

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>CABINET 13 June 2011</b>
<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Review of Library Services</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Tom Jeffrey Executive Director, Community Services</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Sara Bashford, Cabinet Member for Customer Service, Culture &amp; Sport</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT:</b>	
<p>Libraries make an important contribution to the Council's corporate priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safer, stronger and more sustainable communities</li> <li>• Promoting economic growth and prosperity</li> <li>• Improving health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Achieving better outcomes for children and young people</li> <li>• Delivering high quality public services and improving value for money</li> </ul>	
<p><b>FINANCIAL IMPACT</b> These recommendations will enable potential savings and efficiencies to be established. Should the decision to engage in a full procurement exercise be made, then potential costs are currently estimated as £150k.</p>	
<p><b>FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.:</b> This is not a key executive decision at this stage.</p>	

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1.1 Consider the outcome of the public consultation on future options for the library service and the Equalities Impact Assessment on those options.
- 1.2 Agree that the Executive Director Community Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Culture and Sport proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service, and to do so jointly with the London Borough of Wandsworth.
- 1.3 Note the intention to bring a further report back to Cabinet on the outcome of the market testing to the meeting of the Cabinet in September 2011.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Further to the agreement of Cabinet at its meeting on 13 December 2010 (Min. ref. A145/10) officers commenced a full public consultation on options for the library service. The consultation was undertaken between 22 December 2010 and 20 February 2011. Detailed consideration of the responses received from the public consultation is set out in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.2 The Cabinet was originally due to receive a report back on the public consultation in March 2011 but which it was subsequently anticipated would be delayed until July 2011. However, it has been possible to bring that report earlier to this meeting.
- 2.3 Further to the Initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) on the options put forward for consultation, a full EIA has been undertaken in respect of the recommendations in this report and is attached as Appendix 2.
- 2.4 A strategic framework for the service is attached as Appendix 3.
- 2.5 Having considered the outcome of the consultation and the EIA, this report seeks agreement to proceed with market testing for interest in the provision of a library service.

## **3. DETAIL**

- 3.1 As a consequence of the global recession, Croydon Council, like all local authorities is facing significant reductions in its funding, 27% over four years.
- 3.1.1 In response to this challenge the council has launched a programme of service transformation to deliver efficiencies and savings. These include:
- Joining up of services to either co-locate or share management;
  - The outsourcing of some services;
  - The introduction of new governance models for some services e.g. trusts or social enterprise;
  - The development of community partnerships for the delivery of some services.
- 3.1.2 For the library service this has meant careful examination of its current and future costs and detailed consideration of possible approaches and models in order to achieve necessary savings and efficiencies.
- 3.1.3 It has considered closure of some of its buildings as well as how it might organise and deliver services in a different way e.g. linking with the voluntary and commercial sector, sharing services with other local authorities, and open market procurement.
- 3.1.4 The council has taken part in the London Libraries Change programme which has helpfully been developing new ideas to achieving savings through consortia such as the London Libraries Consortium, cross boundary provision, shared services and the elimination of duplication across services.

3.1.5 The council has also benefited from the Future Libraries Programme, a national initiative, which has been examining different opportunities and approaches for public sector library provision.

3.1.6 In December 2010, the council commenced formal public consultation on the options of possible closure of six library building closure options in order to progress possible saving and efficiencies in the service.

3.1.7 The consultation set out to:

- Inform staff, the public and other stakeholders of the proposed options;
- Develop an understanding of the reason for the proposed options;
- Seek feedback and assess the likely effect and impact of any proposed changes on service users so that these issues could be properly considered as part of the council's decision making process
- Allow reasonable and sufficient time for those being consulted to put their views to the council.

3.1.8 The consultation ran for over 8 weeks from 22 December 2010 to 20 February 2011.

3.1.9 A summary of the consultation is set out under Section 4 below, and attached as Appendix 1.

3.2 In considering the response to the consultation, it is also useful to set out the strategic direction and purpose of the Library Service as follows:

### **3.3 Statutory duties: Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964**

3.3.1 The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 (the Act) makes provision for regulating library services and sets out the duty of every library authority to provide a "comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof".

3.3.2 The Act sets out that, in fulfilling its duties:

"a library authority should have regard to keeping adequate stocks of books, other printed matter, pictures, records, films and other materials in sufficient number, range and quality to meet the public's requirements and the special needs of adult and children"; and

"encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the library service, and of providing advice as to its use and of making available such bibliographical and other information as may be required by persons using it";

3.3.3 In addition to supervision, the relevant Secretary of State has the duty to "promote the improvement of those services generally".

### **3.4 Strategic requirements and principles:**

3.4.1 In addition to the above statutory duties, and others e.g. 2010 Equalities Act requirements, the following requirements and principles underpin the delivery of the council's library service:

- 3.4.2 Provision of a sustainable quality service to Croydon residents through:
- The delivery of both core and targeted services;
  - Free services as per the 1964 Act, and discretionary services (which are chargeable)
  - Flexibility in the scope of services offered across the library building network responsive to local need and special requirements e.g. opening hours, ICT facilities, and special collections.

- 3.4.4 Reduction in the cost of library services through:
- Economies of scale e.g. maximising use of resources, streamlining of process, and optimum utilisation of assets;
  - Developing staff competencies, roles, and responsibilities; and
  - Where beneficial and viable, consideration of the option to transfer cost liabilities for buildings, stock and maintenance to third parties.

- 3.4.5 Driving continuous service improvement, innovation, and cost efficiency, with robust performance management.

### **3.5 Library Strategic Framework:**

- 3.5.1 The framework sets out the service strategy and it sits within Croydon's Community Strategy which presents the council's long-term vision and priorities for public services and intended community outcomes in Croydon.

- 3.5.2 The Community Strategy's vision identifies community priorities under six broad headings:

An Enterprising City  
A Learning City  
A Creative City  
A Connected City  
A Sustainable City  
A Caring City

- 3.5.3 Croydon's library service supports this vision by providing access to learning, inspiration, knowledge, enterprise and leisure for all communities in Croydon.

- 3.5.4 To deliver this vision the key priorities for Croydon's library services are to:
- Support the sustainable development of safer and happier individuals and communities
  - Improve health and wellbeing
  - Inspire learning, talent and creativity in young people and children
  - Promote economic growth, prosperity and aspiration through library services
  - Transform the environment and celebrate Croydon's identity and sense of place
  - Strive to deliver excellence which offers value for money
  - Empower local communities
  - Develop an integrated education, skills and employment offer
  - Target library service based on local community needs

- Work in partnership to develop joint initiatives

3.5.5 The full Library Strategic Framework is attached at Appendix 3.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 In this context, as highlighted in Section 3 above, the council commenced a formal public consultation on the future provision of the library service in December 2010.
- 4.2 The options approved for public consultation included those for closure of Norbury, Shirley, Sanderstead, South Norwood, Bradmore Green, Broad Green libraries. There was also a seventh option to do nothing.
- 4.3 The consultation was undertaken using a variety of methodologies so as to reach a wide number of consultees from all areas of the community. A questionnaire was developed to provide a standard format in which individuals could submit their views. A simplified version of the questionnaire was also designed specifically for children and young people. Both of these questionnaires were made available in hard copy and through an online survey.
- 4.4 In addition to the questionnaire, six public meetings were held, and workshops were undertaken with staff.
- 4.5 A number of consultees chose to communicate by letter and email through the specific library consultation mailbox that was set up by the council.
- 4.6 In total, 7,304 responses were received by the council including questionnaires, letters and emails. Eleven petitions totaling 15301 signatures were submitted to the council.
- 4.7 Detail of the responses to the consultation and comments on ideas put forward are set out in Appendix 1.
- 4.8 The responses unequivocally opposed any closures of library buildings and highlighted very clearly that any closures would have a significant negative impact on local communities.
- 4.9 Many people and organisations came forward as part of the consultation to say that they would like to be more closely involved in their libraries and that they would be keen to support e.g. by fundraising or volunteering.
- 4.10 The possible role of commercial and voluntary sector partners was a strong theme as was co-location and ways of increasing income generation.
- 4.11 Analysis of the responses highlighted that any closures would have a particular impact on:
- Children and young people
  - Community access to libraries
  - Individuals in deprived areas
  - Older people

- 4.12 The options were also subject to an initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA). Following and informed by the consultation, a full EqIA has been completed and this is summarised in paragraph 10 below and attached as Appendix 2.
- 4.13 The suggestions and variations that came forward in the consultation whilst being extremely helpful and clear about the value of the service and its buildings didn't provide sufficient savings to keep the libraries open with confidence over the next few years.
- 4.14 So, taking this into account, as well as the overwhelming opposition to closure of library buildings and the clearly identifiable impact on individuals and communities, and the EqIA, it was concluded that the best way to achieve the savings and efficiencies is through market testing for the external provision of the library service followed, subject to a positive outcome, by procurement of such a service.

## **5 Market Testing**

- 5.1 The market testing of the potential for external provision of the library service will be done in a way that will not compromise the principles under which any future procurement would be conducted. It will be undertaken in accordance with the following:
- Seeking to achieve good value for money
  - Ensuring a competitive process
  - Ensuring non-discrimination, with fair and transparent procedures, and equal treatment of all potential suppliers
  - Encouraging and ensuring continuous improvement in the delivery of Council services through the application of value for money principles
  - Incorporating effective and best practice procedures
  - With clarity recognizing the need for clear and understandable rules
  - Minimising risks and to protect the Council's interests and reputation
  - Ensuring controls and accountability, and always acting within the law
  - Responsive to any weaknesses identified by internal/external audit
  - Ensuring that regulations reflect the current procurement environment
  - Supporting the delivery of direct services
  - Setting out regulations which everyone complies with.
- 5.2 As well as identifying interest amongst possible providers, market testing should enable the council to establish a view on the selection of the most appropriate procurement route for a library service, and to identify the risks and opportunities of any procurement in detail.
- 5.3 The reasons for this approach are that the market for the provision of library services is not yet well developed so before putting forward any recommendation to pursue externalisation it is advised that the council learns more about the nature of the market and the track record of potential suppliers. An open market procurement process was successfully undertaken by Slough Borough Council last year.

