NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Proposed change to the provision of Northamptonshire Libraries and Information Services

Consultation analysis report

December 2018 to March 2019

WordCloud of frequently used words in the consultation feedback

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Owner: Public Health, Northamptonshire County Council
Contents
Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 4
Standard questionnaire ...................................................................................................... 6
Children and young people’s questionnaire .................................................................... 9
Abington Library .................................................................................................................. 11
Brackley Library ............................................................................................................... 18
Brixworth Library ............................................................................................................. 21
Burton Latimer Library .................................................................................................... 24
Corby Library .................................................................................................................. 29
Danesholme Library ......................................................................................................... 32
Daventry Library .............................................................................................................. 36
Deanshanger Library ........................................................................................................ 40
Desborough Library .......................................................................................................... 46
Duston Library .................................................................................................................. 52
Earls Barton Library .......................................................................................................... 55
Far Cotton Library ........................................................................................................... 60
Finedon Library ............................................................................................................... 64
Higham Ferrers Library .................................................................................................... 68
Hunsbury Library ............................................................................................................. 73
Irchester Library .............................................................................................................. 76
Irthlingborough Library ................................................................................................. 81
Kettering Library ............................................................................................................. 84
Kingsthorpe Library ......................................................................................................... 87
Long Buckby Library ....................................................................................................... 97
Middleton Cheney Library ........................................................................................... 107
Moulton Library .............................................................................................................. 113
Northamptonshire Central Library .................................................................................. 118
Oundle Library ............................................................................................................... 121
Raunds Library ................................................................................................................ 124
Roade Library .................................................................................................................. 130
Rothwell Library ............................................................................................................ 134
Rushden Library ............................................................................................................. 140
St James Library ............................................................................................................. 143
Thrapston Library ........................................................................................................... 148
Towcester Library .......................................................................................................... 153
Wellingborough Library ............................................................................................... 156
Weston Favell Library .................................................................................................... 159
Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to set out the consultation process on the review of library services in Northamptonshire, and key consultation findings (including an understanding of who participated in the consultation), the results of which will be used to help inform decisions on the future of library services in Northamptonshire.

Cabinet decision and formal consultation

2. The commencement of the consultation on the review of library services in Northamptonshire was approved by Cabinet on 11th December 2018 and consultation on the future of 28 of the libraries began the next day, concluding on 8th February 2019:

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<td>Weston Favell</td>
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<td>Deanshanger</td>
<td>Northampton Central</td>
<td>Wollaston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desborough</td>
<td>Oundle</td>
<td>Woodford Halse</td>
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<td>Earls Barton</td>
<td>Raunds</td>
<td>Wootton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hunsbury</td>
<td>Roade</td>
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3. At this time, the Council was still working closely with communities to develop solutions for the last eight libraries. The consultation on these libraries began on 23rd January 2019 (ensuring that there was a period of overlap where all 36 libraries were out to consultation at the same time), concluding on 22nd March 2019:

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<td>Long Buckby</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duston</td>
<td>Higham Ferrers</td>
<td>St James</td>
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<tr>
<td>Far Cotton</td>
<td>Irchester</td>
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4. As there were times where the consultation on some libraries was open while for others it had not yet begun, or where the consultation on some libraries had closed but it was still open for others, respondents to the online questionnaire were able to make general comments about their library even if it was not open for consultation at the time they completed it. Similarly, respondents not using the online questionnaire could make comments in writing about libraries that were not out to consultation at the time they wished to comment. Comments received outside the consultation period for each library are contained in the relevant library section or in the general comments at the end.

5. The public consultation was conducted by the Consultation, Equalities & Accessibility Team based within Business Intelligence and Project Management (BIPM) alongside officers from the Library Service and Public Health, and was carried out in compliance with NCC’s Consultation and Engagement Policy and Statement of Required Practice.
**How was the consultation promoted?**

6. The consultation was featured on the Council’s online consultation hub ([https://northamptonshire.citizenspace.com/](https://northamptonshire.citizenspace.com/)). Councillors, local MPs and MEPs, district and borough councils, parish and town councils, partner organisations, voluntary and community sector organisations, representatives of protected characteristic groups, local business groups, and members of both the Northamptonshire Residents’ Panel and the Council’s Consultation Register were formally invited to give their views and asked to promote the consultation to their members, or within their local area where appropriate.

7. Opportunities to take part in the consultation were also promoted in the local media via press releases, through the Council’s website, e-newsletter and social media channels, allowing both internal (e.g. NCC staff) as well as external consultees to get involved in the process. It was also promoted in all libraries.
How did consultees have their say?

8. Local people and organisations were able to have their say about the review of the library service in a range of ways, by:
   - Visiting the Council’s Consultation Hub and completing the questionnaire or requesting a paper questionnaire from their local library (a standard questionnaire and one designed specifically for children and young people was made available)
   - Emailing consult@northamptonshire.gov.uk
   - Writing to the Council
   - Attending an event held at libraries where a change was proposed
   - Using social media: Tweeting @mycountycouncil or posting comments on the mycountycouncil Facebook page
   - Signing or submitting a petition or e-petition

Number and type of responses received

9. During the consultation period, using the various means available to consultees, local people and organisations contributed to the consultations 2,255 times (acknowledging that some people may have taken part via a number of different methods).

10. During the consultation period, regular summaries of consultation responses received were circulated to decision makers to ensure such responses were considered in full and redacted versions of all responses received were circulated upon conclusion of the consultation.

What did people say?

11. This report is a summary of the feedback received. It is recommended that it is read in conjunction with the May 2019 Cabinet report and the full consultation results, including the detail and suggestions contained within some of the written responses. The full consultation results have been made available to senior officers and Members and is available on our website. The comments (with personal or potentially defamatory information redacted) are shown in that appendix in full as received.

12. Because proposals were developed for each individual library, the questionnaire was structured so that respondents gave their views on a per library basis, mirroring the feedback that came from letters, emails and petitions in relation to individual libraries. There was no restriction on respondents being able to complete questionnaires for more than one library. This means we are able to summarise views by library, collating the views from the different consultation channels. Links to equality impact assessments for each library were available from the relevant sections of the questionnaire. These have now been updated and are available on our website.

13. In this report, each library has its own section and responses relating to individual libraries are included in those sections. General responses have been analysed across all libraries and are included in the overall results.

Standard questionnaire

14. In total, 2,059 respondents filled out a questionnaire, either partially or fully. Respondents did not have to answer every question and so the total number of responses for each question differs and is shown in relation to each question.
15. Respondents were asked in what capacity they were responding to the consultation, and could select more than one option. There were 1,970 responses to this question.

16. Respondents were then asked which libraries they regularly use, and could select more than one option. There were 1,926 responses to this question.

17. Respondents to the online questionnaire were then asked to identify which library they wished to provide their feedback on. This was limited to one per questionnaire. Respondents to the paper questionnaire were provided with a questionnaire specific to the library they wished to provide their feedback on. The number for both types of questionnaire has been included in the graph below. There were 1,871 responses to this question.
18. Respondents were then asked if they had already completed a questionnaire about another library. There were 1,491 responses to this question.

19. Respondents asked to provide their postcode to help give us an understanding of where respondents lived within the county. There were 1,322 responses to this question, including five valid postcodes from outside of the Northamptonshire area.
Children and young people’s questionnaire

20. In total, 56 respondents filled out a children and young people’s questionnaire, either partially or fully. Respondents did not have to answer every question and so the total number of responses for each question differs and is shown in relation to each question. It was apparent during the analysis of comments that some questionnaires were completed by people over the age of 19, although the majority were from children and young people.

21. Respondents were asked how old they are, with age brackets up to and including 19 years old. There were 54 responses to this question.
Respondents were then asked which library they use the most, being able to select one option only. There were 51 responses to this question.
**Abington Library**

**Standard questionnaire**

23. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Abington Library. There were 38 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing the frequency of library attendance: Weekly 28.9%, Fortnightly 18.4%, Monthly 21.1%, Less often than monthly 21.1%, Once a month or less 7.9%.]

24. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Abington Library. There were 39 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> – to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> – to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> – to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Abington Library</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>39</td>
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25. The proposal for Abington Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution - to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 37 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Chart showing responses to the question: If Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution - to what extent do they think this would be a good solution?]

26. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 27 responses to this question.

27. The respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library would remain open. They commented on how important they feel the library and the functions it provides are as a hub of the local community. They felt that having a library within the locality was essential to the wellbeing and social needs of the community. It was commented how the library provides services to a wide age range with children, families, and older people being highlighted by some respondents. It was commented that the library provides a comfortable and welcoming environment. Respondents were pleased the children’s services activities were remaining. It was commented on the important role the library undertakes with helping to reduce social isolation; enhancing learning opportunities; and access to services, which one respondent felt were lacking elsewhere within the community.

28. Some respondents were from volunteers who commented on their first-hand experience of how valued and needed the library is to the local community, and their commitment in ensuring the library remains open. One respondent also praised the volunteers and staff for their support and role they undertake.

29. A few respondents commented on the accessibility of Abington Library to all ages of the local community. It was commented that not all residents have cars or the mobility to wait at bus stops to access alternative venues. One respondent said they felt access to Weston Favell Library was difficult due to it being on the upper floor and requiring two lifts to access and a walk through the centre building.

30. A couple of respondents felt the proposal provided greater scope for enhancing the services provided at the library and community centre, as working together provides some potential for improved room bookings; promotion of activities; and to become a place that other groups, organisations and individuals choose as a base, or as a place for their events. One respondent said they answered positively on the assumption that the proposal means becoming a community managed library will not necessarily confine ‘partnerships’ just to the nearby community centre.

31. Other comments included that the library should be fully funded by NCC and any new unitary authority; dissatisfaction with NCC’s previous financial management and its impact on communities; that even if opening hours are restricted, at least the library would remain open; and that any decision to close the
library would deprive the surrounding community of a vital service which offers a wide range of library and information facilities.

32. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution commented on the importance of a locally provided library service. They also felt the library was a vital hub of the community and provided local access to many services. The potential closure of the library was viewed as a negative step and detrimental to the local area. Concern was raised over the potential cessation of the groups that use the library, including children’s services. It was felt the library service funding should continue and that its reduction would have a direct impact on the literacy of the local community, particularly young people. It was commented that the library should remain as part of NCC’s statutory provision, and that the government should be providing funding to support children’s literacy, and that without which, children’s lives and their opportunities are stunted. One respondent added that they feel NCC is disregarding its duties. It was also commented that local communities should not have their services reduced due to previous perceived mismanagement at NCC.

33. Some respondents also commented on the ease of access of the library to the local community. It was felt that Weston Favell Library would be too far, too inaccessible, and too inconvenient for some people to attend as it is not within walking distance for many, including the elderly. At present, parents with pushchairs and children can visit the library on their way home from school and this would not be the case if Abington Library closes and Weston Favell becomes the nearest statutory library. It was commented that some households do not have access to a car to drive to an alternative venue.

34. A few respondents commented on the potential reliance on volunteers to deliver the service. It was commented that volunteers would require training in order to fulfil the required duties such as issuing bus passes and to be able to identify fraudulent applications. One respondent felt there would be difficulties in managing and recruiting volunteers, which could result in the library closing. Other comments included the strong emotion and upset some people have felt over the potential closure of the library, with pleas that it remains open; and that the cost of rent and other charges would likely mean the library would close.

35. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution made a variety of comments, some of which mirrored those made by respondents who thought the solution was poor. Respondents commented on the vital importance of a local library and the hub of services it provides to the local community. A respondent commented that library services are an essential part of society in the same way as other services and that having access to these services should be a matter of course. It was commented that reducing any funding would have an impact on the literacy of the community, especially young people. A couple of respondents said they were pleased that the service would still continue in some form, with one adding that they were unhappy with the potential risk of closure should the proposal become unviable.

36. It was again commented that the library should remain as part of NCC’s statutory provision, and that the government should be providing funding to support children’s literacy; that NCC was disregarding its duties; and that local communities should not have their services reduced due to any perceived mismanagement by NCC.

37. One respondent said that if there is no support for the library, it would struggle to meet the cost of overheads. They said NCC should use the library on a paid basis as a venue for other services such as children’s services. They added that the needs of the elderly and vulnerable to reduce loneliness and to support carers can also be met here, as can the provision of a local meeting space for social care workers to meet with service users. They said the responsibility for the library should remain with NCC and that if no
support is given, then a tapered withdrawal of support for overheads should be implemented, and this could be funded from the 5% increase in Council Tax.

38. It was also commented that many residents do not have the transport to be able to access alternative libraries; and that Abington Library is within walking distance of more than one local school and that restricting its service will have a detrimental impact on local children. Other comments included that the library serves a local community with some deprivation; concern that a move from a professionally managed and publicly funded library will eventually lead to a deterioration in the quality of the library provision; and dissatisfaction with the reliance on volunteers to deliver the service.

39. The one respondent who said ‘Don’t Know’ that provided comments said that the service is an important local resource in a deprived area; that children benefit from the workspace, reading material, homework clubs, and the safety the library provides; and that this should be available to the children in the local community.

40. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 20 responses to this question.

41. Some respondents repeated comments previously made, and again many respondents commented on the importance of the library service and its vital role within the local community. They said how it provides a variety of services, including social contact and education, and that the building provides a comfortable place to read, learn and relax. It was commented that the closure of the library would have a devastating and detrimental impact on the local community, especially on the children who use the library. It was commented that the ongoing risk of closure is causing stress on the local community and there were pleas for the library not to be closed. It was commented that any closure would be a loss of focus for the area and the community would lose a source of reading and information materials. Respondents commented that the library serves a deprived area, which make the services provided even more valuable to the users.

42. Some respondents commented on the prospect of the library services being delivered by volunteers. Whilst praise was given to the existing volunteers, it was commented that volunteers would be placed under pressure to deliver a service that should be provided by NCC; that volunteers would not be able to provide the same level of service, including being open for at least five days per week and providing educational support for children. One respondent said volunteers would need training and mentoring to support them to identify children, young people and vulnerable adults and carers who are at risk of harm and will need to know how to handle these situations and the appropriate referrals process. They felt vulnerable people would suffer a loss of support during a crisis. Another said NCC or any new unitary authority should provide a regular forum, staff, and financial support, preferably two part-time posts of professional librarians and a finance officer to support the service and the other small libraries to be taken out of NCC management. One respondent said there needs to be suitable practical support from NCC to ensure the continuity of service including arrangements for regular updating book stocks; that information via leaflets and online sources should still be made available; and ongoing IT support.

43. Again it was commented that the service should be fully funded by NCC or any new unitary authority. It was felt the financial resources would be limited resulting in a high risk of closure. A recommendation was made that there be no charges to the new community group. One respondent said the building should be provided and maintained by NCC, and that it is unfair to put that burden on a deprived local community.

44. The distance to alternative libraries was commented on with respondents saying that Weston Favell is not within safe walking distance for the majority of pre-school and primary school aged children; that Weston
Favell is not easily accessible for anyone with disabilities; and that visiting a library further afield is not convenient for people with mobility issues, including older people, parents, and young people.

45. One respondent said that closing on weekdays at 6pm and being closed at weekends means that the service is now inaccessible to people who are at work during the week. Another respondent wanted reassurance that the community provision will be open at suitable times. One respondent raised their concern that there would be fewer books because more space would be required to enable volunteers to run income-generating activities. Their preference would be to have library services focused on books and reading and not other activities.

46. Other comments included dissatisfaction that local community services may suffer due to NCC financial management; that local Councillors should provide advice and support facilities at the library on a regular basis as education and social care services are reducing; that a proportion of the marketing budget or other expenditure respondents considered unnecessary be utilised to support essential services such as libraries; that reassurance be given that the community group will be given sufficient time to get the service established; and that this it is a good solution to use the building for this purpose.

47. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Abington Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 11 responses to this question.

48. The vast majority of respondents said how they wanted the service to remain funded by NCC and be retained as part of the county’s statutory provision. It was commented that the library was vital to the local community, especially children, and should be fully funded by NCC and any new replacement unitary authority. It was also suggested that NCC should seek additional funding from central government. Respondents also commented that Council Tax should be increased to fund the library or that some of the 5% rise be used to support the volunteers and the buildings overheads. Again, some respondents criticised NCC and expressed their dissatisfaction that local community services may suffer due to NCC’s financial management and other areas of the economy.

49. One respondent said they felt the service provided could be extended and the library could become a hub for the local community for various resources. They added that this decision would impact upon children and future generations; and that IT is ever changing and the cost of the loss of this resource to the community could impact upon its resilience and ability to flourish.

50. Other comments included the need for training for volunteers to enable them to identify vulnerable people and provide signposting to further support services; training on fundraising to support to the community group; help to enable third sector organisations to deliver training and support to volunteers; and that the library should be kept open, ideally for at least five days per week.

51. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Abington Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were 13 responses to this question.

52. Some commented on the importance of the library, praised the staff, and requested that the library be kept open. One respondent said that the proposal gives some hope of a future and possible restoration of a properly funded and maintained local authority resource. Others said that NCC’s support would be essential in making the proposal a success, and felt the consultation materials were lacking in detail as to what support NCC would provide. One respondent said libraries need professional support whilst another said NCC needs to commit to supporting the volunteers, and praised the volunteers for their work.
It was commented by one respondent that the library service goes beyond that of book lending, and that it assists with people’s mental health and self-sufficiency. It was commented that the library provides an ‘oasis’ during difficult times which far outweighs the financial value of the building and the land that it is sited on.

One respondent said they felt ‘Community Managed Library’ is a limited definition, and that the positives and negatives would change over time. They felt the negatives are relatively unknown at present but may depend in part on any understandings, or future actions of NCC. They added a ‘free rein’ to community management would be a positive step. Another respondent commented on the age of the library and its long history. They said it is an excellent facility for local children and that if the proposal goes ahead it can only continue to exist if it is managed by volunteers.

Other comments included that the library is in central location with the community and if it were to be replaced by new homes this space would be lost forever; criticism of NCC; the library has too few reference books and these are required as information in the news and on the internet can be unreliable; and a request for confirmation as to what quantifies as a ‘low number of physical visits’ and that if visits are low the service should be reviewing why and how the numbers could be improved.

Children and young people’s questionnaire

We received four responses relating to Abington Library by respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, respondents for Abington said they talk to the librarians about books and other things and felt this was important; and attend baby and children’s groups. One respondent added that they love their library. When asked about the one thing they like best about their local library, children and young people questionnaire respondents said the librarians; that the children’s area is bright and colourful; the close proximity to respondents home; toys; colouring activities; and books. When children and young people questionnaire respondents were invited to make any other comments, one respondent gave comments and said they did not want their library to close as they valued it highly and enjoyed participating in last year’s summer reading challenge.

Drop-in event

A drop-in event was held at Abington Library on 19 February 2019, attended by 30 people. Most people present were from the community group or volunteers who were there to discuss practicalities around the proposal rather than give their views. One attendee with health problems stated that they enjoyed coming in to Abington Library on a regular basis to enjoy the calmness and to have regular social contact with others. They felt it would be a shame to lose the library.

Other responses

There was one written response received in relation to Abington Library from an individual who said that the library is an asset to the local community. They commented on the diversity and demographics of the local area and how the library is a hub of information, with expert staff. They commented on how the library helps with the integration of people from other countries and that the building should be listed and not sold for housing.

There were also 12 comment cards submitted via the Friends of Abington Library that all began ‘I love Abington Library…’, which were mostly written by small children. The majority of these cards contained the respondents name and age, although this information has been redacted in the appendix. The children expressed their love of the books and activities the library provides and how they find the library a fun place to be. They said how they enjoy participating in the activities and have made new friends. They like the staff and enjoy playing with the toys and colouring materials. Some said they have been going to the library since they were small, and appreciate having the library near their home. The adult respondent to the comment cards echoed some of the feedback provided by the children. They said how the library is somewhere
children can be educated and feel loved. They complimented the children’s services provided such as Rhymetime, as well as the staff. They said the library is part of their family life and is a source of company, entertainment and help.

60. There were no social media comments received in relation to Abington Library.

61. At the start of the consultation period, 28 libraries were open for consultation, while eight libraries (including Abington) were not. However, respondents could leave a comment in the questionnaire about those libraries when the consultation was not open. The five respondents who provided comments on Abington Library said that the library was popular and well-used in an underprivileged area of Northampton. They said the library has been part of the community for a long time and it provides numerous services to a range of people and had over the years adapted to meet the demands made of it by the Council. Respondents were concerned about access to online facilities, stating that vulnerable people would not have access to these if the library closed. They were also concerned about the access to other libraries for those who had limited mobility, as they considered that transport was not accessible. One respondent made an offer to volunteer at the library for a day a week to help keep it open. Another said they thought the building was probably eligible for listed status.
Brackley Library

Standard questionnaire

62. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Brackley Library. There were 35 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing how often respondents usually attend Brackley Library.]

63. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Brackley Library. There were 36 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
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<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>86.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children's Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Brackley Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
64. The proposal for Brackley Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution - to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 35 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

65. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 18 responses to this question.

66. The majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution stated how highly they regarded the library and all of the services it provides. They felt the library was a valuable resource for all ages in the local community. Respondents commented on how the library provided a diverse range of services, and the children’s services were highlighted by some as a service frequently used. There was also praise for the staff. Respondents strongly supported the proposal as it kept the library open, although one respondent raised their concern about the future of other libraries and another hoped this proposal now ended the uncertainty residents and staff had been facing about the future of their local library.

67. Some respondents commented that Brackley was a growing town and that it is important to have a library to help the local population and surrounding villages access the various services and groups that the library provides, and that alternative libraries were too far to travel for some, with the very young and elderly being given as examples, and that this was even more important due to there no longer being a mobile library service. One respondent felt there is potential for the library to make money by using its building in different ways, and that the section 106 money could be used to create additional space that could be hired out to generate revenue.

68. The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution said that opening hours and book stock had been reduced and newspapers withdrawn, and that it was unsatisfactory if nothing is going to change.

69. The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution also commented on the opening hours, and said that since the library closes at 5pm instead of 6pm, it is hard for them to use the service and their usage has been severally decreased.

70. No respondents said ‘Don’t know’ to this question.

71. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were three responses to this question.
72. One commented that there needs to be an increase in opening hours, particularly evenings and weekends, and that book and newspaper stock needs to improve. Another wanted to know the consequences when the section 106 funding is used up and if NCC would find itself in the same position of consulting to close it. Another felt there would be no negative impact if the library were to remain open as part of NCC’s statutory provision.

73. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Brackley Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were three responses to this question.

74. Respondents wanted clarity on the level of service and operating hours, with a request that these are not reduced and to preferably have the library open until 6pm. One respondent said NCC should increase Council Tax and challenge central government’s austerity measures.

75. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Brackley Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were three responses to this question.

76. These respondents expressed their praise for the staff and volunteers of the library. They also felt that the library was an asset to the local community and should remain open. They reiterated their support for the proposal and requested an increase to the current opening hours, especially at the weekend.

**Children and young people’s questionnaire**

77. There were no comments received relating to Brackley Library by respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire.

**Drop-in event**

78. As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Brackley, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

**Other responses**

79. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Brackley Library. After the consultation period for Brackley Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Brackley Library.
Brixworth Library

Standard questionnaire

80. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Brixworth Library. There were 11 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

81. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Brixworth Library. There were 11 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Brixworth Library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
82. The proposal for Brixworth Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution – to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 9 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

83. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were two responses to this question.

84. Those respondents who felt this was a good solution were pleased the library was remaining open and valued it as an important part of the local community, which is aided by its close proximity and links to the local community centre, and one respondent felt the services delivered at both venues complemented each other. However, one respondent felt the section 106 funding of £11,800 was too low considering the importance placed on the library service within the local community.

85. No respondents felt this was a poor solution, and no respondents rated it as neither a good nor poor solution. Respondents who said ‘Don’t know’ did not provide any comments as to why the answered in that way.

86. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were no responses to this question.

87. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Brixworth Library proposal which they would like us to consider. Only one comment was received to this question and the respondent requested a larger range of books.

88. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Brixworth Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were no responses to this question.

**Children and young people’s questionnaire**

89. There were no responses received relating to Brixworth Library by respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire.

**Drop-in event**

90. As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Brixworth, there was no drop-in event held in this library.
Other responses

91. One written response was received regarding Brixworth Library, which was from Daventry District Council stating that it strongly supported the retention of Brixworth Library, as proposed.

92. There were no social media comments received in relation to Brixworth Library. After the consultation period for Brixworth Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Brixworth Library.
Burton Latimer Library

Standard questionnaire

93. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Burton Latimer Library. There were 70 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

94. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Burton Latimer Library. There were 70 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Burton Latimer Library</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** 70
95. The proposal for Burton Latimer Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution – to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 55 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

96. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 33 responses to this question.

97. The majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution commented that the town needed a local library and that the current library needed to continue. They commented that the library provided more than a book borrowing service. Respondents spoke of the size of the library, their preference of Burton Latimer Library over Kettering Library, and of improvements required such as access to toilet facilities, at the current library. A respondent said that the library will still need to have access to books in other libraries and the electronic infrastructure.

98. Respondents who felt this was a poor solution made comments about access to public transport in terms of cost and travel time for residents. They said that this was not a viable situation in that it would cost residents quite a lot of money to get to alternative libraries such as Kettering Library. They said that the bus service was poor and infrequent and that as a result fewer people would use a larger library.

99. In particular they spoke about the impact on lonely and isolated residents. They said that the proposal would also affect the educational development of young children. Another respondent commented on the children’s centre services provided at Kettering Library which they said were at full capacity and therefore would not be able to accommodate more children and families from Burton Latimer. Respondents expressed concerns over the ability and skill set of volunteers and the future supply of volunteers to run the service.

100. Respondents stated that they pay a higher rate of council tax than people in Kettering and that they should get the full range of services. They said that the proposal would be a cut to their statutory service. They felt that Burton Latimer is a growing town that required more services not less. Respondents questioned the use of deprivation data to determine whether libraries remained part of the statutory provision. They said for Burton Latimer this was nonsensical as it had its fair share of deprivation.

101. Respondents were concerned about the loss of the Kettering Borough Council access point if the library closed. Other respondents felt that the Council should wait for the outcome of the proposed local government reorganisation before deciding what to do with Burton Latimer Library. Respondents stated that changing the library to a community managed library would inevitably impact on the services and opening hours. They felt that the library was too important to the community for it to be closed.
102. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution commented on a number of differing issues. One respondent said that it was a valuable service, while another felt that the concept of the library was borne out of a time when books were the only form of communication. They also expressed some concerns about the use of section 106 money, valuing open space which could be used by more people than a library. They also commented about the Civic Centre being next to the library and that one building could deliver these community services. They said that if the Council could not afford the statutory service then it should be closed. Another respondent felt that the success of a community-run library would be dependent on the quality of the volunteers and whether they were well-informed and able to run all the services being offered. Another said that the proposal could work well for the library if enough people could be found to support it.

103. There was one comment from a respondent who said ‘Don’t know’. They commented that the library is an excellent resource and brings people together. They felt more could be done to encourage harder to reach residents and that they may favour the library to be run by the community, however they were unsure how it would happen in practice. They said that they needed more information about the proposal.

104. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 25 responses to this question.

105. These respondents were concerned about volunteers running a library service. In particular, they were not sure how skilled the volunteers would be and whether the supply of volunteers would be maintained and be viable in the future. One respondent said that as there were no local libraries run as community libraries, they felt there was little awareness or idea of the practicalities involved in running such an operation. Others felt that a community library would not survive and that statutory provision was needed and a reversal back to the initial proposal to keep it as a statutory library. Others were concerned about the support given to volunteers and how the Council would help all community run libraries.

106. Respondents were unclear about what services would be provided and whether these would be the services that the community needed. They expressed their thoughts on the opening hours, with some saying that cutting hours means less footfall and use; whereas another respondent asked the opening hours be more responsive to library users’ requirements. Some suggested bringing the service up to date by having somewhere to eat and drink, as well as activities for children.

107. Respondents made representations about the how their council tax is used and whether the Wind Farm Fund could be used to help keep the library open. On Council Tax, they felt that they were being denied a service and effectively paying council tax for a lesser service. They suggested that a local enterprise could be set up for all community managed libraries, which could share good practice and resources.

108. Respondents also were concerned about the future of the groups at the library. Respondents felt that alternative libraries i.e. Kettering and Wellingborough were unlikely to be used by residents of Burton Latimer; and that residents were unlikely to use public transport to get to them. Respondents said that they felt the Council was ‘wrecking’ their community, and that the town was growing and therefore needed these public services.
Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Burton Latimer Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 13 responses to this question.

These respondents said that residents should not be held to account for the perceived mismanagement of council finances. Some respondents felt that the building could be used in a better way which included more activities for the residents of the town. One respondent said the Council should hand over the building to the Town Council. Many respondents asked for the library to remain part of the statutory service and said that the current system worked well and should not be changed.

Other suggestions included the use of local businesses to support the library and that the library could have smaller businesses within it and increase services and generate income. Some respondents suggested increasing council tax whilst another felt that their council tax ought to be used for local services. One respondent said that the library should be closed.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Burton Latimer Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were seven responses to this question.

