| MEETING |
|---|
| COUNCIL |
| **DATE AND TIME**

 TUESDAY 4TH NOVEMBER, 2014

 AT 7.00 PM |
| **VENUE**

 HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, LONDON NW4 4BQ |

Dear Councillors,

Please find enclosed additional papers relating to the following items for the above mentioned meeting which were not available at the time of collation of the agenda.

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.4	LIBRARIES STRATEGY - REFERRED FROM CHILDREN, EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE	1 - 124

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LONDON BOROUGH
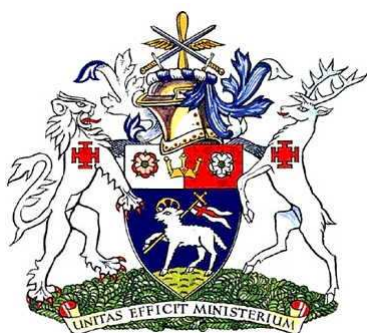
	AGENDA ITEM 11.4
	Council **4 November 2014**
Title	**Report from Children, Education Libraries and Safeguarding Committee - Referral to Council - Libraries Strategy**
Report of	Head of Governance
Wards	All
Status	Public
Enclosures	**Annexe One:** Libraries Strategy **Appendix A:** Options paper **Appendix B:** Needs Assessment **Appendix C** - EIA
Officer Contact Details	Andrew Charlwood Head of Governance (Acting) andrew.charlwood@barnet.gov.uk 020 8359 2014

Summary

Agenda Item 8 of the Children, Education Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on 28 October 2014 was referred up to Full Council by four members in accordance with the Constitution. Council is therefore requested to consider the recommendations and take a decision on them.

Recommendations

1. **That Council consider and vote on the recommendations contained in Agenda Item 8 of the Children, Education Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on 28 October 2014 as set out in annexe one.**

1.   WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1   The Constitution allows a certain number of members to refer a matter on which a Committee had proposed to take a decision to its parent body. At the meeting on 28 October 2014, the required number of members of the Children, Education Libraries and Safeguarding Committee referred Agenda Item 8 up to the next meeting of Full Council.

1.2   As the Children, Education Libraries and Safeguarding Committee did not take a decision, the procedures to be followed will be those set out in Paragraph 20 of Full Council Procedure Rules (Rules of Debate). For reports of Committees (including Overview and Scrutiny Committees), the Chairman of the relevant committee, or the Vice-Chairman in their absence, will move reception of the report and adoption of the recommendations. This report need not be seconded. The leader of each of the other groups, or another member of their group, will then have an opportunity to comment on the recommendation, and at the end of the time allowed the Mayor will bring this part of the debate to an end, whether or not all those entitled have spoken or completed their speeches.

2.   REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   As set out in the substantive report.

3.   ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1   As set out in the substantive report.

4.   POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1   As set out in the substantive report.

5.   IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1   **Corporate Priorities and Performance**
As set out in the substantive report.

5.2   **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**
As set out in the substantive report.

5.3   **Legal and Constitutional References**
5.3.1 Constitution, Responsibility for Functions- Paragraph 6 - Members Rights to Refer Matters to Parent Body.

5.3.2 Constitution, Full Council Procedure Rules, Paragraphs 20 and 21 - Rules of Debate and Time for Debate

5.4   **Risk Management**
5.4.1 As set out in the substantive report.

5.5   **Equalities and Diversity**
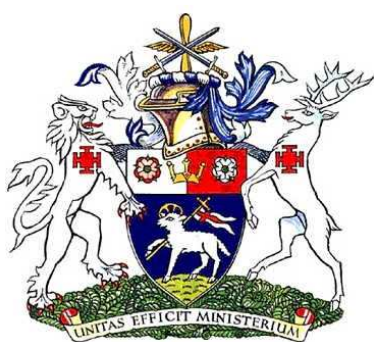5.5.1 As set out in the substantive report.

5.6   **Consultation and Engagement**
5.6.1 None

6.   **BACKGROUND PAPERS**
6.1   None.

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	Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee **28 October 2014**
Title	**Libraries Strategy**
Report of	Family & Community Well-being Lead Commissioner
Wards	All
Status	Public
Enclosures	Appendix A – Libraries options paper Appendix B – Needs assessment Appendix C – Equalities impact assessment
Officer Contact Details	James Mass, Family & Community Well-being Lead Commissioner, 0208 359 4610, james.mass@barnet.gov.uk

Summary

The library service in Barnet is very well thought of by those residents that actively use the service and by the general population as a whole. Library buildings often act as focal points of community activity but there is potential for further integration of services and better use of library spaces to reflect local needs.

Barnet's library service provides children and adults with reading, literacy and learning opportunities. These are through reading and learning materials provided for loan and library use and increasingly through online learning resources. The Council seeks to ensure that at least 95% of Barnet residents can reach their local public library by public transport within thirty minutes. This, along with online access, will ensure that knowledge and information is easily accessible to those that live, work and study in Barnet.

Despite economic growth, public sector cuts will continue until 2020, coupled with rising demand. Barnet has dealt effectively with the first wave of austerity, by anticipating the cuts before they arrived and planning ahead. The Council is now planning for the next 5 years and how a further £72m will be saved.

On 23 June 2014 the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee noted the savings target of £8m allocated by the Policy and Resources Committee and agreed to complete a Commissioning Plan and savings proposals by December 2014. Each Committee has an allocated savings target and there are difficult decisions to make in all areas. The business planning process since then has considered each of the service components within the committee remit to identify possible savings as a contribution to this target and the impact these could have. The process started with investigating the financial contribution libraries could make whilst still delivering a comprehensive and efficient service. As a result of this, the options presented in this report deliver a saving of £2.85m between 2015 and 2020.

Through the development of a new model of library provision, the Council will be able to meet these financial challenges whilst safeguarding services for local people, especially those in more vulnerable groups. This paper updates the vision, outcomes and objectives for the library service and sets out three possible options for consultation with residents and interest groups. Over the next six months, the component parts of these options will be tested and refined and a report will then be brought to the Committee in spring 2014 to update on the outcome of consultation and the further investigatory work.

Recommendations

1. **That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee agree the proposed vision, outcomes and objectives for the library service as set out in section 1.2 of this report.**

2. **That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee agree that the three options set out in section 1.23 below should be the preferred options for the library service and approve the commencement of consultation on these options in accordance with the consultation plan as set out in section 4.2 of this report.**

3. **That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee agree that an open library will be trialled at Edgware library at detailed in section 4.6 of this report.**

4. **That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee note that following this period of consultation, a report will be presented to a future meeting of the Children's, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee. It is intended that this would be in Spring 2015.**

1. **WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

1.1 The Library Strategy was last updated in 2011. The following outcomes and objectives are largely based on those but have been updated to reflect the feedback from consultation since 2011 and the financial challenges now facing the local authority. The updated vision for the library service in Barnet is as follows:

- A library service that provides children and adults with reading, literacy and learning opportunities.
- A library service that engages with communities.
- A library service that makes knowledge and information easily accessible.
- A library service that can withstand current and future financial challenges and safeguard services for vulnerable people.

1.2 In order to meet this vision, draft outcomes and objectives have been devised. The outcomes and objectives are as follows:

- **A library service that provides children and adults with reading, literacy and learning opportunities**
    - Reading and learning materials are provided for loan and library use, in traditional print/hard copy formats as well as provision of e-book, e-audio and online learning resources.
    - The Barnet Digital Library will increase reading and learning opportunities for local people, while the physical library estate continues to offer access to reading, literacy and learning opportunities for children and adults.
    - At least 95% of Barnet residents can reach their local public library by public transport and have access to study space and to learning activities run for communities by communities and by local partners.
    - Outreach and development is targeted at those most in need, with strategic partnerships in Education, Adult and Children's Services, and appropriate local partners.
    - The service continues to deliver onsite and online literacy activities and reading schemes (The National Reading Offer) such as the *Summer Reading Challenge*, *Six Book Challenge* and *City Reads*.
- **A library service that engages with communities.**
    - Library buildings continue to act as focal points of community activity, with further integration of services and use of library spaces which reflects local needs.
    - Opportunities for local people to shape and support library services are increased, through an expanded range of volunteering roles and advisory groups.
    - Social media and new technologies are increasingly used to deliver peer to peer customer interaction and support, offering residents the opportunities to share reading recommendations, advice and support.
    - Local commercial partnership opportunities are exploited where possible.
- **A library service that makes knowledge and information easily accessible.**
    - Local and Council information is provided in both hard and soft copy forms.

- The library service continues to act as a gateway to local services, expanding its use of self-service technology to increase access to those provided by the Council.
- Online library services, accessible 24:7, offer the library service increased opportunities to deliver literacy, learning and information services out of hours and to those unable to visit static service points.
- Users of the physical libraries have access to modernised ICT equipment and ICT learning support.

- **A library service that can withstand current and future financial challenges and safeguard services for vulnerable people.**
  - Barnet's libraries are configured in such a way as to support the Council in meeting these challenges.
  - Income from services, assets, trading and other unique capabilities is maximised in order to take the universal free-to-use library service to the maximum number of people.
  - Opportunities presented by new technology and improved volunteering support are maximised to preserve libraries as physical spaces/community assets.

1.3 The options paper at Appendix A provides further detail on the library service, current usage and proposals for future delivery.

1.4 The Council must consider how to meet its statutory duty to have a library service in an environment of technological innovations, public finance pressures and localism agenda, including involvement of communities and alternative delivery models for public services. There is no national standard framework for libraries, giving local authorities considerable freedom into how they design services to meet local need and aspirations within available resources.

1.5 In considering how to best meet its vision for library services in the current financial climate, consideration has been given to increasing voluntary and community involvement, reduction or re-location of library buildings, changes to opening hours, income generation, closure of library buildings, use of technology and alternative delivery models and cost reduction in the book budget. Having considered these in the light of the financial challenge, a number of conclusions have been reached.

1.6 **Use of volunteers**
Increasing the use of volunteers should definitely be pursued to improve the services offered from libraries and / or to help mitigate other changes implemented. This will need the right resource and an improved approach to recruitment, training and volunteer management.

1.7 Option 3 provides the most opportunity for some libraries to be run by local communities, although all the options leave open the question of the provider of the core libraries and the capacity of the community to support delivery of services.

1.8   **Closures and reductions in size**
        Options with and without closures need to be tested through consultation to explore potential trade-offs between this and other options.

1.9   With regard to a reduction in the size of libraries, it has been concluded that if reducing, it is best to maximise income from the freed up space by leaving around 540 sq. ft. for the library. This would allow all essential services to be delivered on-site and though stock would be limited, the ability to reserve and collect any item from the whole service will significantly mitigate this.

1.10   **Re-location and redevelopment**
        The physical condition of many library buildings means that over the medium term the likely cost of improvements to maintain them is high and it has been concluded that opportunities to create new provision through relocation or redevelopment should be actively identified and explored for feasibility.

1.11   Plans already exist for a new library in Colindale, relocating the existing library in Grahame Park and a new library in the redeveloped Gateway House building, relocating the existing library in Finchley Church End.

1.12   Any scheme would need to result in a library that compares favourably to the proposed changes in whichever option of change was agreed for implementation. This would mean the new site would need to be at least the same size and in a location at least as well served by public transport, as well as accessible to residents with specific needs.

1.13   Opportunities will also be sought for the co-location of libraries with other public services and community facilities. There is greater potential for this to be viable if a library is reduced in size. There should be a presumption that under options that include smaller library sites re-location is likely to secure the best financial return.

1.14   **Opening hours**
        Consultation exercises have consistently shown the value placed on an accessible service open at a range of times to suit various segments of the population. Experience from around the country has shown that when a library's opening hours significantly reduce and do not follow an easy to understand pattern, usage quickly declines.

1.15   As such it is the Council's intention that opening hours are extended through the use of technology for all libraries remaining open. The use of technology can now allow the Council to open and close a library without the need for any staff to be on site – the 'open' library. Visitors would access the library during unstaffed periods by scanning their library card and entering a PIN number. Once inside they would be able to use self-serve technology to borrow and return items, use computers, print and photocopy. CCTV would provide additional security.

1.16   To achieve the level of savings required from the service will require a reduction in staffed opening hours. Preparing a timetable to allocate staffed hours across the estate will need to ensure a good level of accessibility for all and safeguard usage for groups with additional requirements. Ensuring staffed times provide access for children and young people will be prioritised to ensure priority outcomes of the service can continue to be achieved.

1.17   **Income generation**
        Additional income generation should definitely be a feature of the response to the challenges facing the service. One significant financial opportunity is to commercialise any freed-up space in the libraries estate and retain this income to subsidise the service.

1.18   **Alternative providers**
        The initial consideration of the various options for alternative delivery of libraries suggests that either a community or staff owned mutual or outsource option would deliver the greatest level of benefits. The outsourced option could involve a charitable trust or community group. The analysis shows that additional savings can be achieved through these options with the potential for other service improvements. The next phase of work should include a fuller options appraisal to be informed by consultation feedback, engagement with the management team and soft market testing.

1.19   For Hendon library the most effective option would seem to be for a partnership with an educational institution given the potential for an enhanced service that meets the needs of the predominant user base whilst also delivering savings. If this option proved unviable following further investigation, Hendon would be considered as part of the whole service as set out above.

1.20   Relevant interested parties could express an interest in running a library or a group of libraries to the Council and any expression received would be carefully and properly considered.

1.21   **Stock**
        If libraries are made smaller, the stock purchasing budget would be reduced accordingly so that the stock level was appropriate to the new level of storage space – all stock would be available from across the library network through the 'reserve and collect' service. Given the increasing demand and wide accessibility of digital stock, it is proposed that this purchasing budget is maintained. This will ensure a more efficient library service.

1.22   Appendix A sets out further detail of these considerations and sets out three options, which best achieve the vision and objectives for libraries in Barnet.

1.23   The detail of the three preferred options are set out in section 9 of Appendix A and are comprised of the following:

Option 1 – Maintain the full reach of the existing library network

- The service would centre on four 'core' libraries, in Chipping Barnet – the busiest of our current sites; in the new libraries in Church End and Colindale, each of which will have state-of-the-art reading, activity and study services, and a smaller library in Hendon.
- Outside these four libraries, the library space within each building would be smaller – around 540 square feet on average. We would let out space within the library buildings for commercial use or income will be secured through redevelopment of sites, ensuring continued provision of a library in each case. It is likely that a number of libraries would move locally but any new sites would ensure equally good if not better access via public transport. Library users will still have access to books from anywhere in the network at their local library through a reserve and collect service.
- This would allow us to maintain the existing library network – no libraries would close. We would extend current opening hours by 50% across the network. Library staff would be present to support library users and provide information and advice for half of current opening hours, including peak usage periods in the late afternoons and at weekends. Overall, hours would be extended using new technology to keep libraries open outside staffed times, with remote access to information, advice and support available by telephone from within the libraries during core business hours.

Option 2 – Maintain the depth and quality of service provision within a consolidated library network.

- The network would consist of eight libraries: the two new libraries in Church End and Colindale and the existing libraries in Chipping Barnet, East Barnet, Edgware, North Finchley, Hendon and Golders Green. Libraries would be concentrated around the Borough's travel hubs – at least 95% of Barnet's population would be able to access a library within 30 minutes' travel from their home. We would review the mobile library's current routes to ensure any less accessible areas would also have the opportunity to access a mobile library stop.
- Each library would provide a full range of activities supporting literacy for all. The libraries would be staffed for 60% of the current opening hours, including peak usage periods in the late afternoons and at weekends. Opening hours would be increased, using new technology to allow access to libraries from 7am to 10pm, outside staffed times.
- Libraries at Burnt Oak, Childs Hill, Mill Hill, East Finchley, Osidge and South Friern would be closed and the buildings rented out for commercial use – or alternatively income will be secured through redevelopment of sites.

Option 3 – Community leadership of libraries

- Four libraries (East Finchley, Mill Hill, South Friern and Edgware) would be offered to the community to be run as community libraries. The library space in each community library would be reduced in size to approximately 540 square feet. The library space in Burnt Oak would also be reduced to this size. The libraries in East Barnet and Childs Hill would be closed. In each case, the space released would be let out for commercial use or alternatively income will be secured through redevelopment of sites. It is likely that a number of community libraries would move locally but any new sites would ensure equally good if not better access via public transport.
- Hendon, Burnt Oak, Chipping Barnet, Church End, Golders Green, Colindale (replacement for the current Grahame Park library), North Finchley and Osidge would be maintained as the core library network. The libraries would be staffed for 50% of the current opening hours, including peak usage periods in the late afternoons and at weekends. Opening hours would be increased, using new technology to allow access to libraries from 7am to 10pm, outside staffed times.

1.24 A number of features would be common across all options. These would include maintaining the following elements of the existing service:
- A mobile library service – maintained at current levels and used to 'top up' access to the library network for communities across Barnet.
- A home library service – maintained at current levels and used to ensure easy access to the library network for people with mobility issues.
- A Local Studies and Archives service – maintained at current levels.
- Support for adults, children and teenagers, including homework clubs and other activities – available in all staffed libraries.
- The Schools Libraries Resource Service – maintained at current levels, ensuring that school-based literacy activities for children and young people in the Borough continue to develop
- The early years service – maintained at current levels.

1.25 The following elements of the existing service would be expanded or developed:
- Improved self-service online technology – including existing 'reserve and collect' service making any book available to collect from any library now made available through new account service on Council website and delivered more efficiently using new Library Management System.
- e-books, e-audio and other online resources and learning materials – maintained at current levels or increased.

1.26 The options also assume:
- A new delivery model for libraries. This could be an employee or community owned mutual, a charitable trust or similar or an outsourced provider. A partnership with an educational institution would be considered to manage the Hendon branch, maintaining a smaller library on that site or nearby and allowing alternative use of some or all areas of the current building.

- Taking opportunities to generate additional income. This would including increasing the use of facilities, potentially including meeting room hire, offering parking spaces for rent, collection points such as Amazon Lockers and businesses advertising in libraries and on the mobile library vehicle. It would also include some increases to fees and charges.
- A greater role for volunteers to enhance the service provided in libraries.
- Continued support to community libraries in Hampstead Garden Suburb and Friern Barnet.

1.27 Library services are important to residents in Barnet and the options involve fundamental changes in the way the library service is delivered, including the role of the community in these services. It is therefore important to consult fully with current users and non-users of libraries as well as other stakeholders, such as voluntary and community groups, residents' associations and town teams. Section 4.2 of this report sets out the detailed plans for consultation on these proposals.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Council has set a savings target for the library service, which means that consideration needs to be given to delivering the service in a different way. Many local authorities have successfully involved communities in delivery of their library service and new technology provides an opportunity to consider how best to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 Options considered but not included are detailed in section 6 of Appendix A.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 If the recommendations of this report are agreed the next steps will be as follows:

4.2 **Public consultation and engagement**
Previous consultation exercises have shown how important library services are to local people. If the recommendations put to Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on 28 October 2014 are agreed, a public consultation exercise on these options for the library service will commence on 3 November 2014 and close on 15 February 2015. Members of the public will be able to engage through the following routes:

Consultation document and summary	This will be made available online and printed copies will be available from libraries and in locations which target interested groups including JobCentre Plus, Barnet Centre for Independent Living, day centres, schools and public council offices in Burnt Oak and Whetstone.

Survey	This would be aimed at the general population – including users and non-users of libraries. It will ask specific questions and provide the opportunity for free text response. This will be made available online at http://engage.barnet.gov.uk and printed copies will be available from libraries and in locations which target interested groups including JobCentre Plus, Barnet Centre for Independent Living, day centres, schools and public council offices in Burnt Oak and Whetstone. Targeted approaches will also be made to groups who may currently be underrepresented among users of the library service. Further submissions can be sent to libraryconsultation@barnet.gov.uk
Barnet Citizens' Panel	The survey will also be sent to the 'Barnet Citizens' Panel' – 2,000 residents statistically representative of the population of Barnet. This always provides a very high response rate.
Focus groups	Focus groups will be run with communities of interest.
Consultation events	A consultation event will be organised in each of the borough's three localities. Invitations will ensure balanced representation generally whilst ensuring the views of those groups most at risk of disadvantage are heard. Members of the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee will be invited to attend to hear the feedback of those in attendance.
Drop-in sessions in libraries.	A drop-in session will be arranged for three hours in every Barnet library. These will provide a less structured way for local people to feedback their views to an independent facilitator. Notes from discussions will be summarised and included in the consultation report.
Targeted survey of users of home and mobile libraries.	Paper copies of surveys available in mobile libraries and to home library users. Survey to be available on request in different formats: large print, easy read and audio. Option to use paper surveys as basis for interviewing home library users if unable to complete survey. Mobile library drop-in sessions.
Residents' Forums	The consultation will be presented to each of the residents' forums on 15 January 2015.

4.3 **Engagement with other stakeholders**
A targeted survey will be sent to groups and organisations who use libraries for meeting space or to provide activities. A series of information sessions will also be run for voluntary and community groups, residents' associations, town teams and any other organised groups potentially interested in running a community library.

During the consultation process we will work with the groups running the existing community libraries in Hampstead Garden Suburb and Friern Barnet to develop business plans and premises related agreements through to 2020. A detailed plan for consultation and engagement with the library workforce has also been developed. Meetings will be offered to Members to discuss the proposals.

4.4 **Full options appraisal for future delivery model**
A more detailed options appraisal will be completed to assess the most appropriate future delivery model.

The management team of the library service have expressed an interest in exploring the option of creating an employee-owned mutual to run the service. Over the next three months, work will be done with the management team to develop a business plan demonstrating viability. This will be supplemented by a working group and survey of all staff members. Support will also be obtained for the management team from the Cabinet Office's mutual support programme.

To test out the potential for an outsourced provider to run the library service, we will undertake a soft market testing exercise consisting of questionnaires and interviews, which will establish the true level of viable market interest in the service. This will include work with potential educational institution partners and engagement with possible not-for-profit providers, such as charitable trusts.

4.5 **'Open' library pilot**
The Council proposed to run a pilot of the 'open' library concept (see section 1.15) during the consultation period and until Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee make a final decision on the proposals. This will serve two purposes – to help inform the consultation response of local people by allowing them to trial the model and secondly to give the Council experience of operating the model to ensure lessons are learned on how best to implement the approach if approved.

If agreed, the pilot will commence in mid-December in Edgware library. For the duration of the pilot it will extend total opening hours – it will not replace current staffed hours.

4.6 **Asset options appraisal**
An asset options appraisal will be undertaken to assess the relative feasibility of and financial return from rental and redevelopment of sites.

4.7 **Implementation planning**
Further work will be undertaken to develop a detailed implementation plan for each of the three proposed options, including analysis of the likely capital costs of works required.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 **Corporate Priorities and Performance**
5.1.1 The Corporate Plan 2013 – 2016 includes objectives to "create the right environment to support families and individuals that need it - promoting independence" and to "improve the satisfaction of residents and businesses with the London Borough of Barnet as a place to live, work and study".

5.1.2 Relevant outcomes are "to create better life chances for children and young people across the borough" and "to promote family and community well-being and encourage engaged, cohesive and safe communities".

5.2 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**
5.2.1 The net budget for the Libraries service in 2014-15 is £4,536, 910.

5.2.2 On 23 June 2014 the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee noted the savings target of £8m allocated by the Policy and Resources Committee and agreed to complete a Commissioning Plan and savings proposals by December 2014. Each of the Committees has an allocated savings target and there are difficult decisions to make in all areas. The business planning process since then has considered each of the service components within the committee remit including:
- Education services.
- Children with disabilities, special educational needs (SEN) and high needs, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).
- Looked after children and young people.
- Safeguarding and children in need.
- Family support.
- Youth (incl. youth offending).
- Libraries.

5.2.3 Since the committee meeting, a number of savings within the existing Children's Service budget proposals totalling £1.87m have been re-profiled from 2015/16 to 2016/17. As a result, the total savings for the CELS Committee between 2016/17 and 2019/20 will be £9.87m.

5.2.4 The options presented in this report are the result of a bottom-up process to identify possible savings in the libraries service, and deliver a saving of £2.85m between 2015 and 2020. Depending on the option proposed, these savings result from different combinations of a reduction in staff across the network, a reduction in premises costs, reductions in the cost of supplies or increasing income from libraries. The proportion of the savings which results

from these areas are set out in the tables in section 9 of Appendix A.