- 5.4 A positive outcome for the market testing process would include:
- An identifiable market
  - Financial viability of the exercise
  - Opportunity to commission jointly with another London borough
- 5.5 Market testing may be followed by a procurement exercise which could anticipate responses from a range of providers including public, private and voluntary/third sector organisations e.g. a trust, a community interest company (CIC), a commercial company, or a local authority.
- 5.6 Opportunities for voluntary sector involvement such as volunteering and voluntary work can be included as part of the market testing dialogue and if feasible subsequently included in a procurement specification.
- 5.7 Opportunities for stakeholder engagement in the drawing up of a procurement specification will be identified.
- 5.8 Such an approach could deliver a number of the aspirations identified as desirable in the consultation, whilst delivering enough savings and efficiencies to avoid closures, as well as the council's statutory requirements.
- 5.9 The key outcomes of external procurement could include:
- Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network;
  - Potential for current services to continue;
  - Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points;
  - Opportunities for links with commercial businesses e.g. sponsorship, advertising, secondments, training, IT, café, retail and related businesses;
  - Increasing income generating opportunities;
  - Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, volunteering voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities;
  - Possibility of retaining the library strategy and policy within the council;
  - Possible service innovation.

## **6. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

There are currently no direct financial implications from the recommendation in this report.

## **1 Effect of the decision**

The decision to market test would enable the Council to assess whether there are likely to be future savings and efficiencies should procurement be progressed. The costs of market testing are estimated to be minimal, mainly consisting of officer time. If full open market procurement was undertaken, however, then the procurement costs are currently estimated to be in the region of £150k

## **2 Risk**

A full assessment of all the potential risks will be undertaken once the outcome of the market testing is known and the final option considered.

As this is the first time that the council has undertaken this type of exercise for the library service there could be uncertainty around the requirements, outcomes and specification of the exercise. This will be mitigated by developing the criteria for the market testing, and subsequent procurement exercise early in the process.

There could be insufficient interest from organisations during market testing requiring the council to question the value for money of carrying out the procurement exercise.

When exploring joint opportunities with the London Borough of Wandsworth differences in organisational priorities, governance arrangements and culture may exist which could lead to uncertainty in terms of governance and the setting of the objectives and outcome of the exercise. This could also delay decision making.

Challenges by means of judicial review could also arise at relevant stages of the decision making process.

## **3 Options**

There is the option of continuing with the current service; however this would be unlikely to produce significant efficiencies.

## **4 Future savings/efficiencies**

It is anticipated that future efficiencies will be identified as part of the recommendations of this report and should these be of a suitable level they will be incorporated within the Council's budget strategy as part of the rolling budget process.

(Approved by: Richard Simpson Director Financial Services)

## **7. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER**

7.1 The Council Solicitor comments that in respect of the proposals for the service these do not appear to directly engage any human rights issues. However, s.7 of the Libraries and Museums Act 1964 places a duty on library authorities 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof....' which may be considered to raise a statutory requirement to consult.

7.2 If decisions were made about the libraries without taking into account the responses to the consultation from those 'desiring to make use' of the service,

a Court might find any decision taken by the Council flawed and quash that decision on the basis of irrationality having not taken into account relevant considerations, and the effect of the proposals, for example in relation to their equalities impacts.

- 7.3 Insofar as the EIA has detailed a potential impact on those with disabilities duties are engaged under the Equalities Act 2010

The duty on the local authority (to promote disability equality in carrying out its functions) must be 'exercised in substance with rigour and an open mind'. This goes beyond mere reference to, or a general awareness of, the decision makers to the existence of the duty.

- 7.4 As regards any ultimate decision to pursue externalisation of the service, insofar as this would be a means to retain a comprehensive and efficient service without the closures previously proposed, at this stage it is not considered that a further public consultation would be required.

(Approved by: Gabriel MacGregor, Head of Legal Services (Corporate) on behalf of the Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer)

## **8. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 8.1 There is no specific impact arising from the strategy at this stage, however, its future implementation might necessitate a change of structure and skill mix of staff and an assessment should be made in this respect when planning for services, resulting in a workforce strategy/ plan. Potential outcomes could include restructure, redundancy and / or transfer of staff under TUPE regulations. There is a duty to consult with Trades Unions and staff on these proposals in line with council policies on restructure, redundancy or TUPE as applicable.

- 8.2 (Approved by: Chris Baldwin, HR business partner, on behalf of the director, Human Resources & Organisational Effectiveness)

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 9.1 A full EqIA has been conducted on the recommendation, and is attached at Appendix 2. It has utilised demographic desk research and the responses to the full public consultation exercise described in Appendix 1.

- 9.2 The assessment has identified that Croydon has the largest population of children and young people and will also see a greater proportion of older people in future years. Croydon also has a higher proportion of residents who are from BME groups than the overall pattern for London (40% compared to 35%). Croydon also has a larger than average proportion of people from a Muslim and Hindu faith compared to England.

- 9.3 The assessment has identified the main groups impacted are children and young people, older people, BME groups, specifically Asian, Black and Chinese groups, women, and people with disabilities.

- 9.4 The consultation highlighted that people from a BME background use libraries more frequently than the wider community (once a week or more), and access computers, courses and use the libraries for studying. Those consulted from a BME background felt closure of Croydon branch libraries would severely impact them.
- 9.5 77.8% of young people consulted said they “would mind a lot” if their local library were to close.
- 9.6 In general the responses received overwhelmingly opposed any closures to Croydon branch libraries and indicated that any closures would have a significant negative impact on local communities.
- 9.7 The decision to go out to market testing will enable the council to further inform the impacts identified through the responses received to the consultation. This may be done by retaining library provision (including potentially improved provision e.g. book stock or buildings), providing opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities and providing opportunities for library buildings to be improved, as well as benefit from co-location opportunities e.g. public service access points.
- 9.8 The Equalities Impact Assessment will be updated if a final recommendation is made to externalize the service.

## **10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

There is no direct environmental and design impact arising from this report

## **11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

There is no direct crime and disorder reduction impact arising from this report

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Croydon Library Service options consultation**

#### **Consultation findings and analysis report**

#### **Contents**

- 1 Executive Summary**
- 2 Report objectives**
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#### **1 Executive Summary**

1.1 A report was taken to the Cabinet meeting on 13 December 2010 outlining the following 7 options for the library building network:

- Option 1: Closure of Sanderstead Library
- Option 2: Closure of Norbury Library
- Option 3: Closure of Shirley Library
- Option 4: Closure of Bradmore Green Library
- Option 5: Closure of Broad Green Library
- Option 6: Closure of South Norwood Library
- Option 7: Do nothing

1.2 At this meeting Cabinet agreed to commence formal public consultation on these options for the future of the library building network.

1.3 The consultation set out to:

- Inform staff, the public and other stakeholders of the proposed options
- Develop an understanding of the reason for the proposed options
- Seek feedback and assess the likely effect and impact of any proposed changes on service users so that these issues could be properly considered as part of the council's decision making process

- Allow reasonable and sufficient time for those being consulted to put their views to the council
- 1.4 The consultation ran for over 8 weeks from 22 December 2010 to 20 February 2011
- 1.5 In total 7,304 responses were received to the consultation, including questionnaires, letters and emails. In addition we received 11 petitions totaling 15301 signatures.

## **1.6 Adult questionnaire summary**

- 1.6.1 92.2% of consultees stated that they were a library customer.
- 1.6.2 When asked which library they visited most Sanderstead received the highest percentage of responses with 18.2%. This was followed by Shirley (14.1%), South Norwood (11.9%) and Norbury (10.9%).
- 1.6.3 When asked which library they would visit if their local branch closed “None” received the highest percent of responses with 32.6%. This was followed by Central library with 23.8%.
- 1.6.4 63.8% of consultees felt that a closure would have a “Severe” impact on them as an individual or group. A further 32.3% of consultees felt there would be a moderate impact.

## **1.7 Summary of Children and Young People questionnaire**

- 1.7.1 88.3% of consultees said they were a library member.
- 1.7.2 When asked what was their local library Central library received the highest response with 20.8%. This was followed by South Norwood (18.0%), Broad Green (16.9%) and Sanderstead (15.2%).
- 1.7.3 77.8% of consultees said they “Would mind a lot” if their local library were to close

## **2 Report objectives**

- 2.1 This report sets out to:
- Outline the methodology used in delivering the consultation
  - Provide a summary and analysis of the consultation questionnaire responses
  - Identify the key issues and themes raised during the process including through the public meetings
  - Highlight the correspondence that was received during the consultation

## **3 Methodology**

- 3.1 The consultation was designed to reach a wide number of consultees, incorporating different methodologies to facilitate responses.

3.2 A comprehensive list of stakeholder consultees was developed. These included; local residents; service users and customers; schools; local groups and societies; Friends of libraries groups; and national sector bodies including Museum, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)

3.3 The consultation methodology was designed around a core questionnaire which was developed in order to provide a standard format in which individuals could submit their views. It was made available in hard copy and through an online survey.

