

Equality Impact Assessment - head of service review

Reference: EQIA152285887

Submitted: 29 January 2020 14:08 PM

Executive summary

Title of policy or decision: Library Investment and Improvements (Library Refurbishments)

Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): Essex Future Libraries Service Strategy 2019-2024 commits to "radically transform the experience of using the library services by refurbishing them to deliver a consistent high-quality look and feel across the network."

We are requesting a decision to use a fair criteria what will to identify a shortlist of libraries that will be modernised through refurbishment.

What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?: Help create great places to grow up, live and work

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Help create great places to grow up, live and work: Help to secure stronger, safer and more neighbourly communities, Facilitate growing communities and new homes

Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?: a change to an existing policy, practice or project

Please provide a link to the document / website / resource to which this EqIA relates:

<https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/libraries-consultation/essex-future-library-services-strategy-2019-2024/>

Please upload any documents which relate to this EqIA, for example decision documents:

<https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/libraries-consultation/essex-future-library-services-strategy-2019-2024/>

Assessing the equality impact

Use this section to record how you have assessed any potential impact on the communities likely to be affected by the policy (or decision): The Library buildings are used by all library staff and volunteers across the service, and available to use for all residents in Essex.

The procurement process will incorporate a comprehensive specification and requirements exercise. This will include consideration with regard to meeting accessibility standards for all library staff, volunteers and users.

Does or will the policy or decision affect:

Service users: Yes

Employees: Yes

The wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities: Yes

Which geographical areas of Essex does or will the policy or decision affect?: All Essex

Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?: Yes

Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?: No

Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies?: Yes

Description of impact

Description of Impact. If there is an impact on a specific protected group tick box, otherwise leave blank. You will be given the opportunity to rate identified impacts as positive, negative or neutral on the next page: Age, Disability - learning disability, Disability - physical impairment, Disability - sensory impairment, Gender / sex

I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics: I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics

Describe any actions that have already been taken to mitigate negative impacts on any of the protected characteristics: A public consultation was held on the draft library strategy was held from November 2018 - February 2019. The feedback from the consultation has informed the final strategy and its priorities. The customer experience for all user groups shall be enhanced by having a modern library, that is fit for both now and for the future (for larger libraries in the first instance).

Age

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: 40% of the active library users in Essex are aged 16 or under. 3% of this group formed part of the consultation responses. 27% of active library users in Essex are over the age of 60 (see attached EqIA for Future Libraries Strategy). 47% of the survey responses from the public consultation were from residents who were over the age of 60.

Our requirements will specify that the refurbishment of libraries (large ones initially) will:

1. Meet central government accessibility standards.
2. Represent a welcoming space for these user groups.
3. The modernised look and feel to the library will attract more younger people to use the space and may encourage more meet-ups and room hire bookings from other user groups (e.g. Knit and Natter).

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: As a result of these changes, this will have a positive impact on these user groups which will encourage them to use the space more frequently.

Disability - learning disability

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: 2% of the Essex population have a learning disability. 1% of the survey responses from the public consultation were from residents who have a learning disability.

Our requirements will specify that the refurbishment of libraries (large ones initially) will:

1. Meet central government accessibility standards.
2. Represent a welcoming and safe space
3. Support the co-location of community organisations groups, which may increase the usage of this library by this user group e.g. through appointments, support, clubs etc.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: As a result of these changes, this will have a positive impact on this user group which will encourage them to use the space more frequently.

Disability - physical impairment

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: 6% of the Essex population have a physical impairment. 8% of the survey responses from the public consultation were from residents who had a physical impairment.

Our requirements will specify that the refurbishment of libraries (large ones initially) will:

1. Meet central government accessibility standards.
2. Represent a welcoming and safe space for this user group
3. Support the co-location of community organisations groups, which may increase the usage of this library by this user group e.g. through appointments, support, clubs etc.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: As a result of these changes, this will have a positive impact on this user group which will encourage them to use the space more frequently.

Disability - sensory impairment

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: 6% of the residents in Essex have a sensory impairment. 3% of the survey responses from the public consultation were from residents who had a sensory impairment.

1. Meet central government accessibility standards.
2. Represent a welcoming and safe space for this user group
3. Support the co-location of community organisations groups, which may increase the usage of this library by this user group e.g. through appointments, support, clubs etc.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: As a result of these changes, this will have a positive impact on this user group which will encourage them to use the space more frequently.

Gender / sex

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: 59% of the active library users are female making them the largest user groups of the library service. They also made up 67% of the consultation responses.

1. Meet central government accessibility standards.
2. Represent a welcoming and safe space for this user group
3. Support the co-location of community organisations groups, which may increase the usage of this library by this user group e.g. through appointments, support, clubs etc.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: As a result of these changes, this will have a positive impact on this user group which will encourage them to use the space more frequently.

Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

Does your EqIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?: No

Details of person completing the form

I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance: I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance

Date EqIA completed: 29/01/2020

Name of person completing the EqIA: Michelle Brown

Email address of person completing the EqIA: Michelle.Brown@essex.gov.uk

Your function: Corporate and Customer Services

Your service area: Transformation, Delivery and Support

Your team: Future Libraries Programme Team

Are you submitting this EqIA on behalf of another function, service area or team?: Yes

Name of person completing the EqIA: Michelle Brown

Function: Corporate and Customer Services

Service area: Customer Services

Team: Library Services

Email address of Head of Service: Juliet.Pirez@essex.gov.uk