which fall outside of our comprehensive and efficient library service. The Council will also work with each of these libraries to establish a Friends Group to enable a shift in the balance of staffing in these libraries towards volunteers over a three-year period.

For the 'Community Plus' libraries this would mean one third volunteers and two thirds Council-paid staff. These community plus libraries are:

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|
| • Chinnor | • Grove | • Woodstock |
| • Faringdon | • Wheatley | |

For all other libraries this would mean one half volunteers and one half Council-paid staff. These 'Community' libraries are:

- Adderbury
- Bampton
- Benson
- Burford
- Charlbury
- Deddington
- Goring
- Hook Norton
- Kennington
- North Leigh
- Old Marston
- Sonning Common
- Stonesfield
- Watlington
- Woodcote
- Wychwood

In each of the above groups, there are some libraries where there are opportunities to use the buildings in different ways and to work with the community and other partners in more effective ways. The council is committed to exploring these opportunities in all of our libraries.

Consultation

Oxfordshire County Council consulted widely on these proposals. A four month consultation ran from 27 May to 30 September 2011. Around 5,000 responses were received from members of the public, local Friends' Groups, parish and town councils, local MPs and other stakeholder groups.

During the consultation period, councillors and library service representatives attended a series of public meetings across the county to discuss the proposals. Workshop sessions were also held with existing Council-paid staff, as well as meetings with relevant groups (e.g. representing people with protected characteristics) to discuss the proposals in further detail. The minutes and notes of these meetings were fed into the consultation.

All the responses from the consultation, along with all the written submissions, meeting notes, and other material received from interested parties has been subject to independent analysis. The consultation responses and the outcomes of the analysis have been used to refine the Council's proposals. More information about the consultation and the Council's response to the feedback is available here:

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/library-service-consultation>

Alternatives Considered

The Council, in its budget plans agreed in February 2011, decided that, with the exception of fire and rescue services and children's services, all services would receive lower levels of funding than previously. Therefore, if savings were not found from the library services budget they would have to be found in other service areas and could have a larger impact on communities and individuals with protected characteristics.

The proposals announced in the autumn of 2010 would have resulted in the closure of 20 libraries across the council. The libraries that would have remained represented 82% of existing users and 79.5% of current issues. 12 of the libraries listed for closure were in rural areas, meaning that people in

these areas would have had to travel further to access the service. The proposed closures would have had an impact on those without personal transport or who would have had difficulty in reaching the nearest remaining library, in particular the elderly and the disabled

Assessment of possible implications of these proposals

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In recognition of the support that Community Plus and Community libraries will need to manage the transition to the new model of working, the full financial effect of the shift in staffing towards volunteers is not built into the libraries budget until 2014. Council-paid library staff will work with Friends Group to manage and support them through the transition period to enable all of these libraries to have a sustainable solution in place by 2014. Conversations have already begun with many Friends Groups and pilot projects will begin in early 2012 with a view to a detailed transition timetable being put together for all Community Plus and Community Libraries by the end of 2012.

The potential risks in these proposals are explored below, looking at how they might impact on particular groups based on the characteristics of particular library communities. Where necessary, mitigations are proposed to ensure that increased levels of volunteering will not in itself mean that the needs of some groups of users are not met.

Impact of increasing involvement of volunteers

Oxfordshire as a whole has a strong voluntary sector with over 3,500 community and voluntary groups, an above average number of regular volunteers and an increasing number of communities preparing community-led plans. This suggests that the county is well-placed to increase the involvement of volunteers in the running of the library service, and the recent success of community-led solutions to keeping all 13 youth centres faced with closure provides further evidence of this.

Volunteers currently and traditionally have supported the work of the library service by helping in their local communities. The Library Service has experience of working with volunteers to deliver volunteering opportunities and has established successful policies and procedures to successfully recruit; manage; train and support volunteers. The Council will work with existing Friends Groups and emerging community groups to share that good practice and offer support and advice on ways of working. The Council will also appoint a Community Libraries Coordinator, who will help to maintain a strong working relationship between these groups and the library service and help overcome any challenges faced.

The Library Service will retain responsibility for the operational and professional management of libraries but Friends Groups and volunteers will play an important part in helping to deliver services for the library users locally. Volunteers will be contributing to the delivery of a Council service and will therefore be supported to comply with codes of conduct and customer service, delivering tasks they have agreed in an appropriate manner, adhering to relevant Council policies and with due regard to safeguarding the reputation of the Council in general and the Library Service in particular.

It is anticipated that the roles undertaken by volunteers will reflect the individual skills, interests, and abilities of the volunteers themselves. Working in partnership with Council-paid library staff, the Friends Groups will ensure that the volunteers can collectively cover all the tasks that are needed to run the library successfully. These might include:

- Helping users access the information they require.
- Dealing with the day to day transactions such as issuing, renewal and return of books and other items.
- Ensuring the book stock is displayed attractively and meets the requirements of the community and the county, as all stock forms part of the county's collection.
- Supporting library promotional activities such as rhyme times, class visits, 'computer buddies', reading groups and the Summer Reading scheme.

The Council has a duty of care to its volunteers and a responsibility to ensure that adequate training and support is provided in order that it meets its obligations. Training plans will be in place for each volunteer to ensure that every person is comfortable and feels supported in the role they have chosen. Although training will cover key OCC policies (such as equality and diversity, child protection and health and safety), these plans will be light touch and delivered to involve volunteers in the service they are assisting, tailored to the task they are helping with and relevant to the needs of the individual. There will be initial induction and on-going training as required that will equip volunteers to support customers, and support the volunteers to feel part of the Library Service Team and help to add value to the positive experience that volunteering will give them.

The Council will also continue to improve accessibility to library services by:

- re-designing its website to make sure people can easily access the library service online
- facilitating direct communication with the public and library customers through social media
- expanding remote access to library material, by increasing its online services (such as eBooks and eAudio downloads and online information resources).
- working collaboratively with community groups and other service providers to target hard to reach groups, for example hosting sessions in other community buildings (such as Children's Centre, Adult Learning Centres, Early Intervention Hubs) where people already access services.

As part of our comprehensive and efficient library service the council will continue to provide services to groups and people who may struggle to get to a library, such as young people and their parents, or carers, older people and those with disabilities. There will be tailored support that best meets the needs of these groups including:

- Ensuring the cost-effective and efficient use of the mobile library service
- Developing and extending the home library service for those with limited mobility
- Developing and extending the current book deposit scheme to allow us to provide access in areas where there is currently no service.

