Bristol City Council
Library Strategy
2020 - 2024

www.bristol.gov.uk/libraries

Contents

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Executive Summary

I am delighted to introduce Bristol's first Library Strategy in well over a decade, at a time of positive change, arising from a very thorough and informative conversation with residents and city partners.

I take my role as Cabinet Member with responsibility for library services incredibly seriously. I have visited every library in Bristol and participated in the recent library conversations held across the city in order to better understand the challenges each of our libraries face. What was very apparent was that the library service needs to be more ambitious in order to better meet the needs of its users. I am grateful to all the individuals, families and organisations that took time to attend the library conversations and to every single person who expressed their views.

We have listened to your comments and suggestions, and this strategy reflects what we have heard.

Libraries play a unique role in our society, providing us with learning, resources, safe community spaces and digital access. They are about more than books or computers - they are spaces for people to meet, learn and exchange ideas. We have heard and seen the passion of communities that want to keep their local library, and this strategy reflects the approach we plan to take over the next four years.

In parts of the city the use of libraries in Bristol has been declining, whilst customers' expectations have continued to evolve as more people read, learn, shop and seek entertainment online.

We will continue to work with our communities, employees and volunteers to ensure that we create a modern library service that is fit for the 21st century, whilst also continuing to explore the opportunities that innovative technology affords and being open to new and creative ideas.

I am incredibly proud of Bristol's Library Service and that includes our employees and volunteers who help to deliver it.

By 2024

- We will have a library service that is shaped by local communities and delivered in partnership with Bristol's residents. It will be a joint endeavour to put library buildings at the heart of communities, so that they become much more than a library.

- We will have out of hours access to library buildings for communities, so that the space can be used easily, and there will be a wealth of activity happening outside staffed hours. Libraries will be the heart of our local communities with local people making use of the space and working in collaboration with the council.

- There will be new public computers and new self-service kiosks in libraries. There will be wifi printing in every site, for quick and simple printing needs.

- We will be taking the opportunity to plan new library spaces in developments around the city. Provision of libraries will be integrated in the building process.

- We will have run innovation and learning projects, reviewed and shared the learning and evaluated community-led projects (including those being funded via our new Libraries Innovation Fund). This will help us continue to design and develop the library service in partnership with the community into the future.

I am excited that we are continuing to develop a library service that will continue to play a role in the lives of people across our communities – people of all ages, backgrounds and cultures. I therefore commend this strategy to you, the people of Bristol.

Cllr Asher Craig

Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities & Public Health

Introduction

"A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life-raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination. On a cold rainy island, they are the only sheltered public spaces where you are not a consumer, but a citizen instead" **Caitlin Moran columnist and author ('Moranthology', 2012).**

The Library Strategy sets out the direction of travel over the next four years for Bristol Libraries, ensuring that the service is sustainable and relevant to the residents of Bristol. The landscape for libraries has changed dramatically in the last ten years, within the context of funding and resources in Bristol City Council. The service requires a more adaptable approach to meet the changing needs of the city and its residents, and can only do this with community engagement.

Libraries are recognised nationally as providing a significant role to communities in delivering a broad range of outcomes, including increasing wellbeing, literacy targets and community cohesion. In addition, their role as a service located within communities provides a rich selection of resources and materials locally and can offer a venue that facilitates a social space, events and shared working in creative and innovative ways. Libraries are uniquely situated, as a trusted and valued service, to work with local communities in responding to changing needs and neighbourhood priorities.

The Library Service is currently delivered from 27 different sites; in future years we must continue to offer the best citywide geographical coverage for residents within the resources we have. We want to work with the community to respond to local interest and need so that the service is more reflective of the population it serves. This would involve making better and more varied use of our library buildings and extending the use of the Library Service. Currently libraries are run wholly by the council and offer a similar service in all 26 branch locations with a more extensive service in the Central Library.

Bristol is a vibrant, creative city and its residents have many ideas about how best to use their local community asset – we need to capitalise on this wave of enthusiasm and explore the boundaries of what is currently available. Some examples of this activity are: extra story times and engagement with families; more events and activities; different uses for the buildings on closed days, all while still providing the library service that our residents feel so strongly about. We will take opportunities, as they arise, to refurbish, change locations, co-locate and share services working with partners, where there are benefits in doing so.

The pace of change is increasing and with it our residents' expectations. While we cannot speculate on the number of libraries in the future, we can guarantee a quality, citywide service that is responsive, modern, relevant and sustainable in a changing world where its value to residents is acknowledged; where the service is the best it can be for all of Bristol.