3.4 The questionnaire asked eight questions:

1. **Which one of these describes you best?**
2. **Why do you visit the library?**
3. **How often do you visit a library?**
4. **Please tell us which Croydon library you visit the most?**
5. **If the library you visit most were to close, which of these libraries would you visit?**
6. **Please rank the options from 1 – 7 in order of preference**
7. **What impact would the closure of your public library have on you as an individual or group?**
8. **Thinking about libraries, what ideas do you have that you think would help save money?**

3.5 Questions on age, disability, gender and ethnicity were also included to help ensure that the questionnaire was completed by a fair representation of the local community.

3.6 In order to engage our younger users in the consultation a children and young people's questionnaire was also produced.

3.7 The children and young peoples questionnaire asked six questions:

1. **Are you a member of the library**
2. **Which of these libraries do you go to?**
3. **How would you feel if one of these libraries closed?**
4. **Who do you usually go to the library with?**
5. **How often do you go to the library?**
6. **What things do you do at the library?**

3.8 Workshops with key stakeholder groups such as staff were held as well as a number of public meetings for each of the libraries being consulted on.

3.9 A number of respondents chose to communicate directly by letter or email.

#### **4 Equalities analysis of questionnaire respondents**

4.1 Careful consideration should be given to the equality group breakdown of questionnaire respondents. Comparing the equalities breakdown for questionnaire respondents with census figures reveals some significant variance in the age, gender and race streams. The census data, although ten

years old, is the most comprehensive set of resident demographics data available.

4.1.1 *Ethnicity comparative breakdown* - The table below clearly demonstrates that the Asian and Black equality groups are underrepresented as a percentage of total respondents with Mixed and Other equality groups overrepresented

<b>What is your ethnic group? Please use the drop down arrows.</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Questionnaire responses</b>	<b>Population figures (2001 census)</b>
White	64.9%	66.5%
Mixed	7.2%	4.1%
Asian	11.1%	13%
Black	9.4%	14.6%
Other	7.4%	1.8%

4.1.2 *Age group comparative breakdown* - The table below demonstrates a significant under representation of male respondents.

<b>What is your gender?</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Questionnaire responses</b>	<b>Population figures (2001 census)</b>
Male	35.3%	48.1%
Female	64.7%	51.9%

4.1.3 *Gender comparative breakdown* - The table below clearly demonstrates that those 55 and older are significantly overrepresented as a percentage of the total respondents and that the 25 to 54 age bracket is significantly underrepresented.

<b>How old are you?</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Questionnaire responses</b>	<b>Population figures (2001 census)</b>
0-24	31.8%	32.7%
25 to 54	35.8%	45.1%
55 and older	32.4%	22.2%

4.1.4 The equalities information received through this consultation has been used to inform the development of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). Additional equalities analysis can be found within the EqIA.

## 5 Analysis of Adult Questionnaire

### 5.1 Question 1. Which of the following describes you best?

#### 5.1.1 Statistical review

A total of 4566 people responded to this question. 92.2% of consultees stated that they were a library customer.

<b>Which one of these describes you best? (tick one)</b>		
<b>Answer options</b>	<b>Response percent</b>	<b>Response count</b>
I am a library customer	92.2%	4210
I am a friend or relative of a library customer	3.0%	135
I am a member of library staff	1.6%	75
I use other facilities in the library (e.g. room hire)	0.5%	25
I represent a community group	1.2%	55
I am responding on behalf of an organisation	0.7%	30
Other (please specify)	0.8%	38
<b>Answered question</b>		<b>4568</b>
<b>Skipped question</b>		<b>158</b>

### 5.2 Question 2 – What do you visit the library for?

#### 5.2.1 Statistical review

A total of 4556 people responded to this question. 93.8% of responses from consultees indicated that they used the library “to borrow/return books”. This was followed by “to read, study or to work (39%), to hire/return CDs or DVDs (37.8%), to use the computers (34.2%) and research topics e.g. local or family history (33%).

<b>What do you visit the library for? Please tick all that apply</b>		
<b>Answer options</b>	<b>Response percent</b>	<b>Response count</b>
To borrow/return books	93.8%	4276
To hire/return CDs or DVDs	37.7%	1720
To use the computers	34.2%	1556
To attend a course (e.g. computing courses)	6.3%	288
To attend Children’s Events (e.g. Under 5s session)	25.1%	1142
To attend events for adults (e.g. reading group or author event)	12.8%	584
To meet with friends	13.1%	595
To read, study or to work	39.1%	1779
Research topics e.g. local or family history	33.0%	1503
Other (please state below)	3.6%	164
<b>Answered question</b>		<b>4558</b>
<b>Skipped question</b>		<b>168</b>

### 5.3 Question 3 – How often do you visit the library service?

#### 5.3.1 Statistical review

A total of 4456 people responded to this question. The most common response from consultees was that they visited “weekly” (30.3%). This was followed by Fortnightly (23.9%) and Monthly (22.6%).

<b>How often do you visit the library service? Please tick one option only</b>		
<b>Answer options</b>	<b>Response percent</b>	<b>Response count</b>
More than once a week	19.5%	868
Weekly	30.3%	1352
Fortnightly	23.9%	1067
Monthly	22.6%	1007
Other (please specify)	3.7%	164
<b>Answered question</b>		<b>4458</b>
<b>Skipped question</b>		<b>268</b>

### 5.4 Question 4 – Please tell us which Croydon Library you visit most?

#### 5.4.1 Statistical review

A total of 4557 responses were received to this question. Sanderstead received the highest percentage of responses with 18.2%. This was followed by Shirley (14.1%), South Norwood (11.9%) and Norbury (10.9%).

<b>Please tell us which Croydon Library you visit most</b>		
<b>Answer options</b>	<b>Response percent</b>	<b>Response count</b>
Central library	8.9%	408
Ashburton	2.2%	101
Bradmore Green	9.6%	439
Broad Green	6.6%	303
Coulsdon	2.7%	123
New Addington	1.4%	62
Norbury	10.9%	498
Purley	3.0%	139
Sanderstead	18.2%	830
Selsdon	8.9%	406
Shirley	14.1%	643
South Norwood	11.9%	541
Thornton Heath	1.1%	48
None	0.4%	18
<b>Answered question</b>		<b>4559</b>
<b>Skipped question</b>		<b>167</b>

**5.5 Question 5 – If the library you visit most were to close, which of these libraries would you visit?**

**5.5.1 Statistical analysis**

A total of 4170 responses were received to this question. “None” received the highest percent of responses with 32.6%. This was followed by Central library with 23.8%.

<b>If the library you visit most were to close, which of these libraries would you visit?</b>		
<b>Answer options</b>	<b>Response percent</b>	<b>Response count</b>
Central library	23.8%	992
Ashburton	5.2%	218
Bradmore Green	1.0%	42
Broad Green	1.4%	58
Coulsdon	5.8%	240
New Addington	1.1%	46
Norbury	1.1%	44
Purley	4.3%	181
Sanderstead	5.3%	220
Selsdon	9.9%	414
Shirley	1.6%	65
South Norwood	1.9%	81
Thornton Heath	5.1%	211
None	32.6%	1360
If you answered 'none ' please explain further		595
<b>Answered question</b>		<b>4172</b>
<b>Skipped question</b>		<b>554</b>

**5.6 Question 6 – Please rank the options from 1 to 7 in order of preference.**

As a result of comments and complaints received in relation to the wording of this question no analysis has been undertaken on the responses.

**5.7 Question 7 – What impact would the closure of you public library have on you as an individual or group?**

**5.7.1 Statistical analysis**

A total of 4233 consultees responded to this question. 63.8% of consultees felt that a closure would have a “Severe” impact on them as an individual or group. A further 32.3% of consultees felt there would be a moderate impact.

<b>What impact would the closure of you public library have on you as an individual or group?</b>		
<b>Answer options</b>	<b>Response percent</b>	<b>Response count</b>
Little or none	3.8%	162
Moderate	32.3%	1369
Severe	63.8%	2704
Please explain further:		1073
<b>Answered question</b>		<b>4235</b>
<b>Skipped question</b>		<b>491</b>

### 5.7.2 Comments

Additional comments were raised regarding the impact of a reduction in funding. These comments broadly relate to the following themes: Access, children and young people, deprived areas, BME groups

### 5.7.3 CYP

Local libraries offer children and young people the opportunity to gain vital life skills and knowledge in a fun, safe and stimulating environments, including homework clubs.

#### Sample quotes

“The library is a central part of our lives and I believe that my children’s love of books and familiarity with using the library catalogues has put them in good stead for literacy development, success at school and in later life.”

“My teenage children are avid readers and keeping up with their large appetite for reading material would be very costly without the library. Also for school projects and just advise on good sources for information. I personally use Norbury Library for focused work as it has the best quiet study room in my locality and as working at home is nigh on impossible I rely on that facility”

### 5.7.4 Access

Library branches placed in the heart of communities provide communities with easy access to information and services. Despite the strong local transport network it would be very difficult for a large number of current users to travel to alternative libraries should their local one close.

#### Sample quotes

“Sanderstead Library is within a 10 minute walk from my home. This is also a suitable distance for my children to walk. Walking to the next nearest library is not an option for younger children and would require a car journey. I would assume this to be the case for a large amount of people if their local library was to close.”

“Currently I am able to walk to the library. This is very important as, following a

heart attack, my Dr advises me that it is imperative and visiting the library gives me a walk with a purpose. I do not have a computer at home and attending the library gives me access to the internet, email and office and allows me to communicate in this modern world.”

