

Birmingham Strategic Framework for Library Services 2024 - 2029

*Connecting People &
Communities, with
Information, Culture, & Each
Other*

Our Priorities

- **A Prosperous Birmingham:** sparking ambition through education, supporting pre-employment, digital inclusion, mentoring, ESOL and learning.
- **An Inclusive Birmingham:** the promotion of early learning, digital inclusion, increased library membership (particularly in hard-to-reach areas, and by engendering social contact and combatting isolation. Creating platforms where Birmingham's many cultures come together to learn positive new ways of doing things.
- **A Safe Birmingham:** Encouraging digital safety, particularly among the young, encouraging critical thinking, and fighting fake news and the sources of fake news. Creating safe places for city conversations and respectful debate.
- **A Healthy Birmingham:** The promotion of health and wellbeing, healthy lifestyles, consumption, exercise, sleep management and looking after each other. Nurturing a multifaceted approach to human development.
- **A Green Birmingham:** through digital books and lending, energy efficient buildings, community warm spaces and through learning and data about how to protect our neighbourhoods, our city and our world.



 **RESET**

 **RESHAPE**

 **RESTART**

Contents

1. **Foreword**
2. **Executive Summary**
3. **Vision**
4. **Background and current service provision**
5. **Legal Requirements**
5. **Design Principles**
6. **The Opportunity**
7. **Savings Requirements**
8. **The Strategic Framework Moving Forward**
9. **High level Framework for Delivery (to be completed following consultation)**
12. **Appendix 1 Map of Current Library Provision by Tier**



1. Foreword

I am excited to be presenting Birmingham's Strategic Framework for Libraries, this is our first for the City and builds upon the first phase of our libraries changes which commenced in 2017. Since then, there have been many changes to and challenges to our city, all of which have helped to shape our ambition. Library services play an important role within our communities and thanks to the conversations with our stakeholders we set out our draft vision for the city and the framework for its delivery.

We often think about books or access to computers when we think libraries, however our offer in the city is far boarder and inclusive. Libraries are safe universal spaces which offer opportunities for things to do, places to be and to seek early help without the feeling of fear or judgement and for our staff to provide high quality preventative support and information.

During the pandemic we saw the increase in our use of the virtual library and during the cost-of-living crisis, I am proud to say that some of our library buildings played their part working alongside the voluntary, community and faith sectors in providing warm spaces and access to vital services such as food vouchers, income maximisation and wellbeing support. We want to build upon this success to create wider opportunities for earlier intervention and prevention, using our collective data and insight to support communities at a hyper local level.

The financial challenges are an important and difficult driver, but I will work hard to protect and develop an ambitious offer of library services which will meet the needs of our current and future generations. In parts of our city the membership and use of libraries has been declining, whilst customers' expectations have continued to evolve as more people read, learn, shop, and seek entertainment online. We also know that some citizens have never accessed library services and don't see them as relevant to their lives. We have an aging libraries estate with buildings over 100 years old and in significant decline which limits access for some of our most vulnerable citizens. It is important therefore we consider the wider Library Services offer and explore mixed models of delivery and opportunities to innovate with our partners and community groups and businesses so that we can do more and reach more of our citizens.

Together we want to create a modern and inclusive 21st century library service for generations to come. I am incredibly proud of Birmingham Library Service and that includes our employees and volunteers who help to deliver it.

We are on a journey towards 2029 by which time we hope to deliver the actions set out within the framework and can demonstrate its impact upon communities. Our Library services offer will be shaped by data, insight and the needs and aspirations of our communities. Given the financial challenges, we cannot do this alone and will need our partners, volunteers, communities, and businesses to play their part.

Kalvinder Kohli

Assistant Director - Early Intervention and Prevention



2. Executive Summary

‘At its most fundamental level, a public library and information service is about finding, forging, and facilitating connections. Connections between readers and authors. Connections between questions and answers. Connections between the past and present. Connections between people and communities. Connections between personal life challenges and the information and support that can help.’

This document sets out a vision, long-term strategic direction, and purpose for the Library Service in Birmingham. The approach proposed is grounded in national priorities for Public Library Services and is informed by the Independent Review of Libraries 2024 ([An Independent Review of English Public Libraries \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)) and the Councils’ key strategic priority for Early Intervention and Prevention. Our vision is supplemented by an outcome’s framework, setting key priorities to support reading, digital inclusion, stronger communities, health and wellbeing and inclusive economic growth.

