Library services: Options to make essential savings

Included in the consultation on our council budget and finances conducted at the end of 2022, was a proposal to reduce the annual budget for our library service by £473,000. This consultation considers the best ways to deliver the reductions we need to, whilst minimising the impact on service delivery.

Section 1: Your use of library services

Are you (tick all that apply)

- [ ] A registered user of the South Gloucestershire library service (aged 16 or over)
- [ ] A registered user of the South Gloucestershire library service (aged under 16)
- [ ] A parent of a child or young person who is a registered user of the South Gloucestershire library service
- [ ] A member of a community group who use a library
- [ ] A member of council staff working in a library
- [ ] A councillor representing people in my local community
- [ ] Other

Other (please specify)

Which library do you use most often?

- [ ] Bradley Stoke
- [ ] Cadbury Heath
- [ ] Downend
- [ ] Emersons Green
- [ ] Filton
- [ ] Hanham
- [ ] Kingswood
- [ ] Patchway
- [ ] Staple Hill
- [ ] Thornbury
- [ ] Winterbourne
- [ ] Yate

Which library services do you use regularly (please let us know about any service you have used in the last year)

- [ ] Borrow books
- [ ] Browse or read books or newspapers in the library
- [ ] Use library computers/wifi
- [ ] A member of a community group who use a library
- [ ] Place to work/study
- [ ] Borrow DVDs/audio books
- [ ] Take children to read/borrow books
- [ ] Attend children's events or activities
- [ ] As part of school visit
- [ ] Attend adult event or activities
- [ ] Attend a community event, group or class hosted at a library
- [ ] Online services or research
- [ ] Other

Other (please specify)

Section 2: Open access

Have you registered to use the open access service?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If you haven’t yet registered for open access, please can you tell us why not?

- [ ] I didn’t know about it
- [ ] It’s difficult to register/there isn’t a convenient time to register
- [ ] I don’t like/trust the technology
- [ ] I’m worried about safety issues attending a library when it isn’t staffed
- [ ] I just prefer visiting a library when it is staffed
- [ ] I haven’t got round to registering, but I would like to
- [ ] Other

Other (please specify)

If you have registered for open access, can you tell us about your experience. To what extent has it enabled you to access the services you need from your local library?

- [ ] Fully
- [ ] Mostly
- [ ] To some extent
- [ ] I can't

Are there any services which are important to you that you can’t use during open access periods?

Section 3: Options for delivering savings

When we consulted in 2017 ahead of the introduction of Open Access technology, local people’s top priority was to keep their local library open. In looking for savings opportunities, we are therefore not proposing an option to close any libraries. Instead, we have focused on changes which use Open Access technology to keep libraries open.

We are proposing to reduce our costs by a further £100,000 through a restructure of our management team. To deliver these cuts, we need to remove support from some of our least frequently used services, including the community collection services in Marshfield, Hawkesbury Upton, Severn Beach and Stoke Gifford.

Proposed options
- Annual budget for books and other materials reduced by 25% - would save £50,000
- Restructure to reduce management costs - would save £103,000
- Reduction in Third Party Costs Enquiry Service - would save £25,000
- Reduce staffed hours. Library services would continue to be available via Open Access - would save £295,000

We know that ideally no-one would want to make these choices, but please let us know to what extent you support each of the following proposals as a means of delivering the required savings

	Fully support	Generally support	Neutral	Oppose
Annual budget for books and other materials reduced by 25%	☐	☐	☐	☐
Restructure to reduce management costs	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reduction in Third Party Costs Enquiry Service	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reduce staffed hours. Library services would continue to be available via Open Access	☐	☐	☐	☐

We have looked for savings across all the services we deliver. Please let us know in the space below if you have any other ideas for options ***within our library services*** to help us save the money we need to.

To minimise impact on users, we are recommending prioritising staffed hours at the locations and times when libraries are most well used.