Kate Murray

Head of Libraries, Bristol City Council

Purpose of the Library Service

Our purpose is to work with partners and communities to build an inclusive city through access to knowledge, information and public spaces. The service exists to:

- Provide access for all to quality resources; knowledgeable and people-focused staff and volunteers; and a welcoming library space

- Maximise value from library and community assets and resources

- Maintain a sustainable financial position

The Vision for Bristol's Libraries

A responsive, relevant and sustainable network of libraries working with communities and partners for the good of local communities and the city as a whole.

Bristol's libraries will be:

- Vibrant and modern

- Meeting the needs of local communities

- Accessible to all

The Bristol City Council Corporate Strategy sets out clear expectations of what the library service must achieve:

Bristol's libraries empower and care

- Libraries contribute to the empowerment of individuals, local communities and city partners

Bristol's libraries are fair and inclusive

- Libraries contribute to economic inclusion, social mobility and democracy through the provision of services, learning opportunities and the development of skills, and public space for gatherings

Bristol's libraries help connect people in communities

- Libraries help connect people to people and to opportunity, locally, citywide, nationally and internationally

Bristol's libraries support and enable wellbeing

- Libraries promote mental and physical wellbeing by connecting people with knowledge, opportunities, services and with each other

These themes sit alongside the One City Plan which aspires to a city for the future, sharing aims of transformation of physical and social possibility. Bristol Libraries supports this by being a key partner positioned in its communities.

Legal Requirements of the Library Service

Bristol City Council has a legal duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all those who "live, work or study" in the city. (Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 (PLMA))

In formulating the library strategy the Council must also comply with the public sector equality duty (section 149 of the Equality Act). This requires the council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it; the relevant protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership.

Basis for this Strategy

This strategy has built upon the discussions with the community, Friends Groups, staff, councillors and input from the council's Communities Scrutiny Commission. The strategy has also been informed by the work done nationally by Libraries Connected (particularly the Universal Library Offers) and partner organisations such as The Reading Agency and the Carnegie Trust. The Library Service will work collaboratively with the community to ensure that libraries are sustainable and relevant for the future. While this is an overarching strategy for Bristol's libraries, it is expected that local libraries may develop in different ways to reflect the priorities of local communities.

This strategy takes into account what we know about:

- The way the city is changing

- Needs and ideas identified in previous consultations and engagement with communities, staff, service users and equalities groups

- Measures about our current service provision and use

- Costs to deliver library services

See Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for more details.

The main factors the strategy responds to are:

→ Bristol's Library Service is a universal provision to all residents

→ There are at least 45 religions and 187 countries of birth represented, and at least 91 main languages spoken in Bristol

→ Reading and learning play a key part in reducing inequalities. Deprivation statistics produce a picture of polarity between the most affluent and most deprived neighbourhoods in Bristol. The impact of this is seen across educational attainment, employment opportunity and health outcomes

→ Citizens value their local libraries and the library service

→ Library buildings connect communities and are often the only council asset in local neighbourhoods

→ The public want greater access to use library buildings – with or without staff – and to see improvements in the provision of toilets and refreshments

→ Libraries are needed for a variety of reasons e.g. access to free computers; free, friendly space; professionalism of council library staff; local access to books; access to help and support; access to interesting activities and events

→ Residents want to see improvement to the IT provided in libraries. In addition, use of the public computers is decreasing as more people bring their own electronic devices to the library and require wifi and charging facilities