Respondents said that the library was an essential part of a community and that for Burton Latimer it would be better for the Council to go back to its original proposal and keep it as a statutory library. Respondents spoke about their own experiences of using library services including support for young mothers and a sense of community in that the library provided support for those members of the community that were isolated, such as the elderly. Respondents wanted an alternative solution to be found and commented that they paid their taxes and that the taxes should be used for the benefit of all.

Children and young people's questionnaire

There were no responses received relating to Burton Latimer Library by respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

Drop-in event

A drop-in event was held at Burton Latimer Library on 15 January 2019 which was attended by 35 people. Many of the attendees were parents who said that Kettering Library was not a suitable alternative for accessing baby groups. They felt that it was not suitable for their needs and that it would not cope with the extra capacity that would be needed. They were concerned about the affordability of getting to an alternative library i.e. public transport or the general cost of transport.

They also expressed some concerns around volunteers running the library and the future sustainability of a community-led library reliant on volunteers. Attendees said that the proposal offers no stability and that it was not good for the community not to have a safety net around the type of proposal being put forward. They felt that the library service needed consistency and staffing.

Attendees said that they were happy to pay a precept to support the library as the population of Burton Latimer was increasing. They commented that and that the library is well-used and had a lot going for it. Attendees said that the library should remain as is now. Another attendee suggested that the Council should use educational budgets to help run the library and keep the current staff there. One attendee commented on the book stock and felt it was too geared towards popular books and less towards the classics.

Other responses

We received an email from Kettering Borough Council to say it had noted the changes made to proposals to review and re-provide the library service, including the sudden inclusion of Burton Latimer
Library in the list for non-statutory provision. It stated that it will continue to work with community groups and the County Council to ensure the survival of the three libraries in the A6 Towns. There were no social media comments received in relation to Burton Latimer Library.

119. After the consultation period had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. The one respondent who made a comment in relation to Burton Latimer Library said the library was the hub of the community. They stated that there many groups and activities that took place there and if the library closed then any people who valued it would feel disappointed in the decision taken.
Corby Library

Standard questionnaire

120. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Corby Library. There were 14 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

121. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Corby Library. There were 14 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice or to use Registrations Services.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Corby Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
122. The proposal for Corby Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 12 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

123. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were five responses to this question.

124. The respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution expressed the value of the service for the local area. They felt it was essential for children to have access to books, and that the library provided a safe place for education, including for those that are out of mainstream schooling. They were supportive of the proposal that kept the service, and one respondent felt there should be more financial investment to improve upon the existing service.

125. The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this was a poor solution said that libraries should be kept open by reducing senior management salaries and pensions.

126. The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution commented on their dissatisfaction with the library being closed on a Sunday, which made attendance for them problematic. They also felt the range of books should be increased.

127. Respondents who said ‘Don’t know’ did not comment as to why they felt this way.

128. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were two responses to this question.

129. One respondent requested the library be opened on a Sunday. Another respondent stated that they were homeless and said they would have difficulty in accessing what they needed locally should the library close.

130. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Corby Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were no responses to this question.

131. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Corby Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were two responses to this question.
Respondents who took the opportunity to provide further comments expressed their praise for the library staff.

**Children and young people's questionnaire**

We received one response relating to Corby Library by respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire. When invited to make any other comments about the library, one respondent commented on the importance of library as a community resource. They felt it offered a range of information and books, and said they find it a friendly and accessible space for families, which they hope would continue.

**Drop-in event**

As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Corby, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

**Other responses**

There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Corby Library.

After the consultation period for Corby Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Corby Library.
Danesholme Library

