

PART A - Initial Impact Assessment

Proposal Name: Library Opening Hours

EIA ID: 2625

EIA Author: Hilary Coulson (CEX)

Proposal Outline: Maintain current opening hours, which were changed as part of the budget proposal for 2023/24, covered in EIA1358. The hours have been reviewed after 9 months in operation with the proposal to maintain the current approach. This sought to improve the customer experience by extending opening hours in community hub libraries from 31 hours to 34 hours and standardise the times and days open across each library. This means all Council Hub Libraries are closed on Thursdays, and removal of the late afternoon opening, when use it lowest.

Proposal Type: Non-Budget

Year Of Proposal: 24/25

Lead Director for proposal: Lisa Firth

Service Area: Parks, Leisure and Libraries

EIA Start Date: 26/02/2024

Lead Equality Objective: Understanding Communities

Equality Lead Officer: Ed Sexton

Committees:

Policy Committees

- Communities, Parks & Leisure

Portfolio

Primary Portfolio:

Neighbourhoods

EIA is cross portfolio:

No

EIA is joint with another organisation:

No

Overview of Impact

Overview Summary:

The impact of increased opening hours will affect every Sheffield City Council community hub library. The impact will be positive for the majority of people including those with protected characteristics. The standardisation of opening times underlines that all the libraries concerned are of equal value and that all communities should have equal opportunities to access and make use of their local library. It recognises that the value of a library should not only be measured by volume of users or busy periods, as this measurement can be influenced by wider geographical inequalities (e.g. relative deprivation and/or the availability of healthy leisure time, etc). Each library has an intrinsic worth and potential for its community. Although there could be a negative impact for people who are only able to attend the library between 5.00pm and 6.30pm once per week, analysis shows library usage at this time is very low, (i.e. at popular opening times we issue five times more books than the evening session). Anyone who is not able to visit a library can download free library e-books and e-magazines to their own compatible devices, or use our free Home Library Service, or visit Central Library which is open until 8pm on Wednesday evenings.

Impacted characteristics:

- Age
- Care Experienced
- Carers
- Disability
- Health
- Gender Reassignment
- Partners
- Poverty & Financial Inclusion
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Race
- Religion/Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors

Consultation and other engagement

Cumulative Impact

Does the proposal have a cumulative impact:

Yes

Following original consultation in Jan-Feb 23, we have carried out a survey asking for feedback from customers in Jan-Feb 24 to understand the impact of the changes made in April 23. This survey was promoted in our Libraries, on social media and via direct communication for individual who have signed up for this with the Library Service.

Impact areas:

Year on Year

Initial Sign-Off

Full impact assessment required:

Yes

Review Date:

11/03/2025
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PART B - Full Impact Assessment

Health

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: By increasing our opening hours from 31 to 34 per week our customers will have increased access to a safe and warm space, where they can access books and information that are beneficial to their health and wellbeing, and events and activities that are beneficial to their health and wellbeing. We would no longer be opening between 5.00pm and 6.30pm one night per week, which can be mitigated by accessing the library services e-books and magazines, or access the Home Library Service as an alternative, or visiting Central Library which is open until 8pm on Wednesday evenings. Research commissioned by Sheffield Libraries & Archive service in 2016 showed the volunteering opportunities in our communities created by the 16 volunteer led libraries had positive health outcomes. By continuing to support and resource the volunteer led libraries we can expand access to safe and warm spaces, and free access to books and information that are beneficial to health and wellbeing. We will continue to maintain book stocks that can offer positive health outcomes.

Name of Lead Health Officer:

Comprehensive Assessment Being Completed: No

Public Health Lead signed off health impact(s):

Age

Staff Impacted:

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: By increasing our opening hours, people of all ages will have increased access to library services. The needs of older people include: • Reliance on local libraries as a source of social contact to relieve isolation • Need for local provision or a home library service due to difficulty travelling or carrying books. • Retired people who are still active and want to be engaged in the community • Access to large print and talking books
The needs of children and young people include: • Early years development - activities e.g. toddler groups, reading groups • Support networks for parents • Libraries fostering positive attitude to literacy and current low literacy rates in the city.

Carers

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: By increasing our opening hours, people who have caring responsibilities will have increased access to library services. The needs of carers include: • Access to safe and welcoming spaces • Access to autism friendly library services • Access to events and activities that promote health and wellbeing • Access to books and information that help manage health conditions • Access to computers and Wi-Fi that enable applications for universal credit and other benefits
By increasing our opening hours from 31 hours to 34 this will provide increased access to library services for carers. We are proposing to stop the one evening per week open from 5.00pm to 6.30pm and if a carer can only access the library at this time, they can access library e-books and magazines or use the free Home Library Service or visit Central Library which is open until 8pm on Wednesday evenings.