→ Citizens feel that more could be done with volunteers to support the service

→ The extent of the existing service offer is not widely understood by the public and greater promotion of services is needed in a variety of ways appropriate for multiple audiences
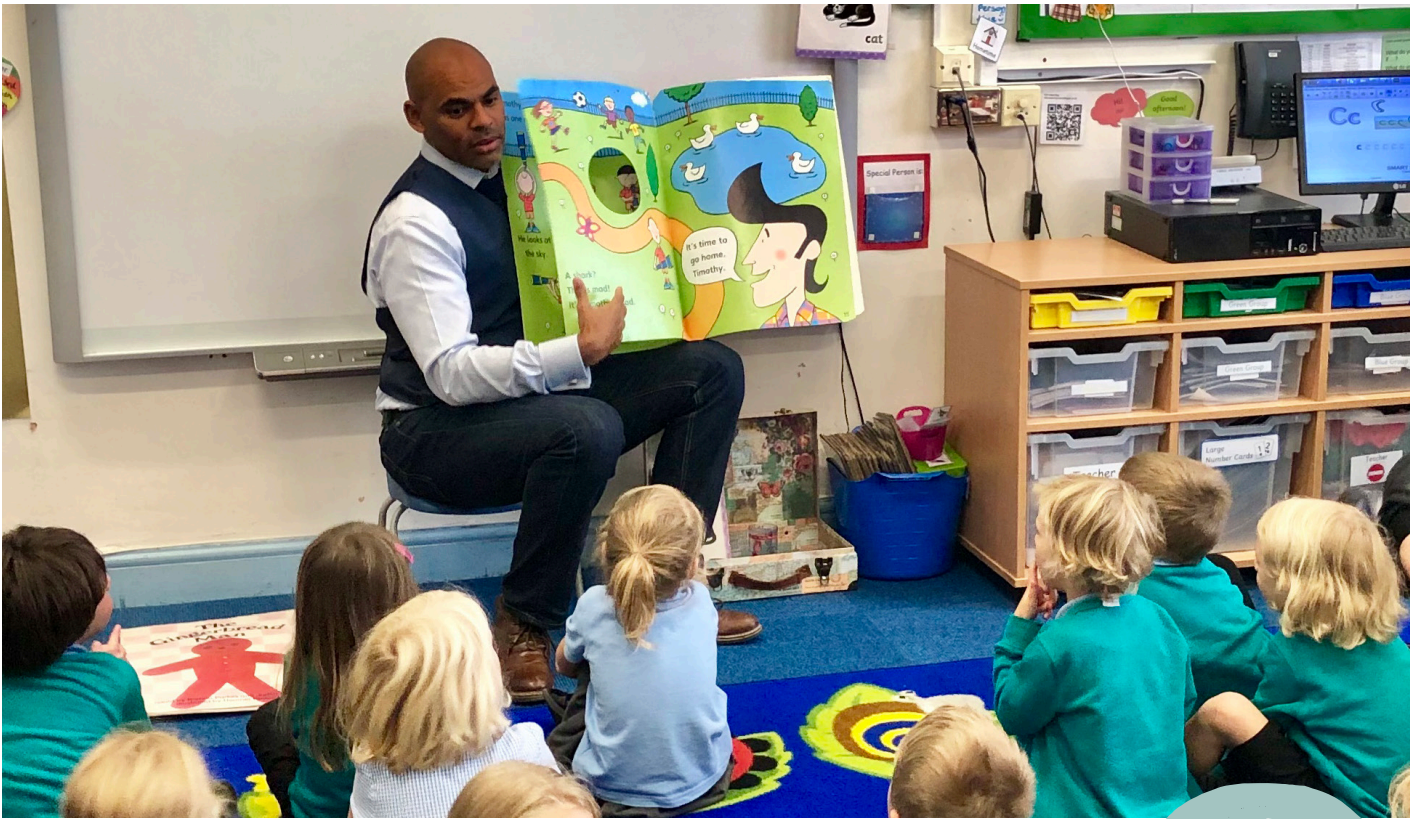
Existing Library Service Provision

Retaining what is working and valued by existing library customers is vital. But we also need to attract new residents and visitors to libraries with better promotion of existing and new services.

The existing service offer in Bristol libraries includes:

- Provision of hard-copy books and information, for reading for pleasure, study and reference purposes

- eResources, including ebooks and eAudio

- Digital access: public computers, free wifi, printing, self-service kiosks

- The Home Library Service, delivered in partnership with the Royal Voluntary Service

- Reader engagement activities, including projects like the Summer Reading Challenge and events like lunchtime lectures

- Activities led by the library staff e.g. baby bounce, storytime and local history displays

- Free community space and some rooms for hire (depending on the building)

- Support to Library Friends Groups across the city

For more information on libraries, opening hours and services please visit: www.bristol.gov.uk/libraries

Delivery of the Strategy

Delivery of the Library Strategy will be incorporated into the annual Library Service Plan, and any other associated service plans (for example Property Services). The Library Service Plan runs from April to March each year and the associated annual revenue budget for the Library Service is signed off by Bristol City Council's Full Council of elected members, as part of council annual budget setting each February.

The main activities associated with each strategic theme (see page 6) are as follows:

Theme 1: Bristol's libraries empower and care

Libraries contribute to the empowerment of individuals, local communities and city partners

Bristol Libraries will continue the work started in early 2019 to engage, discuss and debate new ideas and community involvement that will inform changes in our services.

