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Christine Chapman AM,
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Equality and Local Government Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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SR/CC/JC

28th March 2014

RE: INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN WALES

Dear Ms Chapman AM

Thank you for your letter dated March 26th 2014 with regard to the National Assembly for Wales 'Communities, Equalities and Local Government Committee' inquiry in Public Libraries. Please see enclosed response to the questions you raise in respect of:

- has your local authority undertaken equality impact assessments when considering the potential closure of libraries in your area, and if so, please can you provide details;
- has your local authority consulted with local representatives of vulnerable users when considering the potential closure of libraries in your area, and if so, please can you provide details; and
- what links are there between education services and public libraries in your local authority.

Caerphilly County Borough Council has no plans to close Libraries during 2014-2015. A review of present Public Library provision is scheduled to take place during the life of the Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan 2014-2017 with any changes considered in the final year of this arrangement. On this basis no Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken during this financial year, or at this stage are scheduled for 2014-15.

A greener place Man gwyrdach

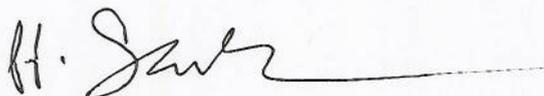
Correspondence may be in any language or format | Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat

Caerphilly County Borough Council has however undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) previously with regard to a Library closure at Aberbargoed in 2011-12. It must be noted that while this facility did close in March 2012 it was reopened by the Authority in May 2013. I attach the relevant EIA and Cabinet report linked to this document for your information. This information should assist with the first two questions you have raised in your letter.

With regard to your final question the Public Library Service in Caerphilly County Borough forms part of the Council's Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate and therefore has strong links to both formal and community learning in the Authority.

I trust the above response and attached information are of assistance to you and the Committee undertaking the inquiry into Public Libraries in Wales. If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Rosser', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Stuart Rosser
Interim Chief Executive
Caerphilly County Borough Council



CABINET – 13TH DECEMBER 2011

**SUBJECT: LIBRARY SERVICES TO SMALLER COMMUNITIES – FUTURE OF
ABERBARGOED LIBRARY, PANT STREET**

REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- 1.1 The report was considered by Education for Life Scrutiny Committee on the 1st December 2011.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Committee fully considered the report and its recommendation to relocate the present Library provision from Pant Street, Aberbargoed to the Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed.
- 1.3 The Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet that the report and its recommendation be withdrawn and a further report to include a fully costed scheme for the retention of Aberbargoed Library be brought forward for consideration.
- 1.4 Members are asked to consider the recommendation.

Author: Emma Sullivan, Committee Services Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1 The Education for Life Scrutiny Committee Report dated 1st December 2011

EDUCATION FOR LIFE (PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT) SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 1ST DECEMBER 2011

**SUBJECT: LIBRARY SERVICES TO SMALLER COMMUNITIES – FUTURE OF
ABERBARGOED LIBRARY, PANT STREET**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION, LIFE LONG LEARNING AND
LEISURE**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- (l) Inform Members of the outcome of consultation on the future of Aberbargoed Library, Pant Street. In particular the proposal to relocate present Library provision from Pant Street, Aberbargoed to the Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed.

2. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 2.1 The County Borough Library Services 5 Year Development Plan, 2009/14 recognised the need to change the manner within which smaller communities across the authority are served. There is an on-going commitment to review and where appropriate rationalise how Library Services to smaller communities are delivered, in particular where new statement Public Libraries have the capacity and proximity to support a wider catchment. This report reflects this process of challenge and review.
- 2.2 The 4th Framework of Welsh Government Public Library Standards 2011/14, places a clear emphasis on the duty of local authorities to carefully consider the location/access needs of residents. Caerphilly County Borough Council currently exceeds the standard that relates to the proximity of residents to service points with 98.8% living within 2 miles of a static site. The standard for Wales is 95%.
- 2.3 Public Libraries contribute to a number of the Council's core priorities including the key themes of the Community Strategy.
- 2.4 Public Libraries support a number of the core aims of the Council's Plan for Children and Young, in particular core aims 1, 2, 4, and 7.

3. REPORT

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 The County Borough Library Services 10 Year Plan approved by Council in November 2003 introduced a tiering model for Public Library development. The tiering approach to Library building development, recently revalidated in 2009 as part of the 2009/14 Development Plan, has provided a significant stimulus to Council investment in the Library Service with a number of high profile schemes completed, under construction, or proposed.