#### 5.7.5 Deprived areas

Libraries in the most deprived areas of the borough are often the hub of the community and play a major role in improving language and literacy skills and building community cohesion.

##### Sample quotes

“The closure of any library would be very sad but to close a library in an area like South Norwood or Thornton Heath would be a disaster, particularly for children in the locality. South Norwood is not an affluent area and it is so important to our children that they have access to books, both for educational purposes and for the sheer pleasure of reading.”

“In a deprived area, we bring children and parents in to the world of books and relationships with the library staff, particularly the children's librarian.”

“Broad Green: the closure of Broad Green library would have a strongly negative effect on the area, especially among the children and young people, who need this free resource to give them a chance in life. Many people in the area are disadvantaged, with little disposable income for activities costing money, and for many their first language is not English.”

#### 5.7.6 Older people

The library service plays a vital role in giving older people a safe local venue where they can access information and interact with others.

##### Sample quotes

“Libraries become more important as you become older, with families grown up and more leisure time available for reading and research. After retirement they are even more important, not only for information, but for reading in order to keep brains stimulated to delay the onset of dementia, etc, and keep people active and interested in life generally.”

“The closure of Sanderstead and/or Shirley would be a major blow for people on their 70's and 80's, who probably can no longer drive or walk long distances to the nearest alternatives. Older friends of ours read several books a month and the loss of this service would drastically reduce their quality of life.”

“My grandmother relies on Sanderstead library for books, she lives alone and is lonely and the library is vital in her meeting people and keeping her mind going with books.”

**5.8 Question 8 - Thinking about libraries, what ideas do you have that you think would help save money?**

**5.8.1 Statistical review**

There were a total of 1054 responses to this question many of which included more than one idea in the response. Several ideas, listed in the table at 5.8.2 below, were recurring across the consultation. Officer response to the ideas proposed is listed below:

**5.8.2 Summary of ideas proposed**

<b>Public Responses</b>	<b>Officer comments</b>	<b>No of comments</b>
Explore links with commercial businesses i.e. outsourcing, sponsorship, advertising, café, retail	Developing links with commercial businesses has the potential to have a positive impact on the library service. These links could enable the library service to increase income, provide an improved book stock, further develop the current level of provision and make investments in library buildings.	412
Greater use of volunteers to supplement professional staff	There are opportunities to increase community involvement through community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience and fundraising activities. An increase community involvement in library services will see a positive impact on the skills and competencies of local communities as individuals will have opportunities to participate in training and support programmes.	313
Reduce opening hours	Opening hours have been reduced in recent years as a result of previous efficiency drives. Further reduction in opening hours could be explored but would be unlikely to provide the council with a significant saving.	261
Increase charge for the use of computers and printers	Easy access to computers, the internet and printing facilities are a key part of the library offer. An increase in the price of these services will not significantly increase income and is likely to prohibit access by individuals most in need of this service. Exploring links with commercial businesses could enable the council to extend current IT provision without needing to increase prices.	149
Increase fines for overdue books	Charges for overdue items are reviewed annually and regularly amended. In doing so the council is mindful that the charge should not act as a barrier to usage or impact on the duty to provide a service as per the 1964 Act. . Overdue charges must also be in line with overdue charges in other local authorities.	346

Charge for lending	The 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act prohibits charging for the lending of printed materials. The library service already charges for other items such as DVD's, CD's, printing etc.	74
Co-location of services e.g. CALAT	Co-locating services has the potential to enable the council to make improvements to library buildings as well provide public service access points in the heart of communities that offer a wide range of information and support. The council are currently exploring co-location opportunities with a range of partners for library services in New Addington.	168
Sell stationery and other library related goods	Opportunities exist to develop a retail offer in local libraries by working in partnership with commercial businesses. There are examples of good practice and learning from other UK libraries that receive a good level income from their retail offer. .	295
Joint opening hours between libraries	The service is open to exploring all options on opening hours, However reducing opening hours at one library to maintain opening hours at another is not always the best option as buildings and locations vary. The overall impact of splitting hours can damage usage of libraries disproportionately and impact negatively on a greater number of people.	164

## 6 Analysis of Children and Young Peoples questionnaire

### 6.1 Question 1 - Are you a member of the library?

#### 6.1.1 Statistical review

Of the 1536 responses to this question, 88.3% said "Yes" they were a member.

Are you a member of the library?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	88.3%	1357
No	11.7%	179
<b>answered question</b>		<b>1536</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>129</b>

### 6.2 Question 2 - Which of these libraries do you go to?

#### 6.2.1 Statistical review

There were a total of 1614 responses to this question with the Central library having the highest response with 20.8%. This was followed by South Norwood

(18.0%), Broad Green (16.9%) and Sanderstead (15.2%).

<b>Which of these libraries do you go to? (You can tick more than one box)</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Central library	20.8%	335
Ashburton	10.5%	169
Bradmore Green	12.0%	194
Broad Green	16.9%	272
Coulsdon	5.6%	90
New Addington	3.7%	60
Norbury	11.4%	184
Purley	7.3%	118
Sanderstead	15.2%	245
Selsdon	7.4%	119
Shirley	11.3%	182
South Norwood	18.0%	290
Thornton Heath	11.6%	188
None	4.2%	68
<b>answered question</b>		<b>1614</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>51</b>

### 6.3 Question 3 - How would you feel if one of these libraries closed?

#### 6.3.1 Statistical review

Consultees were asked to rank how they would feel on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being wouldn't mind and 5 being would mind a lot.

1609 responses were received to this question. 77.8% of consultees chose 5 (Would mind a lot). The overall average rating was 4.54.

<b>How would you feel if one of these libraries closed? Sanderstead, Norbury, Shirley, Bradmore Green, Broad Green, South Norwood (Please use the scale below to tell us how you would feel)</b>							
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>1 = Wouldn't mind</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5 = Would mind a lot</b>	<b>Rating Average</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
	68	38	108	144	1251	4.54	1609
Please explain why you feel this way:							167
<b>answered question</b>							<b>1609</b>
<b>skipped question</b>							<b>56</b>

### 6.4 Question 4 - Who do you usually go to the library with?

#### 6.4.1 Statistical review

In total 1554 children and young people responded to this question. "Someone from my family" had the highest response with 82.0%.

<b>Who do you usually go to the library with? (You can tick more than one box)</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Someone from my family	82.0%	1274
My friends	22.1%	343
I go on my own	23.2%	360
My school	17.4%	270
My child minder / carer	5.2%	81
My nursery/ playgroup	3.0%	47
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>1554</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>111</b>

## 6.5 Question 5 - How often do you go to the library?

### 6.5.1 Statistical overview

1519 children and young people responded to this question. “Weekly” was the most common response (29%) followed by “More than once a week” (27.7%).

<b>How often do you go to the library?</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
More than once a week	27.7%	421
Weekly	29.0%	441
Fortnightly	17.1%	260
Monthly	16.5%	250
Other (please tell us what this is)	9.7%	147
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>1519</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>146</b>

## 6.6. Question 6 - What things do you do at the library?

### 6.6.1 Statistical overview

Of the 1543 responses to this question, “Borrow books” had the highest response with 88.9%. This was followed by “Read, study of work” (46.1%).

<b>What things do you do at the library? (You can tick more than one box)</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Borrow books	88.2%	1361
Borrow CDs or DVDs	41.5%	641
Read, study or work	46.1%	711
Use the computers	43.9%	678
Meet friends	26.8%	413
Go to Homework Help Club	19.8%	305
Go to reading/ writing group	11.0%	170

Teen Summer Reads	10.2%	157
Summer Book Trail	39.1%	603
Event/ holiday activity	17.2%	266
Rhymetime/ Wiggle and Jiggle	17.6%	271
Storytime	19.0%	293
Other	1.4%	21
Other (please state below)	2.1%	32
<b>answered question</b>		<b>1543</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>122</b>

## 7. Public Meetings

7.1 Six public meetings were held during the consultation period, one for each of the libraries highlighted in the proposals. Over 1400 people attended the public meetings.

7.2 The public meetings provided residents with an opportunity to put forward questions or statements to the Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Culture and Sport. It was clear from the comments received that those in attendance highly valued local libraries and whilst they understood the councils need to make financial savings they did not want to see libraries close.

7.3 The range of comments showed variations in the aspirations of different library users and types of issues being raised in differing parts of the borough.

