

Opening Hours Policy

Date: September 2021

Review Date: September 2024



Policy Information	
Policy Title	<i>Opening Hours Policy</i>
Policy Number:	<i>POL045</i>
Version	<i>Version 3 (September 2021)</i>
Policy Sponsor	<i>The Chief Executive</i>
Policy Owner	<i>The Director of Library Services</i>
Committee and date recommended for approval	<i>Services Committee, 16 September 2021</i>
Date approved by the Board	<i>14 October 2021</i>
Equality Screening Status	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Screened: 26 June 2015 2. Screening Reviewed: 8 February 2018 3. Screening Reviewed: 5 August 2021
Rural Needs Impact Assessment Status	<i>Assessed: 5 August 2021</i>
Date Set For Review	<i>September 2024</i>
Related Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s and Young People’s Services Policy • Engaging with Culture and Creativity Policy • Equality Policy • Health and Safety Policy • Heritage Policy • Partnership Policy • Reading and Reader Development Policy • Safeguarding Policy

Libraries NI

Opening Hours Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The primary duty of Libraries NI, as set out in the Libraries Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, is to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service for persons living, working or studying in Northern Ireland.
- 1.2 This service is provided via a network of branch libraries supported by Mobile, Homecall, outreach and online services.
- 1.3 Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries states *"it is important to ensure that the library service is available in the places, at the times, and in the ways that enable as many people as possible to use it."*
- 1.4 Branch Library opening hours are a major factor in determining access to library services.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out Libraries NI's approach to opening hours.
- 2.2 Opening hours in the context of this policy means staffed opening hours; it does not include the 'Out of Hours' service.

3. Policy

- 3.1 Libraries NI will ensure that within the constraints imposed by available resources:
 - a consistent approach to determining opening hours is applied across all libraries; exceptions may be made for libraries serving areas of substantial social need and/or rural libraries
 - opening hours relate to the historic level of use of a library
 - the allocated hours are used in a way that best meets customer need
 - the allocated hours in every library are sufficient to provide a range of opening hours to suit different customer groups and to allow a minimum range of programmes to be delivered in line with Libraries NI's priorities
 - the opening hours are affordable
 - the opening hours are sustainable i.e. ad hoc closures due to staffing shortages should be avoided other than in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.2 During holiday periods, opening hours may be amended to reflect customer demand for services, resources and to ensure sustainable opening hours.

4. Authority

Policy Sponsor: The Chief Executive is the Policy Sponsor.

Policy Owner: The Director of Library Services is the Policy Owner.

Policy Contact: The Heads of Service are the Policy Contacts.

5. Related Documents

Policies

- Children's and Young People's Services Policy
- Engaging with Culture and Creativity Policy
- Equality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Heritage Policy
- Partnership Policy
- Reading and Reader Development Policy
- Safeguarding Policy