



**COFNOD O BENDERFYNIAD WEDI'I DDIRPRWYO GAN SWYDDOG**  
**RECORD OF KEY OFFICER DELEGATED DECISION**

**Penderfyniad Allweddol | Key Decision** ✓

**PWNC | SUBJECT: REVIEW OF REMOTE LIBRARY SERVICE**

**DIBEN YR ADRODDIAD | PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

The purpose of this report is to confirm the results of the recent public consultation into the future delivery arrangements to enable remote access to library services. The report also sets out recommendations for decision in relation to the delivery of remote library services within the County Borough, taking into consideration changes that have been implemented during the Covid pandemic and the results of the consultation.

**PENDERFYNIAD WEDI'I DDIRPRWYO | DELEGATED DECISION:**

Approval to adopt the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation.

Approval to expand the 'At Home' service within existing library service resources to ensure it meets current need.

Approval to retain a 50% of the current mobile library service book budget to ensure the service can continue to provide resources that meet the needs of our remote library service users.

**LOUISE DAVIES**

**31.01.23**

**Llofnod y Prif Swyddog**  
Chief Officer Signature

**Enw (priflythrennau)**  
Name (Print Name)

**Dyddiad**  
Date

**Mae'r penderfyniad yn cael ei wneud yn unol ag Adran 15 o Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol 2000 (Swyddogaethau'r Corff Gweithredol) ac yn y cylch gorchwyl sy wedi'i nodi yn Adran 5 o Ran 3 o Gyfansoddiad y Cyngor.**

The decision is taken in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act, 2000 (Executive Functions) and in the terms set out in Section 5 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

**YMGYNGHORI | CONSULTATION**



**31.01.23**

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**LLOFNOD YR AELOD YMGYNGHOROL O'R CABINET**  
CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE

**DYDDIAD | DATE**

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**LLOFNOD SWYDDOG YMGYNGHOROL**  
CONSULTEE OFFICER SIGNATURE

**DYDDIAD | DATE**

**WILL THIS DECISION HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE WARD?**  
**A FYDD Y PENDERFYNIAD YMA'N CAEL EFFAITH AR Y WARD?**

**BYDD | YES x      NA FYDD | NO ✓**

**Any further comments/Need for Local Member to be informed:**  
**Unrhyw sylwadau pellach/Oes angen rhoi gwybod i'r Aelod Lleol?:**

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**RHEOLAU'R WEITHDREFN GALW-I-MEWN | CALL IN PROCEDURE RULES.**

**A YW'R PENDERFYNIAD YN UN BRYN A HEB FOD YN DESTUN PROSES GALW-I-MEWN GAN Y PWYLLGOR TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU?:**

**IS THE DECISION DEEMED URGENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**

**YDY | YES      NAC YDY | NO✓**

**Rheswm dros fod yn fater brys | Reason for Urgency:**

.....

***Os yw'n cael ei ystyried yn fater brys - llofnod y Llywydd, y Dirprwy Llywydd neu Bennaeth y Gwasanaeth Cyflogedig yn cadarnhau cytundeb fod y penderfyniad arfaethedig yn rhesymol yn yr holl amgylchiadau iddo gael ei drin fel mater brys, yn unol â rheol gweithdrefn trosolwg a chraffu 17.2:***

*If deemed urgent - signature of Presiding Officer or Deputy Presiding Officer or Head of Paid Service confirming agreement that the proposed decision is reasonable in all the circumstances for it being treated as a matter of urgency, in accordance with the overview and scrutiny procedure rule 17.2:*

.....  
**(Llywydd | Presiding Officer)**

.....  
**(Dyddiad | Date)**

**DS - Os yw hwn yn benderfyniad sy'n cael ei ail-ystyried yna does dim modd galw'r penderfyniad i mewn a bydd y penderfyniad yn dod i rym o'r dyddiad mae'r penderfyniad wedi'i lofnodi.**

**NB - If this is a reconsidered decision then the decision cannot be Called In and the decision will take effect from the date the decision is signed.**

**AT DDEFNYDD Y SWYDDFA YN UNIG | FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

**DYDDIADAU CYHOEDDI A GWEITHREDU | PUBLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATES**

**CYHOEDDI | PUBLICATION**

**Cyhoeddi ar Wefan y Cyngor | Publication on the Council's Website:-** 02.02.23

**DYDDIAD | DATE**

**GWEITHREDU'R PENDERFYNIAD | IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

**Nodwch: Fydd y penderfyniad hwn ddim yn dod i rym nac yn cael ei weithredu'n llawn nes cyn pen 3 diwrnod gwaith ar ôl ei gyhoeddi. Nod hyn yw ei alluogi i gael ei "Alw i Mewn" yn unol â Rheol 17.1, Rheolau Gweithdrefn Trosolwg a Chraffu.**

**Note:** This decision will not come into force and may not be implemented until the expiry of 3 clear working days after its publication to enable it to be the subject to the Call-In Procedure in Rule 17.1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

**Yn amodol ar y drefn "Galw i Mewn", caiff y penderfyniad ei roi ar waith ar / Subject to Call In the implementation date will be**

08.02.23  
**DYDDIAD / DATE**

**WEDI'I GYMERADWYO I'W GYHOEDDI: ✓ | APPROVED FOR PUBLICATION :✓**

**Rhagor o wybodaeth | Further Information:**

Cyfadran   Directorate:	Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Enw'r Person Cyswllt   Contact Name:	Nick Kelland
Swydd   Designation:	Principal Librarian
Rhif Ffôn   Telephone Number:	07867373230

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO ACCOMPANY A RECORD OF**

**KEY DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION**

**REVIEW OF REMOTE LIBRARY SERVICE**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR - PUBLIC HEALTH PROTECTION AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**Author(s): Nick Kelland - Principal Librarian**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to confirm the results of the recent public consultation into the future delivery arrangements to enable remote access to library services.
- 1.2 The report also sets out recommendations for decision in relation to the delivery of remote library services within the County Borough, taking into consideration changes that have been implemented during the Covid pandemic and the results of the consultation.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended to:

- 2.1 Agree to adopt the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation.
- 2.2 Agree to expand the 'At Home' service within existing library service resources to ensure it meets current need.
- 2.3 Agree to retain a 50% of the current mobile library service book budget to ensure the service can continue to provide resources that meet the needs of our remote library service users.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Covid pandemic legislation required Library Services to close for long periods and they needed to adapt their services at pace to continue to serve the community during that time. In relation to Remote Library Services, the following adaptations were introduced:

- The Mobile Library Service was suspended in March 2020 due to the continued presence of Covid in the community and the fact that service users interact with staff in a confined space.
- Staff and resources were transferred from the Mobile Library Service to provide an expanded 'At Home' Service. Existing mobile library users were contacted and asked if they would like to register for the service. Those that registered now receive fortnightly deliveries to their home address.
- The 'At Home' Library Service differs from the Mobile Library Service in that it delivers books directly to a members' home. Whereas, the Mobile Library Service has set stops and members visit the vehicle to receive their books.
- Library members were encouraged to take up e-lending following investment from the Welsh Government and the reallocation of library funds to e-books and e-audiobooks to increase the digital collection in order to meet demand. This was assisted by the creation of 'Digital Membership', enabling the public to join online and become digital members of the library, gaining access to online collections without the need to visit a library.
- An 'Order and Collect' service was introduced, whereby a library member could select books or request a 'Librarian's Choice' for collection at a library of their choice. This service has remained in place after the lifting of restrictions due to its popularity with the public. Collection can be made by the member or by a member of their family and friends.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

4.1 An overarching lesson of the pandemic was the need to adapt services to meet current demand and needs. Consideration needs to be given to re-evaluate the adaptations made during the pandemic to ensure that the Library Service, and particularly Remote Library Services, best meet residents' needs.

#### **4.2 Mobile Library Service**

4.2.1 The Mobile Library Service was the most traditional and established method for delivering Remote Library Services. The service model involves a large vehicle travelling around a prescribed route allowing members in communities to borrow books. Demand for this service had been reducing before the pandemic. A significant change to the delivery model of the Mobile Library Service, extensive promotion of the service, partnership working to encourage non-traditional use and the introduction of relevant internet-enabled technologies had failed to

prevent the services decline and the range of new remote library services has ensured customer needs have been met via new services.

4.2.2 Unlike the Mobile Library Service, the 'At Home' Service operated throughout large periods of the pandemic. This service is able to support those who are unable to access either a static or mobile library due to disability, age or other personal barriers. During this period, staff and resources from the Library Service were used to extend the 'At Home' Service to existing mobile library users. In total, of the 394 registered mobile library users, 107 took up the offer of registering with this service. Many of the other users may have switched to digital or order and collect provision; however, there is no data to confirm this.

### 4.3 **The Book Budget**

4.3.2 In order to support our Remote Library Services, a proportion of the book budget amounting to £40,000 is currently set aside for the 'At Home' (£20,000) and Mobile Library services (£20,000). This money is used to maintain a collection of printed books at Rock Grounds from which customers of both services are provided with reading materials. Customers of these services can, as with any member of the Library Service, also request items from the general collection or access digital content online. Under these proposals this amount will be reduced to £30,000 and this will be used to order physical book stock for the extended 'At Home' service as well as increase expenditure on digital content.

4.4 The pandemic led to an increase in electronic engagement, with significant increases being seen in the e-lending of books and audio (see Appendix 1). Borrowing of e-resources has remained high even after the removal of Covid restrictions. Waiting times and reservation numbers for e-stock have risen significantly, requiring us to evaluate the use of our book budget, allocating more funds to the acquisition of e-stock. The increased number of e-resources available offers greater potential for their use in Remote Library Services alongside a partner service providing loans of digital equipment.

4.5 Given the changes made because of the pandemic restrictions, it was important that the Council engaged with customers to understand their opinion of the new or enhanced Remote Library Services and to seek their views on current changes. It also enabled the Council to gather views on further changes that could be considered in respect of Remote Library Services in the future.



## **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

- 5.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 3) has been undertaken and concluded positive impacts for all groups considered in view of the aligned proposal to adopt the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation, including to enhance the “At Home” library services.

## **6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 A full Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been undertaken (Appendix 4) and the main findings were:
- The implementation of this proposal will mainly have a neutral impact upon the Welsh Language with the extended ‘At Home’ service providing the same level of Welsh Language provision as the previous remote services model.
  - The proposal will have a positive effect upon the availability of digital Welsh language provision, and Library Services will promote these elements to increase the number of customers gaining access to e-Welsh content than under the previous model.

## **7. CONSULTATION RESULTS**

- 7.1 A four-week consultation was held between 31<sup>st</sup> of October and 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The consultation consisted of printed questionnaires and an online survey, with printed questionnaires being delivered to existing ‘At Home’ service users and the online survey being promoted to general library users and members of the public. Printed questionnaires were also available on request. Overall, 219 completed questionnaires were returned.

- 7.2 The results of the consultation show that:

- A high percentage of the users of both the existing ‘At Home’ service (99%) and the home delivery service (98%) being offered by mobile library staff rate the service as very good or good.
- A high percentage of users who previously used the Mobile Library Service stated that the current Remote Library Service provision met their needs (97%).
- A high percentage of users who accessed e-books and e-audiobooks via library subscriptions rated the service as very good or good (83%).

- 27% of respondents stated that investing in e-books and e-audiobooks would be a good way to enhance Remote Library Services.

A full summary of the consultation findings can be seen in Appendix 2

## **8. PROPOSED WAY FORWARD**

8.1 After reviewing the results of the recent consultation and re-evaluating the adaptations made during the pandemic, there is an opportunity to adopt the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation to best utilise existing resources whilst meeting the needs of the public.

8.2 The proposal is for:

- Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation.
- Expanding the 'At Home' service within existing library service resources to ensure it meets current need.
- Retaining a 50% of the current mobile library service book budget to ensure the service can continue to provide resources that meet the needs of our remote library service users.