5.2.5   The service is staffed (as of August 2014) by 101.82 FTE (150 posts; 73 full time and 77 part time; 33 of the part time posts Saturday and evening assistants only). 85.97 FTE (131 staff members) work across the physical network, including the home and mobile library services, and 15.84 FTE (19 staff members) are in central roles.

5.2.6   The consultation and other work required to bring a report back to Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee in April 2015 will require significant effort. Much of this will be delivered using existing resources but the following additional budget is required:

Resource	Cost
Consultation – printing, independent facilitation (focus groups, drop-in sessions, consultation events), analysis of responses	£80,000
Project management	£67,500
Project officer resource – development of April report, delivery of 'open' library pilot	£32,850
Commercial advice	£20,000
Total	**£200,350**

5.2.7   This resource will need to be approved by Policy & Resources Committee on 2 December 2014 through the budget and business planning report.

5.3   **Legal and Constitutional References**
5.3.1   The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 provides a general duty for library authorities. Section 7 makes it a duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use of it. However, whilst there is a power to make facilities available to any person, the duty only applies to those persons whose residence or place of work is within the Borough or those who are undergoing full time education within the Borough.

5.3.2   In fulfilling its duty, a local authority must have regard to the desirability of:
5.3.2.1   securing that facilities are available for the borrowing of and reference to books and other printed material, recorded music and pictures and film to meet the general and special requirements adults and children;
5.3.2.2   encouraging adults and children to make full use of the library service and of providing advice as to its use and information as may be required by users of the service;

5.3.3   The duty refers to the requirement to provide a service, it is not a duty to provide this service via library buildings.   The meaning of a "comprehensive and efficient library service" has been considered by the courts, specifically in the case of R(Bailey) v London Borough of Brent (2011). This held that the duty does not mean that every resident lives close to a library, but that comprehension means delivering a service that is accessible to all residents,

using reasonable means, including digital technologies. An efficient service has been held to mean making the best use of the assets available in order to meet its core objectives and vision, whilst recognising the constraints on council resources. Decisions about the service must be made taking account evidence of needs and aspirations across a diverse community within the local area.

5.3.4 Case law has confirmed that a local authority cannot meet its statutory duty without having an adequate assessment of need for library services.

5.3.5 When making public decisions, local authorities must take account of their overarching duties and public law principles of fairness. In particular, the Council must have due regard to its public sector equality duty, must take account of all relevant information and should not take account of irrelevant information. When deciding to consult on a proposal, this must be carried out in a fair and lawful way.

5.3.6 Case law on consultation has confirmed four principles which must be met to ensure that consultation is lawful. These are:

5.3.6.1 Consultation must be carried out at a formative stage. In this case, the committee is being asked to agree preferred options for consultation and the committee will consider at a future meeting, which, if any, of those options are the most appropriate way forward.

5.3.6.2 Consultees must be provided with sufficient reasons for the proposals to allow them to understand the impact and provide an informed response. This would include details of the buildings which may no longer be used as libraries, details of changes to building size, details of changes to the library service offered in each location and details of alternative provider, where this will impact on the delivery of the service.

5.3.6.3 Consultees should have sufficient time to respond to the consultation. The timing and length of consultation should take account of the nature of the decision and the method of consultation. In this case, the consultation will take place during term time and school holidays, when library use may change for children and parents. There are a variety of methods being adopted to engage the community and a period of 12 weeks during which consultees may respond.

5.3.6.4 Consultation must conscientiously be taken into account by the decision maker. At the next committee meeting, Members should expect to see a full summary of the consultation responses. This does not mean that the Council is obligated to make a decision which supports the majority of respondents. When making difficult policy decisions, based on financial constraints, it will be common for consultees to have strong views in support of retaining current provision. Members must consider these views and balance this with other information to decide the most appropriate way forward.

5.3.7 Sections 81-85 of the Localism Act 2011 introduced a right for community, voluntary and charitable bodies and local authority employees to "express an

interest" in providing or assisting in providing a service of behalf of the local authority. Upon receipt of such an expression, the local authority must consider it and if it accepts it, must carry out a procurement process for the service. Use of this power was considered in a recent case involving libraries in Lincolnshire. If an expression of interest is made in time by an appropriate body, it must be considered by the local authority when making decisions about the future provision of library services.

5.3.8 The Council's Constitution, Responsibility for Functions within the Terms of Reference for the Children's Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee responsibility include:
Development and enhancement of the Library Service

5.4 Risk Management
5.4.1 Significant risks identified to date include:

Risk	Mitigation
Inability to commercially rent sites results in failure to achieve savings.	Market testing to be undertaken to increase confidence in income modelling.
Staff may become demotivated and disengaged through the consultation and implementation process.	Communication and consultation plan in place.
Safeguarding or health and safety issues from 'open' libraries model.	Risk assessment for 'open' libraries model has been completed and will be monitored through the pilot phase.
Community libraries prove unsustainable.	Discussions with potential groups to be undertaken during consultation period.
Implementation of any agreed options is delayed by legal challenge.	Robust review of process and consultation approach.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity
5.5.1 Equality and Diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in decision-making in the Council pursuant to the Equality Act 2010. This means the Council and all other organisations acting on its behalf must have due regard to the equality duties when exercising a public function. The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality and good relations into day to day business, requiring equality considerations to be reflected into the design of policies and the delivery of services and for these to be kept under review.

5.5.2 The specific duty set out in s149 of the Equality Act is to have due regard to need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct

that is prohibited by or under this Act;

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

5.5.3 The relevant protected characteristics are – age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

5.5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the development of this paper and is attached as Appendix C. This has informed the consultation plan and the options appraisal. The equality impact assessment will be kept under review during the consultation phase and an updated assessment will be submitted to the future committee meeting. The needs assessment also has detailed information about current usage broken down into protected groups, compared with the general population in Barnet.

5.5.2 Previous consultation has indicated that some library buildings are used more by people from specific ethnic groups, that use of self service facilities may be harder or less suitable for people with certain disabilities, children and older people and that certain library buildings are less accessible than others. This has been taken into account in selection of the preferred options, however this will be subject to more detailed consultation and consideration during the next phase.

5.6 **Consultation and Engagement**
The options report found in Appendix A and the needs assessment in Appendix B summarise the consultation undertaken to date. If the recommendations of this report are agreed, consultation will be undertaken as outlined in section 4.2 of this report.

6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 *Strategic Library Review*, Cabinet, 26 July 2011, http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/201107261900/Agenda/Document%203.pdf

Appendix A

Barnet Council - Library Options Paper

October 2014

1. Contents

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2.   Overview of the current service and recent changes

2.1   Composition of the service

The library service is made up of:

- Fourteen physical sites, ranging in size from Hendon (19,375 sq ft) to Childs Hill (3,767 sq ft), providing access to books and learning materials, computers, printers, photocopiers and wi-fi, study and meeting space, and a range of activities run by library staff and local community groups.
- The mobile library service, which runs for four days a week with stops in 12 locations across the Borough.
- The home library service, which provides access to books and information for people whose mobility is restricted due to age, disability or illness.
- The Local Studies and Archives service, which offers access to local historical materials by appointment three days a week, as well as online resources
- e-books, e-audio and other online resources and learning materials.
- The Schools Libraries Resource Service, which provides professional advice and support to school libraries as well as loans to support the National Curriculum.
- The Early Years service, which provides activities in libraries for under-5s and their parents and helps administer the national Bookstart scheme
- Support for adults, children and teenagers, including homework clubs and other activities.

These services are supported by a central management team and a service development team of professional librarians.

LBB is a member of the Central Buying Consortium for the purposes of stock purchase. The consortium bulk-processes new stock and does so cost-effectively.

The borough has two community libraries, in Friern Barnet and Hampstead Garden Suburb.

2.2   Budget

The full 2014-15 budget for the service is £4,536,910. The Schools Libraries Resource Service and other traded services generate income of around £13,000.

Friern Barnet Community Library receives an annual grant of £25,000, and Hampstead Garden Suburb will receive £26,630, covering rent, utilities and other services. Hampstead Garden Suburb library is located in a leased building with expiry of the lease in 2016; the rent is currently included in the annual grant from the council. Friern Barnet Library is located in a council owned building with no current obligation for rent.

The Media Fund budget for 2014-15 is £668,196 for physical and electronic books, CDs, and other audio and visual materials.

2.3 Staff and volunteers

The service is staffed (as of August 2014) by 101.82 FTE (150 posts; 73 full time and 77 part time; 33 of the part time posts Saturday and evening assistants only).

85.97 FTE (131 staff members) work across the physical network, including the home and mobile library services, and 15.84 FTE (19 staff members) are in central roles.

There were 83 volunteers working within the library service in 2012-13, against an average of 193 for the Borough's Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) comparator group, which benchmarks the performance of the service against similar local authorities. The proportion of hours worked by volunteers was 0.6% against a comparator average of 5.3%.

154 new volunteer applications were received in 2013-14, 98 from adults and 56 from young people.

2.4 Recent and future developments to the service

Following 2011's Strategic Library Review, the service has carried out a programme of changes, including:

- Extending customer self-service and introducing free wi-fi across all sites.
- Initiating a phased capital maintenance programme made up of nine projects. Those still outstanding are:
  - Works to East Barnet, East Finchley and North Finchley which will improve community meeting space and ensure Equality Act compliance for these libraries.
  - Procurement of a new mobile library vehicle.
- Creating the two community libraries (as a consequence of proposals to close Hampstead Garden Suburb and consolidate North Finchley and Friern Barnet into a new landmark library).
- Initiating an ICT transformation programme which will increase network capacity, replace staff and public access PC devices, improve wi-fi, replace software such as the Library Management and public network booking systems, and resolve current firewall issues which create revenue implications and barriers to good customer service.
- Planning further rationalisation of the estate, being developed through the Council's regeneration programme and including:
  - A new library in Colindale, relocating the existing library in Grahame Park.
  - A new library in the redeveloped Gateway House building, relocating the existing library in Finchley Church End.

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2.5 Condition of the library estate

The condition of the current library estate varies but many sites are likely to require significant maintenance work in the next five years. The table below summarises known major works required by site. Many sites have not been surveyed in recent years and it is likely that additional works will be required.

Library	Major work required
Burnt Oak	None
Childs Hill	External and internal building works, full electrical rewiring, Equality Act compliance
Chipping Barnet	External and internal building works, new lighting system, new heating system, Equality Act compliance
Church End	*Moving to new site*
East Barnet	Internal building works, substantial electrical works, Equality Act compliance
East Finchley	Internal building works, substantial electrical works, Equality Act compliance
Edgware	Equality Act compliance
Golders Green	External building works, Equality Act compliance
Grahame Park	*Moving to new site*
Hendon	Minor internal and mechanical works
Mill Hill	External building works, Equality Act compliance
North Finchley	Equality Act compliance
Osidge	Full electrical rewiring, new boiler and heating system, asbestos, Equality Act compliance
South Friern	None

Consideration needs to be given to the likely cost of completing these works when evaluating the future options for each site.

2.6   Current service – summary table

	Burnt Oak	Childs Hill	Chipping Barnet	Church End	East Barnet	East Finchley	Edgware	Golders Green	Grahame Park	Hendon Library	Mill Hill	North Finchley	Osidge Library	South Friern	Total
Size (sq ft)	2,691	3,767	17,222	6,405	5,834	5,113	5,748	5,070	7,040	19,375	5,597	6,512	4,445	4,445	99,265
Staffed opening hours (per week)	51.0	35.0	56.5	50.5	50.5	40.0	53.5	46.0	35.0	56.5	43.0	43.0	39.0	35.0	634.5

3. Statutory duties

3.1 Definition and guidance

Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide a library service. The Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964) states that "It shall be the duty of every library authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof". However, whilst there is a power to make facilities available to any person, the duty only applies to those persons whose residence or place of work is within the Borough or those who are undergoing full time education within the Borough.

In fulfilling its duty, a local authority must have regard to the desirability of:

- securing that facilities are available for the borrowing of and reference to books and other printed material and pictures and film to meet the general and special requirements adults and children;
- encouraging adults and children to make full use of the library service and of providing advice as to its use and information as may be required by users of the service;

Case law has considered the meaning of the duty, specifically Ouseley, J in Bailey v London Borough of Brent [2011] EWHC 2572 (Admin), stated that:

'A comprehensive service cannot mean that every resident lives close to a library. This has never been the case. Comprehensive has therefore been taken to mean delivering a service that is accessible to all residents using reasonable means, including digital technologies. An efficient service must make the best use of the assets available in order to meet its core objectives and vision, recognising the constraints on council resources. Decisions about the Service must be embedded within a clear strategic framework which draws upon evidence about needs and aspirations across the diverse communities of the borough.'

In Draper v Lincolnshire County Council [2014] EWHC 2388 (Admin), the question of delivery method and access should be considered, based on the whole service, rather than the location of library buildings:

"An example of access by digital technology could involve the identification of a book followed by delivery through a mobile library. But there are no doubt other ways in which such access could be achieved. The key is a reasonable ability to access the service by all residents of the county. This means that distances and time taken to reach a library must be reasonable and any particular problems, whether physical disabilities, or created by age or family considerations, must be capable of being met. Furthermore, budgetary constraints can properly be taken into account in deciding the nature of the service provided that it meets the requirements of s.7 of the 1964 Act."

The Secretary of State has a superintendent role over libraries and can order public inquiries into library services, where there is a concern that the library authority is not

meeting its statutory duty. In 2009, Sue Charteris led a public inquiry into Wirral public library services. The key findings from this inquiry are of importance to all library authorities. The following factors are considered relevant to this paper:

- Requirement to make assessment of local need prior to considering changes to the library service
- Requirement to consider the specific needs of adults, including older people, disabled people, unemployed people and those living in deprived areas.
- The need to have due regard for the general needs of children, including consideration of the role of schools in the library service.
- The need to take a strategic approach to the library service, rather than focusing on asset management and cost savings.
- The need to have a clear understanding of the extent and range of services currently provided within libraries.
- Consideration of the need for a comprehensive outreach service.

To comply with the duty, the Council needs to ensure that the breadth and quality of the service provided can be considered comprehensive and efficient. This will mean ensuring that the services provided meet the needs of local people. This would include:

- Securing and keeping a wide range of free resources, including books and other printed matter, pictures, sound recordings, films and other materials, to browse and borrow in sufficient number, range and quality;
- To meet the general requirements of both adults and children living, working or studying in the local area;
- Free independent information and advice from staff; and
- Encouraging use and participation of the service, for example, through clear and easy ways to join, access, shape and influence the service.

Consultation with Barnet's library users in 2011 and 2014 asked residents what they valued about library services. Many of the key points from their responses are echoed in research commissioned by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Association in 2010. The main themes are set out below.

- Libraries are important community 'hubs' or 'centres', which help local residents connect with one another and access services and activities (MLA 2010, Barnet 2014). Library buildings are also valuable as physical spaces, and mean different things to different people (MLA 2010, Barnet 2014).
- Libraries have a strong social role in bringing communities together. Libraries are seen as particularly welcoming and inclusive of marginalised people, perhaps in part because the service is free or cheap to use (MLA 2010, Barnet 2014).

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- The public continue to see libraries' core purpose as focused on reading, learning and finding information. Book borrowing remains the most frequent activity, both for pleasure and study. The unique nature of library services (for example, access to reference books, free internet, an informal learning environment, children's activities, help from library staff and specialist services such as genealogy research) also attracts the public. That these services remain free or very cheap to use is again seen as essential. In Barnet, children's services and engagement with children in particular are consistently seen as core elements of the library service (MLA 2010, Barnet 2011, Barnet 2014).

The service being delivered also needs to be accessible to all residents using reasonable means, including digital technologies. It has never been the case that every resident lived close to a library, but distances and time taken to reach a library must nonetheless be reasonable and any particular problems, whether physical disabilities, or those created by age or family circumstances, must be able to be met. Budgetary constraints can be taken into account when deciding the nature of the service provided.

Lincolnshire County Council's 2014 review of their service reconfigured the library network so that 95% of the population were able to travel to a library within 30 minutes by public transport. This was tested through a legal challenge which found faults in their process but not the substance of their proposals. This 30 minute standard matches the Department for Transport's indicator measuring the accessibility of public services in a local area. Respondents to consultation carried out in Barnet in 2013 also cited a maximum journey time of 30 minutes as their optimal distance from a library.

The options in this paper use the 30 minute public transport travel time standard to judge access to sites in the Barnet library network and have modelled travel times to and from these, using Transport for London data.

In order to make best use of the assets available, proposals should not duplicate activities or resources already available elsewhere. This may involve reconfiguring activities within libraries to coordinate with those provided by other organisations and to ensure that they are not duplicating provision.

There have been a number of high profile judicial challenges to library authorities. These have focused on the following areas:

- Failure to ensure a sufficiently rigorous and timely consultation process.
- Failure to carry out a needs assessment or make a judgement as to whether, taking account of such assessment, the service is comprehensive and efficient.
- Failure to comply with the public sector equality duty.

- Failure to consider an expression of interest from a charitable organisation to manage libraries.

Successful challenges have been based on the process of decision making, as well as failing to meet the statutory duty.

The Arts Council England, in conjunction with the Local Government Association, has produced a guiding principles document in relation to community libraries. The key points in this document are as follows:

- Library services are responding to many drivers of change, including technological innovations, customer expectations, joining up services, financial challenges and localism.
- Community involvement in library services is growing, with more than one in three library authorities having at least one community library operating within their area.
- In considering community involvement, the library authority should take a strategic and long term view, preferably as part of a wider review of its library service.
- Community involvement can take many different forms, taking account of local need, partnership between the local authority and the community and asset management.
- Community libraries can be enterprising and generate income, including setting up cafes, running shops and providing related services.

4. Needs assessment

The needs assessment underpinning this strategy has made use of quantitative data drawn from the Barnet library service and from benchmarking exercises, cross-referencing this with demographic data from the Office for National Statistics and transport and accessibility data from Transport for London.

It has also made use of qualitative data about the service, including satisfaction surveys, the extensive consultation work carried out to develop the 2011 strategy, more recent consultation including a number of focus groups carried out in summer 2014 to inform the development of these options, and it has linked these to national research about library use and the needs of different residents.

The full needs assessment is attached as Appendix B.

The analysis shows that current provision is extensive and includes a range of popular services and activities. Libraries are also well-regarded by non-users. However, the proportion of residents who are library users is relatively low in comparison to similar local authorities and use of some specific elements of the service (such as the home library service and use of library PCs) is lower than others. Library use has been falling across the entire network over the past three years though there is variation between the different library branches. Book-borrowing has fallen most in East Barnet and South Friern and remained more consistent in Church End and North Finchley.

Users are sometimes unaware either of the wider library offer or of services relevant specifically to them. This has been a feature of both 2011 and 2014 consultation (for example, older people, young people, and disabled people). Libraries in some geographical areas may not be reaching the resident population and could perhaps benefit from reviewing their access (for example, Muslim residents, Gypsies and Travellers) to ensure that the service continues to meet local need. Overall, increasing awareness of the library offer is an opportunity to make it more comprehensive.

Strong feedback was given that libraries could widen their offer during consultation carried out by Barnet in 2013. To remain comprehensive in the future, the service should also look to continue diversifying its provision. BME residents have expressed wishes for more services and activities appropriate to people from diverse backgrounds in both 2011 and 2014. The BME population of Barnet is projected to increase from 38% to 42% by 2021, which suggests that these needs will increase. This would also provide an opportunity to review provision for underrepresented groups such as Muslim residents and Gypsies and Travellers. Other groups, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender residents, will need to continue to be able to access appropriate information and resources.

The service could also be made more comprehensive by increasing access in order to extend its reach. Limits on opening hours have emerged as a consistent theme, focusing on the needs of working age adults (Barnet, 2014). Use of the service is relatively low among working age adults and the service is in high demand on Sundays. Extending opening hours could help it meet the needs of this group more effectively.

The themes identified in the needs assessment will be developed further in the discussion of the various considerations and options later in this paper.

5.   Outcomes and objectives

The Library Strategy was last updated in 2011. The following outcomes and objectives are largely based on those agreed at that time, but have been updated to reflect the feedback from consultation since 2011 and the financial challenges now facing the local authority.

The updated vision for the library service in Barnet is as follows:

> 1. **A library service that provides children and adults with reading, literacy and learning opportunities.**
> 2. **A library service that engages with communities.**
> 3. **A library service that makes knowledge and information easily accessible.**
> 4. **A library service that can withstand current and future financial challenges and safeguard services for vulnerable people.**

The Council needs to ensure that it continues to perform its statutory duties, promote literacy and access to information, and ensure that the library service is suited to the needs of the local community at the same time at meeting this significant financial challenge. Over the last few years accessibility in libraries has been improved, wi-fi access has been rolled out and investment in updating the IT equipment available has commenced.

People who use Barnet's libraries hold the service in high regard, with satisfaction ratings running at close to 90%. We know that library buildings are highly valued community assets. Through consultation, people have told us that they see their libraries as community hubs: welcoming, inclusive places where residents can connect with each other, find out about local activities, and benefit from an increasing range of services and facilities.

We also know that while satisfaction with the quality of the service is high, the proportion of the population who use libraries is relatively low compared to other local authority areas. Our challenge is to provide capacity to meet public service objectives, increase usage of the service and maintain satisfaction without the funds to maintain the status quo. Our ability to achieve this is dependent on greater community involvement and the application of new technology in libraries and online.

The service needs to maintain local access to libraries across the Borough, ensuring that almost everyone will be able to reach a library from their home in less than half an hour's public transport travel time. We will make use of new technology to increase opening hours, extending the service to people who cannot currently access the service during the working day.

Promoting literacy is a vital role for the library service and we will continue to run a range of schemes and initiatives to further this goal. These will include early years activities, book clubs and homework clubs.

We will build on the strong positive support expressed by communities for their local libraries. We know that more people want to volunteer in libraries than we currently have the capacity to manage. We will ensure communities can get more involved in shaping, supporting and, where appropriate, running their libraries and the activities provided in them. We will use the library estate to support local businesses, channelling the income generated back into the service.

5.1   A library service that provides children and adults with reading, literacy and learning opportunities

Reading and learning materials are provided for loan and library use, in traditional print/hard copy formats as well as provision of e-book, e-audio and online learning resources.

The Barnet Digital Library will increase reading and learning opportunities for local people, while the physical library estate continues to offer access to reading, literacy and learning opportunities for children and adults.

At least 95% of Barnet residents can reach their local public library by public transport and have access to study space and to learning activities run for communities by communities and by local partners.

Outreach and development is targeted at those most in need, with strategic partnerships in Education, Adult and Children's Services, and appropriate local partners.

The service continues to deliver onsite and online literacy activities and reading schemes (The National Reading Offer) such as the *Summer Reading Challenge*, *Six Book Challenge* and *City Reads*.

5.2   A library service that engages with communities.

Library buildings continue to act as focal points of community activity, with further integration of services and use of library spaces which reflects local needs.

Opportunities for local people to shape and support library services are increased, through an expanded range of volunteering roles and advisory groups.

Social media and new technologies are increasingly used to deliver peer to peer customer interaction and support, offering residents the opportunities to share reading recommendations, advice and support.

Local commercial partnership opportunities are exploited where possible.

5.3   A library service that makes knowledge and information easily accessible.

Local and Council information is provided in both hard and soft copy forms.

The library service continues to act as a gateway to local services, expanding its use of self-service technology to increase access to those provided by the Council.

Online library services, accessible 24:7, offer the library service increased opportunities to deliver literacy, learning and information services out of hours and to those unable to visit static service points.

Users of the physical libraries have access to modernised ICT equipment and ICT learning support.

5.4   A library service that can withstand current and future financial challenges and safeguard services for vulnerable people.

Barnet's libraries are configured in such a way as to support the Council in meeting these challenges.

Income from services, assets, trading and other unique capabilities is maximised in order to take the universal free-to-use library service to the maximum number of people.

Opportunities presented by new technology and improved volunteering support are maximised to preserve libraries as physical spaces/community assets.

6.   Considerations

This section outlines the approaches identified that could deliver cost savings or increase income for the library service.

6.1   Volunteering and community involvement

There has been a significant trend across the country in recent years towards a much greater involvement of volunteers in the running of library services. Barnet has an unusually low proportion of hours worked by volunteers and there are roughly four times more applications to volunteer in libraries than the number of volunteers who work there. LB Redbridge is an example of a library service that makes use of volunteers to allow it to operate with lower revenue expenditure than Barnet but maintain a similar network size. Redbridge's libraries are operated by a charitable trust which may also be a way to motivate more volunteers to get involved with the service.