Standard questionnaire

137. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Danesholme Library. There were 2 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

```
Approximately how often do you usually attend Danesholme Library?

- Never more than once a week
- Weekly
- Fortnightly
- Monthly
- Less often than monthly
- I do not currently use library services in Danesholme Library
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138. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Danesholme Library. There were 2 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Danesholme Library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

139. The proposal for Danesholme Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5,
where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 2 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

140. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There was one response to this question.

141. The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this was a poor solution said that they were concerned about the loss of a dedicated library. They added that they feel inspired when they attend the library, and that it is a good small library for children who need to be encouraged to read. No respondents gave comments as to why they thought this was a good solution. No respondents felt it was neither a poor nor good solution and none said that they didn’t know.

142. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There was one response to this question.

143. This respondent felt that current provision would be lost or watered down if it was moved to an alternative venue that is smaller.

144. Respondents were then asked a series of questions about the proposed relocation of Danesholme Library. They were asked to think about Danesholme Community Centre (where it was propose Danesholme Library will be relocated) and to place a number of criteria in order of importance for the new venue. There were 2 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option per row.
145. Respondents were asked if they feel there is anything that would prevent them from accessing Danesholme Library if it moves to Danesholme Community Centre, to tell us what these are and how they could be overcome. There were no responses to this question.

146. Respondents were then asked if they have any other comments they would like to make about the proposed relocation of Danesholme Library, including if they feel there is an alternative venue that should be considered and why. There were no responses to this question.

147. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Danesholme Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There was one response to this question. This respondent asked whether sponsorship could keep library open.

148. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Danesholme Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were no responses to this question.

Children and young people’s questionnaire
149. There were no responses received relating to Danesholme Library by respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire.

Drop-in event
150. A drop-in event was held at Danesholme Library on 18 January 2019, which was attended by 10 people. Attendees wanted the library to remain in current location or within the nearby area. They preferred it to be run as a community library with volunteers rather than to have no library at all. Attendees also stated which services they used. This included borrowing books, using WiFi, charging phones, printing. They also mentioned the possibility of income generation from adult learning/family learning and overdue or reserved books. One attendee said that they used eBooks rather than borrowing books; another said that their children were doing well at school due to their use of the library.

Other comments
151. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Danesholme Library.
After the consultation period for Danesholme Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Danesholme Library.
Daventry Library

153. A separate public engagement exercise on the future accommodation for Daventry Library was held in October and November 2018 as the current building is owned by Daventry District Council and there is a desire to redevelop the site. The findings from that engagement exercise are available on our website. The consultation covered in this report did not deal with the relocation of the library.

Standard questionnaire

154. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Daventry Library. There were 19 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

155. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Daventry Library. There were 19 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice or to use Registrations Services.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Daventry Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

156. The proposal for Daventry Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 17 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

157. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 10 responses to this question.
158. The respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution expressed their pleasure at the library remaining open and their preference for the facilities and services provided to be delivered to the same current level, including the opening hours and accessibility. Respondents also commented on the planned relocation of the library moving to the Abbey Centre, with some expressing their disappointment with the relocation whilst one respondent said they hoped the new premises would be modern and up-to-date.

159. The two respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a poor solution both remarked on how they did not want the library to relocate to the Abbey Centre as they preferred the current location. One respondent thought a better alternative should be found and stated how high a regard they held the current library service and the building. They felt the Abbey Centre would be too small and lacked natural light. They also felt it is located in an inconvenient location as they felt it is out of the town centre and on a hill, with inadequate parking.

160. The respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution also commented on the library’s relocation. They disagreed with the Abbey Centre as an alternative location and felt it was too far from the town centre and would have a lower passing footfall compared to other areas in the town. One respondent was concerned about the reduction of the internal space for the library whilst another felt the layout would be efficient and may be better internally than it is currently. One respondent criticised the current allocation of books in comparison to some other areas of the country; complained that there were no longer able to order books in; and questioned the spending priorities.

161. No respondents answered ‘Don’t know’.

162. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were seven responses to this question.

163. Once again the majority of respondents commented on the relocation of the library. They felt the number of users would reduce due to the Abbey Centre being located further out of the town centre than the current library location and residents not knowing where it is. Again it was commented that the Abbey Centre would be too small to effectively host the library service and respondents requested that any alternative service needs to be equal to what is currently being delivered.

164. One respondent felt the computer area could be reduced; that adaptable shelving be used to utilise space; that there should be systems in place to help prevent books being stolen; training for volunteers; and an improved labelling system.

165. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Daventry Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were six responses to this question.

166. The most frequent comments received were again regarding the relocation. Respondents commented on how they did not want the library to be relocated and that it should not be moved until what they perceived as a better location has been sourced; that it should be rebuilt on the current site; or that it should be relocated into a more central location with a suggestion that empty shops units in the town centre would be a better alternative.
167. One respondent said how they felt that Daventry District Council has offered a good deal as it is covering the cost of the move, and that they hoped this provided the library with a secure future in the new premises. Other comments included a request for the reinstatement of newspapers and magazines.

168. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Daventry Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were three responses to this question.

169. Respondents who took the opportunity to provide further comments praised the resource materials available in the library including OS maps and information on local history and felt these could be better promoted. Another respondent also felt staff should also be consulted on the future of the service.

Children and young people's questionnaire
170. There were no comments received relating to Daventry Library by respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

Drop-in event
171. As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Daventry as part of this consultation, there was no drop-in event held in this library. Previous engagement events had been held in October 2018 in relation to the proposed relocation.

Other responses
172. Two written responses were received in relation to Daventry Library. One was from Daventry District Council which stated it strongly supported the relocation of Daventry Library to the Abbey Centre, and that it will work with NCC to make this a success. It said that the new location should markedly reduce NCC occupation costs, including contingent costs.

173. The other written response was submitted by Daventry Town Council which stated it was pleased that NCC was conducting a review of the library service and considering options to continue to deliver a sustainable library service, throughout the county, within its budgetary constraints. Daventry Town Council stated it supported Daventry Library to be retained under NCC statutory provision, and be relocated to the Abbey Centre to facilitate the redevelopment of the old library site for the development of a cinema and public space for entertainment and leisure.

174. There were no social media comments received in relation to Daventry Library.

175. After the consultation period for Daventry Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Daventry Library.
**Deanshanger Library**

**Standard questionnaire**

176. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Deanshanger Library. There were 258 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Graph showing frequency of library attendance]

177. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Deanshanger Library. There were 259 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children's Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Deanshanger Library</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>259</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Deanshanger Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 241 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 91 responses to this question.

Many of the respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution expressed the high regard they hold for the library and the services it provides to the local community. Respondents consider the library to be an essential central hub of the community that provides a variety of services to all ages of the growing community and enables community interaction.

It was commented that the library was a ‘lifeline’ for some members of the local community, especially new and young mums, children, families and the elderly. Some respondents commented on the services they access at the library and felt they are essential to the local community. These included access to books (including audio books) and support and information. The children’s services were mentioned by many, which they considered important to children’s education and development and parental wellbeing. Many also mentioned the groups and activities that the library hosts, that help to reduce social isolation, and that the library was considered as a meeting space within the local community. The ability to access IT services that are provided including access to the internet for those that do not have it at home was also mentioned as important, as were other services including Blue Badge and bus pass applications, and access to a health visitor.

Whilst some respondents commented that their preference would be for NCC to continue to deliver and fund the library service, they considered the proposal to be the next best alternative and more preferable than closure, and were pleased that it remained as part of NCC’s statutory provision. It was commented that the library has a positive impact on people’s lives and if it were to close, the most vulnerable would be the greatest affected.

Some respondents commented on the volunteers. Some expressed their praise for them and the dedicated work they do and welcomed their future involvement in developing the library service further. It was commented that local people understood the needs of the locality. A couple of respondents who were already volunteers said the proposal provides the opportunity for the library to be further developed as a community hub that could deliver activities and support beyond what is currently being provided for all ages.
184. A few respondents raised their concern over what they considered to be an over-reliance on volunteers as they feel they would not be subject to the same performance standards as paid staff and may be liable to leave with short notice. There was concern that the library would not be sustainable in the long-term if services were only delivered by volunteers, and that volunteers should be supported by paid library staff to assist with the service delivery, preferably full-time or at least supported by regular visits. A few respondents were concerned that the level of service would reduce with volunteers compared to paid library staff. It was requested that the volunteers had access to the existing systems to enable them to deliver the service effectively.

185. Some respondents commented on the distance of Deanshanger to alternative libraries. It was commented that some residents do not leave the village. It was also mentioned that there are limited bus services within the village that would make travelling to alternative libraries problematic for some, especially those people who do not have access to a car or are unable to drive. The current library is within walking distance for many residents and without it, it was thought that some users would no longer be able to access library services.

186. A few respondents commented on the opening hours. Respondents want the library to have accessible opening hours, including being open at the weekends to enable access for people and families who work during the week. A couple of respondents mentioned the book stock within the library. One said the proposal enables the library to have new books and share stock with other libraries within the county. Another respondent wanted clarity on the budget allocated to books and whether the community group is expected to furnish the library with books.

187. Other comments included a lack of other alternative community provision within the village, including activities for under-fives; that the proposed new unitary authority should review the situation again once established; and that funding is required for things such as the upkeep of book stocks and computers.

188. The four respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution made various comments. One said the village needs a library for the children that use it and stated how much they like its environment. Another raised their concern over the opening hours and were fearful these would reduce and would be too restrictive for people who work to access the services. This view was echoed by another respondent who added that having limited opening times would not be suitable for the needs of the local school children, elderly and other residents. One respondent said there were too many houses being built within the village and that local services and facilities were not increasing to accommodate growing demands.

189. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution also gave a variety of responses. Some commented that the delivery of the library service should not be down to the reliance on volunteers and that NCC should continue to fund and deliver the services. It was commented that the volunteers would not be able to develop the services in the same way as paid staff, and that community groups rely on goodwill, which is a risk to long-term services and that the number of volunteers could diminish. A couple of respondents expressed their appreciation for the volunteers taking over the delivery of the service.

190. A few respondents commented on the opening hours of the library and felt it was currently not open for long enough which makes it problematic for some to access the services. One added that they want more clarity on what children’s services would be available and that the monthly baby clinic should continue as the alternative venues are too far away to be able to see a health visitor.
191. A similar number of respondents said they felt the proposal was acceptable considering the Council’s current financial situation and were pleased the library was remaining open. Other comments included concern that further development of the library is likely to suffer in the long-term if there is a lack of ongoing funds; that more needs to be done in order to ensure the efficient opening of the services; that NCC should fund the service and the community group should not have to contribute any monies; that the service should be provided free at the point of delivery; and a request for more information as to what the Section 106 monies would be spent on, in case it jeopardised other provisions that it was intended for, and the observation that Section 106 agreements are time limited.

192. The one respondent who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided comments said they were not sure how the library would be affected. They commented on how they and their family hold the library, the children’s services, and its staff in high regard. They said it would be a shame if the services or hours were reduced or if it closed completely.

193. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 29 responses to this question.

194. Many respondents raised their concerns about what they considered to be an over-reliance on a small cohort of volunteers to deliver the service. Some praised the hard work of the volunteers and their commitment to help deliver the library service. However, there was concern that the number of volunteers could reduce or that volunteers could leave with no notice, which would in turn make it more difficult for the remaining volunteers to deliver the service, and that they are not subject to the same performance standards as paid staff. A request was made that NCC staff cover the running of the library should it become too onerous for the volunteers. It was commented that some volunteers do not have the same professional attitude or skills and experience as paid trained members of staff, or could find the role too stressful. Requests were made that volunteers receive sufficient training and access to the library computer systems to enable them to perform the same functions as paid members of staff. It was stated that someone would need to organise the timetabling and recruitment of volunteers. It was also commented that a paid member of staff should be employed to ensure the continuation of services, and that they be supported by the community group volunteers.

195. Some respondents raised their concerns about the opening hours and felt these were already too restrictive, especially for people who work during the week. They were fearful that if resources were reduced and the opening hours were condensed further, the library would close as access and attendance would reduce so much it would no longer be viable. Requests were made for longer opening hours including weekends to make the services more accessible for working people.

196. A couple of respondents commented on the need for continued investment in the service, preferably from NCC, for its long-term sustainability. One respondent said NCC should continue to fund and deliver the library service. A similar number of respondents commented on the importance of the library services to the local community and requested that it be retained. It was commented that the village has already had facilities and services reduced, and that Council Tax has been paid to fund these services.

197. Other comments included concern that communication in the village would be lost and the village would become detached; that there should be an undertaking ensuring the service would not require local fundraising in order to keep it open; that the village has few community facilities; and that the future provision of the service is essential to the wellbeing of many people of all ages who meet there for social activities, as well as the support it provides for children who need the computer facilities to aid their education.
198. A few respondents said they could not foresee any negative impact on the community or that the impact would be minimal, and were pleased the library was not closing.

199. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Deanshanger Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 29 responses to this question.

200. Again the most frequent comments were regarding volunteers. Whilst some praised the volunteers and the work they do, others were concerned about the sustainability of the service if it was solely reliant on volunteers to deliver. It was commented that the number of volunteers would reduce over time and that the library should be supported by the presence of paid members of staff to ensure the same quality of service, preferable more frequently than it is now but at least a part-time presence. It was suggestion that this could be funded by either NCC or via a precept on the parish taxes. It was also commented that volunteers should be trained and have access to the library service computer systems, as this would make them more efficient, and remain up to-to-date with books and other materials.

201. Some respondents were pleased the proposal put forward enabled the library to remain open. A few respondents said NCC should continue funding and deliver the library services, or that NCC should invest further in the library to increase its use a resource within the local community. Again some respondents commented on the opening hours, with requests for these to be increased to make the library more accessible to everyone. One respondent suggested the Section 106 monies be used to install automated out of hours access similar to that provided at Kingston Library in Milton Keynes. Another said there should be a degree of flexibility with regard to opening hours if there are enough volunteers.

202. A few respondents requested activities they would like to see being delivered. These included community engagement and training for adults on how to use new technology, which may help those seeking employment; weekend activities for school children aged five years or older; and funding to reinstate the children’s groups which had previously been delivered there. Others suggested working in partnership with other organisations to make the library more sustainable.

203. Other comments included that the spending of Section 106 monies should involve the community and not be spent at the discretion of NCC. A few respondents said they were unable to suggest or envisage any other alternative solution.

204. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Deanshanger Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were 29 responses to this question.

205. Many of these respondents expressed their relief that the library would remain open under this proposal. They praised the service and held it in high regard as a vital community asset to the village. They felt it was important to keep the library open as it is of benefit to all ages, especially children, families and the elderly. They felt it provided a community space that helps to reduce social isolation, and offers a range of activities and has the potential to provide more.

206. A few respondents stated that they would like to see the library offer more events and increase the promotion of activities to improve the use of the facilities. One respondent suggested a café should be onsite which would also help to generate income. Another said they intend to expand on the services provided but need security in order to take projects forward. A similar number of respondents expressed their gratitude to the volunteers and praised their ‘friendly’ attitude and the work they do in supporting the library and delivering its services.
207. A couple of respondents commented on the opening hours. One respondent raised their concerns about the potential limitation of opening hours, whilst another requested the library be accessible during some time over the weekend. One respondent requested that there be regular communication between the community group and NCC to ensure the group can share its ideas and aspirations and seek advice and support as to what would be possible to deliver in the future.

208. Other comments included a request that NCC supports the library to ensure its sustainability; that some people, including older people, would find it difficult to access alternative libraries which has been made worse due to a reduced bus service; and that the village is expanding and needs more facilities and services not less.

Children and young people’s questionnaire
209. We received four responses relating to Deanshanger Library from respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, respondents for Deanshanger said they like the crafts and events held at the library; story time; and said the library is great place to choose a book to help with their reading. When asked about the one thing children and young people questionnaire respondents like best about their local library, they said how they felt the library is important to their village; that they do school trips to the library and have their library cards; and that they like to attend. One respondent commented that the library sign is in need of repair.

Drop-in event
210. A drop-in event was held at Deanshanger Library on 9 January 2019, attended by 20 people. Attendees were complimentary about the library itself, the current volunteers and the community spirit in Deanshanger and felt that the Friends of Deanshanger Library is a strong group, although there was the caveat that volunteers need resilience in order to be able to succeed.

211. Attendees were keen on opening hours being locally decided, with weekends and Mondays being mentioned. There was also a desire to get the book group running again, and for the volunteers to work with other community groups, and not to lose contact with the library service. EBook provision was considered to be good, and there was the suggestion that books could be better promoted.

212. There was the view that Deanshanger was being marginalised as it is ‘on the border’. One attendee felt that the library should be funded and staffed by NCC and should remain open. If it was staffed by volunteers, they felt the volunteers should be paid. They thought that systems and equipment should be fully funded by NCC and that all revenue and capital costs should be covered by NCC and approved by volunteers.

Other responses
213. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Deanshanger Library.

214. After the consultation period for Deanshanger Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Deanshanger Library.
Desborough Library

Standard questionnaire

215. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Desborough Library. There were 66 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing approximately how often respondents usually attend Desborough Library.]

216. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Desborough Library. There were 64 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Description</th>
<th>Response Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Desborough Library</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Desborough Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 54 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 33 responses to this question.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a good solution mostly felt that whilst they would prefer NCC to continue to deliver the library service, this solution enabled the library to stay open during times of financial challenge faced by NCC. It was commented that the library should still be well-resourced and able to meet the various needs of a diverse community. It was commented that the cost of running the library should be paid by NCC, whereas if it is run by a community group, the local community itself would have to pay for it.

Respondents also commented on how the library is an important hub for the community as it provides much more than traditional library services, including community groups and children’s services, and needs to be retained to help prevent social isolation and aid the general wellbeing of the town.

A few respondents commented on the building itself. A respondent felt the property should not be purchased by the newly formed charitable incorporated organisation, Desborough Library and Community Hub (DLCH), and that it should be leased to the group until it can be proven the future of the library is viable. It was also felt there was a conflict of interest as some members of DLCH are also town councillors, and it was suggested members of the public should be able to vote on the decisions instead of the Town Council. Another felt that there need to be plans in place to help manage the situation if it becomes unsustainable that safeguard the monies paid by residents through their Council Tax precepts, and to return any grants repayable if the venture fails. Other comments included the view that it is important to retain a local library due to reductions in local bus services.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution commented on what they perceived as a potential conflict of interest between the community group proposed to run the library and the Town Council.

Respondents commented that they felt the price for the purchase of the building was too high for the Town Council to pay for a property that can only be used as a library and that the rental value was also too high. It was felt that if the responsibility of running the library is no longer NCC’s, then NCC should gift the building to the town or offer a period of free rent to help get the running of the library established. It
was added that if the library is deemed to be a statutory service then precept money should not be used to purchase the building.

224. One respondent raised concerns that the business plan put forward by DLCH is not viable due to lack of funds within the community to pay for the functions, and that if people were required to pay for some of the services currently being delivered for free, they would no longer attend. Other comments included the desire that the library continues to run by paid NCC staff and not volunteers; and that further explanation is needed on how the library will run and the financial implications.

225. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution gave a variety of reasons. Some felt there was a lot of pressure on the volunteers to deliver what would be required and were concerned about sustainability and that there may not be enough volunteers. Requests were made for paid professional support of volunteers. One respondent raised their concern that some staff have already left and were fearful of further staff losses.

226. Respondents also commented on the library building itself and felt it should be gifted to the residents of Desborough as they felt they have already been paying for the property via payment of their taxes. Another felt the property should either be gifted, leased or rented to DLCH as the cost of purchasing the building was considered prohibitive. One respondent said they needed more clarity as to whether the building will be leased or purchased. It was felt that there were no other venues in the town that would be able to accommodate the service.

227. Some respondents said they needed more information before being able to fully consider the proposal or that there were too many unknowns at present. They wanted to know the financial cost to the Town Council and local tax payers and to have sight of the business plan of the charitable incorporated organisation. They also wanted to know if there would be sufficient volunteers to run the services and the opening hours. There was also the expectation that more events and services would have to be offered in order to generate income to sustain the future of the library, and that this would add more pressure to the volunteers.

228. Some respondents also commented on the children’s services and wanted to know what level of service would be provided. They felt the library currently provides good services for children and their parents and that current staff are also equipped to monitor any safeguarding concerns. There were concerns raised that the level of children’s services would reduce. One respondent felt the children’s services are not currently well advertised.

229. Other comments included the view that the library is a community hub; that the bus services serving Desborough and the surrounding villages are not adequate and that bus services and libraries should be considered together; and that a town the size of Desborough should have a fully-funded library service to serve the growing population. One respondent felt the money Desborough would have to pay to buy the library could be better spent elsewhere and gave the example of resurfacing the roads.

230. The one respondent who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided comments said they found the explanation of the proposal unclear as they did not understand the term ‘statutory provision’, so were unable to comment.

231. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 19 responses to this question.
232. The most frequent comments made by respondents were regarding the property and the ongoing maintenance costs. Respondents repeated their view that the price of the property is too high, and that it should not be sold for the market value as the property will only be used as a library and not for any other purpose. It was felt that the library should either be leased or be gifted by NCC to the town or that the purchase value be reduced and that NCC had a duty to do so under the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) protocol. The General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 was also quoted as a way NCC could dispose of the freehold and help the newly formed charitable incorporated organisation. Respondents repeated comments that they felt local tax payers had already paid for the cost of the building, which was considered to already belong to Desborough, and that they should not have to pay for it again. It was felt the ongoing maintenance would incur costs and that activities would need to be charged for to cover this cost. Requests were made for future s106 monies to help support the library. It was also commented that there needs to be more evidence of the viability of the proposal before any purchase of the property takes place.

233. Some respondents raised their concerns over the potential reduction in paid staff and felt these would be needed to work alongside or support the volunteers. They felt paid staff would be better trained and more informed than volunteers, and that the services provided within the library, even if by volunteers, still need to be integrated with other services provided both by local government and the community. It was also felt that if there is a statutory children’s services provision then this should be provided by paid NCC staff with experience of children’s services.

234. A few respondents commented that they should not have to pay additional tax to pay for the services and were concerned about the ongoing cost implications of the proposal, and that the town’s Council Tax payers should not have to pay off any potential loans in order to implement the proposal or purchase of the building. A couple of respondents repeated their concerns over what they felt was a potential conflict of interest between the Town Council and the newly formed charitable incorporated organisation.

235. Respondents also raised concerns that the library may be open for fewer hours than it is currently; that people’s ability to socialise would be reduced; that the town cannot afford the library and that other aspects of the town, including roads and parks, would deteriorate as a result of committing to the library proposal; that breastfeeding support is needed; that there needs to be clear and consistent messages regarding the future of the library and the property; and a request for transparency regarding future business plans and finances and that these should be standard deals across the Council.

236. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Desborough Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 18 responses to this question.

237. Many respondents repeated comments that were previously made. The most frequent was regarding the property. Respondents again expressed the view that the local community should not be made to purchase the property as they felt it was already owned by them, paid for by their taxes. They felt the building should be gifted by NCC or leased. One respondent felt any purchase of the property should be deferred for two years to establish whether the new model is deliverable. One respondent felt the library should relocate to the local church hall, with a book rotation that is shared with other halls, and that the school children would be able to access books via their respective school libraries.

238. Respondents also once again commented on how important they felt it was to retain paid NCC staff to help ensure the quality of service, especially to deliver the children’s services, and to help support the volunteers. It was felt by some that NCC should cover the cost of running the services and staff, although one respondent felt this could be covered by the town’s Council Tax precept.
Again one respondent repeated their concerns about the organisation and people seeking to run the library and the perceived conflict of interest in their relationship with the Town Council, and questioned their financial assessment of taking on the library management. Other comments included a request for more money from central government to help pay for services; a suggestion that Desborough and Rothwell could share a library; the view that there should be the potential for expansion; that the library should be open on a Saturday; and a request for NCC to continue to manage the library.

A few respondents commented on their support for the proposal and felt it provided a practical approach and wanted the library to remain in its current location.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Desborough Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were 12 responses to this question.

These respondents made a variety of comments, the most frequent of which was their high regard for the current level of service and their concern over its potential reduction. They felt the town needed a good library service and that is was an important community hub that was used by all ages. Respondents said how it provided a meeting place and delivered vital services, with children’s services specifically being highlighted by some. These were regarded as an important ‘lifeline’ that provides support for parents, which respondents felt strongly should be retained.

Some respondents reiterated comments regarding the property and felt the purchase price was too high. There was also a concern raised about what would happen to the service if it was decided that the property was too expensive, and that services would be diminished as a result. There was also an objection to the charitable incorporated organisation purchasing the property as it was felt that the property was already owned by the town. One respondent felt the value of the property price should reflect the commitment of the charitable incorporated organisation supported by the Town Council. A couple of respondents made requests for more information about the proposal, including what it would involve and how much it will cost, and a request was made that the full details of the charitable incorporated organisation’s business plan be made available.

One respondent questioned the detail within the equality impact assessment and felt there needs to be a minimum of one breastfeeding group and two baby/toddler groups within the town, supplied free of charge, and that this would allow ‘higher level services’ to link in. One respondent again raised their concern about the charitable incorporated organisation and what they believe to be a conflict of interest with the Town Council, and felt decisions were being made without information being shared with residents. They also felt activities should be provided for free and that many local residents would not pay a fee for activities and would go elsewhere.

We received one response relating to Desborough Library from respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, respondents for Desborough said they use the play area; attend consultations, and make friends. The one thing children and young people questionnaire respondents said they like best about their local library was playing. No other comments were received.

A drop-in event was held at Desborough Library on 8 January 2019, attended by 24 people. Attendees mentioned the library building and felt that it should be gifted to the town by NCC or at least offered at a reduced cost. The importance of the library in terms of community wellbeing was mentioned, and it was noted that the library was ideally located and just the right size for the town.
247. Some attendees suggested things that they felt the library should have in future – this included:
   - Universal children’s services
   - Volunteers that are friendly and knowledgeable
   - Better opening hours, especially at weekends
   - Computer courses
   - Sanitary, nappy and incontinence bins

248. One attendee said they would prefer it if the library is run by NCC, and another said that Rothwell Library should remain open too. One attendee felt that there was a lot of misinformation about the proposal, and that there should be more scenarios as part of the consultation. Another was concerned that the business plan for the community group may not be viable and that it was not fair that they were expected to vote on the increase in precept for the Town Council without seeing the business plan.

Other responses

249. We received an email from Kettering Borough Council to say it had noted the changes made to proposals to review and re-provide the library service. It stated that it will continue to work with community groups and the County Council to ensure the survival of the three libraries in the A6 Towns.

250. There were no social media comments received in relation to Desborough Library.

251. After the consultation period for Desborough Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Desborough Library.
Duston Library

Standard questionnaire

252. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Duston Library. There were 11 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Graph showing the frequency of library attendance]

253. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Duston Library. There were 11 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Duston Library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
254. The proposal for Duston Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 11 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about Duston Library proposal.]

255. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were five responses to this question.

256. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library will remain open and part of NCC’s statutory provision. Respondents praised the staff and commented on how frequently they attend the library and that it is always busy with many users accessing a variety of services. A respondent commented how the items for sale in the shop are relevant to school topics making homework much easier. One respondent said how they hoped the opening hours would not be reduced and were concerned the future of the library may change should there be any further reviews of the service. One respondent said NCC should be able to offer universal access to users of the library as it a vital service for them as a new parent and will continue to be as their child grows. Another said they enjoy the events during the school holidays as they allow them to do interesting activities with their child and enable them to meet up with friends to take part in the same activity.

257. Respondents who felt this was neither a good nor poor solution did not provide comments as to why they felt this way. No respondents felt it was a poor solution and no respondents said ‘Don’t Know’.

258. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were two responses to this question.

259. Respondents commented that if the library were to close it would make it harder to complete school homework and projects; that there are few places to take children during the holidays to do activities for those that have limited access to transport; that the library provides a fun, safe place for children; and that users of the service should be involved in a review of the opening hours.

260. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Duston Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were four responses to this question.

261. The most frequent comment received was regarding the opening hours. Respondents requested that the opening hours do not reduce, and commented that working parents struggle to attend the library with their families. Requests were made for longer opening hours into the evening to make the library more
accessible, with one respondent suggesting the library should be open until 9pm whilst another said it
should open in the evenings for the same length of time as the evening events at the rest of the centre. A
respondent said they would prefer the library to close two days a week if that would reduce any risk of it
closing completely. A respondent commented on the importance they placed on libraries with supporting
education. They added that libraries should continue to work closely and in partnership with other services,
and gave the Citizens Advice Bureau as an example.

262. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Duston Library proposal that they had
not already mentioned. There was one response to this question.

263. This respondent mentioned the current staff and felt they should be more welcoming and
knowledgeable; that the building is in need of repair; and that the situation needs to improve in order for
them to attend as frequently as they used to.

Children and young people’s questionnaire
264. We received two responses relating to Duston Library from respondents using the Children and
Young People’s questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, respondents for Duston said
they do homework there. One respondent commented how they like the help they receive in searching for
books. The one thing children and young people questionnaire respondents said they like best about their
local library were the range of books to choose from, although one respondent added that they felt the
amount of books available was reducing. When children and young people questionnaire respondents were
invited to make any other comments, they said how they like attending the library and that it should be kept
open. They praised the staff and enjoy seeing others, such as babies, enjoying the facilities; and commented
that they felt the range of books was reducing.

Drop-in event
265. As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Duston, there was no drop-in event held
in this library.

Other responses
266. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Duston Library.

267. At the start of the consultation period, 28 libraries were open for consultation, while eight libraries
(including Duston) were not. However, respondents could leave a comment in the questionnaire about those
libraries. No comments were received at that time in relation to Duston Library.
Earls Barton Library

Standard questionnaire

268. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Earls Barton Library. There were 79 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Graph showing attendance frequency at Earls Barton Library]

269. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Earls Barton Library. There were 75 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
<th>Response Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>77.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Earls Barton Library</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
270. The proposal for Earls Barton Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 78 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

271. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 45 responses to this question.

272. The vast majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library would remain open. Many commented on the high regard they hold for the library and the services it provides to the growing community, and feel it is well used. The library was considered to be a vital hub of the community that was of great benefit to the local residents. They felt the library was important for children and their development and education, as well as providing a space for adults, including the elderly, to meet and participate in organised groups and events, which also helps prevent social isolation.

273. Some respondents commented that their preference was for the library to be fully managed and run by NCC, although they felt the proposal offered the next best solution, and that as the library would remain part of NCC’s statutory provision, this provided a ‘safety net’ should the delivery of services by the community group be unsustainable. It was commented that any closure of the library would have a detrimental impact on the community, and that their preference would be to keep the library open in some form rather than let it close, even if it meant a reduction in the service.

274. Some respondents commented on the volunteers, with them being regarded as committed and hard-working in their support of the library service and keeping it running. It was commented they have attracted a good number of volunteers and sought fundraising opportunities. A couple of respondents commented on their concern about what they regarded as an over-reliance on volunteers to run the service and felt they should receive regular support from qualified librarians. One respondent felt remaining part of NCC’s statutory provision should mean there is expertise and input from NCC, as well as ongoing funding for the running of the property and replenishment of stock.

275. A few respondents expressed their preference for a community managed library and felt this would encourage more residents to support the library and be more involved. Other comments included one respondent feeling that reduced opening hours would not be a problem as long as there was still access to groups and activities; that many people would experience difficulties in accessing services at alternative libraries; and another said they wanted more information about the future of the service if it were to be managed by a community group and what the Section 106 monies would be spent on, and the replenishment of book stock.
276. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution said they wanted NCC to continue to deliver the library services, with longer opening hours. They wanted the service to be provided by qualified librarians and felt the management of the service by volunteers and community groups would not be sustainable. It was commented that if the library service is delivered by volunteers they should not have to pay for the rental of the building as it was felt local residents have already contributed to this service through their Council Tax and this was considered to be paying twice.

277. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution said how much they value the service and its importance to the local community, which was enhanced by its proximity to a school. They were pleased it was remaining open but raised concerns over the sustainability of the service if delivered solely by volunteers. A respondent felt the service would be better delivered by a paid member of staff. There was the view that the opening hours are currently too restrictive and these should be increased and not reduced. One respondent felt the library is owned by ‘tax payers’ and this should give them the flexibility to deliver the service how they choose.

278. Two respondents who said ‘Don’t know’ provided comments. One said they would need to know what the ‘alternative provision’ would be. The other praised the volunteers.

279. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 18 responses to this question.

280. Respondents made a variety of comments. Some said they felt the proposal relied heavily on volunteers and that there should be ongoing support from trained librarians, including being able to step in if volunteers are unable to run the library due to illness. One respondent felt a resident librarian should be retained.

281. Some respondents felt NCC should continue to manage and run the library and that services should be reinstated to previous levels prior to any past reductions being made. Concerns were raised about the sustainability of the library being community managed and it was felt NCC should provide support to the community group. A couple of respondents were concerned about any potential reduction in opening hours that would be detrimental to people who work Monday to Friday.