7.4 An overview of the comments received at these meetings can be found under the themes below.

### 7.4.1 Consultation process

Consultation had been inadequately advertised and the questionnaire was misleading and unclear. Question 6 in particular was a cause for concern as it put libraries up against each other and asked the public to choose one branch over another. *Residents also expressed little confidence in the consultations integrity as there was a feeling that a decision on the future of the library service had already been made.*

### 7.4.2 Volunteers

*There is a role for volunteers in the library service however this should be supplementary to paid professionals and not instead of. Any introduction of volunteer models should include comprehensive training opportunities.*

### 7.4.3 Greater links to commercial businesses

*The council should explore links with commercial sector in relation to running the library service. The development of such links could lead to reduced back office costs, increase in sponsorship and other income generating opportunities.*

### 7.4.4 Criteria for closing

*Residents felt unclear as to what the criteria for choosing the six libraries was and indeed what criteria the council will use to assess whether a library is chosen for closure at the end of the consultation. Residents in particular wanted to know what they could do to help their local library remain open.*

#### 7.4.5 Access to alternative libraries

*Alternative libraries are not in close proximity to current provisions. Many examples were given whereby residents would need to get 2 buses to access a library should there local branch close. It was felt that these access issues would lead to a lower usage of the library service.*

#### 7.4.6 Covenant on library buildings

*Comments highlighted that some library buildings were under covenant and therefore consideration would need to be given to this when taking decisions on potential closures.*

#### 7.4.7 Deprived areas

*Uncertainty at how the council could consider closures to libraries in some of the most deprived areas in the borough. Households in these areas often do not have access to books and the internet therefore the loss of their local library would take away their only access to vital support services. Libraries in deprived areas also provide support to children and families with English as their second language.*

#### 7.4.8 Impact on Children and Young People

*Libraries are buildings of knowledge that provide children with access to a safe, local educational environment. Any closures would negatively impact local schools as they signpost children and young people to them to access vital out of school education.*

#### 7.4.9 Closed Library buildings

*There were questions as to what would happen to the buildings should libraries close. In particular residents were concerned that buildings would be sold off for development or left derelict becoming local eyesores*

#### 7.4.10 Long lasting impact

*Negative impact will not only be felt immediately but also in the years to come. Losing local libraries may save resources now but will cost more in adult services in the future.*

#### 7.4.11 Library stock

*Current stock has deteriorated over the past years which will have undoubtedly impacted the usage figures for libraries.*

#### 7.4.12 Social hubs of the community

*Libraries are much more than just a place for books. They are social hubs whereby people from all parts of the community come together and interact in a positive manner. Libraries provide the unemployed, older people, new mums and other vulnerable people with a local lifeline to services and support.*

#### 7.4.13 Capacity of alternative libraries

*Concerns were raised as to whether the suggested alternative libraries could cope with an influx of users from neighbouring wards. It was felt that these alternatives were already at capacity and therefore council investment would be needed to ensure they have adequate stock and IT provisions*

#### 7.4.14 Library cuts in the context of broader council spending

Concerns were raised over the councils wider spending on areas such as your croydon paper, new offices and increases to councilor expenses. Residents felt this money could be better used to support frontline services

#### 7.4.15 Opening hours

Suggestions to reduce opening hours as an alternative to closures. Opening hours could potentially be increased again at a later date as and when financial pressures are elevated. Also requests to explore split/shared opening hours between neighbouring libraries.

## 8. Correspondence

8.1 A specific libraries consultation mailbox was established to provide consultees with a single portal to direct their comments and questions. The mailbox was well used with 654 emails received. The recurring themes are summarised below.

Themes	Responses
How is the council Consulting	72
Challenges to accuracy of information provided in consultation documents	98
Requests for further information	124
Financial costs of delivering the service	
Impact upon local community	438
Value of the library as a community facility	362
Access to alternative library provision	239
Alternative proposals for funding the service, reducing costs and increasing income	175
Introduction of volunteer run libraries	231
Timescales for making and implementing decisions	136
Council requirements under the 1964 Libraries act	143

8.2 In addition 261 letters protesting against the proposals were received

### 8.3 Detailed enquiries and requests for information

8.3.1 During the consultation period detailed enquiries and information requests were received. These requests and enquiries can be split into a number of themes:

□

- Clarification on the rationale behind choosing these six libraries
- Clarification on whether deprivation factors will be taken in to consideration making any final decision on the proposals
- Detailed breakdown of the library service costs

- Challenges on the published user and issue numbers.
- Highlighting the councils responsibility to comply with the 1964 Library Act/
- Concerns around access and transport to alternative provisions
- Detailed breakdown of library management structure including costs
- Process of handing over a Library to a Voluntary Organisation.
- Full analysis of any central costs a local stand alone Library would need to meet to provide a full service.
- Support and training on offer to volunteers should a volunteer run library model be adopted.

8.3.2 Several Freedom of Information requests have also been received.

8.3.3 A total of 11 petitions totaling 15301 signatures were received during the consultation period.

## **9 Conclusion of findings**

9.1 There was large scale public response to the consultation with communities from all six libraries providing strong representation as to the positive contribution their local library makes to their quality of life.

9.2 The responses received during the consultation overwhelmingly oppose any closures to Croydon branch libraries

9.3 The consultation findings report plays a significant role in informing a decision on the future of the library service but is not the sole consideration. In take taking a decision the council will also pay close regard to the resources currently available, alternative ways to run the library service with reduced funds and an Equality Impact Assessment which identifies and addresses the impact any decisions will have on local community groups.

# **Review of Library Services**

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

## APPENDIX 2 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

### SECTION 1: SUMMARY OF EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

1.1	Details of the Policy, Strategy, Function, Project or Activity
	<p>Title of EqIA:</p> <p>Date of EqIA: May 4 2011</p> <p>State whether EqIA is on a policy, strategy, function, project or activity or a combination:</p> <p><b>Function</b></p> <p>Indicate whether it is a 'new' or an 'existing' policy, strategy, function, project or activity:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> New</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Existing</p>
1.2	Details of the person responsible for the EqIA
	<p>Full Name: Ed McDermott</p> <p>Position: Cultural planning officer</p> <p>Department: Community Services</p> <p>Telephone number: 62228</p>

### 1.3 What is the aim and objective of the policy, strategy, function, project or activity?

As a consequence of the global recession, Croydon Council like all local authorities is facing significant reductions in its funding, 27% over four years.

In response to this challenge the council has launched a programme of service transformation to deliver efficiencies and savings. These include;

- Joining up of services to either co-locate or share management
- The outsourcing of some services
- The introduction of new governance models for some services e.g. trusts or social enterprise
- The development of community partnerships for the delivery of some services

For the Library Service, this provides an opportunity to examine afresh its strategic direction, to clarify its purpose, ensure sustainable services into the future, as well as deliver efficiencies and savings. In undertaking this it needs to take into account the following:

#### **Statutory duties: Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964**

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 makes provision for regulating library services and sets out the duty of every library authority to provide a “comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof”.

The Act sets out that, in fulfilling its duties,

“a library authority should have regard to keeping adequate stocks of books, other printed matter, pictures, records, films and other materials in sufficient number, range and quality to meet the public’s requirements and the special needs of adult and children”

“encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the library service, and of providing advice as to its use and of making available such bibliographical and other information as may be required by persons using it;

In addition to supervision, the relevant Secretary of State has the duty to “promote the improvement of those services generally”.

#### **Strategic requirements and principles**

The following requirements and principles underpin the evaluation of the options for delivery of the council’s library service, in addition to the council’s statutory duty under the 1964 Public Library and Museums Act:

- Demonstration of fulfilment of statutory obligations for provision of library services to meet local needs, and the 2011 Equalities Bill

requirements.

- Provision of a sustainable quality service to Croydon residents through:
  - The delivery of both core and targeted services
  - Free services as per the 1964 Act, and discretionary services (which are chargeable)
  - Flexibility in the scope of services offered across the library building network responsive to local need and special requirements e.g. opening hours, ICT facilities, and special collections.
- Reduction in the cost of library services through:
  - Economies of scale e.g. maximising use of resources, streamlining of process, and optimum utilisation of assets;
  - Developing staff competencies, roles, and responsibilities; and
  - Where beneficial and viable, transferring cost liabilities for buildings, stock and maintenance.
- Driving continuous service improvement, innovation, and cost efficiency, with robust performance management.

This purpose of this Equalities Impact Assessment is to assess the equalities impact of the decision by the council to market test the procurement of the borough's library service, whether individually or jointly with another London borough.

This approach is recommended because it has the potential to realise the following:

- Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network
- Potential for current services to continue.
- Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points.
- Opportunities for links with commercial businesses e.g. sponsorship, advertising, secondments, training, IT, café, retail and related businesses
- Increasing income generating opportunities
- Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.
- Possibility of retaining the library strategy and policy within the council.
- Possible service innovation.

## SECTION 2: SCOPING THE ASSESSMENT

### 2.1 What information is currently available about the different protected groups that the policy, strategy, function, project or activity is likely to effect? (for examples see guidance)

#### **Current Croydon Library Service**

Croydon Library Service supports the educational, economic social and cultural life of the borough. It is achieved by the provision of multimedia materials in printed, audio-visual and electronic formats, and by providing formal and informal opportunities for learning and participation.

Digital citizenship is supported through the People's Network and a range of online services available remotely using the council's website. Learning is further supported through access to study space and home work support. The service is underpinned by a skilled workforce focused on delivering the highest quality customer service.

The service has a central library, 12 community libraries and a home library service. In addition to the core library offer, it provides targeted services, many in partnership with other agencies.

#### Core services

- Books, e-books, CDs, DVDs and downloads for loan in a range of formats and languages
- Information services
- 24 hour online access to library catalogue, renewal and reservations and information sources
- Home library service delivers books and other items to people who cannot get out of their own homes or are in residential care
- Free PC and internet access
- A year round programme of events and activities, including cultural celebrations, reading promotions, Summer Reading Scheme, reading groups, Family Learning sessions, ICT for older people,
- Study space

#### Targeted services:

- Next Step, Careers Information Advice and guidance
- Study support provision through a network of homework clubs

- Early years provision with extended Bookstart and early years programmes
- Literacy support with reading schemes, groups family learning and promotions
- Business information support
- ICT training
- ICT learning centre at Thornton Heath Library
- health advice through Healthy Living Centre, Central Library

### **Borough profile**

According to population projections, there are 335,094 people in Croydon; the largest borough population in London. There are over 80,000 children and young people aged 0-19 years living in Croydon, which is the largest population of children and young people in London. However, over the next twenty years, Croydon's population will contain a greater proportion of people aged above 60 years of age.

There are higher proportions of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in the North of the borough compared to the South. Wards such as West Thornton and Broad Green contain some of the highest levels of ethnic diversity in London and England. Whilst the Centre and South tend to be less diverse, changes in the ethnicity of the school-aged population indicates that the ethnic make up of all neighbourhoods will continue to change over the next twenty years.