Respondents to consultation in Barnet have expressed broad support for greater volunteer involvement in the service, to complement the work of library staff (Barnet, 2011, 2014). Older people have expressed some concerns that this would lead to fewer trained librarians in the service; care should be taken to assure them that the number of trained librarians would not be affected.

There are a number of approaches for increasing the use of volunteers in libraries, including:

Approach	Description	Potential for savings
Enhancement of service	Use of volunteers to run additional services in libraries (e.g. toddler activities, reading clubs, job clubs).	None – may be small increase in costs to manage volunteers.
New service delivery model	Libraries could be open with one member of staff complemented by one or more volunteers (all libraries are currently staffed by two or more individuals). Potential to increase engagement from local communities with the service. Would be very difficult to manage operations in this way – it would be likely to lead to more unscheduled closures should issues arise with volunteer dependency.	Would almost halve staffing costs for a library.

Approach	Description	Potential for savings
Volunteer run service, enabled by technology	The Council would provide the building, stock, equipment and other premises related costs along with additional technology to facilitate easier opening and closing. The local authority would undertake core management tasks and volunteers would staff the library.	Staff savings.
Community run library – with specification	The Council would provide the building and potentially stock, equipment and additional technology to facilitate easier opening and closing. A community or other voluntary group would run the library and meet a minimum specification set by the library. The inclusion of a specification is likely to result in the council paying a significant grant to attract a group to run a library in this fashion. Potential to attract external funding, increased if the building is leased on a term in excess of 25 years.	Staff savings less any grant given to the community group.
Community run library – without a specification	The Council would provide the building and current stock. This group would then run the library as it saw fit, without any kind of specification. This is likely to lead to a diversification of service delivery and the development of a community hub. The freedom and flexibility in running the space is likely to attract a broader range of groups / individuals and enable a more sustainable solution. It is assumed that the Council would need to pay premises related costs. Potential to attract external funding, increased if the building is leased on a term in excess of 25 years.	Staff costs. Stock.

6.2   Reduction in library size and rental of the released space

Another approach to reduce the operating cost of a given library is to make it smaller. Significantly, the rental of any freed up space has the potential to generate significant income to support the service. The suitability of each site for sub-division and multi-use is different and some lend themselves more effectively to such proposals dependent on size, location, layout, independent access and alternative

uses. Respondents to consultation have been broadly in favour of use of libraries to generate income but are keen to ensure that profits were channelled back into the service.

The minimum size for a library has been assumed to be something similar to that in Hampstead Garden Suburb (c.540 sq ft) and moving to a library this size would lead to the greatest potential saving. This would clearly lead to a reduction in the range of stock immediately available in a given site, but this would be mitigated to some extent by the continued availability of the 'reserve and collect' service at each branch.

Achieving these savings would require some capital works to separate the space and is dependent on finding suitable tenants for each site. The lettings process and budgetary risk of not finding tenants would best sit outside of the library service in estates management where the expertise in these matters is situated.

In some cases, a better financial return from reducing library size may be secured through redevelopment and / or relocation than rental. These approaches are explored below.

6.3   Re-location

A whole library, or an element of a library, could be moved to an alternative location. The main opportunities identified are:

- Moving a library into new build premises on a development site. Under this approach, a new, more efficient library could be provided which reduces premises costs and buildings maintenance, and it can be ensured that the use of space is fit-for-purpose.
- Moving a library into an alternative Council or public sector partner building. There would be more opportunities to do this if the size of the library was also reduced.
- Moving a library into a 'community hub' building with a range of voluntary and community sector tenants could create a more sustainable format for a volunteer run library.
- Moving a smaller library into a leased property if the cost of the lease is exceeded by the potential income from the released site.
- Moving a children's library into a children's centre or alternative community venue.

Relocation would free up existing sites for rental, development or disposal and the additional income would be a further saving.

6.4   Redevelopment

A number of library sites have the potential for mixed use development with a new library facility below a number of residential dwellings, funded through the residential

development. This could reduce premises costs and buildings maintenance and would ensure that the use of space is fit-for-purpose along with the potential for a capital receipt.

6.5 Reduced opening hours

The opening hours of each library could be reduced to release staff and, to a much smaller extent, utility costs. In developing proposals of this sort consideration would need to be given to:

- Peak usage times.
- Usage by targeted groups.
- Opening across the network.
- Ability to efficiently rota staff.

6.6 Income generation

There are a variety of ways in which the service could attempt to generate additional income with varying degrees of risk. These could include:

- Digital barrier-buster for job seekers (charged to DWP)
- Hires of flexible library spaces
- Ticketed arts and cultural events
- 'Friends of Barnet Libraries' scheme
- Digital independence circles
- Vending machines and commercial collection points
- Advertising and sponsorship
- Increased fees and charges including the introduction of fines for children's stock

6.7 Library closures

The complete closure of a library service on a given site would generate revenue savings of between £135k and £480k. The statutory duty to maintain a comprehensive and efficient service relates to the service, rather than the buildings. It is therefore possible to provide a comprehensive and efficient service with fewer library buildings and other options for accessing library resources.

If the old library site was then leased, the rental income generated could also be used to mitigate the need for further cuts in service. Alternatively, income could be secured through the redevelopment of the site.

When considering site closures, a number of factors need to be considered to identify which sites would be most suitable. These would include:

- Impact on travel times for local people to their next closest library.
- Current usage of the library including equalities impact.

- Financial impact.
- Condition of the site.

6.8   The 'open' library.

The use of technology can now allow the Council to open and close a library without the need for any staff to be on site. Visitors would access the library during unstaffed periods by scanning their library card and entering a PIN number. Once inside they would be able to use self-serve technology to borrow and return items, use computers, print and copy. CCTV would provide additional security.

There is limited precedent for this for UK public libraries but the approach is standard for public libraries in Scandinavia and is now the norm for university libraries in the UK. It would be feasible (with some capital investment) in all libraries – but some sites would be challenging to enable and would require significant capital investment. The ongoing revenue costs are relatively low at around £10k per library per year. Unstaffed opening hours will generate activity for staff or volunteers to do at a later point – e.g. re-stocking.

This approach to library opening could be enhanced by a remote voice or video information and advice service allowing interaction with library staff in other libraries.

The technology could be implemented to:

1. Extend opening hours.
2. Mitigate a reduction in staffed opening hours.
3. Move to an entirely unstaffed opening model.

The third approach would still require staffing to maintain effective running of the library (for example in re-stocking) but these would not be offering information and advice to visitors. Some of this work could be done by volunteers.

6.9   Alternative delivery models

A range of delivery models have been considered for the library service. These are summarised in the following table:

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Delivery model	Quality of services	Savings potential	Control of services	Citizen and service user focus
In-house	Service quality is currently strong – high satisfaction with the service.	None additional.	Maximum control.	Strong – although some distrust arising from implementation of previous strategy may limit ability to engage.
Educational partnership	Educational providers should have strong track record in delivery of library services.	Joining up public and educational libraries should deliver a significantly more cost effective service.	Medium – would be contractual or partnership arrangements in place.	Risk that service would cater for students at the expense of the general population – would need to be mitigated through clear partnership agreement / specification.
Staff or community owned mutual	Current management team are supportive of this approach. This would increase the likelihood of retaining expertise during change. There is evidence from other public service mutuals that staff are more productive and satisfied with their work and are better able to innovate.	The mutual could benefit from reductions in business rates (over half of which would be a net saving to the borough) and may be more successful at engaging communities and securing the services of volunteers or access alternative funding streams. No requirement for profit generation. Risk of limited commercial management expertise. Cost of transition.	Medium – likely to be contractual arrangements in place.	Strong – distinct identity could also improve ability to engage.

Delivery model	Quality of services	Savings potential	Control of services	Citizen and service user focus
Outsource - including charitable organisations	The market for delivery of library services has grown over recent years and there is evidence in London and other areas of sustained levels of service combined with savings delivery.	The models promoted tend to include an increased use of volunteering – looked at separately in this document – and from reductions in management, premises related costs and business rates (due to the charitable status of the delivery vehicle - effective 56% saving to borough). The commercial provider is likely to require a profit and this needs to be accounted for when estimating savings. Cost of procurement.	Medium – would be contractual arrangements in place.	Strong evidence from other boroughs of ability to significantly increase volunteering suggested ability to maintain this focus.

Delivery model	Quality of services	Savings potential	Control of services	Citizen and service user focus
Shared service	Should be maintained – would depend on partner authority / authorities.	There are minimal costs that would be lowered through a shared service – stock is already purchased through a consortium and the impact of operating scale on the costs of running an individual library are minimal. There are central service costs that could be shared amongst authorities such as the management overhead. Some neighbouring boroughs already have outsourced arrangements, which may impact on the availability of a shared service partner.	Medium – less control when trying to meet objectives of multiple boroughs.	May lose unique borough identity.

6.10   Changing the stock purchase model

Alternative stock purchasing models have been investigated but none have been feasible. Barnet is already part of a stock purchasing consortium and so benefits from negotiated discounts. Though individual items could be purchased cheaper in some instances, especially if purchased second hand, the processing cost of protecting the books, tagging them and entering them onto the system would negate any potential savings.

Sourcing shelf-ready second-hand stock from a major retailer or aggregator would be the only way to make material savings and still sustain high enough quality and volume. Initial market testing of this approach suggests that it is unlikely to be viable.

6.11   Reduce spend on stock

The service could reduce spend on physical and / or digital stock.

7. Financial challenge

Despite economic growth, public sector cuts will continue until 2020, coupled with rising demand. Barnet has dealt effectively with the first wave of austerity, by anticipating the cuts before they arrived and planning ahead. The Council is now planning for the next 5 years and how a further £72m will be saved.

On 23 June 2014 the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee noted the savings target of £8m allocated by the Policy and Resources Committee and agreed to complete a Commissioning Plan and savings proposals by December 2014. Each of the Committees has an allocated savings target and there are difficult decisions to make in all areas. The business planning process since then has considered each of the service components within the committee remit including:

- Education services.
- Children with disabilities, special educational needs (SEN) and high needs, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).
- Looked after children and young people.
- Safeguarding and children in need.
- Family support.
- Youth (incl. youth offending).
- Libraries.

The process started with investigating the financial contribution libraries could make whilst still delivering a comprehensive and efficient service. As a result of this, the options presented in this report deliver a saving of £2.85m between 2015 and 2020.

8. Conclusions

Having considered the approaches in the light of the financial challenge a number of conclusions have been reached. This section outlines some opportunities for which there is a clear proposed direction of travel and others where a range of approaches still need to be considered through consultation and further investigation.

8.1 Use of volunteers

Increasing the use of volunteers should definitely be pursued to improve the services offered from libraries and / or to help mitigate other changes implemented. This will need the right resource and an improved approach to recruitment, training and volunteer management.

Of the approaches identified for a volunteer led service in a library, the preferred approach is for a community run library without a service specification. This has been chosen because it:

- Allows the facility to be used according to local community demand.
- Provides the most attractive and practically manageable approach for potentially interested groups and individuals.
- Delivers significant savings.

8.2 Closures and reductions in size

Options with and without closures need to be tested through consultation to explore potential trade-offs between this and other approaches.

When determining which libraries should be closed in the options below, the primary factor considered has been to look at the sites that can be closed whilst maintaining access to a library within 30 minutes of public transport travel time for at least 95% of residents.

Where there is a choice of sites, consideration has been given to usage levels, site condition, financial impact and proximity to other sites.

With regard to a reduction in the size of libraries, it has been concluded that if reducing, it is best to maximise income from the freed up space by leaving around 540 sq. ft. for the library. This would allow all essential services to be delivered on-site and though stock would be limited, the ability to reserve and collect any item from the whole service will significantly mitigate this.

8.3 Re-location and redevelopment

The physical condition of many library buildings means that over the medium term the likely cost of improvements to maintain them is high. Consultees have given feedback that the current library buildings can be a barrier as they are not well matched to modern library use. Elderly and disabled library users have highlighted the need for improved parking and disabled access to the library buildings, and the current estate makes it difficult to achieve these aims. As such, it has been concluded that opportunities to create new provision through relocation or redevelopment should be actively identified and explored for feasibility.

The current network is not inaccessible but only 50% of library sites are in the upper half of the Public Transport Access Level (PTAL) scale. Libraries are positioned near many of Barnet's high streets and shopping centres but their locations often limit the footfall they can attract

Plans already exist for a new library in Colindale, relocating the existing library in Grahame Park and a new library in the redeveloped Gateway House building, relocating the existing library in Finchley Church End.

Any scheme would need to result in a library that compares favourably to the proposed changes in whichever option of change was agreed for implementation. This would mean the new site would need to be at least the same size and in a location at least as well served by public transport.

Opportunities will also be sought for the co-location of libraries with other public services and community facilities. There is greater potential for this to be viable if a library is reduced in size.. There should be a presumption that under options that include smaller library sites re-location is likely to secure the best financial return.

8.4 Opening hours

Consultation exercises have consistently shown the value placed on an accessible service open at a range of times to suit various segments of the population. Experience from around the country has shown that when a library's opening hours significantly reduce and do not follow an easy to understand pattern, usage quickly declines. As such it is the Council's intention that opening hours are extended through the use of technology for all libraries remaining open.

To achieve the level of savings required from the service will require a reduction in staffed opening hours. Preparing a timetable to allocate staffed hours across the estate will need to ensure a good level of accessibility for all and safeguard usage for groups with additional requirements. Ensuring staffed times provide access for children and young people will be prioritised to ensure priority outcomes of the service can continue to be achieved.

8.5   Income generation

Additional income generation should definitely be a feature of the response to the challenges facing the service. A significant financial opportunity is to commercially rent any freed up space in the libraries estate and retain this rental income to subsidise the service. Whilst further work would be needed to deal with implementation issues (including planning) there is confidence that a range of tenants could be found should space be made available. Usage could vary from office space to community, café or retail.

Having assessed the additional income opportunities identified, the following have been chosen as priorities for implementation based on feasibility, return on investment and impact:

- Hires of flexible library spaces and parking spaces.
- 'Friends of Barnet Libraries' scheme.
- Vending machines and commercial collection points.
- Advertising and sponsorship.
- Increased fees and charges including the introduction of fines for children's stock.

Other opportunities could be explored in future to help provide additional investment for the service.

8.6   Alternative providers

The initial consideration of the various options for alternative delivery of libraries suggests that either a community or staff owned mutual or outsourced option would deliver the greatest level of benefits. The analysis shows that additional savings can be achieved through these options with the potential for other service improvements. The next phase of work should include a fuller options appraisal to be informed by consultation feedback, engagement with the management team and soft market testing.

For Hendon library the most effective option would seem to be for a partnership with an educational institution given the potential for an enhanced service that meets the needs of the predominant user base whilst also delivering savings. If this option proved unviable following further investigation, Hendon would be considered as part of the whole service as set out above.

Relevant interested parties could express an interest in running a library or a group of libraries to the Council and any expression received would have to be properly considered.

During the consultation we will explore options for the delivery model, including in-house and shared services as well as the other delivery models. While these are not preferred options, they will be considered further during the next phase and will be included in the consultation questionnaire.

8.7   Stock

If libraries are made smaller, the stock purchasing budget would be reduced accordingly so that the stock level was appropriate to the new level of storage space – all stock would be available from all libraries through the 'reserve and collect' service. Given the increasing demand for and wide accessibility of digital stock, it is proposed that the purchasing budget is maintained. This will ensure a more efficient library service.

9. Options

9.1 Common features of all options

A number of features would be common across all options. These would include maintaining the following elements of the existing service:

- A mobile library service – maintained at current levels and used to 'top up' access to the library network for communities across Barnet.
- A home library service – maintained at current levels and used to ensure easy access to the library network for people with mobility issues.
- A Local Studies and Archives service – maintained at current levels.
- Support for adults, children and teenagers, including homework clubs and other activities – available in all staffed libraries.
- The Schools Libraries Resource Service – maintained at current levels, ensuring that school-based literacy activities for children and young people in the Borough continue to develop
- The early years service – maintained at current levels.

These services will be critical in promoting access for people who find it difficult to reach physical library buildings. They also allow the service to explore different routes for maintaining literacy-related activities and access to information outside the physical library network. It will be important to raise awareness of these services as consultation has suggested many groups who could potentially benefit from them do not know that they are on offer.

The following elements of the existing service would be expanded or developed:

- Improved self-service online technology – including existing 'reserve and collect' service making any book available to collect from any library now made available through new account service on Council website and delivered more efficiently using new Library Management System.
- e-books, e-audio and other online resources and learning materials – maintained at current levels or increased.

Both these developments will make the service more accessible. Self-service online technology supports a flexible library network with residents able to access any book from the library most convenient to them, while the digital library will enable people to access resources without needing to go to a library building and help the service meet the needs of older and disabled people. Consultation suggests that many people who would be interested in using these services do not know they are available and use of the digital library is currently relatively low at 1.5% of all transactions, even though market developments elsewhere suggest that the appetite for digital media is expanding significantly. This suggests there is scope to extend the offer and ensure potential users are aware of it.

The options also assume:

- A new delivery model for libraries. This could be an employee or community owned mutual, a community trust or similar or an outsourced provider. It has also been assumed that a partnership with an educational institution would manage the Hendon branch, maintaining a smaller library on that site or nearby and allowing alternative use of some or all areas of the current building.
- Making use of opportunities to generate additional income. This would including increasing the use of facilities, potentially including meeting room hire, offering parking spaces for rent, collection points such as Amazon Lockers and businesses advertising in libraries and on the mobile library vehicle. It would also include some increases to fees and charges.
- A greater role for volunteers to enhance the service provided in libraries.
- Continued support to community libraries in Hampstead Garden Suburb and Friern Barnet.

Three options have been developed to best achieve the vision and objectives for libraries in Barnet and achieve the savings required. These are outlined in the following sections.

9.2 Option 1: Maintain the full reach of the existing library network.

The service would centre on four 'core' libraries, in Chipping Barnet – the busiest of our current sites; in the new libraries in Church End and Colindale (replacement for the current Grahame Park library), each of which will have state-of-the-art reading, activity and study services, and a smaller library in Hendon.

Outside these four libraries, the library space within each building would be smaller – around 540 square feet on average.   We would let out space within the library buildings for commercial use – utilising our assets to their full potential and potentially supporting small and medium enterprises in line with our ambition to become the best Borough in London for small businesses. Alternatively income will be secured through redevelopment of sites, ensuring continued provision of a library in each case. It is likely that a number of libraries would move locally but any new sites would ensure equally good if not better access via public transport. Library users will still have access to books from anywhere in the network at their local library through the reserve and collect service.

This would allow us to maintain the existing library network – no libraries would close. We would extend current opening hours by 50% across the network. Library staff would be present to support library users and provide information and advice for half of current opening hours, including peak usage periods in the late afternoons and at weekends. Overall, hours would be extended using new technology to keep libraries open outside staffed times, with remote access to information, advice and support available by telephone from within the libraries during core business hours.

Under this option, savings will be achieved as follows:

	Staff	Buildings	Stock	Income
Proportion of total savings	68%	5%	11%	16%

Consultation tells us that residents value the ability to access a library near their homes and that this is particularly important for students, children and older people. Residents also tell us that they value library buildings as welcoming, inclusive spaces where communities can come together and that this is particularly important to certain groups (people with mental health issues, BME residents, and people from areas of deprivation).

This option prioritises continued access to a 'local' library for all residents who currently have this. It provides the greatest number of points at which residents can access the service of any option, and allows the largest extension to current opening hours of any of the three. Almost all residents favour this but it is likely to be of particular benefit to working age people who are currently underrepresented among library users. The network would be as physically accessible as the current service,

if not more so, with better facilities for older people, people with disabilities, and parents with children.

It is likely that people would use different libraries for different purposes, with the four core libraries as centres for literacy and learning activities for people from across the Borough. The smaller libraries would see some reductions in the range of activities available (activities would be likely to fall by about one fifth across the network overall), and space would need to be used flexibly, with compromises made between different uses. Some activities could be provided in appropriate locations elsewhere (for example, job clubs). The reconfiguration of library buildings needed to implement this would be likely to result in better accessibility and modernised library spaces.

Some groups of users would be less comfortable with the reduction in staffed hours (older people; adults with learning disabilities; people with mental health issues) though continuing telephone support from staff and, potentially, assistance from volunteers should mitigate this. It is proposed that unaccompanied children would not be able to access a library during unstaffed hours, although activities where an adult is present, such as school visits, could still proceed. Staffed hours would be targeted at hours of peak use, taking into account times when children most need to access libraries.

Option 1: Maintain the full reach of the existing library network – summary table

	Burnt Oak	Childs Hill	Chipping Barnet	Church End	East Barnet	East Finchley	Edgware	Golders Green	Grahame Park / Colindale	Hendon Library	Mill Hill	North Finchley	Osidge Library	South Friern	Total
Size	539	538	17,222	6,405	539	571	539	539	7,040	19,375	538	538	538	538	**55,460**
Staffed opening hours (per week)	25.5	17.5	28.3	25.3	25.3	20.0	26.8	23.0	17.5	28.3	21.5	21.5	19.5	17.5	**317.3**
Un-staffed opening hours (per week)	51.0	35.0	56.5	50.5	50.5	40.0	53.5	46.0	35.0	56.5	43.0	43.0	39.0	35.0	**634.5**

Option 1: Maintain the full reach of the existing library network – library map

Core Library
Library
Community Library
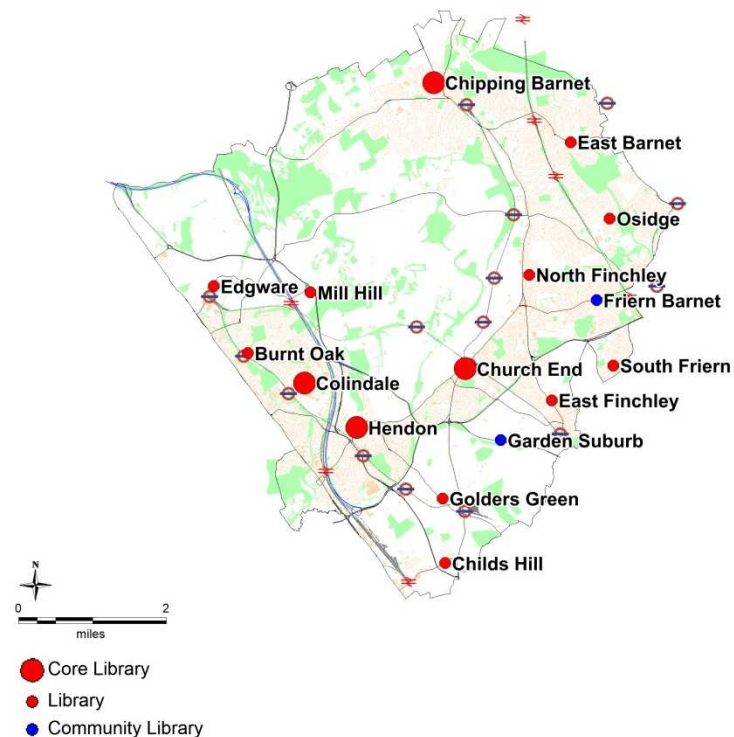
9.3 Option 2: Maintain the depth and quality of service provision within a consolidated library network.

The network would consist of eight libraries: the two new libraries in Church End and Colindale (replacement for the current Grahame Park library) and the existing libraries in Chipping Barnet, East Barnet, Edgware, North Finchley, Hendon and Golders Green. Libraries would be concentrated around the Borough's travel hubs – at least 95% of Barnet's population would be able to access a library within 30 minutes' travel from their home. We would review the mobile library's current routes to ensure any less accessible areas would also have the opportunity to access a mobile library stop.

Each library would provide a full range of activities supporting literacy for all. The libraries would be staffed for 60% of the current opening hours, including peak usage periods in the late afternoons and at weekends. Opening hours would be increased, using new technology to allow access to libraries from 7am to 10pm, outside staffed times. This would mean an increase of over 30% in open library hours across the borough despite the reduction in branch numbers. During unstaffed opening times, remote access to information, advice and support would be available by telephone.

Libraries at Burnt Oak, Childs Hill, Mill Hill, East Finchley, Osidge and South Friern would be closed and the buildings rented out for commercial use – utilising our assets to their full potential and potentially supporting small and medium enterprises in line with our ambition to become the best Borough in London for small businesses. Alternatively income will be secured through redevelopment of sites.