- 3.1.2 On May 22nd 2007 Cabinet gave in principle approval for Hanbury Road Baptist Chapel Bargoed to be converted for Library and Customer Services use, as part of a wider town centre redevelopment scheme already underway. United Welsh Housing Association in partnership with the Council purchased the Chapel site and work commenced in 2010 to convert this statement grade 2* listed building for Library, Customer Services, and worshipping use.
- 3.1.3 The Hanbury Road Baptist Chapel facility will provide 1262m² of floor space including:
- 700m² for dedicated Public Library provision
 - 120m² for a retained worshipping area
 - 100m² for a Customer First Centre
 - 100m² for a two level Café
 - 242m² of circulatory space, stairwells, staff area, etc
- 3.1.4 The Public Library provision included within Hanbury Road Baptist site is state of the art for a facility of this type and will intentionally serve a wider catchment area including Aberbargoed, Gilfach, and Gelligaer.
- 3.1.5 In September 2009 a report on the development of Hanbury Road Baptist Chapel was presented to Corporate Management Team. This report highlighted that the development of the new Bargoed facility would require the review of the present Library operation in Aberbargoed as staff and resources from this location could be better utilised to serve both communities in the nearby Hanbury Chapel site.

3.2 Present Situation

- 3.2.1 Aberbargoed Library, Pant Street, opened to the public at its present site in 1975. The facility has a gross floor area of 73m² the space available for public use is 67m². The Library serves a catchment community of some 3,501 residents. The current floor space does not meet the minimum requirement of the Welsh Public Library Standards. A public floor space of 94.5m² would be required to meet the relevant standard.
- 3.2.2 Aberbargoed Library building is not fit for purpose as a modern 21st Century community facility, in particular the site is cramped with little dedicated space for children or young people to benefit fully from the services provided. The building is in a poor state of repair with a constraining internal layout.
- 3.2.3 Aberbargoed Library was rated C, *Not completely suitable – cannot be improved*, in the Council's most recent Asset Management Plan condition survey. The cost of repairing this building and bringing it up to a condition suitable for the next five years, but still not fit for purpose, is approximately £11,000. The minimum refurbishment and improvement cost to make the present facility fit for purpose would be a further £60,000.
- 3.2.4 There are no current plans to redevelop the present site that is designated a 'Community Link' facility within the Council's tiering model for Public Library provision.
- 3.2.5 Aberbargoed Library is located some 0.96 of a mile from the Hanbury Chapel facility. Some 90.2% of Aberbargoed Library's present customers live within 2 miles of the Hanbury Chapel site.
- 3.2.6 It is important to note that 100% of households in Aberbargoed are located within 2 miles of the new Hanbury Chapel facility this exceeds the minimum required by the Welsh Government in its 4th Framework of Public Library Standards 2011/14. The standard for Wales is 95%.
- 3.2.7 Travel times by public transport within the Aberbargoed catchment area to Bargoed Hanbury Chapel site, and vice versa, are generally well within the 10-minute timeframe recommended

by the Welsh Government in its 4th Framework of Public Library Standards 2011/14 (Public Library Standard 1 'Location of Services Points and Access to them').

3.2.8 The proposed relocation of Aberbargoed Library provision within the Hanbury Chapel site offers a number of benefits to residents of both communities. The following comparisons have formed part of the recent consultation process on the future of Public Library Services in Aberbargoed:

Areas of Comparison	Aberbargoed Library	Bargoed Hanbury Chapel Facility
Public Library Floor Area	67m ² single level – four linked rooms, little or no circulatory space.	700m ² of provision located over three main floors with considerable circulatory space.
Children's Facilities	12m ² , small enclosed children's area with no study space.	100m ² of space children, with a dedicated area for under 5's and homework support.
Young Peoples Facilities	Very limited space – no dedicated floor area set aside.	71m ² of dedicated space for young people within two inter linked rooms catering for recreational activities and more purposeful reading/study activity.
Services to Adults	40m ² of floor space divided into three rooms with little open/circulatory flow.	500m ² of floor space for adult and joint learning provision provided over three levels, including a classroom style area within a Family and Local History Centre.
Access	DDA accessible entrance, internal circulatory space tight for wheel chair users.	DDA accessible entrance to new rear extension, full internal access for disabled residents.
Staff facilities	Staff work areas form part of main library area.	Dedicated staff welfare facilities including a rest room, toilet and kitchen.
Additional Features	NA	Café, considerable circulatory space, public toilets.
Opening Hours	25 hours per week (Tuesday to Friday)	46 hours per week (Monday to Saturday)
Proximity of provision	78% of present customers live within ½ a mile of Aberbargoed Library. 90% of present customers live within 2 miles of Aberbargoed Library.	57% of present Aberbargoed customers live within ½ a mile of the Hanbury Chapel facility. 90.2% of present customers live within 2 miles of the Hanbury Chapel facility.

3.3 Consultation and Findings

3.3.1 Consultation

3.3.1.1 Consultation was carried out on the proposal to relocate Public Library Services from Pant Street, Aberbargoed to Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed between July 11th and October 31st 2011.

