

## INVERCLYDE COUNCIL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

### Budget Savings Proposals

<b>Essential Information</b>
Name of Officer(s) completing this Template: Tony McEwan
Designation(s): Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources
Directorate/Service: Education, Communities and Organisational Development/Culture, Communities, and Educational Resources
Date of Impact Assessment: 23 February 2023
Name of Proposed Budget Saving <sup>1</sup> : 2023/26 Savings – Libraries Service Review (Delivering Differently)

<b>1. Does the proposed budget saving impact on:</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
a. Protected characteristics under The Equality Act 2010:  Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion and Belief; Sex; Sexual Orientation <b>(see Section 3)</b>	X	
b. Reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage – Fairer Scotland Duty <sup>2</sup> <b>(see Section 6)</b>	X	
c. Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2017/22 <sup>3</sup> <b>(see Section 7)</b>	X	
d. Corporate Plan 2018/22 <sup>4</sup> <b>(see Section 8)</b>	X	

<sup>1</sup> Please attach the Budget Saving Proposal to this Template

<sup>2</sup> [Fairer Scotland Duty: guidance for public bodies](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017/22](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Corporate Plan 2018/22](#) (agenda item 5)

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**2. If 'yes' is selected for any part of Section 1, please populate the other relevant Sections of this Template.**

**3. Impact – Protected characteristics**

Which of the protected characteristics will the proposed budget saving have an impact upon? (See guidance for examples of key considerations under each characteristic – this is on ICON.)

<b>Equality Target Group</b>	<b>Positive impact +</b>	<b>Neutral impact =</b>	<b>Negative impact -</b>
Age	X		X
Disability			X
Gender Reassignment		X	
Marriage and civil partnership		X	
Pregnancy and maternity		X	
Race		X	
Religion and belief		X	
Sex			X
Sexual orientation		X	

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Other groups to consider		X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carers</li> </ul>			

<b>4. Which parts of the Equality Duty will the proposed budget saving impact on?</b>	
X	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by The Equality Act 2010
X	Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster good relations between from different groups

<b>5. Impact - groups</b>	
From the information you have highlighted above, describe the positive and negative impacts and the groups affected under The Equality Act 2010.	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Positive impacts</b> +</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Describe groups affected.)</i></p> <p><u>Age</u>: Young people will now have improved access to school libraries as they will be staffed throughout the school day.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Negative impacts</b> -</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Describe groups affected.)</i></p> <p><u>Disability</u>: A reduction in technological support will impact on disabled people requiring support to use devices.</p> <p><u>Age; Sex</u>: There are 13 library staff potentially affected by these proposals, the majority of whom are female.</p>

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### 6. Impact – Fairer Scotland Duty

What impact will this Budget Saving Proposal have on reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage? *Please tick.*

Positive Impact +	Neutral Impact =	Negative Impact -
	X	

**Briefly describe how the Budget Saving Proposal will impact on reducing inequalities of outcome.**

Research shows that libraries not only tackle the key indicators of social exclusion (health, crime, unemployment and education) but can also play a wider role in tackling disadvantage, inequality and discrimination. (See *Speaking Volumes: The Impact of Public Libraries on Wellbeing*; Carnegie UK Trust, 2014, available at: [https://d1ssu070pg2v9i.cloudfront.net/pex/carnegie\\_uk\\_trust/2016/02/pub1455011469.pdf](https://d1ssu070pg2v9i.cloudfront.net/pex/carnegie_uk_trust/2016/02/pub1455011469.pdf) (last accessed Aug 2019).

Libraries provide free access to books and reading including special collections promoting inclusion such as large print, audio, dyslexia friendly etc; free access to PCs, the internet, hardware and software; IT classes, job clubs and other forms of support for Universal Credit claimants; a partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support improving access to information for local people living with cancer; events and activities for both adults and young people, including some specifically aimed at reducing inequalities for excluded groups including people with autism, and people at risk of social isolation.

This Budget Saving Proposal entails reduced professional support, and therefore its implementation is likely to impact on the ability of the public library service to tackle the key indicators of social exclusion.

School libraries offer the services of a librarian, resources and a range of activities to encourage reading for pleasure and information as well as enhancing digital literacy skills. These Budget Saving Proposals entail reduced access to a professional librarian, and therefore a reduction of service. Although its implementation is likely to have a positive impact on the ability of school libraries to tackle the key indicators of social exclusion.

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### 7. Impact – LOIP 2017/22

Which Priority/Priorities from the LOIP 2017/22 will this Budget Saving Proposal impact on?

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. <b>Population:</b> Inverclyde's population will be stable and sustainable with an appropriate balance of socio-economic groups that is conducive to local economic prosperity and longer term population growth
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2. <b>Inequalities:</b> There will be low levels of poverty and deprivation and the gap between the richest and poorest members of our communities will be reduced (This may already have been highlighted during section 6)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3. <b>Environment, culture and heritage:</b> Inverclyde's environment, culture and heritage will be protected and enhanced to create a better place for all Inverclyde residents and an attractive place in which to live, work and visit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4. <b>The local economy:</b> Inverclyde has a thriving and diverse local economy, economic activity is increased and skills development enables both those in work and those furthest from the labour market to realise their full potential

**Briefly describe how the Budget Saving Proposal will impact on the LOIP Priority/Priorities.**

Priority 2: Inequalities - please see Section 6 above on potential impact on the Inequalities Priority.