Under this option, savings will be achieved as follows:

	Staff	Buildings	Stock	Income
Proportion of total savings	55%	11%	8%	26%

This option would allow eight of the Borough's largest, busiest libraries to continue providing libraries, similar, in physical size and in the range of activities provided, to the service which operates today.

The libraries that would close currently provide around 40% of activities across the network but some of these would be consolidated into other sites or could be re-provided through alternative routes. Children and young people would benefit from continued access to a broad range of literacy and learning provision under this option. Larger sites would also mean a larger amount of study space distributed across the network, benefiting children, young people and students.

This option has the highest level of staffed hours of the three, offering the highest levels of access for children and young people. Some groups of disabled people (in particular, people with learning disabilities or mental health issues) would also

benefit from longer staffed hours. Opening hours would not increase overall to the same extent as in Option 1.

The closure of the library at Burnt Oak has an impact on some BME and faith groups and on unemployed people, a high proportion of whom use this site. However, Burnt Oak library is frequently cited as an unpopular site by consultees and alternative provision is available nearby in the libraries at Edgware and Grahame Park (in future, Colindale).
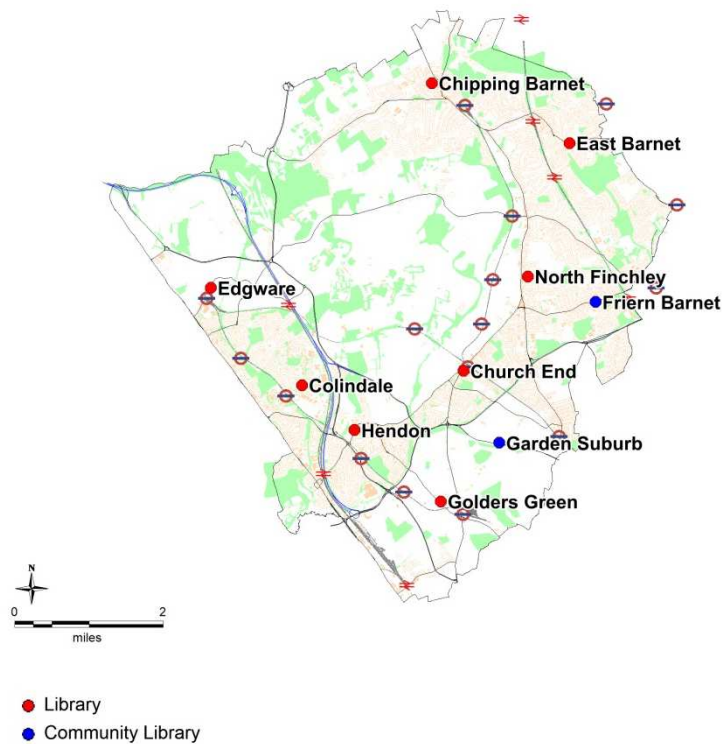
Closures would affect the ability of certain groups of residents to access a library. Just fewer than 15,000 people would be unable to travel from their homes to a library by public transport within 30 minutes. Disabled people and some BME and faith groups (Black British: Africans and Muslims) are particularly affected by these changes.

We would invest in the remaining sites to improve their accessibility and modernise them, as well as exploring redevelopment or relocation to a modern building as an option where possible.

Option 2: Maintain the depth and quality of service provision within a consolidated library network – summary table

	Burnt Oak	Childs Hill	Chipping Barnet	Church End	East Barnet	East Finchley	Edgware	Golders Green	Grahame Park / Colindale	Hendon Library	Mill Hill	North Finchley	Osidge Library	South Friern	Total
Size			17,222	6,405	5,834		5,748	5,070	7,040	19,375		6,512			68,749
Staffed opening hours (per week)	Closed	Closed	39.6	35.4	35.4	Closed	32.1	32.2	24.5	39.6	Closed	tbc	Closed	Closed	**270.2**
Un-staffed opening hours (per week)			65.5	69.7	69.7		72.9	72.8	80.5	65.5		tbc			**569.8**

Option 2: Maintain the depth and quality of service provision within a consolidated library network – library map

9.4 Option 3: Community leadership of libraries

Four libraries (East Finchley, Mill Hill, South Friern and Edgware) would be offered to the community to be run as community libraries. The library space in each community library would be reduced in size to approximately 540 square feet. The library space in Burnt Oak would also be reduced to this size. The libraries in East Barnet and Childs Hill would be closed. In each case, the space released would be let out for commercial use – utilising our assets to their full potential and potentially supporting small and medium enterprises in line with our ambition to become the best Borough in London for small businesses. Alternatively income will be secured through redevelopment of sites. It is likely that a number of community libraries would move locally but any new sites would ensure equally good if not better access via public transport. We would review the mobile library's current routes to ensure any less accessible areas would also have the opportunity to access a mobile library stop.

Hendon, Burnt Oak, Chipping Barnet, Golders Green, North Finchley and Osidge, and the new libraries at Church End and Colindale (replacement for the current Grahame Park library), would be maintained as the core library network. The libraries would be staffed for 50% of the current opening hours, including peak usage periods in the late afternoons and at weekends. Opening hours would be increased, using new technology to allow access to libraries from 7am to 10pm, outside staffed times. This would mean an increase of over 30% in open library hours across the borough despite the reduction in branch numbers. During unstaffed opening times, remote access to information, advice and support would be available by telephone.

Under this option, savings will be achieved as follows:

	Staff	Buildings	Stock	Income
Proportion of total savings	65%	7%	9%	19%

This option takes the enhanced role of volunteers in the new service further by inviting communities to take over and manage a number of libraries. National research suggests that community-led library management structures tend to create clearer, community-directed visions for their libraries, fitting services to local need, increasing use by disadvantaged groups and creating stronger relationships with community service providers.

The libraries proposed as potential community libraries under this option are relatively heavily used by some BME groups, including Asian British: Indian people, Asian British: Pakistani, Black British: African and Black British: Caribbean people as well as Jewish residents. These groups would be likely to gain from the benefits associated with increased community involvement, though there would also be a

potential impact in terms of reduced professional support for these libraries and reduced space in the library buildings.

There is a cost associated with retaining sites as community libraries and the remaining Council-led network needs to be configured to prioritise efficiency as well as access. Some of the remaining core libraries would be smaller or less busy than those retained in option 2, and this option combines a lower increase in opening hours overall with a relatively high reduction in staffed opening hours.

Again, children and young people would benefit from continued access to a broad range of literacy and learning provision under this option. Maintenance of eight larger sites would also mean that study space remained distributed across the network, benefiting children, young people and students.

Library-led activities would be significantly reduced under this option – by around 50%. This option also has the highest fall in activities for unemployed people of the three. Library closures under this option have a disproportionate effect on disabled and older users though people in areas of deprivation and/or high child poverty are relatively unaffected.

It is possible that releasing space in the community libraries could result in re-provision of the library in a more modern, fit-for-purpose building in each case, potentially co-located with other community facilities. We would invest in the remaining sites to improve their accessibility and modernise them.

Option 3: Community leadership of libraries - summary table

	Burnt Oak	Childs Hill	Chipping Barnet	Church End	East Barnet	East Finchley	Edgware	Golders Green	Graham e Park / Colindale	Hendon Library	Mill Hill	North Finchley	Osidge Library	South Friern	Total
Size	539		17,222	6,405		571	539	5,070	7,040	19,375	538	6,512	4,445	538	
Staffed opening hours (per week)	25.5	Closed	28.3	25.3	Closed	0	0	23.0	17.5	28.3	0	21.5	19.5	0	**188.8**
Un-staffed opening hours (per week)	79.5		76.8	79.8		0	0	82.0	87.5	76.8	0	83.5	85.5	0	**651.3**
Community opening hours (per week)						TBD	TBD				TBD			TBD	

Option 3: Community leadership of libraries – library map
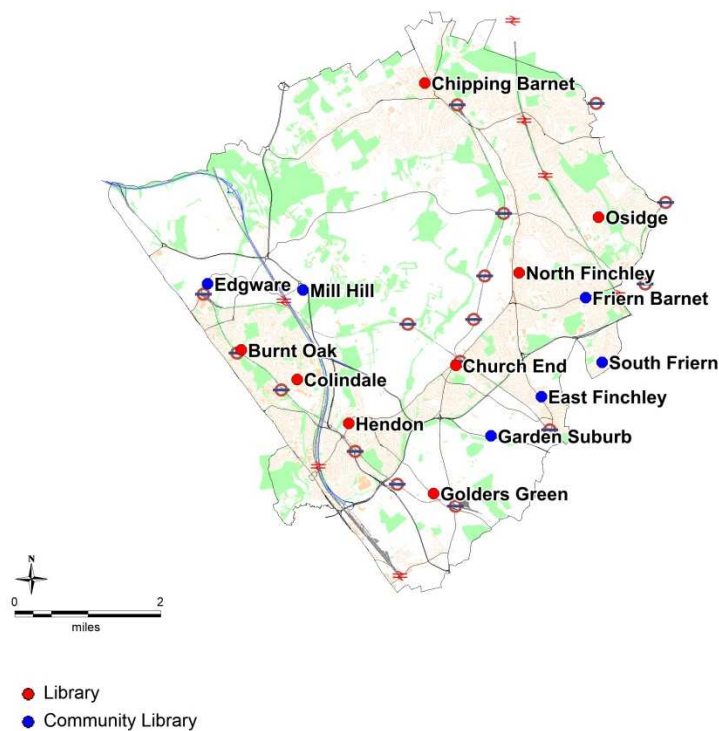
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Appendix B

Libraries needs assessment

October 2014

Executive summary:

This needs assessment analyses current and recent use of the library service. It includes an analysis of relative take-up of the service by different demographic groups, including those protected under the Equality Act 2010 and those identified as having specific needs from libraries under the Charteris Review (2009). The data shows that service provision is extensive, but take-up is below average for some aspects of the service. The public are sometimes unaware of the range of services that libraries offer. Activity varies greatly across different libraries within the network. Use of the overall service has fallen over the last three years. Use of digital library services has seen a substantial increase in the same period, though this is still only a small part of overall use.

There are a number of instances in which users are unaware of the wider library offer or of services which are targeted specifically at them (consultation in Barnet in 2011 and 2014). Consultation carried out in 2013 produced strong feedback that libraries could widen their offer. Overall, this suggests that Barnet could make its provision more comprehensive by increasing awareness of the library offer and by looking to increase access to the service to extend its reach.

The needs assessment then examines the efficiency of the current service, looking at the distribution of resources, the condition and location of the library estate, opportunities for partnership, and use of digital channels. It identifies a number of opportunities to improve the efficiency of the service. The use of digital resources could be increased: many current library users are interested in online resources but unaware of the scale of what is available. The proportion of hours worked by volunteers is currently very low in Barnet in comparison to its local authority peer group. Other local authorities, such as LB Redbridge, have realised substantial efficiencies from working more extensively with volunteers.

There are opportunities to use the estate more effectively, making more efficient use of space within existing libraries and realising more opportunities to generate revenue. Some libraries might be better relocated or redeveloped into modern buildings able to meet residents' access needs more effectively and lacking the substantial maintenance liabilities of the current estate or to rationalise it. Rethinking

opening hours could also help target potential user groups more efficiently, particularly working age adults who are currently less well represented among library users.

Contents

1.   Note on data sources:

This needs assessment draws on the following data sources. The publically available statistics used are listed at the end of this paper.

1.1   Quantitative data on library use:

- Annual statistics on library use and management, collected by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and used to benchmark Barnet against a group of fifteen comparable local authorities (CIPFA 2013-14). Because there is a two-year time lag for verification of statistics, this includes information on the libraries at Friern Barnet and Hampstead Garden Suburb.
- Annual statistics collated by the Library Service about activity in libraries, including loans, reservations, and visits to libraries, between 2011-12 and 2013-14 (Barnet Annual Statistics, 2011-12, 2012-14, 2013-4).
- Data collected by the Library Service on other activity in libraries (other transactions, computer use; library-led events; community activities) in 2013-14 (Barnet Library Data, 2013-14).

1.2   Satisfaction surveys:

- Satisfaction survey undertaken with adult library users in 2009 (CIPFA Adults, 2009)
- Satisfaction survey undertaken with children in 2014 (CIPFA Children, 2014).

1.3   Consultation:

- Research and consultation carried out by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Association on the future of libraries (MLA, 2010)
- Consultation undertaken to inform the development of the 2011 Library Strategy (Barnet 2011)
- Consultation and engagement undertaken to inform the development of the Council's Priorities and Spending Review (Barnet 2013)
- Consultation undertaken to inform the development of these options (Barnet 2014).

More detail about the methodology and a description of past consultation can be found at the end of this paper.

2.   Use of libraries by the general population

Service provision is extensive, but take-up is below average for some aspects of the service. The public are sometimes unaware of the range of services that libraries offer. Activity varies greatly across different libraries within the

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network. Use of the overall service has fallen over the last three years. Use of digital library services has seen a substantial increase in the same period, though this is still only a small part of overall use.

2.1 Service provision is extensive

Barnet's library infrastructure is large. The network had 17 service points, including the mobile and community libraries, against the average of 12; there are still 15 libraries, including the mobile library, run directly by the Council in 2013-14. The number of computer terminals is above average (67.3 against 61.6 on average). The proportion of libraries offering public wi-fi is relatively high at 76% against an average of 58%. The number of visits to Barnet libraries is also slightly higher than average for comparable local authorities (6,043 per 1,000 population against an average of 5,666; fifth highest in the group). (All figures CIPFA 2013-14.)

There were 2,609 library-led events in 2013-14, with more than 44,000 attendances (23,152 adult attendances and 20,954 child attendances). 218 of these were adult literacy events (1,281 adult attendances at these). 914 were child literacy events, including school visits and outreach (15,365 child attendances and 7,813 attendances by accompanying adults). There were 132 different types of community-led event delivered across the library service (Barnet Library Data, 2013-14).

2.2 Take-up is below average for some aspects of the service

While the number of visits to Barnet's libraries is relatively high, the proportion of people in Barnet who are active library borrowers is the fifth lowest in the comparator group (148 per 1,000 people against an average of 182). Taken with the higher-than-average number of library visits (above), this suggests that Barnet has a relatively small but engaged user base. Similarly, the number of housebound readers using the home library service was the sixth lowest at 0.9 per 1,000 people against the average of 1.4.

The number of book issues (3,586 per 1,000 people against the average of 4,336), the stock turn (3.2 issues per item per year against the average of 3.5; third lowest in the group) and the level of stock (1,282 items per 1,000 people against the average of 1,408) are all below average for the group. The number of hours of PC use per 1,000 people is the fourth lowest in the group (433 against the average of 567). (All figures CIPFA 2013-14.)

2.3 The public are sometimes unaware of the range of services offered

Both at national and local level (MLA 2010, Barnet 2011, Barnet 2014), consultation suggests that the public are unaware of the range of services offered by libraries, even among the specific groups they are intended to benefit. For example, in Barnet, disabled people were unaware of the home and mobile library service

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(Barnet 2011, 2014), while children and young people did not know about online study resources designed to benefit them (Barnet 2011).

2.4   Activity varies from library to library across the network

In 2013-14, there were:

- 1,209,483 loans and 22,663 reservations at static library sites.
- 18,967 loans from the mobile library and 35,675 from the home library, with 2,495 reservations across the two services (Barnet Annual Statistics, 2013-14).
- 2,363,023 transactions at the static library sites and 22,451 at mobile and home libraries (Barnet Library Data, 2013-14).

The libraries with the highest numbers of media-related transactions were Chipping Barnet, Hendon and Edgware. Osidge, South Friern and Grahame Park had the least. Hendon, Chipping Barnet and Edgware were most visited in order to borrow books. Childs Hill, South Friern and Grahame Park were the lowest on this measure.

The number of transactions per borrower gives a sense of whether the library has a larger number of users who each take out a small number of items or whether a smaller number of users are carrying out many transactions. In Hendon, South Friern, Grahame Park and Burnt Oak the number of transactions per active borrower is relatively low (implying the former), while in East Barnet, Childs Hill and Chipping Barnet it is relatively high.

The number of transactions per visitor gives a sense of the proportion of library activity that relates to borrowing books and other media. In Childs Hill, Mill Hill, Osidge and East Finchley the number of transactions per visitor is high, suggesting that many people using those libraries are doing so to borrow books and media. In East Barnet, South Friern, Church End and Grahame Park the transactions per visitor are low, suggesting that people visit those libraries for other services or activities. (Transaction and borrower figures Barnet Library Data, 2013-14.)

There were 49 visitors per hour across all static sites and 9 visitors an hour at the mobile library. Chipping Barnet (93 visitors per hour), Hendon (89) and Church End (77) were the busiest sites while the quietest were Burnt Oak (27), Grahame Park (26), Osidge (26) and Childs Hill (18).

The total average visits per open hour across the service are shown in the table below, broken down by day of the week. On Sundays, the network is only open for around 25% of the usual opening time, which may account for the higher visit rate.

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Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
51	45	51	50	49	50	88

(Visitor figures Barnet Annual Statistics, 2013-4.)

The average number of computers per library is 16, with Hendon at the top of the scale with 28 and Childs Hill at the bottom with 4. Data on the hours of use per computer and the number of minutes of wi-fi usage suggest that:

- Computers are most in demand at Edgware, Church End and Burnt Oak.
- Those in South Friern, Grahame Park and Osidge are more lightly used.
- Wi-fi activity is concentrated in Hendon and Chipping Barnet.
- Wi-fi use in East Finchley and Childs Hill is particularly low (Barnet Library Data, 2013-14).

Hendon provides the largest numbers of library-led events (296), followed by South Friern (255) and East Finchley (244). The number of library-led events at Osidge is notably low (72). Chipping Barnet, Edgware and Mill Hill have the highest number of different types of community-led events (23, 20 and 14 respectively) with a smaller range of events delivered at Osidge (5), Golders Green (4) and Burnt Oak (1) (Barnet Library Data, 2013-14).

2.5   Use has changed over the last three years

Across all physical library sites (excluding the home and mobile library and the two sites which are now community libraries), loan and reservation activity have each fallen by approximately 22% over the last three years.

- Book-borrowing activity (loans and reservations together) has fallen most in East Barnet (by 29.2% since 2011-12), Burnt Oak (by 27.2%) and Hendon (by 23.8%).
- Book-borrowing has remained much more stable in Osidge, where it is only 12.2% lower; Mill Hill (14.6% lower) and North Finchley (15.2% lower).
- The total number of active borrowers at the static and mobile sites has fallen by 16.5% (16.5%, again, for the static sites overall and 20.7% for the mobile and home library services).

Use of the digital library has risen by nearly 40% overall since 2011-12 (38.7%), driven by a 63.7% in e-book loans. e-audio loans rose substantially from 2011-12 to 2012-13 but then fell in 2013-14 in an overall decrease of 4.3%.

(All figures Barnet Annual Statistics, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14.)

3. The purpose of libraries: needs of the general public

Members of the public have certain expectations of what a library service should provide. Various public consultations in Barnet (in 2011 and 2014), as well as national research commissioned by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Association (in 2010), have asked the public about their expectations and some consistent themes have emerged. Libraries also support the delivery of other public service outcomes in addition to their own statutory duties.

3.1 What the public want from library services.

Consultation with Barnet's library users (Barnet 2011, Barnet 2014) asked residents what they valued about library services. Many of the key points from their responses are echoed in research commissioned in 2010 from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Association. The main themes are set out below.

Libraries are important community 'hubs' or 'centres', which help local residents connect with one another and access services and activities (MLA 2010, Barnet 2014). Library buildings are valuable as physical spaces; safe places with a pleasant environment that people can visit for social contact, study or quiet time alone – significantly, libraries mean different things to different people (MLA 2010, Barnet 2014).

Libraries have a strong social role in bringing communities together. With library participation much more evenly distributed across the population than other cultural activities, this ability to reach across the social spectrum is an asset. Libraries are seen as particularly welcoming and inclusive of marginalised people, perhaps in part because the service is free or cheap to use (MLA 2010, Barnet 2014).

Library use is motivated primarily by the services on offer. The public continue to see libraries' core purpose as focused on reading, learning and finding information. Book borrowing remains the most frequent activity, both for pleasure (76% of those surveyed) and study (44%). A significant proportion of those surveyed make regular use of library computer services (20%) and DVD and CD rental (15%). The unique nature of library services (for example, access to reference books, free internet, an informal learning environment, children's activities, help from library staff and specialist services such as genealogy research) also attracts the public. That these services remain free or very cheap to use is again seen as essential. In Barnet, children's services and engagement with children in particular are consistently seen as core elements of the library service (MLA 2010, Barnet 2011, Barnet 2014).

Service delivery is similarly important, with a good customer experience highlighted in the report as something the public want from libraries. A good range and choice of books, friendly and knowledgeable staff and a convenient location were listed as the most important drivers of user satisfaction (MLA 2010).

Among non- and lapsed users, the primary reason for not using libraries involved 'motivations and preferences', i.e. having no need, no interest, or no time; or preferring to buy books. This accounted for 87% of responses. Only a small proportion (8%) attributed their non-use to 'barriers' such as poor health, lack of transport, lack of information, or illiteracy and an even smaller one (2%) cited 'disincentives' such as lack of choice, restrictive opening hours, inconvenience of returning books, or insufficient language provision (MLA 2010). In Barnet, much stronger emphasis has been placed on a perceived need to extend opening hours (Barnet 2014). In previous consultation, around one in eight non-users cited inconvenient opening hours or locations as a barrier in Barnet (Barnet, 2011).

Library services are widely valued, even by non- and lapsed users. There is, however, low awareness of the full range of services on offer. The MLA's report emphasises the need for libraries to not only raise awareness of what they do, but continue to communicate effectively with users and potential users (MLA 2010). Consultation in Barnet supports this finding with groups repeatedly being unaware of services from which they could benefit (Barnet 2011, 2014).

3.2   Libraries deliver other public service outcomes

Local learning strategies for children and young people (Barnet's Children and Young People's Plan 2013-16 and the Education Strategy for Barnet 2013-16) will require libraries to continue to work in partnership to provide services and support for children and young people in and out of educational settings. Libraries have an important role to play in delivering local adult learning and skills priorities through the provision of free support and access to information, and activities such as CV workshops and Job Clubs which support adults back into work. The service works closely with Barnet College on its Community Learning Programme. Specifically, the new library in Colindale will play a key role in the regeneration of the Grahame Park area. Middlesex University students are significant users of resources and study space in the Hendon library. There were 28,910 full time students in Barnet at the time of the 2011 Census; this is a group with significant needs from the library service.

Libraries also contribute to targets for improving health and wellbeing in Barnet, including reductions in social isolation, increased inclusion in local communities, providing access to information, and participating in neighbourhood and community-based networks for older people (Barnet Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-15). They support specific initiatives such as Dementia-Friendly Communities and the Safer Places scheme providing respite for vulnerable adults. They are likely to be required to continue doing so under any renewed Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

4. The specific needs of particular demographic groups

This section of the assessment sets out differences in use of the library network by different demographic groups, and research, consultation and feedback from those groups about their needs where these differ from those of the general population.

Groups covered include those protected under the Equality Act 2010, as well as groups identified within the Charteris Review (2009) as having specific needs from the library service (unemployed people, people from areas of high deprivation).

The library service does not collect data on many of the demographic characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 as this would be considered disproportionate given the purpose of the service. In some cases such as users' date of birth, information is often collected but the gaps in the data are large enough to make it an unreliable source of evidence about differential use of the service.

For the purposes of this review, the Council needed to ensure that it could access data which would give it an up to date picture of how the service was being used, and enable it to pay due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Transaction data from the year 2013-14 was drawn from each library, anonymised, weighted, and matched to data at small area level from the 2011 Census. This created a picture of the likely extent to which each library was being used by people from different demographic groups.

The data has been treated as indicative, has been supplemented with qualitative feedback from residents and other research findings, and will be used as the basis for some elements of the consultation process. Findings are not definitive – they are to be used as the starting point for further investigation.

4.1 Overall profile of library users

The overall demographic profile of library users is similar in makeup to that of the Borough, but the data suggests that there are statistically significant differences for the following protected characteristics:

- **Disability:** People whose day to day activities are limited a lot do not use libraries as much as other sections of the population.
- **Ethnicity:** White British and Irish people form a higher proportion of library users than their percentage of the Borough's population. Gypsy and Traveller residents are underrepresented among library users.
- **Religion and faith:** Jewish residents form a relatively high proportion of library users. Muslim residents use libraries slightly less than would be expected.