The library service is highly valued and needs to be sustainable, relevant and available to future generations. The County Council will continue to challenge the way that the service is delivered to ensure it is fit for the 21st Century. In particular, the library service will continue to explore opportunities to further improve and extend the service by:

- investigating the provision of free WiFi across the network
- re-designing the website to make sure people can easily access the library service online
- facilitating direct communication with the public and library customers through social media
- delivering eBook and eAudio downloads via our website
- incorporating complementary services (such as coffee shops) into library buildings
- developing the use of libraries as community resources
- working collaboratively with community groups and other service providers to target hard to reach groups, e.g. locating and resourcing the library service in other ways, using other community buildings (such as Children's Centre, Adult Learning Centres, Early Intervention Hubs) where people already access services.

However, by reducing the number of hours available from Council-paid library managers and library assistants there will be an impact on community groups through the loss of experience and expertise where volunteers are used instead of Council-paid staff. This will be mitigated through volunteers being provided with support and training from the Council-paid library staff working in the community plus and community libraries. A support network and communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they will always have access to professional support.

In many cases the Council-paid staff are the visible 'face' of the library to regular users, and changes to this front-of-house presence could impact on users who have built strong relationships with existing staff. However, this could equally occur through natural turnover of staff and will be mitigated by ensuring volunteers are suitably trained and have appropriate knowledge to support users as effectively as possible. Friends Groups will also be supported to make the transition to the new model based on increased involvement of volunteers as straightforward as possible, thus minimising the impact on library users.

Risks (Increased involvement of volunteers)	Mitigation
Required number of volunteers cannot be identified	<p>Friends Groups will be supported and encouraged to adopt and adapt existing good practice in recruitment of volunteers, and learn from current experiences of the library service, experience shared by other Friends Groups across the county and best practice identified elsewhere.</p> <p>Council-paid staff will work with Friends Group to manage and support them through the transition period to ensure a sustainable solution is in place by 2014. Conversations have already begun with many Friends Groups and pilot projects will begin in early 2012 with a view to a detailed transition timetable being put together for all Community Plus and Community Libraries by the end of 2012.</p> <p>This will allow progress in recruiting volunteers to be assessed and appropriate action taken / support offered in areas where required number of volunteers not coming forward.</p>
Difficulty in retaining volunteers	<p>Volunteers will be offered appropriate training to help them feel confident and competent in their role.</p> <p>Friends Groups and the library service will ensure</p>

	<p>volunteering is as enjoyable and valuable to the individual as possible, through ongoing support, making them feel part of the service, and aligning the tasks and roles they undertake with their own particular interests as closely as possible.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build relationships with volunteers to identify potential issues at early stage</p>
Limited contingency if a volunteer does not attend when expected	Friends Groups will be encouraged and supported to recruit a higher number of volunteers than needed, and to coordinate a rota of people able to assist at short notice
Library users do not feel able to relate to volunteers, and/or do not feel comfortable discussing their needs and interests with volunteers who may be known to them personally	<p>As many Council-paid staff are also from within local communities, there will be a limited difference from current situation</p> <p>Volunteers will be clearly identifiable as such, meaning library users will be able to decide whether to ask for assistance from them or not</p> <p>The installation in all libraries of RFID to enable self-service transactions (issuing and returning books for example) will enable the user to retain a high degree of privacy should they wish to do so.</p> <p>Library users may expect Council-paid staff to operate with a high degree of confidentiality than they may expect of volunteers. However, as the volunteers will be contributing to the delivery of a Council service they will be supported to comply with codes of conduct and customer service, delivering tasks they have agreed in an appropriate manner, adhering to relevant Council policies and with due regard to safeguarding the reputation of the Council in general and the Library Service in particular.</p>
Volunteers do not have appropriate support available / feel isolated from rest of library service	<p>A support network and communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they will always have access to professional support</p> <p>All volunteers will be given initial induction and on-going training as required to help them support customers, and support the volunteers to feel part of the Library Service team</p>
Volunteers do not have appropriate knowledge	All volunteers will be given initial induction and on-going training as required to help them support

<p>and understanding to meet needs of customers</p>	<p>customers, and support the volunteers to feel part of the Library Service team</p> <p>All volunteers will also be given training plans appropriate to the role(s) and tasks they will be undertaking.</p> <p>Use of self service and library website services will enable customers to manage their own library transactions in libraries. Volunteers will receive training to ensure that they will be able to support customers in this.</p>
<p>Volunteers are not confident and competent to assist customers</p>	<p>As above, volunteers will be given training plans and regular reviews, with support available from Council-paid staff and Friends Groups.</p>
<p>Potential drop in service standard during or as a result of transition to greater involvement of volunteers</p>	<p>The Library Service will retain responsibility for the operational and professional management of libraries but Friends Groups and volunteers will play an important part in helping to deliver services for the library users locally. Volunteers will be contributing to the delivery of a Council service and will therefore be supported to comply with codes of conduct and customer service, delivering tasks they have agreed in an appropriate manner, adhering to relevant Council policies and with due regard to safeguarding the reputation of the Council in general and the Library Service in particular.</p> <p>Council-paid staff will work with Friends Group to manage and support them through the transition period to ensure a sustainable solution is in place by 2014 and to mitigate the impact of the increased involvement of volunteers.</p> <p>Conversations have already begun with many Friends Groups and pilot projects will begin in early 2012 with a view to a detailed transition timetable being put together for all Community Plus and Community Libraries by the end of 2012. This will allow progress in recruiting and training volunteers to be assessed and appropriate action taken / support offered in areas where required.</p> <p>All volunteers will be given induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent undertaking their roles and tasks.</p>
<p>Risk of inappropriate or unwelcoming behaviour</p>	<p>Volunteers will be CRB checked and will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the</p>

<p>by volunteers may alienate library users</p>	<p>roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with activities in libraries. This may include recruiting volunteers who already have experience working with particular groups or running particular activities, as well as enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to do so.</p> <p>Increased online and social networking services will help library service users to make the best use of the books and information available without necessarily having to visit a library.</p>
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Impact on people with protected characteristics

Age

All libraries are heavily used by **children and young people**. Many libraries already have strong links with local schools and children's centres, have staff trained and experienced in giving book advice to children and parents, and run events such as summer reading challenges and rhyme times. Under the proposals Council-paid staff and/or volunteers will continue these activities, and professional librarians will continue to manage and build a relevant book stock for children and young adults. Librarians will continue to take opportunities to encourage young people to be involved in choosing appropriate stock.

Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with children's activities in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have experience with helping children and young adults, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to run activities. Working with the local community in this way has the potential to increase the number and variety of opportunities for children and young adults.

Risks (Children and Young People)	Mitigations	Relevant Libraries (see Appendix 1)
Volunteers may not have the knowledge and experience to cater for the needs of children and young people using	Volunteers will be CRB checked and will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they	All Community/Community Plus Libraries but particularly those in areas with an above average

<p>the library. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy activities • Children's bookstock • Internet/ computers • DVD/ music loans 	<p>will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>A support network and communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they and library users will always have access to professional support.</p> <p>Increased online and social networking services targeted at young people will help them to make the best use of the books and information available to them.</p>	<p>proportion of people aged under 16:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benson • Grove • Deddington • Faringdon • Sonning Common • Hook Norton • Goring • Chinnor • Stonesfield
<p>Activities targeted at or available to children and young people might not happen as a result of volunteers not being able to deliver</p>	<p>The Library Service will use community and library profiles to inform library service planning, to ensure an appropriate range of activities are available to reflect the diversity and needs of the community.</p> <p>Professional librarians will continue to ensure that there is appropriate stock available and will continue to support and train volunteers to run activities.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help</p>	<p>All Community/ Community Plus Libraries but particularly those in areas with an above average proportion of people aged under 16:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benson • Grove • Deddington • Faringdon • Sonning Common • Hook Norton • Goring • Chinnor • Stonesfield

	with children's activities in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have experience with helping children and young adults, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to run activities.	
Risk of inappropriate or unwelcoming behaviour by volunteers may alienate children and young people	<p>Volunteers will be CRB checked and will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with children's activities in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have experience with helping children and young adults, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to build on current success recruiting young people to act as volunteers, reducing the risk of alienation by relating to members of their peer group.</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus Libraries but particularly those in areas with an above average proportion of people aged under 16:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benson • Grove • Deddington • Faringdon • Sonning Common • Hook Norton • Goring • Chinnor • Stonesfield
Community and Community Plus libraries may find it	Friends Groups will be supported and encouraged to adopt	All Community/Community Plus Libraries but particularly

<p>difficult to recruit sufficient volunteers, which could in turn lead to a reduction in opening hours. This would impact on children and young people's ability to access the static library service.</p>	<p>and adapt existing good practice in recruitment of volunteers, and learn from current experiences of the library service, experience shared by other Friends Groups across the county and best practice identified elsewhere.</p> <p>Council-paid staff will work with Friends Groups to manage and support them through the transition period to ensure a sustainable solution is in place by 2014. Conversations have already begun with many Friends Groups and pilot projects will begin in early 2012 with a view to a detailed transition timetable being put together for all Community Plus and Community Libraries by the end of 2012.</p> <p>This will allow progress in recruiting volunteers to be assessed and appropriate action taken / support offered in areas where required number of volunteers not coming forward.</p> <p>In the event of a reduction in service hours, an evidence led approach would be taken to determine the optimum opening hours for all relevant groups, in the case of children and young people this might mean ensuring</p>	<p>those in areas with an above average proportion of people aged under 16:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benson • Grove • Deddington • Faringdon • Sonning Common • Hook Norton • Goring • Chinnor • Stonesfield
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	<p>that the library is appropriately staffed and open outside of school hours.</p> <p>The Council will review the operation of both the mobile and the home library services to ensure they remain integrated with the rest of the library service and contribute to meeting the needs of targeted user and community groups across the county.</p>	
<p>Children and young people achieving low educational outcomes may experience a reduction in targeted literacy support</p>	<p>Professional librarians will continue to manage learning resources and literacy programs across the service.</p> <p>The Library Service will continue to develop and extend collaborative work with partners such as children’s centres, schools and family and adult learning deliverers.</p> <p>When drawing up staffing rotas, Friends Groups will be encouraged to match the skills of Council-paid staff and volunteers with the needs of the individuals and groups likely to be in the library at the time.</p>	<p>All Community and Community Plus libraries, particularly those in wards achieving educational outcomes below the county average, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodstock • Wheatley • Old Marston

Older people are frequent library users, and based on user feedback and responses to the consultation often value the library as a space to meet their neighbours and to feel the support of their local community. Increased involvement of volunteers could enhance the value of the libraries as community hubs, and provide for a greater variety of activities and services for older people in their local library. Friends Groups may also wish to recruit volunteers who can provide support to those in this group, for example by providing assistance to those lacking confidence with computers wanting to learn how to access online services.

Risks (Older people)	Mitigation	Relevant Libraries (see Appendix 1)
<p>Volunteers may not have the knowledge or experience to cater for the needs of this group. That this may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social aspects of the library • Community space • Information and advice 	<p>Volunteers will be CRB checked and will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>A support network and communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they and library users will always have access to professional support.</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus Libraries particularly those in areas with an above average proportion of people aged over 65:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burford • Goring • Deddington • Woodstock • Kennington • Sonning Common • Adderbury • Wheatley • North Leigh • Wychwood • Watlington • Bampton • Stonesfield • Hook Norton • Charlbury • Old Marston
<p>Activities targeted at or available to older people might not happen as a result of volunteers not being able to deliver (eg. computer buddies)</p>	<p>The Library Service will use community and library profiles to inform library service planning, to ensure an appropriate range of activities are available to reflect the diversity and needs of the community.</p> <p>Volunteers will receive</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus Libraries particularly those in areas with an above average proportion of people aged over 65:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burford • Goring • Deddington • Woodstock

	<p>induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include running specific activities.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with activities for older people in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have experience with helping older people, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to run activities.</p> <p>The Library Service will continue to develop and extend links with partner organisations, Good Neighbour Schemes, local care homes and community centres to support the needs of older people in the neighbourhood,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kennington • Sonning Common • Adderbury • Wheatley • North Leigh • Wychwood • Watlington • Bampton • Stonesfield • Hook Norton • Charlbury • Old Marston
<p>Presence of unfamiliar 'front of house' staff may lead to a reduction in use of the library by this group.</p>	<p>Volunteers will be contributing to the delivery of a Council service they will be supported to comply with codes of conduct and customer service, delivering tasks they have agreed in an appropriate manner, adhering to relevant Council policies and with due regard to meeting the needs of</p>	<p>All Community/ Community Plus Libraries particularly those in areas with an above average proportion of people over 65:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burford • Goring • Deddington • Woodstock • Kennington • Sonning