We build upon the modernising journey that the City started in 2017 for our Library Services, with a strong focus on citizen outcomes. However, to ensure the Council has a sustainable future we will need to consider efficiency and cost reduction options, whilst delivering a thriving, modern Library Service.

Our proposed aims focus on connection and connected communities with a service for everyone:

- Connect people with learning and discovery.
- Connect people with their own strengths and resilience.
- Connect people with physical and online spaces where they feel most comfortable and confident.
- Connection with community assets to help people flourish.

Our needs analysis is located on the City Observatory Website ([Insights \(birmingham.gov.uk\)](https://insights.birmingham.gov.uk)). Birmingham has a rising population; we are a young city, and a minority majority city. Diversity is our great asset and strength as a city. Equally we have an ageing population whereby people are living longer but often in poor health:

- 26% of all those aged 60 or over experience income deprivation.
- Life expectancy varies between 10 years depending upon where you live in the City.
- 43% of our population live in 10 % of deprived areas.
- Unemployment rates (11.6 %) are higher than the national average, including those for young people (13.2%).
- 1 in 4 people have no qualifications.
- 23 % of the population live with fuel poverty.
- 23,000 people on the housing register with homelessness presentations rising by 20% between 2022 and 2023.
- 100,500 Children live in absolute low-income families.

Our library services offer therefore must be grounded within the context of the needs analysis as well as the financial resource envelope, it is important to ensure that our offer is targeted so that these valued safe universal spaces are able to play their role in helping to tackle some of these deep-seated inequalities.



Through consultation we intend to engage and consult with citizens, stakeholders and community groups to re-determine how we provide library services in Birmingham. In line with findings of the Independent Review of English Public Libraries we would like to explore the creation of community hubs.

- We aim to maintain as much building - based coverage as we can within the context of the budget, whilst also expanding the service offer through mobile provision into areas identified in the needs analysis. We will also seek out co-location sites where our current provision is not fit for purpose and explore community led provision with partner agencies.
- We must also realise the full potential of our frontline workforce to become those all-important community connectors supporting our local communities to access a wide range of services and support so that we are able to intervene earlier before people fall into crisis and prevent the escalation of needs into statutory services.
- We will also encourage the support of local organisations and community volunteer groups to provide additional capacity and support to the library services offer.
- We will need to explore different investment models to improve the physical assets longer term including external investment, corporate partnerships and external grant pots.

The vision contained within this draft framework is based on our current state analysis work, the draft needs analysis, the equality impact assessment and the case for change. Whilst we set out our high-level vision to help discuss and decide on our direction of travel, there are no decisions made in this document and this will be refreshed upon the analysis of the consultation at which point the strategic framework and outcomes framework will also be developed further.

We wish to conduct meaningful consultation with our communities, including groups that currently do not access library services, to understand their needs and aspirations. Final decisions will not be taken until after the consultation.

3. The Vision for Birmingham's Libraries

We have a strong vision for Birmingham's library services which protects the core library offer in local communities. We want to provide cultural and creative enrichment, increase reading and literacy and improve digital access and literacy to all our communities but specifically ensure that provision is protected for our most vulnerable.

Helping everyone achieve their full potential and to lead healthy, happy lives is a key focus which will underpin greater prosperity and stronger, more resilient communities.

We want to deliver a library service that will:

- Deliver an offer which meets the needs of communities at all stages of their lives.
- Move from an output to outcomes focus.
- Use the principles of early intervention and prevention principles to service design to create safe universal spaces that are open to all.
- Provide targeted homes and money advice.
- Working with partners, host tailored services designed to increase the health and wellbeing of the community they serve.
- Use data and insight to centre on citizen need.
- Recognise the progress to date and how that can be accelerated.
- Apply a change to achieving a financially sustainable solution.
- Empower communities, partners, and volunteers.