282. A similar number of respondents also commented on the library building. It was commented that the purchase or rental of the building would have a negative impact as there would be insufficient funding to make this viable, should NCC withdraw its funding. It was also felt that the building should be given to the local community by NCC as it had been funded by taxes and as such it was considered it already ‘belonged to the village’.

283. Other comments included the view that the library needs to be able to acquire new books and to have a rotation of book stock; pleas for the library to remain open; that the proposal is too problematic; that a developer would not have the required level of community spirit; and that decisions should be put on hold to ensure there is enough time for it ‘to bed in’ and for to Brexit to pass to ensure the proposal is viable.

284. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Earls Barton Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 10 responses to this question.
A couple of respondents felt NCC should either gift the building to the local community or provide it for a reduced rent. An alternative suggestion was that the community group should be able to deliver the service either as part of the countywide library service or as an independent library provider, although this would require local fundraising and have a degree of uncertainty. It was requested that NCC maintain ownership and ongoing running costs of the building.

One respondent felt volunteers would be able to deliver the services whereas another felt there were not enough details provided regarding how often a professional librarian would be present at the library and that more information on the proposals should be provided. Another felt the library should remain open full time with a member of staff from NCC.

One respondent felt the library could be expanded and used a community centre that could provide private hire, and that due to its location and available parking it could find methods of income generation. Another respondent thought the building could be used as a community hub for retirees to do jobs for ‘less able people’ within the local area. Other comments included criticism of NCC; that there would appear to be no alternative and that NCC would not reverse the proposal; that any new unitary authority should reconsider the library services as its finances may be better than NCC’s; and that bus passes and Blue Badges could be issued at Borough Council offices.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Earls Barton Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were 16 responses to this question.

Many of the respondents who took the opportunity to provide further comments expressed the high regard they have for the library and the service it provides to all ages of the community, with the elderly, children and parents of young children being highlighted by some. The children’s services were regarded as invaluable, especially for a growing community; as is the opportunity for the elderly to socialise. Alternative libraries were considered too problematic to reach, especially for people with a physical impairment. One respondent commented they would rather the library be open for fewer hours than having it close completely but was fearful for its long-term future. One respondent requested the continuation of having jigsaws.

Some respondents commented on the library building and felt the valuation placed on the building was too high. Concerns were also raised about the ongoing costs of the building maintenance, including equipment such as IT. One respondent felt the property and land should be gifted to either the Parish Council or Friends of Earls Barton Library, otherwise volunteers would need to focus a lot of their energy on raising funds to pay for the rent. They suggested a Community Land Trust model could be considered to manage the asset.

A few respondents took this opportunity to thank the volunteers for their hard work in keeping the library open; the day-to-day running of the service; and for helping to provide a welcoming and friendly environment. One respondent expressed their dissatisfaction with NCC and its management of the process. They expressed their anger at what they perceived to be a lack of support being provided by NCC officers to help community groups create their business cases, and at the timescales given.

Children and young people’s questionnaire

We received four responses relating to Earls Barton Library by respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, respondents for Earls Barton said they attend the homework club; attend various activities with relatives; and read children’s books. When asked about the one thing they like best about their local library, children and young people questionnaire respondents said the resources; staff; atmosphere; books; and the activities that are provided
for all ages, young and old, and that these help prevent social isolation for some elderly people. When children and young people questionnaire respondents were invited to make any other comments, they said how they felt the library was an important asset to their local community that provides a high level of service. They said they found the environment it provides welcoming and safe. One respondent commented that they used to attend the children’s services when they were younger and now enjoy reading the books.

**Drop-in event**

293. A drop-in event was held at Earls Barton Library on 16 January 2019, attended by 15 people. Although the event was advertised as a drop-in session, attendees arrived at the start of the session, and as they were familiar with some of the background to the proposal (with the attendees consisting mainly of volunteers), were keen to hear an update on the latest position. As such, NCC officers from the Library Service gave an update to everyone on the situation with the proposal for Earls Barton Library.

294. Attendees then gave their views as part of an open discussion, rather than on an individual basis. There was a general view that the library should be run by NCC as it was considered necessary for the statutory provision. However, attendees considered that if the Council was not going to run the library, it should at least gift the building/land to the Parish Council and volunteers to run on its behalf, and not charge rent as they felt this was effectively charging local people twice for the library. Attendees included people who are already volunteering at the library, and they stated that they needed additional training to carry out some tasks e.g. relating to computers and Blue Badges. They emphasised the fact that the library was always busy with clubs and children’s activities, and that they loved volunteering.

**Other responses**

295. One written response was received from someone who identified themselves as a former professional librarian of Northamptonshire. They commented that travelling from Earls Barton to Wellingborough was identified as a problem in the consultation materials as ‘a gap has been identified regarding travel times to (Wellingborough) and other statutory libraries’. However, the respondent said there were four bus services an hour between Earls Barton and Wellingborough Monday to Friday, and that Wellingborough also has free car parking. The respondent commented that other communities throughout the county were not so well serviced.

296. There were no social media comments received in relation to Earls Barton Library.

297. After the consultation period for Earls Barton Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Earls Barton Library.
Far Cotton Library

Standard questionnaire

298. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Far Cotton Library. There were 20 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

299. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Far Cotton Library. There were 20 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Far Cotton Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Far Cotton Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 15 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Graph showing responses to question](image)

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were six responses to this question.

The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution said it was essential that the library stays open, and that they were prepared to accept a community managed library if this would mean it does not close. However, they questioned if the arrangement would be able to meet the financial costs of delivering a library service.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution commented on the importance of retaining a library within the local area. They said it was an asset and that local residents need a library, especially as there are several schools within the area. There was concern that a community managed library may result in reduced opening hours and services, and as it would be outside of NCC’s statutory provision, it may close altogether, which was considered unacceptable. It was commented that access to alternative libraries would be problematic for some people in comparison to the local library. It was felt that the incline from Far Cotton to Hunsbury Library would be too difficult to walk for some elderly residents. One respondent said they were wheelchair bound and having to travel the extra distance to an alternative library would be impossible for them, especially during the winter months. Another respondent said they do not drive and that public transport is too expensive to use every day. One respondent suggested the library services should be better marketed and funded by NCC to increase its usage.

Respondents who felt this was neither a good nor poor solution or said ‘Don’t Know’ did not provide comment as to why they felt this way.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were seven responses to this question.

Respondents commented on the importance of retaining the library. They felt it provides a valuable service to the community and is a community hub. It was felt that without the service, some residents would be isolated from information, an internet connection and books. It was commented that any removal of the service would have a detrimental impact on local children, as they use the space to read, study, and access clubs in a safe environment. Some respondents thought that as the community is in deprived area, it increased the importance of retaining a library within the local community, especially for local children.
307. It was felt Hunsbury was not within a safe walking distance for the majority of pre-school and primary school aged children. It was also commented that people who were less mobile or have no access to transport might also find it difficult to access Hunsbury Library. Respondents wanted a library that was close by and easily accessible for them. One respondent suggested if a library needs to close within the area then it should be Hunsbury as they felt families there have more ability to travel to alternative libraries.

308. One respondent repeated the concern that if a community group delivered the library services, the opening hours and services may reduce. They also added that it was unacceptable for the library to close should the situation become unviable. They requested that there be clear funding and support to help the community group deliver the services, and NCC should also ensure there are connections between all local libraries regardless of whether they are community managed or delivered by NCC to allow for continued effective service delivery and support. They also repeated the view that the library services should be better marketed and funded by NCC to increase usage.

309. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Far Cotton Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were six responses to this question.

310. Some respondents commented on the financial support that they thought would be required for a library service to be effectively delivered by the local community. It was commented that NCC should part fund the library service and for the community group and volunteers to add the additional support, even if this was to a part-time service.

311. One respondent said they would be happy to extend the services provided and for the library to become a hub for the local community. They commented that local resources were being put at risk due to problems created by other areas of the economy and governance; that the impact of any reduced or closed services would be felt by children and future generations; and that a reduction of local resources diminishes the local community’s ability to flourish and its resilience. Other comments included a suggestion that the Rec Centre may be able to assist; criticism of NCC and its financial management; and the view that the library belongs to and serves the community.

312. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Far Cotton Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were six responses to this question.

313. These respondents expressed concerns about how the potential closure of the library could impact the health and wellbeing of residents within the local community. It was commented that the library service goes beyond book lending, and that it assists with people’s mental health and self-sufficiency. They felt it would further isolate vulnerable and disadvantaged people, and would limit access to support and services for them, as well as for young people and future generations. It was commented that the library provides an ‘oasis’ during difficult times which far outweighs the financial value of the building and the land that it is sited on. Respondents stated how they wanted to library to remain open and that the local community requires a library, and NCC should not be reducing its funding to this community service.

314. It was commented that the library is situated in a convenient location within the local community that older people can easily access. Respondents felt that Hunsbury Library is too far for some to travel, which would deter many elderly residents, parents with young children and prams from accessing the services, especially if they did not have access to a car or find bus services too problematic. Other comments included that if the library was to be replaced by new homes, this space would be lost forever; and praise for the staff.
Children and young people’s questionnaire

315. There were no comments received relating to Far Cotton Library by respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire.

Drop-in event

316. A drop-in event was held at Far Cotton Library on 18 February 2019, attended by 30 people. Attendees said that the library was an important part of the local community. It was noted that Far Cotton is a deprived area, and that not everyone can afford to buy books and other resources, and the library helped to address that gap.

317. Several attendees mentioned the value that children get from attending sessions and activities at Far Cotton, including several people who shared their personal experiences. Some attendees said that children’s sessions at Northamptonshire Central Library were already full or that they found them intimidating because of how busy they are. The library was noted as providing support for mums who would otherwise feel isolated. One attendee said she would have to travel further to see a health visitor if the library closed.

318. The importance of services at Far Cotton Library for local school children was also mentioned, with attendees saying that the after school activities encourage children and their parents to use the library, and how this was important for their future. Libraries were considered the only way of encouraging young people to read. It was considered that the fact that Far Cotton is a deprived area would mean that poorer children would be particularly disadvantaged by closure of the library. Craft activities for children were also mentioned as being important.

319. Attendees felt that the library is a safe place and that closure would affect everyone, young and old. Services such as audio books were noted as being particularly important for people with disabilities or people who cannot read. One attendee said that they would feel very isolated if the library closed. When thinking about alternative libraries, attendees noted that some people would not be able to afford the bus fare to other libraries. It was considered that there was no safe walking route to Hunsbury Library, and that other libraries were inconvenient to get to. One attendee said there was not enough information available on the proposal.

Other responses

320. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Far Cotton Library.

321. At the start of the consultation period, 28 libraries were open for consultation, while eight libraries (including Far Cotton) were not. However, respondents could leave a comment in the questionnaire about those libraries. No comments were received at that time in relation to Far Cotton Library.
**Finedon Library**

**Standard questionnaire**

322. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Finedon Library. There were 28 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing frequency of library visits]

323. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Finedon Library. There were 26 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Finedon Library</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Finedon Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if
Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5,
where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good
solution. There were 26 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 16 responses to this question.

The majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution said that they would rather the library be managed and retained by NCC but felt the proposal was better than it closing. They felt Finedon needed its own library and that it offered an important service to the local community, with services provided to the elderly and children being highlighted. It was felt the community requires a library that enabled people to access services, meet others, and access a selection of books.

It was commented that some people, including the elderly, may not be able to access library services from alternative locations if they are unable to travel or do not have their own transport. Other comments included the need for NCC to provide continued support to keep the library open, including supporting the local volunteers who are willing to undertake the delivery of the service.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution commented on the importance of having a local library that is easily accessible. Respondents commented that some users of the library do not have access to their own transport and would find it difficult to travel to an alternative library. One respondent said that as a working parent it is convenient for them to be able to walk to the library with their child and that they would not travel the longer time and distance to another library. Another respondent said they would be reliant on someone to take them to an alternative library due to a pre-existing medical condition. It was commented that library services should be delivered by paid members of staff, and that volunteers cannot give the same level of commitment, and if their numbers reduce they would be difficult to replace.

A respondent requested that if some libraries are community managed, library users should still be able to return books to any library and not just their local library, and that some people rely on friends and family to return books on their behalf and the local community managed library may not be the most convenient for them. Other comments included that some older people use the library to combat loneliness; and that the proposal, which has the potential to close the library, does not consider the impact on the people currently using it.

The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution said it was the best of a bad selection. They would rather the library service was provided as part of
a national service, as they felt Finedon has a large proportion of elderly residents and has few amenities for a high proportion of deprived and low income families.

331. Respondents who said ‘Don’t know’ did not comment as to why they felt this way.

332. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were eight responses to this question.

333. Respondents commented on the importance of retaining a library service which is relied upon by many members of the local community. They felt the library was important to the elderly and children for the opportunity to engage in activities, reading, and to support their education. A respondent added that some young people cannot afford computers or have internet access and so use the library to help with their homework.

334. It was also commented that many people struggle with their mobility, and for these the library could be a ‘lifeline’, and provides the opportunity to socialise with staff as well as other users, which helps reduce social isolation and improves people’s mental health. They felt that some people are unable to travel the five miles to an alternative library and that bus services are not adequate to support this, or are too expensive to use. A couple of respondents said NCC needs to continue to support the library with providing book stock and assisting with stock rotation with other libraries within the county; and by providing IT equipment and training. It was felt if these were removed the proposal would no longer be viable. A respondent also said it is the management time and expertise more than the financial pressure that would be required if NCC were to revert to an independent library model.

335. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Finedon Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were eight responses to this question.

336. Respondents commented on the importance of libraries and the need to keep Finedon Library open for the benefit of the regular users, with one adding how a closure would be damaging to future generations. Another respondent said they could not see any other alternative to the proposal if NCC were to withdraw the funding. A respondent said local users would be able to deliver the service, whilst another said more volunteers are required. One respondent said there should be a full-time library manager.

337. A respondent said in order for the proposal to succeed, NCC needs to continue to provide support including the provision of IT equipment, and shared access to books within the county’s wider library network. Another respondent added that more investment is required. Other comments included those from a respondent who said the library should be kept open as it has been paid for by taxes; that football teams and other sporting participants should contribute monies when they play to increase income generation; and that NCC should reduce the remuneration and benefits of senior management.

338. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Finedon Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were six responses to this question.

339. A couple of respondents made a plea for the library to remain open and expressed how important it is for them. One respondent mentioned the building and said it is central to the community and provides a place to centralise services, so it should be retained as a library and town hall.
Another respondent commented on their previous experience of Management Committees, and on the difficulties faced by volunteers delivering library services such as costs, legal, health and safety, and safeguarding issues. They said support would be required from NCC in order to help overcome the challenges these would bring.

One respondent criticised the consultation for having a questionnaire focussed on a per library basis; that said that they believed the communities who protested the most during the previous library consultation are facing the prospect of their libraries closing or being community led, when this was not previously being considered; that respondents are being asked to comment on proposals without financial details; and that volunteer managed library services are not the answer. Other comments included the view that it is important that bus passes and parking permits are still available via the library, as these also help to increase visitors to the library.

Children and young people’s questionnaire

We received nine responses relating to Finedon Library by respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, the majority of the respondents for Finedon said they attended the children’s services provided including Rhymetime, play and learn, stay and play, and messy play. Others attended the after school craft clubs, change books, and play with the toys. Respondents added that they like the library and its child friendly areas. They enjoy socialising with others, with one respondent calling the library their ‘second home’.

When asked about the one thing they like best about their local library, children and young people questionnaire respondents said the books; puzzles; toys; the staff; children groups and activities; the close proximity to their home. One respondent added they felt it provided a safe environment. When children and young people questionnaire respondents were invited to make any other comments, they stated how much they like the library and the people within it, including the volunteers. They said they found it inviting and that they value their time there, and that it provides a place to socialise with others and is an asset to the town, which should not be closed.

A drop-in event was held at Finedon Library on 13 February 2019, which was attended by 35 people. Attendees were already well-informed about the proposal and officers answered specific questions they had. When asked, they had either already completed the online questionnaire, or planned to do so, and so no-one left further feedback at the event.

There was one written response received in relation to Finedon Library which was from an individual who said they would prefer the library to continue under NCC but that this is not possible. They said with the support currently offered including training, IT support, and new books, it is feasible for a library group to run the library. However, they said this support should be ongoing as it would not be feasible to keep the library open under the independent model. The respondent also commented on the delivery of the consultation, including that there were no details of which outside bodies, for example Friends of Finedon Library, had been consulted within the supporting information about Finedon Library, and that it was their understanding that this information was published for all of the other libraries.

There were no social media comments received in relation to Finedon Library.

At the start of the consultation period, 28 libraries were open for consultation, while eight libraries (including Finedon) were not. However, respondents could leave a comment in the questionnaire about those libraries. No comments were received at that time in relation to Finedon Library.
Higham Ferrers Library

Standard questionnaire
348. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Higham Ferrers Library. There were 27 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Chart showing attendance frequency] Approximately how often do you usually attend Higham Ferrers Library?

- 40.7% Weekly
- 20.9% Fortnightly
- 18.5% Monthly
- 7.4% Less often than monthly
- 7.4% More than once a week

349. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Higham Ferrers Library. There were 30 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Higham Ferrers Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
350. The proposal for Higham Ferrers Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 24 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing responses to the question.]

351. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 16 responses to this question.

352. The respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library would remain open, although the preference would be for the library to be retained under the management of NCC. The library is regarded as an important facility to the town. A couple of the respondents commented on the potential relocation and said they would not like the library to move.

353. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution commented on the importance of retaining a library within the local community. Respondents commented that the library is an essential facility of the growing town which has been used by generations and offers a variety of services to many people. They said it is accessible to all who live within Higham Ferrers and that it would be a huge loss to the local residents if it closed and the missed opportunity for learning and preventing access for the community to library services would be detrimental. One respondent commented on the importance of being able to read and that those that can’t read often go to a library for independent help. There was a concern that the library would eventually close, and that the proposal is too reliant on sourcing stable volunteers and new premises.

354. A couple of respondents commented on the potential relocation of the library premises. One stated that the library has recently been refurbished and its relocation would be a waste of money and resources. Another said the information provided does not define that the library will be in the current location until the plans are developed for a community centre and that is not the same as saying that the library will remain in the same place until the community centre is built. They added that they understood the Town Council is working to achieve this within two to three years, whereas the consultation materials state it is not anticipated to happen with the next two to three years.

355. A couple of respondents also commented on the distance to an alternative library as being too far and not possible to access, with the elderly, young families, and those less mobile being highlighted as those who may experience the greatest difficulties in accessing an alternative library. It was also commented that the library should not close due to the perceived mismanagement of NCC’s finances.

356. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution gave a variety of comments. It was commented that having a library service delivered by volunteers
was better than it closing completely, although this is reliant on the continued support of volunteers and whatever assistance they may receive from NCC. One respondent said the situation is dependent on the cost of transferring of assets to the community group, including the building, and on the rates payable. They felt the proposal put forward does not clearly explain the proposition, as it mentions the library becoming a community managed library and then also mentions the service ceasing.

357. Respondents also commented on the current opening hours and feel this has already reduced the number of people using the library. One respondent said they are concerned that some people have already assumed the library is closed. It was commented that the town has few services, and that any further reduction in services risks further isolation of already vulnerable families.

358. Respondents said they want the library to remain in its current building, and that it is in an excellent location and familiar to local residents. One respondent commented on their disappointment that the library would no longer be part of NCC’s wider library service. They would like the library to be able to exchange books with other libraries within the county and retain the library’s linkages with the wider network.

359. The two respondents who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided comments said it is difficult to know how the proposal would work until the arrangements are in place; and questioned why the library had to move.

360. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were eight responses to this question.

361. The majority of respondents commented on the importance of retaining library provision. They said any closure would remove a vital community facility from local residents and that it should be retained under NCC’s statutory provision. They said that libraries offer more services than just book lending, including providing information and blue badge applications, and are the centre of many activities that support families and children and help reduce social isolation, and that the removal of the service would incur further costs to other services. It was also commented that many attendees of these groups are less likely to travel to alternative libraries. One respondent raised their concerns over the potential reduction in the standard of services, and felt that universal services would no longer exist as it would not be viable for a community group to deliver these.

362. A couple of respondents commented on the potential relocation. One asked if any new community centre would be centrally located and accessible. Another respondent said it appears that as soon as plans are developed to relocate the library to a community centre, NCC would want the library to move from the current building, leaving Higham Ferrers without the much needed public space, and that this could be mitigated by allowing the Town Council two to three years to build the community centre. Other comments included that the community group should maintain linkages with the rest of NCC’s library network; and that a ‘book lending service’ as provided by volunteers would not offer the same level of provision.

363. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Higham Ferrers Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were four responses to this question.

364. It was requested that the library remain open and be part of NCC’s statutory provision. One respondent said all assets should be transferred to the community group for a nominal price of a pound and that access should be provided to the NCC library system for a nominal annual cost. Another respondent said temporary relocation of the library to a portacabin would not work as the library is used for more than
books, as it is used for activities and group meetings. They added that the library building is of historic value that provides a safe place for the community.

365. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Higham Ferrers Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were four responses to this question.

366. These respondents said they were pleased the library would remain open but were fearful for its long-term future. It was commented that the local community should not lose the services due to previous financial decisions made by NCC, and that the service should not be under threat of closure at the same time that Council Tax is being increased by 5%. A respondent said the library is vital for the community as it has no other communal spaces, and that the uncertainty about its future and fluctuating opening hours has already resulted in a reduction in people using the service. One respondent added they would prefer the library to remain within its current building.

Children and young people’s questionnaire

367. We received one response relating to Higham Ferrers Library by respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, this respondent said they use the library after school and at the weekends to help them with their school homework, either as a place of study or research. They said they also borrow DVDs and have used the IT facilities including the photocopier, although they added that a nearby service offers photocopying at a cheaper rate. The one thing this respondent said they like best about their local library was that it provides a safe community space for anyone to use. When invited to make any other comments, this respondent said their local library has a long history and is located in a beautiful building. They praised the staff and were strongly against any possible closure. They added that there are few places that offer the same benefits to the local community, and that Rushden Library is not a viable alternative.

Drop-in event

368. A drop-in event was held at Higham Ferrers Library on 12 February 2019, attended by 12 people. Most people who took part did so as part of their library visit for other reasons. One attendee felt services shouldn’t be reduced given the Council Tax that is paid. They were also concerned that if the library did not continue in the same building, it could be replaced with something out of keeping. They considered the library as a community centre and felt that the town would lose a lot if it goes. They felt it had an important social impact and that there would be wide implications if the library closed. Another attendee came from a local pre-school, and ran sessions in the library and borrowed a large number of books at a time for pre-schoolers. They also used other local libraries (Raunds and Rushden). Another attendee stated that they don’t use the library very much but that they felt it would be a tragedy for the community to lose the library.

Other responses

369. There was one written responses received in relation to Higham Ferrers Library which was from Higham Ferrers Town Council. It commented that it supports the need for a library service within Higham Ferrers and that there is a committed community group who are already supporting the delivery of the service, and are willing to staff the library.

370. It felt the proposal under consultation was at too early a stage for seeking feedback as the Town Council and Community Group are awaiting written confirmation of the revised costs of renting the library building, as the initial proposed cost was regarded as unaffordable, potentially making the proposal unviable. The Town Council felt Higham Ferrers was being disadvantaged compared to other communities as it said the rent being requested is higher, yet the access to resources from the community to fund this is not higher. The Town Council said it is actively working on the new Community Centre, but requires a period where the service stays in its current location at minimal cost. It also said that an associate of the Town
Council heard an NCC officer saying at the public event that NCC believes that current library is too costly to run, and that it should be relocated and the current building sold.

371. It felt the assessment of need for all libraries is not transparent. It said that according to NCC statistics, Higham Ferrers Library is performing well in comparison with Irthlingborough Library, which is due to remain as part of NCC’s statutory provision, and questioned what NCC considers as ‘low’ performing as mentioned within the consultation materials. The Town Council thinks NCC should publish a detailed needs analysis in order to evidence its reasoning. It compared Higham Ferrers Library to Irthlingborough Library and said it felt that Higham Ferrers Library should be retained as in comparison, Higham Ferrers ‘outperforms’ Irthlingborough and that the cost per visit is much lower. It added that according to the Indices of Deprivation scoring, Higham Ferrers is only marginally less deprived than Irthlingborough. It also said that the town has grown by 38.2% within the last 18 years and is continuing to grow, and that this projected population growth should be taken into consideration. It also commented that if there is an expectation that Higham Ferrers residents can travel to Irthlingborough to access services then Irthlingborough residents can also travel the other way to use the facilities at Higham Ferrers.

372. The Town Council criticised the consultation. It felt that the public event was not publicised sufficiently and questioned whether decisions had already been taken as they understood NCC have been in discussions since August 2018 with an organisation that currently hires space within the library regarding the potential relocation of the service. The Town Council said it was also of the understanding that the libraries staying within NCC control are not under consultation as the decision has already been taken, however, it noted that the consultation materials covered all 36 libraries, all of which were open for consultation. It felt that this was misleading and that if the decision has already been made, then it does not give communities the option to challenge the decision.

373. The Town Council said that it is willing to work in partnership with NCC but feels there is a lack of transparency and that the ‘timetables and goalposts keep being changed’. They added that the lack of uncertainty is impacting on the ability of the community group to recruit new volunteers. The Town Council also felt that NCC has not adequately assessed the needs in Higham Ferrers and should consider the retaining the service under statutory control, and that should the service close, it would not be able to return in a new building in three years’ time.

374. There were no social media comments received in relation to Higham Ferrers Library.

375. At the start of the consultation period, 28 libraries were open for consultation, while eight libraries (including Higham Ferrers) were not. However, respondents could leave a comment in the questionnaire about those libraries. The two respondents who provided comments on Higham Ferrers Library said that they the library was important to Higham Ferrers and should be kept open, and that central government should invest in local services.
Hunsbury Library

Standard questionnaire

376. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Hunsbury Library. There were 15 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Approximately how often do you usually attend Hunsbury Library?](image)

377. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Hunsbury Library. There were 14 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Hunsbury Library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
378. The proposal for Hunsbury Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 12 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing responses to the survey question]

379. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were seven responses to this question.

380. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library is proposed to remain open and managed by NCC. They felt the library was an important part of the community and that it acted as a community hub providing services beyond books, including providing services and hosting groups for both adults and children. Current staff were praised and one respondent regarded the library as a ‘lifeline’ when they moved into the area.

381. Respondents who felt this was a poor solution did not provide comment as to why they felt this way. No respondents felt this was neither a good nor poor solution.

382. The one respondent who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided comments said how they felt the service is an important resource in a deprived area and provides a safe area for children to study in, and that this needs to be retained.

383. Respondents were then asked if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were three responses to this question.

384. Respondents again expressed their satisfaction that the service would remain open under this proposal. In particular, the children services provided within the library were highlighted as important. A respondent stated how these allowed her to socialise with other parents whilst her young child benefited from the interaction with other children. Another respondent commented on the importance of retaining the library within the local area to enable a safe space for children to come and study. They felt Weston Favell Library would be an unsafe walking distance for the majority of pre-school and primary school-aged children.

385. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Hunsbury Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There was one response to this question.
386. This respondent said the library should remain as a local community hub and that services should be extended. They felt local resources should not be reduced due to issues created elsewhere within the economy and governance. They also felt the impact of the decisions currently being made would affect future generations.

387. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Hunsbury Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There was one response to this question. This respondent felt the library was a vital service that needs to be retained; that the services and wellbeing it provides to the community goes beyond just providing books; and that library needs to remain within the centre of the community.

Children and young people’s questionnaire
388. There were no responses received relating to Hunsbury Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

Drop-in event
389. As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Hunsbury, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

Other responses
390. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Hunsbury Library.

391. After the consultation period for Hunsbury Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Hunsbury Library.
Irchester Library

Standard questionnaire

392. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Irchester Library. There were 87 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

393. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Irchester Library. There were 85 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Irchester Library</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
394. The proposal for Irchester Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 85 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

395. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 61 responses to this question.

396. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a good solution said that libraries provide more for the community than just books and that they are community hubs and provide a place for learning for meeting people and for activities that bring people together. They felt that Irchester Library is in the heart of the community and is a place where people come to get information and help. The library acts as a resource centre and offers many isolated people facilities such as the internet.

397. Respondents said the alternative libraries suggested are not a real alternative, as they are too far away. They stated that public transport is not regular or affordable; and that more environmental damage would be caused as residents use cars to get to services in Rushden or Wellingborough. They also said that many of the older population would simply not go and be put off using the services.

398. Many respondents felt that the current library building/land had been “gifted” to the local community. They expressed their concern and felt the County Council had not taken this into account. Some respondents felt that the Council was being dismissive of this fact and causing unnecessary confusion as to the future of the physical building of the library. Many respondents said that the library should exist in its present location as it was provided for a specific purpose, with others adding that it should revert back into the ownership of the Parish Council.

399. Overwhelmingly, many respondents spoke of Irchester needing its own library. They said that closing the current library was not an option. Respondents agreed that a community managed library was a viable option, however this option needed the support of the County Council and the Parish Council. Some respondents suggested that this support should be that the County Council could help staff the library along with volunteers and that the staffing could be on a rota to be shared with other small libraries. Respondents said support should also come in the form of book stock and resources and that the Council could support volunteers to do this.

400. Respondents also had views on how they thought the library building should be transferred to the local community in the same way as it was when it was transferred to the County Council. Again many respondents said that the library building has been part of the community for over 100 years and should remain so. They also said that they hoped that the local community would rally around and keep it going.
401. A few respondents spoke about the current operational aspects of the library. They said at present that the service was poor. They suggested that opening hours be reviewed, that more local events and a better use of the library space should be considered. Further comments were made about the library in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan for the area. They said the plan had been agreed for the parish and that the plan recognised the importance of community facilities and assets. The plan, which they said the County Council had committed to, recognises the library as an integral component of a functioning and cohesive local community.

402. Respondents said that they were unhappy at the way in which the consultation and the proposals had been put forward and they felt that the service had diminished. Other comments included support for a community managed library; that the Council should give the library back to the community; that the village was evolving and growing; that the money saved by the council is small and that the current facilities are in a decent condition.

403. Respondents who felt this was a poor solution commented on the ongoing costs to the Parish Council should it take over the running of the library in future years. Respondents said that it would be unaffordable and would be a strain on parish funds and that they would be paying twice for the services of a library through a local precept and Council Tax to the County Council. Respondents reiterated comments about the ownership of the library building. They did not think it was right for the County Council to ask for payment for a building that, as a Carnegie Library, they said belonged to local people.

404. Respondents commented on the library being a hub, the practical inconvenience of having to carry books from alternative libraries; and their lack of access to transport in order to access other libraries. Others commented on the current opening times, which were not considered suitable, with one respondent suggesting that once a library was established it would not cost much to run. Respondents stated that they were also concerned about the use of volunteers in running the library. They felt that this was not a sustainable model or that volunteers could offer the same service.

405. The three respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution said that having a community managed library was a better option than having no library. Another respondent wanted the library to remain as it was whereas another respondent commented that they are making more financial contributions for services but getting less.

406. One of the respondents who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided comments said that as long as there was a library available in the village, they would welcome the proposal. They added that they did not feel safe using Wellingborough Library and preferred to walk to their local library. The other respondents said that the information was not clear for them to answer the question and that the proposals were about two different issues (to close or be community managed) and that they couldn’t answer.

407. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 31 responses to this question.

408. On the whole, respondents did not want to lose their local library. They said this would have a negative impact on the local community. Respondents said that it was community space, used extensively for a range of activities other than book lending. They said it provided a safe place for children to play and learn, and for those who are socially isolated to meet.
Respondents again took the opportunity to give their views on the library building, which they felt belonged to the community. They suggested that the County Council could come to an arrangement with the Parish Council which would mean that a professional library service could be provided. Other respondents expected the County Council to be assisting both practically and financially in the running and passing over of the library to the Parish Council.

Respondents expressed concerns about isolated members of the community being unable to access library services if they were not provided in the village. They also stated that Irchester was a growth area that required such community infrastructure. Respondents again stated that public transport is not good and that should the library close, the proposal would add to traffic congestion and environmental damage. They added that for some people, for example the elderly, it would be impractical to use alternative library as it would be difficult for them to carry more books to last them until their next visit.

Respondents expressed concern about being able to access resources which they could not otherwise access without a library. Another respondent suggested that book donation events could be held, however they were concerned about how new material/resources would be obtained. A respondent was concerned about the practical arrangements such as the timely return of books. On community-run libraries, a respondent said that caution should be applied so that it was run fairly and not be biased towards a particular community. Another commented that the lack of volunteers may affect the efficiency of the library. A respondent also suggested looking at the way other areas had maintained a library being open all day by investing in CCTV and remote staff monitoring of the site with secure access to the site for library member/users.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Irchester Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 23 responses to this question.

Respondents commented that libraries were about more than book lending. They said that libraries are communities in their own right. They felt that the County Council should find money to help maintain the library and keep it open. Some respondents felt that the Council has already made its decision and that there was really only one option left on the table if the village was to retain its library. A respondent said that the Council should return the library to the Parish Council for a pound. They said that this will enable the Parish Council to better establish the library for them to then run it as a community managed library.