3.3.1.2 The consultation included:

- Consultation with local Councillors - The timetable and key elements of the planned consultation on Public Library provision in Aberbargoed were prepared with the input and approval of Cllr. Phil Bevan, Cabinet Member for Education, Lifelong Learning and Leisure and Corporate Management Team. Both Cllr. Alan Higgs and Cllr. Keith Reynolds, local Members for Aberbargoed, were briefed before the consultation process began (please see **Appendix 1** for details on the consultation exercise and responses received).

- ❑ Consultation with users and residents (questionnaire, two public meetings, and a separate meeting with older residents)
- ❑ Bargoed Town Council
- ❑ Greater Bargoed Community Partnership
- ❑ Letters and accompanying surveys to specific interest groups – children, retired, and welsh language organisations
- ❑ Library Staff and trade unions

The Council's Youth Participation Team led the consultation with young people in the Aberbargoed area.

Prior to the consultation the County Borough Library Service undertook an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of the proposal to relocate Public Library provision from Pant Street, Aberbargoed to Hanbury Road, Bargoed (**see Appendix 2**).

- 3.3.1.3 Members of the public were invited from August 22nd until October 31st 2011 to complete a questionnaire seeking to measure the impact the changes proposed would have on them as individuals, their families, and the community of Aberbargoed. Information detailing the rationale for the proposed relocation of library provision was provided with each consultation survey.
- 3.3.1.4 The consultation exercise received 221 responses to 1,500 surveys distributed to locations within the village. Young people via the Hub team contributed 17 of the total responses received while 4 returns were made online. A total of 200 paper survey responses were received.
- 3.3.1.5 A total of 95 residents attended public meetings held in Aberbargoed on September 28th, October 19th, and October 26th 2011. The meeting held on October 19th 2011 was with members of Aberbargoed OAP Club.
- 3.3.1.6 Bargoed Town Council received a presentation by Council officers on the proposal to relocate library services from Pant Street, Aberbargoed to Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed on September 7th 2011. The Greater Bargoed Community Partnership received a similar presentation on July 25th 2011.

3.3.2 Consultation Findings

- 3.3.2.1 The findings of the consultation are summarised below:

Public Meetings

- ❑ The residents who attended the two public meetings and the session held with Aberbargoed OAP Club were against the proposal to relocate Library Services from Pant Street, Aberbargoed to the Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed.
- ❑ Residents requested that either the present facility were retained as is, or that it be refurbished or relocated to another accessible venue in the village.
- ❑ Other aspects of the residents concern with the proposal were:
 - The impact on young children and those studying that require access to books, IT facilities, and other resources to undertake their homework.
 - Transport and access difficulties. Residents pointed out that for children, older residents, and those with underlying health conditions, that Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed was too distant to travel by foot and that the present public transport arrangements were inadequate.
 - Numerous residents also stressed the community and social value of the present Library provision from Pant Street Aberbargoed. Attendees at each of the meetings felt that the community identity of Aberbargoed had not been considered sufficiently.

Consultation Questionnaire Results (Main Questionnaire and mediated Survey with Young People)

- ❑ Some 71.3% of survey respondents felt the proposed changes would impact significantly on themselves, their family, or their community.
- ❑ 86.9% of survey respondents felt strongly that they would not be able to access another library in the borough if the proposal was followed through.
- ❑ 82.9% of survey respondents felt strongly that they would not be able to access the Library within the new Hanbury Chapel development in Bargoed.
- ❑ Feedback to the mediated survey conducted among 17 young people was more contradictory with 41.2% agreeing the impact of the changes suggested would be significant for them while 58.8% noted that they would be able to use another Library should the present site be relocated to Hanbury Chapel.

Bargoed Town Council

Bargoed Town Council voted on October 5th 2011 to oppose the proposal.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The EIA (see **Appendix 2**) identified a number of potential vulnerable groups within the Aberbargoed area including children, young people, older residents, and the infirm. Particular emphasis was given within the consultation exercise to ensure the views of vulnerable groups were adequately represented (see **Appendix 1**). In addition it was identified that the views of Welsh speakers also required particular consideration.

Access issues linked to low levels of car ownership in Aberbargoed and the impact of current public transport provision between Aberbargoed and Bargoed were also recognised in the EIA.