Libraries will:

- Develop as hubs for community development, organisation and empowerment

- Support further volunteering opportunities

- Develop Friends Groups – one for each library – to take forward library and community ideas

Our measures of success will be:

➜ An increase in the number of volunteers in the service

➜ The establishment of a constituted Friends Group in each library

➜ Delivering projects and activities developed from the innovation funding by December 2020

➜ Developing case studies of community participation and local empowerment to share good practice to promote and inspire others

We want the local community to be a partner, informing us how the service can fulfil any local gaps or needs. Equally, we want to involve our communities in shaping the local offer from each library so that it reflects interest and need. This will mean much more collaborative working with local residents and communities. We aim to rebuild confidence and trust in the service by responding to the ideas and suggestions put forward via community engagement. The library service can respond by initiating pilot projects for bigger ideas that can test whether these could make the service more sustainable in the future.

Theme 2: Bristol's libraries are fair and inclusive

Libraries contribute to economic inclusion, social mobility and democracy through the provision of services, learning opportunities and the development of skills, and public space for gatherings

Libraries will:

- Promote the love of reading and ensure that all residents have free and equal access to books, ebooks and other reading resources

- Partner with businesses and communities to promote existing provision and increase learning opportunities

- Support and enable community, cultural and business use of libraries

- Promote the library as an accessible public space for meetings and services

Our measures of success will be:

→ Increased hours of activity in libraries outside staffed opening hours

→ Increased reader development and engagement, including attendance at events, participants in the Summer Reading Challenge, case studies and evaluation of use of the library as a cultural venue

→ An increase in business partnerships with libraries

→ An increase in learning opportunities in libraries

→ A number of trial activities which explore outcomes and benefits of working with external partners such as health, employer support and debt advice within libraries in specific locations

→ An increase in satisfaction with libraries in Bristol City Council's Quality of Life survey

→ An increase in specific groups currently underrepresented in use of the library service

Bristol Libraries will provide and promote quality library materials and support ways into reading and learning with partners and volunteers and community organisations. Books and the love of reading is part of our core offer and we will work with the Reading City initiative in the One City Plan to promote reading in Bristol.

Theme 3: Bristol's libraries help connect people in communities

Libraries help connect people to people and to opportunity, locally, citywide, nationally and internationally

Libraries will:

- Work with city partners to reduce levels of digital exclusion and disadvantage

- Improve accessibility and strengthen community resources and assets by extending the availability of the building outside staffed hours

- Become a hub for quality service offers: self-service kiosks, public computers, wifi printing, digital resources

Our measures of success will be:

➜ Upgraded public-use computers

➜ An increase in the number of hours of IT volunteering to support residents to access digital services

➜ An increase in the number of people using library wifi

➜ Wifi printing available to users in all libraries

➜ Upgraded self-service kiosks

➜ An increase in the number of users accessing digital resources (including ebooks and eAudio)

➜ Increased satisfaction with library IT provision via a customer survey

➜ An increase in activity in libraries outside staffed opening hours

Digital inclusion and access is vital for people who need to access information online, but don't have the skills or resources to do so.

It is recognised that libraries play an increasingly important role in connecting people, being local knowledge hubs and providing places for people to get together. By sharing space and looking for new partnerships with organisations including business start-up hubs, we can explore ways to generate additional income and grow the role of libraries and make better use of these valuable assets.

We will work internally with Housing and Property colleagues to ensure that strategic decisions about developments in communities or concerning library buildings involve the service at every point. We recognise that some of our buildings are in urgent need of upgrading and may not be in the right location or meet the needs of the community. We are committed to taking opportunities through developments to modernise and adapt our library buildings to offer more than a standalone library service and co-locate or offer joint services.

Theme 4: Bristol's libraries support and enable wellbeing;

Libraries promote mental and physical wellbeing by connecting people with knowledge, opportunities, services and with each other

Libraries will:

- Build relationships with partners to help deliver health and wellbeing initiatives to individuals and communities

- Focus funding bids on engagement and pilot culture-led opportunities in areas of greatest need

- Improve library environments

- Improve and promote a wide cultural programme and social inclusion

Our measures of success will be:

➡ An increase in the number of wellbeing partnerships and initiatives run in libraries

➡ An increase in the number of successful funding bids applied for by the library service and the number of successful funding bids applied for by the community in partnership with the library service

➡ Case studies and evaluation of the pilots for the community-led redesign of the library environment

➡ An improvement in our evaluation and tracking of the number and variety of cultural activities taking place in libraries and their attendance

Bristol Libraries offer free, welcoming spaces to everyone. Many of our services offer early intervention and promote wellbeing.

Appendix 1

Data sources and previous consultations and engagement

Quality of Life Survey

Bristol's Quality of Life survey gives local residents an opportunity to voice their opinions about issues close to their hearts and their views on local public services. It has been an annual survey since 2001, but does change over time. The statistics are analysed to a ward level and also equality groups such as age, sex and ethnicity.

