

Appendix 1

The public consultation on the proposed changes to the Library and Information Service

Consultation overview

This report brings together the feedback received through each of the different consultation elements and provides a comprehensive evidence base to help inform the decision-making process. It reviews the full range of feedback received, and brings together those common themes that have emerged.

Verbatim quotations (all of which are italicised) are used where relevant to capture recurrent points of view.

Overview of the consultation elements

Consultation type	No of responses / participants
Quantitative	
Questionnaire	827
Total quantitative responses	827
Qualitative	
Public meetings (5 meetings across the borough)	211
Focus groups & stakeholder meetings 5 sessions with various groups)	65
Written submissions (from individuals and groups)	18
Petitions	2
Signatures	1,454
Total qualitative responses (some individuals may have contributed to more than one consultation strand)	1,748
TOTAL RESPONSES OVERALL	2,575

Consultation process

In October and November 2015, Lewisham Council consulted on the proposed savings in the Libraries budget as part of the Lewisham Future Programme. The Library & Information Service was asked to find £1,000,000 in savings from its budget. 3 options were proposed – outsourcing of the service; reducing opening hours and closing libraries; the extension of the Lewisham Libraries community model with the transfer of 3 libraries to community partners - Forest Hill, Manor House and Torridon Libraries, the creation of 3 Hub libraries – Deptford, Downham and Lewisham, and the remodelling of Catford Library

The consultation launched on 1st October and ran until 15th November. Information about the proposals was posted in the libraries, on the Libraries section of the Council website (<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/libraryconsultation>) and a consultation survey was posted on the Lewisham consultation website (https://lewisham-consult.objective.co.uk/public/proposed_changes_to_the_library_and_information_service). 5 public meetings were held at locations across the borough and 4 focus groups.

Users were encouraged to complete the survey online and paper copies were made available in libraries and at the consultation meetings and focus groups. An email address was created for people to contact the service and request pdf copies of the consultation survey or submit comments - library.consultation@lewisham.gov.uk.

Information was also posted on the Library & Information Service Facebook page and Twitter account.

Petitions were handed in from local interested parties. Steps were taken to monitor activity and comments on the web to ensure awareness of the main areas of concern, including comments posted on the petition **Save Lewisham Libraries** and the **SE23 Forum**.

Public meetings

Public consultation meetings were held on –

Date	Location	No of attendees
Wednesday 7 October	Broadway Theatre, Catford SE6 4RU	27
Monday 12 October	Trinity School, Lee SE12 8PD	46
Monday 19 October	Sydenham School, Forest Hill, SE26 4RD	55
Thursday 22 October	Sandhurst Junior School, Catford SE6 1NW	55
Wednesday 4 November	St Dunstan's Jubilee Hall, Catford SE6 4SW	28

Focus groups

Focus groups were held to ensure input from users who might not be able to interact online or attend evening meetings.

Date	Group	No of attendees
Monday 2 November	Young Mayor's Advisors	25
Thursday 5 November	Positive Ageing Council	12
Wednesday 11 November	School teachers and librarians	3
Thursday 12 November	Lewisham Disability Coalition	4
Monday 16 November	Manor House Library stakeholder meeting	21

Online consultation

The online consultation was launched on 1 October. Information was posted on the Libraries section of the Council website, which received 2,268 unique visits and 2,937 views over the consultation period from 1 October to 15 November.

Source	Number of responses
Library Consultation page on the Council website	2,268 visitors
Consultation survey (A copy of the survey is attached)	827

Written submissions

	Source	Number of responses
Petitions received	2	
	Number of signatories	1454
	Number of comments	363
	Formal responses from local organisations	4
	Emails	7
	Letters	3

Social media

Source	Number of responses
SE23 Forum	100 comments

Areas of concern raised through the consultation process

Main themes

The austerity approach – It emerged consistently during the consultation that residents feel strongly against the climate of austerity that is having a negative effect on the local authority and its capacity to continue to sustain services to residents. Some maintain that the council should find ways to express its residents' views to the government.

The value of the library service – Residents were unanimous in expressing their views on the value of the Lewisham library service and its staff. It was felt that any reduction in the service would make the authority poorer in the present and more so in the future. The impact on citizens and future generations was clearly and repeatedly articulated in person and in writing.

Deterioration of the Service if community run – A large number of respondents expressed concern about the quality of the service if this moved to being “community run” and that the proposed option would entail reduced access to professional and/or trained library staff

Impact on children - A number of respondents expressed concern that the proposed option would have a major detrimental effect on children and their families.

