Birmingham Libraries Consultation

Findings from the First Phase of Birmingham City Council's Libraries Consultations held during 4th April – 17th July 2024

Contents

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Purpose of the Libraries Consultation

- People who live, work, or study in Birmingham were **invited to help shape** the future of the library service for Birmingham during the First Phase Libraries Consultation which took place from **4th April 2024 – 17th July 2024.**

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

- Both locally and nationally, **the ways in which people use library services have changed significantly** over the last five or so years.

- At the same time, like many other local authorities, Birmingham City Council continues to face a **significantly challenging financial situation** and is required to **make considerable budget savings** across all its services. The review of the library service aims to achieve greater efficiency and value for money, and the continuing provision of a library service.

- While savings have been announced, **no decisions have been made on what the library service will look like in the future**. The findings from the first phase consultation highlighted in this report, and the findings from the final phase consultation (taking place over August – September 2024) will **help inform any next steps**.

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Purpose of this report

- The first phase of public consultations took place during **4th April 2024 – 17th July 2024**, inviting people who live, work, or study in Birmingham to help shape the future of the Library service.

- The first phase of the consultation mainly focused on **'current usage'** and securing feedback on the **'proposed delivery models'** via 7 feedback mechanisms (described on slide 5).

- The final phase of the consultation is taking place from **late August until the 27th September** and will focus on the **'future of Birmingham's Libraries'.**

- The purpose of this report is to provide at a Birmingham-level, details of the findings from **the 7 feedback mechanisms** that formed part of the first phase of consultation. Details of findings per library are available at each library.
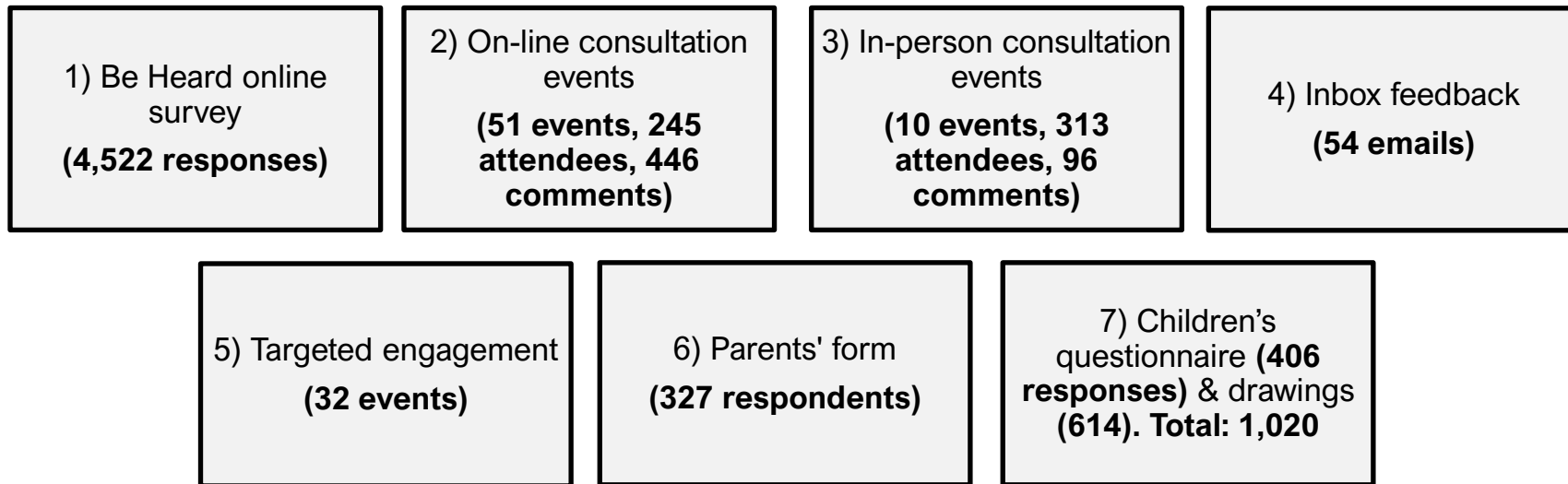
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First stage consultation feedback mechanisms – (4th April-17th July 2024)

1 Be Heard online survey	2 Online consultation events	3 In-person consultation events	4 Inbox Feedback	5 Targeted engagement	6 Parents' Form	7 Children's questionnaire and drawings
66 questions on the proposed changes to the Library Service and alternatives people may wish to propose	General comments on the proposed Library changes received in online forums per library in the day, and per constituency during the evening	General comments received on the proposed options, alternative suggestions and how to attract wider usage	Feedback which has been sent directly to an inbox about the Libraries consultation	Focussed specifically on capturing the views of key target groups (e.g. individuals with a disability, faith groups, ethnic groups, those who are of pension age, LGBTQ+) via focus groups and in-person feedback	Focussed engagement on parents, carers and legal guardians	A child and young person targeted questionnaire and drawings to gather views from children and young people

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Responses received per consultation

1) Be Heard online survey **(4,522 responses)**

2) On-line consultation events **(51 events, 245 attendees, 446 comments)**

3) In-person consultation events **(10 events, 313 attendees, 96 comments)**

4) Inbox feedback **(54 emails)**

5) Targeted engagement **(32 events)**

6) Parents' form **(327 respondents)**

7) Children's questionnaire **(406 responses)** & drawings **(614). Total: 1,020**

Please note, these numbers may differ very slightly from previously publicised results due to the removal of duplicate responses and the completion of analysis

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Executive summary (Slide 1 of 3)

Section 1 - Summary of findings from the Be Heard Survey:

- **Response rate:** 4522 respondents completed the survey.
- **Library services:** The top 5 library services respondents consider to be the most important are: 1) Borrow a book, 2) Access to Information/Advice, 3) Attend library community events/activities/groups, 4) Access to a public PC, 5) Space to meet people or study
- **Access requirements:** Most respondents visit their library weekly. Most respondents walk to their library. The most popular times respondents would like to visit a library are Saturday morning or afternoon. Most respondents use the Birmingham Libraries website every few months, mainly for reservations and renewals.
- **Library proposals:** Most respondents strongly disagree with co-locating services within the community hubs proposal. Most neither agree nor disagree with the mixed-delivery proposal. Most neither agree nor disagree that the mixed-delivery proposal will safeguard the future of Birmingham Libraries. Most think Birmingham City Council should consider a council-run full-time community library hub.
- **Strategic vision:** Most somewhat agree with the vision for Birmingham libraries. Most somewhat agree with the libraries priorities moving forward. Most are neutral about the strategic framework proposed and subsequent actions. Most are neutral about the community hub approach.

Section 2 - Summary of findings from the Online Consultation events across Birmingham's Libraries:

- 351 comments were documented during the online consultation events held across Birmingham's Libraries. Most comments relate to impacts and concerns around library closure (such as decision making), other frequent comments relate to suggestions for the future (such as involving the community and/or wider groups, better/more marketing/promotion of libraries), and some comments refer to how else respondents would like to access libraries (such as a multi-functional space, relevant to community needs).

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Executive summary (Slide 2 of 3)

Section 2 - Summary of findings from the Online Consultation events across Birmingham's Constituencies:

- 95 comments have been documented during the online consultation events held across Birmingham's Constituencies.
- Most comments relate to impacts and concerns around library closure (such as decision making and concerns around accessibility and usage), other frequent comments relate to suggestions for the future (such as undertaking research/securing further feedback and engaging businesses/developing local partnerships), and some comments refer to how else respondents would like to access libraries (holding events/activities/workshops and ensuring libraries are relevant to community needs).

Section 3 - Summary of findings from the In-person consultation events across Birmingham:

- 96 comments have been documented during the in-person events held across Birmingham.
- Most comments relate to impacts and concerns (such as around accessibility and usage of libraries if they are closed and further away for residents to travel to, and on BCC's current and future financial situation), other most frequent comments relate to suggestions for the future (such as engaging/collaborating with schools, and marketing/promoting libraries more), and some comments refer to how else respondents would like to access libraries (such as having trained staff/professionals and for Knowledge and learning opportunities).

Section 4 – Summary of feedback from the emails received to a dedicated Libraries Public Consultation Inbox:

- Out of the 54 emails received, 41 were against proposals, 9 were neutral, and 4 were supportive of proposals.

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Executive summary (Slide 3 of 3)

Section 5 - Summary of feedback received through Targeted engagement:

- **Individuals with a disability:** Most felt the community hub model was a good idea if it means libraries will stay open. Suggestions also included ensuring there was a virtual offer available for neurodivergent people as they are more likely to access this function.
- **Faith Groups:** The majority agreed with the community hub model, but also mentioned it being important for hubs to retain a quiet space for reading.
- **Ethnic minority groups:** Most felt the community hub model was a good idea and that having a multi-functional space will be good for community connection.
- **Those who are of pension age:** There was a mixed response to the community hub model with concern around multi-functional space affecting provision of private/confidential spaces which are safe.
- **LGBTQ+:** All respondents agreed with the community hub model and suggestions included ensuring that safe spaces were available for people to work from.