8.3 The current extended 'At Home' service would require additional funding for printed book stock and so it is proposed that we retain 50% of the current mobile library stock book budget amounting to £10,000. This option would ensure that the quality and range of stock available to remote library service users remains at the current high standard as well as allow for an increase in spending on e-audio and e-book stock.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

9.1 It has been calculated that the proposed changes to the library service would result in revenue savings of £66,924 per annum. However, this sum could be greater given the recent increases in the cost of diesel.

9.2 If a further expansion to the current 'At Home' Service is needed, this would require the lease of a van, an estimated cost of approximately £3,350.70 per annum (this is expected to rise).

9.3 The smaller size and nature of the 'At Home' library vans means that any plans to change to electric vehicles would be both easier and more

cost efficient. The mobile library vehicles are a bespoke build and would be more costly to replace or retro-convert to electric power.

## **10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 10.1 There is no statutory requirement for the Council to provide a Mobile Library Service. The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 simply requires local authorities to ensure the provision of a 'comprehensive and efficient service' without providing any criteria for what can be considered as 'comprehensive and efficient.' In Wales, the Welsh Public Library Standards has clear quality indicators that library services have to abide by. These do not specify the need for a Mobile Library Service.

## **11. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 11.1 Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation, expanding the Remote Library Services offered by the Council alongside its static library, promotes independence and positive lives for everyone, ensuring the Council is able to offer an accessible option for all residents, including those unable to visit a static library.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

- 12.1 The success and cost effectiveness of the current delivery of Remote Library Services, the extension of the 'At Home' service when considered against the high cost of the existing Mobile Library service, and the diminishing use by the public should be considered. A significant change to the delivery model, extensive promotion of the service, partnership working to encourage non-traditional use and the introduction of relevant internet enabled technologies have failed to prevent the services decline. The enforced hiatus of the service imposed by Covid-19 have contributed to the continuation of the services decline and have made its continuation in its current form unsustainable.
- 12.2 It is proposed that the recommendations made in this report are approved and that the Council adopts the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation.  
offer a Remote Library Service based upon the proposals outlined in this report.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO ACCOMPANY A RECORD OF**

**KEY DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION**

**27 JANUARY 2023**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR - PUBLIC HEALTH PROTECTION AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES,**

**REVIEW OF REMOTE LIBRARY SERVICES**

**Background Papers**

Appendix 1 – Library Service - Electronic Engagement: April – August 2020  
and 2021

Appendix 2 – Remote Libraries Consultation

Appendix 3 – Equalities and Socio Economic Impact Assessment

Appendix 4 – Welsh Language Impact Assessment

**Officer to contact**

Nick Kelland – Principal Librarian

## Appendix 1

### Library Service - Electronic Engagement: April – August 2020 and 2021

Authority	eAudio loans			eBook loans			Total loans		
	April - August 2020	April - August 2021	Variance	April - August 2020	April - August 2021	Variance	April - August 2020	April - August 2021	Variance
RCT	8,503	10,073	18%	10,120	10,122	0%	18,623	20,195	8%
Consortium	175,418	205,239	17%	218,671	207,577	-5%	394,089	412,816	5%

  

Authority	Total registered users			Active users			Loans per active user		
	Aug-20	Aug-21	Variance	Aug-20	Aug-21	Variance	Aug-20	Aug-21	Variance
RCT	2,202	2,907	32%	696	814	17%	5.46	5.15	-6%
Consortium	47,443	60,793	28%	16,073	16,989	6%	5.13	5.06	-1%

### April – July 2021 – 2022, year on year comparison

Authority	eAudio loans			eBook loans			Total loans		
	April - July 2021	April - July 2022	YOY Variance	April - July 2021	April - July 2022	YOY Variance	April - July 2021	April - July 2022	YOY Variance
RCT	8,010	9,289	16%	7,994	8,293	4%	16,004	17,582	10%
Welsh Consortium	162,098	200,295	24%	165,196	170,208	3%	327,294	370,503	13%

  

Authority	Total registered users			Active users			Average loans per active user		
	By end July 2021	By end July 2022	YOY Variance	During the month of July 2021	During the month of July 2022	YOY Variance	During the month of July 2021	During the month of July 2022	YOY Variance
RCT	2,845	3,667	29%	779	978	26%	5.10	4.67	-8%
Welsh Consortium	59,585	74,549	25%	16,363	19,777	21%	5.04	4.81	-5%

## **Remote Libraries Consultation**

This report was generated on 12/12/22. Overall, 219 respondents completed this questionnaire.

The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'. A total of 219 cases fall into this category.

The following charts are restricted to the top 12 codes. Lists are restricted to the most recent 100 rows.

### **Which, if any, of the below Remote Library Services do you use? (Please tick all that apply)**

The existing 'At Home' service (99) 46%  
The home delivery service offered by mobile library staff (53) 24%  
None (46) 21%  
Accessed e-books and e-audiobooks via the library's subscriptions to Borrowbox and ULibrary. (28) 13%  
The 'Order and Collect' service (25) 12%

### **If you used the services below, how would you rate them. (The home delivery service offered by mobile library staff)**

Very good (53) 93%  
Neutral (3) 5%  
Good (1) 2%  
Poor (-)  
Very Poor (-)

### **If you used the services below, how would you rate them. (The existing 'At Home' service)**

Very good (100) 94%  
Good (5) 5%  
Neutral (2) 2%  
Poor (-)  
Very Poor (-)

### **If you used the services below, how would you rate them. (The 'Order and Collect' service)**

Very good (25) 89%  
Good (3) 11%  
Neutral (-)  
Poor (-)

Very Poor (-)

**If you used the services below, how would you rate them. (Accessed e-books and e-audiobooks via the library's subscriptions to Borrowbox and ULibrary.)**

Very good (15) 52%  
Good (9) 31%  
Neutral (3) 10%  
Poor (1) 3%  
Very Poor (1) 3%

**Did you use the Mobile Library Service before the Covid 19 Pandemic?**

No (121) 56%  
Yes (96) 44%

**If you previously used the Mobile Library Service, how would you rate the current Remote Library Services provision?**

It meets my needs (82) 87%  
Neutral (9) 10%  
It doesn't meet my needs (3) 3%

**How could Remote Library Services be enhanced? (Please tick all that apply)**

Extend 'At Home' delivery service (151) 77%  
Invest in e-books and e-audiobooks (54) 27%  
Provide a tablet lending service for accessing e-books and e-audiobooks (28) 14%  
Other (14) 7%

**If you selected 'Other', please specify in the comment box below:**

I had no idea any of these services existed.