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This section of the paper sets out the needs of specific demographic groups and where their use differs from that of the general user population of libraries, including high use of particular libraries within the network. Again, these findings are indicative rather than definitive.

4.2 Profile of the needs of different groups

4.2.1 Ethnicity

The library service does not collect user data on ethnicity in the course of providing the service.

Analysis of transaction data suggested that the breakdown of library usage by different ethnic groups was:

	Library	Borough
White; English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish/British/Irish	50.4%	49.8%
White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller	<0.5%	<0.5%
White; Other White	15.9%	16.1%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Black Caribbean	0.8%	0.8%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Black African	0.8%	0.8%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Asian	1.6%	1.6%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; Other Mixed	1.4%	1.4%
Asian/Asian British; Indian	7.6%	7.6%
Asian/Asian British; Pakistani	1.4%	1.4%
Asian/Asian British; Bangladeshi	0.6%	0.6%
Asian/Asian British; Chinese	2.2%	2.3%
Asian/Asian British; Other Asian	5.8%	5.9%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; African	4.8%	4.9%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; Caribbean	1.1%	1.1%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; Other Black	0.9%	0.9%
Other Ethnic Group; Arab	1.3%	1.3%
Other Ethnic Group; Any Other Ethnic Group	3.5%	3.5%

(Barnet Library Data, 2013-14)

White British and Irish people's use of libraries was higher than would be expected given the makeup of the Borough's population.

Of individual Black and Minority Ethnic groups, Gypsy and Irish Traveller people were the only ones to show disproportionately low representation. Gypsies and Travellers were more likely to use the libraries in Chipping Barnet and Golders Green than in other parts of the Borough. While the error rate is potentially high given that the Gypsy and Traveller population is small, there is often low take-up of public services among the Gypsy and Traveller community and the Council will undertake further engagement with this group to ensure they are not being excluded.

National research (Taking Part, cited in MLA, 2010) has shown a substantial difference in library usage levels between those of white ethnicity and those from a BME background. BME people are much more likely to have visited a library in the last year, and while library visits have fallen across the board over the last five years they have done so much more slowly among BME library users (by 6.9% against 9.3% for white library users, MLA, 2010).

In Barnet, BME consultation respondents have been significantly more in favour of proposed changes to the service, such as the increased use of volunteering, self-service, and technology than the general population (Barnet 2011, 2014). In 2011 BME respondents were particularly supportive of the idea of the digital library, though some groups (such as parents) were also less likely to be aware of existing online resources.

BME respondents have consistently been keen to see more tailored activities aimed at people from diverse backgrounds, including (in 2014), people from different age groups. They valued libraries as physical spaces in part because this provided opportunities for people of shared heritage to meet, and were particularly keen to see more and improved spaces and services for children and young people (Barnet 2014).

4.2.2 Religion and belief

The library service does not collect user data on religion or belief in the course of providing the service.   Analysis of transaction data suggested that the breakdown of library usage by different religious groups was:

	Proportion of library usage	Proportion of Borough population
Christian	40.1%	41.2%
Buddhist	1.2%	1.3%
Hindu	5.9%	6.2%
Jewish	17.6%	15.2%
Muslim	9.2%	10.3%
Sikh	<1%	<1%
Other religion	1.1%	1.1%
No religion	16.1%	16.1%
Religion not stated	8.5%	8.4%

(Barnet Library Data, 2013-14)

The data suggests that the proportion of use by Jewish people is higher than would be expected given the makeup of the Borough's population (to a statistically significant extent), while Muslim residents use libraries slightly less than would be expected given the makeup of the Borough's population.

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This finding is surprising because the national Taking Part survey, which monitors the uptake of cultural events among different demographic groups, shows that there are differences in participation between religious groups and that Muslims are significantly more likely to use libraries than other religious groups (DCMS survey, cited in MLA, 2010). Barnet's consultation exercises have ensured that people from a range of religious backgrounds are represented and these did not identify any specific needs or barriers relating to use by people from different religious groups. However, further engagement will be undertaken to identify whether there are any specific access barriers for Muslim residents in Barnet.

The data also suggests that some libraries are used more than would be expected by people from particular religious groups. Muslim people are relatively heavy users of Burnt Oak and Childs Hill libraries. Jewish people are heavier users of Edgware, Golders Green, Hendon and Mill Hill than would be expected even given the high numbers of Jewish people in those areas.

4.2.3 Disability

The data suggests that disabled people are responsible for roughly 14% of library usage, 7.5% of transactions being carried out by people with a moderate disability and 6.5% with people whose day to day activities are limited a lot. People whose day to day activities are limited a lot make significantly higher use of libraries in Burnt Oak, Childs Hill and Grahame Park, and relatively low use of the libraries in Church End, Hendon and Mill Hill.

Consultation with disabled people has suggested that the aspects of the service they value most highly are

- Book lending.
- Access to information and resources.
- Access to online facilities.
- Education and community facilities.
- Libraries as a focal point of the community and of learning for local people.
- Libraries as places which offer a warm welcome at the same time as learning, social and personal development opportunities (Barnet, 2011).

Following on from this, respondents who had mental health issues or learning disabilities describe libraries as welcoming, inclusive places, and as community 'resources' which reduce social isolation (Barnet, 2014). People with sensory impairments were enthusiastic about the role of library reading groups in reducing isolation.

People with disabilities have reported relatively 'heavy' library use: 64% of disabled respondents said that they also used a library at least once a week in Barnet, 2011. Parents of disabled children reported high levels of library use in Barnet, 2013.

Respondents have stressed the importance of working toilet facilities and user-friendly furniture (Barnet, 2011). More generally, access is seen as a potentially significant issue for disabled users by both users themselves and by others (Barnet, 2011, 2014).

Some users suggest the mobile library can mitigate lack of access to more centralised services. However, physical disability and mental health disability focus groups and participants in the in-depth interviews for people with sensory impairments reported that they had not known about the mobile and home services and were keen to learn more about other services and activities on offer (Barnet, 2014). Again, this suggests that the library service could be better at marketing its offer to those who may need it.

Disabled people praised the book exchange service within libraries (people with physical and learning disabilities were in favour of this) and the ability to access a wide network of local libraries. People with learning disabilities suggested that some improvements could be made around access to easy read print and audio book stock and more up-to date information about their disabilities. People with sensory impairments noted alternative ways of accessing content such as ebooks available from the Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB) (Barnet, 2014).

Some specific views emerged around potential changes to the service:

- Potential concerns were expressed about a move towards more digital provision. The mental health issues group liked the therapeutic qualities of paper books, while people with learning disabilities were concerned that digital resources would be difficult for them to access (Barnet, 2014).
- The prospect of longer opening hours (especially if in the evening and if facilitated by volunteers) was welcomed (Barnet, 2011, 2014).
- People with sensory impairments had some concerns about the skills of volunteers and sought reassurance that volunteers would be properly trained (Barnet, 2014).
- If the library was not staffed, people with learning disabilities suggested that easy read symbols should be installed to help people find their way around the building and use the library (Barnet, 2014).

4.2.4 Gender

The transaction data suggests that library usage by men and women mirrors the profile of the Borough overall.

Some gender differences emerged in responses to the 2011 consultation. The most significant of these were:

- Men were more likely than women to agree with increased use of self-service technology.

- Men were more likely to access online resources while women were more likely to borrow books.
- Women were more likely than men to cite parking as a problem.
- Women were more likely than men to request longer opening hours.

No significant differences from the general population emerged within the 2014 consultation.

4.2.5 Sexual orientation

The library service does not collect user data on sexual orientation and this data is not available from the 2011 Census.

If use by lesbian, gay and bisexual people (LGB) followed the proportion of the national population who are LGB it would run at approximately 6% or just over 11,000 active borrowers. A small proportion (3%) of respondents to the 2011 consultation identified themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual but this response rate was too low to draw out specific findings. The library service stocks materials tailored to LGB people. Research carried out elsewhere (*Voice Counts*, a 2010 consultation carried out in Hertfordshire) identified a need for libraries to continue to provide specific media relating to LGB people and access to relevant information.

4.2.6 Gender identity

The library service does not collect user data on gender reassignment and this data is not available from the 2011 Census.

GIRES, the Gender Identify Research and Education Society, estimate that 0.6-1% of the population may experience gender dysphoria (a medical term used to describe the negative feelings associated with the sense that a person's gender identity doesn't match up with the body they were born in). If this proportion held locally it would suggest that 750-1000 library users might be affected. National research suggests that people affected by gender dysphoria, particularly children and young people, often have difficulties because of a lack of relevant information about issues which affect them and improved access to information is therefore likely to have a particular benefit for this group.

4.2.7 Marriage and civil partnership

The library service does not collect user data on marriage and civil partnership. Analysis of transaction data suggests that library use by widowed people is higher than would be expected from the proportion of the Borough's population who are widowed.

Research carried out by Age UK (Loneliness and Isolation Evidence Review, 2014) suggests that widowed people may be disproportionately at risk of loneliness and

isolation, which may mean that the inclusive nature of libraries is important to this group.

4.2.8 Older adults

Analysis of transaction data suggests that 13% of library transactions are carried out by people aged 65 and over, as opposed to just under 14% for the Borough as a whole. This difference is not statistically significant.

The data suggests that Childs Hill has disproportionately heavy use from older adults, who are also less likely to use the libraries in Burnt Oak, Grahame Park and South Friern.

The service areas most valued by this group were similar to those valued by disabled people:

- Book lending (also in Barnet, 2014; and older people in 2011 were more likely than other groups to support higher spending on stock).
- Access to information and resources.
- Access to online facilities.
- Education and community facilities.
- Libraries as a focal point of the community and of learning for local people, supporting community events and activities as well as an expanded learning offer.
- Libraries as places which offer a warm welcome at the same time as learning, social and personal development opportunities (Barnet, 2011).
- Older people have consistently stressed the importance of having access to a library close to home, and of having adequate parking and disabled access (Barnet 2011, 2014).
- Parking was cited as a barrier to greater use of libraries, but older people were less concerned than others with potential barriers created by restrictions on opening hours (Barnet, 2014).
- Older people were concerned that any greater use of volunteers would dilute service quality (Barnet, 2014).

4.2.9 Pregnancy and maternity

The library service does not collect user data on pregnancy and maternity, but existing information and the 2011 consultation gives some specific findings relating to parents (including those of older children).

Access emerges as a theme for parents, both in terms of physical access – more parents reported using a car to access the library than any other group – and in term of opening hours. 43% of those with children in their households who responded to the 2011 survey commented on potential increases to opening hours.

Parents also benefit from increased services for children and young people, and in particular, parents of disabled children have emerged as heavy library users (Barnet, 2013). Parents of young children also benefit from any increased accessibility for wheelchair users as this improves accessibility for buggies and pushchairs at the same time.

Consultation responses have suggested that parents are more likely to be internet users away from libraries and overall, slightly more likely to use Barnet library services online. However, BME parents were less likely to be aware of online services than parents from other groups (Barnet, 2011).

4.2.10 Children and young people

Children are a key library user group. Respondents to the 2011 consultation from all demographic groups saw engagement with children, including outreach and literacy services, as a core duty for libraries. The data suggests that take-up of library services by children and young people is relatively high for under-16s but falls for 16-17 year olds.

Children and young people responding to the consultation said that they want access to:

- Better space within physical libraries, set aside for their use.
- Appropriate music, film and computer games.
- Advisory services such as careers and education, but also social issues (Barnet, 2011).

This group welcomed the idea of more volunteers in libraries and the possibility of longer opening hours. In later consultation, access to study space was seen as an area where service provision could be stronger as existing space is currently used to capacity (Barnet, 2014).

Young people said they were unaware of a range of services which are specifically targeted at them, such as online learning resources (Barnet 2011, 2014). Both consultations suggested that a perception of libraries as 'boring' might be a barrier to use for children and young people (Barnet 2011, 2014).

Take-up of services might be improved by better communication about the library offer though if stigma is a barrier for young people who do not currently use libraries, alternative ways of providing study space might be a more appropriate option.

4.2.11 Working age adults

Analysis of transaction data suggests that only 45% of library activity is carried out by adults aged 18-64, even though they make up nearly 63% of the Borough's population. They are overrepresented in Church End and Hendon and underrepresented in Childs Hill. Issues for working adults have focused on restricted

opening times and the need for more weekend and evening opening (Barnet 2011, 2014). This group is likely to benefit more from longer hours, or hours targeted outside the working day.

4.2.12 Unemployed people

Analysis of transaction data suggests that around 2% of transactions are carried out by people claiming JobSeekers Allowance, matching the Borough profile, and just fewer than 6% by people claiming out of work benefits, against a Borough average of 7.1%.

The data suggests that Burnt Oak has a disproportionately high number of transactions from people claiming JobSeekers Allowance given its catchment area. Grahame Park and South Friern both have disproportionately high transaction rates from JSA claimants and people on out of work benefits, while Golders Green and Hendon have lower-than-expected rates. The library service has offered jobseekers additional free PC access through a JobCentre Plus referral scheme for several months. Take-up of this scheme was concentrated in Hendon, Chipping Barnet and Church End with data suggesting no use at all taking place in East Finchley or Mill Hill over the three-month period. The 2011 consultation suggested that unemployed people make heavy use of libraries – 84% of those responding to the consultation who were unemployed used a library at least once a week. Unemployed people were also more likely to use any of the online services provided (Barnet, 2011).

In 2014, the unemployed people's focus group was strongly invested in the physical library service, focused on libraries' role in making books, computers and the internet accessible and affordable and on libraries being a place of shelter, reducing isolation. The group was unaware of the e-book offer and the participants didn't own e-readers; they stressed the need to continue providing print books and warned that fines could be a barrier to low-income people accessing other media such as DVDs. They were also unaware of the library service's job clubs even though these would be specifically targeted at them.
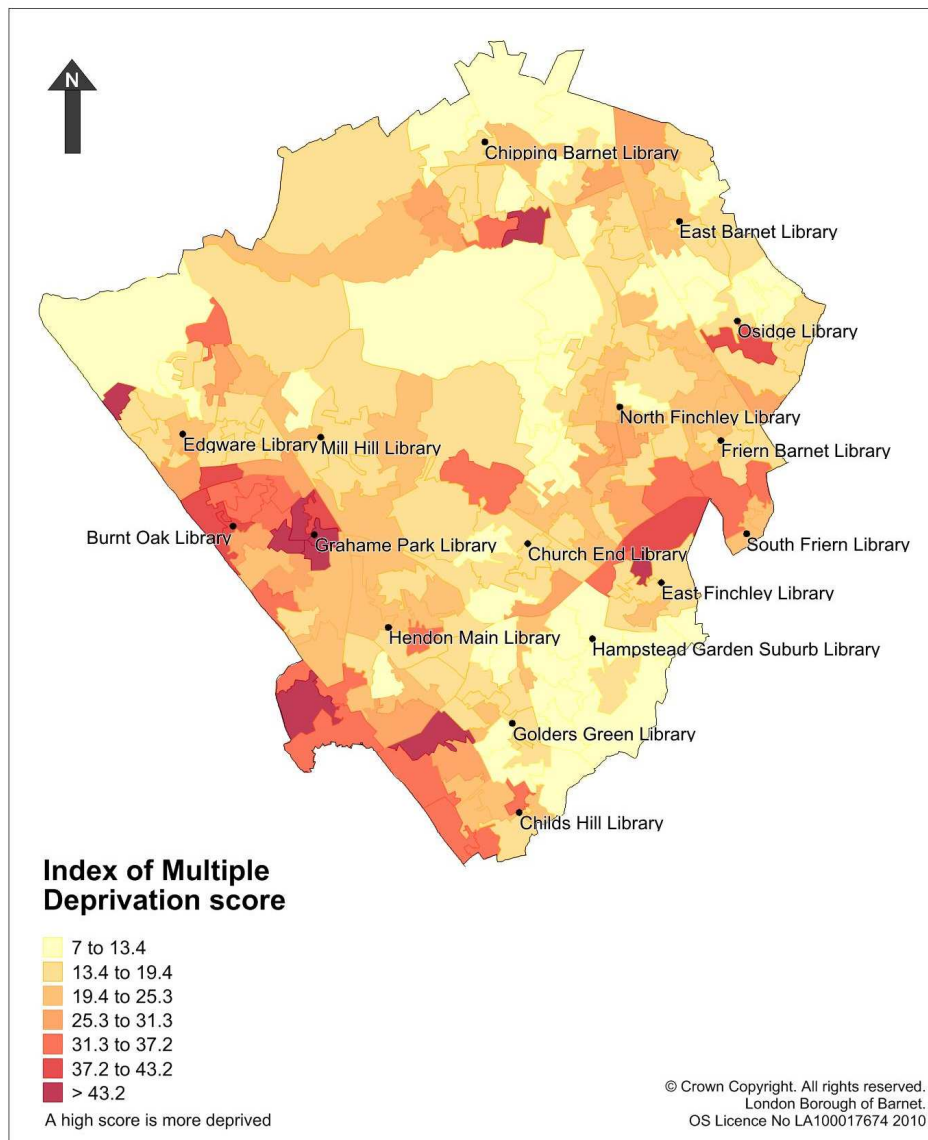
4.2.13 Areas of deprivation and low income

The data suggests that people from areas of deprivation and from areas with high child poverty are less represented among library use than they are among the general population. 17.2% of library activity comes from areas with high child poverty, against 20.1% for the Borough, while 4% of library transactions come from areas where deprivation is high, against 5.7% of people in the Borough who live in areas among the 20% most deprived nationally. Data suggests that users from areas of high deprivation or child poverty are more concentrated in Burnt Oak and Grahame Park, suggesting that people from areas of deprivation may tend to use libraries close to their homes. The data suggested that Golders Green has a low proportion of activity drawn from areas of deprivation.

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Members of the deprivation and low income focus group during the 2014 consultation placed particular emphasis on the physical aspects of libraries and their ability to help reduce isolation, and their inclusive nature. This group expressed a wish for longer opening hours. They were not aware of the home and mobile library services.

The 2010 English Indices of Deprivation are the most recent indicator set relating to deprivation. The map below shows the Index of Multiple Deprivation scores for each LSOA in the borough (the higher the score the more deprived an LSOA). Clusters of more deprived areas can be found primarily in the west of the borough around the areas of Burnt Oak, Grahame Park and Colindale, in East Finchley in the east and Dollis Valley in the north. These areas all fall within the 30% most deprived LSOAs in United Kingdom (LSOAs recording a score of over 31 are in the 30% most deprived LSOAs nationally).

Deprivation in Barnet

Index of Multiple Deprivation score

7 to 13.4
13.4 to 19.4
19.4 to 25.3
25.3 to 31.3
31.3 to 37.2
37.2 to 43.2
> 43.2

A high score is more deprived

Libraries were matched to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation ranking for the area in which the site stands. The libraries in the areas of highest deprivation were Burnt Oak and Grahame Park, which are in the top 20% of deprived areas nationally. The Colindale replacement site for the Grahame Park library is also currently in the top 20% of deprived areas although regeneration plans mean this is likely to change. Hendon and East Barnet are both in the top 50% of deprived areas nationally. All other libraries are in the lowest 50-70% though Childs Hill, Osidge and South Friern are all close to areas which are in the most deprived 30% nationally and East Finchley is near two areas in the most deprived 20%.

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5.   Making the service more comprehensive

The data shows that current provision is broad, includes a range of popular services and activities, and offers high satisfaction to users. Libraries are also well-regarded by non-users. However, the proportion of residents who are library users is relatively low in comparison to similar local authorities and use of some specific elements of the service (such as the home library service and use of library PCs) is lower than others (the latter is likely to be due in part to the quality of the equipment and the current IT transformation programme is addressing this). Library use has been falling across the entire network over the past three years though there is variation between the different library branches. Book-borrowing has fallen most in East Barnet and South Friern and remained more consistent in Church End and North Finchley.

Users are sometimes unaware either of the wider library offer or of services relevant specifically to them. This has been a feature of both 2011 and 2014 consultation (for, for example, older people, young people, and disabled people). Libraries in some geographical areas may not be reaching the resident population and could perhaps benefit from reviewing their access (for example, Muslim residents, Gypsies and Travellers) to ensure that the service continues to meet local need. Overall, increasing awareness of the library offer is an opportunity to make it more comprehensive.

Strong feedback emerged from consultation in 2013 (Barnet, 2013) that libraries could widen their offer. To remain comprehensive in the future, the service should also look to continue diversifying its provision. BME residents have expressed wishes for more services and activities appropriate to people from diverse backgrounds in both 2011 and 2014. The BME population of Barnet is projected to increase from 38% to 42% by 2021, which suggests that these needs will increase. This would also provide an opportunity to review provision for underrepresented groups such as Muslim residents and Gypsies and Travellers. Other groups, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents, will need to continue accessing appropriate resources.

The service could also be made more comprehensive by increasing access in order to extend its reach. Limits on opening hours have emerged as a consistent theme, focusing on the needs of working age adults (Barnet, 2014). Use of the service is relatively low among working age adults and the service is in high demand on Sundays. Extending opening hours could help it meet the needs of this group more effectively.

6.   Distribution of resources

The CIPFA data benchmarks the service's use of resources against comparator local authorities using a figure for the revenue cost per 1,000 population. Barnet is in the middle of the comparator group. Most of the cheaper library services occupy far

fewer physical buildings – only one is similar to Barnet in scale. This is the Redbridge library service, which is managed by a trust and run with a high proportion of provision by volunteers.

Barnet's spend patterns (based on 2012-13 data) can also be compared to the average for local authorities in the comparator group. The proportion of revenue spent on employees and premises was marginally higher, while the amount spent on support service costs was nearly 7% higher than the average. The proportion spent on stock and other materials was slightly lower than the average. However, in this year the budget available for stock purchase was set at an unusually low level and in previous and subsequent years has been around 30% higher than in 2012-13. This would bring Barnet closer to the average for the proportion of revenue spent on materials, and substantially below the average for the proportion of revenue spent on staff. The service would remain substantially above average for support service costs.

	Barnet	Average
	% of total spend	% of total spend
Employees	53.31%	52.58%
Premises	13.32%	12.19%
Total materials	7.40%	9.26%
Computing costs	*Not reported*	4.14%
Other supplies and services	2.13%	3.73%
Transport	0.18%	0.50%
Third party payments	1.17%	1.93%
Support service costs	22.49%	15.68%

(All spend figures CIPFA 2013-13).

The average cost per transaction across the service is £1.69. The library with the highest transaction cost is Grahame Park (£3.06), followed by South Friern (£2.35), Burnt Oak (£1.88), and Osidge (£1.88). These four libraries are relatively small in size but all have low levels of transactions and activity. The fifth and sixth highest transaction costs are at Hendon (£1.77) and Chipping Barnet (£1.62), the two largest libraries. These costs are both around the average level for the service. The lowest transaction costs are at Childs Hill (£1.27) and East Finchley (£1.26).

The average cost per visitor across the service is £2.39. The library with the highest cost per visitor is Childs Hill at £3.84, followed by Osidge (£3.27), Grahame Park (£3.14), Mill Hill (£2.60), South Friern (£2.52) and Burnt Oak (£2.48). Again, these are libraries with relatively low footfall. The library with the seventh highest cost per visitor is Hendon (£2.24), which is just below the average for the service overall. The lowest costs per visitor are at Edgware (£1.90), East Barnet (£1.89) and Church End (£1.50). (All figures Barnet Library Data, 2013-14.)

CIPFA have benchmarked the 2012-13 year's cost per visitor (£2.97) against Barnet's comparator group and found it slightly below the average of £3.19, sixth lowest for the group. However, the cost per book (£6.34) is slightly above average at £6.47, sixth highest for the group (CIPFA, 2013-14).

Employee expenditure as a percentage of revenue expenditure in 2012-13 was average for the comparator group at 53%. Material expenditure as a percentage of revenue expenditure was below average (7% against a 9% average) and is the third lowest for the group. Support service costs were relatively high – 22% against an average of 16% and the fourth highest for the group. CIPFA also benchmarked the relative proportions of the estimated revenue expenditure for 2013-14. Here, employee expenditure is the highest percentage of revenue expenditure in the comparator group, at 74% against the group average of 53%.