Croydon is home to a variety of faiths, but has a larger than average proportion of people from a Muslim and Hindu faith compared to England. Wards in the North have a greater diversity of faiths with a larger proportion of Muslims and Hindus compared to the borough average.

**2.2 What are your information gaps? For example service user data, or employment data on a particular protected group. What steps are you/have you taken to fill them as part of this assessment?**

**The consultation which was undertaken supported data that the council already has. As part of the questionnaires produced equalities data was captured to help fill gaps in library user data - this is outlined in the next section.**

**2.3 Who have you engaged with (staff, service users, community groups etc)?**

**Describe the methods of engagement you used**

**What are the issues arising from the engagement?**

**What are the outcomes of this engagement?**

**What engagement did not or could not take place?**

On 13 December 2010 Cabinet approved a public consultation on the following options:

- Option 1 – closure of Sanderstead library
- Option 2 – closure of Norbury library
- Option 3 – closure of Shirley library
- Option 4 – closure of Bradmore Green library

- Option 5 – closure of Broad Green library
- Option 6 – closure of South Norwood library
- Option 7 – Do nothing

The consultation set out to:

- Inform staff, the public and other stakeholders of the proposed options
- Develop an understanding of the reason for the proposed options
- Seek feedback and assess the likely effect and impact of any proposed changes on service users so that these issues could be properly considered as part of the council's decision making process
- Allow reasonable and sufficient time for those being consulted to put their views to the council

The consultation ran for over 8 weeks from 22 December 2010 to 20 February 2011

In total 7,304 responses were received to the consultation, including questionnaires, letters and emails. In addition we received 11 petitions totalling 15301 signatures.

## **Methodology**

The consultation was designed to reach a wide number of consultees, incorporating different methodologies to facilitate responses. A comprehensive list of stakeholder consultees was developed. These included; local residents; service users and customers; schools; local groups and societies; Friends of libraries groups; and national sector bodies including Museum, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)

The consultation methodology was designed around a core questionnaire which was developed in order to provide a standard format in which individuals could submit their views. It was made available in hard copy and through an online survey.

The questionnaire asked eight questions:

- 1. Which one of these describes you best?**
- 2. Why do you visit the library?**
- 3. How often do you visit a library?**
- 4. Please tell us which Croydon library you visit the most?**
- 5. If the library you visit most were to close, which of these libraries would you visit?**
- 6. Please rank the options from 1 – 7 in order of preference**
- 7. What impact would the closure of your public library have on you as an individual or group?**
- 8. Thinking about libraries, what ideas do you have that you think would help save money?**

Questions on age, disability, gender and ethnicity were also included to help ensure that the questionnaire was completed by a fair representation of the local community.

In order to engage our younger users in the consultation a children and young people’s questionnaire was also produced. The children and young peoples questionnaire asked six questions:

1. Are you a member of the library
2. Which of these libraries do you go to?
3. How would you feel if one of these libraries closed?
4. Who do you usually go to the library with?
5. How often do you go to the library?
6. What things do you do at the library?

Workshops with key stakeholder groups such as staff were held as well as a number of public meetings for each of the libraries being consulted on. A number of respondents chose to communicate directly by letter or email.

### Equalities analysis of questionnaire respondents

Careful consideration was given to the equality group breakdown of questionnaire respondents. Comparing the equalities breakdown for questionnaire respondents with census figures reveals some significant variance in the age, gender and race streams. The census data, although ten years old, is the most comprehensive set of resident demographics data available.

*Ethnicity comparative breakdown* - The table below clearly demonstrates that the Asian and Black equality groups are underrepresented as a percentage of total respondents with Mixed and Other equality groups overrepresented

<b>What is your ethnic group? Please use the drop down arrows.</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Questionnaire responses</b>	<b>Population figures (2001 census)</b>
White	64.9%	66.5%
Mixed	7.2%	4.1%
Asian	11.1%	13%

Black	9.4%	14.6%
Other	7.4%	1.8%

*Age group comparative breakdown* - The table below demonstrates a significant under representation of male respondents.

<b>What is your gender?</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Questionnaire responses</b>	<b>Population figures (2001 census)</b>
Male	35.3%	48.1%
Female	64.7%	51.9%

*Gender comparative breakdown* - The table below clearly demonstrates that those 55 and older are significantly overrepresented as a percentage of the total respondents and that the 25 to 54 age bracket is significantly underrepresented.

<b>How old are you?</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Questionnaire responses</b>	<b>Population figures (2001 census)</b>
0-24	31.8%	32.7%
25 to 54	35.8%	45.1%
55 and older	32.4%	22.2%

### **Key consultation findings**

- 49.8% of respondents attend the library either weekly (30.3%) or more than once a week (19.5%)
- 63.8% of respondents felt that the closure of their public library would severely impact them, with a further 32.3% of respondents feeling that library closures would have a moderate impact
- 34.2% of respondents visit the library to use computers
- 39.1% of respondents visit the library for reading/study and work
- 25.1% of respondents visit the library to attend children's events e.g. under 5 sessions

## **Key consultation findings – Equalities and protected groups**

- The findings identify that respondents from a BME background attend the library on a more regular basis compared to the overall group. The findings found that people from a mixed (25.5%), Asian (30.4%), Black (36.8%) or Chinese (37.9%) attend the library more than once a week compared with the overall respondent figure of 19.5%.
- Respondents from an Asian (75.3%) and Black (75.1%) background felt the impact of closing libraries would be severe, compared with the overall respondent figure of 63.8%
- In terms of library uses the following was identified as part of the consultation:
  - Respondents from an Asian (47.8%), Black (62.8%) and Chinese (58.1%) background used library computers compared with the overall respondent figure of 34.2%
  - Respondents that were 55 or over (7.7%), or are from an Asian (7.5%), Black (7.2%) or Chinese (9.7%) background attend courses at the library compared with the overall respondent figure of 6.3%
  - Respondents from an Asian (56.5%), Black (60.4%), and Chinese (48.4) attend the library to read/study or work compared with the overall respondent figure of 39.1% or those from a white background, 34.3%.
  - Male respondents (43.8%) attend the library to read/study or work compared with the overall respondent figure of 39.1%.

## **Summary of Children and Young People questionnaire**

- 88.3% of consultees said they were a library member.
- When asked what was their local library Central library received the highest response with 20.8%. This was followed by South Norwood (18.0%), Broad Green (16.9%) and Sanderstead (15.2%).
- 77.8% of consultees said they “Would mind a lot” if their local library were to close.
- 82% of consultees said they attended the library with someone from their family

## **Key consultation findings - non quantified**

In response to question 7, ‘What impact would the closure of your public library have on you as an individual or group?’ a total of 4233 consultees responded to this question. 63.8% of consultees felt that a closure would have a “Severe” impact on them as an individual or group. A further 32.3% of consultees felt there would be a moderate impact.

Comments were also submitted as part of this question with the following equalities impacts:

### **Children and young people**

Local libraries offer children and young people the opportunity to gain vital life skills and knowledge in a fun, safe and stimulating environments, including homework clubs.

### Sample quotes

“The library is a central part of our lives and I believe that my children’s love of books and familiarity with using the library catalogues has put them in good stead for literacy development, success at school and in later life.”

“My teenage children are avid readers and keeping up with their large appetite for reading material would be very costly without the library. Also for school projects and just advise on good sources for information. I personally use Norbury Library for focused work as it has the best quiet study room in my locality and as working at home is nigh on impossible I rely on that facility”

### **Access**

Library branches placed in the heart of communities provide communities with easy access to information and services. Despite the strong local transport network it would be very difficult for a large number of current users to travel to alternative libraries should their local one close.

### Sample quotes

“Sanderstead Library is within a 10 minute walk from my home. This is also a suitable distance for my children to walk. Walking to the next nearest library is not an option for younger children and would require a car journey. I would assume this to be the case for a large amount of people if their local library was to close.”

“Currently I am able to walk to the library. This is very important as, following a heart attack, my Dr advises me that it is imperative and visiting the library gives me a walk with a purpose. I do not have a computer at home and attending the library gives me access to the internet, email and office and allows me to communicate in this modern world.”

### **Deprived areas**

Libraries in the most deprived areas of the borough are often the hub of the community and play a major role in improving language and literacy skills and building community cohesion.

### Sample quotes

“The closure of any library would be very sad but to close a library in an area like South Norwood or Thornton Heath would be a disaster, particularly for children in the locality. South Norwood is not an affluent area and it is so important to our children that they have access to books, both for educational purposes and for the sheer pleasure of reading.”

“In a deprived area, we bring children and parents in to the world of books and relationships with the library staff, particularly the children's librarian.”

“Broad Green: the closure of Broad Green library would have a strongly negative effect on the area, especially among the children and young people, who need this free resource to give them a chance in life. Many people in the area are disadvantaged, with little disposable income for activities costing money, and for many their first language is not English.”

**Older people**

The library service plays a vital role in giving older people a safe local venue where they can access information and interact with others.

**Sample quotes**

“Libraries become more important as you become older, with families grown up and more leisure time available for reading and research. After retirement they are even more important, not only for information, but for reading in order to keep brains stimulated to delay the onset of dementia, etc, and keep people active and interested in life generally.”

“The closure of Sanderstead and/or Shirley would be a major blow for people on their 70's and 80's, who probably can no longer drive or walk long distances to the nearest alternatives. Older friends of ours read several books a month and the loss of this service would drastically reduce their quality of life.”