As a community managed library, respondents felt that there would be opportunities for income generation. However, one respondent said the County Council ought to provide support in the form of project management, business management, income generation, community engagement and volunteer guidance. Another respondent said that better opening hours would enable more people to use the library. Other comments received included offers of volunteers, a proposal to consider locating the library to the village hall, the proposal to operate schemes whereby incentives are provided such as reduced fees for those customers using community managed libraries; and the facility to return books to any library.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Irchester Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were 19 responses to this question.

Some respondents said that they everything must be done to keep the library open. This included either keeping it open and run by the County Council or letting the Parish Council run it. Respondents commented on the support they could offer to a community managed library. This included using the facilities, volunteering time and creating further community opportunities.
417. Many comments were again made about the ownership of the library and it being returned to the people of Irchester, with respondents adding comments in reference to local government reorganisation and hoping that any new unitary council would support the library. They said that the library was a valuable asset to everyone and that it had been gifted to the people of Irchester.

418. Some respondents said they were disappointed and tired of worrying and campaigning about the future of library. Respondents felt that the County Council was not thinking about the outcomes and impact of the proposal on the local community. Respondents wanted the Parish Council to be given time to work things out so that it was in a better position to offer a community managed library. Respondents did not want villages to be penalised. Another commented on the way in which the space was being used for other activities which they felt was making it difficult to access books. A long-time library user explained how they used the library and what it meant to them. They offered to pay a donation or subscription every time they used the library.

Children and young people’s questionnaire
419. There were no comments received relating to Irchester Library by respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire.

Drop-in event
420. A drop-in event was held at Irchester Library on 11 February 2019, attended by nine people. Most people present were from the Parish Council or were volunteers who were there to discuss practicalities around the proposal rather than give their views. One attendee raised some concerns about the communication with the Friends Group. They felt there were some confusing messages about the expectations being placed on volunteers, and felt that while the Friends Group would support a community managed library in Irchester, it could not be the volunteers that run it on a daily basis. Another attendee who was a regular library user said that they would not want to lose the library and so this proposal was better than closure.

Other responses
421. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Irchester Library.

422. At the start of the consultation period, 28 libraries were open for consultation, while eight libraries (including Irchester) were not. However, respondents could leave a comment in the questionnaire about those libraries. One respondent who provided comments on Irchester Library at this time said that the library was the heart of the community and that it provides a range of activities, across the year, which cater for a wide range of the community, some of which are income generating. They also felt that should the library be taken over by the local parish council, then they would be paying for it through both the local parish precept and Council tax. This they felt was not right and not equal.
Iрthlingborough Library

Standard questionnaire

423. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Irthlingborough Library. There were 34 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing how often respondents usually attend Irthlingborough Library.]

424. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Irthlingborough Library. There were 31 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Irthlingborough Library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Irthlingborough Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 29 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 12 responses to this question.

Respondents who felt this would a good solution expressed their satisfaction and relief that the library would continue to be managed by NCC under this proposal. Most of the respondents who commented said how the library was an important part of the local community, with some feeling there are few or no other alternative facilities within the town that can accommodate some of the groups held within the library. Respondents felt the library is used by many residents and praised the current members of staff.

No respondents felt this was a poor solution.

The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution said they felt the existing library was well equipped, although they felt some areas could be improved to create greater use, including facilitating more clubs and interest groups.

The one respondent who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided comments simply reiterated they did not know.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were no responses to this question.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Irthlingborough Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There was one response to this question. This respondent put forward a suggestion that certain areas should be expanded to attract various groups to use the library including evening classes, clubs, and different interest groups.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Irthlingborough Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were five responses to this question.

These respondents expressed their satisfaction with the proposal that the town would retain a library and their support for the library service, with one respondent calling it a ‘lifeline of the community’, saying it supports a diverse population. Some respondents listed the services they have accessed at the
library with one respondent calling for trained staff to continue running the children’s services groups to ensure continued up-take of the sessions.

**Children and young people’s questionnaire**

435. There were no responses received relating to Irthlingborough Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

**Drop-in event**

436. As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Irthlingborough, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

**Other comments**

437. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Irthlingborough Library.

438. After the consultation period for Irthlingborough Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Irthlingborough Library.
**Kettering Library**

**Standard questionnaire**

439. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Kettering Library. There were 17 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing frequency of library attendance]

440. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Kettering Library. There were 17 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice or to use Registrations Services.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Kettering Library</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Kettering Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 15 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were four responses to this question.

Respondents who felt this was a good solution stated how much they valued the library and how supportive staff are. They described the children’s groups as a lifeline for parents, and said that the library provided a safe environment for parents and children. Another respondent noted that the library provides a safe environment for vulnerable young children who are excluded from mainstream education. One respondent, while rating the proposal as providing a good solution for Kettering Library, stated that they do not use libraries and don’t know anyone who does.

No respondents thought this was a poor solution.

The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution commented on the overall package of services currently on offer at Kettering Library. They said that the quality of service was extremely poor, with staff who lacked knowledge or were unwilling to assist. They felt that proposal did nothing for Kettering Library unless what they considered as the poor book stock and IT was replaced and underpinned by an appropriately designed infrastructure of databases and services. They commented that a statutorily-provided service required professional leadership, good resources and qualified and trained staff.

There were no comments received from anyone who responded ‘Don’t know’ to this question.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There was one response to this question. This respondent suggested an online service that lends book via a mail and return service.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Kettering Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were five responses to this question, with four of them containing very similar comments on the provision of and access to services for people with learning disabilities. They did not directly comment on the library service but mentioned the need to have easy read information and to feel safe and happy in the community. One respondent gave a
dictionary definition of the word library, saying that it meant a building that houses books not play areas and computer rooms.

449. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Kettering Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were four responses to this question. All of these repeated comments from previous questions about the same issues relating to the provision of and access to services for people with learning disabilities. There were no comments which mentioned the library or library services.

Children and young people's questionnaire
450. There were no responses received relating to Kettering Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

Drop-in event
451. As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Kettering, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

Other responses
452. One written response was received from Kettering Borough Council. It said it will continue to work with community groups and the County Council to ensure the survival of the three libraries in the A6 Towns and to make Kettering Library more sustainable. It was keen to help develop a joint approach to the management of the library, art gallery and museum in Kettering and to create more income earning options.

453. There were no social media comments received in relation to Kettering Library.

454. After the consultation period for Kettering Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Kettering Library.
Kingsthorpe Library

Standard questionnaire

455. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Kingsthorpe Library. There were 86 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

456. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Kingsthorpe Library. There were 87 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children's Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Kingsthorpe Library</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 87
The proposal for Kingsthorpe Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 83 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 72 responses to this question.

Respondents who provided comments as to why they thought this proposal was a good solution gave a range of reasons. The most frequently mentioned reason was that it was considered a positive outcome for the library, the School and students with Special Educational Needs, as it could combine two local facilities (both of which were considered community hubs), improve footfall to both and provide students with the opportunity to enhance their life skills. Others felt that the proposal could work but that more space would need to be added to the existing building to properly house a library.

Some respondents stated the view that it was important for the whole community to keep the library in Kingsthorpe, while another felt it was the only feasible solution available to maintain library services in the area. These respondents generally had a positive view of the School and the Bee Hive.

Respondents who provided comments as to why they thought this proposal was a poor solution gave a number of reasons. The most frequently mentioned reason was that the library should remain in its current location, or that the Bee Hive was too far away from the heart of Kingsthorpe to be convenient for current users to access. There was concern that accessibility would be a particular issue for elderly people and families with young children and that a bus journey was not a feasible option. Some also felt that if the library moved, it would lead to an increase in traffic, either with people driving to the Bee Hive when they might previously have walked, or by driving to alternative libraries. With regard to alternative libraries, others expressed the view that Central Library was not accessible from Kingsthorpe (requiring public transport/costing too much) or that they did not like Central Library and it would not be an acceptable alternative.

Some also felt that the library in its current location serves a deprived community, which would be less likely to access its services if it moved to the Bee Hive, and as a result, they would be excluded from accessing the library. There were concerns this would have a negative impact, particularly on children and their families, and people on low incomes. Some felt that the Bee Hive would be too small to accommodate a library and would cost too much to extend, and there were also concerns about whether there is adequate parking. Some respondents raised safeguarding concerns and questioned the appropriateness of the library being accommodated at the school.
463. While not specifically addressing the proposed change in location, some people were concerned about the library being outside of the statutory provision and the risk of closure if the community managed library was not viable. There was also the view that the library should be run by qualified staff and not volunteers. Other respondents were concerned with the perception that the library would be run by what they considered to be a commercial enterprise that could decide to close the library at any time. It was suggested that the Council should work with the Save Kingsthorpe Library group to discuss the future of the library.

464. With regard to the practicalities of a community managed library model, some concerns were raised that opening hours would be inadequate and that customers wanted to see an increase in the current opening hours. Some also felt that it was difficult to comment on the proposal without knowing what facilities a library at the Bee Hive would have. Other comments included the view that the move would have a negative impact on local schools that accessed the library in its current location, the suggestion that students of the school could volunteer at the library to gain life skills, and that it was a shame that this had to happen but that the proposal was better than closure.

465. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good or poor solution gave a mixture of reasons. Like many who felt it was a poor solution, a number of these respondents felt that the library should remain in its current location, or that the Bee Hive was too far away from the heart of Kingsthorpe to be convenient for current users to access. They too raised concerns that accessibility would be a particular issue for elderly people and families with young children and that a bus journey was not a feasible option, especially for people on low incomes. Increased traffic as a result of the library moving venue was also mentioned.

466. Some respondents stated that they, or people they knew, would stop using the library if it moved to the Bee Hive. A number felt that alternative libraries were not accessible, for practical and/or financial reasons. Once again, some respondents felt that the Bee Hive is too small to also accommodate a library. One respondent said that universal children’s services need to be available there, while another was concerned that moving the library there would have a negative impact on the Bee Hive.

467. When considering the local area, some respondents commented that Kingsthorpe is a growing area and needs access to services, such as a library, which was considered important to the area. It was felt that Kingsthorpe is a deprived area and that this meant that the library should be within statutory provision. One respondent felt that if the library moved to the Bee Hive it would reduce the use of shops near the current library and negatively impact on them.

468. There were some concerns about the voluntary nature of a community managed library, and that if the transfer was not done properly, it could result in the library closing. Some respondents who rated this as neither a good or poor solution stated that they could see some positives to the proposed move to the Bee Hive but then followed this up with some concerns. Some respondents said that at least this way the library can continue to run in Kingsthorpe, and that it was better than closure.

469. Some respondents made alternative suggestions here, such as an alternative venue or ways that they felt a community managed library could work. One respondent suggested the new Methodist Church as an alternative venue. Another suggested the library should remain in its current venue and make use of the space currently taken by Lloyds Bank for more community activities. Another respondent suggested speaking to bus companies about making the Bee Hive more accessible by bus, although a different respondent considered that there was a bus stop nearby that made the Bee Hive accessible.
470. One respondent said they needed further information before they could comment. One respondent stated that they did not know how to answer this question, because in the absence of any other solution they felt it was better than closure, but had concerns that the library opening hours would be dictated by the Bee Hive’s opening hours, and that car parking there was limited.

471. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 57 responses to this question.

472. A high proportion of respondents stated that the proposed new location at the Bee Hive is too far away from the current location, and that the library should remain where it is. There were a similar number of concerns that the proposed move would lead to reduced use of the library as people would not use the new venue. Some respondents felt this would lead to social isolation, especially for older people.

473. Some respondents commented again that they felt the Bee Hive is too small to accommodate the library and so they felt the library service/stock would be reduced. There were also concerns about the amount of parking available and that traffic in the area would increase as a result of more people driving to the Bee Hive. Some respondents felt that this proposal will lead to poorer outcomes for young people and would impact upon the educational attainment of local children, while others were concerned about the potential impact upon people on low incomes. There was also concern that this would negatively impact on shops and businesses near the current library, as people would no longer be in the vicinity when visiting the library.

474. Other potential negative impacts identified included:
- the perception that other areas were being protected ahead of Kingsthorpe
- reduced accessibility to library services because there is now no mobile library
- negative impacts upon children and families if there are no universal children’s services at the new venue
- safeguarding concerns if the library is moved to the Bee Hive
- the view that it would cost too much to make changes to the Bee Hive to accommodate the library and extra visitors
- the perceived negative impact of the School making decisions about the future of the library
- the view that as Kingsthorpe expands, it needs services to match that growth

475. In terms of ways to mitigate any potential negative impact, some respondents simply said that the library should remain within statutory provision. Others stated that a different alternative site should be found instead of the Bee Hive. Some respondents stated that the negative impact could be mitigated by increasing the opening hours and ensuring the library is open for longer than the Bee Hive is currently open. They also suggested improving accessibility and car parking at the Bee Hive to mitigate against the concerns previously expressed. Others suggested establishing a robust handover to the group running the library with some ongoing support to improve its viability.

476. Other potential mitigations identified included:
- sharing funding from more affluent areas with more deprived areas
- working with the Save Kingsthorpe Library group
- spending more money on public services
- closing Northamptonshire Central Library and keeping smaller local libraries open
- not closing Kingsthorpe Library
- protecting the vulnerable
• using paid staff to protect customers
• having self-service or a returns service at Kingsthorpe
• getting volunteers to take people to the new venue
• retaining the same level of services
• using the Lloyds Bank part of the building to run community activities

477. Some people referred to comments they had made in relation to previous answers without elaborating further. Another respondent simply said that the proposal was unworkable.

478. Respondents were then asked a series of questions about the proposed relocation of Kingsthorpe Library. They were asked to think about The Bee Hive (where it is proposed Kingsthorpe Library will be relocated) and to place a number of criteria in order of importance for the new venue. There were 74 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option per row.

479. Respondents who suggested another factor as important in the proposed new venue said the following:
• the reinstatement of the bus route from Waitrose to the Bee Hive
• the presence of a qualified librarian
• the provision of an advice centre for a minimum of once a week
• subscription services on computers
• children’s play area

480. Other comments included disagreement with the proposed relocation and disagreement with being asked to rank different factors.

481. Respondents were asked if they feel there is anything that would prevent them from accessing Kingsthorpe Library if it moves to The Bee Hive, to tell us what these are and how they could be overcome. There were 45 responses to this question.

482. The most common issue respondents mentioned when considering if anything would prevent them from accessing Kingsthorpe Library if it moved to the Bee Hive was the new location itself, for a number of reasons:
• Accessibility for people with mobility difficulties e.g. the elderly, young, vulnerable people
• Too far to walk
• Distance from other amenities
• Lack of own transport
• Lack of public transport to proposed venue
• Lack of safe walking routes

483. Respondents also felt that the perceived lack of parking at the Bee Hive would prevent them from accessing the library there. Some felt that if the library became a non-statutory service, it would prevent them from accessing it.

484. Other concerns raised were:
• Feeling forced to buy from the café
• Limited hours based around the hours that the school is open
• A reduction in size or services
• If there was no weekend opening
• The cost of public transport
• Inconvenience (nothing specific mentioned)

485. One person said that nothing would prevent them from accessing the library if it moved to the proposed new location.

486. Some respondents suggested solutions to overcome potential barriers to the proposed new location. The most common solution suggested was a nearby bus route/bus stop to enable people to access the proposed new location more easily by public transport. Other suggestions included:
• Space for pushchairs
• Make Kingsthorpe Library a statutory service
• Build extra space at the Bee Hive
• Have a pollution monitor to track pollution levels in anticipation of increased traffic
• Have more convenient opening hours e.g. at weekends

487. One respondent said that they wouldn’t stop using it but would prefer it if the Library remained at its current location. Another said that it would be impossible to overcome the barriers at the proposed new location.

488. Respondents were then asked if they have any other comments they would like to make about the proposed relocation of Kingsthorpe Library, including if they feel there is an alternative venue that should be considered and why. There were 42 responses to this question.

489. The most common other comment received was that the library should remain at its current location. Some respondents considered that other venues closer to the current venue could be considered – these included the Methodist Church, the old HSBC or Midland Bank, the King David or White Horse pubs, as well as the general suggestions that the location should be closer to St David’s or more central to Kingsthorpe.

490. A couple of respondents suggested that the library should remain in its current location but be run by Northgate School, while another suggested that local churches should be approached to run the library service in Kingsthorpe. Some respondents suggested that the library should be developed more as a community hub, expanding into the space currently used by Lloyds Bank in the existing building.
491. **A range of other comments were received:**

- General disagreement with the proposal
- Concern that the proposal will result in reduced footfall of the library
- Other libraries should be closed to save Kingsthorpe Library
- The library should remain as a statutory service
- The library needs to be accessible to young people
- The Bee Hive should be expanded to accommodate the library
- The proposal is the best way of keeping a library in Kingsthorpe
- The move will result in more congestion in the area
- Savings should be found from elsewhere
- Sponsorship deals should be set up to support the library
- Children’s services are vital, as is the library in general
- The current landlord should reduce the rent for the library
- The Bee Hive is too far away from the centre of Kingsthorpe
- Alternative libraries are too far away
- Better opening hours are required

492. **Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Kingsthorpe Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 25 responses to this question.**

493. **Once again, the most frequently mentioned comment was that the library should remain in its current location. A number of respondents also stated that they felt the library should remain part of the statutory provision. When considering the location, some felt that the library could be relocated to another building but that it should be closer to the centre of Kingsthorpe. Others felt that the library should remain in the current building and that the space currently used by Lloyds Bank should be developed into a community hub space. Some respondents also felt that the Council should work with the Kingsthorpe community group and councillors who want to run a community managed library in the current location.**

494. **Opening hours (the concern that they will be restricted to school hours or the request that the library is open at weekends to encourage more use) were also mentioned here. A range of other comments were received:**

- The view that residents and services are suffering as a result of perceived financial mismanagement by NCC
- Concern that the proposed relocation will have a negative impact upon the centre of Kingsthorpe
- Libraries should not be reviewed until the new unitary authorities are in place
- A question about volunteer librarians
- The view that the Council should think creatively about the future of libraries – looking into sponsorship, having libraries as parcel delivery receipt points, closer working with schools, councillors making use of libraries for their surgeries and gathering resident feedback in libraries
- The library should be a partnership between the Bee Hive and the community
- Concern that alternative local libraries will not be able to cope with the demand from Kingsthorpe Library users
- The view that the library should be community managed but remain within statutory provision
- The view that there should be a single unitary authority for Northamptonshire and that the money saved should be spent on libraries
- Concern about the impact of the proposal on vulnerable people
- One person stated they would be glad when the library closes
Respondents could then make any other comments about the Kingsthorpe Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were 15 responses to this question.

Respondents who took the opportunity to provide further comments made a variety of remarks. Some felt that NCC should work harder to keep more libraries open for future generations. Other comments included:

- That library staff should be valued more
- The perception that the consultation was flawed because it was repeating what was overturned at the judicial review in August 2018
- That library usage will increase with the Buckton Fields development
- That the library is vital for the community for so many reasons
- The doubt that the consultation was genuine
- That relocation would lead to fewer people using the library
- Concern about the library being run by what was seen as a business, and whether there would be access for all
- Blame for the current situation on Conservative councillors
- That Central Library was not a good alternative for people in Kingsthorpe and that library should be closed and relocated
- Concern about the potential negative impact on Kingsthorpe residents
- That senior council salaries should be capped to fund services
- A question on how the library would be staffed
- The view that it would be sad to see the current library go

Children and young people’s questionnaire

There were no responses received relating to Kingsthorpe Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

Drop-in event

A drop-in event was held at Kingsthorpe Library on 11 January 2019, attended by 40 people. Some people attended specifically to give their views while others did so as part of their library visit for other reasons. Attendees included parents with young children and older library users.

Attendees expressed the view that the library was particularly important to the area for a variety of reasons – social wellbeing, support for people with mental health issues, for advice using computers, for people on low incomes without internet/computer access and other vulnerable groups.

Most people felt that the Bee Hive is difficult to access for current Kingsthorpe Library users, especially for older people, parents with young children and those with no transport. Attendees stated that they would prefer the library to remain in the current building. Some attendees felt that the Bee Hive it is not big enough to accommodate a library in addition to its current facilities and that this could result in reduced book stock and fewer PCs. Parking was also mentioned as a concern, with attendees feeling that there is not enough parking at the Bee Hive. Others felt that the Bee Hive was better than nothing but would not be an ideal solution.

Thinking again about the Bee Hive, some attendees were concerned that the proposed move could have a negative impact on current Bee Hive users, who might end up losing out on space to accommodate the library. Others felt there were safeguarding concerns about using the Bee Hive as a venue for the library, and some were concerned that the school could pull out of running the library at any time, leaving the local
area without a library. There was also some concern about the viability of the library as a non-statutory service.

502. Access to children’s services at the library was valued by a number of attendees who stressed how important they felt it was that they could currently access these, and that they were concerned that this might not be the case if the library moved location. They were concerned that children, and mums in particular, would be disadvantaged by this and said that people were worried locally. Attendees who mentioned other local libraries said they would find it difficult or expensive to get into town to use Northamptonshire Central Library, and that children’s events there are too busy. Some felt that a move would put people off using the library and that ultimately it would close through lack of use.

503. Attendees also made a range of other comments:
- The view that most people would be prepared to pay a small amount towards services
- Concern that the Bee Hive would not be accessible outside of school hours
- Now the mobile library has been stopped it is even more important to have local libraries
- The view that services (e.g. the book fund) have already been reduced
- The library needs to be open at weekends
- The library needs access to a good selection of books
- Volunteers running the library need to know what they are doing
- It is important to learn from other community managed libraries
- The suggestion that Wardington Court (a local Assisted Living development) could support with running the library
- The suggestion that the community centre in Chalcombe Avenue could be used as an alternative venue

504. One attendee thought it would be a good idea for the School to run the library.

Other responses
505. We received five emails in relation to the proposal for Kingsthorpe Library. We received one email from a representative from Green Oaks Primary Academy in Kingsthorpe, who supported keeping Kingsthorpe Library open in its current venue as it is used regularly by the school, and it was considered important to be able to walk the children there. It was noted that children then go on to use the library with their families.

506. We also received an email from a representative from All Saints CEVA Primary School. They stated that they were grateful to the Bee Hive for the offer to run Kingsthorpe Library but that they were concerned that the proposed new venue would be too small and would mean that the school couldn’t take a whole class of children or that it would restrict its use for homework study space. They stressed the importance they placed on the library for people of all ages – for young children to develop a love of reading, for older people for companionship and support for people applying for benefits and jobs. They felt that the proposed new location was too far away and would restrict access to many current users. They felt that as the library serves a deprived community, it should remain under NCC statutory provision.

507. We received three other emails from interested members of the public. It was felt that the proposed relocation would be inconvenient and is actually further away than described. It was also felt that Duston was not a suitable alternative for current library users. One respondent disagreed with the proposed move, while another was under the impression that it was proposed to close the library, and requested that it remain open.

508. There were no social media comments received in relation to Kingsthorpe Library.
After the consultation period for Kingsthorpe Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Kingsthorpe Library.
Long Buckby Library

Standard questionnaire

510. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Long Buckby Library. There were 270 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![](chart.png)

511. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Long Buckby Library. There were 273 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Long Buckby Library</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>273</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
512. The proposal for Long Buckby Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 261 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

513. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 172 responses to this question.

514. The vast majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution said how highly they valued the library and the diverse services and support it provides to all ages of the community (including the surrounding villages), especially the elderly and young children. They strongly felt the retention of the library was vital for the wellbeing of the growing community, which has an increasing population, and that any closure would be detrimental to the village. Whilst respondents value the book lending service, they said how the library provides many services beyond books. They said the library is an important hub of the community and provides a place for people to meet, attend groups and activities, which in turn helps to reduce social isolation for all ages including the elderly. It was commented that many groups rely on the library and the space it provides and would struggle to find similar space within the local community. Respondents commented on the learning opportunities the library creates for children and young people, and the important role of the library in introducing children to books and supporting their educational development. As well as the above, respondents commented on the value of the other services it provides including the information available and allowing access to IT equipment and the internet, which they again felt would be difficult to replace from elsewhere within the local community should the library close.

515. Respondents commented on the free children’s services the library provides and how the activities help with children’s development. It was commented that the local nursery use the library; as do many children outside of school hours, including children with disabilities. One respondent commented on the value of the summer reading challenge, whilst another referred to the children’s services as a ‘lifeline’. It was commented that the library provides a safe and friendly environment, in a central location within the community and was described as the ‘heart of the village’. Respondents said the library is a way of connecting with the local community and has a strong amount of community spirit.

516. Whilst some respondents said their preference would be for the library to remain part of NCC’s statutory provision, with services fully funded and delivered by NCC, many viewed the proposal as a compromise and felt it provided a way for the library to remain open, and although not many people had a preference for having a community managed library, they felt it was preferable to closure.
517. Some respondents expressed their preference for the library to be community managed instead of being run by NCC, and felt it would enable it to tailor its services to the needs of local people; that it could enhance its services and deliver more; and that there would be a lot of community support for the library.

518. Many respondents also commented on the distance to alternative libraries being too far. Some respondents commented on how they value the ability to walk to their local library. Many mentioned the reduction in bus services from the local area to Daventry, and how the services were more suitable for people who work and travel to Daventry at ‘peak times’ than visitors during the day, which makes the possibility of access to Daventry impractical for some. It was commented that not everyone has access to a car and that without one, the journey to Daventry would be difficult and unrealistic. Respondents felt this would greatly impact on the ability of the elderly to access the service and also school children, who attend the library after school. It was commented that if bus services are poor then five miles is an extremely long way, and that this distance is even worse for the surrounding villages, from where people may need to travel further. It was also commented that some people could not afford the cost of travelling to an alternative library; that some people, including people with disabilities, are not able to travel the distance without assistance; and some people such as working parents would not have the time to travel to Daventry Library during weekdays. It was added that the reduction in bus services has isolated some villagers from easy access to services, which in turn makes the need for a local library even greater.

519. A few respondents commented on the library building itself. A couple felt the local Parish Council should purchase the building. One respondent said they believed the community had already contributed to the cost of building the library. Some respondents commented that there was a need for long-term funding from NCC in order for the proposal to be viable, including support to pay for the premises, as the community group would find it challenging to fund the operating costs and would find the cost of the building prohibitive. It was also commented that NCC should provide some form of infrastructure support.

520. A similar number of respondents mentioned the volunteers and felt there was a sufficient amount of volunteers, describing them as a good team, enthusiastic, and committed. It was commented that they will require the support of the community and Parish Council. There was praise for the existing library staff and a respondent said their preference was for the service to be delivered by paid NCC staff.

521. Other comments included that the library service provides good value for money; requests for the opening hours to increase as these are currently restricting some people from attending; the importance of keeping the Library Management System and stock rotation with other libraries; and request that there is regular contact between the statutory and non-statutory libraries to discuss issues, update stock and materials, and provide training opportunities for volunteers; and dissatisfaction with NCC’s management and the view that communities are suffering as a consequence.

522. The majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution commented on the distance to alternative libraries being too far. Respondents here echoed similar concerns to those raised above. Again many respondents mentioned the reduction in bus services from the local area to Daventry, and how the services did not meet the needs of those that wish to travel outside of ‘peak times’. It was considered that a bus trip to Daventry would take most of the day. It was commented that not everyone has access to a car or could afford a taxi, and without one the journey to Daventry would be difficult and unrealistic. Many parents commented on the problems they would face in being able to take their children to Daventry, and that they would no longer be able to visit the library on their way home from school. Respondents again mentioned the value of being able to walk to a local library. It was commented that the distance to Daventry was marginally longer than 5 miles if travelling by road and that this would be
even longer for some that live in villages further away than Long Buckby itself. It was commented that many groups within the wider community use the library and these should have facilities within their own community. It was also commented that services being diminished within villages and rural areas at the same time as bus services are reducing is causing isolation; and that having a local library provides a community aspect for that is important for rural living.

523. Again many respondents commented on the importance of retaining the local library and how it is a vital community hub of a growing population that should not close or have its services reduced. They commented that there is a high level of usage of the diverse services the library provides to a wide rural community of all ages. They commented that the library provides more than just information and book lending and its groups and activities helps prevent social isolation for all ages, especially the elderly, and that it delivers a social service to the community, and felt the library was best placed within the community to provide these additional services. Similarly to above, the importance of the library’s role in supporting education, especially of children, and how it can inspire them to read and learn, was mentioned. One respondent commented that the local library provides many children’s services, that enable them and their children to socialise and learn, and questioned if Daventry Library would be able to cope if everyone from Long Buckby Library attended their groups. It was also commented that the library improves the mental wellbeing of the community and that the long-term impact of its potential closure would be detrimental both to communities and individuals. There was praise for the staff and respondents felt that libraries further afield would not be able to have the same level of community connection with Long Buckby and its surrounding villages.

524. Whilst a few respondents said they prefer the prospect of the library being community managed to closure, some said they felt the services should be fully funded and managed by NCC and that it should be included within NCC’s statutory provision. One respondent added that the facilities should also receive investment due to their importance in developing communities; supporting the vulnerable; and being a valuable community asset. They felt if it were a community managed service, then it would be put under pressure and weakened. Another respondent said that the library should be made statutory due to the demographics of the local area, cost per visit, and there being no realistic alternative provision.

525. A few respondents raised their concern over the sustainability of the proposal in the long-term and requested ongoing support from NCC. It was commented that the funding available is too small; that the community would not be able to financially support the library; and that the community does not have the resources and skills to manage the library and its wide range of services. One respondent asked if the council would allow volunteers the use of the library software. A couple of respondents commented on the volunteers. One felt there were enough volunteers within the local community to deliver the services. Another said that although the volunteers are doing good work, they were not confident that the volunteer option would be strong enough to sustain the library.

526. A few respondents commented on the building. One respondent sought clarity as to who would own the building and be responsible for its maintenance. Another felt in the long-term the cost of rent from a private landlord would be priced too high for the proposal to remain viable, and that the landlord would then sell the site for a profit to the detriment of the local community. A couple of respondents specifically mentioned the Section 106 funding, with one feeling the amount is too low and that more funding would be required. The other respondent said the Section 106 funding is dependent on agreement with a developer and that they feel this suggests that the balance of interests would be weighted against local needs and inevitably influenced by profitability motives.
Other comments included dissatisfaction with NCC’s management and the view that communities are suffering as a consequence; a concern about the appearance of lack of support from the Parish Council compared to some other proposed community managed libraries within the county; and that taxes should fund community services such as libraries, not pensions.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution again mentioned the value they held for the library. They said it provides a vital educational, cultural and social hub to the growing community. They said it is well used by children and that it is important to keep the library open and services available for all of the local community, and that libraries should remain available for local residents.

Many of the respondents expressed their preference for NCC to fully fund and manage the library and for it to be part of NCC’s statutory provision. It was commented that this is especially important due to poor transport links to other towns; that a local authority should be responsible for delivering a library service; and that NCC should provide paid staff to deliver the service. A couple of respondents added that NCC should help fund the library service if it is delivered by a community group, and were concerned that ongoing funding would be a problem. One respondent said having a community managed library involves the risk of lack of finance and skills, and that there should be greater transparency about the support that could be provided. However, several respondents added that the proposal of the library being community managed was much more preferable than its closure.

Many of these respondents also commented on the distance to Daventry Library being too far to travel, especially due to the reduction in bus services from Long Buckby to Daventry making the journey difficult to many. It was felt that unless users had access to other forms of transport such as a car, the journey to Daventry would not be practical for many, especially the elderly and non-car users. It was commented that five miles was too far for a local library and that if bus services are poor the distance almost becomes irrelevant if the bus journey is not practical. Other comments included the need for there to be enough volunteers to ensure the proposal is viable; that if may be difficult to sustain volunteers’ level of commitment to ensure the library is open for the number of hours currently provided; and one respondent who said they did not understand the proposal.

Respondents who said ‘Don’t know’ made a variety of comments. Again some respondents commented on the importance of retaining a library service within the local community, and that it was relied upon by some members of the community, in particular the elderly. They said it was a useful resource within the village which is highly valued and well stocked with books. It was commented that the library provides a place for socialising and friendship, as well as a meeting place for groups and activities. Respondents were strongly opposed to the library closing and felt the proposal provided a better alternative and enabled the library to remain open.

Some respondents said they were unsure or that they did not fully understand the proposal and sought clarity as to whether the Section 106 funding would still be invested if the library becomes community managed or if the library would still be available under the proposal. Other comments included that Daventry Library is not suitable for many of the current Long Buckby Library users to attend, especially any elderly people who do not have a car and would find the bus travel too difficult; and that NCC should retain the library as public transport is too sparse to Daventry.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 76 responses to this question.
Some of the respondents reiterated comments they had already made. Many of the respondents said the library should remain open. They felt it provided vital services and that many people would be affected by any potential closure. Again the library was described as providing more than just book lending. Respondents said the library provided a vital community hub that allowed people to meet and communicate with others in a safe, welcoming environment, which was particularly important for the elderly. Respondents also commented on the importance of retaining a library for parents of children and young people, as it provides a place of education and can be children’s first introduction to books, which some respondents considered to be more beneficial than online resources. One parent called the library a ‘lifeline’ during their maternity leave.

It was commented how the services and groups that meet within the library contribute towards the improvement the mental wellbeing of the community. The library was considered to be centrally located and accessible. Concern was raised as to where the groups who currently meet at the library would meet in the future should the library venue no longer be available to them, including concerns over the cost of venue hire. It was commented that the local community was increasing in size although services within Long Buckby and the surrounding villages were diminishing, making the library and the services it offers more important than ever. It was commented that the local community deserves equality of access to cultural and community opportunities. There were concerns that should the proposal be unsuccessful then the library would be closed and lost forever, and that this would be detrimental to the local community and would leave a void in the community. A few respondents commented that should the library close, access to the variety of services it provides would be a lost to many, including the IT services, information, and books.

Many respondents commented on the distance of the library to alternative libraries, saying it was impractical and felt the reduced bus service to alternatives such as Daventry was insufficient to enable this to be an alternative venue to access library services, which would result in many users not being able to attend. It was commented that use of a car would be required to access Daventry Library and that some residents do not have access to their own transport. It was also commented that many people, including parents, will not travel the extra distance to Daventry Library, and that a library should be within walking distance of people’s homes. A respondent commented on the increased traffic and pollution the additional journeys to an alternative library would cause. One respondent requested the bus services to Daventry be reinstated to enable easier access. It was also considered that the new plans for Daventry Library appear to have too small a space to be able to accommodate the children’s services in addition to their own users.