Section 6 – Summary of feedback received from Parents' forms:

- Most parents visit a library weekly. Most agree with the proposed library model.
- The most important thing in a library for parents are books and literature availability and space and activities for children. The most frequent response to what the council could do to encourage people into libraries was hold events/ activities/ workshops/ classes and market/advertise libraries more. The most frequent suggestion on how to improve the community hub model was to market/promote them more and amend opening days and/or hours to make more suitable.

Section 7 – Summary of Children's Questionnaire and Drawings:

- A total of 1020 children's questionnaires and drawings were submitted.
- Most travel to the library via walking. Children and young people most like to read/explore books, take part in activities and arts and crafts and use the computer in a library. In terms of other things children and young people would like to do in the library is take part in activities, play games and access new facilities.

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1) Findings from the Be Heard Survey

The Be Heard Survey asked respondents 66 questions focussed on current usage, access requirements, feedback on proposed changes and the strategic vision.
4522 responses were received across all Libraries

Please note, that in this section, any 1 comment/response made by a respondent may include several things that they have 'mentioned'. Therefore the number of times something is 'mentioned' may exceed the number of respondents.
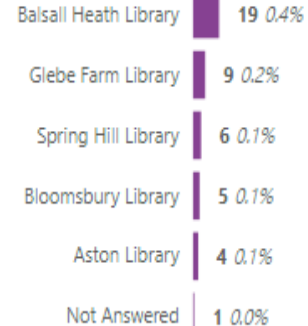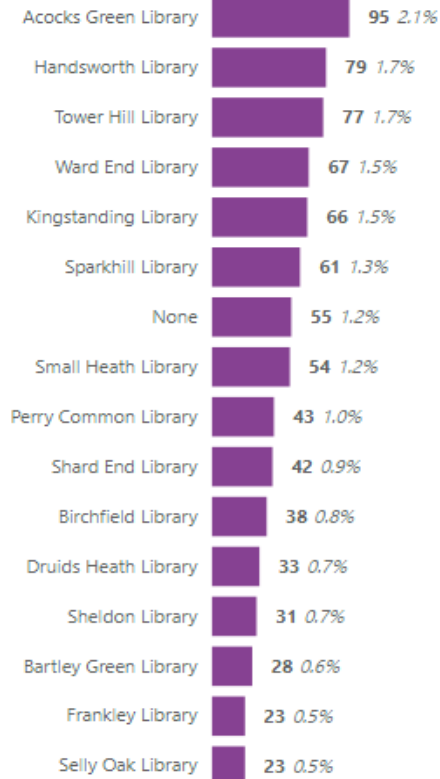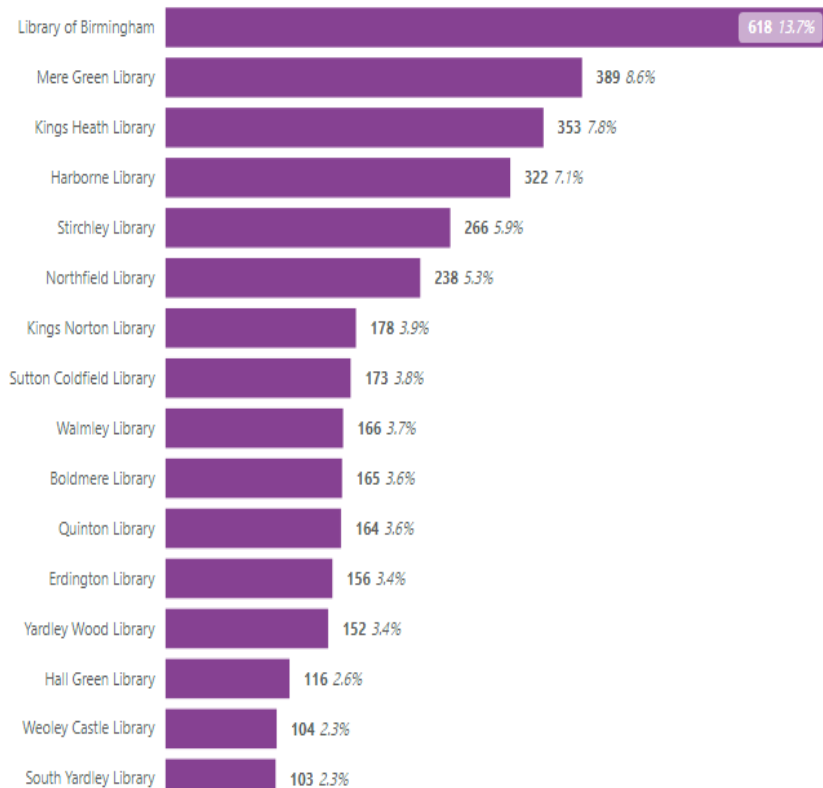
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The below provides a breakdown of respondents who have participated in the Be Heard Survey

- A total of **4522 respondents completed the Be Heard online survey**

- **Responses received by constituency:** Edgbaston (514), Erdington (265), Hall Green and Moseley (530), Hodge Hill and Solihull North (118), Ladywood (702), Northfield (543), Perry Barr (198), Selly Oak (474), Yardley (229), Sutton Coldfield (893), unknown (56)

- **Library members**: 95.3% of all respondents are a Library member

- **Age groups:** Most respondents were aged 25-49 (1862 respondents), those aged 60+ (1566 respondents) and those aged 50-59 (648 respondents). Those under the age of 16 were the least likely to respond to the survey (178 respondents)

- **Ethnicity:** The top 5 ethnic groups who completed the questionnaire were: 1) White British (74.3%), 2) Other White (5.4%), 3) Indian (5.1%), 4) Pakistani (4.3%), 5) Black British (2.5%)

- **Economic activity:** Most respondents who completed the questionnaire are working as an employee (44.1%) followed by those who are retired (26.4%)

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The libraries which 4522 respondents have selected they use most often are:

Library	Count	%
Library of Birmingham	618	13.7%
Mere Green Library	389	8.6%
Kings Heath Library	353	7.8%
Harborne Library	322	7.1%
Stirchley Library	266	5.9%
Northfield Library	238	5.3%
Kings Norton Library	178	3.9%
Sutton Coldfield Library	173	3.8%
Walmley Library	166	3.7%
Boldmere Library	165	3.6%
Quinton Library	164	3.6%
Erdington Library	156	3.4%
Yardley Wood Library	152	3.4%
Hall Green Library	116	2.6%
Weoley Castle Library	104	2.3%
South Yardley Library	103	2.3%

Library	Count	%
Acocks Green Library	95	2.1%
Handsworth Library	79	1.7%
Tower Hill Library	77	1.7%
Ward End Library	67	1.5%
Kingstanding Library	66	1.5%
Sparkhill Library	61	1.3%
None	55	1.2%
Small Heath Library	54	1.2%
Perry Common Library	43	1.0%
Shard End Library	42	0.9%
Birchfield Library	38	0.8%
Druids Heath Library	33	0.7%
Sheldon Library	31	0.7%
Bartley Green Library	28	0.6%
Frankley Library	23	0.5%
Selly Oak Library	23	0.5%

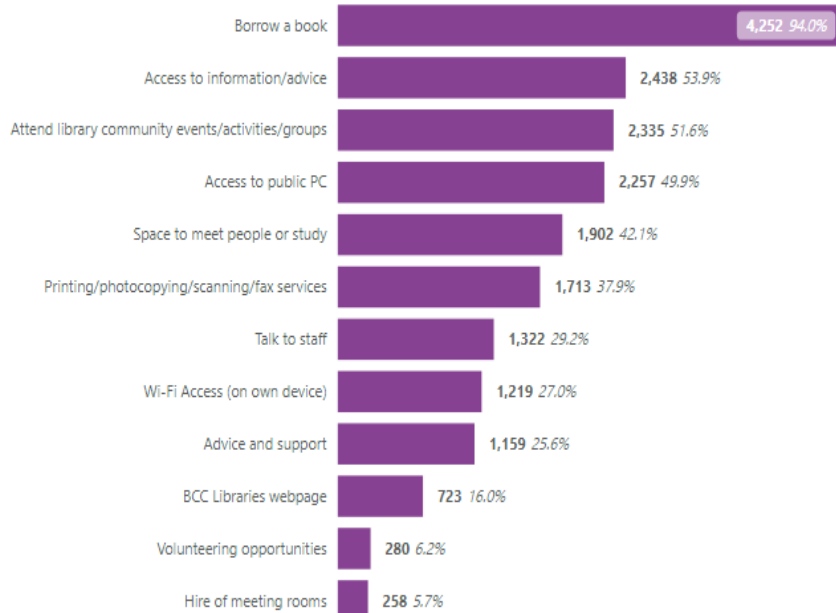| Library	Count	%
Balsall Heath Library	19	0.4%
Glebe Farm Library	9	0.2%
Spring Hill Library	6	0.1%
Bloomsbury Library	5	0.1%
Aston Library	4	0.1%
Not Answered	1	0.0%

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The chart to the left shows the services respondents consider to be the most important. The chart to the right shows how often respondents use these services

Which library services respondents consider to be the most important?