	<p>library users as effectively as possible.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to make the transition to the new model based on increased involvement of volunteers as gradual as possible, thus minimising the impact on library users.</p> <p>Volunteers will be CRB checked and will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help and support older people, for example the home library service and 'computer buddies'.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to recruit not only volunteers who already have experience with particular groups or activities, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained.</p> <p>Research and current experience shows that people from this group are likely to volunteer, and therefore be sensitive to the needs of library users. A number of sessions are already</p>	<p>Common</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adderbury • Wheatley • North Leigh • Wychwood • Watlington • Bampton • Stonesfield • Hook Norton • Charlbury • Old Marston
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	run by volunteers and organisations, including Age UK, and these will be supported to continue.	
Risk of inappropriate or unwelcoming behaviour by volunteers may alienate older people	<p>Volunteers will be CRB checked and will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be and supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with activities for older people in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have experience with helping older people, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to build on current success recruiting older people to act as volunteers, reducing the risk of alienation by relating to members of their peer group.</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus Libraries particularly those in areas with an above average proportion of people aged over 65:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burford • Goring • Deddington • Woodstock • Kennington • Sonning Common • Adderbury • Wheatley • North Leigh • Wychwood • Watlington • Bampton • Stonesfield • Hook Norton • Charlbury • Old Marston

Disability

Libraries will continue to offer a range of services targeted at those with disabilities, which include visual impairments, mobility difficulties, and mental health issues. They also provide a range of activities specifically for these groups, which have the potential to be enhanced by the involvement of volunteers. Volunteers will also be encouraged to assist disabled users and will receive appropriate training to help meet their needs.

Older people and those with disabilities might require or request special stock, such as large print and audiobooks, and professional librarians will continue select and manage such material.

Risks (People with disabilities)	Mitigations	Relevant Libraries (see Appendix 1)
<p>Volunteers may not have the knowledge or experience to cater for the needs of this group. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audiobooks • Information and advice • Targeted activities • Social aspects of the library • Accessing relevant materials 	<p>Volunteers will be CRB checked and will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>A support network and communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they and library users will always have access to professional support.</p> <p>Professional librarians will continue to ensure there is appropriate stock available to meet the needs of individuals with particular disabilities, for example self-help and specialist material on particular subjects, available in a</p>	<p>All community/ community plus libraries but particularly those in areas with a high number of people claiming disability living allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adderbury • Bampton • Faringdon • Wheatley

	<p>range of formats</p> <p>The Library service will continue to work with care homes and carers in the community to ensure that libraries offer the best service to customers with particular needs.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be and supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with activities in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have experience with helping people with disabilities, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained.</p>	
<p>Risk of inappropriate or unwelcoming behaviour by volunteers may alienate people with a disability</p>	<p>Volunteers will be CRB checked and will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be and supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with activities in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have experience with helping people with disabilities, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained.</p>	<p>All Community/ Community Plus libraries but particularly those in areas with a high number of people claiming disability living allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adderbury • Bampton • Faringdon • Wheatley

	<p>Friends Groups will also be supported to build on current success recruiting young people to act as volunteers, reducing the risk of alienation by relating to members of their peer group.</p>	
<p>Community/community plus libraries may find it difficult to recruit sufficient volunteers, ultimately leading to a reduction in opening hours. This would impact on the ability of people with mobility related disabilities to access the library service.</p>	<p>Friends Groups will be supported and encouraged to adopt and adapt existing good practice in recruitment of volunteers, and learn from current experiences of the library service, experience shared by other Friends Groups across the county and best practice identified elsewhere.</p> <p>Council-paid library staff will work with Friends Group to manage and support them through the transition period to ensure a sustainable solution is in place by 2014. Conversations have already begun with many Friends Groups and pilot projects will begin in early 2012 with a view to a detailed transition timetable being put together for all Community Plus and Community Libraries by the end of 2012.</p> <p>This will allow progress in recruiting volunteers to be assessed and appropriate action taken / support offered in areas where required</p>	<p>All Community/ Community Plus libraries but particularly those in areas with a high number of people claiming disability living allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adderbury • Bampton • Faringdon • Wheatley

	<p>number of volunteers not coming forward.</p> <p>In the event of a reduction in service hours, an evidence led approach would be taken to determine the optimum opening hours for all relevant groups, in the case of people with disabilities this might mean ensuring that the library is appropriately staffed at times that align with public or and community transport, or other sessions, activities, appointments and so on in the local area.</p> <p>The Council will review the operation of both the mobile and the home library services to ensure they remain integrated with the rest of the library service and contribute to meeting the needs of targeted user and community groups across the county.</p>	
<p>Limited contingency if a volunteer does not attend when expected – this may mean a person with mobility who has made particular travel arrangements and/or may have travelled from outside the immediate area is not able to access a library when it should be open.</p>	<p>Friends Groups will be encouraged and supported to recruit a higher number of volunteers than needed, and to coordinate a rota of people able to assist at short notice.</p> <p>The Council will review the operation of both the mobile and the home library services to ensure they remain integrated with the rest</p>	<p>All Community/ Community Plus libraries, particularly those in geographically isolated areas (above county average for geographic barriers index):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlbury • Burford • Stonesfield • Watlington • Hook Norton • North Leigh

	of the library service and contribute to meeting the needs of targeted user and community groups across the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bampton • Goring • Adderbury • Benson • Chinnor • Wychwood
Library users with a particular disability do not feel able to relate to volunteers, and/or do not feel comfortable discussing their needs and interests with volunteers who may be known to them personally	<p>Volunteers will be clearly identifiable as such, meaning library users will be able to decide whether to ask for assistance from them or not.</p> <p>The installation in all libraries of RFID to enable self-service transactions (issuing and returning books for example) will enable the user to retain a high degree of privacy should they wish to do so.</p> <p>Library users may expect Council-paid staff to operate with a high degree of confidentiality than they may expect of volunteers. However, as the volunteers will be contributing to the delivery of a Council service they will be supported to comply with codes of conduct and customer service, delivering tasks they have agreed in an appropriate manner, adhering to relevant Council policies and with due regard to safeguarding the reputation of the Council in general and the Library Service in</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus libraries but particularly those in areas with a high number of people claiming disability living allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adderbury • Bampton • Faringdon • Wheatley