Barnet's libraries have low scores in contrast with the comparator group across most indicators relating to volunteering. The number of volunteers, number of volunteer hours and number of hours per volunteer place Barnet in the lowest four libraries in the group for each. The proportion of hours worked by volunteers is 0.6% against a group average of 5.3%. Trends show that in 2008-9 Barnet was not far below the average for volunteers (with 38 volunteers against the average of 41) but the gap has widened substantially to 83 Barnet volunteers against an average of 193 for the group. Edgware, Chipping Barnet and Hendon see the highest number of volunteer applications for adults; Chipping Barnet, North Finchley, East Finchley and Mill Hill have the most applications from children. Osidge and South Friern see very low levels of applications from either group.

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7. The library estate

7.1 The condition of the estate

The library estate is in need of significant capital investment. As well as internal and external maintenance, all libraries apart from Hendon, Burnt Oak and South Friern require large-scale works to ensure they are fully accessible to disabled users and other people with restricted mobility (elderly people, parents with young children).

In 2011, face-to-face consultation identified the current 'look, feel and ambience' of a library as a significant block to greater use. Respondents wanted a mixture of relaxation areas where chatting was permitted, refreshments, quiet study areas and 'brighter, more modern, less stale environments' (Barnet, 2011).

7.2 Location: population trends, access and transport

7.2.1 Significant population trends

The Greater London Authority (GLA) issues annual ward level population projections which use the 2011 Census as a baseline and project Barnet's population all the way to 2041. The 2013 projections show the following significant trends:

Colindale is Barnet's most populous ward in 2014 and is also predicted to experience the greatest change in population between 2014 and 2021 (over 50%). The existing Grahame Park library is in Colindale and the new facility with which it is being replaced will serve that population.

Golders Green currently has the highest proportion of children aged 0-15 (more than 1 in 4 residents) and the highest population of children compared to all other wards. Its population is predicted to grow by almost 30% to 2021.

Burnt Oak is the Borough's most densely populated ward, with 8,586 residents per square km; it also has a high proportion of children (approximately 1 in 4 residents). However, its population is not expected to change significantly to 2021.

7.2.2 Access

The diagram below maps libraries against roadways which have shops along them and which therefore attract passing footfall. For reference, it includes the two community libraries. Of the libraries which are still part of the Council's statutory network, only Osidge and South Friern are more than 250m from any of Barnet's high streets.

Barnet Libraries and Streets with Shop Frontage
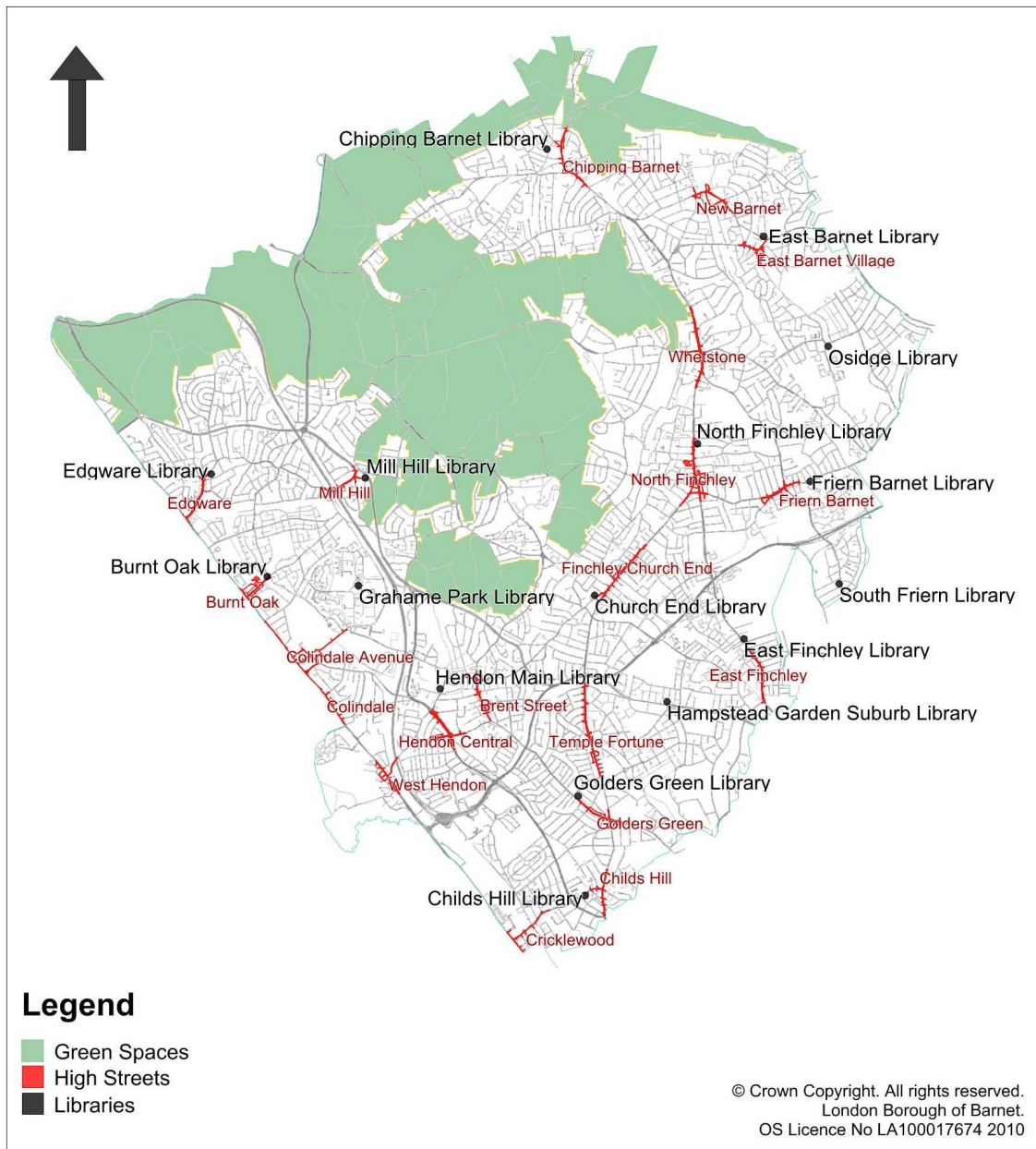
While libraries in Barnet are predominantly placed close to town centres or shopping streets, some consultation has suggested that they could be better located within those areas to attract more footfall and spontaneous visits. Suggested locations included shopping centres (Barnet, 2011).

7.2.3 Transport

Barnet has high car ownership in comparison to other London Boroughs (6th of 32). 71.3% of Barnet's households own a car or van (Census 2011). However, this is still low in comparison to the rest of England and Wales (Barnet is 300th of 348 local authorities). Maintaining access to libraries by public transport is therefore important to ensure all who need to use the service are able to do so.
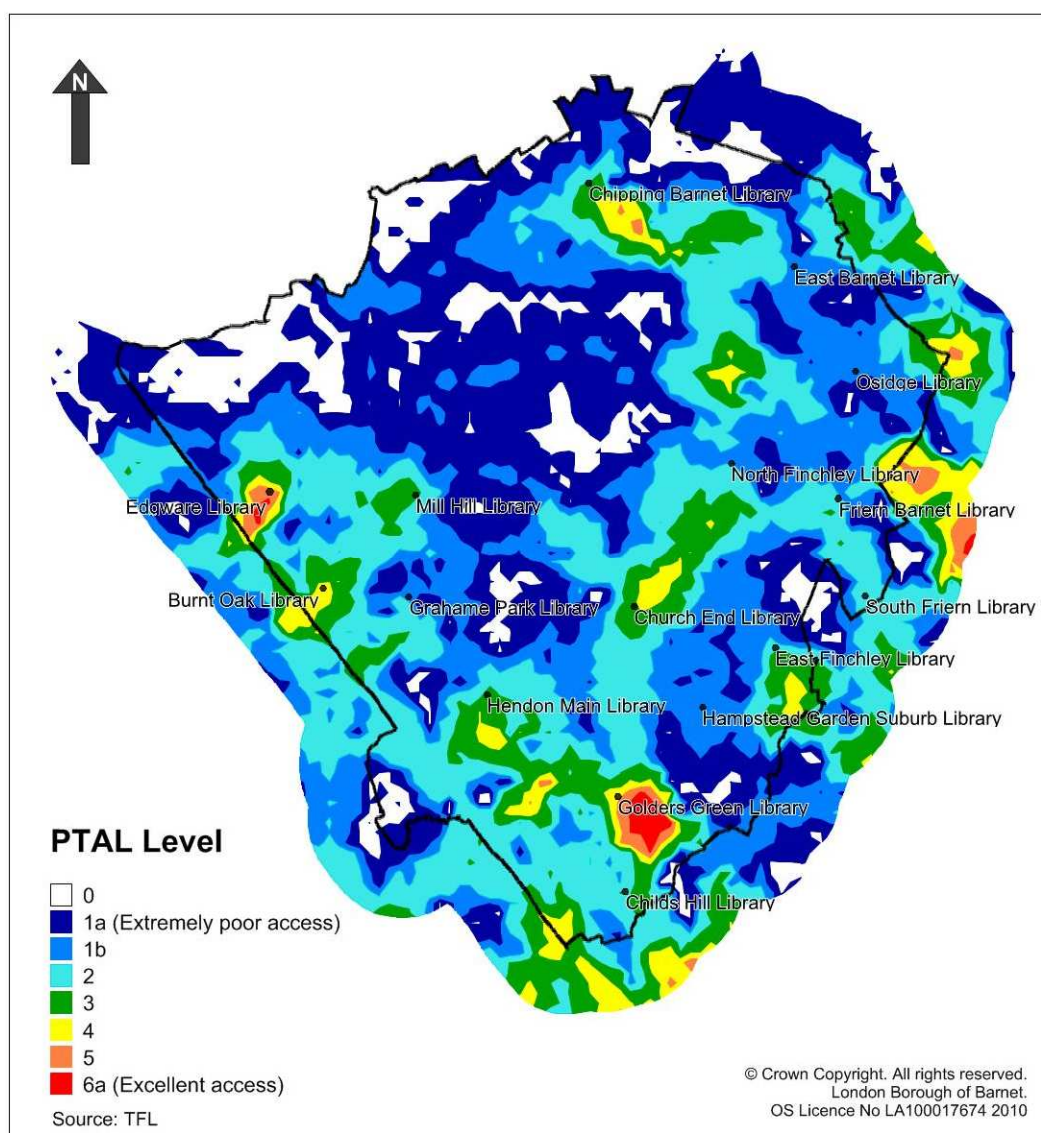
Participants in the 2014 consultation felt that the existing libraries are well served by public transport; Transport for London provides free or discounted travel for key groups who are also likely to need to access libraries (children, young people and students; people in search of employment, older people, people with disabilities).

The Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating of an area indicates its proximity to regular transport routes which provide access to numerous destinations. The ratings run from 0 through 1a (extremely poor access) up to 6a (excellent access).

Barnet's best located libraries are Edgware and Golders Green. The next most accessible libraries are Chipping Barnet, Burnt Oak and the current library site at Church End. Hendon and Mill Hill fall in the middle of the scale while East Finchley, Childs Hill and South Friern are lower. In the east of the Borough, Osidge, East Barnet and North Finchley are all difficult to access. The current library in Grahame Park has very poor public transport links but its new site in Colindale will be more accessible.

The diagram below shows the PTAL ratings for each site, including the two community libraries.

PTAL Rating for Barnet

PTAL Level

- 0
- 1a (Extremely poor access)
- 1b
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6a (Excellent access)

Source: TFL

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7.3   Use of library space for other purposes

Use of libraries by other groups is variable. Chipping Barnet hosted the largest number of non-library-led events in 2013-14 (23), followed by Edgware (20) and Mill Hill (14), as well as regular use by other groups to provide activities in the library space. Church End (6), Childs Hill (6), Osidge (5) and Golders Green (4) held the lowest numbers of events. Burnt Oak held only one event in that year but additional space in the building is used in an alternative way by Barnet's Customer Services.

Responses to consultation suggested that residents would like to see the library offer widened and that they felt libraries could do more, either by making more of their role as community spaces and events or by incorporating other services into libraries (Barnet, 2013).

8.   Other opportunities

8.1   Sharing costs with partners or other local authorities.

A feasibility study has been carried out on the potential for commissioning a shared service with a neighbouring borough. The study determined that there were limited opportunities for economies of scale. Barnet is part of a stock purchase consortium and therefore already realises some of these opportunities. The distribution of Barnet's libraries – spread around the edges of the Borough – would make it difficult to rationalise the estate across borders and maintain provision in the centre of the Borough.

Some libraries have functioned as phase 3 children's centres in the past and potential opportunities have been identified to co-locate children's centres and other services into libraries. So far there have been limited suitable opportunities identified to relocate libraries within operational buildings used by other services.

8.2   More use of digital channels

Use of the library's digital resources is growing but e-books and e-audio still make up less than one per cent of stock overall (0.81%; 0.56% of all book stock and 3.6% of all AV stock). Market developments (for example, Kindle book sales overtaking those of printed books from Amazon) suggest that the appetite for digital media has expanded significantly over the last three years. While library use and provision of digital media has increased substantially, it is nowhere near that of traditional media.

9. Making the service more efficient

Data and feedback suggests that the following options may provide opportunities to increase the efficiency of the service:

11.1 Greater use of digital resources.

Digital resources have the potential to allow libraries to deliver access to the wider world of knowledge and information to people currently unable or unwilling to access the physical sites, in an efficient manner. There are some restrictions on the range of stock available due to publishing and licensing issues, but many current library users are interested in online resources and unaware of the scale of what is available now. The online 'reserve and collect' service, now to be made more easily available alongside other Council services on the Barnet website, will also make access to physical library stock easier and more flexible, and the rollout of a new Library Management System will enable reservations using this service to be processed more quickly and efficiently by library staff.

11.2 Increase the proportion of hours which are worked by volunteers.

Of local authorities with lower revenue spend per 1,000 population in Barnet's peer group, most have much smaller physical networks. The exception is Redbridge who instead achieve efficiencies through high levels of volunteer involvement. Barnet has an unusually low proportion of hours worked by volunteers and there are roughly four times more applications to volunteer in libraries than the number of volunteers who work there. Redbridge's libraries are operated by a charitable trust which may also be a way to motivate more volunteers to get involved with the service.

Non-users and young people have welcomed the idea of more volunteer involvement, assuming service quality is not diluted (Barnet, 2011). Older people have expressed some concerns that this would lead to fewer trained librarians in the service; care should be taken to assure them that the service quality offered can remain strong.

9.3 Make more efficient use of space within existing libraries and realise opportunities to generate revenue.

The use of library space for non-library events or activities varies across the network. A review of local partnerships in 2013 identified a number of opportunities to increase the links between local libraries and local groups. Where space is available for community groups and events it allows a broader range of activity provision and use of the buildings than is possible for library staff to provide as well as generating what in some cases (such as Chipping Barnet) is a significant income stream. In the 2011 consultation, non-users of the library service were more likely to want increased community space than users were. Increasing the use of community space could therefore potentially also broaden the library user base.

9.4   Better library buildings in better places.

The current library estate requires significant capital investment running into millions of pounds. The largest area of cost is to make Barnet's older buildings Disability Discrimination Act compliant and therefore fit for purpose for all users under the Equality Act 2010. Some groups (elderly people in the 2011 consultation, for example) have highlighted the need for improved parking and disabled access to the library buildings, but the current estate makes it extremely difficult to achieve these aims. Consultation has identified a desire for brighter, more modern library buildings able to accommodate a variety of uses, including both quiet study space and places to meet and interact, without these interfering with one another. This is not always possible in the current library buildings.

The current network is not inaccessible using public transport but only 50% of the library sites are in the upper half of the Public Transport Access Level (PTAL) scale. Libraries are not far from Barnet's high streets but the location of many of the current buildings limits their appeal for alternative uses and the footfall they can attract.

There may be opportunities to create a more efficient service by prioritising the newer library buildings from the current estate and exploring opportunities to relocate libraries to new, more effective sites. This would also be likely to create a more comprehensive service as it would enable the network to better meet the needs of key groups with access issues, such as older adults, disabled people and parents with young children.

The 2011 consultation suggests library users who make use of online library services are also relatively frequent visitors (50% of this group also visited a library at least once a week), suggesting that access to physical sites should be maintained. There is, however, potential for some greater efficiency of service provision in making physical sites smaller but ensuring that all stock continues to be available across the network.

9.5   Examine variations in use across the network.

There is substantial variation in usage levels from library to library. In many cases this is correlated with a higher transaction cost or cost per visitor. There is the potential to increase efficiency by rationalising the estate. Some groups (such as working age adults) are underrepresented among library users and there may be more efficient ways to meet their needs.

9.6   Access at different times.

Limits on opening hours were cited as a barrier to use across a number of groups in both the 2011 and 2014 consultations. Extending opening hours was a priority for most of the 2014 focus groups. Participants felt, variously, that opening times across the borough had been reduced so that libraries closed too early (although hours have not in fact reduced). The BME, mental health, unemployed and low

income/deprivation groups all cited this as an issue for people in full time employment. Young people in 2011 and 2014 also reported that opening times did not meet their needs. It is possible that by rethinking the times of day at which libraries are open the service could be provided in a more efficient way. It is important to users that opening times remain consistent from day to day (Barnet, 2011, 2014).

In 2011, non-user respondents to the consultation were significantly more dissatisfied than users with the current opening hours (1 in 4 against 1 in 7). This again emerged as a theme for non-users in the 2014 focus groups. It seems likely that rethinking or extending opening hours would also potentially result in a more comprehensive service, able to meet the needs of a greater range of users.

In 2014, respondents were asked when they would like to see libraries open: some asked for more Sunday opening but most argued for libraries to remain open later in the evenings.

9.7   Use of new technology: the 'open' library

Scandinavian libraries have for some years operated on an 'unstaffed' model in which the library buildings are kept open outside staffed hours, accessed using a swipe card and PIN. The technology which enables this has only recently been introduced in UK public libraries though unstaffed access is the norm in universities.

The technology provides an opportunity to maintain or increase access to library buildings and core library services while reducing their running costs. It would also make a volunteer-led model more sustainable by reducing dependency on volunteers and making volunteer management less intensive.

Library users have been asked for their general views on self-service technology, including, potentially, an unstaffed library. Participants have been enthused by the idea of the extended opening hours this could permit, but wanted reassurance that support would be available if needed. They wanted reassurance that this solution would not result in a reduction in trained librarians, and that security considerations would be taken into account (Barnet, 2014).

Previous experience of rolling out self-service technology suggests that users accept such changes as a way of reducing costs but will be concerned about reduced contact with library staff (Barnet, 2011). This approach to library opening could be enhanced by a remote voice or video information and advice service allowing interaction with library staff in other libraries, which would mitigate some of the concerns users have with self-service solutions

10.   Demographic data sources and statistics

10.1   Using public data and statistics

The library service does not collect data on many of the demographic characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 (this would be considered disproportionate given the nature of the service) and in other cases data collected is partial.

So that the Council could use recent data to consider whether the service meets users' needs, transaction data from the financial year 2013-14 was matched to data at small area level from the 2011 Census and other sources. This was used to produce an overall profile of users of the book-borrowing service and compared to the overall demographic profile of the Borough.

The transaction data was aggregated to Lower Super Output Area level. The transactions were weighted according to the demographic profile of the Lower Super Output Area and aggregated to produce an overall profile of library users.

The profile of library users was compared against the Borough's population. The proportions of each demographic group using the library service, or a particular library, were put through a statistical test to assess whether they differed from the general population or from the overall profile of library users.

Where a change to the service was being assessed, the characteristics of the group of people affected by that change were similarly tested to see if that change had a disproportionate impact on a particular demographic group.

10.2   List of demographic data sets and statistics

- ONS (Office for National Statistics) Census 2011 data on age, gender, disability, ethnicity, and religion
- DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) data on claimants of out of work benefits and JobSeekers' Allowance
- HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) data on child poverty
- DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) data on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- GIRES (Gender Identity Research and Education Society) data on the prevalence of gender dysphoria (gender identity)
- DTI (Department for Trade and Industry) data estimating the proportion of the population who are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

11. Details of past consultation in Barnet

The following consultation exercises were used to inform the development of these options. The key findings are summarised throughout this report.

11.1 Consultation for the Strategic Review of the London Borough of Barnet Library Service (January 2011)

A consultation was taken to inform the 2011 strategic review. Initiated in 2010, its key objective was to establish how to modernise and develop libraries in the borough within a reduced budget. The consultation comprised three different strands:
- 6 group discussions in November 2010 convened by Alpha Research with people who live, work or study in the Borough. Each group formed a representative sample of people from across the Borough, with good spread by demographics and library usage. All discussions involved at least 8 respondents.
- Consultations from October to December 2010 with various community and voluntary organisations and their members, convened by CommUNITY Barnet. The consultations involved 27 different targeted groups with protected characteristics. Focus groups and ballot box presentations were the predominant methods used, with some short informal workshops also held.
- A general population online survey, designed and hosted by the London Borough of Barnet on their website, running from October to December 2010, received 1,670 responses (non-user responses supplemented by 60 telephone interviews conducted by Alpha Research). An additional online survey for young people, running from November to December 2010, received 58 responses.

11.3 Priorities and Spending Review Engagement (October - December 2013)

In September 2013 the London Borough of Barnet commissioned OPM to consult with local residents, service users, and businesses to help inform the Priorities and Spending Review for 2015-2020.

The consultation involved 3 Citizens' Panel workshops (a total of 78 residents) and 16 focus groups (a total of 137 residents) that were held between October and December 2013. The workshops included a reflective sample of the local population while the focus groups were targeted at specific service users, businesses and some protected characteristic groups.

The objectives of the research were to:

- Understand residents' views at the formative stage of the Priorities and Spending Review.
- Communicate to participants the need for the council to conduct the Priorities and Spending Review set in the context of the Government's continued austerity programme and rising demand for council services.
- Gain an in-depth understanding of stakeholders' priorities and how they would want the council to approach the Priorities and Spending Review over the next five years.

While none of the groups discussed libraries in detail they were mentioned in all 3 Citizens' Panel workshops, most of the social care user groups, young people's group and BME group. There was a clear view across the groups that discussed libraries that they need to widen their offer.

A Barnet Challenge online Call for Evidence was conducted by OPM from March to June 2014 as part of the Priorities and Spending Review consultation. The aim of the survey was to hear the views of organisations, businesses and residents on the future of Barnet, how the council can ensure that public services best meet the needs of the borough, how the council can change and how organisations and individuals can play a part in meeting Barnet's challenges during this time.

Evidence was sought on two main topic areas:

- Ideas on the future of public services in Barnet, and how organisations and individuals can play a role in providing some of these services.
- Ideas on how the council could be more entrepreneurial and generate more income.

20 responses were received from individual residents, 7 from organisations.

11.4 Consultation, research and engagement at the formative stage to inform the development of the Library Options Paper to be considered by the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on 28 October 2014 (August - September 2014)

As part of the evidence-led review of its library service, the Council commissioned OPM to conduct a series of focus groups to discuss the current library service and what residents expect from library services in the future. The work included:

- 11 focus groups were held during August (with 88 residents) and September 2014 - one-off 1.5 hour group discussions aiming to capture the views of users and non-users of library services.
- The focus groups were selected to ensure a representative sample across groups identified as having particular needs in the Charteris Review and groups with protected characteristics. Further details can be found below.

Recruitment ensured a representative range across the following criteria:

- Age.
- Gender.
- Households: single, couples and families.
- Ethnicity and religion.
- Socio-economic areas.
- Geographical areas.

Groups identified as having particular needs in the Charteris Review and with protected characteristics were also targeted in the individual focus groups as listed below:

- General population users.
- General population non-users.
- General population users and non-users (mixed group).
- Older people (over 65s).
- Range of BME residents.
- People with learning disabilities.
- People with disabilities.
- People with mental health issues.
- Unemployed people.
- Low income households/people living in areas of high deprivation.
- Young people.

In addition, four in-depth interviews were carried out with people with sensory impairments by an independent facilitator and added to the main report as a separate section.

Equality Analysis (EqA)

Questionnaire

Please refer to the guidance before completing this form.

1. Details of function, policy, procedure or service:
Title of what is being assessed: Libraries Strategy
Is it a new or revised function, policy, procedure or service? Revised service
Department and Section: Family Services, Youth and Communities
Date assessment completed: 17 October 2014

2. Names and roles of officers completing this assessment:	
Lead officer	Elissa Rospigliosi, Commissioning & Policy Advisor
Stakeholder groups	**Internal:** Commissioning Group Family Services Delivery Unit LBB Members **External:** Library users Library non-users "Charteris Groups": elderly people; children; disabled people; unemployed people; people from areas of high deprivation (identified as having specific needs from libraries by Sue Charteris in her 2009 review of Wirral Libraries). Voluntary and community organisations
Representative from internal stakeholders	James Mass, Family & Wellbeing Lead Commissioner
Representative from external stakeholders	N/A
Delivery Unit Equalities Network rep	N/A
Performance Management rep	N/A
HR rep (for employment related issues)	N/A. Separate EIA completed for impact on staff.

3. Full description of function, policy, procedure or service:
Please describe the aims and objectives of the function, policy, procedure or service *Please include - why is it needed, what are the outcomes to be achieved, who is it aimed at? Who is likely to benefit? How have needs based on age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and carers been taken account of? Identify the ways people can find out about and*

benefit from the proposals. Consider any processes they need to go through or criteria that we apply to determine eligibility.

Context

Barnet has an extensive library service with high satisfaction ratings among users. Some elements of the service are relatively underused and the public can be unaware of the range of activities that libraries provide. The service was last reviewed in 2011 at which point a substantial transformation programme began, investing in more self-service technology for customers; ICT equipment and resources including new public computers and wi-fi; improvements to some of the library buildings, and rationalisation of the estate including two new libraries replacing existing buildings in Grahame Park and Church End and the creation of two community libraries.

Continuing financial constraints mean that the Council needs to explore alternative ways to deliver services and consider how it can best continue to safeguard services for the most vulnerable. Barnet has dealt effectively with the first wave of austerity, by anticipating the cuts before they arrived and planning ahead. The Council is now planning for the next 5 years and for how a further £72m will be saved.

Why is it needed?

The Council has a statutory duty, under the Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964, to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof'. To be comprehensive, the service must ensure that it is accessible to all and designed to meet local need. To be efficient, it must make the best use of the assets and resources available to it.

Since the 2011 Strategy, there have been a number of developments which offer the potential for more efficient ways of delivering the service. In particular, the increased availability of 'open' library technology (self-service technology allowing libraries to open during times at which staff are not present) outside its existing Scandinavian market; much greater community involvement in library services (including volunteer-led models such as community libraries), and improved digital and online services make it possible to deliver library services in different, more cost-effective ways.

On 23 June 2014 the Council's Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee noted the savings target of £8m allocated by the Policy and Resources Committee and agreed to complete a Commissioning Plan and savings proposals by December 2014. Each Committee has an allocated savings target and there are difficult decisions to make in all areas. The business planning process since then has considered each of the service components within the committee remit to identify possible savings as a contribution to this target and the impact these could have.

The process began by investigating the financial contribution libraries could make whilst still delivering a comprehensive and efficient service. As a result of this, the options presented in this Committee report would deliver a saving of £2.85m between 2015 and 2020. Through the development of a new model of library provision, the Council will be able to meet these financial challenges whilst safeguarding services for local people, especially those in more vulnerable groups.

The purpose of the paper this EIA accompanies is to set out proposals for the future of the service for public consultation and feedback, which will inform a decision to be made next year by the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee.

What are the outcomes to be achieved? What are the aims and objectives?

The following outcomes are largely based on those agreed for the 2011 Strategy, but have been updated to reflect feedback from consultation carried out since 2011 and the financial challenges now facing the local authority. The Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee will be asked to agree these updated objectives on 28 October 2014.

1. A library service that provides children and adults with reading, literacy and learning opportunities.

2. A library service that engages with communities.

3. A library service that makes knowledge and information easily accessible.

4. A library service that can withstand current and future financial challenges and safeguard services for vulnerable people.

Changes to the previous objectives

The new strategy will aim to provide **'a library service that provides children and adults with reading, literacy and learning opportunities'**. This consolidates and replaces the following previous strategic objectives:

- Increasing reading, literacy and learning opportunities for children

- Promoting reading and learning opportunities for adults

The library service will now aim to sustain reading, literacy and learning opportunities for children, rather than increasing them.

The library service will continue aiming to promote its reading and learning opportunities for adults more effectively: this has been identified as a key area in which the service could enhance its reach and become more comprehensive.

The new strategy will aim to provide **'a library service that is at the heart of the community'**. This replaces the previous strategic objective:

- Engaging with communities and offering improved community spaces, access and resources

The changes to this objective are designed to reflect the Council's growing ambition to mobilise community capacity to support the library service, including enhanced roles of volunteers, community leadership of libraries, and peer to peer interaction and support for residents facilitated by social media and new technologies.

The new strategy will aim to provide **'knowledge and information that is easily accessible'** in place of the previous strategy's objective:

- Providing easy access to the wider world of knowledge and information.

Much of the work intended under the previous strategy to promote access to knowledge and information is now in train or has been completed. The new strategy aims to maintain and enhance this access.

Finally, the new strategy proposes an additional objective, to ensure that **'the Council is able to meet current and future financial challenges and safeguard services for vulnerable people'**. This involves configuring the library service in such a way as to support the Council in meeting these challenges, using opportunities presented by new technology and improved volunteering support are maximised to preserve libraries as physical spaces/community assets and deliver a more efficient service, and acts to frame a number of the service developments proposed in this paper.

Where there are differential impacts resulting from the changes to these objectives for particular

equality strands these are set out in section 4 (below).

Various possible directions for the service have been identified, based on technological developments, the changing context of library provision, and innovation and best practice from elsewhere. These have been considered in order to design a delivery model which can achieve these outcomes while ensuring the service is run as efficiently as possible. Three options, which combine these considerations, are being proposed for public consultation.

The options involve **maintaining some services at existing levels**, especially those aimed at outreach (such as the home and mobile libraries) and at developing provision outside libraries (such as the Schools Libraries Resources Service).

Other existing service areas will be **developed and extended**, such as **digital provision** and **electronic resources**; **online and self-service technology** such as the 'reserve and collect' service; **current income generation initiatives** such as meeting room space and vending machines.

Other developments considered include

- **An enhanced role for volunteers** which significantly extends the range of volunteer-led activities available in libraries. Barnet's libraries currently have very low levels of volunteering in comparison to similar local authorities and there is scope to make greater use of community capacity to complement the work carried out by paid staff. National research suggests that increased community involvement in libraries results in higher take-up of the library service and is thought to act as a stepping stone towards benefits such as increased numbers of community groups and activities in libraries, disadvantaged groups using libraries more, and stronger relationships with community service providers, particularly learning providers (Arts Council, *Community Engagement in Public Libraries*, evaluation update, March 2011).

- **Rationalising the library estate to ensure buildings are fit for purpose.** The library estate is in need of significant capital investment with major work needed to fulfil current backlog maintenance requirements and prevent the buildings from deteriorating further. In addition, consultation has identified a number of functions which the public would like library buildings to fulfil but which are not possible within the current estate, including enhanced accessibility for elderly and disabled people, 'bright, modern spaces', and more logical configurations of buildings to allow multiple uses including meetings/activities and reading/study.

- **Rationalising the distribution and locations of library buildings.** The current network is not inaccessible using public transport but analysis (using the Public Transport Access Level scale developed by Transport for London) suggests that locations could be improved. This could also be an opportunity to increase the range of people who access the library service by better integrating libraries into public places. People in Barnet have said that they wish to be no further than 30 minutes' travel time from a library by public transport, which matches the Department for Transport's national accessibility indicator. This allows for a number of potential rationalisations of the estate to prioritise support for the busiest and most popular library facilities.

- **Using the library estate to generate income.** If the estate is rationalised, there are opportunities to use the freed-up sites, or space within sites, to generate income which can then be used to subsidise other elements of the service. This would be likely to result in library spaces being co-located with other public services, within residential developments, or within buildings with commercial tenants.

- **Extending opening hours with the help of new technology.** New self-service technology – the 'open' library, self-service technology which allows libraries to open during times at

which staff are not present – makes it possible to extend library opening hours at relatively low cost, potentially increasing the range of people able to use libraries. It is proposed that there would be some restrictions on access for unaccompanied children during times when the library was not staffed, though accompanied children (e.g. schools and children's centres on library visits) would be able to use the library. Advice and support for users wanting to access information and other services would be available from library staff via a dedicated telephone line during unstaffed opening hours. A pilot of the 'open' library concept will run at Edgware library between December 2014 and February 2015 to allow members of the public to test it out and to inform responses to consultation.

- **Reducing staffed opening hours.** Staffed opening hours would need to be reduced across the network but would be targeted at the busiest times of day, and at times of heavy usage by children and young people unable to access 'open' libraries. As above, advice and support for users wanting to access information and other services would be available from library staff via a dedicated telephone line during unstaffed opening hours.

- **Use of alternative providers.** Initial assessment of the various possibilities for alternative delivery of libraries suggests that a community or staff-owned mutual or outsourced delivery model would offer the potential for service improvements as well as achieving additional savings, either through economies of scale or through greater potential for innovation and for mobilising volunteers and other additional capacity.

  The library in Hendon, heavily used by students, could be effectively delivered through a partnership with an educational institution. This could enhance the service to better meet the needs of the predominant user base while also delivering savings.

The three specific options which combine these considerations are set out below:

Option 1: Maintain the full reach of the existing library network

This option aims to maintain the full breadth of the library network, with libraries in all areas where there is currently a library presence. No libraries would close. This option prioritises continued access to a 'local' library for all residents who currently have it. It maximises the number of points at which people can access services and provides a broad base of physical locations to support volunteer and community led activities in libraries. It provides the largest extension to the level of opening hours across the network of any of the options, though with the joint largest reduction in staffed opening hours.

People would use different libraries for different purposes. The service focuses on four large libraries, the existing building in Chipping Barnet; the new libraries in Church End and Colindale (the replacement for Grahame Park); and the Hendon library, moderately reduced in size. These libraries would form the core of the service and be centres for literacy and learning activities for people from across the Borough, with state-of-the-art facilities in the new libraries.

All other libraries would be reduced in size to around 540 square feet on average. The network would be as accessible as it is now – or more so if library sites were to relocate. The range of stock in the library at any one time would be reduced although books from anywhere in the network would still be available via the reserve and collect service. Literacy and learning activities would still take place within library sites though space would need to be used flexibly with compromises made between different uses. The required reconfiguration of library buildings would be likely to result in better accessibility and modernised library spaces.

Staffed hours would be reduced across the network to 50% of the current levels and targeted at times of greatest need, particularly when children and young people need access to libraries. Opening hours would be extended on current levels by 50% using 'open' library technology, supplemented by telephone access to information and advice from staff.

Option 2: Maintain the depth and quality of service provision within a consolidated library network

This option aims to keep libraries much as they are today but consolidates the network into a smaller number of sites. This allows us to free up sites and space for the purposes of generating the income needed to support this level of service. Of the three, this option offers the highest level of opening hours with staff present although it does not offer the greatest extension to existing opening hours.

Eight of the largest and busiest libraries in the network would be maintained with a similar range of stock and activities to current provision. These would be the two new libraries in Church End and Colindale (replacement for the library in Grahame Park), and the existing libraries in Chipping Barnet, East Barnet, Edgware, North Finchley, Golders Green and Hendon (the Hendon library would be likely to be reduced in size). This network has been designed to prioritise access; these libraries are concentrated around the Borough's travel hubs, meaning that more than 95% of Barnet's population would be able to access a large library within 30 minutes' travel from their home.

Staffed hours would be reduced across the network to 60% of the current levels and targeted at times of greatest need, particularly when children and young people need access to libraries. Opening hours would be extended on current levels by more than 30%, using 'open' library technology, which would be supplemented by telephone access to information and advice from staff.

Burnt Oak, Childs Hill, Mill Hill, East Finchley, Osidge and South Friern libraries would be closed. The mobile library's routes would be reviewed to ensure any less accessible areas would also have the opportunity to access a mobile library stop.

Option 3: Community leadership of libraries

This option aims to augment the enhanced role of volunteers in the new library service by allowing communities to take over and run a number of libraries. National research suggests that community-led management structures tend to create clearer community-directed visions for library services, realising some of the further benefits of successful community involvement in public libraries identified by the Arts Council research. However, there are a number of trade-offs. Community libraries are unlikely to provide the same level of professional library services as the Council-run library network. There is a cost associated with retaining sites as community libraries and therefore a greater need to prioritise efficiency, as well as access, across the Council-led network to support them; some of the libraries which remain will be smaller than those in the network in Option 2. This option does not offer the largest extension to opening hours across the network, but has the equal highest reduction in the number of staffed hours.

The service would focus on eight core libraries, in Hendon (with a reduction in size), Burnt Oak, Chipping Barnet, Church End, Golders Green, Colindale (replacement for the current Grahame Park library), North Finchley and Osidge, maintained with a similar range of stock and activities to current provision. More than 95% of Barnet's population would be within 30 minutes' travel time of one of these core libraries. The mobile library's routes would be reviewed to ensure any less accessible areas would also have the opportunity to access a mobile library stop.

Voluntary and community groups would be invited to bid to run the libraries at East Finchley, Mill Hill, South Friern and Edgware, creating volunteer-led models shaped to meet the needs of the local communities around each library. These libraries would be smaller than the current spaces – around 540 square feet on average – and likely to be co-located with other public services, commercial providers, or in community hubs.

The libraries at East Barnet and Childs Hill would close.

Staffed hours would be reduced across the network to 50% of the current levels and targeted at times of greatest need, particularly when children and young people need access to libraries. Opening hours would be extended on current levels by more than 30%, using 'open' library technology, which would be supplemented by telephone access to information and advice from staff.

Who is it aimed at? Who is likely to benefit?

The Council's statutory duty applies to all those who live, work or study in the Borough. Whilst there is a power to make library facilities available to any person, the duty only applies to those persons whose residence or place of work is within the Borough or those who are undergoing full time education within the Borough. Library users in general will benefit from maintained or increased access to the service.

The current library service is popular among users but users are a minority (14.8%) of the Borough's population. Consultation shows that restrictions on opening hours are perceived as a barrier to access for certain groups, including young people and working people. Proposals to extend opening hours will benefit these non-user groups in particular.

Proposals to invest in the library estate will benefit all users by providing modern, fit for purpose buildings, potentially in (in some cases) more convenient locations. Groups whom consultation has shown to have concerns about the accessibility of the library buildings (disabled people, older people, parents accompanying children) will benefit in particular.

Opportunities to get involved with the service through volunteering and potentially through volunteer-led community libraries is likely to benefit local people beyond the current library user population, as experience elsewhere in the country has suggested that this broadens the range of voluntary and community activity taking place within libraries.

Identify the ways people can find out about and benefit from the proposals.

A full public consultation will take place from 3 November 2014 to 15 February 2015. The consultation document will set out the three options and underlying considerations for feedback.

The consultation document, summary document, and a survey based on these will be available online (at http://engagebarnet.gov.uk) and in print, from libraries and from locations which target groups of interest, including JobCentre Plus, Barnet Centre for Independent Living, day centres, schools, and Council customer access points in Burnt Oak and Whetstone.

Paper copies of the survey and consultation documents will also be available in mobile libraries and to home library users. The survey will be made available on request in different formats, including large print and easy read.

Voluntary and community groups who currently use library space to provide events and activities will be sent a targeted survey.

A drop-in session will be arranged for three hours in every Barnet library, including the mobile library. These will provide a less structured way for local people to give their views, through an independent facilitator. Notes from the discussions will be summarised and included in the consultation report.

The consultation will be presented to each of the Council's residents' forums on January 15 2015.

Targeted approaches will be made to groups who may currently be underrepresented among

users of the library service.

These will be opportunities to shape the library service of the future and to ensure that it meets local need.

From mid-December 2014 onwards, residents can use the 'open' library pilot in Edgware to experience the proposals for extended opening hours in practice and to inform their responses to the consultation.

Consider any processes they need to go through or criteria that we apply to determine eligibility.

Any member of the public is able to access a library building during staffed opening times. To borrow items, library users must join the library. This is a simple process which can be carried out in person or via email, with support available at library buildings.

The home library service is available to residents whose mobility is limited because of age, disability or illness. Users register using a short membership form which is vetted by staff to assess eligibility.

To use the 'open' library, users must opt into the scheme and receive some user education on correct practice and procedure. It is proposed that children will not be eligible to opt into 'open' library use though will be able to use the libraries during these periods if accompanied by an adult.

How have needs based on age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and carers been taken account of?

The review and options have been informed by a comprehensive needs assessment which analyses

- transaction data and management information from the library service

- performance data compiled by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and benchmarked against comparable local authorities

- data from the 2011 Census, the Department for Work and Pensions, HMRC, and the Indices of Multiple Deprivation

- travel time and accessibility data from Transport for London

- information on the condition of the library estate

- extensive public consultation carried out to develop the 2011 Libraries Strategy, public consultation on Council spending plans carried out in 2013, and focus groups undertaken to inform this options paper in summer 2014

- user feedback, satisfaction surveys carried out in 2009 and 2013 (with adults and children respectively)

- qualitative research from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Association and Arts Council England and on the special needs of particular demographic groups where relevant.

The assessment sets out the identified specific needs of each of the above groups and includes analysis of the needs of carers of disabled children. It also analyses the needs of unemployed people and people from areas of high deprivation as these are groups identified as having specific requirements from a public library service.

The library service does not collect data on many of the demographic characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 (this would be considered disproportionate given the purpose of the service). In cases where information is collected, such as date of birth, the data has gaps which mean it is not a reliable source of evidence about usage of the service by different groups.

For the purposes of this review, so that the Council can use recent data to consider whether the service meets users' needs and ensure that it has been able to pay due regard to its duties under the Equality Act, transaction data from the financial year 2013-14 has been anonymised, weighted, and matched to data at small area level from the 2011 Census, to predict the proportion of transactional activity in each library which is being carried out by people with relevant protected characteristics. This has been used to produce an overall profile of users of the book-borrowing service and this has been compared to the demographic profile of the Borough.

Four pieces of analysis have been carried out to identify the impact of the changes to the network – i.e. any significant reductions in space, closures, or community involvement in groups of libraries under each option.

To show the **impact on users**, the proportion of transactions carried out by each protected group at affected libraries has been calculated as a proportion of all library activity carried out by that group. Statistically significant differences from the mean have been identified to show where impact may be disproportionately high. As described above, this analysis uses transaction data weighted using Census information and the findings should be treated as indicative and as a starting point for further investigation and monitoring.

The impact on users has also been determined by identifying the change in the **level of activity which is provided in libraries** and which is aimed at the needs of particular demographic groups.

For the **impact on the general population, including non-users**, the most significant impact identified was on the available options to access library services. This analysis therefore used Transport for London and Census 2011 data to identify the number of people living in areas of the Borough which, within the reconfigured library networks, would not have access to a local authority-run library within 30 minutes' travel time by public transport. (In all cases, this is less than 5% of the total population of the Borough). The data was analysed to identify any disproportionate representation of particular demographic groups in these areas in comparison to their representation across the Borough as a whole.

Finally, for all groups, the analysis includes any **consultation feedback** or other research relevant either to the general principles behind the three options, or specifically to the options themselves.

The needs assessment carried out within this review process identified a consistent lack of awareness of the library offer across a number of demographic groups. To ensure the success of the mitigation measures identified below it will be important to ensure proactive and targeted communication is undertaken with the intended audience for each, and that take-up is monitored in some way.

As the proposals are further developed they will be coordinated with other key strategies relating to, for example, carers.

Overall impact

Option 1:

The network footprint does not change. A total of 400 people in Barnet (0.11% of the Borough's population) do not have access to a library within 30 minutes' travel time by public transport (as

is currently the case).

A number of libraries will be substantially reduced in size. Those in scope in this option administer 59.3% of all transactional library activity across the network.

The analysis has assumed a 30% drop on current levels in the volume of library-led activities currently held in sites which would become smaller under this option. This equates to a fall of 20.9% in the total volume of activity across the network (including activity in both large and small libraries).

Option 2:

The network footprint is reduced from 14 libraries to 8 libraries, closing six. Those six administer 25.8% of all transactional library activity across the network.

14,579 people (4.2% of the Borough's population) are not within 30 minutes' travel time of a library

The sites which would close provide 38% of all library-led activities across the network. Some of this capacity might be consolidated into other sites.

Option 3:

The network footprint is reduced from 14 libraries to 8 libraries, closing two and converting four into community libraries. Libraries administering 37.4% of all transactional library activity across the network are affected.

15,933 of people (4.6% of the Borough's population) are not within 30 mins' travel time of a library (when community libraries are excluded from the analysis).

The volume of library-led activities across the network is reduced by approximately 50%.

In identifying how the various equality strands are affected, below, the common themes which apply across each option are analysed for any differential impact on each equality strand, before looking at implications of the specific options.

The qualitative data, unless otherwise stated, is drawn from the three major consultation exercises carried out in Barnet with regard to libraries, in 2011, 2013 and 2014.

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4.	How are the equality strands affected? *Please detail the effects on each equality strand, and any mitigating action you have taken so far. Please include any relevant data. If you do not have relevant data please explain why.*		
Equality Strand	**Affected?**	**Explain how affected**	**What action has been taken already to mitigate this? What action do you plan to take to mitigate this?**
1. Age	Yes ☒ / No ☐	**General considerations:** **All adults** Despite the changes to the library service's strategic objectives, the service will continue to try to promote its reading and learning opportunities for adults more effectively: this has been identified as a key area in which the service could enhance its reach and become more comprehensive. **Older people** Older people will benefit from the current proposals through increased access to information, online facilities, and accessible buildings. All these are priorities for this group. Older people are less invested in increases to opening hours than other groups, and will benefit less from measures to extend these. Older people may be concerned by an increase in the use of volunteers as they see this as a potential decline in the quality of service. **Children and young people** The changes to the library service's strategic objectives mean that the library service will now aim to sustain reading, literacy and learning opportunities for children rather than increasing them. Children and young people have expressed specific support for many of the specific proposals set out here, including use of volunteers and increases in opening hours. It is proposed that unaccompanied children will not be able to use libraries when	**Older people** Care to be taken to communicate and explain any changes in use of volunteers accurately **Children and young people** Schools to be briefed on 'open' library technology to allow visits and outreach to continue during unstaffed hours. Target staffing at times when children and young people need to use the library. **Option 1** Explore alternative locations where study space is already available for children and young people. **Option 2**

they are not staffed, for safeguarding reasons. They are therefore- likely to see a net reduction in times when they can access the library.

Working age adults

Working age adults are underrepresented among current library users and will benefit from extended opening in which they can access the library outside working hours.

Option 1 offers the largest number of physical access points and the largest extension to current opening hours, but reduces staffed hours substantially.

This combination is likely to benefit older people, who identify transport and travel issues as significant barriers.

It is also likely to benefit working age people as longer hours, in particular, ease access for this group.

This option heavily reduces staffed hours which is a cause for concern for older people and will have an impact on the level of access available to children and young people.

In this option, children's activities across the service are likely to fall more than the average for all activities: by 42.9% against an average of 20.9%.

There is no disproportionate impact on a particular age group from changes to the libraries in scope for reduced space, based on current activity. However, the reduction of space in most libraries under this option will affect the availability of study space for children and young people

Option 2

Data on the impact of closing library site under this option suggests that 0-5 year olds would be disproportionately affected.

17.5% of all activity from areas with high under-5 populations takes place at the libraries in scope for reduction under this option.

Children's activities reduce by 40% against an average reduction of 38% for activities overall, although some redeployment would be expected. Some children's community-led activities would also be lost. However, children and

Redeploy some provision of children's activities into remaining libraries.

Monitor levels of activities aimed at older people.

Option 3

Give special attention to future provision of children's literacy activities.

		young people would be likely to benefit from the maintenance, under this option, of a broad range of activities in a larger number of sites than in option 1. Retaining a greater number of larger library sites would also ensure the continued provision of more study space, with a positive impact on children.	
		In terms of physical access to library sites, a statistically significant proportion of 10-15 and 16-17 year olds are unable to access a library within 30 minutes' travel from home (7.85 and 2.7% of those affected, respectively). However, as young people cannot access 'open' libraries unaccompanied they also benefit from the relatively large range of staffed hours available under this option.	
		The reduction in activities has a slightly higher impact on regular community-led activities for older people (4 of 9). However, older people again benefit from retention of more library sites providing a broad range of activities under this option – a priority for this group.	
		Option 3	
		Library closures have a statistically significant effect on older people in this option, with 18.8% of people affected by the closures of Childs Hill and East Barnet aged over 65.	
		Again, this option reduces professional/paid library services, which is unpopular with older people.	
		10-15 year olds are affected both as a significant proportion of those unable to access a library within 30 minutes (8.6%) and as a proportion of users of Burnt Oak library, should its size be reduced.	
		Children's literacy events are affected more than the average by changes to the network under this option (a 57% fall against a 50% fall in activities overall)	
		0-5 year olds are disproportionately represented among those affected by community libraries (17.6% of all activity across the network by 0-5 year olds is in the planned community libraries).	
2. Disability	Yes ☒ / No ☐	**General principles** People with disabilities generally welcomed improvements in access, including better buildings and increased opening hours.	Access measures such as easy read symbols to be used to ensure people with learning disabilities

Concerns have been expressed about accessibility of digital provision and of the 'open' library for people with learning disabilities.

People with sensory impairments may find it more difficult to navigate the 'open' library. However, there are alternative routes which this group has identified as more convenient for access to literary resources, including library ebooks, content available directly from the Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB), and the home library service. People with sensory impairments also suggested a number of measures which would improve access to the existing service.

People with sensory impairments had some concerns about the skills of volunteers and sought reassurance that volunteers would be properly trained, including safeguarding training. Development of an enhanced volunteer offer should mitigate these issues but it will be important to offer reassurance to vulnerable residents that this training has taken place.

Option 1

This option maintains the largest physical network and the potential for more accessible, newer buildings.

People whose disabilities limit their activity a lot are significantly overrepresented in current usage of the libraries which will reduce in size (6.6% of usage).

Option 2

Longer opening hours and the relatively long staffed opening hours under this option will benefit disabled people. People with learning disabilities and people with mental health issues both focused on libraries' role in reducing isolation and will benefit from the continuation of rounded provision in more libraries.

Some disabled people may find it difficult to have to travel further to reach a library. Disabled people are represented among those no longer within 30 minutes' travel time to a significant extent (7.3% against 6.6% average).

Data suggests people whose day to day activities are limited a lot are affected to a statistically significant extent (6.6% of all activity by this group). They are, specifically, relatively heavy users of libraries at Childs Hill and Burnt Oak.

One disability-related community event would be lost under this option.

can use open libraries. Use of other provision to be monitored and surveyed to ensure it remains accessible for all.

It will be important to offer reassurance to vulnerable residents that volunteers have been thoroughly trained, including safeguarding training.

For options

Take-up of service by disabled people, including home library service, to be monitored to identify any developing issues. Disabled people directly invited to feedback specifically on 'open' library pilot.

More publicity of home and mobile library services via disabled people's support groups and/or social care contact routes to ensure users are aware of the service.

Consider options for improved access

		Option 3 Both staffed and opening hours are more limited under this option than under others, reducing the benefits of both. Disabled people conduct a significant proportion of usage of sites which close or reduce under this option, though there is no impact on them caused by changing use of the four libraries which may go into community ownership. Changes in travel time have no significant impact on this group.	proposed by and for people with sensory impairments.
3. Gender reassignment	Yes ☐ / No ☒	**General principles** The service does not hold data on this characteristic and few consultation responses have been received from identified trans people. If the number of trans people using libraries were similar to their rate within the general population they would make up approximately .0.6% of library users (300 active borrowers). Evidence from elsewhere suggests that this group benefits from increased access to information and that it is necessary to provide appropriate materials. The library service already provides some tailored materials. Improved access to information (longer opening hours and more digital information) should have a positive impact on this group. There is no data to suggest a differential impact across the various options. If the proportion of trans people followed that in the general population, this would imply that 87 people with gender dysphoria would not be able to reach a library in 30 mins in option 2 and 95 people would be affected across the Borough in option 3.	Monitor consultation for any issues/data that do arise Ensure digital offer and future stock purchases take this group's needs into account
4. Pregnancy and maternity	Yes ☒ / No ☐	**General principles** Physical access to library buildings, internal and external, is important for parents who often need to use cars to -transport children. Parents say that they are more likely to use online services so will benefit from increased provision of e-resources Parents have been disproportionately supportive of any potential increases in opening hours and are likely to benefit from this change.	Communicate availability of e-resources to improve take-up. **Option 3** Consider redeploying some parent-focused events across the remainder of the network.

		Option 1 This option offers the largest increase in opening hours and as a result may have the largest potential benefit to parents. Changes to the network would reduce activities aimed at parents roughly in line with the average – 20.3% against an average 20.9% **Option 2** Opening hours would not increase as significantly as in option 1. Parent-focused activities lost as a result of network changes would be a larger proportion than under option 1, but a smaller reduction overall – 17% against the average 14.5%. **Option 3** Opening hours would not increase as significantly as in option 1. Parent-focused activities would reduce roughly in line with the average – 48.3% against 50.2% on average – but would change by a much larger proportion.	Encourage community libraries to provide parent-focused events.
5. Race / Ethnicity	Yes ☒ / No ☐	**General principles** BME residents support the idea that libraries should be maintained as physical spaces. Improvements to the estate should benefit this group. BME residents have also expressed higher levels of support for change, particularly increased volunteering and use of self-service technology. These changes to the service may have a particular benefit for them. There is some evidence in the needs assessment which suggests that Gypsies and Travellers may use the library service significantly less than other demographic groups, although numbers are very small (0.035% against a Borough average of 0.037%). **Option 1** There would be a greater number of physical library spaces under this option than any other, which BME people consistently say they value. However, BME users also express consistent support for a broad range of activities suitable for people from a diverse range of backgrounds, so the reduced range of activities in many libraries may not be an advantage for this group.	Outreach with Gypsies and Travellers to identify whether there are any barriers to use of the service and suitable mitigation measures if barriers are identified. Early years and play activities can be a successful route for engagement with Gypsy and Traveller communities and may provide opportunities here. **Option 2** Outreach with Black African community and

Looking at usage of the libraries which would be reduced in size, the data suggests Gypsies and Travellers would be affected to a significant extent, even though they are still responsible for less than 1% of usage overall.

Black British: Other users are also affected to a significant extent, carrying out 0.9% of transactions in the libraries which will be reduced in size.

The reduction in BME resident-focused activities in libraries would be lower than average for general activities under this option: 13.7% against an average of 20.9%.

Option 2

BME users express consistent support for libraries to provide a broad range of activities tailored to people from a diverse range of backgrounds. Option 2 would have a positive impact in relation to this as it preserves the broadest range of activities in the greatest number of libraries.

Looking at usage of the libraries which would be closed, the data suggests Gypsies and Travellers would be significantly affected although they still carry out less than 1% of this usage.

Changes to the network would have a significant effect on travel time to access a library for specific BME groups.

In particular, Black British African residents make up 9% of people unable to access a library within 30 minutes under this option (1304 people). Mixed: White and Black African (1.4%, 202 people) and Other Black British (1.6%, 236 people) are also statistically overrepresented in this group.

The proportion of affected activities (in closing libraries) aimed at BME groups is low, suggesting minimal impact (11.9% against the 38% average).

Option 3

The data suggests usage of the four libraries specified as potential community libraries is significantly higher than would be expected for certain BME groups.

British Indian people (8.7% of usage), British Pakistani people (1.6%), British Black: African (5.5%) and British Black: Caribbean (1.2%) are all overrepresented.

other Black British groups to identify impact of changes and relevant mitigation measures. Consider deployment of mobile site to make up for change in access

Option 3

Outreach and investigative work during consultation with the broad range of BME communities identified as potentially suffering negative differential impact from site closures or reductions in library space, to identify potential mitigation measures.

Particular care to be taken when organising sessions for voluntary and community groups interested in running libraries, to ensure that these are accessible to and attended by appropriate community representatives given the makeup of the library user base.

		This suggests that the intended benefits of community libraries – greater involvement and a service which can be directed by community need – would fall disproportionately to these groups, but that other impacts would also do so (e.g. reductions in the level of professional support in libraries; reduced space in library buildings). Reducing space in Burnt Oak has a disproportionate impact on Gypsy and Traveller library users (.1% of all transactional activity) and Black British: African (11.1%) and Black British: Other (2.0%) people. Closing East Barnet and Childs Hill libraries has a significant impact on library usage by Mixed: White and Caribbean people (.1%), Black British: Other people (.1%), and Other: Arab people (.2%). In each case the numbers are small and should therefore serve as a trigger for additional investigation rather than being treated as definitive. Changes in travel times for some areas of the Borough to access a library have a disproportionate effect on White people (52.1%), Mixed: White and Caribbean (.9%) people, and Pakistani people (1.6%). Again, the reduction in activities aimed at BME people is actually disproportionately small: 24% against an overall reduction of 50.1% in activities across the network.	
6. Religion or belief	Yes ☒ / No ☐	**General principles** The data suggests that the proportion of use by Jewish people is higher than would be expected given the makeup of the Borough's population (to a statistically significant extent), while Muslim residents use libraries slightly less than would be expected given the makeup of the Borough's population. This finding is surprising because the national Taking Part survey, which monitors the uptake of cultural events among different demographic groups, shows that there are differences in participation between religious groups and that Muslims	Further engagement will be undertaken during the consultation period for these proposals to identify whether there is indeed differential use of the library service by Muslim residents and whether there are any specific access barriers

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| | | are significantly more likely to use libraries than other religious groups (DCMS survey, cited in MLA, 2010).

The data also suggests that some libraries are used more than would be expected by people from particular religious groups. Muslim people are relatively heavy users of Burnt Oak and Childs Hill libraries. Jewish people are heavier users of Edgware, Golders Green, Hendon and Mill Hill than would be expected even given the high numbers of Jewish people in those areas.

Option 1

Data suggests the only impact on any religious group of reducing space in libraries is on those grouped under 'other religion'. The impact on any one group is likely to be limited.

Option 2

The impact of this option on library users relates to the current usage of libraries which are to be closed. Again, data suggests that Muslim users make up a statistically significant proportion of usage of these libraries: 10.9% of usage of libraries by Muslims overall will be affected by these closures.

Muslims also make up a significant proportion (11.3%) of the population now unable to access a library within 30 minutes' travel time under this option. This is statistically significant and affects 1647 individuals. Relatively heavy use of the libraries at Burnt Oak and Childs Hill means closure of these sites will have a higher impact on Muslim residents as a group.

Option 3

The proposed community libraries would have an impact on a disproportionate level of library usage by Jewish people (21.5% of all use of libraries by Jewish people) and people whose religion is 'other' (1.4% of such people use the potential community libraries).

The reduction in size of the Burnt Oak library affects a disproportionately high percentage of library use by Muslims (16.5%) and by Buddhists (2.3%)

The closure of East Barnet and Childs Hill libraries together has a | for Muslim residents in Barnet. Ensure reductions to the library at Burnt Oak do not have a lasting impact on communities which use it heavily.

Ensure the Jewish community are engaged in discussions around community libraries.

Review the mobile library to identify any potential gaps in coverage. |

		disproportionate impact on Christians (47.8%) and on people with no religion (17.7%) In this option, the impact on travel times is only statistically significant for Jewish people (18.1% of those affected, or 2,877 people).		
7. Gender / sex	Yes ☐ / No ☒	**General principles** Men in Barnet have expressed a higher preference for self-service technology than women have. Women are strongly in favour of longer opening hours for libraries and also support improved access particularly around parking. Proposals to extend opening hours and the use of self-service technology, and to revitalise the library estate, should meet the delivery needs of both groups. **Option 1**, which offers the greatest extension to opening hours overall, would be likely to be preferable for women using libraries because of this. The differential gendered impact will also be seen in different responses on the basis of pregnancy and maternity and in the experience of using libraries with young children.	Cross-monitor with other characteristics such as pregnancy/maternity and the experience of using libraries with young children to ensure any differential gendered impact is picked up.
8. Sexual orientation	Yes ☐ / No ☒	**General principles** The service does not hold data on this characteristic and few consultation responses have been received from lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. If the number of LGB people using libraries were similar to their rate within the general population they would make up approximately 6% of library users (2,990 active borrowers). Evidence from elsewhere suggests that this group benefits from increased access to information and that it is necessary to provide appropriate materials. The library service already provides some tailored materials. **Option 1** No significant change identified.	Monitor consultation for any issues/data that do arise Ensure digital offer and future stock purchases take this group's needs into account

		Option 2	
		If the incidence of LGB people in the sample no longer able to access a library within 30 minutes followed their proportion in the general population, 874 people would not be within the required range of a library under option 2.	
		Option 3	
		If the incidence of LGB people in the sample no longer able to access a library within 30 minutes followed their proportion in the general population, 956 people would not be within the required range of a local authority-run library under option 3.	
9. Marital Status	Yes ☐ / No ☒	No specific differential impact identified for the general principles of change to the service.	Monitoring for marital status among service users is likely to be experienced as intrusive, so to ensure that any barriers are identified in this area, the deliberative events planned as part of the Council's consultation should be commissioned so as to recruit people with different marital statuses.
		Option 1	
		The data suggests that married people are making higher use of libraries which would be reduced under this option, carrying out 48.2% of all usage at these libraries.	
		Option 2	
		Married people are the largest group affected by proposed closures, though not larger than others to a statistically significant effect (45.66% of activity). The data suggests that people in same sex civil partnerships are disproportionately affected by proposed library closures (0.25% of activity in those libraries) but numbers are very small.	
		For groups potentially affected by increased travel following library closures, separated (not divorced) people emerge as significantly more likely to be affected by the change, although the numbers are small (403 people).	Consultation should also aim to identify any specific needs of, or barriers to access for, single parents.
10. Other key groups?	Yes ☒ / No ☐	**Unemployed people**	**Unemployed people**
		Unemployed people are one of the groups identified as having special needs from libraries by Sue Charteris's inquiry into the Wirral libraries strategy (Charteris, 2009).	**Option 2** Explore possible alternative provision of

Unemployed people in Barnet are in favour of online services but may not know about alternative ways of accessing services, such as job clubs or ebooks.

Option 1

The physical library network would remain but access to some of the support and information jobseekers need may be curtailed if reduced space means fewer computers in each small library.

There would not be a disproportionately high impact on events and activities for jobseekers. These would be reduced by around 11.2% against the 20.9% average reduction for all activities in libraries.

Option 2

Burnt Oak is currently a library which data suggests has disproportionately high use by people claiming JobSeekers' Allowance (as does South Friern). Both would close under option 2.

This, along with the other closures, would mean that library events devoted to job-hunting would be reduced by a relatively low proportion (22.2% against a 38% average for activities in this option).

496 unemployed people would find themselves outside the 30 minute travel time to access a library.

There is the potential for alternative provision for this group via the welfare reform team's work taking place in Burnt Oak itself and the provision of the new library nearby in Colindale.

Option 3

Burnt Oak would be maintained in this option while South Friern would be put forward as a potential community library, likely to be a good candidate for co-location with a relevant service for jobseekers.

The fall in activities for unemployed people in this option Is relatively low – 37.2% against 50% average for all activities – but much higher than the other options for this group.

People from areas of high deprivation

some activities in Burnt Oak, either through the new library at Colindale or through links with existing welfare reform initiatives in the area.

Areas of deprivation

Option 2
Explore use of the mobile library to access some areas of deprivation near to libraries which have closed.

Option 3:
Explore whether take-up from children living in poverty is actually low for the libraries proposed to close under this option.

Engage with disadvantaged groups early on in relation to community libraries.

Burnt Oak is located in the top 20% of deprived areas nationally. The Colindale replacement site for the Grahame Park library is also currently in the top 20% of deprived areas although regeneration plans mean this is likely to change.

Childs Hill, Osidge and South Friern are all close to areas which are in the most deprived 30% nationally and East Finchley is near two areas in the most deprived 20%.

Option 1

No libraries close in this option and a core library is located in Colindale, serving the communities of Grahame Park and Burnt Oak and providing opportunities to link work in libraries with regeneration strategies.

Burnt Oak would remain open and can continue to sustain links with local welfare reform work.

Option 2

Burnt Oak closes but Edgware and Colindale remain, each easily accessible from the Burnt Oak catchment area.

Childs Hill, Osidge, South Friern and East Finchley libraries would all close and are all near to areas of significant deprivation. The mobile library service can mitigate this to some extent by making stops in those areas.

People from areas of deprivation have said that they value physical library spaces, so this option favours them less than option 1.

Option 3

Data suggests that the libraries which close have around 19.3% of their transactions originating from the most deprived areas of Barnet, and only 1% of those where child poverty is high. The first matches the Borough's population, suggesting it is unlikely that there will be a disproportionate impact on this group. The proportion of transactions from areas with large-scale child poverty is low compared to the proportion of library users from these areas. The impact is likely to be minimal.

The libraries currently proposed as community libraries handle approximately

17.4% of transactions from people from areas of deprivation, and 4.9% of transactions from people in areas where child poverty is high. This suggests that there could be a positive impact for these groups under this option, giving them the opportunity to gain the wider benefits of community involvement identified as a side-effect of community led libraries.

Students in full time education

There were 28,910 students in Barnet at the time of the 2011 Census.

The most significant proposal for this group is that of a partnership with an educational institution to run the Hendon library. Students would gain a library service tailored to their needs and extended opening hours which mirror the setup already familiar in many university libraries.

Elsewhere, in **option 1**, reductions in study space in smaller buildings might prove problematic for this group and alternative provision considered.

5.	**What will be the impact of delivery of any proposals on satisfaction ratings amongst different groups of residents?**

Satisfaction ratings may initially drop among service users and the public as the upcoming decision will be a difficult one. Ultimately, the proposals will aim to provide a renewed library service with an increased satisfaction rating.

6.	**How does the proposal enhance Barnet's reputation as a good place to work and live?**

The proposals develop an innovative model for library provision which will strike the appropriate balance between maintaining the level of service and finding the efficiencies needed.

They aim to make libraries accessible to all including those currently prevented from using them by restrictions on opening hours caused by the constraints of the working day.

7.	**How will members of Barnet's diverse communities feel more confident about the council and the manner in which it conducts its business?**

The consultation exercise will be carried out to a high level of transparency by an independent, trusted facilitator via a robust process with will seek to assure people of the validity of the findings.

The prospect of community involvement in running libraries – even if simply as a volunteer – has a positive impact on residents' engagement with other services.

8.	**What measures and methods have been designed to monitor the application of the policy or service, the achievement of intended outcomes and the identification of any unintended or adverse impact?** *Include information about the groups of people affected by this proposal. Include how frequently will the monitoring be conducted and who will be made aware of the analysis and outcomes? Include these measures in the Equality Improvement Plan (section 15)*

The consultation plan builds in a mid-point review period to monitor uptake and enable targeted work with any underrepresented groups.

The consultation will also involve follow-up investigations of any issues identified within this needs assessment and EIA, such as the potential need for improved links with the Muslim community.

9.	**How will the new proposals enable the council to promote good relations between different communities?** *Include whether proposals bring different groups of people together, does the proposal have the potential to lead to resentment between different groups of people and how might you be able to compensate for perceptions of differential treatment or whether implications are explained.*

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By designing a library service suitable for all and able to run efficiently enough to safeguard services for the most vulnerable, the Council will ensure that the needs of all stakeholders are met and promote good relations between them.

| 10. | **How have residents with different needs been consulted on the anticipated impact of this proposal? How have any comments influenced the final proposal?** *Please include information about any prior consultation on the proposal been undertaken, and any dissatisfaction with it from a particular section of the community.* |

Previous library strategy consultation and other relevant engagement:

Consultation for the Strategic Review of the London Borough of Barnet Library Service (January 2011)
- A consultation was taken to inform the 2011 strategic review. Initiated in 2010, its key objective was to establish how to modernise and develop libraries in the borough within a reduced budget. The consultation comprised three different strands:
    - 6 group discussions in November 2010 convened by Alpha Research with people who live, work or study in the Borough. Each group formed a representative sample of people from across the Borough, with good spread by demographics and library usage. All discussions involved at least 8 respondents.
    - Consultations from October to December 2010 with various community and voluntary organisations and their members, convened by CommUNITY Barnet. The consultations involved 27 different targeted groups with protected characteristics. Focus groups and ballot box presentations were the predominant methods used, with some short informal workshops also held.
    - A general population online survey, designed and hosted by the London Borough of Barnet on their website, running from October to December 2010, received 1670 responses (non-user responses supplemented by 60 telephone interviews conducted by Alpha Research). An additional online survey for young people, running from November to December 2010, received 58 responses.

Priorities and Spending Review Engagement (October - December 2013)
- In September 2013 the London Borough of Barnet commissioned OPM to consult with local residents, service users, and businesses to help inform the Priorities and Spending Review for 2015-2020.
- The consultation involved 3 Citizens' Panel workshops (a total of 78 residents) and 16 focus groups (a total of 137 residents) that were held between October and December 2013. The workshops included a reflective sample of the local population while the focus groups were targeted at specific service users, businesses and some protected characteristic groups.
- The objectives of the research were to:
    - understand residents' views at the formative stage of the Priorities and Spending Review
    - communicate to participants the need for the council to conduct the Priorities and Spending Review set in the context of the Government's continued austerity programme and rising demand for council services.
    - gain an in-depth understanding of stakeholders' priorities and how they would want the council to approach the Priorities and Spending Review over the next five years
- While none of the groups discussed libraries in detail they were mentioned in all 3 Citizens' Panel workshops, most of the social care user groups, young people's group and BME group. There was a clear view across the groups that discussed libraries that they need to widen their offer.

Priorities and Spending Review Call for Evidence (March - June 2014)

- A Barnet Challenge online Call for Evidence was conducted by OPM from March to June 2014 as part of the Priorities and Spending Review consultation. The aim of the survey was to hear the views of organisations, businesses and residents on the future of Barnet, how the council can ensure that public services best meet the needs of the borough, how the council can change and how organisations and individuals can play a part in meeting Barnet's challenges during this time.
- Evidence was sought on two main topic areas:
  - o ideas on the future of public services in Barnet, and how organisations and individuals can play a role in providing some of these services
  - o ideas on how the council could be more entrepreneurial and generate more income
- 20 responses were received from individual residents, 7 from organisations.

Consultation, research and engagement at the formative stage to inform the development of the Library Options Paper to be considered by the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on 28 October 2014 (August - September 2014)

As part of the evidence-led review of its library service, the Council commissioned a series of focus groups to discuss the current library service and what residents expect from library services in the future. The consultation was designed, facilitated and reported on by OPM, an independent research organisation:

- 11 focus groups (a total of 88 residents) were held during August and September 2014 - one-off 1.5 hour group discussions aiming to capture the views of users and non-users of library services.
- The focus groups were selected to ensure a representative sample across groups identified as having particular needs in the Charteris Review and groups with protected characteristics. Further details can be found below.

Recruitment ensured a range across the following criteria:

- Age
- Gender
- Households: single, couples and families
- Ethnicity and religion
- Socio-economic areas
- Geographical areas

Groups identified as having particular needs in the Charteris Review and with protected characteristics were also targeted in the individual focus groups as listed below:

- General population users
- General population non-users
- General population users and non-users (mixed group)
- Older people (over 65s)
- Range of BME residents
- People with learning disabilities
- People with disabilities
- People with mental health issues
- Unemployed people
- Low income households/people living in areas of high deprivation
- Young people

In addition, four in-depth interviews were carried out with people with sensory impairments by an independent facilitator and added to the main report as a separate section.

Overall Assessment

11. Overall impact		
Positive Impact	Negative Impact or Impact Not Known[1]	No Impact
☐	☐	☒

12. Scale of Impact		
Positive impact: Minimal ☐ Significant ☐	Negative Impact or Impact Not Known Minimal ☐ Significant ☐	

13. Outcome			
No change to decision	Adjustment needed to decision	Continue with decision *(despite adverse impact / missed opportunity)*	If significant negative impact - Stop / rethink
☒	☐	☐	☐

14. Please give full explanation for how the overall assessment and outcome was decided
At this stage the decision is merely to propose revised objectives and to bring proposed options forward for consultation. An extensive range of evidence has been brought together and analysed to inform this. Mitigation measures have been identified for any adverse impacts and built into the next stage of the project plan.

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[1] 'Impact Not Known' – tick this box if there is no up-to-date data or information to show the effects or outcomes of the function, policy, procedure or service on all of the equality strands.

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