4. Background and Current Service Provision

There are several drivers which have necessitated this exercise. The state of the Council's finances is well rehearsed. The budget set by the Council in March required a saving from the library service of £2.3m. However, there are several other factors which have made change of the libraries an imperative. For many years, the burden of increasing maintenance on older buildings has meant that there has been less funding for library content. This challenge has inevitably led to disruptions in our service that have resulted from shorter hours or the closure of facilities. Consumption of information, and learning, particularly by young people, has changed dramatically over time. Demand for digitally enabled content grows every year. Library services have also expanded dramatically to cover many facets of wellbeing from combating social isolation to supporting digital inclusion and pre-employment. Finally, our data indicates that while libraries thrive in higher income neighbourhoods, for harder to reach communities, membership is falling. We need to ensure that for these communities, the library service remains relevant. These drivers all point for the need to change.

Change of our Library Services began in 2017 and this framework now helps to evolve the delivery model further using data and insight available from the last 7 years.

Our current service offer consists of 35 community libraries and the Library of Birmingham. Many of our current libraries operate on restricted hours due to staffing shortages and sites that are currently closed due to the condition of the building. If we calculate the actual opening hours of our current libraries, we have an equivalent of 27 libraries. The council also provides one mobile van provision, libraries at home, the prison library, and virtual online access. The core offer also includes free digital access, public computers, free Wi-Fi, printing facilities, self-serve, activities led by library staff, community spaces for events and support of friend's groups across the city.

Our individual libraries are as unique as the wards they serve. Our staff work with partner agencies to provide additional access to more tailored activities including pop up adult education classes, under 5s learning sessions, class visits and work with schools, community curated exhibitions, cultural and heritage funding applications, literacy programmes including the Summer Reading Challenge, and a range of wellbeing activities and support in partnership with BCC Public Health.

5. Legal Definitions

Birmingham 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)). The Council is also conscious of its 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 partnerships.

The **Independent review of English public libraries 2023** was conducted to inform a new National Public Libraries Strategy. The review recommends several pertinent issues facing libraries across the country and some practical examples to take forward locally:



- 1) The better use of data and insight into local communities to help support libraries provision was emphasised.
- 2) Improving the local “branding” of libraries, examples included the use of terms such as “community hubs”. It was acknowledged that there is a lack of general awareness in places that libraires are no longer “strait-laced institutions” and that they can and do offer a wide variety of services to the local community.
- 3) Libraries to measure and evaluate the social value and benefits of their work as on-going practices to support with seeking further investment and benchmark performance.

7 Outcomes	4 Universal Offers	7 Principles
<p>Culture and Creative enrichment</p> <p>Increased Reading and Literacy</p> <p>Digital Access and Literacy</p> <p>Helping citizens to achieve their full potential</p> <p>Healthier and Happier Lives</p> <p>Greater Prosperity</p> <p>Stronger, more resilient communities</p>	<p>The 7 DCMS Outcomes will be achieved through Libraries Connected 4 Universal Offers</p> <p>Information & Digital</p> <p>Information, free wi-fi, computers.</p> <p>Enhanced EI&P offer: Digital Skills, Homes & Money.</p> <p>Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>Information, resources, social space.</p> <p>Enhanced EI&P offer: Community Connectors, Community Safety. Homes and Money</p> <p>Reading & Learning</p> <p>Books, e-books, free study space, story-times</p> <p>Enhanced EI&P offer: Community Living Rooms, Digital Skills, Community Connectors</p> <p>Culture & Creativity</p> <p>Exhibitions, events, heritage, leisure, trusted social space, civic participation.</p> <p>Enhanced EI&P offer: Community Living Rooms, Community Connectors</p>	<p>Legal Compliance including the Equality Act and associated Public Sector Duty.</p> <p>Co – design and Co – Creation, service design should be shaped by engagement and participation of communities</p> <p>Focus on public benefits and high-quality user experience</p> <p>Evidence based decision making.</p> <p>Consistent delivery of the 7 outcomes and universal offers whilst recognising not every library will be the same</p> <p>Promote partnership working, innovation and enterprise and encouraging staff to be entrepreneurial</p> <p>Use public funds effectively and efficiently – Councils should examine alternative delivery models and regularly review how they provide library services.</p>



6. Design Principles

Given the challenges we face as a city, we cannot speculate on the number of library buildings in the future, but we can aim for quality, citywide service that delivers our statutory service, is responsive, modern and relevant. We will build a service that is sustainable in a changing world, where its value to residents is acknowledged and where the service is the best it can be for all. To do this we need to shift our focus from just library buildings and explore with greater confidence the range of library services and how this can be part of the fabric of community assets that already exist. We will explore how we attract residents and partners to help keep the buildings open for longer and how we enable their wider community use for arts, culture and community and family events. A focus on Library services affords us the ability to protect a range of viable buildings whilst providing the flexibility that our residents are seeking, a greater range of activities, co located support services in one place, different use of buildings for certain days and opportunities for community led provision.