The results are used by the council, health service and other public sector partners to help plan local services, track change and improve the quality of life in Bristol. The survey is the council's main tool for providing neighbourhood level statistics and public perception information

www.bristol.gov.uk/statistics-census-information/the-quality-of-life-in-bristol

2017 Your Neighbourhood consultation

The 2017 consultation was primarily focused on finding the savings target of £1.4m by proposing to reduce the number of libraries from 27 to 10.

There were 3,749 responses to the Your Neighbourhood survey. 93% of these filled in the section about libraries. Of the 3,473 (93%) people who responded to the library questions in the consultation, 2,132 people (61%) selected a preferred option of the three libraries options proposed which were to run a reduced number of libraries spread geographically around the city; the Central Library remaining as the core offer for the city centre, city and wider use in the region and nationally; then two types of branch libraries: 'Area' libraries and 'Local' libraries. 286 (13% of those who selected an option) of these

also expressed a dislike of all three options in the free text response.

A further 1,341 respondents (39% of 3,473 library respondents) provided free text comments - mostly expressing concern and/or alternative suggestions for running the future library service - but did not select a preferred option in question 1. 816 (almost two-thirds of the 1,341) explicitly stated that they did not support any of the three options.

There were 2,679 free text responses (77%) comprising of 250,000 words with an additional 17,870 words on libraries in 'Next Steps' section. The major themes of the free text were about impact (to the older people, children, families and disadvantaged) and alternative suggestions.

Findings were:

- Citizens clearly value their local libraries and the library service.

- Respondents wished to see more than 10 sites or access points to libraries.

- Citizens felt that a core, council-staffed service of 10 libraries was not sufficient coverage in Bristol neighbourhoods and communities.

- Citizens felt that more could be done with volunteers to support a local service.

- Citizens expressed a wish for status quo or retention of a particular local library.

- That the service was needed in their area for a variety of reasons e.g. access to free computers; free friendly space; professionalism of council library staff; local access to books without the costs and inconvenience of travel.

Community conversation in 2019

Between January and April 2019 we heard from over 300 people (some who used libraries and some who were new to libraries) in 12 public meetings that there was a wealth of interest, energy and excitement about a period of positive community involvement. We received over 1,200 ideas and suggestions which far exceeded our initial hopes. The Friends Groups grew in number from 10 to 17 and we began a series of local meetings to prioritise the ideas that could be community led.

www.bristol.gov.uk/tell-us-your-idea-for-the-library-service

"It's only a library when the door is open. When the door is shut, it's just a closed building"

Comment by a resident at a community engagement session in January 2019

We have learned that the communities feel strongly about their local library and have a wealth of ideas about the service. The general themes were:

➔ Promotion of services in a variety of ways, appropriate for multiple audiences

➔ IT – improvements to the public computers and new services

➔ Building changes - toilets and refreshments

➔ Access to the building - with or without staff
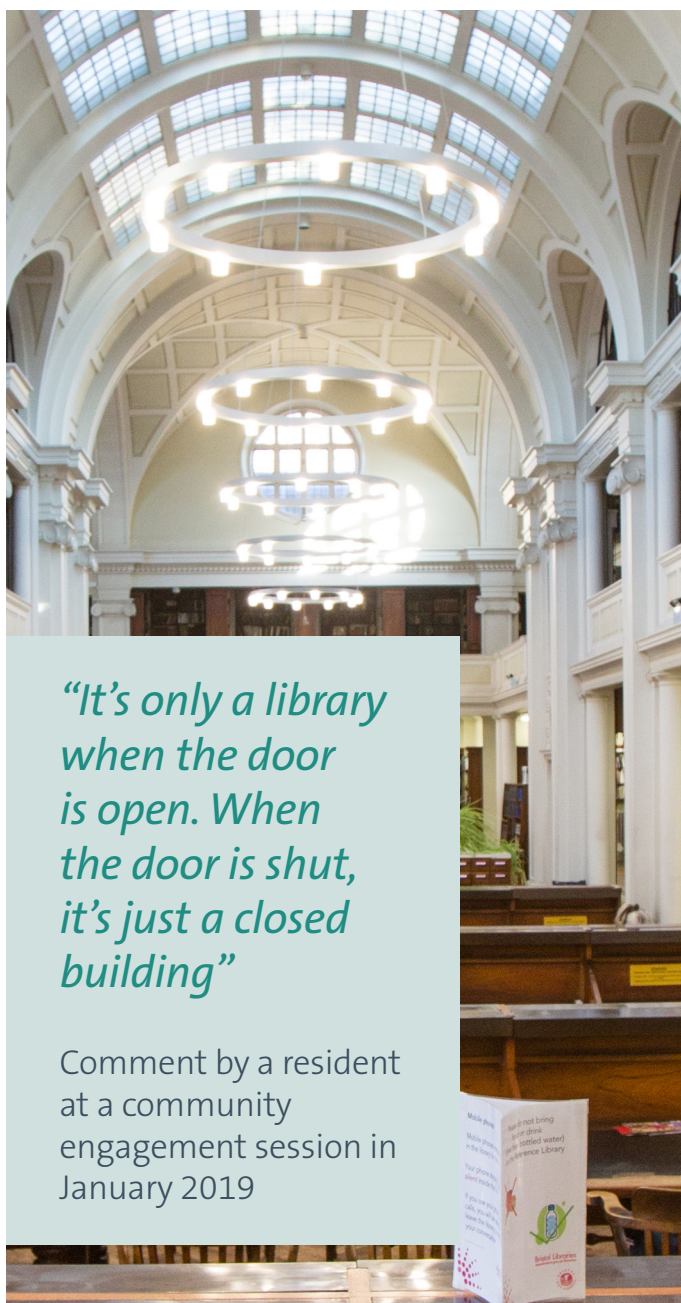
➔ More activities and events