Service	Value	%
Borrow a book	4,252	94.0%
Access to information/advice	2,438	53.9%
Attend library community events/activities/groups	2,335	51.6%
Access to public PC	2,257	49.9%
Space to meet people or study	1,902	42.1%
Printing/photocopying/scanning/fax services	1,713	37.9%
Talk to staff	1,322	29.2%
Wi-Fi Access (on own device)	1,219	27.0%
Advice and support	1,159	25.6%
BCC Libraries webpage	723	16.0%
Volunteering opportunities	280	6.2%
Hire of meeting rooms	258	5.7%

How often respondents use services provided by a Birmingham Community Library

Service	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Every few months	Yearly	Never
Borrow a book	1.6%	30.6%	37.0%	19.2%	5.4%	7.9%
Access to public PC access	2.1%	7.6%	7.5%	13.6%	8.3%	61.6%
Wi-Fi Access (on own device)	3.2%	14.3%	13.6%	13.3%	4.5%	51.9%
Printing/photocopying/scanning/fax services	1.0%	5.6%	9.0%	18.4%	12.7%	54.0%
Access to information/advice	1.8%	11.3%	16.9%	24.5%	12.0%	34.8%
Attend library community events/activities/groups	0.9%	12.0%	12.9%	21.1%	14.2%	40.0%
Space to meet people or study	2.3%	15.4%	13.5%	16.1%	7.5%	46.3%
Employment, skills, and training support	0.7%	3.1%	3.0%	5.9%	5.2%	82.5%
Welfare benefits and money advice	0.4%	2.0%	1.8%	4.0%	4.0%	88.4%
Digital inclusion and support	0.7%	3.0%	2.5%	4.5%	3.7%	85.8%
Housing and Homeless Prevention	0.4%	1.5%	1.2%	1.7%	1.6%	94.0%
Informal Learning	1.5%	10.1%	11.7%	15.3%	7.6%	54.7%
Health and Wellbeing activities	1.0%	7.2%	7.0%	9.4%	7.0%	69.1%
Hire of meeting rooms	0.4%	1.9%	2.0%	2.9%	4.0%	89.1%
Volunteering opportunities	0.5%	2.1%	2.5%	3.6%	4.2%	87.6%
Talk to staff	2.7%	22.2%	21.8%	14.9%	6.2%	33.5%
BCC Libraries webpage	3.0%	15.9%	17.8%	14.7%	5.5%	44.6%

Respondents who selected 'Access to advice/information' as the service they consider to be the most important, were asked which advice/information they would like to seek, of which: 39.4% selected cultural events, 34.1% selected community connection advice/activities, 33.3% selected health and well-being activities, 30.6% selected children's activities, 24.1% selected employment, skills and training support, 21% selected youth activities, 20.4% selected welfare, benefits and money advice, 17.2% selected digital inclusion and support, 16.7% selected community safety and 10.8% selected housing and homeless prevention

The responses below refer to how the 4522 respondents would like to access libraries

- **How often respondents visit a library:** The majority visit weekly (40.5%) and monthly (34.2%), followed by 16% who visit every few months, 4% who visit daily, 3.3% who visit yearly and 2% who never visit.

- **Of those who have not visited a Library in the last 12 months, when asked for the reasons for not doing so:** 280 selected 'opening hours don't work for me', 109 selected 'do not offer anything that I currently require or am interested in', 75 selected 'location – difficult for me to get to, and 59 selected 'don't know what they offer'.

- **How respondents normally travel to a Library:** Walk (65.8%), Car/motorbike (32.4%), Bus (16.3%), Bicycle (4.3%), Train (4.2%)

- **How far respondents travel to their preferred library:** Less than 1 mile (45.9%), 1-2 miles (38.6%), More than 2 miles (14.3%), Not answered (1.2%)

- **When respondents would like to visit a Library** (Mostly Saturday morning and afternoon):

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning	28.6%	33.7%	22.2%	31.5%	30.0%	52.7%
Lunchtime	14.3%	16.3%	13.4%	17.0%	16.8%	29.4%
Afternoon	26.6%	31.8%	23.5%	34.2%	31.0%	46.2%
Evening	11.2%	11.9%	11.7%	16.5%	12.3%	12.6%

- **When would be more suitable for respondents to access a Library:** Morning (45%), Saturday (43.9%), Afternoon (43%), In the evenings 5-7pm (37.5%), Over lunchtime (22.9%)

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The responses below refer to the usage of the Birmingham libraries website

- **How often respondents use the Birmingham Libraries website:** Every few months (24.3%), Monthly (23.5%), Weekly (20.4%), Never (17.5%), Daily (4.5%), Not answered (1.2%)

- **Which website features respondents have used in the last 12 months:** Reservations and renewals (58.4%), Library catalogue (56.5%), Finding nearest Library opening times (44.9%), General information about the Library service (31%), Event and activity information (20.3%), E-books, e-mags and e-audio loans (17.3%), Online access to resources e.g. ancestry, driving theory test, citizenship (9.3%), Online joining (5.5%)

- **Online library services respondents would find most interesting:** Free e-books to borrow (47.8%), Historic photos and maps of Birmingham (47.5%), Free audio books to download (43.2%), Blogs and social media about Birmingham's history (40%), Community connection advice/activities (32.6%), Children's activity sheets to download (31.9%), Blogs and social media about Birmingham today (30.2%)

How respondents would rate the Birmingham Libraries website features:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Never used
Library catalogue	19.8%	39.2%	13.2%	1.4%	0.4%	24.8%
Reservations and renewals	32.8%	32.2%	8.7%	0.8%	0.3%	24.0%
E-books, e-Mags and e-Audio loans	7.3%	15.5%	8.7%	1.7%	0.7%	64.9%
Online joining	7.8%	16.4%	5.9%	0.8%	0.4%	67.5%
Finding your nearest library/opening times	23.9%	37.5%	10.5%	1.3%	0.5%	25.1%
General information about the Library Service	16.5%	35.0%	12.7%	1.9%	0.5%	32.2%
Online access to resources e.g. ancestry, driving theory test, citizenship	5.7%	11.2%	5.5%	1.0%	0.4%	74.9%
Event and activity information	8.7%	22.2%	12.1%	3.2%	1.3%	51.3%
Overall appearance	13.4%	37.2%	22.7%	4.2%	1.4%	19.8%
Ease of use	16.4%	36.8%	22.0%	4.0%	1.0%	18.5%

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The responses below refer to feedback from respondents on Library proposals

(Please see appendices for further detail on the community Hubs and mixed-delivery proposals, located at the end of the document from pages 45 +)

- **Extent respondents agree or disagree on co-locating services within the community hubs proposal:** Strongly disagree (1013 respondents), Neither agree nor disagree (963 respondents), Agree (910 respondents), Disagree (732 respondents), Don't know (597 respondents), Strongly agree (306 respondents)

- **Extent respondents agree or disagree on the mixed-delivery proposal:** Neither agree nor disagree (1264 respondents), Agree (868 respondents), Don't know (771 respondents), Disagree (727 respondents), Strongly disagree (711 respondents), Strongly agree (180 respondents)

- **Extent respondents agree or disagree that the mixed delivery proposals will safeguard the future of Birmingham Libraries:** Neither agree nor disagree (1223 respondents), Agree (909 respondents), Disagree (757 respondents), Strongly disagree (749 respondents), Don't know (639 respondents), Strongly agree (244 respondents)

- **Library options BCC should consider for the library respondents use most often:** Council-run full time community Library hub (66.3%), Contracting with a local community group/organisation to lead and deliver Library offer (31%), Council run part time community Library hub (25.9%), Provide an enhanced online library offer (17.8%), Deliver library based events outside of library buildings at alternative community venues (11.9%), Providing an electronic access point within the community for enquiries to be made for book requests and delivery (9.9%), Moving aspects of the library offer into the building of other service providers (9.3%), Providing a mobile library service stop instead (5.2%)

- **What would be of most interest to respondents at a Community Library hub:** Book lending services (86.5%), Cultural events and activities (46.1%), Children and youth services (37.2%), Access to study space (37.1%), Access to PCs (34.3%), Community connection activities (33.9%), Health and Well-being (26.7%), Jobs, skills and education support (19.1%), Digital Inclusion support (16%), Access to welfare benefits advice and other support with your finances (16%), Community safety (15.5%), Housing support (11.1%)

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The responses below refer to feedback from respondents on the Strategic Vision

(Please see appendices for further detail on the Strategic vision, located at the end of the document from pages 45 +)