It would be very nice if Borrowbox actually worked. Every time I've tried to use it, it's either frozen or buffered. Then finally when you get access and log-in, there isn't a lot of stuff to choose from. A huge disappointment. And waste of money. It's nothing to shout home about, PR or otherwise.

Restart the vans.

I don't have a provision for at home library as i go to and use my local library regularly.

Letting people know about this good service.

By listening to borrowers and not using consultations as a means of covering up the councils real intention i.e to withdraw services.

Satisfied with the service.

Please return to mobile library with set stops.

Would like the mobile library returned so i can choose my own books.

Bring back the mobile library vans having many stops during a day instead of one morning and one afternoon stop. Being able to choose books myself is my preference.

Return the mobile library so i can choose my own books.

But excellent as is.

The mobile library with set stops locally. Not at remote stops.

I am very satisfied with the services I receive.

**Do you have any further comments you would like to share:**

More horror, fantasy and sci-fi choices in the e-audiobooks if possible please.

Most people using the library tend to be older and not all have digital skills.

I found that the e-book and audiobook library is limited so have not used it as no titles I have wanted have been available.

I would be concerned about the library locations closing as I believe they provide other services such as Internet use & can be a warm home hub for anyone in need, especially the elderly.

Better advertisement of remote library services would be a good idea.

Make the facility of e-books and e- audio books more widely known.

More widely publicised information on the above facilities as I and my family were unaware they even existed.

Increase amount spent on library services generally.

the library service is a much needed life line to the house bound the more that's done to enhance the service the better.

**Do you have any further comments you would like to share:**

I wasn't aware that there was an "at home" delivery service. I think I would probably have used it. I read ebooks atm but much prefer to hols and read a proper book.

I don't want the crap Borrowbox to replace actual real libraries - you closed my local one in Rhondda Fach, so I gave up using the service all together when the digital failed too.

I don't use the service as I use kindle as well as borrowed from friends charity bought books, but some prefer a book to read as in fact I do. Extending the delivery of books would be better as digital is not for all.

Older generation want books not tablets they have served the country time to keep serving them back and not cost cutting books are valuable in society ...if any power cuts people cannot access.

Please consider library users from older generation who would find digital services difficult to use.

These people should not be excluded by default.

No.

There still needs to be physical library location that people can attend in person.

The library is all important in communities so anything to extend the service would be wonderful.

I can understand the need to enhance the mobile Library service however, I much prefer visiting the local library at Hirwaun.... The service they offer there is far more than accessing books and other items. It has a positive effect on your wellbeing and a wonderful feel good factor.

The librarians offer a very personal service. They know you by name, they are so attentive and helpful and are wonderful with the elderly people who frequent the Library. I highly regard and greatly appreciate the Librarians who work at Hirwaun Library and value greatly the service they provide to the community of Hirwaun and surrounding area.

Improved opening hours responsive to working peoples needs.

None.



I use the library in Treorchy for Family History and find them very helpful.  
No further comments, RCT LIBRARY SERVICE IS EXCELLENT, STAFF ARE ALWAYS POLITE, COURTEOUS AND READY TO HELP.

cannot comment as not a user.

This would be targeted I presume at people who are disabled or unable to travel and reading books should be promoted and easy access made available. How would people who are do not have a computer or are not IT literate be made aware of and sign up to the service.

I remember the mobile library service but didn't know the council still operated it with all the cuts. Not high on my list of priorities, but there may still be a need to continue it for disadvantaged families, depends on the cost vs benefits evaluation. I honestly thought it had withered and died on the vine through lack of awareness and covid.

The delivery of books to my home makes a great difference to my quality of life as I would be very unhappy if I had no books to read. The staff choose a good variety of books for me and I look forward to their monthly visits.

Make membership easier, or wencotabe membership with more advertising.

End Mobile Library Service if it is not being accessed and numbers are low. Numbers are low at some physical libraries across RCT - need to focus on increasing numbers at these venues and have more activities taking place within settings via RCT Adult Education/Community Services - continue to link provisions to library settings. Extend 'At Home' delivery service and online ordering/e-books.

We do not have any RCT Library facilities in this area at all. There are none whatsoever in this area most people travel to good CBC Library in Pencoed. 'At Home' delivery service is essential for housebound people and those with mobility issues, as is ebooks and e-audiobooks. However, there is still need for libraries especially for children, people on their own and certainly now with the increased fuel costs, people can sit and read books in the warm.

### **Do you have any further comments you would like to share:**

I loved the mobile service and do miss it. I now travel to Pontypridd to change books for myself and 2 grandsons. My daughter set up a lending library for children in Ynysybwl pre Covid but the venue is no longer available. She is now setting up a storytime session for children. To travel to Pontypridd with 2 children is cost prohibitive for many parents. We are looking at alternate options to set up a lending library.

I absolutely love the borrowbox service. I read on average a book a week and would certainly not be able to do this without this service. The only thing I can think of to improve the service is to increase the books available. Thank you.

I don't want or need anything else. The library staff are fab.

Can't wait to have my books every 4 weeks.

The staff are very helpful and do an excellent job choosing books for me.

Excellent at your job.

Very happy with the service given by the at home service.

The at home service is excellent and they always find all the books i want and are lovely to speak with.

Monthly list of TKBKs would be nice. Nothing but praise for the At Home Service.

Glad to have the service.

Unfortunately, many older people still do not have access to internet and now with the cost of living crisis, it will be even harder and more people affected. Alongside the tablet lending portable wifi might also be considered.

The service is invaluable to housebound people and services the community well with excellent service from friendly knowledgeable staff.

I have been very pleased with the "at home service".

None.

As i had a stroke this service is great for me.

Please do not use comment to abandon mobile library.

My librarians do a great job of selecting my books but the social side of meeting other people and choosing my own books is not the same.