3.4 Conclusions

- 3.4.1 Based on the requirement by this authority to meet the 4th Framework of Welsh Government Public Library Standards and key findings of the public consultation are:
- i) Retaining the present Library facility on Pant Street, Aberbargoed in its present condition and location is not tenable when considerations of proximity to the new statement Hanbury Chapel are considered and the future sustainability of the existing building are taken into account.
 - ii) The consultation process has highlighted a high degree of support for the Library in Aberbargoed as an important community, social, and learning facility.
 - iii) An improved public transport system, offering a greater number of direct buses between the two communities, would greatly improve the choice of library offer open to residents of all ages in Aberbargoed.
 - iv) The Library Link Housebound Service is already available to eligible residents within Aberbargoed in particular those vulnerable due to age, disability, or mobility, providing Library facilities delivered direct to the home.
 - v) Through the consultation process maintaining some form of alternative Library provision within Aberbargoed was a preferred option by residents. Residents were favourable to exploring alternative venues such as the existing primary and infant school sites and vacant shops.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The costs of updating Aberbargoed Library in line with the outcomes of the Council's Asset Management Plan Condition Survey, as noted in 3.2.3, would be approximately £11,000. A further £60,000 would be required to make the present facility fit for modern Public Library delivery.

- 4.2 There would be costs associated in the demolition of the present building in Aberbargoed these are being calculated at present. It may also be possible to sell the current building and associated land and accrue a capital receipt.
- 4.3 The closure of Aberbargoed Library would enable its current operating budget, £41,054 based on 2010/11 spend, to be allocated toward the new Hanbury Chapel facility.

5. PERSONNEL ISSUES

- 5.1 Two public facing Library staff would be transferred into the new Hanbury Chapel facility. Salary protection would be in place for the Senior Library Assistant in line with Council's Personnel Policies.
- 5.2 The costs associated with any transfer of Aberbargoed Library staff to the Hanbury Chapel facility would be £4,595 in detriment payments for the Senior Library Assistant over an 18-month period.
- 5.3 The present cleaner based at Aberbargoed Library would either be relocated to another Library site within the County Borough or offered the opportunity to transfer into the Council's Contract Cleaning team.
- 5.4 Initial meetings have taken place with all staff concerned to make them aware of the issues under consideration. Discussion with the unions will be formally undertaken when the outcome of the proposal to relocate library services from Pant Street, Aberbargoed to Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed is known. The relevant unions have been informally contacted to make them aware of the consultation process.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Please see section 3.3 above and **Appendix 1** for more information on the public consultation that has taken place.
- 6.2 The Cabinet Member for Education, Lifelong Learning, and Leisure is in agreement with the recommendations of this report.
- 6.3 Local Members, Cllr. Alan Higgs and Cllr. Keith Reynolds, have been actively involved in the consultation process throughout, their specific views on the proposal under consideration are noted below:
- ❑ Both Members stated they did not understand and agree with the rationale for the recommendation to relocate present Library provision to the Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed. The financial implications associated to the recommendation when staffing costs were excluded are minimal.
 - ❑ Both Members raised concerns regarding the accessibility of the Hanbury Chapel for children, the elderly, and infirm. The Members felt access to library facilities and Internet access would be denied to residents of Aberbargoed if the recommendation were carried through.
 - ❑ Members commented upon the improved performance of Aberbargoed Library over recent years with regard to books lent and visits to the site.
 - ❑ Members expressed concern regarding the continually withdrawal of services in Aberbargoed to serve an increasing housing stock.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 It is recommended that members approve the relocation of the present Library provision from Pant Street, Aberbargoed to the Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 The present Public Library facility in Aberbargoed does not meet Welsh Public Library Standard 9 (iv) with regard to public floor space. The Hanbury Chapel facility exceeds the minimum public floor space required to serve the wider Bargoed area including Aberbargoed.
- 8.2 A 100% of households in Aberbargoed are located within 2 miles of the new Hanbury Chapel facility this exceeds the minimum required by the Welsh Government in its 4th Framework of Public Library Standards 2011/14. The standard for Wales is 95%.
- 8.3 Aberbargoed Library provision relocated within the Hanbury Chapel sites offers improved benefits to residents as detailed in 3.2.8.

Author: Steve Mason, Principal Officer Community Education and Libraries
Consultees: Sandra Aspinall, Corporate Director – Education, Lifelong Learning and Leisure
Cllr. P Bevan – Cabinet Member Education, Lifelong Learning and Leisure
Dan Perkins – Head of Legal Services
Nicole Scammell – Head of Corporate Finance
Colin Jones – Head of Performance and Property Services
Tony Maher – Assistant Director Planning and Strategy
Education for Life Senior Management Team
Corporate Management Team
Cllr. A Higgs
Cllr. K Reynolds
Bargoed Town Council
Greater Bargoed Community Partnership

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Consultation Process and Key Findings
Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment Form

Background Papers:

Council November 2003 - Future Library Service for Caerphilly County Borough Council

Education for Life Scrutiny Committee 2nd June 2009. Caerphilly County Borough Council Library Service –Five Year Development Plan 2009-14