“My grandmother relies on Sanderstead library for books, she lives alone and is lonely and the library is vital in her meeting people and keeping her mind going with books.”

**SECTION 3: ANALYSING YOUR EQUALITY INFORMATION**

**3.1 From the information you have gathered (including information gathered to fill existing gaps) and the engagement you have undertaken how are each protected group affected (positively or negatively, or not affected at all)?  
What changes could be made to the policy, strategy, function, project or activity to mitigate a negative impact?**

<b>Age</b>					
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Brief detail of impact</b>	<b>What changes could be made?</b>

	Impact	Impact			
0–18 years	✓			<p>The consultation identified that local libraries offer children and young people the opportunity to gain vital life skills and knowledge in a fun, safe and stimulating environments, including homework clubs.</p> <p>77.8% of consultees said they “Would mind a lot” if their local library were to close.</p> <p>The decision to proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service will have a positive impact due to the potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network</li> <li>• Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points.</li> <li>• Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</li> </ul>	In proceeding to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service, testing should be done on the continuation and improvement of general and targeted provision top this group
19-35			✓	None specifically identified from the	

				information available.	
<b>36-65</b>			✓	None specifically identified from the information available.	
<b>Over 65</b>	✓			<p>The decision to proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service will have a positive impact due to the potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network</li> <li>• Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points.</li> <li>• Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</li> </ul>	In proceeding to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service, testing should be done on the continuation and improvement of general and targeted provision top this group.
<b>Disability</b>					
	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Brief detail of impact</b>	<b>What changes could be made?</b>
<b>Learning</b>	✓			The consultation highlighted that library branches placed in the heart	In proceeding to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library

<b>disability</b>				<p>of communities provide communities with easy access to information and services. Despite the strong local transport network it would be very difficult for a large number of current users; including those with disabilities to travel to alternative libraries should their local one close. The decision to proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service will have a positive impact due to the potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network</li> <li>• Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points.</li> <li>• Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</li> </ul>	<p>Service, testing should be done on the continuation and improvement of general and targeted provision top this group.</p>
<b>Physical disability</b>	✓			As above	As above
<b>Mental health</b>	✓			As above	As above

<b>Deaf or hard of hearing</b>	✓			As above	As above
<b>Visually impaired</b>	✓			As above	As above
<b>Other, incl carers</b>	✓			As above	As above
<b>Gender/Sex</b>					
	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Brief detail of impact</b>	<b>What changes could be made?</b>
<b>Female</b>	✓			<p>63.8% of respondents felt that the closure of their public library would severely impact them, with a further 32.3% of respondents feeling that library closures would have a moderate impact.</p> <p>The decision to proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service will have a positive impact due to the potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network</li> <li>• Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points.</li> </ul>	In proceeding to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service, testing should be done on the continuation and improvement of general and targeted provision top this group.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</li> </ul>	
<b>Male</b>	✓			<p>Male respondents to the consultation (43.8%) attend the library to read/study or work compared with the overall respondent figure of 39.1%.</p> <p>The decision to proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service will have a positive impact due to the potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network</li> <li>• Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points.</li> </ul> <p>Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</p>	<p>In proceeding to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service, testing should be done on the continuation and improvement of general and targeted provision top this group.</p>

<b>Gender reassignment</b>			✓	None specifically identified from the information available.	
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>					
	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Brief detail of impact</b>	<b>What changes could be made?</b>
<b>Asian</b>	✓			<p>The consultation highlighted this group as high users who felt that closing libraries would severely impact them.</p> <p>The decision to proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service will have a positive impact due to the potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network</li> <li>• Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points.</li> <li>• Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</li> </ul>	In proceeding to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service, testing should be done on the continuation and improvement of general and targeted provision top this group.
<b>Black</b>	✓			The consultation highlighted this group as high users who felt that	As above

				<p>closing libraries would severely impact them.</p> <p>The decision to proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service will have a positive impact due to the potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network</li> <li>• Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points.</li> <li>• Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</li> </ul>	
<b>White</b>	✓			63.8% of respondents felt that the closure of their public library would severely impact them	As above
<b>Mixed</b>	✓			<p>The consultation highlighted this group as high users who felt that closing libraries would severely impact them.</p> <p>The decision to proceed to market test interest in the provision of a</p>	As above

				<p>borough Library Service will have a positive impact due to the potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network</li> <li>• Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points.</li> <li>• Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</li> </ul>	
<b>Other, such as Travellers</b>			✓	None specifically identified from the information available.	As above
<b>Religious/Faith Groups</b>					
	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Brief detail of impact</b>	<b>What changes could be made?</b>
<b>Buddhist</b>			✓	<p>None specifically identified from the information available.</p> <p>However, libraries provide access to books, information, and works of creative imagination, ensuring equality of access by actively taking account of the cultural, linguistic and social diversity of the surrounding</p>	Further work could be undertaken to identify needs of these groups and the services they use

				area.	
<b>Christian</b>			✓	As above	As above
<b>Hindu</b>			✓	As above	As above
<b>Jewish</b>			✓	As above	As above
<b>Muslim</b>			✓	As above	As above
<b>Sikh</b>			✓	As above	As above
<b>No religion/faith</b>			✓	As above	As above
<b>Other</b>			✓	None specifically identified from the information available.	As above
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>					
	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Brief detail of impact</b>	<b>What changes could be made?</b>
<b>Heterosexual</b>			✓	None specifically identified from the information available.  However, libraries provide access to books, information, and works of	Further work could be undertaken to identify needs of these groups and the services they use

				creative imagination, ensuring equality of access by actively taking account of the cultural, linguistic and social diversity of the surrounding area.	
<b>Lesbian</b>			✓	As above	As above
<b>Gay</b>			✓	As above	As above
<b>Bisexual</b>			✓	As above	As above
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>					
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Brief detail of impact</b>	<b>What changes could be made?</b>
	✓			<p>The library service offers a number of services for pregnant women and those on maternity leave. 25.1% of respondents to the consultation visit the library to attend children's events e.g. under 5 sessions.</p> <p>The decision to proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service will have a positive impact due to the potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network</li> </ul>	In proceeding to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service, testing should be done on the continuation and improvement of general and targeted provision top this group.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public access service points.</li> </ul> <p>Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</p>	
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**Marriage and civil partnership**

	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Brief detail of impact</b>	<b>What changes could be made?</b>
<b>Marriage/civil partnership</b>	✓			<p>The library service offers a number of services for families and 82% of respondents to the children’s survey said they attended the library with someone from their family.</p> <p>The decision to proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service will have a positive impact due to the potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to retain the freehold of the current library building network</li> <li>• Opportunity for an improved level of provision e.g. improved book stock or buildings, co-location opportunities such as public</li> </ul>	In proceeding to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service, testing should be done on the continuation and improvement of general and targeted provision top this group.

				<p>access service points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</li> </ul>	
<b>3.2</b>	<b>From the information you have gathered and the engagement you have undertaken describe how the policy, strategy, function, project or activity actively enables the council to meet its public duties to:</b>				
<b>Advance equality of opportunity between different groups of people by removing or minimizing disadvantages</b>		<p>The council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity between different groups. Libraries do this by providing access to books, information, and works of creative imagination, ensuring equality of access by actively taking account of the cultural, linguistic and social diversity of the surrounding area.</p> <p>Libraries provide multimedia materials in printed, audio-visual and electronic formats, and by providing formal and informal opportunities for learning and participation.</p> <p>The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 makes provision for regulating library services and sets out the duty of every library authority to provide a “comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof”.</p>			
<b>Advance equality of opportunity between different groups of people by taking steps to meet needs</b>		<p>The council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity between different groups. Libraries do this by providing access to books, information, and works of creative imagination, ensuring equality of access by actively taking account of the cultural, linguistic and social diversity of the surrounding area.</p> <p>Libraries provide multimedia materials in printed, audio-visual and electronic formats, and by providing formal and informal opportunities for learning and participation.</p> <p>The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 makes provision for regulating library services and sets out the duty of every library authority to provide a “comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof”.</p>			

<p><b>Advance equality of opportunity between different groups of people by encouraging participation in public life</b></p>	<p>The council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity between different groups. Libraries do this by providing access to books, information, and works of creative imagination, ensuring equality of access by actively taking account of the cultural, linguistic and social diversity of the surrounding area.</p> <p>The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 makes provision for regulating library services and sets out the duty of every library authority to provide a “comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof”.</p> <p>Libraries provide opportunities for community involvement and links with voluntary sector partnerships e.g. community steering groups, voluntary work, work experience, fundraising, events and activities.</p>
<p><b>Eliminate discrimination</b></p>	<p>The council is committed to eliminating discrimination. Libraries support social cohesion and the elimination of discrimination through working with local groups to identify and satisfy the requirements of all sections of the local community for information, individual learning and development, cultural, heritage and leisure activities and encourages community engagement by enabling local people to contribute to the development and delivery of services and by providing opportunities for volunteering.</p> <p>Any service provider will need to have a robust complaints procedure to ensure that discrimination is not tolerated.</p>
<p><b>Eliminate harassment</b></p>	<p>The council is committed to eliminating harassment. Any service provider will need to have a robust complaints procedure to ensure that harassment is not tolerated.</p>
<p><b>Eliminate victimisation</b></p>	<p>The council is committed to eliminating victimisation. Any service provider will need to have a robust complaints procedure to ensure that victimisation is not tolerated.</p>