- **Extent respondents agree this is the right vision for Birmingham Libraries:** Somewhat agree (1572 respondents), Neutral (1287 respondents), Strongly agree (783 respondents), Strongly disagree (445 respondents), Somewhat disagree (434 respondents)

- **Extent respondents agree with the Libraries priorities moving forward:** Somewhat agree (1526 respondents), Neutral (1160 respondents), Strongly agree (1121 respondents), Somewhat disagree (389 respondents), Strongly disagree (325 respondents)

- **Extent respondents agree with the strategic framework proposed and actions**: Neutral (1975 respondents), Somewhat agree (1214 respondents), Strongly disagree (545 respondents), Somewhat disagree (484 respondents), Strongly agree (303 respondents)

- **Extent respondents agree with the Community Hub approach:** Neutral (1782 respondents), Somewhat agree (1230 respondents), Strongly disagree (607 respondents), Somewhat disagree (526 respondents), Strongly agree (376 respondents)

- **The areas respondents think it is most appropriate to be reducing spending on:** Printing/photocopying/scanning/fax services (27.6%), Mobile Library provision (27.1%), Cultural events and activities (27.1%), BCC Libraries webpage (21.7%), Access to free Wi-Fi (21.7%), Community connection activities (19%), Number of library buildings (17.5%), Access to PC's (17%), Access to information/advice services (12.4%), Access to study space (12.4%), Children & family events and activities (11%), Range of books (10.7%)

- **What is most important to respondents (Rank 1-4 with One being most important and Four being least important):**

	One	Two	Three	Four
Having a Library resource that gives me access to a full range of services	50.7%	19.3%	9.7%	21.1%
Having a library resource that I can access at any time	30.0%	21.2%	25.6%	23.9%
Having a library resource that I can access on any day	29.4%	28.7%	27.3%	15.3%
Having access to a library resource close to where I live	66.3%	16.8%	7.1%	10.3%

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Open text responses on Library proposals and Strategic vision (1/3)

The 5 most frequent emerging suggestions provided by respondents to what the council can do to encourage people into libraries were (3716 respondents answered this question):

1) Marketing/Advertising/Promotion/Communication (1272 mentions) such as: advertising the range of services available marketing to schools, advertise on social media platforms etc.

2) Events, activities, workshops (1256 mentions) such as: book clubs, coffee mornings for elderly people, arts and crafts classes etc.

3) Amend opening days and/or hours (882 mentions) such as: later opening times for people who work full-time, open at lunchtimes etc.

4) Books, literature and media (590 mentions) such as: a better range of books, availability of newly released books etc.

5) Digital and Information Technology (480 mentions) such as: printing service availability, make registration available online, offering e-books and audiobooks, computers for homework etc.

The 5 most frequent emerging suggestions for anything the council has not considered in the proposals for the Library Service were (1249 respondents answered this question):

1) 94 mentions about the general closure of the libraries, such as: 'don't close libraries', 'keep the libraries open'

2) 71 mentions about Trained staff/professionals, such as: libraries should be run by trained staff and librarians

3) 62 mentions about libraries being a Statutory service/funded centrally, such as: the importance of the council investing in libraries as a statutory service,

4) 59 mentions about Events/Activities/Workshops such as: small charges for unique activity events, host themed events e.g. DIY workshops, offer digital literacy workshops, adult education workshops in the evening etc.

5) 48 mentions about Digital and Information Technology, such as: Wi-Fi access being important, availability of e-books and audio books, online and digital service of delivering books at home, charge a small amount to use computers.

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Open text responses on Library proposals and Strategic vision (2/3)

The 5 most frequent emerging suggestions for how the Community Library Hub concept and mixed delivery approach could be improved were (946 respondents answered this question):

1) Events, Activities, Workshops (46 mentions) such as: offering diverse programs of activity, collaborate with schools/museums/galleries, networking events for business promotion etc.

2) 45 mentioned suggestions on the terminology/definitions/information presented, such as: requiring more specific details about community libraries in order to make a suggestion, less jargon to enable public understanding etc.

3) 40 mentioned making libraries more Relevant to community need, such as: using the building for the benefit of the community and keeping the borrowing of books as the main purpose of a library, create 'library governors' from the local area who can articulate local needs, ensure services are citizen-centred, for the services to be community-led etc.

4) 39 mentioned Marketing/Advertising/Promotion/Communication such as: promoting libraries actively, team up with churches, schools and universities, charities to promote the new concept, using social media

5) 38 mentioned Trained staff/professionals, such as: the need for staff to be knowledgeable, core staff to be librarians and support to be provided by volunteers, professional librarians to be at the heart of every proposal

The 5 most frequent emerging suggestions for alternative options that the council could consider, taking into account the financial savings that are required were (1233 respondents answered this question):

1) 92 mentions in relation to BCC's current budget and or/financial situation, such as: concerns about council tax increasing but libraries budget being slashed, questions of whether the government could step in to restore funding, concerns that once cuts are made they wont be recoverable, asks of making cuts elsewhere and in other departments

2) 75 mentions around Fundraising, Grants and Funding such as: putting in bids for charitable funding to support delivery, accepting donations to keep libraries running, working with sponsors in local communities

3) 74 mentions on Generating and/or maximising income such as: small fees for reservations/computer usage/Wi-Fi, room hire, in-house coffee shop

4) 71 mentions of Events, activities, workshops such as: adult classes and homework hubs run by community organisations, summer holiday clubs

5) 68 mentions around Amending opening days and/or hours such as: reducing opening hours rather than cutting facilities, changing opening hours to fit around working patterns

Open text responses on Library proposals and Strategic vision (3/3)

The 5 most frequent emerging responses on what else the Council could do that would benefit those who live work and study in Birmingham and deliver against the 7 outcomes for Libraries were (1535 respondents answered this question):

1) 126 mentioned the General closure of the libraries such as: 'keep the libraries open', 'save the libraries'

2) 91 mentioned Events, Activities, Workshops such as: using the libraries for parent and toddler reading groups, social clubs/spaces to promote well-being activities, resources and spaces for small business owners and enterprises etc.

3) 90 mentioned Marketing/ Advertising/ Promotion/ Communication such as: publicise the benefits of library activities, promote the use of libraries, promote libraries in schools etc.

4) 88 mentioned Involve community and/or wider groups such as: working with schools and community groups, some comments also mentioned not relying on community groups to run a public service and for the council to retain the duty

5) 83 comments mentioned Books and Literature, such as: providing books required to help ongoing education, running book clubs, providing more books to schools, more books etc.

The 5 most frequent emerging responses for 'is there anything else we should include in the Strategic Framework for the Library Service?' were (763 respondents answered this question):

1) 48 mentioning the General closure of libraries, such as: 'don't close the libraries', 'keep all libraries open'

2) 31 comments mentioned Books and Literature, such as: add more books and novels, importance of local access to books, concentrate on e-books, ensure continued provision of free books

3) 27 mentioned Trained staff/professionals such as: the importance of trained and knowledgeable staff to run the libraries, wanting more information about staff proposals, keeping paid librarians

4) 25 mentioned comments in relation to Digital and Information technology such as: adapting libraries to new trends in technology and reading by being brave and innovative, access to Wi-Fi being important, audio and e-book provision

5) 22 comments mentioned Marketing/ Advertising/ Promotion/ Communication such as: promoting libraries to youth as alternative places to socialise, encouraging more local writers, thinkers, activists and influencers into library spaces, increase social media presence of libraries

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The responses below refer to interest in Community Asset Transfers

- 664 (14.7%) of respondents are interested in a Community Asset Transfer.

- Of this, **146 are interested a great deal in supporting the delivery of Library services in their area**, 232 don't know but would like more information, 206 are a little interested, and 75 are not interested.

- The majority (285) who have selected they are interested in Community Asset Transfers, have selected the reason for doing so because of their **'interest in volunteering opportunities to run, open and close buildings and maintain provision'.**

- **101 are interested in interested in moving their business/ group/service into an existing Library**. Around 70-80 respondents each have expressed an interest in sharing a building with a Library, having a Library occupy space on their premises, and offering a co-location site.

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2) Findings from Online Consultations per Library

This section provides a detailed summary of the 351 comments that were documented across Birmingham, when respondents were asked the following 4 questions during online consultation sessions that took place in the day by Library: 1) What is your feedback on the options?, 2) Do you have any concerns about the recommended option 4?, 3) Do you have any alternative suggestions as to how BCC could reduce the budget whilst protecting a maximum amount of library services?, 4) How do we make Library services more relevant to attract wider usage? Please note, as these sessions were open online discussions, conversations often moved away from the 4 questions, to where respondents wanted the conversations to be, hence why responses have been analysed under 7 emerging themes, rather than the 4 questions that were asked

Please note, that in this section, any 1 comment/response made by a respondent may include several things that they have 'mentioned'. Therefore the number of times something is 'mentioned' may at times exceed the number of respondents/comments.