No notice was taken of peoples comments on the change to the library mobile vans stops. It's probably been a waste of my time filing in this form.

It's a friendly face for people who live on their own and a good public service.

Please reinstate the old mobile library.

I have been very grateful for my books at this difficult time.

No, suits my needs well.

Excellent service provided by Donna, Tom and Aled. Always deliver suitable books to have a great need. A great service to meet needs and aid general well-being. Many thanks.

I am more than pleased with the service you provide, long may it continue.

Very Obliging staff.

I find the service invaluable and I couldn't choose a better selection of books myself.

If the mobile libraries was demobilised I would not be able to use it. As my mobility has declined in the last few years.

Your library staff do a fantastic job of choosing my books, because they have been used to my choices over the years.

The mobile library service is a valued opportunity to access a variety of reading material for housebound people or for 24/7 house cared.

### **Do you have any further comments you would like to share:**

I have used the mobile Library for many years. The delivery service is absolutely vital being disabled and I spend hours reading daily. These teams who bring/collect books are outstanding people and have broadened scope of my reading and are splendid people.

Excellent service. Thank you.

I really appreciate the home delivery service.

Excellent service from Aled, Donna and Tom, they are friendly and helpful. Cannot fault the service provided.

Home service has been excellent.

The service is a life line to my husband and I; both of us are over 80 and not so mobile as we used to be.

The library service is very good. The home delivery service has been a life line to me and others I know. The staff are fantastic and extremely helpful. Please do not reduce our library services.

The Staff are very helpful.

The people who deliver the books are very helpful and pick great books because they know me and know what books I like.

I am 95 and this mobile library service is wonderful because I cannot get to Pontypridd Library on my own. My niece sometimes collects books there for me, she brings me the new book list.

I am more than happy with the mobile delivery service, the delivery staff are wonderful, they are always on time.

Yes, Staff are very friendly and helpful.

I am housebound and the home delivery service is excellent, I don't know what I would do without it. Thank you.

I would like to thank the staff who bring the books. They go out of their way to find any ones I request.

They are always cheerful and if unable for any reason to come, they always phone to let me know.

Mae y gweasanaeth yn arbenning o dda ac mae y staff leant y lant.

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM INCLUDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

(Revised March 2021)

Please refer to the current Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this document. If you would like further guidance please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team on 01443 444529.

An equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

This document will also contribute towards our duties to create a More Equal Wales within the

- Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

The [‘A More Equal Wales – Mapping Duties’](#) guide highlights the alignment of our duties in respect of the above-mentioned legislation.

## SECTION 1 – PROPOSAL DETAILS

Lead Officer: Caroline O'Neill

Service Director: Louise Davies

Service Area: Libraries

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023

1.a) What are you assessing for impact?

Strategy/Plan	Service Re-Model/Discontinuation of Service	Policy/Procedure	Practice	Information/Position Statement
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.b) What is the name of the proposal?

Remote Library Services

1.c) Please provide an overview of the proposal providing any supporting links to reports or documents.

The Mobile Library Service was the most traditional and established method for delivering Remote Library Services. The service model involves a large vehicle travelling around a prescribed route allowing members in communities to borrow books. Demand for this service had been reducing before the pandemic. A significant change to the delivery model of the Mobile Library Service, extensive promotion of the service, partnership working to encourage non-traditional use and the introduction of relevant internet enabled technologies had failed to prevent the services decline and the range of new remote library services has ensured customer needs have been met via new services.

Unlike the Mobile Library Service, the 'At Home' Service operated throughout large periods of the pandemic. This service is able to support those who are unable to access either a static or mobile library due to disability, age or other personal barriers. During this period, staff and resources from the Library Service were used to extend the 'At Home' Service to existing mobile library users. In total, of the 394 registered mobile library users, 107 took up the offer of registering with this service. Many of the other users may

have switched to digital or order and collect provision; however, there is no data to confirm this.

A public consultation to gather views on Remote Library Services was undertaken during Q3 2022/23. After reviewing the results of the consultation and re-evaluating the adaptations made during the pandemic, there is an opportunity to adopt the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation. to best utilise existing resources whilst meeting the needs of the public.

The proposal is outlined below:

Adopt the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation.

Expand the 'At Home' service within existing library service resources to ensure it meets current need.

Retain a 50% of the current mobile library service book budget to ensure the service can continue to provide resources that meet the needs of our remote library service users.

1.d) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

There is no statutory requirement for the Council to provide a Mobile Library Service. The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 simply requires local authorities to ensure the provision of a 'comprehensive and efficient service' without providing any criteria for what can be considered as 'comprehensive and efficient.' In Wales, the Welsh Public Library Standards has clear quality indicators that library services have to abide by. These do not specify the need for a Mobile Library Service.

1.e) Please outline who this proposal affects:

- Service users
- Employees
- Wider community



## SECTION 2 – SCREENING TEST – IS A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?

Screening is used to determine whether the initiative has positive, negative or neutral impacts upon protected groups. Where negative impacts are identified for protected groups then a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

### Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups. Please take an intersectional approach in recognising an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Age</b> ( <i>Specific age groups i.e. young people or older people</i> )	Positive	From the data available we know the Mobile Library Service is used predominantly by older people, many of whom may have mobility issues or are unable to carry heavy books. They may also be unable to access a static library either by car or by public transport. The mobile library service provided them with access to a good choice of books, other printed materials, and audiobooks. Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the ‘At home Library Service’ thereby retaining the ability of older people to gain access to these materials with them being	Public Consultation Staff 121 Library Management System data.

