

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

Please read EIA guidelines when completing this form

1. Name of Service Area/Directorate

Name of Head of Service for area being assessed:Jon Chedgzoy
Directorate:Community Wellbeing
Individual(s) completing this assessment:Jon Chedgzoy
Date assessment completed:27th June 2023 – Reviewed 29th June 2023

2. What is being assessed

Activity being assessed (eg. policy, procedure, document, service redesign, strategy etc.)

An assessment is being made of the suitability of the Undercroft and Assembly Hall at Shire Hall being the location for a new Hereford Library. A decision has been made by the Council's administration to pause the development of a section of Maylord Orchard to house the new library while a review of possible alternative locations is undertaken. Shire Hall is one of the locations under consideration and this EIA has been completed to support the review process.

What is the aim, purpose and/or intended outcomes of this activity?

To assess the impact of the development of a potential new library at Hereford Shire Hall as it relates to the Equality Act 2010 and to understand any actions that might be required to ensure compliance with that Act. The move of the library is required to allow a redevelopment of the current site to provide an improved Museum and Art Gallery.

Name of lead for activity

Jon Chedgzoy

Who will be affected by the development and implementation of this activity?

- Service users
- Patients
- Carers
- Visitors
- Staff
- Communities
- Other:

Is this:

- Review of an existing activity/policy
- New activity/policy
- Planning to withdraw or reduce a service, activity or presence?

What information and evidence have you reviewed to help inform this assessment? (name your sources, eg. demographic information for services/staff groups affected, complaints etc.)

The initial assessment has been undertaken as a result of a number of visits to the site by the Libraries & Archives Manager and Interim Library Lead. Those visits have been supported at site by the Custodians with responsibility for the building and the Strategic Assets Delivery Director. Support and advice has also been received from Herefordshire Council's Equality Officer.

A review of transport options has shown that public transport connections to the site are as good as, if not better, than to the current library site in Broad Street. A number of bus routes such as the 405 from Ledbury, 420 from Bromyard, 426 from Leominster, 436 from Breinton and 478 from Much Marcle make use of the bus stops directly outside Shire Hall. Many other routes stop nearby at the Old Market and at Maylord Orchard. The pedestrian route from Hereford train station to the Shire Hall is approximately 0.5 miles. This is around 0.3 miles shorter than the same journey to the existing library in Broad Street.

Pay and display car parking is available just around the corner from the Shire Hall in Gaol Street. The car park there has 130 places including 4 for blue badge holders. The pay and display car park at the Shire Hall itself is available to the public on weekends and has 61 places including 2 for blue badge holders.

Summary of engagement or consultation undertaken (eg. who and how have you engaged with, or why do you believe this is not required)

This EIA identifies issues associated with the potential use of areas of the Shire Hall as a public library. Consultation has been undertaken with the Equality Officer of Herefordshire Council. Should the Shire Hall be identified as a possible location following the Cabinet's review of options then a further consultation will take place with potential partners, appropriate groups and the public. The Equality Officer has recommended that if feasible a Changing Places facility be included in any wider redesign of the building.

Consultation has also taken place at this stage with Herefordshire Cultural Partnership and is planned to take place with Joint Action For Herefordshire Libraries and the Ward Member for Central.

Summary of relevant findings

The undercroft area has access from external areas compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. There is appropriate lift access connecting the undercroft area with the other levels of the building including the Assembly Hall which would be components of the library service offer. There is currently no level access to the main entrance of the Shire Hall and solutions for this would need to be assessed as part of any design works to bring the building back into use.

A library service being delivered from the undercroft and Assembly Hall at Shirehall would meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Consideration would need to be given to the wider building development to assess any additional requirements for improved access for wheelchairs and pushchairs to the front of the building and to ensure access to toilet facilities.

3. The impact of this activity

Please consider the potential impact of this activity (during development and implementation) on each of the equality groups outlined below. **Please tick one or more impact box below for each Equality Group and explain your rationale.** Please note it is possible for the potential impact to be both positive and negative within the same equality group and this should be recorded. Remember to consider the impact on staff, public, patients, carers, partner organisations, etc. in these equality groups.