	<p>particular.</p> <p>The library service will continue to work closely with care homes, representative groups and so on to ensure the needs of people with a disability are identified and met. This will include scheduling of appropriate activities, availability of specialist support, and specialist stock of books and other materials.</p> <p>The Council will review the operation of both the mobile and the home library services to ensure they remain integrated with the rest of the library service and contribute to meeting the needs of targeted user and community groups across the county.</p>	
<p>Activities targeted at or available to people with a disability might not happen as a result of volunteers not being able to deliver</p>	<p>The Library Service will use community and library profiles to inform library service planning, to ensure an appropriate range of activities are available to reflect the diversity and needs of the community.</p> <p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include running specific activities.</p>	<p>All Community/ Community Plus libraries but particularly those in areas with a high number of people claiming disability living allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adderbury • Bampton • Faringdon • Wheatley

	<p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with activities in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have experience with helping people with a disability, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to run activities.</p>	
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Gender

Currently 36% of library users are male and 64% female and therefore any changes in the provision of services and activities will have a greater effect on the female population than on the male. Women have also been disproportionately affected by recent changes in employment levels, and Oxfordshire in general (and Oxford in particular) has a high reliance on public sector jobs which are at risk, so more women may be using libraries for job seeking in the future.

It is likely that a higher proportion of volunteers will be female, so Friends Groups will be supported to recruit volunteers of both genders.

Risks (Gender)	Mitigations	Relevant Libraries (see appendix 1)
Volunteers may not have the experience or knowledge to cater for the needs of people of either gender	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include running specific activities or working with particular groups of people.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with activities in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have relevant experience, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to run activities.</p> <p>A support network and communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure</p>	All community/ community plus libraries

	<p>that they and library users will always have access to professional support.</p> <p>Users across the county will have access to the full library catalogue via the online catalogue. Council-paid staff and volunteers will communicate the availability of this to users and non-users.</p>	
<p>Risk of inappropriate or unwelcoming behaviour by volunteers may alienate people of either gender</p>	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be and supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with activities in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have relevant experience, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to run activities.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of the local community (eg men and women, people of all ages).</p>	<p>All community/ community plus libraries</p>

Pregnancy and maternity

For users aged between 25 and 44, taking children to the library is a particularly important reason for going themselves (MLA). The Library Service currently works with Health Visitors, Children’s Centres, Bookstart and Registrars to reach mothers and encourage them to share books with their babies, and this will continue to be the responsibility of Council-paid staff. Partnerships will be continued and developed, and volunteers will receive training in the value of books and reading to babies and their parents and carers

Libraries are breast feeding friendly, and self-help books for parents are stocked. Young mothers value the sense of community that a library provides.

Risks (Pregnancy, maternity)	Mitigations	Relevant Libraries (see profiles for statistics – annex XX)
<p>Volunteers may not be equipped to cater for the needs of babies, parents and families using the library. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities for young children • Early years literacy support • Social aspect of library • Breast feeding friendly 	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include running specific activities or working with particular groups of people. Volunteers will receive training in the value of books and reading to babies parents and carers.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with children’s activities in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have experience with helping young children, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to run activities.</p> <p>A support network and</p>	<p>All libraries but particularly those in areas containing an above average number of young children (0-4), namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benson • Sonning Common • Grove • Deddington • Adderbury • Faringdon • Stonesfield

	<p>communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they and library users will always have access to professional support.</p> <p>Users of all libraries across the county will have access to the full library catalogue. Council-paid staff and volunteers will communicate the availability of this to users and non-users.</p>	
<p>Risk of inappropriate or unwelcoming behaviour by volunteers may alienate this group</p>	<p>Volunteers will be CRB checked and will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported and encouraged to recruit parents, and other people with experience in early years behaviour, to act as volunteers.</p>	<p>All libraries but particularly those in areas containing an above average number of young children (0-4), namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benson • Sonning Common • Grove • Deddington • Adderbury • Faringdon • Stonesfield
<p>Limited contingency if a volunteer does not attend when expected – this may mean someone who is pregnant or with a young family and has made particular travel arrangements and/or</p>	<p>Friends Groups will be encouraged and supported to recruit a higher number of volunteers than needed, and to coordinate a rota of people able to assist at short notice.</p>	<p>All libraries but particularly those in areas containing an above average number of young children (0-4), namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benson • Sonning

<p>may have travelled from outside the immediate area is not able to access a library when it should be open.</p>	<p>The Council will review the operation of both the mobile and the home library services to ensure they remain integrated with the rest of the library service and contribute to meeting the needs of targeted user and community groups across the county.</p>	<p>Common</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grove • Deddington • Adderbury • Faringdon • Stonesfield
<p>Activities targeted at or available to babies, parents and families might not happen as a result of volunteers not being able to deliver</p>	<p>Council-paid staff will use community and library profiles to inform library service planning, helping to ensure an appropriate range of activities are available to reflect the diversity and needs of the community.</p> <p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include running specific activities.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help with children’s activities in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have experience with helping children and families but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to run activities.</p>	<p>All libraries but particularly those in areas containing an above average number of young children (0-4), namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benson • Sonning • Common • Grove • Deddington • Adderbury • Faringdon • Stonesfield

	The Library Service will continue to work with Registration Service Health Visitors, Bookstart ,Children's Centres and other partners to reach parents and carers and promote the value of books and reading.	
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Religion and belief (different faiths, including people with no religion or belief)

The Library Service does not discriminate on the grounds of religion and belief, and this impartiality is critical to users. The library service provides unbiased information in hard copy and online, and this will continue to be the responsibility of professional librarians.