Building on the core strengths of Birmingham's libraries

'No matter who you are or where you are from, you can walk into any library... and ask a member of staff to help you. And if they can't help you themselves, they will be able to point you to someone who can.'

Baroness Elizabeth Sanderson of Welton - *An Independent Review of English Public Libraries, 2023*

Libraries in Birmingham have a decades-long track-record of developing and delivering a wide range of services designed to improve people's lives and life chances. From championing child literacy to practical first steps help for entrepreneurs, from legal advice clinics to mental health initiatives, from helping with GCSEs to providing the space for communities to share opinions and celebrate Birmingham's amazingly diverse cultures. As Baroness Sanderson describes in her foreword to her review of public libraries in England, 'Each programme is there to serve a particular purpose or reach a certain demographic, but they all have a common goal which is to improve people's lives and help build a better, stronger, community.'

Guided by the outcome's framework suggested by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Birmingham Library Services can now build on its core strengths. Supporting self-help and personal resilience are at the heart of what libraries in Birmingham aim to do. By working in a more joined-up way with other parts of Birmingham City Council, community groups, local charities, and the citizens of the city, libraries in Birmingham have the opportunity to deliver more benefits to more people.

Early Intervention and Prevention (EI&P)

A key strategic objective for Birmingham City Council is to build services which ensure citizens needing help, or who are likely to need help are reached at the earliest possible time. As libraries are regularly used universal spaces, early intervention and prevention services will play a key role in the new model. The proposed vision and delivery of the strategic framework will be underpinned by the following Early Intervention and Prevention Principles:

- *helping citizens to keep a roof over their heads*
- *have money in their pockets*
- *help to get a job and then a better job, or self-employment*
- *utilising the safe universal spaces that are provided by library services to support and create connected communities.*

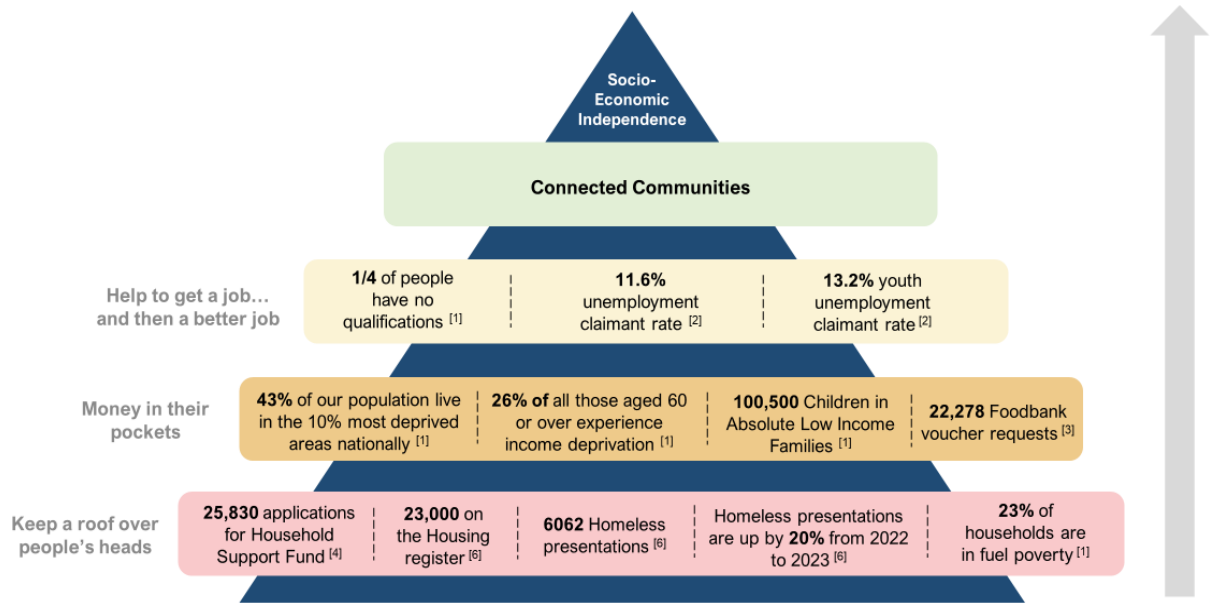
We know that communities and people are using services differently and will ensure data underpins our re-designed offer. Our intelligence tells us:



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

The below diagram shows how we are incorporating a broad set of data and intelligence to contribute the health and wellbeing of communities through a new library offer.

Birmingham’s Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs against EI&P Principles



Equalities Considerations

We want to ensure that equalities considerations are embedded within our vision, strategy, and delivery of the new library offer. The hierarchy of needs illustration above highlights a range of disparities across the city from both social and economic lenses. Our libraries are based in communities which are impacted by multiple factors, and we will take this opportunity to build a service which delivers a comprehensive and efficient offer, which meets the needs of all communities at all stages of their lives. We will ensure our remaining buildings are warm, welcoming, and accessible to all.

Data is an important part of equalities measurement and future delivery models will ensure appropriate data is collected consistently across our libraries provision which will help shape services.

Cost of Living

Since the Council declared a Cost-of-Living Emergency in 2022, the libraries have been central to the effort to support citizens through the crisis. From the start, Libraries have become part of the Warm Welcome



Network which now includes 300 Warm Spaces across the city. These are places of welcome, offering both a cosy environment, and company. Since then, the network has introduced new activity such as art, pre-employment support and health and wellbeing. Going forward, the libraries will continue this effort, helping communities with rising costs and providing both resources and signposting to other areas of assistance.

7. The Opportunity

Whilst we cannot ignore the savings needed within the library changes, there are opportunities available to change the current offer and ensure services are protected for citizens in greatest need.

Our journey

Birmingham has already been actively modernising the Library Service in line with national policy. Recent key achievements on this journey include:

The creation of an Early Intervention and Prevention Homes and Money Hub at **Shard End Library**, which is in the East of the City and area of high deprivation. The service offer was co- designed with local residents and now comprises of a proactive Homes and Money offer to support the income maximisation of residents, a focus on strength-based practices by front line staff – how do we help you to help yourself and the ability to connect local resident to community assets. The library has successfully co located 30 plus community organisations on a timetable basis alongside businesses such as banking institutions, utilities companies. The pilot was part funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority to deliver a behavioural science pilot ‘Nudge’ which sent tailored messages to residents that were likely to be in financial hardship but were not reaching out for help. Over a 6-week period the pilot income generated 100k for 39 families. This data and insight leadership approach is now being recognised nationally.

Glebe Farm Library, also located in the East of the City within an area of high deprivation and high unemployment and skills, has worked in partnership with local elected members and Welcome Change, a local organisation since 2017. The library is run by Council staff for three days a week and open as a community hub staffed by Welcome Change for an additional three days a week with books checked in and out electronically when the library is operating as a Hub. Welcome Change offer a range of activities and events tailored to the needs of the local community, listening to what local people want them to provide and involving them in the running of activities, for example debt and benefit advice, a community fridge, jobs club, wellbeing sessions, community get together and celebrations. They also offer and support volunteering opportunities for local people to gain the skills and confidence to move on to paid employment.

Aston Library is located near the centre of the City in a ward which has high deprivation and a high young population (0-19) profile. Birmingham City Council currently has a successful co-location arrangement with the Fire Service and leases the site at a minimal cost. It is the newest Library in the City and the children’s Library has a glass viewing wall so that children can observe the Fire Engine appliance bay. The library is focused on children’s books and activities and local schools use the library for children’s visits which is open 2 days a week.

