Birmingham City Council

Libraries Public Consultation

4th April – 17th July 2024

RESET RESHAPE RESTART

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Purpose of this consultation

People who live, work, or study in Birmingham are being **invited to help shape** the future of the library service for Birmingham.

- Birmingham City Council has a **legal duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service** for all those who “live, work or study and want to access the service” in the city. (Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964)
- Both locally and nationally, **the ways in which people use library services have changed significantly** over the last five or so years.
- As more people make use of technology in their day-to-day lives, **Birmingham has seen a change in those people visiting library buildings**. 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 and home library service.
- At the same time, like many other local authorities, Birmingham City Council continues to face a **significantly challenging financial situation** and is required to **make considerable budget savings** across all its services. The review of its highly valued library service aims to achieve greater efficiency and value for money, and the continuing provision of a library service.
- While savings have been announced, **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 any next steps**.

Our Vision For Libraries

Protect Core Library Offer in local communities:

- Cultural and creative enrichment
- Increased reading and literacy
- Improved digital access and literacy.
- Helping everyone achieve their full potential.
- Healthier and happier lives
- Greater prosperity
- Stronger, more resilient communities

Work with the local community to better understand local aspirations and needs to shape services within the hub.

Deliver digital inclusion, targeted homes and money advice and access to jobs and skills for residents across the city

Enable and empower partners to co-locate/run services and local groups

Provide robust Information, Advice and Guidance including signposting and connections to internal and external resources and assets.

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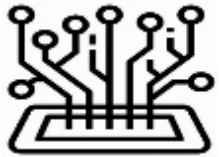
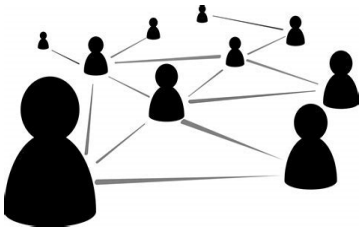
A network of our Library Community Hubs will…

Provide a welcoming, safe, multi-purpose place that is accessible and recognised by the local community



A place to go and tell your story and access a range of universal and targeted information, advice and services that meets the needs of the local community.



Offer spaces, activities and services that are created and designed with residents and the local community. Co-location of help to secure the future of the library space.

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Equalities Considerations

Throughout this consultation we are mindful of the equalities considerations that need to shape and inform any future delivery model:

- Ensure that the service offer supports and enhances the current digital inclusion for our communities (skills, connectivity and access).
- That we offer study spaces in warm and well - equipped locations.
- That there is a library services offer to areas of high socio, economic need.
- That we also focus on who is not using the library and how a library services offer could be tailored accordingly.
- Universal spaces '*something for everybody and a place to be*' approach which is all-age.
- That we offer Warm, safe spaces which act as gateways into support including access to domestic abuse support services, benefits access, social isolation, health and wellbeing.
- Ensure that through a range of Library services, the provision is accessible to all citizens within the community – physical locations, virtual offer and libraries at home.

Needs Analysis

All library needs analysis data can be accessed HERE

The next page displays a comprehensive data review table for all 35 Libraries.

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Comprehensive Review Data

The following table provides details of the 35 council-run Community Libraries against each of the criteria considered within the comprehensive review of the data as detailed in the City Observatory dashboard. The library usage data within the tables are from operational service data recorded between January - October 2023.

Library scorecards have been created for the 35 council-run libraries included within the library statutory consultation, outlining the current community usage, demographic profile, building information and ward information.

Scorecards can be accessed HERE

- The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 ranks small areas from most deprived to least deprived and divides them into 10 equal groups (deciles) Decile 1 represents the most deprived 10% while decile 10 represents the least deprived 10% in England.
- At a more local level, IMD scores have been aggregated to calculate ward deprivation rankings. This allows us to show Birmingham's 69 wards ranked by their aggregate IMD score from 1 the most deprived to 69 the least deprived.)