Access to the full range of stock, both on the shelves and through reservation, will continue to be provided, and self-service terminals will help to protect the privacy of borrowers. Volunteers will receive training in the County's equality and diversity policies to ensure an understanding of the variety of customers with diverse needs

Risks (Religion and Belief)	Mitigations	Relevant Libraries (Appendix 1)
<p>Volunteers may not be equipped to cater for the needs of people with particular religious beliefs</p>	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include running specific activities or working with particular groups of people.</p> <p>A support network and communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they and library users will always have access to professional support.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have relevant</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus libraries, particularly those with above average numbers of a minority religious group (see profiles for particular religious group):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston • Woodstock • North Leigh • Kennington • Hook Norton • Wheatley • Wychwood • Burford • Deddington • Woodcote • Deddington • Stonesfield • Burford • Watlington • Charlbury • Bampton • Chinnor

	<p>experience, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to run activities.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of the local community (including different religions and beliefs).</p>	
<p>Volunteers may not be sensitive to the perceived barriers experienced by some members of this group and so unintentionally sustain those barriers</p>	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy and codes of conduct (including customer care).</p> <p>Increased community involvement in the running of the library will ensure that services and activities reflect the needs of that community.</p> <p>Local input from volunteers can help with identifying local needs.</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus libraries, particularly those with above average numbers of a minority religious group (see profiles for particular religious group):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston • Woodstock • North Leigh • Kennington • Hook Norton • Wheatley • Wychwood • Burford • Deddington • Woodcote • Deddington • Stonesfield • Burford • Watlington • Charlbury • Bampton • Chinnor
<p>Friends Groups could be over or under representative of a particular religious group, leading to the needs of some groups not being met effectively</p>	<p>Council-paid staff will use community and library profiles to inform library service planning, helping to ensure an appropriate range of activities are available to reflect the diversity and needs of the community.</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus libraries, particularly those with above average numbers of a minority religious group (see profiles for particular religious group):</p>

	<p>Local input from volunteers will also help with identifying local needs.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to seek volunteers that are representative of the local community, and to recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of the local community (including different religions and beliefs).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston • Woodstock • North Leigh • Kennington • Hook Norton • Wheatley • Wychwood • Burford • Deddington • Woodcote • Deddington • Stonesfield • Burford • Watlington • Charlbury • Bampton • Chinnor
<p>Risk of inappropriate or unwelcoming behaviour by volunteers may alienate people of particular faiths or beliefs</p>	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be and supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have relevant experience, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of the local community (including different religions and beliefs).</p>	<p>All Community/ Community Plus libraries, particularly those with above average numbers of a minority religious group (see profiles for particular religious group):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston • Woodstock • North Leigh • Kennington • Hook Norton • Wheatley • Wychwood • Burford • Deddington • Woodcote • Deddington • Stonesfield • Burford • Watlington • Charlbury • Bampton • Chinnor

Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment

Libraries are seen as a place to come which is seen as safe and non – judgmental, and provide a range of books and access to online information of special interest to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender users. Themed materials will continue to be available in larger libraries (accessible in all libraries via the catalogue). Professional librarians will continue to select and manage such material.

This service meets the needs of this group and promotes tolerance within the wider community. Greater reliance on volunteers may jeopardize these relationships as there may be high volunteer turnover together with a lack of knowledge, understanding and communication skills. However volunteers will receive training in the County’s equality and diversity policies to ensure an understanding of the variety of customers with diverse needs.

Risks (Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment)	Mitigations	Relevant Libraries (Appendix 1)
Volunteers may not be sensitive to the perceived barriers experienced by some members of this group and so unintentionally sustain those barriers	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council’s equalities policy and codes of conduct (including customer care).</p> <p>The Library Service will use community and library profiles to inform library service planning, helping to ensure an appropriate range of activities are available to reflect the diversity and needs of the community.</p> <p>Increased community involvement in the running of the library will ensure that services and activities reflect the needs of that community.</p>	All Community/ Community Plus libraries

	Local input from volunteers can help with identifying local needs.	
Risk of inappropriate or unwelcoming behaviour by volunteers may alienate people from this group	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be and supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have relevant experience, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of the local community.</p> <p>Increased online and social networking services will help potential users to make the best use of the books and information available without necessarily having to visit a library.</p>	All Community/Community Plus libraries
Volunteers may not be equipped to cater for the needs of people of this group	Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include	All Community/Community Plus libraries

	<p>running specific activities or working with particular groups of people.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who already have relevant experience, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained to run activities.</p> <p>A support network and communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they and library users will always have access to professional support.</p> <p>Users across the county will have access to the full library catalogue via the online catalogue. Council-paid staff and volunteers will communicate the availability of this to users and non-users.</p> <p>The development of self service in all libraries will allow users to access information anonymously should they wish.</p> <p>The Library Service will continue to provide a</p>	
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	range of books and access to online information of special interest to LGBT users and to advocate libraries as a safe and impartial environment.	
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Ethnicity

Libraries are well used by those who have a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background; libraries in Oxford and Banbury in particular serve the needs of learners with English as a second or other language, students from other countries and migrants. Skills for Life materials are provided for learners, and books and newspapers in other languages are bought for those who wish to read in their own language. Specialist stock and expertise will still be provided by professional librarians.

Most of the libraries in areas of high black and minority ethnic population are designated as core in the proposals. However, minority groups are present in many communities across the county. Greater involvement of local volunteers will help the service to reflect the diversity of its local area, and Friends Groups will be required to take into account the commitment of volunteers to equality and diversity

Council-paid library staff have acquired skills in communicating with BAME users and in understanding their particular needs and cultural barriers. Greater reliance on volunteers may jeopardize these relationships as there may be high volunteer turnover together with a lack of knowledge, understanding and communication skills. However volunteers will receive training in the County's equality and diversity policies to ensure an understanding of the variety of customers with diverse needs

Risks (Ethnicity)	Mitigations	Relevant Libraries (Appendix 1)
<p>Volunteers may not be equipped to cater for the particular needs of BME people using the library. Secondary research suggests that this may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign language bookstock • Internet and computers • Information and advice • Educational materials • Culturally relevant reading materials 	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include running specific activities or working with particular groups of people.</p> <p>A support network and communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they and library users will always have</p>	<p>All Community/ Community Plus libraries but particularly those in wards with above average numbers of BME people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston <p>And those with above average numbers of school children from BME backgrounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kennington • Old Marston