<p><b>Foster good relations between different groups and communities by tackling prejudice</b></p>	<p>The council is committed to promoting good relations between different groups and communities by tackling prejudice.</p> <p>Libraries do this by providing access to books, information, and works of creative imagination, ensuring equality of access by actively taking account of the cultural, linguistic and social diversity of the surrounding area.</p> <p>Libraries also support good relations and social cohesion through working with local groups to identify and satisfy the requirements of all sections of the local community for information, individual learning and development, cultural, heritage and leisure activities and encourages community engagement by enabling local people to contribute to the development and delivery of services and by providing opportunities for volunteering.</p>
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<p><b>Foster good relations between different groups and communities by promoting understanding</b></p>	<p>The council is committed to promoting good relations between different groups and communities by promoting understanding.</p> <p>Libraries do this by providing access to books, information, and works of creative imagination, ensuring equality of access by actively taking account of the cultural, linguistic and social diversity of the surrounding area.</p> <p>Libraries also support good relations and social cohesion through working with local groups to identify and satisfy the requirements of all sections of the local community for information, individual learning and development, cultural, heritage and leisure activities and encourages community engagement by enabling local people to contribute to the development and delivery of services and by providing opportunities for volunteering.</p>
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**3.3 Having considered the potential or actual effect of the policy, strategy, function, project or activity on equality make an informed judgment about what should be done (more than one may apply)?**

Outcome	Definition (more information is available in the guidance)	Judgment (Y/N)
<p><b>Outcome 1: no major change</b></p>	<p>Your assessment demonstrates that the policy is robust and the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and that you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.</p>	<p><b>Y</b></p>

<b>Outcome 2: adjust the policy</b>	This involves taking steps to remove barriers or to better advance equality and introducing measures to mitigate the potential effect.	
<b>Outcome 3: continue the policy</b>	This means adopting your proposals, despite any adverse effect or missed opportunities to advance equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate.	
<b>Outcome 4: stop and remove the policy</b>	If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you will want to consider stopping the policy altogether. If a policy shows unlawful discrimination it <b>must</b> be removed or changed.	

**3.4 Planning actions – please record all actions arising from the assessment, with clear targets, milestone and lines of responsibility.**

Protected group <sup>1</sup>	Action (SMART)	Intended Outcome	Completion Date	Lead Officer	Lead Partner <sup>2</sup>
All	Proceed to market test interest in the provision of a borough Library Service.	Alternative service provision/providers identified, to protect the library service and enables the council to go out to tender	September 2011	Aileen Cahill	Croydon Council
All	Through the market testing, specify and identify the types of services that could be provided to protected groups and that the council want to protect	Following thorough testing for need and viability, potential and current services to protected groups to be secured and identified.	September 2011	As above	Croydon Council

<sup>1</sup> Enter in this column which of the protected characteristics that the action encompasses: race/ethnicity (r), disability (d), age (a), sexual orientation (so), gender/sex (g), religion/belief (rb), gender reassignment (gr), marriage and civil partnerships (m), pregnancy and maternity (pm).

<sup>2</sup> If appropriate.

All	Equalities impact to be part of the market testing	Impacts on protected groups identified as part of the process	September 2011	As above	Croydon Council
All	Should the market testing have a positive outcome – contract/specification to include the need for provision for protected groups and monitoring arrangements within the contract	Provision for protected groups being delivered	March 2012 onwards	As above	Croydon Council

<b>3.5 Please indicate the risks and what will be done to address them? Risks may need to be recorded in your risk register.</b>						
<b>Risk/ issues identified</b>	<b>Action required</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Expected outcome</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Targeted services are not delivered as part of any future library provision	Needs analysis to be completed protected groups to identify services used.	TBC	September 2011	Aileen Cahill		
The current active user does not capture information on all protected groups and is not compulsory	Survey to be amended to capture information	TBC	September 2011	As above		

#### **SECTION 4: MONITORING AND REVIEW**

<b>4.1 Equality impact assessment is an ongoing process that does not end once a policy, strategy, function, project or activity has been agreed or implemented.</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>How will you measure the effects of the policy on equality?</b>	<p>The active library user survey will continue to be carried out to identify and measure the effects of the decision. Active users are defined as library members who have used the library in the last 12 months. Figures are generated from the library management system and are based on activities relating to the borrower's membership card (these include using it to borrow, renew, return, or reserve items; or to use a Peoples' Network computer).</p> <p>Any service provider will be asked to capture this information as part of the contract.</p>

<b>When will the policy be reviewed?</b>	The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis as part of any future service or contract.
<b>What type of equality information is needed for monitoring and how often will it be analysed?</b>	Information will be collected on the protected group e.g. ethnicity, disability, gender, age etc. and will be undertaken annually or more frequently if practical.
<b>How will stakeholders be engaged in the implementation, monitoring and review?</b>	Stakeholders will be engaged via the library staff, information boards, websites, computer home pages, Your Croydon.

<b>5.1</b>	<b>Before sending the EqIA to be approved by the relevant director use the following checklist to ensure the process is completed. The completed initial EqIA should also be checked.</b>	
		<b>Y/N</b>
	The EqIA clearly outlines the purpose of the policy, strategy, function, project or activity? (initial and full assessment template)	<b>Y</b>
	The EqIA clearly outlines how the policy, strategy, function, project or activity relates to equalities and to the council's public duties? (initial and full assessment template)	<b>Y</b>
	The EqIA clearly outlines the evidence available and the information gathered for the assessment? (full template only)	<b>Y</b>
	The EqIA clearly outlines the community engagement undertaken for the assessment? (full template only)	<b>Y</b>
	The EqIA clearly identifies the impact on each protected group based on the information available and how the policy, strategy, function, project or activity enables the council to meet its public duties? (full template only)	<b>Y</b>

Final judgement has been made based on the evidence available? (full template only)	Y
The EqIA identifies SMART actions and identifies risks? (full template only)	Y
The EqIA includes information on how the policy, strategy, function, project or activity will be monitored and reviewed? (full template only)	Y

**SECTION 6: DECISION MAKING AND PUBLICATION**

<b>6.1</b>	<b>I agree with the outcome of the above EqIA and actions arising, and have integrated the outcome into the policy decision</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Aileen Cahill</b>	
<b>Signature</b>		
<b>Date</b>		
<b>Lead Director</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Tom Jeffrey</b>	
<b>Signature</b>		
<b>Date</b>		
<b>Date sent to corporate equalities and cohesion team (<a href="mailto:data.equalities@croydon.gov.uk">data.equalities@croydon.gov.uk</a>)</b>		

**THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CORPORATE EQUALITIES AND COHESION TEAM**

<b>Publication Date (summary on website)</b>	
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## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Library Strategic Framework**

The Croydon Community Strategy presents the council's long-term vision and priorities for public services and intended community outcomes in Croydon. The vision identifies community priorities under six broad headings:

An Enterprising City  
A Learning City  
A Creative City  
A Connected City  
A Sustainable City  
A Caring City

Croydon libraries support this vision by providing access to learning, inspiration, knowledge, enterprise and leisure for all communities in Croydon.

To deliver this vision the key priorities for library services are as follows;

#### **1. Support the sustainable development of safer and happier individuals and communities**

We will deliver library services that provide the best possible opportunities for local communities to develop their skills, interests and life chances. By bringing different generations together we will combat negative stereotypes, tackle exclusion, improve community cohesion and make people feel proud of their local area. Our work will be informed by comprehensive knowledge of local communities and their particular needs.

#### **2. Improve health and wellbeing**

Partnering with health providers the library service will deliver joint initiatives that bring together a range of support mechanisms to enable people to live healthy fulfilled lives. We will deliver targeted promotions that support the community health and well being priorities, will ensure that health and well being information is accessible and will signpost people to appropriate agencies for support

#### **3. Inspire learning, talent and creativity in young people and children**

Libraries provide children and young people with free safe places in which they can express themselves, explore their potential and develop their skills. Access to quality study support, reading and information resources and space and ICT facilities contributes to the educational attainment of all. We will work with children, young people and their families to continually develop new services. In so doing we will involve them in the design and delivery of those services.

#### **4. Promote economic growth, prosperity and aspiration through library services**

We will support the growth of local businesses by the provision up to date business resources and facilitate access to essential business information. Accredited careers

information, advice and guidance services will be provided. We will maximise opportunities for libraries to positively impact the local economy.

#### **5. Transform the environment and celebrate Croydon's identity and sense of place**

We will seek opportunities to improve library buildings ensuring they contribute positively to the local environment. We will exploit co-location opportunities that offer positive environmental impacts on local area and ease access to services.

#### **6. Strive to deliver excellence which offers value for money**

The service will be performance driven striving for excellence and continuous improvement. Where possible we will seek opportunities for external validation of performance. To deliver value for money we will regularly review performance and benchmark against others. We will seek opportunities to attract inward local investment, partnership and development.

#### **7. Empower local communities**

We will further empower communities so that they have a greater influence over the development of services. This will be achieved by building upon our current good practice including community steering groups and community partnerships.

#### **8. Develop an integrated education, skills and employment offer**

We will offer lifelong learning opportunities both formally and informally through access to information and resources on employment, training and skills development. Working with education and learning partners, we will offer programmes to support local priorities.

#### **9. Target library service based on local community needs**

By better understanding the needs of local communities through regular engagement and evidence-based analysis, we will target services within local communities to enable social equality and inclusion. By undertaking regular analysis of local and up-to-date demographic information, we will be able to predict and respond to potential shifts in demand for services.

#### **10. Work in partnership to develop joint initiatives**

By taking a more joined up approach to strategy and delivery across public service areas, we will support the council priority to improve the customer experience and better meet customer needs. Part of this approach will promote the role of Croydon's libraries as community hubs and access points for other council services, as well as ensuring that library services complement and fill gaps in provision by other public sector services.