Summary of Online Consultation responses captured across Birmingham Libraries (Slide 1 of 2)

- **1) Feedback on proposed options:** Amongst the 351 comments, 14 comments could be identified as appearing to be against the recommended proposals and options, 9 were identified as supportive of the recommended proposals and options, and 10 were identified as respondents appearing to lack clarity on the proposed models and options. No clear opinion was expressed in the other responses.

- **2) Suggestions for the future:** 86 comments related to suggestions for the future. Amongst the most frequent comments, 30 mentioned the Involvement of Community and/or Wider groups (such as asking the community what they would like, collaborating with schools and GP's to encourage use, provide space for community groups), 13 mentioned Marketing/Advertising/Promoting/Communication (such as libraries should be promoted more, offering open days to advertise library services), 12 mentioned Engage/collaborate with schools (such as tours and trips to libraries for school children, activities to take place in libraries through schools), 7 mentioned co-locate with others (such as co-location providing the opportunity to develop key assets which can become the centre of a community), 7 mentioned Generate and/or maximise income (such as renting out spaces/rooms), 6 mentioned Volunteer-led opportunities (such as securing willing volunteers from the local community), 5 mentioned Engage with businesses (such as for corporate sponsorship, 3rd party ownership of buildings), 5 mentioned Fundraising & Grants, 5 mentioned that libraries should be distinct from a Community Hub (such as libraries should be unique and no other services should move into the space), 5 mentioned seeking feedback and undertaking research (such as feedback from residents and researching how other councils operate).

- **3) Impacts and concerns:** 108 comments related to impacts and concerns. Amongst the most frequent comments, 22 mentioned Decision Making (such as questions on who is making the final decision, the criteria for selection, considering socio-economic factors behind high/low usage) 18 mentioned concerns around the General closure of libraries (such as libraries must be maintained, reductions in the service won't help long term), 18 mentioned concerns on the impacts on Marginalised, hard to reach, vulnerable groups and communities (such as concerns on widening the existing poverty gap, how having fewer libraries may impact people who can't travel/have health issues), 14 mentioned concerns on being Volunteer-led (such as needing robust training for volunteers, use of volunteers being unsustainable), 13 mentioned the impact on Local Residents, and 12 mentioned the impact on Children and Young People (such as on literacy, access to computers, safeguarding of children if the library is used for multi-functional reasons), 7 mentioned concerns around Accessibility and Usage (need for free parking, opening times remaining consistent), 6 mentioned concerns around the Buildings and Maintenance (such as closure leading to unkept buildings, buildings not being saleable).

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Summary of Online Consultation responses captured across Birmingham Libraries (Slide 2 of 2)

- **4) How respondents currently use libraries:** 26 comments related to current usage. Amongst the most frequent comments, 10 mentioned usage for Social Contact and Community (such as it's a place for people to meet, place for people to interact), 7 mentioned they use the library as a Space for activities for their children (such as children and parent groups), 6 mentioned they use libraries for the Atmosphere and Environment (such as a safe space, warm space).

- **5) How else would respondents like to use a library:** 72 comments related to how else respondents would like to use a library. Amongst the most frequent comments, 29 mentioned wanting to use the Library as a Multi-functional space (such as using libraries as warm hubs, in conjunction with schools, for resident groups to meet), 24 mentioned ensuring libraries are Relevant to community needs (such as ensuring activities that take place benefit the community, meeting spaces for the community), 7 mentioned requiring Better Facilities (such as creating spaces people can work from, offering drinks, not offering services in a corridor but in a room).

- **6) How respondents would like to access libraries:** 19 comments related to how respondents would like to access libraries. Amongst the most frequent comments, 12 mentioned Amending opening days and/or hours (such as reducing the hours a library is open, making opening hours more accessible for working people, opening at lunch time), 5 mentioned Location and Proximity (such as having libraries in more central locations, making sure people don't have to travel too far to get to a library).

- **7) Process of Consultation**: 60 comments related to the Process of the consultation. Amongst the most frequent comments, 30 mentioned concerns on how the consultation was being undertaken (such as the survey being too long, concerns that decisions have already been made, the options provided lacking detail, the public not being equipped to answer some of the questions being asked), 16 mentioned concerns around the Terminology being used, definitions and information presented (such as specifics missing from what was presented, the documentation presented having a lot of jargon).

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2) Findings from the Online Consultations per Constituency

This section provides a detailed summary of the 95 comments that were documented across Birmingham, when respondents were asked the following 4 questions during online consultation sessions that took place during the evening by Constituency: 1) What is your feedback on the options?, 2) Do you have any concerns about the recommended option 4?, 3) Do you have any alternative suggestions as to how BCC could reduce the budget whilst protecting a maximum amount of library services?, 4) How do we make Library services more relevant to attract wider usage? Please note, as these sessions were open online discussions, conversations often moved away from the 4 questions, to where respondents wanted the conversations to be, hence why responses have been analysed under 7 emerging themes, rather than the 4 questions that were asked

Please note, that in this section, any 1 comment/response made by a respondent may include several things that they have 'mentioned'. Therefore the number of times something is 'mentioned' may at times exceed the number of respondents/comments.

Summary of Online Consultation responses across Birmingham's Constituencies (1/2)

- **1) Feedback on proposed options:** Amongst the 95 comments, 10 comments could be identified as appearing to be against the recommended proposals and options, and 3 were identified as respondents appearing to lack clarity on the proposed models and options. No clear opinion was expressed in the other responses.

- **2) Suggestions for the future:** 29 comments related to suggestions for the future. Amongst the most frequent comments, 8 mentioned undertaking Research and seeking feedback (such as consulting other national and international agencies, deeper engagement with citizens), 7 comments referred to suggestions of Engaging with Businesses/Develop local partnerships (such as partnerships with schools, adult education, colleges, voluntary organisations), 7 comments referred to libraries being a Statutory service/funded centrally (such as respondents mentioning they pay for the service to be run via council tax, there being a statutory duty to provide an efficient and comprehensive library service), 4 mentioned suggestions for how the council could Market/Advertise/Communicate/Promote libraries (such as publicise libraries better, market authors and poets and other creatives in libraries), 3 mentioned suggestions around Engaging/collaborating with schools (such as encouraging library membership through schools, working with schools in deprived areas), 2 mentioned Generating and/or maximising income (such as securing investment via attracting businesses to books out spaces)

- **3) Impacts and concerns:** 63 comments related to impacts and concerns. Amongst the most frequent comments, 28 mentioned Decision making (such as whether the council has explored long term return on investment that libraries bring to their communities, wanting to know the criteria for selection of cuts), 21 concerns mentioned Accessibility and Usage (such as budget cuts impacting usage even further, some libraries being open less frequently and not at suitable times), 14 concerns mentioned BCC's current Budget and Financial situation (such as keeping libraries open as people are paying increased council tax, current cuts affecting future generations, question on where future funding will come from in the future), 10 concerns mentioned the impact on Residents/local community (such as communities feeling left behind with decisions, libraries being central to communities), 9 mentioned concern around Future cost implications (such as undertaking thorough assessment to prevent future financial difficulty, decisions being made now being irreversible in the future and potentially costing more), 5 mentioned concerns on the impact on Marginalised/Hard to reach/vulnerable groups and communities (such as people who cant afford to drive/pay for a bus ticket won't visit libraries if they are further away, and the impact on those with mobility challenges)

Summary of Online Consultation responses across Birmingham's Constituencies (2/2)

- **4) How respondents currently use libraries:** 15 comments related to current usage. Amongst the most frequent comments, 11 mentioned usage for the Atmosphere and Environment (such as a warm space, social space, safe space), 10 mentioned they use the library for Social contact and community (such as community meetings), 6 use libraries for Advice and Information (such as job festivals, support with food vouchers), 6 mentioned for Books, Literature and Media, and 6 mentioned usage for Events, activities and workshops (such as reading programs, mental health support)

- **5) How else would respondents like to use a library:** 17 comments related to how else respondents would like to use a library. Amongst the most frequent comments, 7 mentioned Holding events/activities/workshops (such as job fairs, art sessions, English language classes), 7 mentioned ensuring libraries are Relevant to community needs (such as relevant for different groups, families, communities), 3 mentioned wanting Designated spaces (such as quiet spaces, social spaces),

- **6) How respondents would like to access libraries:** 7 comments related to how respondents would like to access libraries. Amongst the most frequent comments, 6 mentioned Location and Proximity (such as ensuring accessibility by being within walking distance, good transport links), 3 also mentioned Amending opening days and/or hours (such as consistent opening hours, open early mornings and late evenings)

- **7) Process of Consultation**: 20 comments related to the Process of the consultation. Amongst the most frequent comments, 17 mentioned Terminology/definitions/information presented (such as some questions being leading questions, questions being raised on the statistics being used to make decisions), 9 also mentioned concern around how the consultation process was being undertaken (such as needing more serious engagement with citizens, concern with the consultation being run during the election period).