		<p>delivered directly to their homes. Investing in e-books and e-audiobooks, as well as a potential tablet loan scheme will provide an additional delivery method for accessing reading materials ensuring better access to resources that suit these needs. No age-related criteria will be applied to the service and so access to this material will be available to people of all ages.</p>	
<p><b>Disability</b> <i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>There is no monitoring of registered library users in this area of protected characteristic. However, we have no evidence to suggest the proposal will have a negative impact on anyone based on this protected characteristic. The adoption of the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the 'At Home' Library Service which will result in users of the service having access to the same range of library materials previously offered via the Mobile Library Service although these will now be delivered directly to their home address. In addition to these further resources will become available via investment in e-resources and the potential introduction of a tablet lending service ensuring that anyone within this protected characteristic will have</p>	<p>Public Consultation</p>



		better access to Library resources which suit their needs.	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth including non-binary identities)</i>	Positive	Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the 'At Home' Library Service and further resource to e-books and audio books, as well as a potential tablet loan scheme, ensuring that all genders will have better access to Library resources to suit their needs	Public Consultation

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	Positive	Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the 'At Home' Library Service and further resource to e-books and audio books, as well as a potential tablet loan scheme, ensuring that those in a marriage or civil partnership will have better access to Library resources to suit their needs.	Public Consultation
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> <i>(women who are pregnant/on maternity leave)</i>	Positive	Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the 'At Home' Library Service and further resource to e-books and audio books, as well as a potential tablet loan scheme, ensuring that women who are pregnant/on maternity leave will have better access to Library resources to suit their needs.	Public Consultation
<b>Race</b> <i>(ethnic and racial groups i.e. minority ethnic groups, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</i>	Positive	Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the 'At Home' Library Service and further resource to e-books and audio books, as well as a potential tablet loan scheme, ensuring that all races will have better access to Library resources to suit their needs.	Public Consultation

<p><b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and philosophical beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the 'At Home' Library Service and further resource to e-books and audio books, as well as a potential tablet loan scheme, ensuring that people with varying religions/beliefs/no beliefs will have better access to Library resources to suit their needs.</p>	<p>Public Consultation</p>
<p><b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the 'At Home' Library Service and further resource to e-books and audio books, as well as a potential tablet loan scheme, ensuring that all sexes will have better access to Library resources to suit their needs</p>	<p>Public Consultation</p>
<p><b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the 'At Home' Library Service and further resource to e-books and audio books, as well as a potential tablet loan scheme, ensuring that all sexual orientations will have better access to Library resources to suit their needs</p>	<p>Public Consultation</p>

In addition, due to Council commitments made to the following groups of people we would like you to consider impacts upon them:

	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Armed Forces Community</b> <i>(anyone who is serving, has served, family members and the bereaved)</i>	Positive	Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the 'At Home' Library Service and further resource to e-books and audio books, as well as a potential tablet loan scheme, ensuring that the armed forces community will have better access to Library resources to suit their needs.	Public Consultation
<b>Carers</b> <i>(anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i>	Positive	Adopting the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation will provide an extension of the 'At Home' Library Service and further resource to e-books and audio books, as well as a potential tablet loan scheme, ensuring that anyone of any age who provides unpaid care will have better access to Library resources to suit their needs.	Public Consultation

If the initial screening test has identified negative impacts then a full equality impact assessment (section 4) **must** be undertaken. However, if after undertaking the above screening test you determine a full equality impact assessment is not relevant please

provide an adequate explanation below:

As all protected characteristic groups will be positively impacted by the restructure of Remote Library Services, a full equality impact assessment is not relevant. The proposal offers staff opportunities to leave or stay with the service; expands provision for all users; utilises digitization to increase access; and enables better use of resources.

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision?

Yes

No

Name: Caroline O'Neill

Position: Head of Arts, Culture and Library Services

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Please forward a copy of this completed screening form to the Diversity and Inclusion Team.

PLEASE NOTE – there is a separate impact assessment for Welsh Language. This must also be completed for proposals.

Section 3 Socio-economic Duty needs only to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. Definition of a 'strategic nature' is available on page 6 of the [Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty](#) Welsh Government Guidance.

### **SECTION 3 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (STRATEGIC DECISIONS ONLY)**

The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

- Single parents and vulnerable families
- Pensioners
- Looked after children
- Homeless people
- Students
- Single adult households

- People living in the most deprived areas in Wales
- People with low literacy and numeracy
- People who have experienced the asylum system
- People misusing substances
- People of all ages leaving a care setting
- People involved in the criminal justice system

<b><u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b><u>Low Income/Income Poverty</u></b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	Select from the following:		
<b><u>Low and / or No Wealth</u></b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>	Select from the following:		
<b><u>Material Deprivation</u></b> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i>	Select from the following:		

<b><u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b><u>Area Deprivation</u></b> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport))</i>	Select from the following:		
<b>Socio-economic background</b> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>	Select from the following:		
<b>Socio-economic disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>	Select from the following:		



## SECTION 4 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative/adverse impacts and clearly identify which groups are affected.

- 4.a) In terms of disproportionate/negative/adverse impacts that the proposal may have on a protected group, outline the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate the impact for each group identified. **Attach a separate action plan where impacts are substantial.**
- 4.b) If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.
- 4.c) Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users/staff.
- 4.d) Give details of how you engaged with service users/staff on the proposals and the steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group. Explain how you have used feedback to influence your decision.
- 4.e) Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the Statutory Equality and Socio-economic Duties?
- Yes                       No

## **SECTION 5 – MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 5a) Please outline below how the implementation of the proposal will be monitored:
  
- 5b) When is the evaluation of the proposal due to be reviewed?
  
- 5c) Who is responsible for the monitoring and review of the proposal?
  
- 5d) How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

## SECTION 6 – REVIEW

As part of the Impact Assessment process all proposals that fall within the definition of ‘Key Decisions’ must be submitted to the Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your proposal is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Decision please forward your impact assessment to [Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk) for a Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. The EqlA guidance document provides more information on what a Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that you can demonstrate how you have considered equality and socio-economic outcomes. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below

<b>Officer Review Panel Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations</b>
<b>Consultation Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consultation</b>

## **SECTION 6 – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSAL**

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the equality and socio-economic impact section of the Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

## **SECTION 7 – AUTHORISATIONS**

Lead Officer:

Name:

Position:

Date:

I recommend that the proposal:

- Is implemented with no amendments
- Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
- Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on protected groups or socio-economic disadvantage

Head of Service/Director Approval:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Please submit this impact assessment with any SLT/Cabinet Reports.

## WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIS) tool enables RCT Council to consider the principles and requirements of the [Welsh Language Standards \(No.1\) Regulations 2015](#) to ensure compliance with the [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#).

**Stage 1 – Information Gathering**

**NOTE:** As you complete this tool you will be asked for **evidence to support your views**. Please see [Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for more information on data sources.

<b>Proposal Name:</b>	Remote Library Services
<b>Department</b>	Libraries
<b>Service Director</b>	Caroline O'Neill
<b>Officer Completing the WLIA</b>	Nick Kelland
<b>Email</b>	Nick.e.kelland@rctcbc.gov.uk
<b>Phone</b>	078673732330
<b>Brief Description</b>	Proposed changes to remote library services following a public consultation on the future of these services based upon changes adopted during the Covid 19 pandemic and future service requirements.
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Please outline who this proposal affects? (Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)</b>	Service users, Employees, Wider Community

<p><b>What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?</b></p>	<p>The aim of this proposal is to improve the quality and range of remote library services by building on the lessons learnt during the Covid 19 pandemic, when alternative methods of delivery were explored by the library service. It relates to all aspects of remote library services, English, Welsh and other languages.</p>
<p><b>Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.</b></p>	<p>Any individual who uses remote library services whether face-to-face or online could be affected by this proposal. This will include people who read, listen to and speak the Welsh language.</p>
<p><b>Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned</b></p>	<p>Every ten years the nation sets aside one day for the Census, a count of people and households. The Census is a key source of information about the number of people who can speak Welsh.</p> <p><b>Census 2021 – Welsh Language Skills</b></p> <p><i>The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released the results of the 2021 Census questions asking respondents to state their level of Welsh language skills on 6 December 2022. This document summarises the figures as released on 6 December 2022 as they relate to Rhondda Cynon Taf and the rest of Wales.</i></p> <p><b>Wales</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Across the whole of Wales, 24.4% of respondents to the 2021 Census state some degree of Welsh language skills</li> <li>• 16.8% of respondents state they can read Welsh, 14.5% state they can write Welsh, 17.3% state they can speak in Welsh and 3.9% state they can understand spoken Welsh only</li> <li>• Across Wales there has been a decrease in the proportion of the population that states some level of Welsh language skills in all but one measure (the population who say they “can speak and other combinations of skills in Welsh” has increased by 23.3%, from 5369 to 6620) since the 2011 Census</li> </ul> <p><b>Rhondda Cynon Taf</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCT has a total of 43,179 people who stated some level of Welsh language skills in Census 2021 (18.2% of the total area population)</li> <li>• This is a decrease from 19.2% of respondents in the Census of 2011 stating some level of Welsh language skills</li> <li>• Proportionally, there has been very little change in the distribution of Welsh language skills across the area between 2011 and 2021</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCT has a lower than the Wales average in 6 of 8 measures of Welsh language skills – the exceptions are “can read but cannot speak or write Welsh” and “can write but cannot speak or read Welsh”.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other relevant data or research</b></p>	<p>Data for 2020/21 shows that library service expenditure on materials in the Welsh Language was £13,815 which equates to 5% of the total library service expenditure on materials (Welsh Public Library Standards target is 4%). This level of expenditure allows us to purchase the majority of new Welsh Language titles being published although preference is given to Welsh learning, beginners titles, children’s titles and adult fiction. Data for 2020/21 shows that 1,269 Welsh Language items were issued to the public which equates to 1.4% of all items issued by the library. This low number of Welsh Language loans reflects the downturn in loans that was experienced due to the pandemic. Data for 2021/22 (April – December) shows that 6,967 Welsh language items were issued to the public which equates to 2.7% of all items loaned. Of the 62 posts in the library service, 4 identify as beginners, 7 as intermediate and 8 as fluent Welsh Speakers.</p>

## **Stage 2 – Impact Assessment**

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals.

Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

**Previous Welsh Language Impact Assessments can be found on Inform by [clicking here](#).**

### **Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?**

	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?</b>	<b>Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.</b>	<b>What evidence do you have to support this view?</b>	<b>What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<p><b>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</b></p> <p>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</p> <p>The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	Neutral	The proposal refers to the adoption of the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation with an extended 'At Home' service. Each service provides opportunities for members of the public to engage with library	The adoption of the changes to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation with an enhanced 'At Home' service does not reduce the level of interaction between library staff and customers.	The nature of the 'At Home' service, where items are delivered directly to a customer's home, does mean that customers can be assigned to a specific 'At Home' staff member. The appointment of a Welsh speaking staff member would allow customers to use Welsh whilst being visited.



		staff. Opportunities for Welsh speakers to use Welsh are limited by the number of Welsh speaking staff within the service, although Welsh speaking members of staff are available for members.	Opportunities to use Welsh remain at the same level as previously and is determined by the number of Welsh speaking staff. All written communication with 'At Home' customers is bilingual and telephone contacts are offered the opportunity to speak with a Welsh speaking member of staff.	
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## **Stage 2 – Impact Assessment**

**Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?**

	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?</b>	<b>Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.</b>	<b>What evidence do you have to support this view?</b>	<b>What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<p><b>Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers</b> e.g Welsh Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's <a href="#">Cymraeg 2050 Strategy</a> / <a href="#">RCTCBC Five Year Welsh Language Strategy</a></p>	Positive	The changes made to remote access to library services that were implemented during the Covid pandemic and consulted upon in the recent public consultation allow customers to access Welsh Language books including Welsh language titles for beginners and study guides. This proposal recommends the addition of a digital element to	Currently Welsh Language books including Welsh language titles for beginners and study guides. are available as e-audiobooks/e-books via our online service Borrowbox. Welsh Language collections are always displayed prominently on the front pages of both e-audiobooks and e-books to enable Welsh Language titles to be quickly found and borrowed.	The proposal recognises that the expansion of the 'At Home' service will require additional funding for book stock (both hardcopy and digital) and recommends that 50% of the current mobile stock book budget is retained. At least 4% of this additional funding will be

		<p>the 'At Home' service via the introduction of an e-reader/tablet loan scheme. This will allow customers who previously had been unable to access online Welsh language content due to a lack of equipment to make use of these resources.</p>	<p>The Borrowbox platform has a number of language options for its interface including Welsh. There are however a number of places where Welsh is not available .</p>	<p>used to purchase Welsh Language stock both hardcopy and digital. 'At Home' customers will also be able to borrow Welsh language items from the wider library collection where we will continue to expend 4% of the total book budget on Welsh Language materials as outlined in the WPLS.</p> <p>The current level of Welsh Language provision available on Borrowbox has been developed following discussions with the Society of Chief Librarians who will continue to actively canvas for a fully Welsh Language interface. It has to be recognised however that these services are provided by external companies who may not always comply with our requests.</p>
<p><b>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</b></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The proposed enhancement of the 'At Home' service in no way</p>	<p>Staff that have been supported to learn Welsh have proven to be</p>	<p>Consideration needs to be given to the addition</p>

<p>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community</p> <p>Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time</p>		<p>reduces the opportunities for interaction between staff and customers. We actively support staff who wish to become Welsh learners and to review vacancies as they arise to assess whether they should become Welsh essential.</p>	<p>keen to us the Welsh Language with one staff member setting up a bilingual children's story time sessions in one of our libraries. All staff have been willing to take part in Welsh promotional activities such as Shwmae Day. Currently the Library Service does not have enough Welsh speaking staff to cover all service staff and there are currently no Welsh speaking staff in the 'At Home' service. The proposal requires the employment of an additional 'At Home' staff member and this provides us with an opportunity to appoint a Welsh speaking staff member.</p>	<p>of a Welsh speaker to the 'At Home' team. Irrespective of whether this is done or not we will continue to promote a Welsh language service to customers.</p>
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<p><b>Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language</b></p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>The library service ensures that it complies with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards and Welsh Language Promotional Strategy in all of its service areas including the 'At Home' service</p>	<p>All communication between customers and staff is bilingual whether that be answering the phone bilingually, replying to Welsh Language emails in the Welsh Language or providing bilingual publicity materials for the service.</p> <p>Our 'At Home' webpage is available in both Welsh and English and similarly our online catalogue is also available in both languages.</p> <p>Although the service currently has no Welsh speaking members of staff plans have been put in place for a Welsh Speaking member of the Mobile Library Service to visit customers should they request the service via the Welsh language.</p>	<p>On looking at the service we can see that everything is in place to provide a Welsh Language service, but improvements could be made in promoting this fact.</p> <p>The following steps would help improve awareness of the availability of a Welsh Language service.</p> <p>More clearly promote Welsh Language service availability during the registration process.</p> <p>More clearly advertise the availability of a Welsh Language service on our webpage.</p> <p>Produce publicity materials promoting both Welsh language Stock and the Welsh Language service.</p> <p>Finally, the addition of a Welsh speaker to the</p>
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staffing structure would greatly improve our ability to provide a Welsh Language service.

**Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal**

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

<b>What are you going to do?</b>	<b>When are you going to do it?</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>
Ensure that any promotional material for the expanded 'At Home' service proactively offers a Welsh service and ensure that any customers who express a preference for the service to be delivered via the Welsh language are assigned a Welsh speaker for visits.	Ongoing	Libraries SMT
Once the proposal has been approved, it will be discussed with the Library Services Management Team to ensure that the implementation of the expanded 'At Home' service considers the Welsh language as a key consideration at all levels of the service.	April 2023 – July 2023	Principal Librarian
Promote Welsh language lessons to staff and review vacancies to determine whether Welsh essential employment is appropriate.	Ongoing	Libraries SMT
Ensure that at least 4% of any additional book budget funding is used to purchase Welsh language stock (both Hardcopy and Digital).	Ongoing	Libraries SMT

If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.

<b>What was identified?</b>	<b>Why is it not possible?</b>

## Stage 4 – Review

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not, you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services – [welshlanguageofficer@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:welshlanguageofficer@rctcbc.gov.uk) and the Consultation and Engagement team – [consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk) in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

As part of the Welsh Language, Equalities and Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment Process all proposals that fall within the definition of Significant Key Decision should present at the Officer Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your report is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Strategic Decision please forward your completed (Stage 1>6) impact assessment, policy proposal/report and consultation report to [CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk) for an Officer Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. [See our guidance document](#) for more information on what a Significant Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below in collaboration with the relevant departments.

Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback
<p>Welsh Language Services is heartened to hear of the potential this service development has to increase the use of Welsh language library services in RCT, particularly with regards to the increased availability of Welsh ebooks.</p> <p>In order to ensure any positive effects on the Welsh Language are maximised where possible, we would ask that you consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Staffing – does the service have enough Welsh-speaking staff to ensure a seamless Welsh language provision is available in all capacities (in library and via the at home service)</li><li>- Online interfaces – these should be fully available in Welsh, and there are some instances where Welsh is not available on Borrowbox</li></ul>		



- Proactive offer – as per the Welsh Language Standards, there needs to be a proactive offer of Welsh-medium service, rather than waiting for the customer to request this.		
<b>Officer Review Panel Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations</b>
<b>Consultation Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consultation</b>

**Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing**

How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

The Head of Arts, Culture and Libraries will oversee the transition from one service model to the next and once implemented the proposal will be monitored and evaluated by the Senior Management Team of the Library Service.

## **Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal**

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment, to include some of the main positive and negative impacts along with an overview of actions taken since the impact assessment to better contribute to more positive impacts. This summary must be included in the Welsh Language Considerations section of the SLT/Cabinet report template. It is not suitable to only write 'please see full report at Appendix x' in the body of the report. The impact assessment must be published alongside the report.

*A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are as follows -*

- The implementation of this proposal will mainly have a neutral impact upon the Welsh Language with the extended 'At Home' service providing the same level of Welsh Language provision as the previous remote services model.
- The proposal will have a positive effect upon the availability of digital Welsh language provision, and Library Services will promote these elements to increase the number of customers gaining access to e-Welsh content than under the previous model.

## **Stage 7 – Sign Off**

<b>Name of Officer completing the WLIA</b>	Nick Kelland	<b>Service Director Name:</b>	Louise Davies
<b>Position</b>	Principal Librarian	<b>I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)</b>	<b>Is implemented with no amendments</b>
			<b>Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined</b>

				<b>Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language</b>
<b>Signature</b>		<b>Service Director Signature</b>		
<b>Date</b>		<b>Date</b>		