Cabinet 9th June 2009. Caerphilly County Borough Council Library Service –Five Year Development Plan 2009-14

Development of Hanbury Road Baptist Chapel Bargoed as Town Library and Customer First Centre - Corporate Management Team 1st October 2009

CONSULTATION PROCESS AND KEY FINDINGS

1. CONSULTATION TIMETABLE AND RESPONSES RECEIVED

Consultation Element	Timescales	Comments and considerations
Meeting with Cabinet Member Education, Lifelong Learning and Leisure	11 th July 2011	Cabinet member fully briefed on the consultation methodology and timetable.
Meetings with local County Councillors	12 th July 2011	Agreed to keep both local members informed of progress with the consultation on a staged basis.
Equality Impact Assessment	4 th July 2011 ongoing	Monitored and updated throughout consultation process.
Staff and Trade Union Consultation	23 rd August 2011	Discussions with the staff at site will link to the outcomes of the consultation process and subsequent Scrutiny and Cabinet reports.
Greater Bargoed Community Partnership meeting	July 25 th 2011	A presentation on the consultation process and proposal under consideration was given to the partnership.
Bargoed Town Council	September 7 th 2011	<p>A presentation on the consultation process and proposal under consideration was given to the partnership.</p> <p>A letter dated October 6th 2011 was received from Bargoed Town Council indicating that the Council had voted on October 5th to oppose the proposed closure of Aberbargoed Library.</p>
Public consultation – Questionnaire and outline proposal to relocate library provision from Pant Street Aberbargoed to Hanbury Chapel Bargoed	August 22 nd to October 31 st 2011	<p>1,500 survey forms produced and distributed to five locations in Aberbargoed including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aberbargoed Library - Premier Store - Health Clinic - Chemist - Credit Union <p>Both Primary Schools (Aberbargoed Primary and Ysgol Bro Sannan) distributed questionnaires to their pupils and parents/carers.</p>

Consultation Element	Timescales	Comments and considerations
		<p>200 replies were received to the consultation questionnaire (13.3% return rate).</p> <p>An online survey was available from two locations on the County Borough Council website, 4 partially completed replies were received.</p>
Consultation with Young People	September 12 th to October 31 st 2011	The Council's Youth Participation team consulted with young people using a modified version of the survey, 17 responses were received as part of the process.
<p>Public Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - St Peter's Church Hall, Aberbargoed - The Hangar, Aberbargoed 	<p>September 28th 2011</p> <p>October 26th 2011</p>	<p>38 people attended the first public meeting including both local Councillor and Gwyn Price AM.</p> <p>32 people attended the second public meeting including Councillor Keith Reynolds and Gwyn Price AM.</p>
Meeting with Aberbargoed Pensioners Group at the Hangar	October 19 th 2011	25 older persons attended.
<p>Letters with consultation forms were sent to nine special interest groups including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cylch ti a fi - Cylch Meithrin - Aberbargoed Rainbows - Credit Union - Young at Hearts 	September 6 th to 14 th 2011	Consultation form replies were received from the Aberbargoed Rainbows and Aberbargoed OAP Club.
Other responses including those from individuals in writing		<p>Responses were received from one local authority resident and from the local Police Community Support Officer (dated September 17th 2011).</p> <p>Gwyn Price AM for Islwyn wrote to Anthony O'Sullivan, Chief Executive of Caerphilly County Borough Council on September 23rd 2011.</p>

2. KEY FINDINGS

2.1 PUBLIC MEETINGS (INCLUDING SESSION WITH ABERBARGOED PENSIONER GROUP)

Two general public meetings took place during the consultation time period. The first on September 28th and the second on October 26th. Both meetings took place in the evening so that the widest range of residents could attend. Different locations were used within the community to ensure geographic coverage.

In addition to the two public meetings a separate session took place with Aberbargoed OAP Club on October 19th that was also attended by members of the general public. The feedback below seeks to represent the main areas of concern raised by residents at all three meetings, it is not the complete transcript of the comments made at any of the three sessions held.

- **Transport and access**

*“What’s the use of having a new facility in Bargoed if people can’t get there?”
“Too far to walk...No bus shelter”*

Residents have to rely on the bus service that has been identified as limited at all three public meetings held.

Lack of transport among older residents.

- **Services to Children (Homework support)**

Concerns raised about the travel distance children and young people would have to travel by foot to reach the Bargoed facility – roads in question were deemed too dangerous and the terrain challenging.

Children have all the resources and IT facilities they need in the present Library – they can access this service safely and it is convenient for them.

- **Services to Elderly (vulnerable)**

Bargoed Library considered too far for older residents to walk too, the terrain is too difficult. Many of the older people present did not have their own means of transport.

- **Library as a community resource**

“Don’t want a state of the art library – just a community library”

Older residents felt strongly that the present Aberbargoed Library is part of the community it serves.