	<p>access to professional support.</p> <p>Users across the county will have access to the full library catalogue via the online catalogue. Council-paid staff and volunteers will communicate the availability of this to users and non-users, in a range of languages.</p> <p>Increased online and social networking will help people to make the best use of the books and information available without necessarily having to visit a library.</p> <p>Active engagement with community groups will make non library users more aware of services on offer and will improve community cohesion.</p> <p>The Library Service will continue to work closely with BAME users and community groups to provide specialist stock and expertise to meet library and information needs.</p>	
<p>Perceptual barriers may mean that this group feels excluded from volunteering or participating in the development of a community library</p>	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include running specific activities or working with particular groups of</p>	<p>All Community/Community plus libraries but particularly those in wards with above average numbers of BME people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston <p>And those with above average numbers of school children from</p>

	<p>people. Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers, supporting them to be representative of the local community.</p>	<p>BME backgrounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kennington • Old Marston
<p>Volunteers may not be sensitive to the perceived barriers experienced by some members of this group and so unintentionally sustain those barriers</p>	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy and codes of conduct (including customer care).</p> <p>Council-paid staff will use community and library profiles to inform library service planning, helping to ensure an appropriate range of activities are available to reflect the diversity and needs of the community.</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus libraries but particularly those in wards with above average numbers of BME people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston <p>And those with above average numbers of school children from BME backgrounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kennington • Old Marston
<p>Risk of inappropriate or unwelcoming behaviour by volunteers may alienate people from this group</p>	<p>Volunteers will be CRB checked and will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to seek volunteers that are representative of the local community, and to recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus libraries but particularly those in wards with above average numbers of BME people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston <p>And those with above average numbers of school children from BME backgrounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kennington • Old Marston

	<p>the local community. Friends Groups will also be supported to recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of the local community.</p> <p>Users will have access to the full range of stock in all libraries. Council-paid staff and volunteers will communicate the availability of this to users and non-users.</p> <p>Increased online and social networking services will help people make the best use of the books and information available without necessarily having to visit a library.</p>	
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Deprivation

Oxfordshire has generally low overall levels of deprivation. However there are ten areas in Oxford City and two in Banbury which fall within the 20% most deprived areas in the country. These areas will continue to be served by static libraries that will remain as part of the core provision. Consideration of the particular needs in different areas formed part of the decision to include Berinsfield in the group of core libraries.

Whilst deprivation extends beyond these specific areas it might be hidden within the overall affluence of an area, potentially increasing the impact on individuals.

People in areas of significant deprivation are less likely to volunteer in the library sector than those in more affluent areas.

Relevant training and guidance for Council-paid staff and volunteers will continue to ensure that people seeking work, wanting to improve their skills, build their confidence, or break the cycle of deprivation receive a high quality and responsive service. Where Council-paid staff are not available on-site, assistance will be available from across the library network.

Risks (Deprivation)	Mitigation	Relevant Libraries (see Appendix 1)
<p>Volunteers may not have the knowledge or experience to cater for the needs of this identified group. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing information and advice • Signposting to other services • Use of computers • Literacy materials 	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include running specific activities or working with particular groups of people.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to build on the existing network of volunteers and to attract volunteers willing to be trained to run library activities relevant to local need.</p> <p>A support network and communications tree</p>	<p>All Community/ Community Plus libraries, especially those in areas with above average numbers of people claiming job seekers allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston • Kennington <p>And those in areas above the county average for child poverty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faringdon • Old Marston

	<p>has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they and library users will always have access to professional support.</p> <p>Professional librarians will continue to broker relationships with external organisations involved in teaching skills for life, with family learning partners and with agencies helping people into work.</p> <p>Active engagement with community groups will make non-traditional library users more aware of services on offer and will improve community cohesion.</p> <p>Users across the county will have access to the full library catalogue via the online catalogue. Council-paid staff and volunteers will communicate the availability of this to users and non-users, in a range of languages.</p> <p>Increased online and social networking will help people to make the best use of the books and information available without necessarily having to visit a library.</p>	
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<p>Volunteers may not be sensitive to the perceived barriers experienced by some members of this group and so unintentionally sustain those barriers</p>	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy and codes of conduct (including customer care).</p> <p>Increased community involvement in the running of the library will ensure that services and activities reflect the needs of that community.</p> <p>Local input from volunteers can help with identifying local needs.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of the local community (including different ethnic backgrounds).</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus libraries, especially those in areas with above average numbers of people claiming job seekers allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston • Kennington <p>And those in areas above the county average for child poverty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faringdon • Old Marston
<p>Risk of inappropriate or unwelcoming behaviour by volunteers may become a barrier to library use.</p>	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training appropriate to the roles and tasks they will undertake, including awareness and understanding of the council's equalities policy.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be and supported to build on the existing network of volunteers who help in the libraries, for example by recruiting not only volunteers who</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus libraries, especially those in areas with above average numbers of people claiming job seekers allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston • Kennington <p>And those in areas above the county average for child poverty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faringdon • Old Marston

	<p>already have relevant experience, but also enthusiastic volunteers willing to be trained.</p> <p>Friends Groups will also be supported to recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of the local community (including different ethnic backgrounds).</p> <p>Users across the county will have access to the full library catalogue via the online catalogue. Council-paid staff and volunteers will communicate the availability of this to users and non-users.</p> <p>Increased online and social networking services will help people make the best use of the books and information available without necessarily having to visit a library.</p>	
<p>Perceptual barriers may mean that this group feels excluded from volunteering or participating in the development of a community library</p>	<p>Volunteers will receive induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent in undertaking the tasks and roles they opt to do – this may include running specific activities or working with particular groups of people.</p> <p>Friends Groups will be supported to seek volunteers that are representative of the local community, and to recruit volunteers that</p>	<p>All community/ community plus libraries, especially those in areas with above average numbers of people claiming job seekers allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Marston • Kennington <p>And those in areas above the county average for child poverty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faringdon • Old Marston

	reflect the diversity of the local community.	
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Rural Communities

Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South East, with two-thirds of the population living in rural areas. Most of the ‘Community’ libraries, which will be most dependent upon volunteer support, are concentrated in these parts of the county. However, as outlined above, the Council will help Friends Groups recruit, manage, and retain sufficient volunteers to cover opening hours and stock will be maintained as now across all libraries.

As discussed in the quantitative analysis paper, people also use town libraries when making trips for work, shopping, or other appointments. The continued provision of services in these larger libraries will be developed to create capacity to meet additional need, possibly displaced across the network if users decide to travel further to still have face-to-face dealings with Council-paid members of staff for example.

Moreover, the on-going development of digital information resources, eBooks and eAudio downloads, and online reservations and renewals will benefit those less able to get to a library.