There were concerns that the community group may not be able to fund the purchase and ongoing costs of delivering the service and maintaining the building. However, some said they were pleased that the library would remain open and that the proposal presents a means of continuing the service with the support of volunteers. It was commented that public funds had already paid for the existing Long Buckby Library building and the community should not be asked to fund it for a second time. A respondent raised their concern that in the long-term the cost of renting the building would inevitably increase to a price that made it unaffordable and the library would close, and the land sold for profit. They suggested ownership of the building and all associated costs should remain with NCC, with the service delivered by the community group. Another respondent was concerned that the community group would be left to manage a large building in need of maintenance, without the support of the Parish Council who can raise the money to help with upkeep. They felt the Parish Council should take on the responsibility, not just community group, or there should be the option to consider selling the building and relocate to the community centre.
538. Many respondents called for continued support from NCC, including financial support, in order to help the proposal succeed, including seeking further funding from central government, as concern was raised as to whether the community group could cover the running costs. One respondent was concerned that access to grant funding for the community group would be in limited supply due to the amount of competition from the other community libraries being established. Respondents wanted NCC to assist the community, and felt the amount of funding quoted was too small and short-term. It was requested that adequate funding is provided to ensure the service is viable. One respondent felt cost of building the new cinema in Daventry should be used to cover the cost of running the library, another said savings should be found elsewhere that would have less of an impact on people’s quality of life. It was also commented that the community group should receive guidance and support from NCC staff on the delivery of a library service, with a couple of respondents requesting a paid member of staff to help manage and promote the library services.

539. Some respondents said the library should remain part of NCC’s statutory provision, and be open more than it is now. One respondent said that in future, NCC will probably look to community hubs to support fragmented communities so should be investing in and safeguarding the library’s future. A respondent added that it should be the Council’s responsibility to provide the library service and not volunteers.

540. Some respondents commented on the volunteers. It was commented that any initial enthusiasm and commitment of volunteers may decline and concern was raised as to the potential difficulty in recruiting further volunteers. It was requested that NCC hold a recruitment campaign to seek new volunteers. Respondents want volunteers to be well-trained and be able to deliver all of the functions provided by paid staff and have access to the same computer systems, although there was concern as to whether this would happen. Some respondents raised their concern that the opening hours would reduce, with one requesting it remains open at least three times a week. Another respondent said they would prefer the library to reduce its hours if it meant it did not close.

541. Other comments included criticism of NCC and its financial management impacting on the potential loss of community assets; clarification as to how stock and equipment will be made available and updated; that NCC should consider the whole-life cost to a community rather than short-term cost cutting measures; the building should not be sold and used for housing; that there should be additional use of the library as a local services information hub including citizens advice, housing, benefits support; that any transition of service should be gradual and not suddenly closed; and that the proposal has not been advertised widely outside of Long Buckby.

542. A few respondents said they could not envisage the proposal having a negative impact if it meant the library would remain open.

543. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Long Buckby Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 61 responses to this question.

544. Again some respondents commented on the importance of libraries. It was commented that the library was well used and should not be considered as expendable. Respondents appreciated the meeting space and the information it provides. Respondents said that losing libraries is a setback to the educational resources offered, especially to children. It was requested that the library be treated like a major service to the village. One respondent said that before any changes are made, NCC needs to work with libraries to improve customer services; to ensure they are efficiently run; and ensure the services that are provided are
well promoted. It was considered that nothing could replace the library and there was several pleas for it to remain open.

545. Many respondents requested the library be funded, staffed and delivered by NCC, and be part of NCC’s statutory provision. It was commented that the library is a necessity and should not be delivered by volunteers, especially due to the increasing population of the area. One respondent said NCC should take the library back into its control once finances permit. Another said it is an important cultural service. However, many of the respondents also said that considering the current circumstances with the Council’s finances, the proposal put forward was much more preferable than the closure of the library.

546. A few respondents said that the finances need to be carefully considered and requested that NCC provide some ongoing funding to help maintain the long-term viability of the proposal, including ongoing costs, so that these were not paid for by residents. A couple of respondents requested that NCC lobby central government for reverse their austerity measures and seek further funding.

547. A few respondents also commented on the building itself and wanted clarity as to who would pay for the use of the building. One respondent said the library building was built with public funds, so NCC should consider handing the building over to the local community for community use in perpetuity. Another commented that NCC should fund the purchase of the building, whilst three respondents said the community group should be allowed to buy or rent the building for the purpose of the community. Others said the Parish Council should invest in the community and either buy or rent the building, and hand it over to the community group. Another respondent felt NCC should allow the Parish Council to purchase the building at a reduced rate, whilst another said they understood the Parish Council will offer to lease the building from NCC and allow the community group to have day-to-day management of the library. One respondent questioned whether there would be enough finances raised to cover the running costs and if not, that this would affect the long-term viability of the proposal.

548. A couple of respondents also mentioned the potential sale of the building. One requested the building is retained as an amenity for the community and not sold as 'development land'. Another suggested the library should be moved to the local infant school with some land used for additional parking and that would enable the current library building to be sold for development.

549. A few respondents again commented on the distance to alternative libraries. They said that the bus service was restrictive and unreliable, and that many users cannot get to Daventry, and that this situation is worse for those residents of the villages outside Long Buckby that are further away than five miles to Daventry.

550. A few respondents mentioned volunteers. It was commented that for the proposal to succeed there needs to be long-term support from volunteers; that local residents and volunteers would be able to deliver the library service; and that trained library staff need to provide some form of support to the volunteers. A similar number of respondents commented on the taxes they have paid and said that the service should either be paid for via a tax increase or from the recent 5% Council Tax increase. One respondent said the public should have a greater say on what taxes are spent on.

551. One respondent said they wanted the Parish Council to consider supporting the community managed library. Another said there should be new Parish Council elections to take place for all positions, with three nominees being selected to co-ordinate the running of the library (with one of those positions being the vice chairman), as they considered this to be an important decision that required the full support of the Parish Council. One respondent said the Section 106 money should be invested to keep the library open and managed by the community group, as they felt often Section 106 money is not utilised effectively.
or for the benefit of the people it is aimed at, and as the funding is for this purpose, then irrespective of NCC’s current finances, the Section 106 money should be used for its intended purpose.

552. Other comments included criticism of NCC and its management and a request that more support is provided to local services; that there be part-time opening; that there should be a franchised coffee shop within the library to generate income and footfall; and that the library be a parcel delivery point to earn additional income.

553. A couple of respondents said they do not believe there is an alternative suggestion, with one adding that they believe the current proposal is workable.

554. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Long Buckby Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were 49 responses to this question.

555. The majority of respondents who took the opportunity to provide further comments repeated the strength of feeling towards retaining the library and its role as a community hub and said the service should not be closed. They said the library is the ‘heart of the community’ and provides a valuable resource for learning and reading as well as hosting many groups and activities, and that it is used by all ages, especially the elderly and children. It was commented that it would be devastating to the wellbeing of the local rural community, including the surrounding villages, should it close. Respondents said how important the library is to the community’s wellbeing and that it enhances residents’ lives, including their physical and mental wellbeing. It was commented that it provides community support that also helps to reduce social isolation. Respondents said that residents of villages have had many services close, with few remaining available to them and they would not want to lose their local library, as it provides a place where they can socialise and feel safe. It was commented that the community centre is not free; other local venues that offer free space are licensed; and that church halls may not be suitable for some. It was commented that the library offers vital services, including access to IT equipment and the internet, which some people, particularly the elderly, do not have access to at home. It was commented the potential closure would be detrimental to local children. Respondents commented on how the library is part of their lives and that attendance has become an important part of their routines, and that some residents have grown up with their local library and would be saddened to see it close. It was commented that should the library close it will be very expensive for it to be reinstated.

556. Again some respondents commented on the distance to Daventry Library being too far to make it a viable alternative. They commented again on the reduced bus service making public transport too problematic and impractical. They said that some people cannot afford to pay for public transport or taxis, and that not everyone has access to a car. It was commented that access would be more difficult for children, people with low incomes, and people with disabilities, and one respondent said vulnerable people should have a right to access library services. It was requested that if residents are to travel to Daventry Library, then the bus service must meet users’ needs.

557. A few respondents commented on the building. It was requested that the Parish Council purchase the building for community use. One respondent said the proposed cost of rent to NCC should be reviewed as they considered the property to already be owned by the local residents as a community facility. Another respondent said there is a need for all local councils to assist in providing a building for the library. It was requested NCC provides some form of support, including paying for the supply of books. Others wanted local authorities and central government to provide more support to the library service. Respondents commented on how their preference would be for NCC to fully fund and staff the library, although several respondents said the library being managed by a community group is preferable to closure.
A few respondents praised the dedication of the volunteers, and felt the local community was fortunate to have such dedicated people willing to deliver the services; that the community group has a lot of support from residents; and one respondent said they would offer to volunteer if required. Two respondents said the Parish Council should take a role in trying to save the local library, with one adding this is the case with other areas of the county facing similar library proposals.

Other comments included praise for the current staff; dissatisfaction with NCC’s management and the view that rural communities are not being treated equally with urban areas; concern that Council Tax will be raised above normal levels which the local population do not deserve; that investment should be made in local services and not just adult social care; that it has been difficult to make views known and that more people would give their support for a community managed library if there was more information; that the library should also be a drop off point for parcel delivery services; and that the proposal needs the opportunity to work.

**Children and young people’s questionnaire**

We received three responses relating to Long Buckby Library from respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire. When asked about the one thing they like best about their local library, these respondents said the wide range of books. When invited to make any other comments, the only comment received was that the respondent found it a relaxing place to be.

**Drop-in event**

A drop-in event was held at Long Buckby Library on 8 February 2019, attended by 30 people. Most people present were from the Parish Council or volunteers who were there to discuss practicalities around the proposal rather than give their views. One attendee who was also a member of the walking group that starts and finishes at the library noted the good community spirit. They said that the library was a good meeting place and they definitely wanted it to continue and were looking forward to the proposal being implemented. Another attendee noted that a similar proposal with the Parish Council is working well with the local community centre, so they felt this was promising for the library. Another attendee felt that volunteers alone would struggle to sustain the library, but felt that as a number of former librarians are involved, this will help to support the group. Another attendee felt that the group should be independent of NCC, as they had concerns the NCC offer could be withdrawn.

**Other responses**

There was one written response received in relation to Long Buckby Library which was from a local resident. They said Long Buckby is a large rural community and that the library is a focal point that should remain open. They expressed their desire that all possible options are considered in order for the library to remain open, and said they feel there are volunteers in the community who would be prepared to help staff deliver the library services.

There were no social media comments received in relation to Long Buckby Library.

At the start of the consultation period, 28 libraries were open for consultation, while eight libraries (including Long Buckby) were not. However, respondents could leave a comment in the questionnaire about those libraries. The one respondent who provided comments on Long Buckby Library at this time said that the library was well-used by older people. They added that should the library close, this cohort would need more support in the home and lose the incentive to come out and mix with their local community.
Middleton Cheney Library

Standard questionnaire

565. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Middleton Cheney Library. There were 47 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing attendance frequency](chart.png)

566. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Middleton Cheney Library. There were 47 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>85.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Middleton Cheney Library</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
The proposal for Middleton Cheney Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 45 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 28 responses to this question.

The majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library would remain open under this proposal, and whilst their preference would be for NCC to continue to manage and staff the library, they felt the proposal offered a solution that enabled the library service to continue. Respondents mentioned the high regard they hold for the library, its staff, and the services it provides. The library was regarded as a vital amenity within the village, and it was felt that the proposal has the potential for the range of services it provides to develop and increase, although there was also concern that the services offered may reduce, and that the volunteers may not be able to deliver the same level of service. Other respondents praised volunteers for the work they currently undertake and it was felt that, with adequate support, they would be well-placed to manage the library service.

A couple of respondents commented on the library building. One felt there should be some form of financial support for the ongoing maintenance of the building. Another said they felt it would be positive for the library and village if the Parish Council was able to purchase the property due to its proximity to the primary school and preschool that could allow an opportunity for a joined-up community programme. One respondent commented that access is an issue for Middleton Cheney as the nearest town, Banbury, is in Oxfordshire, and that all services are being centralised in Oxford.

Other comments included criticism of NCC and its financial management and overall plans for the library services; a request for the opening hours to be extended to make the library more accessible for people who work; and that the library would be more sustainable if it were managed by the local community. One respondent said the details in proposal were not accurate as the Parish Council had not agreed to finance the library.

Two respondents commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution, although they were both pleased that some form of library provision was remaining. One of the respondents said there is a need for professional staff; that there is no guaranteed funding for the community group; and that NCC should be gifting the building to the community group. The other respondent felt some of the supporting information provided was incorrect as they were of the understanding that the Parish Council has not offered to fund the library; and that the community group had not yet received sufficient information from NCC to determine whether it would take on the delivery of the library service. They also said that as the
library was deemed to be part of the county’s statutory provision they could not understand why volunteers would deliver the service, other than to improve on a limited statutory service.

573. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution gave a variety of comments. Some said they were pleased the library was remaining part of NCC’s statutory provision, but that their preference was for NCC to continue to fund and manage the library service and for it not to rely upon volunteers. They commented that if the service had to be delivered by volunteers then NCC should provide some form of continuing support. One respondent was concerned about the reliance of volunteers alone to deliver the service. Another said the current level of staffing support from NCC (one day per week with the remaining hours delivered by volunteers) was working well as it enables the service to receive the support it needed for book rotation, bus passes and book requests and for the health visitor to attend.

574. One respondent commented that there is currently no indication of the cost of the library to the village and that without this knowledge it is difficult to make an informed decision. They added it is incorrect to state the Parish Council have said it will financially support it as they understood that it has offered to purchase the building but was not in a position to meet the annual running costs. The respondent said the building is in need of maintenance and sought clarity as to who would fund this. They felt the building should be replaced and said the Section 106 funding should go towards a new, more efficient, building.

575. Other comments included a request that the library open at the weekends; that the building continues to be used as a community resource; that ownership of the building needs to be secured as the Parish Council have not yet guaranteed its financial support; and that as the community group would have significantly less money to run the service than NCC, it would be reliant on the support of the local community and should be allowed sufficient autonomy to deliver the service.

576. The three respondents who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided comments gave a variety of comments. One felt there was not enough clarity about the services that would be delivered. Another said how they thought the proposals were unclear as to how NCC proposed to fulfil its statutory responsibility if a community group were to take over delivery of the day-to-day running of the library and building maintenance. The other respondent said their opinion on the proposal is dependent on the financial relationship between the community group and NCC, and that they would fully support the proposal if the library building were leased at a reduced rent to the community group whilst they attempted to raise ongoing revenue costs, but would be against the proposal if the community group had to provide all of the staffing, costs of building maintenance, and had taken out a loan to purchase the property. They felt that any process must be mutually supportive and gradual, and added that any transfer of responsibility to a unitary authority would have to be overcome as part of the process.

577. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 15 responses to this question.

578. Many respondents commented on the need for ongoing financial support from NCC and the risk of this diminishing. The maintenance cost of the building was specifically mentioned by several respondents as an area of concern. They were doubtful this ongoing expense could be sustained by the local community and that the situation would result in the closure of the library should NCC not provide some ongoing financial support. One respondent commented that Parish Council support may be available if supported by a
community poll, but for capital expenditure rather than revenue. This would also to apply to Section 106 monies.

579. Some respondents commented on the importance of the role the library plays in the local area, including being a community hub. Respondents were concerned about losing a professional library service that is well-placed within the village and easily accessible to local school pupils, and has recently been updated. Respondents thought the local community could be more involved with the service and for it be used more as a community hub.

580. A similar number of respondents commented on the prospect of volunteers delivering the library services. It was commented that increasing the responsibilities undertaken by volunteers could deter some people from volunteering. Concern was raised that volunteers would not be able to sustain the delivery of the service and that they should focus on staffing the library and not on managing the building and fundraising.

581. Other comments included a request that no changes are made to the service until the proposed new unitary authority for the area has been established; the request for continued political support from local councils; a request for clarity on how new books would be acquired; that the process of the transfer of responsibilities needs to be carefully phased; and the need for improved communication with the local community. One respondent felt there would be no impact if all of the services could still be offered.

582. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Middleton Cheney Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 12 responses to this question. A few respondents commented that they wanted financial support from NCC, including the management and maintenance of the building and its assets, including all of the equipment.

583. One respondent commented that they felt any potential sale of the library building would be unacceptable to the local community and could cause a financial burden. They also said a sustainable source for funding the ongoing maintenance of the building is required. Another respondent felt the Parish Council should consider purchasing the building and act as responsible landlord to community group. A respondent felt if NCC could not commit to maintaining the building or rebuilding it then it should be sold to the Parish Council which should try to raise funds for a new energy efficient multipurpose building, which could include wrap-around care and more evening groups. Another respondent suggested a new building with accommodation above would help secure the future of the library and provide income by selling or letting accommodation.

584. It was commented that there should be paid staff regularly in attendance at the library to support the volunteers to deliver the service, especially as the library would be part of NCC’s statutory provision. It was suggested that the library could make linkages with the local secondary school for their sixth form as part of a working in the community volunteering initiative. One respondent felt the local community could be encouraged to take ‘ownership’ of the library, and that this would help develop the community’s responsibility towards it, including financial.

585. Other comments included requests for increased opening hours; increased book stock; that any alternative solutions be considered taking into account countywide provision and not on a per library basis; that Council Tax should be increased to help fund the service; and criticism of NCC’s recent performance. A respondent added that experiences of other UK libraries has shown that transition to community management requires clear communication, a phased process and time for communities to insert their library revenue cost requirements into local budgets.
Respondents could then make any other comments about the Middleton Cheney Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were 11 responses to this question.

Some mentioned how the library is an important community resource that needs to be retained. They mentioned how it supports all ages of the growing community and also helps to prevent social isolation. The position of the building within the village was also commented upon and it was felt to be in a beneficial location and near to schools. A couple of respondents felt the position of the Parish Council was not clearly presented in the consultation materials. One respondent added that there is also no reference to capital or revenue accounting and that these are central to community management, and that the supporting materials are unclear on the financial issues involved.

A couple of respondents felt that the library needs to remain as a statutory service supported and funded by NCC, including building maintenance. One added that volunteers would need access to advice and support from NCC staff whilst another wanted a member of staff to be delivering the services. Another respondent took the opportunity to praise the volunteers for the work they have been doing. Other comments included that the building is in need of maintenance which may be undertaken either free or at a discounted rate by local tradespeople; that the building is currently underused and could be better used to generate more income to support the library; and that the future of library needs to be decided upon in order to support applications for funding of forthcoming projects.

**Children and young people’s questionnaire**

There were no responses received relating to Middleton Cheney Library from respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire.

**Drop-in event**

A drop-in event was held at Middleton Cheney Library on 23 January 2019, attended by 25 people. A number of attendees were supportive of the proposal for the library to be community managed, and said they felt it was a positive future for the library. There was an acknowledgement that libraries play an important role in prevention of problems escalating, and acted as a community hub for village life. Several attendees were current volunteers at the library.

Children’s services were mentioned as being really important, for children and mums – improving socialisation and preventing isolation among new mothers. One attendee thought that parents would be willing to pay for children’s services such as Rhymetime. One attendee wanted the book fund reinstated, and another had questions about which services would continue to be provided e.g. provision of disabled bus passes. One attendee thought that the building should be purchased rather than leased, and another thought that peppercorn rent should be charged and that there should be no running costs, or that repairs should be done before the building is handed over. One attendee had a query about who owns the car park.

**Other responses**

There were two written responses received in relation to Middleton Cheney Library. One was from an individual who uses the library and regards it as an important resource. Due to their health condition and lack of transport, they experience difficulties in accessing the library and wanted to know how they would be able to get books delivered to their village.

The other written response was from the Save Brackley Library group. It commented on how Middleton Cheney, and similar libraries, was being categorised as part of NCC’s statutory provision but that would no longer be funded by NCC. It questioned why NCC would cease to fund what it considered to be a statutory service. It raised concerns that if neither NCC nor the Parish Council fund the service then this would place a reliance on the community to fund the service and raised the concerns that this would not be
sustainable. It went on to comment that libraries are not an easy or simple service to manage on a volunteer-run and funded basis, and that the delivery and management of such a service, including fundraising and dealing with some members of the public, is beyond the abilities of many volunteers. It said that volunteer-run libraries in other areas of the country have seen book borrowing fall or have closed. It commented that approximately one in seven households would lose access to a library service if it were to close as according to the 2011 Ward Profile for Middleton Cheney, 13.7% of households did not have a motor vehicle at that time. The group felt the situation is made worse due to the reduced opening hours at Brackley Library as it is open for 4 hours on a Saturday which provides a limited time slot for families where parents work during the week. The group felt this would result in reduced literacy rates for children, and increased costs for elderly people in Middleton Cheney. It felt the best solution would be to have a funded library service in Middleton Cheney that enabled both of these vulnerable, protected groups to access to a library in a cost-effective way. The group added that this funding, preferably by NCC, should be continued by any new unitary authority, and that a library service should not be dependent on whether a local Parish Council is willing to fund the service or on the proportion of the local population able and willing to volunteer.

594. There were no social media comments received in relation to Middleton Cheney Library.

595. After the consultation period for Middleton Cheney Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Middleton Cheney Library.
Moulton Library

Standard questionnaire

596. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Moulton Library. There were 30 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Graph showing frequency of library visits]

597. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Moulton Library. There were 29 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>82.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Moulton Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
The proposal for Moulton Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 26 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 22 responses to this question.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution said the proposal was better than having the library service cease and that the proposal would enable the library to remain open, be part of the countywide library service, and be part of the community centre which also houses a café. One respondent said they had confidence that the Friends of Moulton Library and the Parish Council are supporting the library facilities and will continue to do so in the future. It was commented that the library was an important community hub and provided many services to local residents via an accessible venue. Other comments included dissatisfaction with NCC for the planned withdrawal of funding and the hope that a new unitary authority would reinstate the funding in the future; and concern about whether there would be sufficient funds for the proposal to be a long-term solution.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution raised their concerns about a library being run and managed by a community group. They were concerned that a community group would not have sufficient resources and knowledge to be able to effectively deliver the services currently being delivered. There was concern that a community group would not have the expertise or the funding in order to manage the ongoing maintenance of the library building or for new library materials such as books. Respondents raised concerns that if the community group fails to sustain the library then the service would cease if no longer under NCC statutory provision.

Respondents also commented how they felt volunteers would struggle to run all the different services on their own. It was felt that trained paid staff are required to support and ensure the effective running of the library. Concerns were also raised about the sustainability of volunteers and the future of the library if their numbers were reduced. Other comments included that alternative libraries, such as Weston Favell, are too far away from Moulton as the elderly would struggle to travel there; dissatisfaction with the current level of service being provided; and that as the library is still new it should not be reviewed so soon and that this review should have been conducted before it was relocated.

Respondents who commented on why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution made a variety of comments. Respondents were pleased the library would remain open as they valued the services it provides for all ages, with the young and the elderly being highlighted, for education and socialisation respectively. They considered the library to be an asset to the community and that it should continue with its links to all of the services it currently provides.
Some respondents expressed their gratitude to the volunteers for continuing to keep the library running, although one respondent said they had worked and volunteered in libraries and felt the services provided in addition to book lending are vital and that the role of working in a library is skilled and would be challenging for volunteers to deliver.

Respondents commented on how they felt the service should be funded by NCC and remain part of NCC’s statutory provision and should not close if the proposal becomes unviable. They also commented on the distance to Weston Favell being too far for some to travel, especially with a reduced bus service, and that not being able to access an alternative library would be detrimental to some people’s wellbeing. Other comments included dissatisfaction with funding a new Library/community building and then removing some of the funding; and a request to have a quiet library without small children.

The one respondent who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided a comment wanted clarity on what level of service would exist should the proposal go ahead compared to the level of service currently being provided, in particular, access to the internet. The respondent also wanted clarity on the implications if a new unitary authority is brought in, and commented that any reduction in service would be inherited by the new authority.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 17 responses to this question.

Some respondents stated the importance of keeping the library open. They wanted NCC to provide support to the community group on how to run the library and seek funding opportunities, and to guarantee that the Council would take over the management of the library should community group proposal not be sustainable. Comments were also made regarding concerns that the level of service would reduce, with children's services also being specifically mentioned, and an increase in social isolation. Financial support was also requested of NCC, including assistance and upgrading of IT; for major structural building works; and day-to-day running costs.

Whilst volunteers were praised for the work they having been doing, concerns were raised about the lack of potential volunteers required, whether the number would be sustainable and their lack of knowledge and training in comparison with paid library staff. A request was made for some form of paid support, even if this was predominantly remote, to help oversee the running of the service. It was commented that the library was a community hub for the local area and has only recently been relocated to the new community centre, which resulted in an increase to the Parish precept, and that the library has not had sufficient time to develop within its new premises.

Concerns were raised regarding the current stock and supply of new books. Requests were made for the library to participate with inter-library loans of books and materials with other libraries within the county; and that funding be available for new stock. Other comments included a request for doors to be fitted to reduce the smell of food from the café coming into the library; criticism of NCC and the management of the library service; and a request that there be one named person who is ultimately responsible for the running of the library.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Moulton Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 14 responses to this question.
The majority of respondents commented on their desire for the library to remain managed and funded by NCC in its current format. One respondent felt NCC should continue to maintain responsibility and liability for the library and work with the Community Group and Parish Council on the provision of the delivery of day-to-day services in order to give them sufficient knowledge and experience to provide the service; that NCC should provide the budget required for the service delivery and maintenance with the aspiration to reduce funding as and when the community managed library has proven experience of income generation. A couple of respondents said the proposal is temporarily acceptable considering NCC’s current financial situation but felt NCC should take over management of the library when its financial situation improves. It was felt any potential closure would be detrimental to the community.

Some respondents felt the library requires support from paid members of staff. It was suggested that either a full or part-time librarian should be on hand to assist with the running of the library and support for volunteers, and that this employee could work across several libraries if necessary. Other comments included criticism of NCC and its leadership and management; that Moulton Library should have linkages with other local libraries to enable sharing of books and resources; that Section 106 funding should be used to help keep the library part of NCC’s statutory provision; and that the services being delivered at the library should be increased.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Moulton Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were four responses to this question.

One asked that the Council Tax they paid for the library should be given to the Parish Council to enable it to help fund the service. Another felt views of the local community should be sought to see if they would be prepared to fully fund the cost of running the service. A respondent wanted an employed librarian to be reinstated should funding levels increase. Another felt volunteers could not be relied upon to manage a library and that whilst volunteers can support the delivery of such a service, management should be by NCC, and that current and future generations would suffer as a result of NCC’s decisions and management.

**Children and young people’s questionnaire**

There were no responses received relating to Moulton Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

**Drop-in event**

A drop-in event was held at Moulton Library on 30 January 2019, attended by 15 people. Most people stated that they had or would give their views via the online questionnaire. One attendee said they were in favour of the proposal as they want the library to remain open, and was an active member of the Friends group. Another attendee who regularly attends the library with their children said they had no problem with the library being volunteer-run as long as it remains open.

**Other responses**

One written response was received which was from Daventry District Council which urged NCC to work closely with Moulton Parish Council to make the community library in Moulton viable and successful. They requested that NCC surrenders its lease of the library space without charge, and that this would be in NCC’s own financial interest, and should avoid the need to repay planning obligations monies provided for the library. They said such surrender could be conditional on Moulton Parish Council running a community library for a minimum period of time, and gave an example of five years.

There were no social media comments received in relation to Moulton Library.
620. After the consultation period for Moulton Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Moulton Library.
Northamptonshire Central Library

**Standard questionnaire**

621. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Northamptonshire Central Library. There were 39 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing attendance frequency]

622. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Northamptonshire Central Library. There were 38 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>86.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice or to use Registrations Services.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Northamptonshire Central Library</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
623. The proposal for Northamptonshire Central Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 34 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

624. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 17 responses to this question.

625. The respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution said how they value the service and that it is needed and were glad it did not face closure. They felt the library provided a safe place that was well resourced and was essential to the cultural life of the town. It was commented that the library provided a quiet space for reading, working and research and had a wider choice of books than other libraries. The library was considered as the main library within the county and was regarded as ‘the flagship’, and in a central location with access from many bus routes.

626. A couple of respondents felt the services being provided could be improved including the stock of books, especially reference books; that the first floor is cold during the winter; and said that there was the need for a public toilet downstairs. Other comments included praise for the staff, and a concern was raised over the possible reduction of other library services within the county.

627. The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution said all libraries should be kept under NCC control.

628. The three respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution gave a variety of reasons. One said they no longer trust NCC to effectively deliver any services. Another said they were pleased the library was remaining part of NCC’s statutory provision and wanted it to continue to deliver the same level of service and events but were concerned that too much emphasis was being placed on the commercial aspect of selling items. The other respondent raised their concerns over the Local Studies Service and felt there was a considerable decline in the level of the service offered due to the reduction in staff and to no new material being purchased. They felt the collection of materials was declining and no longer donated their own books, postcards and periodical articles as they were not assured they would remain in the library or be made available for public use.

629. The one respondent who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided comments said if the library is still in this situation they did not know for how long it will be like this.
Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were nine responses to this question.

Although a couple of respondents said they felt there would be no negative impact or that they could not think any, the remaining respondents to this question raised various points. These included a request that stock be replenished; appreciation for the staff and a request they be better paid; concern over the perception that libraries proposed to be community managed will not be responsible to anyone; concern over the potential future of other libraries within the county; and a request for the Local Studies Service to have a qualified librarian or historian to make the most of the materials already collected.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Northamptonshire Central Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were seven responses to this question.

Again respondents gave a variety of feedback which included to keep the service as it is now and that this should help encourage visitors to the town centre; that NCC should prioritise its spending on libraries; that libraries should reduce their focus on increasing their revenue; that some of the services should be decentralised; and to restore the provision of stock and local history materials. Whilst one respondent felt the libraries were giving away free electricity which should be stopped, it was also commented that the cost for using the computers for 20 minutes was too high, and that there should be an option to do printing without having to pay to open the document at a computer first and pay a fee for 20 minutes’ use.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Northamptonshire Central Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were seven responses to this question.

These respondents felt that the library should have longer opening times; that there should be a better range of books and these should be updated more frequently; that the toilet facilities should be improved with accessible toilets and changing facilities on the ground floor; and that newspapers should be reinstated. It was also commented that the library needs to be professionally managed; that staff have too many services to attend to apart from readers and that their workload was too great. One respondent said the library should stop allowing people to use the power sockets to recharge laptops and mobile phones.

Children and young people’s questionnaire

There were no responses received relating to Northamptonshire Central Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

Drop-in event

As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Northamptonshire Central, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

Other responses

There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Northamptonshire Central Library.

After the consultation period for Northamptonshire Central Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Northamptonshire Central Library.
Oundle Library

Standard questionnaire

640. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Oundle Library. There were 35 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

641. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Oundle Library. There were 35 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children's Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice or to use Registrations Services.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Oundle Library</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Oundle Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 33 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 16 responses to this question.

The respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library is proposed to remain part of NCC’s statutory provision. Respondents felt the library is a valued community asset that is well used by the residents of Oundle and the surrounding villages. They felt it was important that facilities were remaining available for children and the elderly, and highlighted the importance of access to information, books and other services that the library provides.

Respondents also commented on the geographical location of Oundle within the county and its distance to other larger towns such as Corby. They felt if the library service were to cease, it would have a big impact within the rural area, with the next nearest library being too far for many people to travel, making access almost impossible for some, especially those without access to a car. It was felt important to have a library service close to people’s homes, especially considering the large range of services that it provides.

Other comments included praise for the staff; that many villagers do not have access to the internet; that the town is growing and requires a library to help serve the community; the importance of the facilities and activities being delivered at the library and that it was felt these could not be matched by a community managed library. One respondent referred to the library as a ‘lifeline’ during their maternity leave. Another requested the reinstatement of newspapers, magazines and new books.

Two respondents commented as to why they felt this was a poor solution. One felt that libraries were no longer needed and that in a period of financial hardship they should close as the money would be better used for other priorities. The other respondent appeared to have selected answered the previous question incorrectly as their comment was one which expressed the importance of retaining the library due to the distance of alternative venues, and commented on the importance of continued partnership working with health and the third sector.

No respondents said this was ‘neither a good nor a poor solution’ or that they did not know.
Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were four responses to this question.

Respondents felt that costs will continue to increase so NCC will struggle to meet financial its targets; that the library needs to remain a pleasant environment for all ages and that some soundproofing of the children's area would assist with this; and the library is restricted by the governing rules for libraries and there needs to be flexibility to be inventive so that it can be tailored to better met local needs. One respondent said they could not see a negative impact in keeping open a frequently used library.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Oundle Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were three responses to this question.

Comments received included a request to close the library and provide a mobile service; to relocate the office in the market square used by Oundle Theatre and the events group into the library as this would increase footfall and reduce the cost of renting the space in the market square; and to better utilise the underused Sure Start space by making it available to the library so it can expand its services including increasing the number of books on offer, more ICT stations, and a quiet research space.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Oundle Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were five responses to this question.

These respondents mostly repeated comments previously provided. Respondents requested the reinstatement of newspapers, magazines and new books, saying that this would help increase footfall; the need to make libraries more relevant for the wider community; to better utilise the underused Sure Start space; and that NCC has more important priorities to spend its money on than libraries; that taxes can be a financial burden for many people; and a request to simply keep Oundle Library open.

Children and young people's questionnaire

There were no responses received relating to Oundle Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

Drop-in event

As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Oundle, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

Other responses

There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Oundle Library.

After the consultation period for Oundle Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Oundle Library.
Standard questionnaire

Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Raunds Library. There were 79 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Raunds Library. There were 80 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Raunds Library</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Raunds Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 67 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 49 responses to this question.