Older residents noted that there is a beneficial social impact of meeting in the present Library.

- **Retain, develop, or redevelop provision in the village**

The overwhelming feeling expressed at all three meetings by those residents present (including the local AM and County Councillors) was that Aberbargoed Library should remain either where it is or be retained within an alternative accessible site in the village.

A number of possible alternative venues were suggested including the Aberbargoed Primary School or former Infant School site, a vacant shop, or be redeveloped and/or extended on its present location.

Officers were challenged to consider what grant funding could be sought that might enable the present facility to be updated and maintained if possible.

2.2 PUBLIC CONSULTATION SURVEY

Two hundred responses were received to the paper consultation questionnaire.

The age balance of the completed surveys is as follows:

- 27.5% children under 16 years of age
- 7.5% 16 to 24 year olds
- 23.5% 25 to 44 year olds
- 22% 45 to 64 year olds
- 19.5% 65+ years old

64.6% of the questionnaires were completed by female residents while 35.4% were filled in by male residents. In addition some 18.4% of respondents described themselves as being able to 'speak, read and write Welsh'.

35.8% of survey respondents indicated they had a long-term illness or health problem while 30.4% stated they had a disability, of these individuals 39.9% noted that their health condition and/or disability impacted on their daily activities and the work they could undertake.

4.8% of the respondents described their ethnic group as something other than 'White British'.

The data and percentage information provided in the table below are based on the number of responses to each specific question asked in the consultation survey. In a number of instances individuals may have chosen not to complete all the questions in a given section.

Question	Analysis
What is your interest in Aberbargoed Library? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Library customer - Relative/friend of a library customer - Resident of Aberbargoed 	= 142 (71.7%) = 23 (11.6%) = 12 (11.6%)
Do you use any other library within Caerphilly County Borough?	Yes = 33 (16.7%) No = 165 (83.3%)
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I understand why the library service needs to make changes to library provision in Aberbargoed - I am able to access the library at Bargoed - I will be able to access another library within the borough - I will no longer be able to access a library 	Disagree/strongly disagree = 136 (74.7%) = 126 (82.9%) = 132 (86.9%) = 60 (36.2%)
One option to help residents adapt to the changes proposed, would be to provide collections of library resources in various community venues. Do you think that this would help you to access library service?	Yes = 51 (26.7%) No = 140 (73.3%)
Which of the following statements best describes the impact you feel the proposed changes to the library service will have on you, your family and/or community? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposed changes will not affect me, my family or my community - Proposed changes will have some impact on me, my family or my community - Proposed changes will have a significant impact on me, my family or my community - I don't know 	= 11(5.6%) = 32 (16.4%) = 139 (71.3%) = 13 (6.7%)

Cross section of written survey comments received as part of the consultation questionnaire:

"Not enough time to walk to another Library – Mum and Dad work full time. I visit Aberbargoed Library with my Nana"

"I am 10 years old and enjoy going to the library with my friends. I am not allowed to go to Bargoed"

"I use the Library with my family as I don't feel Aberbargoed is a safe place for children to play anymore."

"I am unable to drive and Aberbargoed is local to me...It is my local Library where a number of my family attend. It has been part of the community for nearly 25 years and is used by many of the residents of Aberbargoed"

"I pay enough Council Tax to have my say, leave our Library alone"

"If you take away the Aberbargoed Library there are quite a number of older people who cannot access the Library in Bargoed"

"Because I have limited mobility the proposed site in Bargoed will make it very difficult for me to get to and from the Library"

"I will not use Bargoed Library. I never go to Bargoed there's nothing there for me. I live in walking distance of Aberbargoed Library and go there every week. The ladies working there are very helpful and have helped me use the computer"

"If you cannot drive to go to Bargoed and carry books home to Aberbargoed can be quite a task...If Aberbargoed closed where would the children be able to get their Library Services, for young people children to have no Library in Aberbargoed would be criminal"

"Not only would we lose the Library in regards to reading but also the computer facilities, not all households have a computer and having one in walking distance is a great advantage"

"My family would be very worried if I could not have my local Library, it is my one enjoyable time (disabled resident)"

"I am young and able – However Aberbargoed has lots of elderly people who rely on Aberbargoed Library heavily! They are unable to get to Bargoed...closing Aberbargoed Library would be a great shame for the older population of the village"

"The children and people in Aberbargoed need and deserve more facilities not less"

2.3 SPECIFIC CONSULTATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE (HUB TEAM RESPONSES)

The Council's Youth Participation team consulted with a range of young people from the Aberbargoed area. A modified version of the public consultation questionnaire was used to seek the views and concerns of young people to the proposal to relocate Aberbargoed Library, Pant Street to Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed.