Library Name	Constituency	Items issued (by kiosk or desk)	Computer Useage	Number of users (Membership reserve)	IMD Rank (69 is the lowest deprivation and 1 is highest)	Tier of each library	Travel distance to nearest alternative library	Journey time by car (from library location to nearest alternative library) - less than 20 mins	Journey time by public transport to alternative library - (from library location to nearest alternative library) around or less than 30 mins	IMD Decile (where 1 is 10% most deprived nationally)	Building condition & maintenance cost High suitability <£100K, Medium suitability £100K-£220K, Low suitability >£220K (based on 2018 and 2021 condition surveys	Number of new members added within the last year
Acocks Green Library	Yardley	25,046	3,677	53,797	36	1	South Yardley (1.15 miles away)	Yes	Yes	2	Low	2494
Aston Library	Ladywood	2,905	135	10,419	14	3	Birchfield (0.52 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	High	294
Balsall Heath Library	Hall Green	18,475	2,654	31,771	9	1	Sparkhill (1.09 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	Under refurbishment	514
Bartley Green Library	Edgbaston	4,156	332	8,337	31	3	Weoley Castle (1.26 miles away)	Yes	Yes	2	Low	175
Birchfield Library	Ladywood	17,753	1,031	29,348	14	2	Aston Library (784 yards away)	Yes	Yes	1	Medium	547
Bloomsbury Library	Ladywood	4,331	No data available	8,364	24	3	Aston Library (1.08 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	Not a BCC building	116
Boldmere Library	Sutton Coldfield	23,307	494	35,873	65	2	Sutton Coldfield (1.28 miles away)	Yes	Yes	7	High	406
Druids Heath Library	Selly Oak	11,409	749	19,690	25	2	Yardley Wood (1.45 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	Medium	338
Erdington Library	Erdington	34,379	4,639	59,986	38	1	Boldmere (1.46 miles away)	Yes	Yes	3	Low	1261
Frankley Library	Northfield	5,419	435	9,636	22	2	Northfield (2.21 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	Not a BCC building	171
Glebe Farm Library	Yardley	6,244	358	11,362	15	3	Shard End (0.84 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	High	254
Hall Green Library	Hall Green	40,614	1,889	58,722	50	1	Yardley (1.2 miles away)	Yes	Yes	3	Low	755
Handsworth Library	Perry Barr	15,220	4,463	35,450	16	1	Birchfiled (1.24 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	Medium	1044
Harborne Library	Edgbaston	59,774	3,110	88,294	55	1	Selly Oak (1.32 miles away)	Yes	Yes	3	Low	1247
Kings Heath Library	Hall Green	31,755	3,110	87,068	53	1	Balsall Heath (1.39 miles away)	Yes	Yes	3	Medium	1174
Kings Norton Library	Northfield	30,921	2,128	45,310	44	1	Stirchley (1.34 miles away)	Yes	Yes	2	Low	527
Kingstanding Library	Perry Barr	11,778	881	21,701	52	2	Perry Common (1.2 miles away)	Yes	Yes	3	High	454
Mere Green Library	Sutton Coldfield	62,991	1,486	90,862	66	1	Sutton Coldfield (1.73 miles away)	Yes	Yes	7	High	889
Northfield Library	Northfield	40,618	2,759	66,398	59	1	Weoley Castle (1.61 miles away)	Yes	Yes	4	Low	1045
Perry Common Library	Perry Barr	13,428	1,297	23,303	12	2	Kingstanding (1.24 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	Low	529
Quinton Library	Edgbaston	32,900	1,506	50,666	51	1	Harborne (1.54 miles away)	Yes	Yes	3	Low	709
Selly Oak Library	Selly Oak	5,464	No data available	13,707	57	3	Stirchley (1.17 miles away)	Yes	Yes	4	Not a BCC building	263
Shard End Library	Hodge Hill	13,149	2,092	25,081	11	1	Glebe Farm (0.56 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	High	649
Sheldon Library	Yardley	9,819	336	18,232	45	2	South Yardley (1.31 miles away)	Yes	Yes	3	Low	425
Small Heath Library	Ladywood	22,905	3,200	45,684	21	1	Bloomsbury (1.52 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	High	1014
South Yardley Library	Yardley	38,640	4,420	60,112	48	1	Acocks Green (1.06 miles away)	Yes	Yes	3	Medium	1035
Sparkhill Library	Hall Green	25,916	3,046	46,067	30	1	Balsall Heath (1.06 miles away)	Yes	Yes	2	Low	939
Spring Hill Library*	Ladywood		28	5,245	29	2	Library of Birmingham (0.68 miles away)	Yes	Yes	2	Closed (Low)	65
Stirchley Library	Selly Oak	33,219	870	45,710	46	3	Selly Oak (1.04 miles away)	Yes	Yes	3	Medium	544
Sutton Coldfield Library	Sutton Coldfield	32,026	3,216	50,964	63	1	Boldmere (1.3 miles away)	Yes	Yes	6	Low	815
Tower Hill Library	Perry Barr	19,487	934	31,336	56	2	Perry Common (1.87 miles away)	Yes	Yes	4	Low	497
Walmley Library	Sutton Coldfield	25,987	915	37,806	64	2	Castle Vale (2.15 miles away)	Yes	Yes	7	Medium	428
Ward End Library	Hodge Hill	24,723	3,452	50,495	18	1	Bloomsbury library at The pod (1.54 miles away)	Yes	Yes	1	Medium	1148
Weoley Castle Library	Northfield	19,922	2,224	34,728	35	1	Bartley Green (1.27 miles away)	Yes	Yes	2	Low	805
Yardley Wood Library	Selly Oak	40,911	1,577	60,917	34	1	Hall Green (1.17 miles away)	Yes	Yes	2	Low	706