The vast majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library would remain open. Respondents commented on the high value they have for the library services and how the library is viewed as a vital community asset for the local area that delivers important services to all ages of the growing community, supporting education and social wellbeing. The children’s services delivered at the library were also highlighted by some as invaluable services. Some respondents said they felt the library should remain as part of NCC’s statutory provision but considered the proposal acceptable as at least the local library service would be retained. It was commented that if the delivery of the services becomes unviable, the library should be taken back and managed by NCC.

A few respondents commented on the difficulty of accessing services at alternative locations and said that public transport is unaffordable for some people with low incomes, and buses are too infrequent. A couple of respondents expressed their desire for the service to be managed and delivered by local residents, as they felt they would be able to provide a service that would better suit local needs. Praise was given to the volunteers and the work they do.

A couple of respondents also commented on the opening hours and said the library should be open on a Saturday otherwise it is inaccessible for anyone who works during the week, and that this in turn restricts access for their children. One respondent said the library space is used for a lot of community activities which needs to be considered as part of the review as they felt the library is the only premises within the local community that has capacity to deliver them.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution commented on the difficulties local residents would face in accessing alternative libraries. They commented that many people do not have their own transport and that the distance would be too far or the journey too expensive for parents with young children and the elderly. Again it was commented that bus services are too infrequent to alternative locations. Respondents expressed the importance of retaining services within rural communities and said the closure of the library would make the services it provides inaccessible for all ages, including school children. One respondent wanted clarity as to why Irthlingborough Library was proposed to remain part of NCC’s statutory provision considering its proximity to Wellingborough, but Raunds was not. A couple of respondents said the library should form part of the county’s statutory provision, as the town was expanding and were concerned that NCC would withdraw their support for a voluntary run service.
Respondents commented on the importance of the library to the growing community, and regarded it as an important community hub. Respondents commented on the services and support the library offers to the local rural community, especially to vulnerable people, and how it helps with more than just books, with helping to reduce social isolation, information and advice, and support to new parents being mentioned.

A couple of respondents commented on how the library service should be supported by experienced and trained librarians that have an understanding of the countywide service. They felt these paid members of staff were important in supporting the library and the volunteers. Other comments included that any decisions on the future of the library should be put on hold until a new unitary authority is established; that there needs to be the facility to have new reading stock and the ability to order books from another library; that there appears to be a lack of provision in place for the 'Library to You' scheme for Raunds and surrounding villages; criticism of NCC; and a concern that the library would still eventually close.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution felt the proposal was a better prospect than the library closing. Respondents raised their concerns about the potential closure of the library should the proposal be unviable. It was felt the closure of the library would have a detrimental effect on the local community and would impact on a wider range of the population. Concerns were also raised over the potential cessation of the other services the library provides as well as book lending should the library cease, including the children's services. Respondents commented on the importance of the library as a community hub and the impact this would have on the local community should the library close.

Some respondents commented that the library should remain as part of NCC’s statutory provision, and that this would provide the library with the security of being NCC managed should the proposal become unsustainable. Other comments included that volunteers should run the library if NCC chooses not to; that the proposal is too dependent on volunteers who may lack specialist knowledge; that NCC should still provide Blue Badge assistance and universal services; and concern that NCC will withdraw its support in the long-term.

The one respondent who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided comments said they did not fully understand the proposal. They said that they need the library to remain open, especially for the provision of books, and that they would find travelling to an alternative library difficult.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 17 responses to this question.

Again respondents commented on the importance of the library service to the local community and how it is a vital community hub for Raunds and its surrounding villages. They viewed any potential closure of the library as ‘catastrophic’ to the town. Some respondents said they wanted the library to be part of NCC’s statutory provision or be considered to be taken back under NCC management should the Council’s finances permit in the future. It was requested that NCC gives sufficient support, especially at the initial stages, to enable the community to maintain the services.

A few respondents commented on the reliance on volunteers. Concerns were raised around the sustainability of volunteers and that should these numbers reduce, the remainder may struggle to deliver the service. It was commented that the volunteers need to be well-trained in order to deliver the same level
of service. One respondent felt a paid member of staff should be in attendance at least once a week in order to support the delivery of some services including bus passes and Blue Badge applications.

675. Other comments included dissatisfaction with the current opening hours (using volunteer support) as they were considered restrictive; the fear that the current service and access would reduce; that alternative libraries are too far away for many users and that public transport links are insufficient; uncertainty as to how the surrounding villages of Raunds would be affected if Raunds Town Council were to fund the library service; and that structured support should be put in place for all community libraries, using a hub and spoke model.

676. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Raunds Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 17 responses to this question.

677. Many of the respondents requested that the library remains funded by NCC and for it to be retained under the county’s statutory provision. Respondents wanted ongoing funding and support from NCC, including staffing. Requests were made that should the library be managed by a community group, NCC commits to providing continued support to the volunteers.

678. A few respondents felt the library would be better run by a community group, and that the service should be delivered by the volunteers. One respondent wanted the library to be managed locally with no involvement from NCC. Another respondent felt the possibility of allowing the community group/ Town Council to purchase the library and to run it as an independent entity should be explored.

679. One respondent said the provision provided at urban libraries should be reduced or for them to seek more community support in order to release staff to provide more support in rural libraries. Another said there needs to be the opportunity for the community to regularly donate monies to the service in order to make the library service sustainable.

680. It was commented that the books should be given to the community group and that there should be stock rotation with other NCC libraries. It was also commented that the self-service terminals should be left, and that the community group have access to national and NCC databases and reference sources. Other comments included that there should be free access to the library services; that any changes should be left for the proposed new unitary council to decide; that the library is well used by various age groups and that it would be damaging for the local community should it close, and that residents would not want to access the services at Rushden.

681. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Raunds Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were 12 responses to this question.

682. These respondents again mentioned the importance they placed on the library and the services it provides, including learning and helping to reduce social isolation. They commented how the library needs to remain open, as it provides a variety of services to a diverse audience, including the young and the elderly. It was also commented that the town has areas of deprivation and the library is important for the wellbeing of the growing local community. There was concern that should the library close it would never be replaced. One respondent said the library also facilitates a number of community activities not currently included in the considerations and that the building provides a safe and welcoming environment.

683. One respondent said the price of the library building must be the market value and should not be inflated, and that the library should relocate if the price is not accurate. Another expressed their keenness
for NCC to sell the building and transfer the responsibility of delivering the service to the community group. Another felt the decision should wait until the proposed new unitary authority for the area is established. Other comments included that the proposal was providing a poorer service to rural areas; that alternative venues were problematic to access due to infrequent bus services; that ongoing support needs to be given to community libraries in order for them to become established and remain sustainable; and a suggestion of other activities the library could provide, with Chess given as an example.

Children and young people’s questionnaire

684. We received one response relating to Raunds Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, this respondent said they see their library friends there that they do not see anywhere else. They added that they used to attend every Saturday and see them and take out new books but that this is no longer possible as the library is now closed on Saturdays. When asked about what they liked best about their local library, they said everything. They then went on to specify looking at the books, playing with the toys especially with other children, the librarians who play with them, checking books in and out on the self-service machine, the Summer Reading Challenge, putting money in the donations box, and having their hand stamped. When invited to make any other comments, this respondent simply said they love their local library.

Drop-in event

685. A drop-in event was held at Raunds Library on 22 January 2019, attended by 10 people. Attendees had various questions about how the community managed library would work around the following subjects:

- Book stock
- Computer access
- Repairs
- Timescales
- Children’s services
- Use of other libraries
- Blue badges and bus passes
- Magazines
- Ancestry and other subscriptions

686. Several attendees stated that they wanted NCC to run the library, and others said they hoped that the library being run by volunteers would be temporary and that NCC would take the library back on when finances improved. One attendee said they would volunteer in future, and another said they would like to see volunteers and the Friends Group continue to be involved in the running of the library. A couple of attendees mentioned that Raunds was a growing community and should have a library. It was felt that there needs to be better opening hours to make the library accessible to all, and that there needs to be a better offer for young people.

687. Other views included:

- that the proposal is better than closure but it would be better to remain an NCC-run library
- concern about the viability of a community managed library
- that paid staff should oversee volunteers and access to services that volunteers don’t currently deliver
- concern that the future of the library is closely linked to decisions on the property
- the view that the community should not have to pay for the library as they already pay Council Tax
- the desire to see the future decided as quickly as possible
Other responses

688. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Raunds Library.

689. After the consultation period for Raunds Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Raunds Library.
Roade Library

Standard questionnaire

690. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Roade Library. There were 25 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

691. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Roade Library. There were 25 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Roade Library</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
692. The proposal for Roade Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 24 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about the proposed solution for Roade Library.](image)

693. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 19 responses to this question.

694. Respondents who felt this would a good solution expressed the view that there is a need for a library service in Roade, describing it as vital. Some respondents were satisfied that the proposal saved the service which would otherwise close. Respondents commented that the library could focus on more community services and additional services may evolve. Some respondents also commented that the distance calculations used with the proposals were not correct and that the library currently served the villages of Ashton, Stoke Bruerne and Blisworth as well as Hartwell.

695. Respondents said that Roade has retired residents who have capacity, including financial capacity, to help manage and sustain the library. However, respondents felt that the community model needs to have NCC support to develop. It would also require, they said, access to books and other infrastructure resources such computer systems. Respondents stated that the library premises are centrally placed within Roade. The range of current services provided are well used however, they were concerned about what would happen to some services, such as children’s activities.

696. Respondents also said that loneliness was a big problem in rural areas and that access by public transport to the alternative library in Hunsbury would be difficult. One respondent stated that they information provided on the proposal was unclear and that clarity should be provided so that proposals could be properly considered and commented on.

697. Two respondents who felt this was a poor solution gave comments as to why they felt this way. One respondent said that in the long run the service would become untenable and stop. The other respondent said that the County Council was withdrawing from its responsibility of providing library services and leaving itself neither accountable nor responsible for it and therefore was pushing everything onto voluntary groups and small local councils.

698. Respondents who felt this was neither a good or poor solution provided comments as to why they felt this way. They said that the proposal provided a solution to have a library service in Roade. However they were unsure as how this would work. They questioned operational issues such as the ability to refresh, borrow and return library stock from other libraries and whether the means existed to continue the current
level of services. One respondent felt there needs to be concrete assurances as to the long-term management and ownership of the building.

699. Respondents who said that they did not know how to respond did not comment as to why they felt this way.

700. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were seven responses to this question.

701. Some respondents said that more consultation and co-operation was required prior to changes or that they could not comment as they were not sure what was planned. Some respondents were concerned about the sustainability of the library if it was run by the community. Further comments were expressed about the Council charging a commercial rent for the library. They said this would make it unaffordable for the community as it could not be expected to raise those kinds of funds. They continued to express concerns that there is no alternative proposal and that a vital provision would be lost to the community. Other respondents commented on the provision of book stock or the ability to have a budget provided for new book stock. They also said that village of Roade was expanding bringing in more young families.

702. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Roade Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were nine responses to this question.

703. Some respondents were concerned about the condition of current library building. They said that the County Council should repair the building before selling it to the Parish Council. If this was not possible then they felt money should be deducted from the final price to account for this. They did not want the community to be in negative equity or to pay commercial rents. One respondent suggested that the property be passed to a trust.

704. Other respondents wanted the ability to use Section 106 monies or money from the New Home Bonus to purchase the library. Another asked that the library continued to be funded by the County Council. Another respondent suggested that the Parish Council should use funding held for recreational purposes for the library. A respondent also said that space at the library should be hired out to generate income; and that the library needed to have fixed opening hours and have permanent trained staff supported by volunteers.

705. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Roade Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were seven responses to this question.

706. Respondents stated that the Friends Group and volunteers are willing to go ahead with the proposal, with another respondent stating that the Parish Council needs to be given time to explore finding funding from other sources to purchase the building as they said the Council has said that Section 106 funds cannot be used.

707. A respondent also mentioned the time taken to undertake the two consultations has had a negative impact on footfall and public perception of the library services. They said that the only reason the current consultation is being undertaken is as a result of the previous Judicial Review and that they felt that the Council’s heart is not behind the proposal and hence they doubted the Council’s long term commitment to it. Another respondent suggested that investments be made into digital book services. One respondent questioned the distance calculations used in the proposal saying that this was not an accurate calculation.
Children and young people’s questionnaire
708. We received one response relating to Roade Library from respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire. When asked what they like best about their local library, they said it was the endless supply of books and the pleasant atmosphere.

Drop-in event
709. A drop-in event was held at Roade Library on 6 February 2019, attended by 13 people. Attendees said that they would prefer the library to continue to be a statutory library run by NCC, but that this was the next best option. They were keen to get the proposal off the ground.

710. Other comments received included:
- Offers of volunteering
- Support that the building can be used for community meetings
- Support and the offer of help from a representative from Hartwell Parish Council
- A query about the distance to Towcester quoted in the information materials

Other responses
711. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Roade Library.

712. After the consultation period for Roade Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Roade Library.
Rothwell Library

Standard questionnaire

713. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Rothwell Library. There were 69 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Approximately how often do you usually attend Rothwell Library?](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Attendance</th>
<th>Response Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More often than once a week</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less often than monthly</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not currently use library services in Rothwell Library</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

714. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Rothwell Library. There were 69 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Response Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services</td>
<td>to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>84.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services</td>
<td>to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services</td>
<td>to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services</td>
<td>to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services</td>
<td>to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services</td>
<td>to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Rothwell Library</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
715. The proposal for Rothwell Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 64 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Survey Responses](image)

716. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 46 responses to this question.

717. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a good solution said the loss of the library would be extremely detrimental for the local community and under the circumstances this was a better option than the library closing down. They felt volunteers would be able to run the library with some controls and support from NCC but felt that there is a risk attached to the option if there is lack of support from the town and borough councils. One respondent was unclear as to the proposed future of the building and whether it will be retained as the venue for the library. Another stated that the asking price or rental cost should be reduced to make it more affordable and that a paid part-time member of staff should be retained.

718. Respondents felt the library provided more than just a book lending service and that it is an active community hub, allowing people to access many services in addition to those traditionally provided by a library. These included access to information, children’s services, and a place of social interaction with others within the local community. One respondent felt people value this more than the book lending service.

719. Some respondents said they felt the library should be retained as part of the county’s statutory provision due to what they considered to be lack of public transport to alternative libraries; the number of users who walk to the library; the high density of under 10 year-olds and older people residing with the town; and planned building of new homes which would increase the local demand for the service. Respondents commented on the importance of enhancing the reading skills of children and young people and the current levels of adult illiteracy and the important contribution libraries make in helping to improve these levels.

720. Many of the respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution commented on the distance of Rothwell to the nearest alternative library. Respondents felt travelling five miles to an alternative library was too far and respondents commented on the reduced public transport in Rothwell making the usage of buses problematic for some. A few also felt the cost of public transport was too high and would hinder accessing an alternative library for people on low incomes should services at Rothwell Library cease. Some respondents also felt that families with young children, the elderly, and those with poor mobility would also be impacted the most in experiencing difficulties in travelling to neighbouring towns to access library services.
Many respondents also expressed their anger that Rothwell Library was proposed to no longer be part of NCC’s statutory provision. Some respondents quoted statistics from the supporting documents to support their comments as to why they felt the library should remain part of the statutory provision. They felt the non-statutory status was not proportionate to the population density of the town and the demographic breakdown of its residents, with many aged under 10 years old or over 60 years. The reduction in bus services, planned new houses, and social deprivation and were also mentioned. One respondent also felt Rothwell was in a position of inequality as other towns highlighted as having areas of significant deprivation were all being retained as part of NCC’s statutory provision. One respondent also said they felt the media attention generated for Desborough Library had influenced NCC’s decision to designate Desborough Library as statutory and not Rothwell, and felt Rothwell had not received parity of treatment.

A similar number of respondents raised their concerns about the library services being delivered by volunteers and a community group. They felt that despite the best intentions of those involved, a community group and volunteers would be unable to retain the quality of services currently being delivered and concerns were raised that services would be diminished to basic levels. Concerns were also raised about the number of volunteers required to run the service and the retention of volunteers in what some perceived to be a varied and challenging role. Respondents wanted NCC paid staff to work alongside to support volunteers. A respondent also questioned the future of the library should the academy trust no longer exist in the future, whilst another questioned the appropriateness of an academy trust to run a multifaceted library service.

Some respondents commented on the diverse role the library plays as a community hub and expressed their high regard for this function. They commented on a diverse range of services being delivered from the library and felt any reduction in service would affect a wide range of the local population, especially children and the elderly. A respondent also said there was a lack of alternative venues available within the town to provide these services. A few respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the cost of purchasing / renting the library and the need to pay for services and maintenance. They felt this cost was too high, especially in relation to the local population level, which is also assessed as an area of high social deprivation, and that they would have to pay a precept in addition to Council Tax. They felt the cost of purchasing / renting should be reduced.

Some respondents expressed their general disagreement with the proposal and felt if the library were to ever close it would have a disastrous effect on the local community. They felt the services provided were vital, especially to develop children’s literacy. They felt they were suffering due to perceived previous mismanagement of NCC funding and a lack of funding from central government.

Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution gave a mixture of reasons. Some expressed their general dissatisfaction with the proposal and stated how the local community needs a library, especially considering the demographics of the area. There was concern that if the library is no longer within the Council’s statutory provision it could put various services, including children’s centre services, at risk should a community-managed library no longer exist in the longer term.

Some respondents were concerned that there would be a reduction in services without paid NCC staff, including reduced opening hours. The library was viewed by some as an important community hub that delivers a variety of services to a diverse audience, including providing access to local nursery groups and schools. They felt a reduction in service would be detrimental to the local community and the wellbeing of its residents, which would be worsened by the increasing population of the town compared to the reducing services.
Some respondents praised the work done by volunteers but said the continued running of the library would still require some financial support from the borough and county councils. A respondent also stated that paid staff should be assisting with the management and support of volunteers.

A few respondents also felt alternative libraries were not viable options due to their distance from Rothwell. Again the reduction in bus services within the town was mentioned, as was the financial implication of people having to use public transport. One respondent felt it was not appropriate to expect school children to travel to Kettering after school to access resources there if Rothwell Library were to close and they felt this was unsafe and unfair. Similar comments were made regarding parents with young children. One respondent was concerned that the site of the current library would be sold to a developer.

No respondents said ‘Don’t know’.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 33 responses to this question.

Respondents most frequently expressed their concerns over the proposed reduction in paid library staff and the increased involvement of volunteers. Whilst respondents praised the work done by volunteers, they felt they would not be able to provide the same level of service as paid staff. Respondents commented on how paid staff are better trained and experienced in supporting a diverse range of library users, including young people, whose schooling may be disadvantaged as a result. Concern was raised about whether there would be enough volunteers to run the library and that these volunteers would require training. This includes the need to deliver the children’s services, failing which the service would either deteriorate or cease. A suggestion was made that Kettering Borough Council should support the children’s services within the library. Concern was also raised over volunteers accessing individuals’ personal information; volunteers being able to resolve disputes over fines; or managing challenging behaviour such as the anti-social behaviour Rothwell Library has experienced in the past. One respondent said that volunteers should not be relied upon to deliver a service. It was felt by some respondents that paid staff should be supporting the delivery of the service and the work done by the volunteers.

Some respondents said how they felt the library was a vital part of the community and provides a large variety of services to a diverse audience. They commented that the sessions being delivered are well-attended and that many of the services are not able to be accessed or delivered elsewhere in the town. They regarded the library as a vibrant and much loved service within the town, which has disabled access and provides a safe environment that also allows for social interaction, especially for parents of young children and older people.

Respondents also raised their concern that without direct management from NCC, the library would not be able to offer the same level of service it currently delivers and that opening hours could reduce; as would services being delivered there including children’s services and that there would be a reduction in school children being able to use the venue to assist with their studies.

Some respondents mentioned the difficulties some users would have to access library services from another town should services at Rothwell Library cease. Respondents repeated comments previously made, including how the demographics of the local area include many young children and older people who may struggle to travel to alternative towns. Reduced public transport was again mentioned, as was the financial implications of paying for travel for people on low income. A few respondents said how a decision to reduce the library provision at Rothwell would have a detrimental effect on their wellbeing.
A few respondents raised their concerns over the future of the library service and were fearful it would ultimately close without it being regarded as part of NCC’s statutory provision, and requested that this proposal be reviewed. They felt the required funding and voluntary support would not be sustainable. A respondent said they would rather pay more Council Tax than have the library close.

Other comments included a request to have a reduced purchase price or rent or to have a community asset transfer of the library building to Rothwell Town Council, or the registered charity Rothwell Community Library Trust; for there to be Library Access Point services as defined in the consultation materials; to retain the public toilet within the building, which is the only one in the town that is free of charge; the view that the building is in the centre of the town and that changes would impact on the use of local shops; and that if cost for services were introduced this would have an adverse effect on people on low incomes.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Rothwell Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 22 responses to this question.

The most frequent comments received were requests that the service remain as part of NCC’s statutory provision. Respondents felt that areas of the county with a smaller population than Rothwell had their libraries designated as statutory and felt Rothwell should also be statutory; they wanted part-time paid staff; and Local Access Point services as defined in the consultation materials. They also felt that they were paying for the library service via Council Tax and that it is unfair they may have to pay extra in the form of a parish precept when others do not. Another respondent said the number of libraries within the county is already under the European guidelines, whilst another made a plea that the library should not be closed if the community proposal becomes unviable.

Some respondents commented on the library building itself and were fearful for its future. They felt the building should be transferred, with suggestions of transferees including the Friends Group and the Town Council. It was also requested that the library remains in its current building as it is in the centre of the town. Some respondents requested more financial support from NCC, Kettering Borough Council or any new unitary council to help maintain the service. A few respondents took the opportunity to express their dissatisfaction with central government and NCC, including its previous financial management and its choice of budgeting priorities. A couple of respondents suggested that local developers should make a greater contribution towards the funding of local services, including paying an annual fee per dwelling.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Rothwell Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were 14 responses to this question.

Some repeated comments previously made. The majority expressed the high value they place on the library and the services it provides. They said how the library is a well-used community hub that provides many services to a diverse audience, including helping to reduce social isolation. They requested that the service be retained at its current level. Requests were made for the service to be part of the NCC statutory provision, but it was felt that the proposal was more palatable than the complete closure of the library.

A few respondents commented on the venue and felt that the library needs to remain in the same location. It was felt there were no viable alternatives within the local area that could accommodate the service. It was commented that the building had been valued at too high a price and that Kettering Borough Council should assist with any purchase required by a community group. One respondent requested there be improved rear access to the library that is separate from the fire station.
Other comments included the view that the reduced bus service would be problematic for young families and the elderly to travel to an alternative library out of town should the Rothwell Library close; that they already pay Council Tax that contributes towards keeping the service in Rothwell; and praising the work done by the local volunteers. One respondent made reference to an NCC document entitled Libraries Review of 2012 – 2015, and quoted a paragraph that outlines some challenges faced by other local authorities in implementing community libraries.

Children and young people’s questionnaire

We received six responses relating to Rothwell Library from respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, respondents for Rothwell said they play with the toys; use the children’s area; borrow DVDs and books; use the computers; and attend children’s activities and special events. They added it is also a social event and helpful for parents to meet other parents and for children to gain social skills. When asked about the one thing they like best about their local library, the majority of children and young people questionnaire respondents said the books, both reading them at the library and being able to take them home. Other comments included the toys; having fun; and sharing information and ideas. One respondent stated they liked the accessibility of the library and that they visit it on their way home from school. When these respondents were invited to make any other comments, they said how they hold the library and its staff in high regard. They felt it provides a child-friendly place to meet other people. They also said they like the availability of toys within the library, and that staff recommend authors and order books from other libraries. They felt the library was an asset to the local community and said they would be lost without it.

Drop-in event

A drop-in event was held at Rothwell Library on 21 January 2019 attended by 55 people. Most attendees were already familiar with the proposal (mainly consisting of representatives from the Parish Council, community group and volunteers) and were keen to hear an update on the latest position. As such, NCC officers from the Library Service gave an update to everyone on the situation with the proposal for Rothwell Library. Most of the discussion that followed was in the format of practical questions and answers. Those attendees who did give their views thought that the proposal sounded like a positive solution to what they described as a ‘terrible situation’ and that the Friends Group was already improving and extending the service.

Other responses

One written response was received from Kettering Borough Council. It said it had noted the changes made to proposals to review and re-provide the library service. It said it will continue to work with community groups and the County Council to ensure the survival of the three libraries in the A6 Towns.

There were no social media comments received in relation to Rothwell Library.

After the consultation period for Rothwell Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Rothwell Library.
Rushden Library

Standard questionnaire

750. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Rushden Library. There were 24 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

751. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Rushden Library. There were 24 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Rushden Library</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Rushden Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 23 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 13 responses to this question.

The majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution said how they strongly supported the proposal as it kept the library open. The said how highly they regarded the library and all of the services it provides. They felt the library was an essential service within the local community that was used by all ages. Respondents listed some of the diverse range of services provided at the library, with children’s services being highlighted by some as a service frequently used, with one respondent calling it a ‘lifeline’. Some respondents also commented on the importance of a library in encouraging young children to develop their reading. Respondents felt it also provided a social hub. There was also praise for the staff and the view that there was a need for paid staff and knowledgeable volunteers. One respondent commented on how they used to volunteer at the library and found it a positive experience.

It was commented on how the town was growing and this brought with it the importance of having a library, especially if smaller libraries nearby were to close. The building itself was also considered to be part of the heritage of the town. One respondent felt all towns and villages should have access to a local authority-run library even if that meant an increase in taxes. Other comments included the need to promote the services provided within the library more; and criticism that the questionnaire was not directly seeking views on the overall plans for the county’s libraries.

The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution said that people are losing too many services and that the library is also a meeting point for people, and that this would be lost.

Respondents who felt this would be neither a good nor poor solution did not comment as to why they felt this way. No respondents said they did not know.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. Two respondents provided comments.

One commented that the proposal would not have a negative impact. The other respondent considered libraries as important as universities; felt that libraries need to focus on services provided to
adults; that there should be a separate section for geography and history; and that staff should be more knowledgeable of non-fiction works.

760. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Rushden Library proposal which they would like us to consider. Two respondents provided comments.

761. They said NCC should not sell any libraries and should continue to manage them all itself; that the mobile library should be reinstated in certain areas; and that newspapers should also be reinstated.

762. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Rushden Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were four responses to this question.

763. These respondents praised the staff; commented on their appreciation of NCC’s commitment to the library provision considering its currently challenging financial status; and said that staff should be able to help send photos. One respondent simply stated there were too many other comments to mention.

**Children and young people’s questionnaire**

764. There were no responses received relating to Rushden Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

**Drop-in event**

765. As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Rushden, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

**Other responses**

766. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Rushden Library.

767. After the consultation period for Rushden Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Rushden Library.
St James Library

Standard questionnaire

768. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend St James Library. There were 14 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Approximately how often do you usually attend St James Library?](chart)

769. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at St James Library. There were 14 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children's Services</strong> – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in St James Library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
770. The proposal for St James Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 11 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

771. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were eight responses to this question.

772. The two respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution said how the library serves a diverse and densely populated area with a mixture of ages and backgrounds. It was commented that the library was a focal point of the community and must continue to remain open as it was regarded as a ‘lifeline’. It was also felt by one of the respondents that some people are unable to travel to alternative libraries and access to a local library is easier for some than going into Northampton town centre.

773. Respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution gave a variety of comments. Some commented on the importance of retaining a library locally. They felt the demographics of the local community and the financial and health disadvantages faced by some meant a library was even more important. They felt having this resource in Northamptonshire Central Library would not be the same as the services currently delivered locally. They also felt that some would not be able to travel to an alternative library either due to financial restraints or ill health. It was commented that some people go the library seeking support in a crisis and that it would not occur to some to seek this from Northamptonshire Central Library. One respondent added that the local library has helped people in many ways including seeking employment; supporting mental health issues; and supporting some who have experienced abusive relationships; as well as children’s activities, making it a vital part of the community and that without it, this support would still need to be delivered elsewhere.

774. A couple of the respondents were concerned about whether the local community had sufficient skills and finances to deliver a community managed library, especially if there was no financial support from the local authorities. It was commented that if there is no ability to raise the funds required then the scheme would not even be able to start.

775. One respondent felt the library should be fully staffed as it is in a deprived area, whilst another raised their concern about the sustainability and reliability of volunteers, especially those who were required to take on the responsibility of managing other volunteers. They also questioned whether the proposal would work in the long-term within the local area without support from the current library service. Other comments included concern that the library would ultimately close if it was taken out of NCC’s statutory provision; and the importance of the local services delivered via the library including coffee mornings and subsidised trips.
The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution said they were unsure of how a community managed library would actually be delivered and added that the library is an important part of the community and supports education.

No respondents said ‘Don’t know’.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were five responses to this question.

Again respondents made a variety of comments. It was commented that volunteers would not be able to deliver the same level of service or hours as is previously been delivered; that volunteers are lacking the required skills; and that there should be paid NCC staff working two half days a week at the library to support with some services such as bus pass applications. It was suggested this should be funded by reducing the hours of the one of the larger libraries.

Respondents also commented that as the community is regarded as deprived, any removal of services would increase pressure on a fragile system, as the library is a community hub and there is no comparable service within the local area. It was also commented that the local community lacked easy access to the internet to connect with services, which the library provides.

The location of alternative venues was again commented upon. One respondent said many local residents do not have cars so would struggle to access an alternative venue, and that vulnerable people would not walk to access the facilities in Northamptonshire Central, and if they did, Central Library would not be able to cope with the increased level of demand.

Other comments included that if some services were undeliverable, then the library would be less attractive to use; that older residents use the library for social gatherings and without this, it would limit their social activities and negatively impact on their health; and that trips are organised for families at a discounted rate and without this many families would not leave the area.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the St James Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were three responses to this question.

One respondent said there is a need for a community hub that is freely accessible to the local community, including for groups and organisations to communicate necessary information to residents, and for it to be open seven days a week. Another said NCC should be more supportive and not close the library, although they added that NCC was offering more levels of support than a year ago. One respondent said they had some ideas how to keep the library open and wished to speak to someone but they did not leave any name or contact details.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the St James Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were three responses to this question.

One respondent stated they have struggled to support the library since the reduction in hours and said that Saturday opening is essential to enable them to access the service. Another respondent said they disagreed with the proposal, especially due to the small amount it would potentially save within NCC’s
budget if deliverable. They felt the library should be staffed five days a week, particularly as many services, including children’s services, have been placed within the library.

787. One respondent made a range of comments on a variety of subjects including:

- That the library should be used more as a community hub
- That there should be more activities for children and young people, including a travelling library to assist with homework
- That there should be activities for adults (including during the evening)
- That there should be appropriate training for staff
- That the library should work in partnership with local organisations
- That volunteers couldn’t be expected to work on Saturdays, resulting in closures
- That local people should be employed at the library

**Children and young people’s questionnaire**

788. There were no responses received relating to St James Library from respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire.

**Drop-in event**

789. A drop-in event was held at St James Library on 20 February 2019, attended by 21 people. Most people had attended the pre-meet before the open session, which was to allow officers and representatives of the groups involved in working on a solution for the library the opportunity to discuss the latest position.

790. Rather than feed back views on an individual basis, attendees shared their views in this open session. Some attendees felt that the proposal was a brilliant idea for the local community, and that it provides an opportunity for the community to build on and draw people back to the library. It was felt that there were lots of opportunities to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of people in the area because of the high levels of deprivation.

791. There were, however, also concerns about volunteer capacity within the local area and whether this would be viable. There was also some concern about the fact that the proposal requires some sort of commercial activity within the library for it to be viable in the longer term, with some people concerned about the proposal of a coffee shop and the view that this could overshadow the library itself and take up too much space. There was also some concern that the suggested link-up with the nearby café could have a negative impact or look like the library was promoting unhealthy eating.

792. Other comments made during this open session included the desire to see clubs and groups at the library continue (or restart if they had stopped because of reduced opening hours), even if there was a voluntary financial donation for them. The current volunteers were praised as being very talented, and when considering how the library could run in future, it was suggested that if people could not afford a financial contribution towards a group/club/session, they could perhaps donate their time to volunteer instead. People who had come into the library as part of craft/knit and natter groups also gave their views after the proposal had been explained to them. They thought it sounded hopeful and were in favour of the community managed library proposal.

**Other responses**

793. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to St James Library.
At the start of the consultation period, 28 libraries were open for consultation, while eight libraries (including St James) were not. However, respondents could leave a comment in the questionnaire about those libraries. No comments were received at that time in relation to St James Library.
Thrapston Library

Standard questionnaire

795. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Thrapston Library. There were 54 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

796. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Thrapston Library. There were 54 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Thrapston Library</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Thrapston Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 54 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 34 responses to this question.