17 completed survey responses were collected as part of this section of the consultation process. The key findings are as follows:

- ❑ 41.2% were existing library customers (7)
- ❑ 17.6% use other libraries in the County Borough (3)
- ❑ 58.8% understood why the library service needs to make changes to library provision in Aberbargoed (10)
- ❑ 76.4% indicated they would be able to access the library at Bargoed (13)
- ❑ 58.8% disagreed with the statement that they would no longer be able to access a library – should Aberbargoed be relocated (10)
- ❑ 47.1% agreed that they would be able to access another library within the borough (8)
- ❑ 82.4% thought the use of community venues to provide residents with access to library resources would help (14)
- ❑ 41.2% felt the proposed changes to the library service in Aberbargoed would have a significant impact on them, their family or their community (7).

 <p>CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL CAERFFILI</p>	<h2>EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM</h2>
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NAME OF NEW OR REVISED POLICY / FUNCTION / PROJECT	Relocation of Aberbargoed Library to Bargoed Hanbury Chapel facility
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DIRECTORATE	Education and Leisure
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SERVICE AREA	Community Education and Libraries
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CONTACT OFFICER	Steve Mason Principal Community Education and Libraries Officer Gareth Evans Senior Manager - Libraries
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DATE POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED / REVISED NEXT	Relocation dependent upon outcome consultation process October 2011 and subsequent Scrutiny and Cabinet of reports in December 2011
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PURPOSE OF THE POLICY / FUNCTION / PROJECT

1.	<p>What is the policy intended to achieve? <i>(Please give a brief description of the purpose of this policy/procedure)</i></p> <p>The County Borough Council proposes relocation Aberbargoed Library, Pant Street, within the new Hanbury Road Baptist Chapel facility, Bargoed.</p> <p>The Hanbury Road facility is sited less than 1 mile from Aberbargoed Library and serves a wide geographic catchment area that includes Aberbargoed.</p> <p>Consultation on the proposal to relocate provision is currently taking place with, residents, stakeholders, and interested bodies (Bargoed Town Council, Greater Bargoed Community Partnership) and will conclude on Monday October 31st 2011. The aim is to ensure that the views and concerns of local people, vulnerable/minority groups, and the widest range of individuals affected by the proposed changes are considered as part of the decision making process.</p>
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2.	<p>Who is the policy for? <i>(Who will be directly affected by the delivery of this policy/procedure? e.g. staff, public generally, specific sections of the public)</i></p> <p>The proposed relocation of Aberbargoed Library within the Hanbury Chapel will affect residents and present service users who live, work, or study in the village.</p> <p>The staff employed by the Council in Aberbargoed Library will also be affected by the proposal under consideration. Alternative posts within the Library Service are available for all the employees affected by the proposals being considered.</p>
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IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

3. Does the policy ensure that everyone has an equal access to all the services available?
(What has been done to examine whether or not one or more of these groups do not have direct access to the service or receive the service in a different way, if so which groups are affected?)

The current Library in Aberbargoed is used by a wide range of people who live, work, or study in the area serviced by this facility.

The Library serves a catchment population of approximately 3,501 residents. The Library has 1,365 registered customers broken down into the following broad categories:

Under 5's	60
5 to 16	371
16 to 25	305
25 to 59	447
60+	139
Playgroups and other bodies	43

Of these categories the most active customers groupings are those under 16 or who are 60+.

It was anticipated in advance that children, young people, the elderly, or infirm would be the groupings most likely to be disadvantaged by any changes in the present pattern of provision/delivery. The consultation process also identified residents who may be excluded due to lack of access to a car or other private means of transport (40.6% of households have no access to a car or van compared to the Council average of 29.2%).

The consultation timetable included specific elements that aimed at reaching a number of these groups through questionnaires distributed via local Primary Schools, Street Youth Workers engaging with young adults, staff attendance at a meeting of the older persons club. Additionally a number of groups and societies were corresponded with, this included a number of welsh language organisations (welsh group were sent bilingual letters and surveys).

Actions required

The outcome of the consultation process thus far has identified the following areas that may require consideration to assist in maintaining equality of access to Library Services for residents of Aberbargoed:

- Homework support resources and IT facilities relocated to another community site in the village, subject to location, access, and appropriate mentored support being available
- Utilisation of 'Library Link' Housebound Mobile Libraries to reach those individuals disadvantaged by age, disability or underlying health condition. The Library Link service takes resources and access direct to the individual's home setting.
- Consider improvements that could be made to the present bus service between Aberbargoed and Bargoed. Present direct connections are limited to approximately one service per hour in each direction, however there are a number of indirect routes where walking or even train travel can increase the number of options available.
- Develop an improved welsh language offer in Hanbury Road Baptist Chapel site both for children and adults alike – suitable to support the needs of all welsh speakers in the area.