*Spring Hill library closed as of Spring 2022

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Building Conditions and Costs

There has been consistent overspend for all libraries across all years, which will continue to rise without significant investment. In the last 3 years, maintenance costs have been three times the budgeted amount.

Whilst some buildings are good quality, we have some libraries which need significant investment and are not accessible to all e.g. heating/functioning roofs. Currently, our backlog of maintenance to provide fundamental improvements for all 35 libraries is over £10 million.

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Maintenance Spend

Year	Budget	Actuals	Overspend
2019/20	150,000	438,199	288,199
2020/21	150,000	404,532	254,532
2021/22	153,000	549,118	396,118
2022/23	153,000	396,367	243,367
2023/24 (Oct 23)	153,000	294,028	141,028
Total	759,000	2,082,244	1,323,244

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Case for Change

This section outlines the reasons and logic used to identify the need and opportunity to change the current libraries service

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Libraries service are designed to meet need

Library services are designed to address Birmingham's biggest challenges, but those challenges are now more profound
Birmingham is a city of huge potential, but, like many of the UK's biggest cities, it has some deep economic and social issues that act as stumbling blocks to people, communities and the city.

- Equality and inclusion
- Unemployment, skills and the local economy
- Health and wellbeing
- Community resilience, cohesion and living standards
- Climate emergency
- Opportunities for children and young people

City of diverse local needs
Birmingham is a vast patchwork of neighbourhoods and communities. Libraries need to be designed to meet the different needs of different people in different locations. Using research and statistics, library services should be designed with particular social and economic outcomes in mind.

- Census information
- Deprivation indicators
- Health statistics
- Educational attainment
- Community-led research and recommendations

Since 2017 (the last public consultation on libraries), it has been challenging to deliver a Library Service due to staffing budgets, libraries repairs and provision which has not been targeted to specific community need. This case for change seeks to re-establish a library offer with complementary services which is more targeted in areas of need.

Current Tiered Library Provision

There are 35 community Library buildings spread across the city. Libraries operate on a tiered model:

Tier 1: Main Libraries – There are 19 tier 1 libraries, and they provide the widest range of services. They are open for 35 hours per week. All these libraries operate in a council-staffed mode for 35 hours. Some tier 1 sites may have partner agencies based within them.