Selly Oak Library is a colocation arrangement that Birmingham City Council came to with Sense (a National Charity) at Touchbase Pears, after the Councils previous Selly Oak Library, built in 1906, Carnegie building held in Trust, fell beyond the Councils financial repair in 2016. This has been a successful colocation enabling the City to continue to serve the local community with book provision through a self-service machine and staffed 2 days a week leased by the Council. Touchbase Pears was an ideal colocation site for the library as it is a welcoming, accessible environment where local people can feel connected and part of the community. They combine health and Social Care services with arts, sports and



wellbeing activities, offering employment, education, volunteering and raining opportunities on site. As well as the library on site they also have a cafe and hold art exhibitions, events and other community activities.

Our Birmingham Adult Education Services provide drop in style informal learning environments to learners in some of our most deprived parts of the City, the service also co located within the **Library of Birmingham**, we hope to build upon this success as part of our inclusive economy strategy.

A Community Hub Approach to delivering Library Service

Birmingham faces significant challenges concerning inequalities and socio-economic disadvantages experienced by our communities. A Library Services offer over the next 5 years and beyond must be co designed with this in mind. Our pilot in Shard End library has shown us that we can broaden the library offer and meet communities needs with one service offer.

We know we cannot afford to turn all libraries into full time hubs. Our offer therefore will be underpinned by intelligence, community need, involvement from community groups and partners and a flexible range of opening times and locations. It is important to utilise community assets and resources available to shape our library services offer. This will move towards creating connected communities, where library services move from traditional library buildings and instead, we create a network in partnership with local organisations and volunteers.

Our aim is to ensure that the libraries will be multi-faceted in their public service offer, acting as platforms for a wider range of positive interactions whilst maintaining the traditional and statutory services, public trust and ethos that have been nurtured for over a century. Our vision for a new library service therefore is one that offers equal, relevant access and opportunity across the city. These will be spaces that have impactful digital outreach into the individual communities. As well as offering all the established library services, the proposed community hub delivery model will be centres of health and wellbeing, benefits, and employment support as well as early learning and reading. There will be a refocus of investment in content, including digital content. Through increased investment in our mobile services, book lending, digital content and wider support services, there will be more coverage of the city which historically have not had library services.

We strongly encourage our citizens to engage in the design and delivery options for their local library services so that they are genuinely designed by and for our local communities.

The libraries as Warm Spaces and as hubs in the Warm Welcome Network

In October 2022, Birmingham Council initiated a Cost-of-Living programme which sought to support hard pressed households during the energy price shock. Part of this programme has led to the creation of a network of over 300 registered Warm Welcome spaces. Libraries in the city have played their part in supporting the programme by also becoming Warm Welcome spaces. The proposed community Libraries will act as hubs in this network.

Libraries and the Digital and Economic Inclusion Agenda

Birmingham is a city of significant economic opportunity. With the youngest population in the UK, its formidable Higher and Education services, digital industry clusters, high levels on Inward Investment and substantial growth opportunities, the city has a bright economic future. Unfortunately, not enough of the citizens of Birmingham are able to take advantage of this economic growth.



Our libraries play a key role in economic and digital inclusion:

- Digital inclusion support to all its members. This includes free Wi-Fi and the use of computers. There are also other digital services including digital access to reading material and to order books and our Digital Book Club
- Promotion of reading and writing for the young: core to the library service is improving literacy among the young. We will develop further digital outreach for young people. We will create new digital reading platforms and promote the further use of e and Audiobooks.
- By working closely with schools and colleges, we will teach young people to critically evaluate online content, discuss reliable sources, fact-check, and identify misinformation. We will use technology to enhance learning experiences. Interactive e-books, quizzes, and educational games will make literacy engaging. We will encourage video calls with family members or friends who read stories aloud. This is intended to promote language development, ESOL and bonding. Again, working with the schools, we will encourage young writers to create digital content, blogs, social media, and collaborative writing platforms to allow young people to express themselves and receive feedback.
- Digital Mentoring: Our libraries could provide training and guidance for parents who want to become digital mentors. Mentorship is less about technical skills and more about engaging in meaningful conversations with children about their online activities and experiences.
- Pre-employment Preparation: The libraries will continue to support job seekers through one-to-one coaching, online job searches, and accessing job boards and websites such as Indeed, LinkedIn, and Glassdoor. We will encourage networking and social media through LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook. Online Learning and skills development will be available. Training on key words for CVs and cover letters will help secure interviews. Virtual interviews will be held with online mentors. Above all, learning to use digital services to optimise a job search will be a priority for library-based tutoring and mentoring.