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3) Findings from the In-person Consultations

This section provides a detailed summary of the 96 comments that were documented across Birmingham, when respondents were asked the following 4 questions during in-person consultation sessions that took place per Constituency: 1) What is your feedback on the options?, 2) Do you have any concerns about the recommended option 4?, 3) Do you have any alternative suggestions as to how BCC could reduce the budget whilst protecting a maximum amount of library services?, 4) How do we make Library services more relevant to attract wider usage? Please note, as these sessions were open forum discussions, conversations often moved away from the 4 questions, to where respondents wanted the conversations to be, hence why responses have been analysed under 7 emerging themes, rather than the 4 questions that were asked

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Summary of In-person Consultation responses across Birmingham's Constituencies (1/2)

- **1) Feedback on Proposed options:** Amongst the 96 comments, 20 were identified as supportive of the recommended proposals and options, 10 comments could be identified as appearing to be against the recommended proposals and options, and 2 were identified as respondents appearing to lack clarity on the proposed models and options. No clear opinion was expressed in the other responses.

- **2) Suggestions for the future:** Most respondents made suggestions about the future in relation to Engaging and collaborating with schools, Marketing/ Advertising/ Promoting/ Communication (leaflet drops, marketing campaign), comments about libraries being a Statutory service that need to be funded centrally, suggestions on how to Generate and/or maximise income and Fundraise (GoFund me page, coffee shops, bring in lettings in to the libraries, nominal fee on use of spaces, hire out rooms and venues), Co-locate with others (including co-locating staff), Engage with businesses and develop local partnerships, Involve community groups in decisions, Reduce overheads, Research what other areas are doing, and comments on Libraries needing to be distinct to community hubs.

- **3) Impacts and concerns:** Most respondents have raised impacts and concerns around Accessibility and Usage (for those with a disability if they have to travel further, the limits closing down libraries would have on knowledge, access to computers for people who don't have them at home), concerns around BCC's current budget and financial situation (need to consider other forms of income generation, looking elsewhere to target budget cuts, whether the budget will go back to normal long term), the impact on Marginalised, hard to reach and vulnerable people and communities (youth, those who are socially deprived), concerns on use of Volunteers and being Community led (libraries to be run by trained professionals, too much reliance on voluntary/community organisations), impact on Children and young people and Older people, concerns on the Changes being made not being recoverable long term

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Summary of In-person Consultation responses across Birmingham's Constituencies (2/2)

- **4) How respondents currently use libraries:** Most respondents use libraries for Books, Literature and Media, for Key Library services (advice and information, computer access etc), for Social Contact and Community (place for people to meet, a warm space for the most vulnerable and elderly, place for friends to study together), for Events, Activities, Workshops (coffee mornings, mental health workshops), for Information Technology (computers and Wi-Fi), for the Atmosphere and Environment (quiet space, warm space, safe space), for Educational purposes and a source of knowledge, as a Space for activities for children (parents bringing children to the library after school, lego afternoon etc), and for Advice and Information (emotional, mental and financial related support).

- **5) How else would respondents like to use a library:** Most respondents would like to access libraries that have Trained staff/professionals (those with knowledge and expertise, those who can uphold data protection regulations), for Knowledge and learning (to read and develop, English speaking classes), for Books, literature and media (variety of books, e-books etc), to hold Events, activities and workshops (book readings by authors, musical events, IT workshops), by making libraries Relevant to community needs (social groups, tea and coffee mornings), to have Designated spaces (safe spaces for children from a safeguarding perspective, quiet spaces, reading corners, safe space to get advice about social and financial issues), for Advice, information and support (food, healthcare, mental health etc), for Events and activities for children, as a Multi-functional space (reading corner, advice and information, digital access), as places you can Self serve (outside of 9-5 so people can help themselves when libraries aren't/cant be staffed), and to have Better facilities (co-location, food and drink)

- **6) How respondents would like to access libraries:** Most respondents would like to access libraries that are closely Located/within proximity (easily accessible, within walking distance, easily commutable with transport links), libraries that have Opening days and/or hours that work for them (open later, open at lunch time, open after work hours), libraries that have good Buildings (sustainable, good facilities), and libraries with Free parking.

- **7) Process of consultation:** Some respondents highlighted that they struggled with the Terminology, definitions and information presented during the consultation (such as the validity of data), some also mentioned that more sessions should have taken place at various times for increased citizen engagement.

4) Findings from the Libraries Consultation Inbox

This section provides findings on the feedback which has been sent directly to a dedicated inbox set up about the Libraries consultation, which received a total of 54 emails

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Feedback from the comments received to the Libraries Public Consultation dedicated Inbox

- A total of 54 emails were sent to the dedicated inbox, of which 41 were against proposals, 9 were neutral, and 4 were supportive of proposals.

- Amongst the emails that were against proposals and cuts, they featured comments which most frequently related to the importance of Libraries (such as keep libraries safe for the future, libraries being vital, don't close the libraries), they also featured concern for the impacts on residents and the local community (such as libraries being vital to reduce social isolation, libraries being the heart of the community), there were also concerns around Accessibility and usage (such as the need for libraries to be within close proximity to citizens and easily accessible). Other emails featured concern on the impact on children and young people and older people (such as libraries being a safe space for young people to enter and travel to independently, important spaces for homework, libraries being spaces to meet, socialise, make friends and take part in activities), concerns around the decision making process (such as concern that decisions have already been made), other concerns related to the process of the consultation (such as proposals being vague and difficult to understand, the survey being too long to complete), other concerns related to the impact of library closure on marginalised/hard to reach/vulnerable group and communities (such as libraries being a fundamental resource for deprived communities, free access to digital resources for those who don't have/can't afford them)

- Amongst the emails that were supportive and neutral, there were suggestions for the future operation of libraries, such as Involving the community and/or wider groups (such as working with the local community to deliver targeted activities around health, finances, social aspects), other suggestions included Engaging with businesses/local businesses, Fundraising and/or applying for grants, and exploring opportunities to Generate and/or maximise income.

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5) Findings from Targeted engagement

This consultation focussed specifically on capturing the views of key target groups (e.g. individuals with a disability, faith groups, ethnic minorities, those who are of pension age, LGBTQ+) via focus groups and in-person feedback. The following 4 questions were asked of respondents: 1) What is most important to you? 2) What do you think of the community hub model, 3) What else have we not thought of?, 4) What would encourage you into the space?

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Feedback from key target group: Individuals with a disability

Feedback captured during Focus Groups speaking to individuals with a disability (51 attendees) – this involved speaking to respondents who are Neuro Diverse (Autism, ADHD, ADS) and those with a visual impairment

- **Responses to 'What is most important to you?':** Responses includes the importance of a quiet space, audible options, for community services, longer opening hours, and more accessible opening hours for carers etc

- **Responses to 'What do you think of the Community Hub Model':** Most felt it was a good idea and that buildings should be retained no matter what, and that hubs will help communities learn about what's happening in their area. There were some questions raised about whether 'there will be too much going on' in the space that could affect those who are neurodivergent, and therefore quiet spaces are important. There were also comments about the need to consider demographics and need. There were also questions raised on how people would be encouraged into the space for services which are not traditionally the focus of a library e.g. foodbank vouchers, and marketing of hubs therefore being key.

- **Responses to 'What else have we not thought of?':** Responses focussed on making sure there was an improved virtual offer as neurodivergent people are more likely to access this function. There was also reference to the core offer of libraries remaining, such as reading rooms, books, audio options to use in person. There was also mention of marketing libraries as a work and study space. There were also suggestions on social exchange programmes for communities to be held in libraries such as DIY skills or baking etc. The importance of new books being available was also mentioned.

- **Responses to 'What would encourage you into the space?':** Responses included improved signage, sensory rooms, quiet spaces, music room, garden/allotments, local exchange schemes, borrow laptops/photography equipment. The importance of promoting libraries as safe spaces with accessible toilets (for changing) as and when needed for those who are disabled was also important. Having shelves on wheels to move to create space for events and those in wheelchairs was also suggested. Suggestions for improving the online offer were also made such as, online subscriptions to journals/academic journals. There were also suggestions to have family events, and lending of equipment such as gardening tools, health screening, hiring out spaces to local organisations, and educational sessions on internet safety and artificial intelligence etc.

Feedback from key target group: Faith Groups

Feedback captured during Focus Groups speaking to Faith Groups (26 attendees) – this involved speaking to respondents who identify as Muslim and Christian (please note other faith groups were invited but did not/could not attend)

- **Responses to 'What is important to you'?:** Responses included having a space that is close distance, health and well-being activities and programmes, writing competitions for children, support with applying for benefits, English language support.
- **Responses to 'What do you think of the Community Hub Model':** Respondents felt it was important for hubs to still have a quiet space, and also mentioned it would be good for the hub to provide support around employment and skills such as CV writing.
- **Responses to 'What else have we not thought of?':** Respondents felt it was important to offer support around council tax form filling and payments and household bills.
- **Responses to 'What would encourage you into the space?':** Respondents felt it was important to advertise hubs with leaflets, pop up stalls (especially for those who don't have digital access/can't use a computer).