Tier 2 libraries-There are 9* tier 2 libraries that deliver a tailor-made offer to local communities. They open for 21 hours per week by Council staff.

Tier 2/3 Libraries-There are 2 tier 2/3 libraries, these are hybrid libraries and operate for the same time as Tier 2 libraries (21 hours)but are delivered with community or partner involvement who offer additional opening hours.

Tier 3 Libraries- There are 4 tier 3 libraries. These Libraries are professionally supported by Birmingham City Council but led by local communities and volunteers. The Council work in partnership with local communities or other organisations in the city to provide library services in these locations. They are open 15 hours a week.

*Spring Hill Library was the 10th tier 2 Library (35th) however, Spring Hill Library has been closed since Dec 2022 due to a boiler that requires replacement.

Building information

Maintenance cost

Adequate maintenance has not been possible for the past decade. Staffing levels have been streamlined over the same period resulting in many of the city's libraries operating on a part-time or restricted basis with several short notice closures.

Short notice closures and door service

Libraries have needed to close or offer a door service (drop off items only service) for 5% of the total amount of opening hours. 79% of closures was due to staffing issues, 11%, was due to extreme weather, 3%, was due to staff training. The remaining 7%, covered a range of reasons including door failures, power cuts, fire alarm failures, H&S issues, bus strikes, maintenance and colocation (schools being closed).

Buildings in Trust

- Bartley Green
- Stirchley
- Selly Oak (not currently running as a Library, Library now co-located at Selly Oak Touchbase Pears)

Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental factors

National and local factors that impact on how libraries operate

- **Political considerations**

  Library services up and down the UK are shaped by a combination of national and local political policies and priorities. Nationally, libraries are expected to deliver (a) Cultural and creative enrichment. (b) Increased reading and literacy. (c) Improved digital access and literacy. (d) Help for everyone to achieve their full potential. (e) Healthier and happier lives. (f) Greater prosperity. (g) Stronger, more resilient communities. In Birmingham, libraries need to contribute to a series of key strategies including Early Intervention, Equality and Community Cohesion, Prosperity and Opportunity, Digital Inclusion, Culture, Heritage & Tourism.

- **Economic considerations**

  Library services are shaped by economics in two ways:

  (1) Learning, information and advice services provided by libraries need to respond to local economic needs – i.e. Job Skills or Warm Welcome.

  (2) Birmingham City Council finances impact heavily on the numbers and types of library services that can be delivered to citizens.

- **Social considerations**

  Public libraries were invented by the Victorians to help address the severe and negative impact of social inequality. Combating social inequality and improving people's life-chances remains a core library objective today. Public libraries should be culturally accessible places that offer information, advice, and well-connected signposting to wider support services – this core function needs to be central to any service redesign alongside the introduction of new data capture tools to inform more accurate metrics that sufficiently reflect changing contemporary need, use and expectation.

Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental factors continued.

- **Technological considerations**

  Internet and smart phone technologies have transformed how people find information, access services, and communicate with each other. It impacts on *what* people want from their libraries and *how* they want to access their library services.

  (1) **What people want: From information to interpretation.** Vast amounts of raw data and basic information is freely available online. Library visitors increasingly want help with interpreting and using information rather than just getting hold of information.

  (2) **How people want to access services: More online 24/7.** With retail, financial services and health services increasingly moving online, more people expect similar services from their libraries.

- **Legal considerations**

  In terms of providing library services, Birmingham City Council is legally required to respond to two main pieces of legislation.

  (1) **Local Government Finance Act 1988** requires all local authorities to balance their income and expenditure. When that is particularly difficult, national government can appoint commissioners to help councils balance their books.

  (2) **Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964** requires all local authorities to provide its citizens with 'comprehensive and efficient' library services. While it is up to each council to interpret what 'comprehensive and efficient' means, central government can review any changes and force councils to rethink or explain why they are changing how their libraries are run.