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
Age		√		There would be no impact on this equality group
Disability	√		√	<p>Service users with a disability who are unable to use steps would be unable to access the main entrance of the Shire Hall building. Access could be provided via the Undercroft.</p> <p>Inside the building all levels containing elements of the library service would then be accessible by lift</p> <p>This potential impact could be mitigated by improved access at the main entrance of the building for wheelchairs etc.</p> <p>There could also be a potential positive impact if access to toilet facilities for people with a disability are improved as part of the wider redevelopment of the building</p>
Gender Reassignment		√		There would be no impact on this equality group
Marriage & Civil Partnerships		√		There would be no impact on this equality group
Pregnancy & Maternity			√	<p>Service users who are pregnant may not be able to use the steps to access the main entrance of the Shire Hall building. Access could be provided via the Undercroft.</p> <p>This impact could be mitigated by improved access at the main entrance to the building for pushchairs, prams etc.</p>
Race (including Travelling Communities and people of other nationalities)		√		There would be no impact on this equality group
Religion & Belief		√		There would be no impact on this equality group
Sex (including issues of safety and sexual violence)		√		There would be no impact on this equality group
Sexual Orientation		√		There would be no impact on this equality group
Other Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Groups (eg. carers, care leavers, homeless, social/ economic deprivation, etc)		√		There would be no impact on this equality group

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
Health Inequalities (any preventable, unfair & unjust differences in health status between groups, populations or individuals that arise from the unequal distribution of social, environmental & economic conditions within societies)	√			It is intended that a library at the Shire Hall would work with partners to offer a wider range of health & wellbeing support and guidance than is provided from the current library. Consultation with potential partners has already taken place regarding opportunities for future joint working with the library service

What actions will you take to mitigate any potential negative impacts?

Potential negative impact	Actions required to reduce/eliminate negative impact	Who will lead on action?	Timeframe
Main entrance can only be accessed by those able to use stairs/steps, impacting those with a disability and those attending with pushchairs and prams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure appropriate means of access via a platform lift and/or a ramp. Discussions to be in conjunction with the relevant officers and user groups to ensure compliance with listed building status Negative impact can be reduced by facilitating the existing level access to the Undercroft then utilising the internal lift to provide access to all areas of the building 	Libraries & Archives Manager in conjunction with appropriate officers in Property Services	Decision not yet taken on whether development of Shire Hall will proceed. Cabinet to meet on 20 th July to discuss and decide next steps

Where an impact on any of the Equality Groups is realised after the implementation of the project/service/policy, the commissioners and/or providers of the project/service/policy will seek to minimise the impact and carry out a full review of this EIA.

4. Monitoring and review

How will you monitor these actions?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a decision is taken to proceed with the development of Shire Hall as a location for a library then regular reviews of the EIA will be incorporated into the Project Plan Regular site visits to ensure that issues raised are being addressed during the project implementation Comments received to be fed back and taken into consideration in regular reviews of the EIA
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When will you review this EIA? (eg in a service redesign, this EIA should be revisited regularly throughout the design & implementation)

The EIA will be reviewed on a monthly basis as a minimum and will take into account ongoing building management issues as well as the programme for the redevelopment of the building. The EIA will also be specifically reviewed if there is a change in guidance and/or recommendations by either Herefordshire Council's Health & Safety Officers or by Herefordshire & Worcestershire Fire & Rescue Service.

5. Equality Statement

- All public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to set out arrangements to assess and consult on how their policies and functions impact on the 9 protected characteristics.
- Herefordshire Council will challenge discrimination, promote equality, respect human rights, and design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, and population, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.
- All staff are expected to deliver services and provide services and care in a manner which respects the individuality of service users, patients, carers etc, and as such treat them and members of the workforce respectfully, paying due regard to the 9 protected characteristics.

Signature of person completing EIA

J.Chedgzoy

Date signed

29.6.23