The Council will review the operation of both the mobile and the home library services to ensure they remain integrated with the rest of the library service and contribute to meeting the needs of targeted user and community groups across the county.

Risks (Rural Communities)	Mitigation	Relevant Libraries (Appendix 1)
Community/community plus libraries may find it difficult to recruit sufficient volunteers, particularly in smaller communities where people might already be volunteering in a number of other groups and/or the cost and ease of travel to volunteer is prohibitive.	<p>Friends Groups will be supported and encouraged to adopt and adapt existing good practice in recruitment of volunteers, and learn from current experiences of the library service, experience shared by other Friends Groups across the county and best practice identified elsewhere.</p> <p>Council-paid library staff will work with Friends Group to manage and support them through the transition period to ensure a sustainable</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus libraries, particularly those in geographically isolated areas (above county average for geographic isolation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlbury • Burford • Stonesfield • Watlington • Hook Norton • North Leigh • Bampton • Goring • Adderbury • Benson • Chinnor • Wychwood

	<p>solution is in place by 2014. Conversations have already begun with many Friends Groups and pilot projects will begin in early 2012 with a view to a detailed transition timetable being put together for all Community Plus and Community Libraries by the end of 2012.</p> <p>This will allow progress in recruiting volunteers to be assessed and appropriate action taken / support offered in areas where required number of volunteers is not coming forward.</p> <p>The Council will review the operation of both the mobile and the home library services to ensure they remain integrated with the rest of the library service and contribute to meeting the needs of targeted user and community groups across the county.</p>	
<p>Limited contingency if a volunteer does not attend when expected – this may mean someone who is has made particular travel arrangements and/or may have travelled from outside the immediate area is not able to access a library when it should be open.</p>	<p>Friends Groups will be encouraged and supported to recruit a higher number of volunteers than needed, and to coordinate a rota of people able to assist at short notice.</p> <p>Users across the county will have access to the full range of stock from all libraries. Council-paid staff and volunteers will communicate the</p>	<p>All Community/ Community Plus libraries, particularly those in geographically isolated areas (above county average for geographic isolation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlbury • Burford • Stonesfield • Watlington • Hook Norton • North Leigh • Bampton

	<p>availability of this to users and non-users</p> <p>The Council will review the operation of both the mobile and the home library services to ensure they remain integrated with the rest of the library service and contribute to meeting the needs of targeted user and community groups across the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goring • Adderbury • Benson • Chinnor • Wychwood
<p>Potential drop in service standard during or as a result of transition to greater involvement of volunteers could mean people who already travel to reach a library are frustrated by a lack of professional support available</p>	<p>The Library Service will retain responsibility for the operational and professional management of libraries but Friends Groups and volunteers will play an important part in helping to deliver services for library users locally. Volunteers will be contributing to the delivery of a Council service and will therefore be supported to comply with codes of conduct and customer service, delivering tasks they have agreed in an appropriate manner, adhering to relevant Council policies and with due regard to safeguarding the reputation of the Council in general and the Library Service in particular.</p> <p>Council-paid library staff will work with Friends Group to manage and support them through the transition period to</p>	<p>All Community/Community Plus libraries, particularly those in geographically isolated areas (above county average for geographic isolation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlbury • Burford • Stonesfield • Watlington • Hook Norton • North Leigh • Bampton • Goring • Adderbury • Benson • Chinnor • Wychwood

	<p>ensure a sustainable solution is in place by 2014 and to mitigate the impact of the increased involvement of volunteers.</p> <p>Conversations have already begun with many Friends Groups and pilot projects will begin in early 2012 with a view to a detailed transition timetable being put together for all Community Plus and Community Libraries by the end of 2012. This will allow progress in recruiting and training volunteers to be assessed and appropriate action taken / support offered in areas where required.</p> <p>All volunteers will be given induction and ongoing training to ensure they are confident and competent undertaking their roles and tasks.</p> <p>A support network and communications tree has been devised and will be implemented to provide assistance and, where needed, immediate response, for volunteers to ensure that they and library users will always have access to professional support.</p> <p>Users across the county will have access to the full library catalogue via the online catalogue.</p>	
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	<p>Council-paid staff and volunteers will communicate the availability of this to users and non-users.</p> <p>The Council will review the operation of both the mobile and the home library services to ensure they remain integrated with the rest of the library service and contribute to meeting the needs of targeted user and community groups across the county.</p> <p>Increased online and social networking services targeted at young people will help them to make the best use of the books and information available without necessarily having to visit a library.</p>	
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Other protected characteristics

The increased involvement of volunteers has the potential to support each library in reflecting the diversity of its local community. Friends Groups will be supported to ensure volunteers are committed and trained with respect to the County's Comprehensive Equality Policy⁵, and volunteers will be supported as they develop the relevant experience and skills needed to help all library users. Friends Groups will also be supported to recruit volunteers that reflect the diversity of the local community, including those from under-represented groups.

The Council have not identified any particular impacts of these proposals on people with the following protected characteristics, beyond those discussed above (see particularly age, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity):

- Marriage or civil partnerships

Impact on staff

A total of 52 employees (21.5 full time equivalent) are employed within those libraries proposed to be Community Plus and Community Libraries. An EQIA has been carried out to assess the impact of these changes on all protected equality strands. It has been identified that the majority of staffing within these libraries are female: 98%. 91% are aged between 40 and 60+ years. None of the staff has a declared disability. Approximately 2% of the staff are from a black or ethnic minority background.

The service will continue its policy of holding a significant number of vacancies through temporary appointments which, together with natural staff turnover and redeployment opportunities throughout the service, will minimise the impact for staff.

The full impact on staff will be assessed separately once a decision on these proposals has been made and an implementation plan has been devised.

Impact on providers

There is no direct impact on providers as the Council will continue to be responsible for delivering the library service.

However, involving Friends' Groups and volunteers in the running of their local library will provide greater local engagement in the service and allow each library to more effectively reflect and serve local needs.

Impact on other Council services

⁵ <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/equality-and-cohesion>

The proposals are unlikely to affect Council services other than the library service itself. However, some libraries are on shared sites, and/or have long standing arrangements with other services including schools. Such arrangements will not be directly affected by these proposals, but individual libraries might wish to review and reshape their relationships with the other services involved during the three year transition period to ensure they are able to meet local needs as effectively as possible.