- **Environmental considerations**

  Most of Birmingham's library buildings are over 50 years old. They were not designed to be energy efficient. Retro-fitting or converting historic buildings for new greener types of heating, for example, is expensive and sometimes not possible. Relocating to more environmentally friendly buildings may need to be an option to consider.

Key Findings from Needs Analysis

- Since 2014 useage of libraries has declined by 45% and continues to decline
- There is continued use of digital library resources
- Over the past 10 years the needs of the community have warranted changes in skills required in Library staff as people access library buildings for a range of reasons e.g. benefits and welfare advice, information, access to groups and to use IT equipment
- Analysis illustrates that those who are more deprived are less likely to access libraries
- The current provision of Community Libraries is not concentrated in the centre of the city where there is greatest need
- The most popular/most attended events that Community Libraries hold are Children's events

There is a greater need for Economic Inclusion activity

Libraries already provide economic inclusion activity (some examples below). However, there is an opportunity to expand this offer and combine with other council services that also focus on these areas (such as Adult Education Services and the Neighbourhood Advice and Information Service).

- Immigration Legal advice provided in person and remote (co-ordinated by team)
- Comprehensive ESOL collection for those looking to improve English skills plus IELTS for IELTS examinations
- National Careers Service: Weekly attendance delivering career advice in person and remote
- Job Fairs in Partnership with DWP & NHS
- Driving skills – online theory test and hazard perception suitable for DSA test in the UK
- UK citizenship test
- Weekly Digital Coder Dojo Club held Tuesdays from 1700-1830 for young learners ages 7-17 to learn coding skills
- Job researching across information published in newspapers, journals, reference works and open access sources. Job Library & dedicated computers for job searching, job applications, CV writing

There is currently high demand for Benefit & Welfare advice across the city and there are opportunities to explore to bolster this service within libraries provision.

Growing Financial Constraints

There are two key areas under consideration for transformation. Community Libraries and Neighbourhood Advice and Information Services. The vision is to bring together services that can provide wider benefits for communities. We will therefore be combining the teams under one future budget.

Birmingham City Council has a provisional **planned saving target of £2,300,000*** against the two services against budgets of:

- Community Library Staff - £4,100,000
- Buildings - £1,270,000
- Neighbourhood Advice and Information - £350,000 (N.B this is supplemented with Household Revenue Account which directly supports council tenants)

Financial constraints are imperative to considering the case for change and needs analysis in this consultation.

*With flexibility for savings to be implemented in a different way depending on consultation responses.

Summary

- For more than a decade, tightening budgets for maintenance, staffing, and technology have made Birmingham Libraries' current delivery model inefficient and not effective.
- The current section 114 situation means that library budgets have been further reduced.
- The need for free and facilitated access to information, culture, and advice is high in Birmingham and very high for some communities.
- Public libraries in Birmingham have a long and strong track record of adapting to new demands and changed circumstance.
- A fundamental review and redesign of the scope and delivery mechanisms used to provide information and library services in Birmingham offers the best route towards a long-term, effective, efficient, and sustainable solution
- The expectations of library users and other Birmingham citizens has changed. More people are reading e-books. More people would like the convenience of online services. Shared community spaces are in high demand. Many citizens are looking for advice and help with accessing Council and other public services.

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Options Appraisal

This section outlines possible options for future libraries provision

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National library guidelines recommends considering 3 options:

1. **Do nothing - Leave the service as it is (option 1)**

   Even before Birmingham City Council's current financial difficulties, there were insufficient budgets to run and maintain all libraries around the city.

2. **Low level change – Adjust and reconfigure existing delivery model.**

   Review all current library locations and services using a "Stop, Start, Change" approach to rationalising, reducing, and refocusing how libraries operate.

3. **Fundamental change – Research options for full transformation (option 3 and 4)**

   Rethink Birmingham's library service more fundamentally. Consider what libraries are good at doing and how they can impact Birmingham citizens most positively. Think about how a library service would best be designed for the 21st century and for the expectations and needs of Birmingham.