We recognise how important libraries are in supporting children and young people with their learning, so we are also proposing to keep the libraries staffed at those key times after school when so many schoolchildren visit their local library. The proposals would reduce staffed library open hours from 351 to 285, a reduction of 19% and would mean:
- Removing staffed access over lunch time in eight of the 12 libraries (Cadbury Heath, Downend, Filton, Hanham, Kingswood, Patchway, Staple Hill, Winterbourne).
- Staffed access ending across all libraries at 5.00pm.
- A half day reduction in staffed access at five libraries – Downend, Filton, Hanham, Kingswood and Staple Hill
- A further one day reduction in staffed access at three libraries - Cadbury Heath, Patchway and Winterbourne.

Open Access hours would be increased to cover the periods which would no longer be staffed.

Please let us know about any impact for you if the staffed hours of your local library were cut.

- ☐ I/my children would no longer be able to visit our local library
- ☐ I would sign up for open access
- ☐ I would be less likely to visit my local library/I would visit my local library less often
- ☐ Implications for my work/hours
- ☐ Other

Other (please specify)

Use the space below to share ideas of alternative options for reductions to staffed opening hours.

Please let us know below about the potential impacts for you of any of the other changes we are proposing.

About You

This section is really important. It's vital that we understand the experiences of a wide range of respondents in order to ensure that everyone is treated equally. By understanding more about what people from diverse backgrounds tell us, we can ensure we act appropriately to meet needs. All questions are optional and any responses to these questions will remain confidential. Individuals will not be identified and personal details will not be published.

What is your age?

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 19 to 29
- ☐ 30 to 39
- ☐ 40 to 49
- ☐ 50 to 59
- ☐ 60 to 69
- ☐ 70 to 79
- ☐ 80 or over
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Are you?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Please tell us your sexual orientation

- ☐ Straight or Heterosexual
- ☐ Gay or Lesbian
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ All other sexual orientations
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to be disabled? (**Please tick all that apply**)

- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Yes - Physical impairment, such as difficulty using arms or mobility issues which may mean using a wheelchair or crutches
- ☐ Yes - Sensory impairment, such as being blind/having a serious visual impairment or being deaf/have a hearing impairment
- ☐ Yes - Mental health condition, such as depression, anxiety or schizophrenia
- ☐ Yes - Learning disability/difficulty (such as Down's Syndrome, dyslexia, dyspraxia) or cognitive impairment (such as autism spectrum condition)
- ☐ Yes - Long standing illness or health condition, such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy
- ☐ Yes - Other (please state)

Please tell us your ethnic origin

- ☐ Arab/Arab British 01
- ☐ Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi 02
- ☐ Asian/Asian British - Chinese 03
- ☐ Asian/Asian British - Indian 04
- ☐ Asian/Asian British - Other 05
- ☐ Asian/Asian British - Pakistani 06
- ☐ Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - African 07
- ☐ Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - Caribbean 08
- ☐ Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - Other 09
- ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller 10
- ☐ Mixed/multiple ethnic group - Other 11
- ☐ Mixed/multiple ethnic group - White & Asian 12
- ☐ Mixed/multiple ethnic group - White & Black African 13
- ☐ Mixed/multiple ethnic group - White & Black Caribbean 14
- ☐ White - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British 15
- ☐ White - Other (please state) 16
- ☐ White Irish 17
- ☐ White - Roma 18
- ☐ Other ethnic group 19
- ☐ Prefer not to say 20

If other, please state:

Q12 Are you currently, or have you previously, served in the UK Armed Forces?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, I am currently/have previously served in the regular UK Armed Forces
- ☐ Yes, I am currently/have previously served in the reserve UK Armed Forces

Please return your completed questionnaire to South Gloucestershire Council, Insight and Engagement Team, Library savings, PO Box 1953, Bristol, BS37 0DE

Any personal information that you have supplied will be held by South Gloucestershire Council in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations (UKGDPR) 2021. This information will only be used as part of this exercise and personal information will not be published or passed onto any other organisation. Your personal information collected as part of this survey will be kept for two years to help us improve services before being securely destroyed.Our privacy notice, which explains how we will process your personal information, how long we will retain it and your rights as a data subject, is available at www.southglos.gov.uk/privacy