Research by Rising Arts and Real Ideas Organisation (RIO) 2019

During 2019, we learned from focus groups in secondary schools and sixth forms and also from sessions held by Rising Arts with young people 16-24 year olds. The findings from the projects produced some cross-cutting issues the strategy will address for young people and how they access the library service:

- Ensure that communication and messaging with young people about the library service is targeted and accessible. The use of social media networks is key

- Involve and engage young people in partnership with developments in the library service

- Produce a space that reflects the needs of young people in their pursuit of learning and creativity

- Make libraries more accessible to support young people with study after school and in the evenings

The reports can be accessed here:

www.bristol.gov.uk/tell-us-your-idea-for-the-library-service

Impact assessment by Equalities Group, October 2019

Protected Characteristic	Potential impact / requirement	Mitigation / Justification
All groups (cross cutting)	• Lack of knowledge about Library Service	Communication strategy will provide a range of media and messaging to suit differing audiences and make the information about the libraries' services, events and activities accessible to all
	• The library is a safe place to visit	All staff will have adequate training that will be taken forward with future work with volunteers, friends groups and extended opening
		Training and DBS checks will be necessitated
		Visual statements of what behaviour is expected in the library will be displayed (as per Stonewall research evidence)
		Reporting mechanisms for discrimination will be in place and utilised
		Projects to engage groups will evaluate what users determine 'a safe place' (innovation funding, pilot projects)
	• Provision of toilet	Toilet provision depends on the specific building and is not in direct control of library service. Toilet changes will be considered as a pilot project in the first year of the strategy and learning taken forward in subsequent period
	• Tackling discrimination and non-tolerance	Use of posters/information visually displaying what is considered discrimination and what will not be tolerated
		Training of all staff (paid/unpaid/Friends group members)
		Robust reporting system
		Continued conversations and engagement with groups with protected characteristics in Bristol with BCC Equalities Advisor

Protected Characteristic	Potential impact / requirement	Mitigation / Justification
Age: Older People	• Easy access and proximity to the home • Continued access to book lending • A safe, physical space to spend time around other people and engage in the community, which is nonetheless not overly noisy • Access to information about events and neighbourhood news • Access to ICT facilities, and help to use them • Libraries on bus routes	The Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) contract to deliver books to homes spans the length of the strategy Regular timetabled activities ensure library users are able to consider times to visit. This will be covered within the communications and information to users that will be provided in suitable accessible formats This will be continued as is, with improved formats and promotion of events to target audiences actively. The communications will be tailored in a range of media These sessions are targeted and tailored across a variety of topics and at various levels of ability All libraries are on bus routes and the information on bus services will be made accessible and available on the website
Age: Young People	• Easy access via public transport or walking, including from universities, schools and colleges • Study / work space, preferably quiet • Modern, welcoming venues for meeting other people • Access to ICT facilities, particularly wifi and computers for study/ homework • Access to books for homework	All libraries are on bus routes and communicating travel information will be included and made more accessible and available on the website. Libraries currently are located in 27 sites across the city The findings from the two studies carried out with young people (RIO and Rising Arts) will inform the strategy with recommendations for extending opening hours for young people to do their homework after school and with direct communication that relates to young people – targeted and relevant (social media)