Suggested future options for Community Libraries – Do Nothing

#	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	Do nothing and retain 35 Library buildings, Library of Birmingham, mobile offer, libraries at home offer and prison library.	• Some provision in current locations across the city in the short term. • Reduced potential for disruption.	• Greater staff cuts to make the agreed budget savings (over 50%). Therefore, libraries would be open on very reduced hours. • In real terms there are currently 27 libraries in operation across the city not 35 with current staff shortages and building closures. • Likely that unplanned, permanent library closures will continue as mounting repairs costs of buildings cannot be met in the current financial climate. • Some buildings that are currently open are not fit for purpose (due to their condition /not disability compliant). Cost of repairs and adaptations to be compliant for all 35 libraries is in total over £10 million (3 times the annual budget of Community Libraries before any reduction through savings targets). • Limits opportunities to provide a new, modern, targeted service most relevant to communities.

Low-level change – adjust and reconfigure the existing delivery model, is not a favoured option for the same reasons outlined above.

Suggested future options for Community Libraries – Significant Change

#	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
2	Keep Library of Birmingham and reduce Community Libraries to 6 but invest in co-located larger spaces and operations including expanding the digital offer and a mobile service whilst also retaining libraries at home and the prison library.	• A significant increase in investment for 6 hubs and therefore services. • Would retain fewer buildings giving the opportunity to invest and improve quality of the retained 6. • Extended opening hours for 6 hubs.	• Potentially reduced access and convenience as many residents would be some distance from their local libraries. • Current community groups and partners would lose library space. • Potential reduced opening times across the city for remaining provision. • Current warm spaces would be reduced. • It would be difficult to provide equal access to digital inclusion services and financial support from only 6 hubs. • **This option is not favoured** due to the limited number of community libraries

Suggested future options for Community Libraries – Fundamental Change 1

#	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
3	Move from current 35 Community Libraries to a minimum of 11 Community Library Hubs (including Library of Birmingham) open 6 days per week with a BCC offer of Library services and Early Intervention and Prevention. For the remaining libraries, work with the Voluntary and Community sector to enable groups to run libraries in their communities. This could be either as a hub and spoke model of delivery to wrap around the core offer in the community. In addition, where appropriate co-locate library provision in suitable local buildings with suitable local organisations (e.g. colleges/wellbeing centre/GP surgeries). Based on current information on community interest and co-location opportunities, we estimate a combination of the council run and community led provision might secure a minimum of 16 building- based library services. This figure may change.	• Preservation of some service across city. • Offer greater number of services in one place. • Offer can be flexed to meet each community need. • Gives VCS an opportunity to expand and run community libraries via Community Asset Transfer and use their wider organisational resources to offer library 'services' through community venues and therefore widening their reach. • Support local organisations via colocation of offer. • Extended opening hours for the Hubs • Mixed team of staff able to support widespread queries. • Investment in hub buildings to futureproof for residents. • Expanded mobile offer will fill some gaps caused by necessary closures.	• Could still result in a closure of some library. buildings which the council or the community and voluntary sector will struggle to maintain without significant investment. • For some communities, increased travel time for residents.

Suggested future options for Community Libraries - Fundamental Change 2

#	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
4	**Recommended:** Move from current 35 Community Libraries to a mixed delivery model of: • BCC run Community Library hubs open 5 days per week providing library and early intervention and prevention services. • BCC Community Library hubs open part-time hours providing library and early intervention and prevention services. • BCC staff co-located with partners/community groups providing library services. • Community groups running library services via Community Asset Transfer. • Library of Birmingham. • Virtual (digital) Library. • Expansion of mobile provision. • Prison Library (Government grant received to deliver HMP Library) • Self Service. • Libraries at Home **Based on current information on community interest and co-location opportunities, we estimate a combination of the council run and community led provision might secure circa 25 building-based library services. This figure may change.**	• Greater preservation of service across city. • Offer greater number of services to more communities. • Offer can be flexed to meet each community need. • Gives VCS an opportunity to expand and run community libraries via Community Asset Transfer and use their wider organisational resources to offer library 'services' through community venues and therefore widening their reach. • Support local organisations via co-location of offer. • Moves services from buildings no longer fit for use. • Extended opening hours in some areas. • Mixed team of staff able to support widespread queries. • Investment in hub buildings to futureproof for residents. • Expanded mobile offer will fill some gaps caused by necessary closures.	• Could still result in a closure of some library buildings which the council or the community and voluntary sector will struggle to maintain without significant investment. This would be fewer buildings than option 3. • For some communities, provision would be through mobile library only. • Where library buildings have closed, increased travel time for those citizens not wishing to use mobile services.