Feedback captured during In-person sessions speaking to a Faith Group (25 attendees) – this involved speaking to respondents who identify as Muslim (please note other faith groups were invited but did not/could not attend)

- **Responses to 'What is important to you?':** Responses included arts and craft sessions, varied books, computer and printer use, internet access, more youth sessions, community engagement, English lessons, warm space.
- **Responses to 'What do you think of the Community Hub Model':** The majority of respondents agree with the model, with 2 disagreeing and 2 who were neutral.
- **Responses to 'What else have we not thought of?':** Suggestions from respondents included advertise library services digitally and on the radio, promote cultural and community aspects of the hubs. Other suggestions included hubs being open on the weekend for children and longer hours in the weekday to accommodate working parents. It was also suggested to have a hub for every locality, and making sure they are open, safe and secure for communities. Tea and coffee availability was also suggested, as well as strong internet connection.
- **Responses to 'What would encourage you into the space?':** Respondents mentioned having a booking system to reserve books, open libraries to community groups to run social events and hire rooms, promote libraries in schools, activities on a wide range of subjects, tea and coffee, importance of retaining physical books, sponsorship of author events, extending opening hours, social clubs e.g. knitting, book club, promote the libraries as an office space via memberships.

Feedback from key target group: Ethnic minorities

Feedback captured during Focus Groups speaking to ethnic minority groups (18 attendees) – this involved speaking to respondents who identify as Asian-Chinese, Asian-Pakistani, Asian-Indian, Black-African, Arab, Asian-Cantonese, Mixed-White and Black African, White-Roma, White-Ukraine, White-Spanish, White-Polish

- **Responses to 'What do you think of the Community Hub Model':** Respondents felt it was a good idea and mentioned that multi-functional spaces would be good for connections, meeting new people, accessible spaces, and help with development and skills (with particular mention of CV skills being important). Tea and coffee availability was also mentioned. Other services people would like to see in libraries were also mentioned, such as: book reading workshops, mental health support, parenting workshops, advice and benefits support.
- **Responses to 'What else have we not thought of?':** Respondents mentioned services they would like to access in community hubs, such as: online and digital support, food support, money and debt support, form filling, jobs and skills, housing, health and well-being, warm spaces, support with domestic abuse, and support for refugees/asylum seekers, online safety workshops for children and young people, maternal support for new mums, support for isolated elderly people.
- **Responses to 'What would encourage you into the space?':** Respondents mentioned it would be good to have activities for children and activities such as writer-clubs, poetry clubs, space for arts, and other creative courses. Accessible opening times were also mentioned as being important, as well as warm drinks. Other suggestions included: speaking clubs, arts and crafts, advice around jobs, support with benefits, coffee mornings, reading corners, educational workshops by various speakers, youth clubs, councillor surgeries and transport options to and from the library.

Feedback captured during In-person sessions with ethnic minority groups (13 attendees) – this involved speaking to respondents who identify as Black-African, Asian-Pakistani, White-Ukraine, White Polish

- **Responses to 'What is important to you?':** Responses included more advertisements, arts and craft sessions, warm space in winter months, free internet, coffee mornings, space to study and work, access to computers, library that's nearby.
- **Responses to 'What do you think of the Community Hub Model':** The majority of respondents agreed with the Community Hub model, with 1 disagreeing, and 1 saying that they don't know.
- **Responses to 'What else have we not thought of?':** Suggestions included better advertisement of libraries, using libraries as neighbourhood offices is good as they were closed years ago, running libraires with paid staff who are supported by volunteers, some respondents mentioned if hubs mean their library building stays open that this was a good thing.
- **Responses to 'What would encourage you into the space?':** Respondents suggested more promotion of libraries on buses, radio and TV, story sessions for children, create more modern spaces, warm spaces and provide tea/coffee.

Feedback from key target group: Those who are of pension age

Feedback captured during In-person sessions speaking to individuals who are of pension age (15 attendees)

- **Responses to 'What is most important to you?':** Responses included the need for libraries being open at suitable times - ideally 7 days a week, social element such as making friends and reducing isolation, borrowing books, for research purposes, activities such as an art club

- **Responses to 'What do you think of the Community Hub Model':** There was a mixed response to this question, with some agreeing (for reasons such as it will help with access to benefits and advice), some disagreeing (for reasons such as services need to be kept local, need for a confidential/private space which feels safe, concerns about not being able to walk to a community hub, concerns about how all services will fit under one roof)

- **Responses to 'What else have we not thought of?':** Respondents mentioned the need for a private and confidential space to get information and advice, need for hubs to be local and within close proximity to walk to or get a bus to, having the latest books being available at the library, concern that a hub will dilute the purpose of a library and be unsafe, more suitable working hours, access to computers, donation of books

- **Responses to 'What would encourage you into the space?':** Responses included suggestions such as: a campaign to get new people registered, more accessible opening hours for parents and working people, local parking

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Feedback from key target group: LGBTQ+

Feedback captured during an In-person session and Focus Group speaking to individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ (23 attendees)

- **Responses to 'What is important to you'?:** Respondents mentioned its important that people are aware that there's a printing service at libraries particularly for those people who own their own businesses and who are self-employed. Respondents also mentioned it is important to have a safe and accessible space, which is inclusive to all. Other suggestions included importance of educational activities geared towards a particular subject, and workshops which raise heritage and cultural awareness

- **Responses to 'What do you think of the Community Hub Model':** All respondents agreed with the model

- **Responses to 'What else have we not thought of?':** Respondents mentioned education and early years support and revision clubs. There was also reference to promoting hubs on social media and other organisations promoting the community hubs. Respondents also mentioned the availability of LGBTQ+ books, LGBTQ+ champions in the space, and bringing in LGBTQ+ friendly organisations to run events and workshops.

- **Responses to 'What would encourage you into the space?':** Respondents mentioned hubs could be a safe space for them to work in, in an agile way. There was also suggestions around having gender neutral toilets. Other suggestions included drop-in sessions for youths and parents, and jobs and skills support. Respondents also mentioned that it is important that libraries are inclusive. Other suggestions included having books and literature by authors in the LGBTQ+ community, as well as having trained professionals who are able to help users (signposting), and staff with knowledge and experience of the LGBTQ+ community.

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6) Findings from Parents' forms

This consultation focussed on engaging with parents/carers/legal guardians via asking them to complete a form which asked them the following 5 questions: 1) How often have you visited a library in the last 12 months?, 2) To what extent do you agree with the offering of the Community Library Hubs?, 3) What is most important to you?, 4) What could we do as a council to encourage people into libraries?, 5) Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the community hub model? Views from a total of 327 parents/carers/legal guardians were captured

Please note, that in this section, any 1 comment/response made by a respondent may include several things that they have 'mentioned'. Therefore the number of times something is 'mentioned' may at times exceed the number of respondents/comments.

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Feedback captured from parents/carers/legal guardians (Slide 1 of 3)

- **Responses to 'How often have you visited a library in the last 12 months'?:** Most parents said Weekly (121), 92 responses were Not applicable, 58 said Monthly, 11 said Not often, 10 said Once every 6 months, 9 said Never, 8 said Daily, 6 left a Blank response, 6 said Don't know, 3 said Yearly, 2 said Once a week and Once a month, 1 said First time

- **Responses to 'To what extent do you agree with offering of the Community Library Hubs':** Most parents strongly agreed with the model (141 responses), followed by 90 who Agreed, 22 who were Neutral, 20 who said they Don't know, 20 who Strongly disagreed, 19 who Disagreed, 10 who Neither agreed or disagreed, 3 who Didn't answer, and 2 provided Blank responses.