Protected Characteristic	Potential impact / requirement	Mitigation / Justification
Young People *(continued)*	• A place to go that gives independence • Access to a wide range of books to read	Proposal for a pilot project to run from April 2020 to August 2021 to develop ideas and engagement for working with young people responding to earlier consultation with this age group
Disability	• Good accessibility into and within buildings, and accessible facilities (e.g. signage, toilets) • Large print and audio books and assistive/ accessible ICT services • Easy parking / transport • A safe space to visit, to reduce social isolation and increase access to events	Accessibility into and within buildings is compliant with legislation. The Library Service will ensure detail of what is available and what alternative provision can be provided is better communicated Accessible IT has formed part of the conversation with the council's IT department with the upgrading of library IT equipment. The additional elements not included in this are being scoped and form part of the strategy Information will be clearly communicated on the website/information, including a link to the AccessAble website All volunteers are DBS checked and carry out training on safeguarding and IT safe security. There is a code of conduct for volunteers. An exclusion policy is in place and used within libraries. Further consultation will continue with disability groups to ensure an accurate understanding of need, in line with developments and offers in the library service. Conversations will continue with WECIL The strategy will continue to work on being inclusive as developments change in view of friends or volunteers taking on more responsibility in the future. The Strategy reflects the values of the library — and this will be produced in visible statements of inclusivity; i.e. what behaviour is not tolerated (Stonewall research) There will be clear processes for how to report incidents of discrimination

| Protected Characteristic	Potential impact / requirement	Mitigation / Justification
Disability *(continued)*	• Co-location with other services • Staff to help with advice and services • Near to home – not too far to travel	There are 27 libraries located across Bristol that are mapped to be accessible to people from local neighbourhoods, as well as being on bus routes and near other local amenities
Sex	Data from the Quality of Life (QoL) survey suggests more women than men use the library service.	Data taken from the QoL survey reflects 39% men and 52% women are library card holders. The library service provides a number of services to ensure equality of service provision including extended opening hours Improved collection of library user demographic data is included in the strategy Introduction of iPads within library buildings for users to input anonymous data regarding themselves and their visit will support this. Innovation funded projects have to include data of users in their evaluation as part of the funding criteria
Sexual Orientation	See above section *'All Groups'*	A centralised events diary will be used to assess what events are taking place - and to identify gaps and perhaps target what else could be added The library service's Reader Engagement Team are responsible for overseeing activities

Protected Characteristic	Potential impact / requirement	Mitigation / Justification
Pregnancy/ Maternity	Consistency of offer of accessible changing	Provision of welcoming service with groups and sessions aimed at pregnancy and new parents

'Breastfeeding welcome' signage and accessible changing facilities

Toilet facilities in some libraries: this will be clearly signposted on library information sites |
| Gender reassignment | See above section *'All Groups'* | Bristol City Council paid employees all receive training on awareness raising. Offer can be extended to unpaid staff within library service |
| Race | • Libraries that function as spaces to socialise with friends and colleagues

• Connections between libraries and other organisations / services within the community

• Modern, welcoming buildings

• Culturally relevant stock

• Books and courses for people with English as a second language

• Libraries are good for social cohesion | Bookstart packs are given to every child a year before they start school and include details of how to join the library in the first language spoken in the home

The innovation fund will engage with community-led groups around the city reflecting the neighbourhood it serves. The evaluation and showcasing of this will take place at the end of 2020

There are specific cultural and language-led groups delivering activities in the library such as Afro-Caribbean non-fiction reading group and Czech storytime. These are all captured on the events listing on the library webpage and communicated in libraries and across social media channels

Books and activities for people with English as a second language including story time in different languages |

Protected Characteristic	Potential impact / requirement	Mitigation / Justification
Religion or Belief	Impact of opening hours See above section *'All Groups'*	Clear communication and awareness raising where space for prayer and quiet rooms are available Consideration and consultation on any changes in opening hours that may impact religious practice will continue to be part of the library service
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Same sex parents of children Awareness of children with more than one family home See above section *'All Groups'*	Staff and volunteer training in awareness raising Having discretionary authority to e.g. issue more than one library card to children of separated parents Visible statements of inclusivity in library buildings and in library communications
Socio-economic Deprivation	Development of data system to capture deprivation and related measures across library areas and users Use of social economic data and library data to link with the One City plan and city wide strategies to tackle deprivation and low literacy levels	Increasing engagement of volunteers from areas of higher deprivation Current data reflects an imbalance in figures between those volunteering from areas of deprivation and elsewhere with engagement more difficult with residents in struggling estate neighbourhoods. The Innovation Fund will develop ideas within these localities to engage participants in activities. The library service has a dedicated volunteer coordinator to support community members to participate. Schemes to partner reading support and provision of free meals to school-age children and their families in deprived neighbourhood libraries will continue to be facilitated by the Reader Engagement Team in the summer holidays