Wider Support for those seeking work.

Libraries are best placed to guide people through the resources they need and to target employment opportunities. We propose that our homes and money advisors will be co-located at libraries to support income maximisation with opportunities be referred to our employment teams and offered support in the form of ESOL training, driving skills (where necessary for commuting), learning for those who are to sit a citizen's test, digital coding classes and digital job searches.

Digital Coverage

In common with many places in the UK, Birmingham libraries have been very building centric. Yet content, particularly news, is increasingly digested digitally, often on mobile phones. The new library service will have a significant digital presence to complement the physical spaces. It is important to remember that nearly half the wards in Birmingham have never had a physical library. An ambition of the new service is to provide greater digital and mobile library coverage to these areas and to generally increase citizen access to library services. This will be achieved by working with partners, by creating new book drop off points, and by doubling the investment in mobile libraries.

8. Savings Requirements

The greatest challenge for the future of Library Services is the current financial climate both nationally across Local Government and locally within the City.

The issuing of the Section 114 Notice and the subsequent Secretary of State Powers deployed to assist the local authority in regaining a stable financial standing cannot be ignored. The expectation at this stage is for the service to deliver £2.3m in savings from the amalgamation of the Libraries and Neighbourhood Advice and Information Services. Whilst the required savings have been set, there have been no decisions



made on the delivery model that will deliver these savings. With only staff and building costs in the current budget, what is clear at this stage is that the current delivery model cannot be sustained.

	2024/2025	2025/2026
Savings Requirement	£1,000,000	£2,300,000

Whilst the budget will be reduced, we maintain our ambition to deliver a transformative vision and delivery model which is fit for purpose for the changing needs of our communities which is capable of: **Connecting People & Communities with Information, Culture, & Each Other**

9. The Strategic Framework Moving Forward

At a high level the proposed strategic framework (pending the outcomes of the consultation) will comprise of the following component parts:

Proposed Action	Expectation	Considerations
Deliver a core service which is focused on the legal definitions, outcomes and design principles set out within this document	We will work to maximise the support to a wide range of citizens and communities to ensure that the service offer is inclusive and meets the diverse needs of the city with a particular focus on those with protected characteristics.	We will gather evidence, data and insight to shape, design and target our core offer.
Work to reverse the decline in membership rates and lapsed members.	To ensure that the service offers meet the needs of our communities.	We will gather insight to understand why there has been such a marked decline, how it could be reversed and to shape our offer accordingly.
Work to improve access and the relevance of libraries to our citizens in the more deprived parts of the city who are less likely to access the libraries.	That we have a library offer which meets the expectations of our communities.	We will engage with citizens and community groups to understand the barriers that are preventing citizens from accessing libraries and what would encourage them to do so and what would they like libraries to offer/deliver.
Subject to consultation redesign of community libraries to operate as community hubs, whilst maximising their impact and reach, service effectiveness and value for money.	Through the public consultation and any subsequent future role out we will work with residents, elected members, staff and local stakeholder to shape and co create solutions that work for our communities. Increased levels of activity within libraries outside of staffed hours because of mixed delivery models, community led offers and enhancement using volunteers.	We will gather evidence, data and insight to shape, design and target our core offer. We want to move beyond traditional models of delivery and to work with greater flexibility We will work with local communities and Friends of Groups to enhance the volunteer offer We will share case studies and models of best practice and learning to promote and inspire others