Priority 3: Environment, Culture and Heritage Priority - Inverclyde's libraries are key cultural assets and in some communities are the only venue providing cultural opportunities for local people. Reduced professional support may reduce opportunities to protect and enhance Inverclyde's culture.

Priority 4: Local economy – Reduced professional support is likely to reduce opportunities to support those furthest from the labour market who often rely on the informal support offered by libraries as trusted and safe spaces required for 'first steps' in literacy and skills development.

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### 8. Impact – Corporate Plan 2018/22

Which Priority/Priorities from the Corporate Plan 2018/22 will this budget saving impact on?

X	1. To promote Inverclyde, to both residents and visitors alike, as a great place to live, work and visit
X	2. To work collaboratively, to enable strong, connected and empowered communities, particularly in areas of deprivation, so that residents have influence and control over the things that matter to them
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. To grow the local economy in a way that creates opportunities for all our residents, including access to good quality jobs
X	4. To reduce the prevalence of poverty and in particular, child poverty in our communities
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. To safeguard, support and meet the needs of our most vulnerable families and residents
X	6. To improve the health and wellbeing of residents so that people live well, and for longer
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. To protect and enhance our natural and built environment
X	8. To preserve, nurture and promote Inverclyde’s unique culture and heritage
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. To deliver services that are responsive to community needs and are underpinned by a culture of innovation, continuous improvement and effective management of resources
X	10. To develop motivated, trained and qualified employees who deliver quality services that meet current and anticipated service needs

**Briefly describe how the Budget Saving Proposal will impact on the Corporate Plan Priority/Priorities.**

- (Priority 1) Please see response to Section 7
- (Priority 2) Please see response to Section 6
- (Priority 4) Please see response to Section 6
- (Priority 6) Please see response to Section 6
- (Priority 8) Please see response to Section 7
- (Priority 10) The proposed budget savings are likely to reduce the quality of service available from Inverclyde Libraries HQ, and its ability to meet current and anticipated service needs.

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- (Priorities 9 and 10): Joining up public and school library services and providing more seamless access to school/public libraries will have positive benefits including improving innovation, continuous improvement, effective management of resources, and improving the motivation and skillsets of staff.

### 9. Evidence

What evidence do you have to help identify any potential impacts of the proposed budget saving?

Note: Evidence could include consultations, surveys, focus groups, interviews, projects, user feedback, complaints, officer knowledge and experience, equalities monitoring data, publications, research, reports, local, national groups.

Evidence	Details
Consultation/Engagement	<p>Budget Consultation 2022: 37.46% of respondents supported this Budget Saving Proposal.</p> <p>In the 2019 Budget Consultation, 43% of respondents supported a reduction in library services.</p> <p>In the 2017 Budget consultation, 46% of respondents supported the proposal to reduce library services.</p>
Research	<p>See above research on Libraries and social exclusion.</p> <p>Legal challenges to other authorities proposing library service reduction/withdrawal – please see this link for a comprehensive list, including one in Scotland (Moray Council):</p> <p><a href="https://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/library-closing/legal/legal-current-uk-situation">https://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/library-closing/legal/legal-current-uk-situation</a></p> <p>There is a wealth of information on the positive impact of school libraries on attainment. See Scottish case study here:</p>

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	<p><a href="#">the impact of school libraries on learning.</a></p> <p>The case study demonstrates that school libraries impact on: higher test or exam scores equating to academic attainment; successful curriculum or learning outcomes, including information literacy; and positive attitudes towards learning.</p>
Officer's knowledge and experience (including feedback from frontline staff)	
Equalities monitoring data	<p>Equal opportunities forms; membership data from library management system. The data available tells us that 57% of library users are female and 43% are male. Around 12-13% of library users have a disability, and just over 5% come from an ethnic minority group.</p>
User feedback (including complaints)	<p>Yes. The Service has a Consultation and Engagement Strategy. Library visitors are encouraged to feed back in a number of ways and this is held by the service and taken into account when decisions are made.</p> <p>There is a reputational risk to any reduction in services linked to libraries.</p>
Stakeholders	
Other	
Are there information gaps and, if so, what are these?	



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**10. Please use the space below to detail any other matters arising from the Equality Impact Assessment process, including what action could be taken to mitigate the impact of this Budget Saving Proposal.**

Should the Budget Saving Proposals go ahead:

- We will increase local engagement to better understand the library services most required by local residents;
- The service review will target services more efficiently to reduce the potential disproportionate impacts on groups with Protected Characteristics and those living in poverty.
- Although one purpose of the service re-design would be to achieve a budgetary saving, it should be noted that there are also positive benefits to be gained, in terms of service delivery, ability to demonstrate continuous improvement, and making the most efficient use of resources. In addition, schools would be free to consider the possibility of augmenting their school library provision, if required, with non-core budgets.

Details of the Person(s) who completed the Assessment:	Name: Tony McEwan
	Position: Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources
	Date: 23 February 2023
Authorised by:	Name: Ruth Binks
	Position: Corporate Director - Education, Communities and Organisational Development
	Date: 28 February 2023

Thank you for your assistance with the completion of this task.

Please send a copy of the completed Template to Karen Barclay, Corporate Policy and Performance Officer: [karen.barclay@inverclyde.gov.uk](mailto:karen.barclay@inverclyde.gov.uk).