Appendix 2
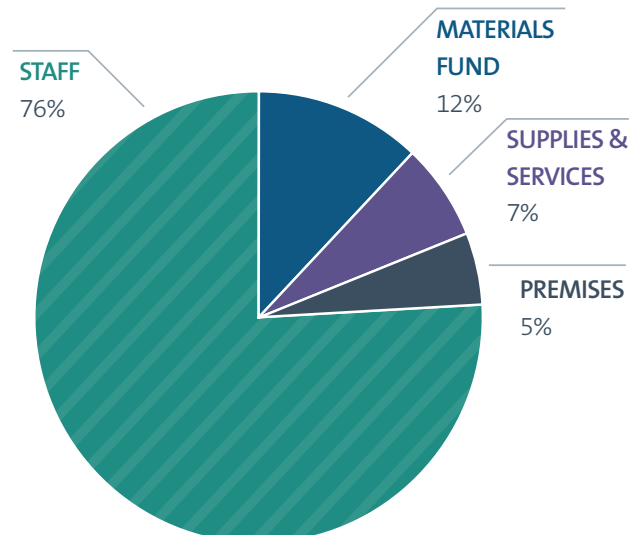
Overview of Bristol Library Service

Library buildings

There are 27 council-run libraries in the city. They are dispersed around the city across communities of prosperity and also in some of the highest recorded deprivation areas in the country.

The Library Service does not manage the library buildings; this is done by the Council's Property Service Department. The properties vary considerably with some built before 1900 and many from the 1930s and 1960s. There are nine libraries in leased spaces.

There is a specialist Reader Engagement Team that works with schools, children and communities that take the service out of the buildings and also support and develop events, activities and volunteering.

Library stock and online resources

LibrariesWest is a partnership of seven public library services in the south west of England. The seven services work together to share costs and offer enhanced services to customers. Key benefits are: access to over 2.5 million books and other materials from across all 7 authorities; the ability to use any of the libraries across LibrariesWest with one library card; borrowing and returning items to any library; and a wide range of electronic resources, including ebooks, eAudio, emagazines, online newspapers and online information resources.

Library Budget 2019/20

STAFF 76%
MATERIALS FUND 12%
SUPPLIES & SERVICES 7%
PREMISES 5%

The Library Service revenue budget is currently £4.6m (2019-2020) per year. The majority of the budget goes on staff costs, as staff support the opening hours and the number of libraries. Our other main costs are the materials and resources for reference and loan (e.g. books, eResources) and some rents and services.

The cost of running the entire library service is split between the Library Service, Property Services and ICT. Property currently pay an estimated £1m for the library utilities and business rates and some scheduled repairs and maintenance. Property Services are responsible for the buildings as corporate assets and where applicable, Parks are responsible for the land around the buildings.

Bristol Libraries has been under review since 2014 with a savings target of £1.1m that year, and then of £1.4m in 2017. This prompted a discussion about the number of libraries in Bristol and the threat of library closures. In July 2018, the savings target was removed at Cabinet and we began a series of citywide community engagement events to talk to communities about how they wanted to extend the use of the building or extend the library service.

Bristol Libraries – Key figures (2018–19)

NUMBER OF ISSUES

ADULTS
978,127

CHILDREN
526,104

GROUPS
13,484

HOURS OPEN
41,700

VISITS TO BRISTOL LIBRARIES
1,388,546

ACTIVE USERS OF BRISTOL LIBRARIES
68,098

ENQUIRIES
136,887

RESERVATIONS
152,359
ITEMS RESERVED
128,624 (84.4%)
RESERVATIONS SATISFIED

VOLUNTEERS 473
ACTIVE 130
ROLES 15

CHILDREN AT STORY TIME AND BABY BOUNCE
25,745

NEW LIBRARY MEMBERS
24,731

BRISTOL
PHYSICAL ITEMS
750k

LOANED eRESOURCES
eBOOKS 17,334
eAUDIO 15,225
eMAGAZINES 6,029

STAFF
POSTS 184
(part-time and full-time)

NUMBER OF PC SESSIONS

ADULTS
185,099

CHILDREN
8,165

SESSIONS BOOKED IN ADVANCE 86,210

PC HOURS USED
141,114

PAGES PRINTED BY CUSTOMERS
560,237

PEOPLE USING PCs AND WIFI IN THE LIBRARIES
23,352

PCs AVAILABLE 236

Access to over
2.5 MILLION items across LibrariesWest

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL