

## Birmingham City Council Libraries Consultation - 2024

### Questions regarding Future Library Services

Question	Response
<p>Why is this change happening to Birmingham Library Services?</p>	<p>Birmingham City Council continues to face a significantly challenging financial situation and is required to make considerable budget savings across all its services.</p> <p>Birmingham Community Libraries have also faced significant challenges over recent years due to the deterioration of Library buildings, higher running costs, and insufficient staffing levels, which means that the current offer of 35 council-run Community libraries currently is unrealistic.</p> <p>At the same time, Birmingham has seen a change in the ways in which people use library services, with more people accessing collections digitally, as it allows for greater flexibility, at a time that suits them. Since 2014 Birmingham has seen a reduction in people accessing Library buildings but has seen an uptake and more emphasis on online activities and events, mobile service, click-and-collect offering, and home library service.</p> <p>While savings have been announced, final decisions have not been made on what the library service will look like in the future; the consultation and research outcomes from this exercise will help inform decisions that will be taken by the Council, after the completion of the consultation.</p>

<p>What is the amount of savings required and what is the breakdown between Library Service and Neighbourhood Advice &amp; Information Service (NAIS)?</p>	<p>The current Library Service and Neighbourhood Advice &amp; Information Service (NAIS) will be combined into a single service. Provisional planned saving target of £ 2.3M (Libraries and NAIS) with flexibility for how savings will be achieved depending on the outcome of consultation.</p>
<p>What will the library service in Birmingham look like?</p>	<p>All options shared are proposals at this stage and no decisions have been made on what the library service will look like in the future; the consultation and research outcomes from this exercise will help inform decisions that will be taken by the Council, after the completion of the consultation.</p>
<p>What will happen to library buildings if they are closed and are there alternative services I can use?</p>	<p>If the building is closed as a library, we will look at whether it could be taken over by an organisation with a social purpose for the benefit of the local community. If this is not appropriate, then disposal of the building may be the option.</p> <p>You will continue to be able to use all the other libraries and access the library service through the other available routes which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Hubs – based on a community living room concept.</li> <li>• Community-managed libraries</li> <li>• Co-located sites</li> <li>• Mobile Library Services</li> <li>• Virtual Library Services</li> <li>• Home Library service</li> </ul>
<p>How will you select which libraries will close?</p>	<p>Any decision to close a library will be based on a number of factors including the criteria below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducting a public consultation exercise and consideration of the responses from that exercise.</li> <li>• Needs assessment within each locality. With regard to the following factors: levels of ward deprivation, library usage, current condition of building and transport links</li> </ul>

<p>What if my community wants to set up a community-led library?</p>	<p>We want to work with local people to find flexible and sustainable ways of providing library services. One of the options may be for the community to take over the running of the library building through a Community Asset Transfer. As part of the consultation, we would like to hear from any organisation with a social purpose that would like to know more about how it might take over a Birmingham City Council owned building for the benefit of the local community.</p>
<p>How can I find out more and have my say?</p>	<p>The public consultation on the proposed changes to libraries in Birmingham is running from Thursday 4 April 2024 until Wednesday 17 July 2024.</p> <p>More information and a consultation questionnaire are available on the Be Heard website. All Birmingham Libraries will have hard copies at each of the library sites.</p>
<p>What other options have been considered?</p>	<p>The options being considered are available in the consultation outline on <a href="#">Birmingham City Council's Be Heard website</a></p>