The vast majority of respondents who commented as to why they felt this was a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library would remain open and be part of NCC’s statutory provision. They commented on the importance of a library to the local community and its wellbeing, and how the library is an important hub for a growing town and that the town’s facilities are already too limited. Some commented on how they would prefer the library to remain as it currently is and managed by NCC and run paid staff, however they considered the proposal to be a good compromise. Respondents commented on the high regard they hold the library service in to support children’s development and education, including activities such as the Reading Challenge. Some also mentioned the importance of the service for older people as it provides reading matter and socialisation, and that not all older people are able to use computers or other technology.

A few respondents commented on the volunteers and expressed their thanks for the hard work they undertake for the community. One respondent said it felt like NCC was ‘passing the buck’ to volunteers to run a statutory service; another was concerned that too much reliance was being placed on volunteers; whilst another respondent offered to volunteer if they were needed. A few respondents said they were pleased the children’s services were remaining as these were considered vital both for parents and children.

A similar number of respondents requested clarity on the future of the building and wanted this to be communicated to the residents of the town. One respondent felt the building and its continued maintenance was vital in delivering an effective service and felt the Town Council should contribute towards this and resources should be shared where possible. A couple of respondents raised their concern over the long-term future of the library, with one unsure what would happen should local government in the area change to a unitary authority. Another was concerned about what would happen if volunteers were not successful in running the service.

Other comments included that Thrapston was too far from other libraries and so required a library within the town; dissatisfaction with NCC’s previous financial management which was considered to have caused the library review; a request that the supply of Blue Badges and bus passes be retained as these were considered beneficial services to the community; and that the library needs to prioritise its opening hours for when the town is most busy, including market days and at the weekend.
803. The two respondents who commented as to why they felt this was provide a poor solution said they were concerned about NCC not managing the library, although it has been designated as part of the statutory provision. It was felt the library should be run by NCC due to its distance to the nearest libraries that are being retained under NCC statutory control. It was also commented that the future of the service is unclear due to lack of clarity over the future of the library building and if library services would still be provided within it in the future. A lack of paid NCC staff to work in the library and financial support was also commented upon. A respondent also felt there was no firm definition as to what would constitute a failure of the statutory community managed library model that would lead to NCC taking back control of the service.

804. The respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution were satisfied that the library service would remain within the town. Some respondents added that their preference would be for the library to remain fully managed by NCC.

805. Respondents also raised their concerns about how much would be expected of the volunteers. It was commented that volunteers should not be providing a statutory service, and that there is a requirement for paid trained library staff to either support the volunteers or continue to deliver the service in its entirety. It was felt that volunteers would struggle to deliver the diverse services delivered within the library, ranging from Blue Badge applications to reading challenges or other children’s activities. Concerns were raised that the level of services would need to be reduced should volunteers not be supported by paid staff.

806. Other comments included a request for clarity on the current and future opening hours, with one respondent recommending a variety of opening times to help suit the needs of the diverse users of the library. One respondent felt NCC was essentially forcing the Town Council to purchase the premises; whilst another said they were concerned that the library may close and detailed the impact this would have on them and others.

807. No respondents said ‘Don’t know’.

808. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were 11 responses to this question.

809. Some respondents repeated comments they had previously raised. The majority of respondents were concerned that the current level of service would be reduced. It was commented that the reliance on volunteers would leave the library ‘precariously balanced’ as changes to volunteer availability could affect the library’s ability to operate. Concerns were raised over too much pressure being placed on volunteers to run the service, and that the opening hours and levels of service would diminish if sufficient levels of volunteering could not be sustained. It was requested that professional guidance on library and community services should be available, to help volunteers to deal with challenging queries.

810. Respondents commented that the proposal would have a detrimental effect on people’s wellbeing, both young and old, if the specialist services and advice provided via the library were reduced. One respondent suggested an appointment system should be in place to assist with accessing some services such as Blue Badge and bus pass applications.

811. Other comments included the need to have a well-run library with a continued supply of books; the need for services such as bus passes and Blue Badge provision; help with and access to computers; clarity over the future of the building with a request for some security of tenure in either the current building or another suitable building by either NCC or the Town Council; staffing and ongoing financial support levels;
and the definition of explicit criteria as to what would constitute a failure of a statutory community managed
library. One respondent said they could not envisage a negative impact should the library remain open.

812. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions
to the Thrapston Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were 15 responses to this
question.

813. Whilst some respondents stated they wanted the library to remain as it is now and fully managed
and run by NCC, the most frequent comments received were about the reliance on volunteers and the need
for them to be well supported by NCC paid staff. It was felt by many that as the library was deemed to be
part of the statutory provision, then a paid member of staff, even if part-time, should be retained in order to
assist with the running and development of the service. It was commented that volunteers should be there
to provide extras rather than being essential to run a statutory service, and that the library should be able to
exist without the reliance on volunteers. It was also commented that the involvement of volunteers must be
sustainable for the proposal to work. Some respondents specified which days of the week they wanted to
the library to be open to improve access, including Saturdays.

814. One respondent said they agreed with the library being supported by the Town Council, and felt it
could co-locate with the library instead of being located within two different buildings, as this would bring
with financial benefits. Another respondent said they would rather pay more Council Tax in order to
maintain services. One respondent felt that so much of the service has been reduced that it would
challenging to reinstate it to the previous level. Other comments included the need to purchase more books,
the desire to have a community space for groups and organisations; refreshment facilities; and for grants
and/or lottery funding to be sought.

815. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Thrapston Library proposal that they
had not already mentioned. There were 10 responses to this question.

816. Some of the respondents who took the opportunity to provide further comments reiterated the
importance of having a library for the local community. They stated how they felt the children’s services
were vital as there is little other provision within the town for new parents. They felt the library was an
excellent resource for both the young and elderly and is a great help as an introduction to reading for
children. It was commented that the library should be open as much as possible.

817. A few respondents commented on the library building itself. One respondent expressed their anger
that the Town Council should have to purchase the building as it was felt residents had already paid for it
through their Council Tax, whilst another felt it made sense for the Town Council to take ownership of the
building, as long as it was financially viable. However they added their concern about the long-term financial
burden should the community managed library struggle to be sustainable and questioned the future of
NCC’s involvement. A request was made for further information about how the building will be utilised and
for a copy of the business plan to be made available should the Town Council purchase the building.

818. Other comments included praise for the volunteers and the work they have done and continue to do
in sustaining the long-term future of the town’s library. A request was made for more transparency and
improved partnership working from NCC with the Friends group.

Children and young people’s questionnaire
819. We received seven responses relating to Thrapston Library from respondents using the Children and
Young People's questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, respondents for Thrapston said
they do drawing, colouring and crafts; play with the toys; read and borrow books; attend the seasonal events and activities; and access the children’s services sessions, which were regarded as vital. When asked about the one thing they like best about their local library, children and young people questionnaire respondents said reading the books; colouring; and the children’s facilities. One respondent said they like exploring and seeing what is there. Another simply said everything. A respondent commented how much they appreciate the free activities and that they would be prepared to pay a small amount every week for them if it would help to keep the service sustainable. When children and young people questionnaire respondents were invited to make any other comments, they expressed the high regard they hold for the library. They said how happy they were with the services it provides and regard it as a vital part of the community, especially for the young, and that it would be a loss if it were ever to close. They praised the people who work there and wished it did more activities for young people. One respondent said how they have been regularly attending the library and its events for approximately seven years and how the services positively support children’s development and provide a place to have questions answered and conduct research.

Drop-in event

A drop-in event was held at Thrapston Library on 31 January 2019, attended by 30 people. Most people present were from the Town Council or volunteers who were there to discuss practicalities around the proposal rather than give their views.

One attendee stated that they were in favour of the proposal as it keeps a library in the town. Another attendee felt that without any paid members of staff, it would be difficult to manage the volunteers and deliver a quality service. One attendee was dissatisfied with some aspects of the drop-in event. They felt that the highest paid Council officers should take a pay cut to fund the service.

Other responses

There was one written submission with relating to Thrapston Library, which was received from a member of the public. They felt there was no apparent evidence as to why the Town Council should purchase the library building, and that the residents have already paid for the building via their taxes. They felt due to this, and as the purpose of the building would remain a library and part of the county’s statutory provision, the purchase was wrong. They also felt there should be continued onsite presence of paid staff.

The respondent felt the proposals were unclear as they appear to be dependent on further plans, still being developed, by the Town Council and Friends Group, and that consultation should be delayed until these plans are clearer. They also commented on their dissatisfaction with the delivery and promotion of the public drop-in event held at Thrapston Library; and their dissatisfaction with the layout of the consultation questionnaire.

There were no social media comments received in relation to Thrapston Library.

After the consultation period for Thrapston Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Thrapston Library.
Towcester Library

Standard questionnaire

826. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Towcester Library. There were 21 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing attendance frequency]

827. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Towcester Library. There were 21 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice or to use Registrations Services.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Towcester Library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
828. The proposal for Towcester Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 18 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

829. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were eight responses to this question.

830. Respondents who felt this would a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library was proposed to be maintained and managed by NCC. Respondents praised the current library staff and facilities, and felt the venue provided a welcoming space. A couple of respondents raised their concerns over the proposals and future of other libraries within the county. One respondent felt there was a need for libraries outside of direct NCC management to have a sufficient supply of books. They also felt the consultation materials did not provide sufficient information about the funding of purchasing new books for the library service and how future funding compares to previous years.

831. Respondents who felt this was a poor solution or a neither good nor poor solution did not provide comment as to why they felt this way.

832. The one respondent who said ‘Don’t know’ that provided comments said they did so as they were unable to assess the impact of the proposal on users of other libraries.

833. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There was one response to this question.

834. This comment related to other libraries and was not specifically about Towcester. The respondent said any closure of other libraries would be detrimental to the pre-school groups who use them as well as individuals who use them as a place to meet.

835. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Towcester Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were two responses to this question.

836. No specific suggestions were made regarding Towcester although one respondent felt many people go into a library to seek particular books and they thought the service may be able to encourage users to browse more for other books that may interest them, and suggested that schools may have a role in encouraging a “try it” approach.
Respondents could then make any other comments about the Towcester Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were two responses to this question.

One respondent expressed their concerns over the uncertainty of the service given the current financial challenges faced by NCC and the proposed changes to local government. Another felt the consultation could have been better publicised.

Children and young people’s questionnaire
There were no responses received relating to Towcester Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

Drop-in event
As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Towcester, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

Other responses
There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Towcester Library.

After the consultation period for Towcester Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Towcester Library.
Standard questionnaire

843. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Wellingborough Library. There were 16 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

844. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Wellingborough Library. There were 16 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice or to use Registrations Services.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Wellingborough Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Wellingborough Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 14 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were five responses to this question.

The respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the service would remain open as they felt it was valued and used by the local community. They felt the library service provides a variety of services that meet the needs of a diverse audience within the local community, including accessing IT equipment, accessing services including the Registrations Service, and conducting research. One respondent expressed their concern that no new books are currently being purchased and they felt this goes against maintaining a comprehensive and efficient library service.

The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution said the funding for development was inadequate and that if it is not possible to increase the service to best standards to encourage greater use then the service should be reduced to minimum levels.

No respondents felt this was neither good nor poor solution or said that they did not know how to answer.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There was one response to this question. This respondent said that the funds (presumably the Section 106 monies) should be used elsewhere as they felt the sum was too low to make a quantifiable difference.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Wellingborough Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were no responses to this question.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Wellingborough Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were no responses to this question.
Children and young people’s questionnaire
853. We received one response relating to Wellingborough Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, the one respondent for Wellingborough simply said ‘work’. The one thing this respondent said they like best about their local library was simply ‘books’. No further comments were added.

Drop-in event
854. As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Wellingborough, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

Other responses
855. There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Wellingborough Library.

856. After the consultation period for Wellingborough Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Wellingborough Library.
Weston Favell Library

Standard questionnaire

857. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Weston Favell Library. There were 33 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Graph showing frequency of library visits]

858. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Weston Favell Library. There were 31 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>83.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children's Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Weston Favell Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Weston Favell Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 26 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 17 responses to this question.

Respondents who felt this would a good solution expressed their satisfaction that the library would be maintained and managed by NCC. They said that the library is well used and that libraries are and have always been an integral part of Northamptonshire life. However, they said that the stock needed refreshing, the place needed brightening up and space could be better configured.

Respondents said that any new site/hub would need to be close to Weston Favell Centre as it attracts people who would then use library. They did not want the library services to reduce if a new hub was created. Some respondents felt that they needed more information on the proposed hub but they welcomed the idea. Others felt that the location and space currently occupied is good and convenient and that this should not be compromised within a new hub setting. Another respondent commended the Council for the proposal presented.

No respondents felt this was a poor solution.

Two respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution stated that they wanted the library to be kept as a traditional library. They felt that library was too noisy and that the Council could save money by not setting up a Wellbeing Hub and instead spend the money on increasing book stock and modernising equipment. They felt a larger book stock would make the library more attractive. They also said that they would like the library to have longer opening hours and more staff and activities.

The three respondents who said ‘Don’t know’ provided various comments. One said that the library provided a space which was calming and useful to develop the mind. They also commented that books are still widely read. Another respondent said that they did not use the library now but would be using it more in the future as they had just retired. Another respondent said they were not sure what was meant by the Council working with other partners. They said this was vague and it was not clear whether the Council was talking about having a new location for the library; and questioned whether it would mean other services moving in with the library in its current location.
Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were seven responses to this question.

Comments included that libraries give new generations a chance to learn, read and explore. Respondents said that the library was popular and well used with many child-based activities. They felt a move could cause issues as they were not sure where new services would be housed. Others mentioned that location is important to this library. Another respondent was concerned about increased usage as they felt it was already busy and noisy. Another commented that they did not agree with the proposal if it meant reductions to staff and services.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Weston Favell Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were five responses to this question.

A few respondents said that they has already answered the question in previous responses. There were some comments that library needed to provide activities that are accessible and be a pillar of the local community. They said that if services are cut then fewer people would use libraries. Another respondent asked for more stock and materials.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Weston Favell Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were five responses to this question.

These respondents felt that improvements are needed in the digital provision, including the provision of suitable working IT equipment. They also said that library was a vibrant place and they were not sure where young people would go to if they did not have the library.

Children and young people’s questionnaire

We received one response relating to Weston Favell Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire. When asked what else they do at the library, the one respondent for Weston Favell said they attend every day to do school work, as do many of their peers. The one thing children and young people questionnaire respondents said they like best about their local library was the ability to do their homework with their friends in a quiet environment. When children and young people questionnaire respondents were invited to make any other comments, this respondent simply said they love the library.

Drop-in event

As there were no changes proposed to library provision in Weston Favell, there was no drop-in event held in this library.

Other responses

There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Weston Favell Library.

After the consultation period for Weston Favell Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Weston Favell Library.
Wollaston Library

Standard questionnaire

876. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Wollaston Library. There were 7 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

877. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Wollaston Library. There were 7 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Services – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Children’s Services – to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Services - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Services – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Services - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Wollaston Library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Wollaston Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 7 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were three responses to this question.

The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide a good solution said they felt Wollaston needed the library and that it is well used.

The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution said they already pay for a library through their Council Tax and that the service should not be removed, and if it was, they should pay less tax.

The one respondent who commented as to why they felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution said the proposal was preferable to the library closing completely; that they felt if the library were to close it would never be reinstated; and that they would rather pay more Council Tax than lose public services or have then run by volunteers.

Respondents who said ‘Don’t know’ did not comment as to why they felt this way.

Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were two responses to this question.

One repeated an earlier comment that they already pay for a library through their Council Tax and that the service should not be removed, and if it was, they should pay less tax. Another respondent raised their concern that the quality of service may deteriorate if the service is provided by volunteers as opposed to paid NCC employees. They felt volunteers groups are difficult to sustain and may change which would cast doubt over the viability of the service; that volunteers are not as well trained as paid staff and may lack some of the child protection training or knowledge to help vulnerable people; that such skills are especially required due to other reductions in services within the local area and gave a reduction in health visitors as an example. They also felt volunteer groups may have their own priorities which may not reflect those of NCC.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Wollaston Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were two responses to this question.
Responses included a request to keep the library service as it currently is; to increase the opening hours so that the service can be used more; and to increase Council Tax to help pay for the service.

Respondents could then make any other comments about the Wollaston Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There was one response to this question.

This respondent expressed their gratitude that people are prepared to volunteer to continue the delivery of the library service but raised their concerns that voluntary groups may be challenging to sustain in the long term and raised their concerns that the quality of the existing service will reduce.

Children and young people’s questionnaire

There were no responses received relating to Wollaston Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

Drop-in event

A drop-in event was held at Wollaston Library on 14 January 2019 which was attended by 11 people. Some attendees said they thought the proposal sounded viable, and were supportive of it, with the caveat that Council support for the community managed library would be important. Other attendees gave examples of their personal experience where their children’s reading had been developed by coming to the library.

Other comments made included:

- The view that the library is a soft target
- Concern that there won’t be enough volunteering capacity (as a result they were trying to recruit more volunteers)
- The view that the library is important as an information resource, for social reasons and support companionship during difficult times e.g. illness

Other responses

There were no written responses or social media comments submitted in relation to Wollaston Library.

After the consultation period for Wollaston Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Wollaston Library.
Woodford Halse Library

Standard questionnaire

895. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Woodford Halse Library. There were 3 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

![Bar chart showing attendance frequency at Woodford Halse Library]

896. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Woodford Halse Library. There were 4 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> - to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal Children’s Services</strong> - to attend activities such as Rhymetime sessions, Play and Learn sessions, to access information and advice on school readiness services.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> - to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> - to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Woodford Halse Library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal for Woodford Halse Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 4 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

898. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were three responses to this question.

899. Respondents who felt this would provide a good solution did not comment as to why they felt this way.

900. The three respondents who commented as to why they felt this would provide a poor solution said they already pay for a library through their Council Tax. They felt that the service was being ‘stolen’ from them. They said that the library service was a vital local resource and ought to be funded and run at a county level with trained staff rather than volunteers and if not, they should pay less tax.

901. No respondents felt this would provide neither a good nor poor solution or said that they did not know how to respond.

902. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were three responses to this question.

903. Two respondents repeated earlier comments about paying for the service through Council Tax and that they felt that the service was being stolen from them. One respondent commented that they felt that the service would be diluted with the loss paid staff members, and they would lose the link to other libraries which may make the library difficult to use.

904. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Woodford Halse Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There was one response to this question. This respondent said that the library should remain as it and that cuts need to be made in other service areas.

905. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Woodford Halse Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were no responses to this question.
Children and young people’s questionnaire
906. There were no responses received relating to Woodford Halse Library from respondents using the Children and Young People's questionnaire.

Drop-in event
907. A drop-in event was held at Woodford Halse Library on 24 January 2019, attended by six people. Several people had come in to volunteer and were supportive of the proposals. Another attendee thought that the proposal offered an exciting opportunity for the community to make it a really vibrant library, with the possibility of running IT sessions there.

Other responses
908. Two written responses were received. One was Daventry District Council, which urged the County Council to work closely with Woodford Parish Council to make the community library in Woodford Halse viable and successful. In particular, it urged the County Council to surrender its lease of the library space without charging for this. It said that such a surrender would be in the County Council’s own financial interest and that a surrender could be conditional on Woodford Parish Council running a community library for a minimum period of time, such as five years.

909. The other respondent commented that no alternative statutory library had been identified for Woodford Halse on distance criteria as alternatives would be more than five miles away. They also said that if Earls Barton’s circumstances justify it being retained as part of the statutory provision, the same should apply to ‘isolated’ Woodford Halse.

910. There were no social media comments received in relation to Woodford Halse Library.

911. After the consultation period for Woodford Halse Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Woodford Halse Library.
Wootton Library

Standard questionnaire

912. Respondents were asked how often they usually attend Wootton Library. There were 24 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

913. Respondents were then asked which of the following services they regularly use at Wootton Library. There were 24 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Response number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Services</strong> – to access a range of book stock or e-books, to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, to use the Library to You service, or to be a member of a Library.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Services</strong> - to access digital support to help with using online services such as employability or family history research, or to take part in regular activities including craft events or Stitch and Chat groups.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong> - to learn basic IT skills, to access public computers, photocopying, and printing facilities, to use free Wi-Fi and device charging facilities, to access County Council or District Council websites or to enrol on free online courses.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services</strong> – to access information and advice health, lifestyle and wellbeing, parenting and family support, for Health Visitor drop-in sessions or breastfeeding facilities, or to access information about volunteering opportunities.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Services</strong> – to access support when looking for a job or to find out about starting and developing your own business, to apply for or renew a concessionary bus pass/disabled parking permit, to apply for school places, to access debt help and money management advice.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture Services</strong> - to visit local displays, attend a play or speaker event outside of normal opening hours.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not currently use library services in Wootton Library</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
914. The proposal for Wootton Library was then explained, and respondents were asked if Northamptonshire County Council decides to go ahead with the above proposal – using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is a poor solution and 5 is a good solution, to what extent do they think this would be a good solution. There were 23 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option.

915. Respondents could then choose to tell us why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 14 responses to this question.

916. Respondents who felt this would provide a good solution commented that the library was important to retain. They said that there was opportunity to extend services and opening hours without it being a financial burden on the tax payer. Respondents however did comment that they wanted the library to be close to local residents and that the library should be able to service small villages close to the current provision. They said that the area was expanding with new homes being built or planned. They felt that the library was needed locally for children to use and therefore it would be good to retain. They also commented on stock replenishment, saying that they were not sure where stock would come from if there was no access to the NCC library service.

917. Residents who felt this would provide a poor solution commented that this was not a suitable proposal as they were not sure what criteria had been used. They questioned the distance criteria used. Some respondents felt that the Council was offloading its statutory responsibility for a library service to the voluntary sector and small local councils and that the proposal showed neither accountability nor responsibility. Respondents said that the ability to share book stock across the county would be compromised. They said that they felt that they could be paying twice for a service i.e. council tax to NCC and the parish precept. Respondents valued volunteers but felt that they should not be replacing paid professional staff.

918. Respondents who felt this would provide neither a good nor a poor solution commented that overall a community library is a good idea but they were not sure how viable or sustainable it would be. Other respondents said it was better to have a community library than to lose it completely; whereas some respondents said that it should remain as a statutory provision. Respondents said that the library was a vital part of the local community and that it should be accessible to everyone. Other respondents said that the library could offer more things that it currently does and become a hub of the community. The current library was limited in what it offered and this was not helped by the type of building it was in, with it being described it as a shed with little space or facilities.

919. One respondent who had indicated ‘Don’t know’ provided a comment, saying that they were not sure as to the difference was between a statutory run and community run service. They expressed preference for the service to remain in the local community.
920. Respondents were then asked that if they feel this option would have a negative impact, to tell us what they think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated. There were eight responses to this question.

921. Respondents commented that they felt that the proposal depended on the sustainability of volunteers. They questioned whether a wider analysis of the social impacts had been considered along with the financial implications. Other respondents welcomed the community approach adding that other more community-based services, social and commercial, could be developed. However, they also mentioned the growth and expansion of the Wootton area with new housing and the desire to bring the library back into NCC control should the community proposal not work out in the future. Respondents also stated that they were concerned about stock rotation and having choice; that they would not be able to walk to the alternative libraries i.e. Hunsbury or Northamptonshire Central and therefore they would be excluded from accessing a statutory service.

922. Respondents were then asked a series of questions about the proposed relocation of Wootton Library. They were asked to think about Wootton Community & Sports Centre (where it was proposed Wootton Library will be relocated) and to place a number of criteria in order of importance for the new venue. There were 19 responses to this question, with respondents only being able to select one option per row.

923. Respondents who selected ‘Other’ said that they want the library to remain local with paid staff, regular opening hours and the provision to have other recreational activities. One respondent also commented on the library building, suggesting that it needed to have more light and be more comfortable.

924. Respondents were asked if they feel there is anything that would prevent them from accessing Wootton Library if it moves to Wootton Community & Sports Centre, to tell us what these are and how they could be overcome. There were six responses to this question.

925. Respondents said that they wanted good professional service provision without any additional cost over and above that for other libraries within the county. They also commented on having weekend access, access for secondary school children and working people and for accessible car parking. A respondent also
said that they were not sure where the library would go or fit as the current community centre is designed in a rectangular room with a bar, a hall for various sports activities and changing facilities.

926. Respondents were then asked if they have any other comments they would like to make about the proposed relocation of Wootton Library, including if they feel there is an alternative venue that should be considered and why. There were eight responses to this question.

927. Respondents were varied in their comments. Some suggested Hunsbury Library as an alternative library. Respondents said that using unallocated section 106 monies is a good idea but they did not want extra charges being added to the local parish council precept. They said that it was a good idea to extend the community centre and with it create a community café that it could act as a focal point for the library. Respondents said the library needed to be a quiet place to read and or study. Another suggested that a space next to secondary school could be used to for a library as the current library service facilities need extensive repairs and maintenance. They also added that this space could be developed into a more commercial place that could house a swimming pool. Another respondent felt that the Council was incompetent and that this has led to a poor library service provision.

928. Respondents were then asked if they would like to tell us of any alternative solutions or suggestions to the Wootton Library proposal which they would like us to consider. There were three responses to this question.

929. Responses included a request to close Wootton Library and invest in Hunsbury Library instead; to make better use of land near Caroline Chisholm School or local shops to create a recreation space which could offer more to the community; and to keep the current library as part of the statutory provision.

930. Respondents could then make any other comments about the Wootton Library proposal that they had not already mentioned. There were three responses to this question.

931. These respondents said that a sustainable, good and equitable service needed to be provided by the Council. They said that the current facility was not suitable and a more attractive facility needs to be provided which could be used and also hired to the growing local community. They thought that the Council had made an oversight in that it had not included Blue Badge and buss pass services in the list of potential service provision, as it had with other libraries.

Children and young people’s questionnaire

932. We received one response relating to Wootton Library from respondents using the Children and Young People’s questionnaire. When asked which one thing they like best about their local library, they said it was the ability to sit down and look around; and to choose their own books, look at them and take them home. When children and young people questionnaire respondents were invited to make any other comments, they said how they like the people who run the library.

Drop-in event

933. A drop-in event was held at Wootton Library on 29 January 2019, attended by five people. Attendees were keen library users, and were in favour of the proposal. They valued the library, including using the self-service option, and did not want it to close.

Other responses

934. We received one written response in relation to Wootton Library. The respondent had made a response to the previous library service review consultation and said that their views had not changed. They
expressed their concern about the Council’s definition of statutory provision and whether the Council has consulted on the criteria. They said that the impact assessment did not make sense in reference to distance and the percentage of young children in Wootton and Duston. They were unhappy about paying Council Tax for keeping Duston Library and having to pay a parish council tax precept for Wootton. They were not sure how much money the Council would actually save in the long run. They said that the libraries need investment as they are inclusive, provide learning, digital and cultural opportunities, and are part of the community. They said that libraries need to be managed with initiative, enthusiasm and commitment which means they need staff and resources. The respondent did not want Wootton Library to close and did not want an ‘unprofessional’ library service; did not want it to be transferred to a community provision as they said it was already a community provision; they felt that the service would be watered down and become a second rate service if run by the Parish Council as all the benefits of a statutory service would be diminished.

935. There were no social media comments received in relation to Wootton Library.

936. After the consultation period for Wootton Library had ended, and during the time that eight libraries were still open for consultation, respondents could still leave a comment about their library. No further comments were received about Wootton Library.
General comments

937. We received 10 letters and emails from respondents that did not relate to specific libraries, but were about the proposals for the library service as a whole.

938. One respondent commented on the design and methodology of the consultation. They stated that allowing respondents to have a say on one library at a time would effectively dissuade people from taking part in the consultation and in turn the results of the consultation would not be an accurate reflection.

939. Another respondent felt that the public were being asked to pay more money for reduced services. They indicated their discontent with the way in which the County Council is managing public finances and questioned its competency. They also questioned whether the Council has the courage to ask central government for more money and whether decision making councillors really understood the consequences of their decisions. They also said the current library proposals would result in increased demand in mental health services for children and adults. They stated that vulnerable members of the community could not afford to access the services if not provided by the public purse. The respondent said that they community/charity run libraries would show the Council how libraries could be run.

940. One respondent commented that the information issued by the County Council on all the libraries and in particular, about the community managed library model was insufficient and made it unreasonable for anyone to complete the consultation. They questioned whether the proposal meets the Council’s obligations under the Public Libraries Act 1964, however, they believed that this could only be tested in Court. They questioned the methodology of the consultation, saying that they were not able to comment or provide alternative suggestions as to how the Council could find savings for the whole service as the questionnaire asked them to comment on one library at a time. The respondent said that the Council was prejudging the consultation by stating that it could not maintain the library service in its current form. They said the money to be saved was not a large sum and further suggested that the Council could raise this through increases in Council Tax over the 3% threshold limit; or take the increase to the absolute maximum; or via seeking equivalent saving elsewhere; or through using a share of £17 million collected from business rates; or await the outcome of the government funding formula.

941. Another respondent had completed a questionnaire for their local library but wanted to comment on the BorrowBox service that they use. The respondent did not want this and the audiobook service to be reduced. They commented that the service could be enjoyed at anytime and anywhere without the need to visit a library directly. They thought that the service was not well publicised.

942. One respondent, who was not affected by a library closure, felt that due to the proposed local government changes for the county, it was unnecessary to spend time and resources in carrying out the consultation. They felt that the priorities of the new unitary authorities may be totally different to those of the County Council and as such they may wish to keep all the libraries.

943. We received a response from the Save Brackley Library group, which made specific comments relating to Middleton Cheney Library, summarised above in the Middleton Cheney section of this report. They made some general comments about the review, including how Middleton Cheney, and similar libraries, were being categorised as part of NCCs statutory provision but that they would no longer be funded by NCC. They questioned why NCC would cease to fund what it considered to be a statutory service. They raised their concerned that if neither NCC nor the Parish Council no longer fund the service then this would place a reliance on the community to fund the service and they raised their concerns that this would not be sustainable. They went on to comment that libraries are not an easy or simple service to manage on a volunteer run and funded basis, and that the delivery and management of such as service, including
fundraising and dealing with some members of the public, is beyond the abilities of many volunteers. They said that volunteer run libraries in other areas of the country have seen book borrowing fall or have closed. They added that funding is needed, preferably from NCC, and that it should be continued by any new unitary authority, and that a library service should not be dependent on whether a local Parish Council is willing to fund the service or on the proportion of the local population able and willing to volunteer.

944. Another respondent made extensive comments about the accessibility of library services under the proposals presented. They felt that the Council had not met its statutory equal opportunities responsibility as they said access issues have not been given a very high weighting. They provided various analyses of current bus timetables routes to put forward their concerns. They expressed their concerns about the alternative travel arrangements should community managed libraries not succeed. The respondent said that the distance calculations were not a true reflection for those that did not travel by car. They said it was wrong to assume that people had the use of the car or to design proposals on that basis. They also made an observation from their use of public transport that those that use the bus services have mobility issues. In particular, they commented that bus timetables are not of benefit to people who needed to travel outside commuter hours or commuter days. They felt that the bus service was severely limited in many villages and areas of the county. In some cases a short trip by distance could in fact take over half a day when factoring in the return journey. The respondent made specific comments in relation to several libraries, which have all been summarised in the relevant sections for those libraries in this report. They said it was not clear who had agreed the criteria used in determining what constituted a level of library service which satisfies the 1964 Act.

945. One respondent, while commenting in a personal capacity, was well-informed in relation to the previous and current library proposals and said that they continued to have serious concerns regarding the sustainability of those libraries that County Council proposes to remove from its current statutory provision, despite the current proposal showing, in their view, some improvement on the ‘independent library process’ previously proposed by the County Council. They then set out in detail a number of concerns.

- They wanted clarity on the judgement that would be used to determine whether a community group running a statutory library was failing, requiring NCC to step in and run it again
- They felt that property and associated costs were unreasonable, especially in areas without a town or parish council and the ability to charge a Council Tax precept, and wanted clarity on the figures and a support strategy, otherwise they felt the proposals would be unsustainable
- They felt that residents of areas with a parish or town council that would charge a precept to pay for a community managed libraries would be treated unfairly in comparison to other areas that would not have that charge
- They felt that the proposals break up the current 36-library system into three tiers, which would be further complicated by the fact that it is proposed that the county is split into two unitary authorities, creating an imbalance of NCC-run statutory libraries between the two
- They were concerned that core library functions i.e. book lending would be diminished if groups feel the need to generate income and accommodate other activities in order to be sustainable
- They were concerned that increasing retirement ages would lead to a lack of volunteers and they felt there was not enough information about what support NCC would provide to community managed libraries
- They wanted improved communications from NCC to community groups and also to their local county councillors who may be supporting them in the development of proposals. They felt that the amount of work being put in by community groups to ensure the proposals are sustainable needs to be acknowledged and for them to be treated with respect, given the level of responsibility that would be taken on
946. One respondent commented that it was ‘awful’ that the management of finances at the County Council was resulting in the closure of libraries. Another respondent said that they did not want these changes but felt that they would go ahead anyway.

947. One comment was received via social media. The respondent said that it was unacceptable that the consultation did not include all the libraries and that that consultation for the service should open as a whole when all the information was available on all libraries.