- **Responses to 'What is most important to you?':** Amongst the most frequent responses captured, 192 mentioned Books and Literature (such as Children's books, variety of books), 87 mentioned Space and activities for children (such as art workshops, toddler groups), 56 mentioned Library services (such as loaning books), 39 mentioned Information Technology (such as free Wi-Fi, computer usage), 29 mentioned Atmosphere and environment (such as libraries being welcoming, calm, quiet, warm), 28 mentioned Events, activities, workshops and classes (such as book clubs, craft sessions), 27 mentioned Educational; source of knowledge (such as for personal development, local information), 24 mentioned Designated spaces (such a quiet spaces, rhyme time, event space), 23 mentioned Social contact and community (such as for the community feeling, social gatherings), 11 mentioned Trained staff and professionals (such as knowledgeable librarians, helpful staff)

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Feedback captured from parents/carers/legal guardians (Slide 2 of 3)

Responses to 'What could we do as a council to encourage people into libraries?'. Amongst the most frequent responses:

- 89 mentioned Hold events, activities, workshops, classes (such as author visits, competitions)
- 88 mentioned Marketing, advertising, promotion, communication (such as sending out letters, advertise in nearby shops, promote on social media)
- 82 mentioned Events and activities for children (such as reading challenges, story time, parent and toddler groups)
- 41 mentioned Amend opening days and/or hours (such as being open on weekends for parents who are at school/work in the weekday, open early mornings before school)
- 36 mentioned Books (such as rare books, wider selection of books, comics)
- 32 mentioned Better facilities (such as collaborative workspaces, food service, café)
- 22 mentioned Engage/collaborate with schools (such as school visits, holiday sessions)
- 19 mentioned Designated spaces (such as soft play, study rooms, board games)
- 17 mentioned Knowledge and learning (such as educational sessions, reading clubs)
- 13 mentioned Digital (such as access to e-books, computers for homework)
- 11 mentioned Relevant to community needs (such as job fairs to support employment, English language lessons)
- 11 mentioned Rewards/Incentives (such as reading achievements, free refreshments, prizes for competitions)

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Feedback captured from parents/carers/legal guardians (Slide 3 of 3)

Responses to 'Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the community hub model?'. Amongst the most frequent responses:

- 28 mentioned Marketing, advertising, promotion, communication (such as advertise on social media, promote libraries in schools)
- 23 mentioned Amend opening days and/or hours (such as make opening hours more accessible, open 7 days a week)
- 22 mentioned Hold events, activities, workshops, classes (such as educational workshops, well-being sessions, activities for elder people)
- 17 mentioned Events and activities for children (such as book clubs for children, mother and baby reading sessions)
- 15 mentioned Books (such as better books, new books)
- 14 mentioned Designated spaces (such as cozy places to read, large kids space, co-working spaces)
- 13 mentioned Better facilities (such as food and drinks, café)
- 13 mentioned that Libraries should be distinct from community hubs (such as don't have services conflated in one place, different parts of the building having different spaces, keep libraries separate from hubs)
- 13 mentioned Location and proximity (such as being accessible to all in the local area, within walking distance)

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7) Findings from the Children's Questionnaire and Drawings

This consultation focussed on capturing views from children and young people via 2 mechanisms: a questionnaire and by asking children and young people to draw their thoughts. Both the questionnaire and drawings asked children and young people: 1) How do you travel to the library?, 2) What do you like to do in the library?, 3) What else would you like to be able to do in the library?

Please note, that in this section, any 1 comment/response made by a respondent may include several things that they have 'mentioned or 'drawn'. Therefore the number of times something is 'mentioned' or 'drawn' may at times exceed the number of respondents/comments.

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Findings from Children's Questionnaire and Children's Drawings

Feedback captured from the questionnaire completed by children and young people (406 respondents)

- **Responses to 'How do you travel to the library?':** The majority Walk to the library (248), followed by 122 who use a Car, 11 who use a Bike, 11 mentioned Other, 9 use the Bus, 3 didn't complete the question, and 2 use a Taxi

- **Responses to 'What do you like to do in the library?':** The most frequent responses included: 324 mentioning books, 78 mentioning Exploring books, 75 mentioning Using the computer, 47 mentioning Borrowing books, 34 mentioning for the Calm environment, 30 mentioning Homework, 26 mentioning Activities, 19 mentioning for Socialising with friends

- **Responses to 'What else would you like to be able to do in the library?':** The most frequent responses included: 71 mentioning Reading, 51 mentioning Activities, 50 mentioning New facilities (such as outdoor garden, iPads), 41 mentioning More activities (author visits, Lego workshops), 40 mentioning Exploring books, 35 mentioning Using the computer, 32 mentioning Playing, 28 mentioning Borrowing books, 20 mentioning More clubs (summer clubs)

Feedback captured from the drawings completed by children and young people across schools in the city (614 drawings)

- **Responses to 'How do you travel to the library?':** The majority Walk to the library (289), followed by 228 who use a Car, 49 who use the Bus, 43 who use a Bike, 3 who left a Blank response, and 2 who use the Train

- **What featured most frequently in the drawings where children answered: 'What do you like to do in the library?':** Books and Reading (381), Activities (130), Arts and crafts (105), Using library resources (76) such as computers etc, Socialising/with friends (71), Playing (69), Relaxing (56), Playing games (41), Studying (39)

- **What featured most frequently in the drawings where children answered: 'What else would you like to be able to do in the library?':** Activities (79), Playing games (73), Books (71), Arts and crafts (57), Playing (50), Reading (38), Clubs (18), Use a computer (18), Socialising (18)

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Appendices

Notes on Data Analysis

A range of different methods were used to capture data in this consultation. A standardised approach was developed in order to provide a framework to analyse and present the data in a transparent and meaningful way. This section provides details of the approach taken:

Analysis of Be Heard Survey data:
- Please note, where total responses for a question exceed a 100% response rate, it was due to respondents being able select multiple options, all of which have been portrayed in this report. Where total responses are below 100% for a question, it was due to some responses being blank.
- Standardised coding of text by different themes was applied to analyse the free text entered by respondents. This enabled analysis to identify common themes and topics in responses.

Analysis of qualitative data: Online consultation, In-person consultation, Inbox feedback, Targeted engagement, Parents form, Children's drawings and questionnaire:
- Thematic analysis has been conducted on all qualitative consultations, with standardised themes being used and applied to describe responses of a similar nature across all consultations.
- Please note, that any 1 comment made by a respondent may include several things that they have 'mentioned' and/or 'drawn'. Therefore, the number of times something is 'mentioned' and/or 'drawn' may at times exceed the total number of respondents/comments across these consultations.

Analysis of Online and In-person consultations data:
- A total of 4 questions were asked during the online and in-person sessions, which have been categorised into 7 key themes. As these sessions were open forum discussions, conversations often moved away from the 4 questions, to where respondents wanted the conversations to be, hence why responses have been analysed under 7 emerging themes in this report: 1) Feedback on the proposed options, 2) Suggestions for the future, 3) Impacts and concerns, 4) How respondents currently use libraries, 5) How else respondents would like to use a library, 6) How respondents would like to access a library, 7) Process of consultation, rather than the 4 questions that were asked during the sessions: 1) What is your feedback on the options?, 2) Do you have any concerns about the recommended option 4?, 3) Do you have any alternative suggestions as to how BCC could reduce the budget whilst protecting a maximum amount of library services?, 4) How do we make Library services more relevant to attract wider usage?
- During the sessions, a series of comments were documented by notetakers, rather than a response per person, hence why in this report the phrase 'comments' has been used rather than 'response'.

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Our Vision For Libraries

Protect Core Library Offer in local communities:
- Increased reading and literacy
- Cultural and creative enrichment
- Improved digital access and literacy
- Helping everyone achieve their full potential
- Healthier and happier lives
- Greater prosperity
- Stronger, more resilient communities

Work with the local community to better understand local aspirations and needs to shape services within the hub.

Deliver digital inclusion, targeted homes and money advice and access to jobs and skills for residents across the city.

Enable and empower partners to co-locate/run services and local groups.

Provide robust Information, Advice and Guidance including signposting and connections to internal and external resources and assets.

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Developing a mixed Library service delivery model will include

Community Hubs

Community Hubs are warm, welcoming spaces for people to socialise and call their own. They are a place for relaxing and meeting new people. The network offers a variety of spaces that have different offers. These will be open on a full time (5 days) and part time basis.

We aim to empower, motivate, and unite individuals by fostering knowledge, self-reliance, and innovation. Our ambition is to create inclusive environments, both in-person and online, where residents can access support, and be connected to their communities.

Part time Library Offer

Part time BCC staffed Library operating part-time hours delivering the core Library offer and additional EI&P offerings based on the community's needs.

Opportunity for full-time opening supported by internal and external partners, groups and the community.

Community co-location

Provide statutory library service from a non-BCC building but using BCC staff.

Services delivered in community settings such as Family Hubs, Community Centres, school, sheltered accommodation, faith & and community settings, residential and nursing homes

Partner Led Library

Community organisations and/or voluntary groups own and manage their local community library building from which a library service could be delivered with support from Birmingham City Council.

As part of the first phase of consultation organisations and groups were invited to express interest* in running a Library building . This would mean the building and Library offer remains open through partner-led service provision with no BCC funding.

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Community Hubs provide the opportunity to provide access to services differently

Core library offer	Online and digital support	Accessing food support	Money and debt	Jobs and skills
Housing	Benefits	Health and well-being	Warm Welcome	General advice

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A core library offer will be provided within each of the Birmingham City Council run community hub libraries, ensuring access to:

- A (reservations) service giving access to the city's stock.
- Online access, 24/7, to the library catalogue, e-Books, e-Magazines and our e-Reference Library.
- A wide range of events and regular activities.
- A Children's Library delivering a range of children's activities, including trained staff in storytelling techniques and creative storytelling.
- Support for children's literacy by providing reading materials, and a range of reading-based activities.

- Support for adult literacy by providing suitable reading materials and events.
- Free access to the internet on library computers and free wi-fi.
- Welcoming public spaces to visit and spend time in and provide a warm welcome.
- Access to skilled, trained and knowledgeable staff.
- Study space.
- Books and audio books to loan.

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