The majority of residents surveyed and groups consulted asked for the present service from Pant Street to be maintained and if possible funding sought to improve the present building.

The local staff located at Aberbargoed Library will be relocated to the Hanbury Chapel site, subject to the outcome of the consultation process and subsequent Cabinet report.

4.	<p>What are the consequences of the policy for particular groups? <i>(Has the service delivery been examined to assess if there is any indirect affect on any groups? Could the consequences of the policy differ dependent upon people's gender, race, sexuality, age, language, disability, religion/belief?)</i></p> <p>Please see response to section 3 above</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>Please see response to section 3 above</p>

INFORMATION COLLECTION

5.	<p>Is full information and analysis of users of the service available? <i>(Is this service effectively targeting all its potential users or is there higher or lower participation or uptake by one or more groups? If this is so, What has been done to address any difference in take up of the service one or more groups?)</i></p> <p>A detailed consultation exercise has been undertaken (please see 6 below).</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

CONSULTATION

6.	<p>What consultation has taken place? <i>(What steps been taken to ensure that women and men, different racial groups, Welsh speakers and disabled people have been consulted during the development of this policy /procedure?)</i></p> <p>Between Monday August 22nd and Monday October 31st 2011 a detailed consultation on the future of Aberbargoed Library, Pant Street has taken place. This consultation has included the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questionnaire on the proposal to relocate provision to Hanbury Chapel, Bargoed (including proposal details and information sheet). - Multiple access points for residents to participate in the consultation exercise including 5 locations in the village where survey forms could be collected and returned - Provision of the questionnaire online via the Caerphilly County Borough's website. - Access to the questionnaire in welsh and in large print formats. - A modified questionnaire has been used by the Council's Youth Participation Team to gather the views of young people in the Aberbargoed area. - Senior Library Officers have been available at agreed times in Aberbargoed Library to answer questions from the public. - Two public meetings have taken place in local venues attended by some 70 residents, including Gwyn Price AM and Councillors Alan Higgs and Keith Reynolds - The Aberbargoed Pensioners Club hosted a meeting for older residents to find out more and input into the consultation process – 25 attended. - Both Primary Schools in the Aberbargoed area supported the consultation process sending letters and survey forms home with their pupils - Letters were sent to special interest groups, accompanied by the questionnaire, including the local Cylch Meithrin, Aberbargoed Rainbows, Aberbargoed Ladies Choir, and Allotment association. - Local Councillors were briefed ahead of the consultation commencing and were kept informed of different stages in the process. - The Cabinet Member for Education, Lifelong Learning, and Leisure was briefed throughout the process.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bargoed Town Council and Bargoed Community Partnership received briefings from officers who attended their meetings and were asked to contribute to the consultation process. - Local staff in Aberbargoed Library have been briefed throughout the process and where individuals are members of a trade union their respective union officials have been informed of the status of the consultation exercise. <p>The venues selected for both public meetings were DDA accessible and one of the two Primary Schools who participated in the consultation exercise is a Welsh medium establishment.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>A detailed consultation process has been completed.</p>

MONITORING AND REVIEW

<p>7.</p>	<p>How will the policy be monitored? <i>(What monitoring process has been set up assess the extent that the service is being used by all sections of the community?)</i></p> <p>Following the completion of the consultation a report detailing its main findings will be prepared. This report will also make recommendations on the future of Aberbargoed Library and its possible relocation within the Hanbury Chapel facility.</p> <p>The report will be presented to the Education Directorate Senior Management Team, Education for Life Scrutiny Committee, and Cabinet.</p> <p>The County Borough Library Service on behalf of the Council will monitor recommendations and actions agreed as a result of this report.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>See above.</p>

<p>8.</p>	<p>How will the policy be evaluated? <i>(What methods will be used to ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are being met?)</i></p> <p>Dependent on the outcome of the consultation exercise and subsequent Cabinet report.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

<p>9.</p>	<p>Have any support / guidance / training requirements been identified? <i>(Has the EIA or consultation process shown a need for awareness raising amongst staff, or identified the need for Equality training of some sort?)</i></p> <p>N/A</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

10.	<p>What could be done better next time? <i>(What has been learned to help ensure that the needs of the community will be better catered for in the future?)</i></p> <p>Too early to determine the broader effectiveness of the consultation process undertaken.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>An internal review of the consultation process undertaken and its effectiveness will take place in due course.</p>

Completed By:	Gareth Evans
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Date:	On going during consultation period and prior to its commencement – final entries in EIA on 31 st October 2011
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Position:	Senior Manager - Libraries
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Name of Head of Service:	Steve Mason, Principal Officer Community Education and Libraries
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