Exploration of Recommended Option – Development of “Community Hubs”

This section provides further detail on the recommended option concluded in the options analysis

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Developing a mixed Library service delivery model will include

Community Hubs

Community Hubs are warm, welcoming spaces for people to socialise and call their own. They are a place for relaxing and meeting new people. The network offers a variety of spaces that have different offers. These will be open on a full time (5 days) and part time basis.

We aim to empower, motivate, and unite individuals by fostering knowledge, self-reliance, and innovation. Our ambition is to create inclusive environments, both in-person and online, where residents can access support, and be connected to their communities.

Community co-location links

Provide statutory library service from a non-BCC building but using BCC staff.

Services delivered in community settings such as Family Hubs, Community Centres, school, sheltered accommodation, faith & and community settings, residential and nursing homes

Community Asset Transfer

Community organisations and/or voluntary groups own and manage their local community library building from which a library service could be delivered with support from Birmingham City Council.

Places where people can continue to access a quality library offer, potentially including library stock, IT and free Wi-Fi, but where the rest of the library space is used in flexible ways that meet the needs of the community, whatever that may be.

Community Hubs provide the opportunity to provide access to services differently

- Core library offer
- Online and digital support
- Accessing food support
- Money and debt
- Jobs and skills
- Housing
- Benefits
- Health and well-being
- Warm Welcome
- General advice

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A core library offer will be provided within each of the Birmingham City Council run community hub libraries, ensuring access to:

- A (reservations) service giving access to the city's stock.
- Online access, 24/7, to the library catalogue, e-Books, e-Magazines and our e-Reference Library.
- A wide range of events and regular activities.
- A Children's Library delivering a range of children's activities, including trained staff in storytelling techniques and creative storytelling.
- Support for children's literacy by providing reading materials, and a range of reading-based activities.
- Support for adult literacy by providing suitable reading materials and events.
- Free access to the internet on library computers and free wi-fi.
- Welcoming public spaces to visit and spend time in and provide a warm welcome.
- Access to skilled, trained and knowledgeable staff.
- Study space.
- Books and audio books to loan.

Community Managed Library

One of the options is the reduction of community libraries operated by the Council. If that proposal was adopted, further issues would arise as to whether the Council works with community bodies to achieve a Community Asset Transfer of the building. In order to gather more information and views on what that option may look like, we are asking to hear from any organisations with a social purpose that would like to know more about how it might take over a BCC-owned building for the benefit of the local community.

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How to get involved in the Consultation

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How to have your say on Libraries

Birmingham City Council is asking for all those who live, work or study in Birmingham for their views, comments and feedback on the proposed changes outlined in this pack and on the Libraries Strategic Framework(Draft). We encourage both current library users and nonusers to be part of the consultation and share what more the service could offer.

This consultation presents proposed options for the savings required for Library Services. Proposals will be achieved, depending on the outcome of consultation.

Please help to ensure we develop the right choices for Birmingham by having your say:

Consultation period: Midday **Thursday 4th April** to Midday **Wednesday 17th July 2024**

- Be Heard questionnaire
- In-person and online person timetable
- Libraries Strategic Framework-Draft

The Be Heard questionnaire is also available in hard copy at all Birmingham Libraries

For more information on these and other subjects, please go to: **www.birmingham.gov.uk/budgetconsultations**