Care Experienced

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

By increasing our opening hours, people who have are care experienced will have increased access to library services. The needs of those who are care experienced may include:

- Access to safe and welcoming spaces
- Access to autism friendly library services
- Access to events and activities that promote health and wellbeing
- Access to books and information that help manage health and wellbeing
- Access to computers and Wi-Fi that enable applications for public services

By increasing our opening hours from 31 hours to 34 this will provide increased access to library services for individuals who are care experienced. We are proposing to stop the one evening per week open from 5.00pm to 6.30pm and if a care experienced individual can only access the library at this time, they can access library e-books and magazines or use the free Home Library Service or visit Central Library which is open until 8pm on Wednesday evenings.

Disability

Staff Impacted:

No

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

By increasing our opening hours, people of disabilities and higher level of need will have increased access to library services. The needs of people with disabilities include:

- Local provision to limit travel requirements
- Access to books and information that helps them manage their condition
- Access to social interaction and activities
- Access to large print and talking books
- Home Library service
- Access to safe and welcoming spaces

By increasing our opening hours from 31 to 34 this will provide increased access to library services for people with disabilities. We are proposing to stop the one evening per week open from 5.00pm to 6.30pm and if a disabled person can only access the library at this time, they can access library e-books and magazines or use the free Home Library Service or visit Central Library which is open until 8pm on Wednesday evenings.

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: By increasing our opening hours from 31 hours to 34 this will provide increased access to library services for people of who have had a gender reassignment living or working in Sheffield. We are proposing to stop the one evening per week open from 5.00pm to 6.30pm and if library users can only access the library at this time, they can access library e-books and magazines or use the free Home Library Service or visit Central Library which is open until 8pm on Wednesday evenings.

Partners

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: By increasing our opening hours from 31 hours to 34 this will provide increased access to the library and library services for our partners and partner services. Therefore, a positive impact from the change.

Poverty & Financial Inclusion

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: A positive impact will be created by increasing our opening hours from 31 to 34 hours per week. People accessing the library service can benefit from a safe and warm environment, free hot drinks as part of Welcoming Spaces, free access to internet and Wi-Fi, free find my past, free driving test theory, fine free access to library books.

Pregnancy / Maternity

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: By increasing our opening hours, people of who are pregnant/on maternity will have increased access to library services. The needs of people who are pregnant/on maternity include: • Locally accessible provision • Welcoming safe spaces • Access to information and books that help them gain knowledge about their condition • Access to baby time sessions and peer support • Access to baby books that can inspire a lifetime of reading for fun with enhanced life changes. By increasing our opening hours from 31 hours to 34 this will provide increased access to library services for all people. We are proposing to stop the one evening per week open from 5.00pm to 6.30pm and if a person who is pregnant can only access the library at this time, they can access library e-books and magazines or use the free Home Library Service or visit Central Library which is open until 8pm on Wednesday evenings.

Race

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: By increasing our opening hours from 31 hours to 34 this will provide increased access to library services for people of all races living or working in Sheffield. We are proposing to stop the one evening per week open from 5.00pm to 6.30pm and if library users can only access the library at this time, they can access library e-books and magazines or use the free Home Library Service or visit Central Library which is open until 8pm on Wednesday evenings.

Religion / Belief

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted:

Description of Impact:

By increasing our opening hours from 31 hours to 34 this will provide increased access to library services for people of religions and beliefs living or working in Sheffield. We are proposing to stop the one evening per week open from 5.00pm to 6.30pm and if library users can only access the library at this time, they can access library e-books and magazines or use the free Home Library Service or visit Central Library which is open until 8pm on Wednesday evenings.

Sexual Orientation

Staff Impacted:

No

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

By increasing our opening hours from 31 hours to 34 this will provide increased access to library services for people of all sexual orientations living or working in Sheffield. We are proposing to stop the one evening per week open from 5.00pm to 6.30pm and if library users can only access the library at this time, they can access library e-books and magazines or use the free Home Library Service or visit Central Library which is open until 8pm on Wednesday evenings.

Voluntary / Community & Faith Sectors

Staff Impacted:

Yes

Customers Impacted:

No

Description of Impact:

By increasing our opening hours from 31 hours to 34 this will provide increased access to library services for community groups, and therefore a positive impact. Community groups can also access community spaces in libraries outside of library opening hours.

Action Plan & Supporting Evidence

Outline of action plan:

Consultation with customers via Have your say, and surveys in libraries. to understand the impact of the changes that were made in April 2023, to inform a

decision about adopting these on an ongoing basis.

Action plan evidence:

Analysis of library usage patterns this year, compared to the previous year

Changes made as a result of action plan:

Mitigation

Significant risk after mitigation measures: No

Outline of impact and risks:

Review Date

Review Date: 11/03/2025