		<p>We will focus on voices less heard to ensure that all views are represented.</p> <p>We will work with community actors and community based infrastructure organisations to take an asset-based community development approach to connected communities.</p>
<p>Maximise the reputation that Libraries hold within communities as safe welcoming services and spaces, with quality resources, knowledgeable people focused staff and volunteers to deliver against our key corporate agendas for the City;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Inclusive Economy • Income Maximisation • Educational Attainment and adult literacy • Prevention of the need for statutory care services including Homelessness and Social Care • Domestic Abuse Prevention • Improved Health and Wellbeing • Digital Inclusion • Tackling Inequalities 	<p>Ensure that we consider the differing needs and aspirations of communities of interest, place and identity.</p> <p>Flexibility, innovation and the voice of citizens will be at the heart of everything that we do so that we can respond to changing need and be able to deliver services beyond the traditional library buildings.</p> <p>Increasingly provide services on behalf of the wider council and other partners through integrated community hub model.</p>	<p>We will gather evidence, data and insight to shape, design and target our core offer.</p> <p>We will maintain an equality risk impact log to ensure that any negative impacts are identified early, and mitigations are sought.</p> <p>We will work with the NHS, ICB and Public Health partners to target campaigns at specific cohorts of population .</p>
<p>Gather insight to better understand our communities and their needs and aspirations.</p>	<p>The proposed service delivery model will be data and insight driven, we will create a new set of metrics, outcomes and tools to be able to better understand the needs of local areas and cohorts of population so that we can target and intervene much earlier in the lives of households before they fall into crisis.</p>	<p>We will build internal capabilities including improvement of our services through investment in improved technology driven services through, self-serve options, an Integrated View of Citizens, Digital touch points and digital triage tools to</p>



		<p>ensure that we are reaching households in need.</p> <p>Create qualitative and quantitative metrics which demonstrate the social value worth of libraries within communities.</p>
<p>Create a forward-looking culture for all those that work within our Libraries to provide a great place to work and a service that potential partners are excited to work with.</p>	<p>We will work with our staff and support them to roll out the strengths based, and insight driven approaches developed during the piloting of the Homes and Money offer at Shard End Library other locations.</p>	<p>A happier, more resilient workforce that is skilled and supported to meet the needs of our communities.</p>
<p>Resilience during a time of financial turbulence</p>	<p>We will work with our Corporate Landlord Services and the wider Public Estate Partners to explore shared asset opportunities.</p> <p>Through the proposed community hubs delivery model, we will proactively seek out external funding opportunities, greater use of targeted social value offers and wider corporate social responsibility to support delivery including for the wider arts and culture offer.</p>	<p>An increase in business partnerships.</p>
<p>Improving take up and usage of Library Services</p>	<p>Through co design of our service offer and effective promotion through the use of social media, providing regular coverage of events, service offers and opportunities through our partner agencies we will aim to improve the take up of library services for all sections of our communities.</p>	<p>We will increase in satisfaction with our library services and increase in take up by specific groups or parts of the city that are currently underrepresented.</p>
<p>Development of the proposed outcomes Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture and Creative enrichment • Increased Reading and Literacy • Digital Access and Literacy • Helping citizens to achieve their full potential 	<p>To demonstrate the impact of a comprehensive and efficient offer for all our citizens</p> <p>To utilise libraries as safe universal spaces to provide warmth, improve quality of life and personal resilience, support social inclusion by tackling social injustice.</p>	<p>We will focus on the outcomes that are achieved through a comprehensive and efficient offer for all our citizens, taking an all-age approach.</p> <p>We will take an early intervention and prevention approach to keep a roof over people's heads, money in their pocket, help to get a job and then a better job, supporting citizens to feel connected to their communities.</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier and Happier Lives • Greater Prosperity • Stronger, more resilient communities 		<p>We will use data and insight to target cohorts of population to reducing the risks of homelessness, domestic abuse and the need for statutory care interventions.</p> <p>We will promote independence by supporting and skilling citizens to self-serve wherever possible.</p> <p>We will help deliver the digital inclusion strategy for the city and an inclusive economy approach to tackling unemployment and deep-seated inequalities.</p> <p>We will take our space as partners within our communities to create connections and connected communities.</p>
<p>Development and delivery of the KIP indicators</p>	<p>Currently our KPIs largely focus on ‘outputs’ like numbers of books borrowed, numbers of visitors, numbers of children’s activities, or numbers of computer sessions booked.</p> <p>Whilst this is important, we will also align to the Public Health Outcomes Framework.</p>	<p>We will work with other UK library authorities; to develop KPIs that reflect ‘outcomes’ as well as ‘outputs. Advice from organisations like the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the National Literacy Trust, and local universities, will help Birmingham Libraries develop measures that capture the beneficial impact of longer-term interventions connected to child literacy and cultural engagement.</p>



Appendix 1- Map of Library provision by tier