Reduction in perceived access to libraries – Respondents expressed concern that they would be unable to travel to a hub library and would not be able to access ‘full’ library services

The local community – Many felt that the proposal would have a negative impact on the local community.

Volunteers – Respondents expressed concern over the use of volunteers to “replace” council staff. Some stressed the lack of reliability that is inherent in the transient role of volunteers. Some were concerned about issues linked to the ability of volunteers to care for the assets and to safeguard visiting audiences, particularly children. That the proposed option would mean that professional and/or trained library staff

The consultation process – Some believed that the consultation was not properly carried out because of insufficient publicity or time and opportunity to respond, or because the information was inadequate.

Consultation survey

827 Responses were received to consultation survey.

Need for change

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that changes to the Council's public library service were necessary.

20% agreed or strongly agreed
65% disagreed or strongly disagreed

Need for change

Question responses: 814 (98.43%)

To what extent do you agree or disagree that changes to the Council's public library service are necessary?

Table .1

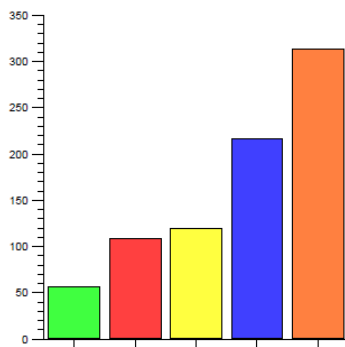


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Strongly agree	6.77%	6.88%	56
Agree	13.06%	13.27%	108
Neither agree nor disagree	14.51%	14.74%	120
Disagree	26.24%	26.66%	217
Strongly disagree	37.85%	38.45%	313
[No Response]	1.57%	--	13
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Option selection

Respondents were asked which – if any – of the 3 proposed options they preferred.

6% preferred outsourcing the service to a third party organisation
4% preferred reducing opening hours and closing libraries
36% preferred creating 3 fully staffed hubs and extending the community model
54% preferred another option

Respondents were then asked to complete a free text box with details of their preferred 'other' option. These are listed below.

Option selection

Question responses: 780 (94.32%)

Which of the following is your preferred option for changes to the library service?

Table .1

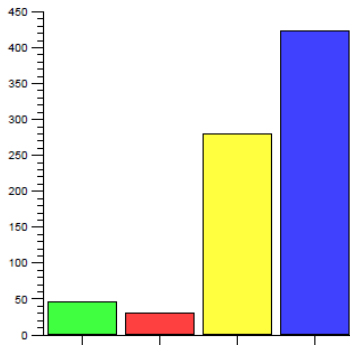


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Outsourcing the library service to a third party organisation	5.56%	5.90%	46
Reducing opening hours and closing libraries	3.75%	3.97%	31
Creating three fully staffed hub libraries with longer opening hours and extending the community library model to three more buildings	33.86%	35.90%	280
Other...please specify below	51.15%	54.23%	423
[No Response]	5.68%	--	47
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Preferred option

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the Council's preferred option to create 3 hub libraries and extend the community model.

29% agreed or strongly agreed
59% disagreed or strongly disagreed

Preferred option

Question responses: 806 (97.46%)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Council's preferred option to create three fully staffed hub libraries with longer opening hours while extending the community model to three more buildings?

Table .1

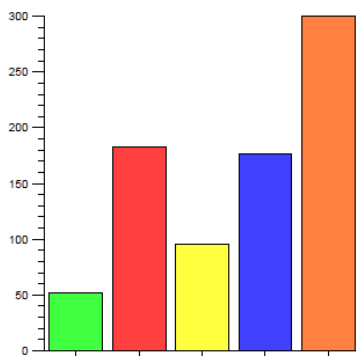


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Strongly agree	6.29%	6.45%	52
Agree	22.13%	22.70%	183
Neither agree nor disagree	11.49%	11.79%	95
Disagree	21.28%	21.84%	176
Strongly disagree	36.28%	37.22%	300
[No Response]	2.54%	--	21
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Impact of the proposed changes

Respondents were asked what impact the proposal would have on them personally.

8% said it would have a positive impact
66% said it would have a negative impact

Respondents were able to complete a free text box with further details on what the impact would be on them. The results of this are listed below.

Impact of proposed changes

Question responses: **809 (97.82%)**

What impact do you think that this proposal would have on you personally?

Table .1

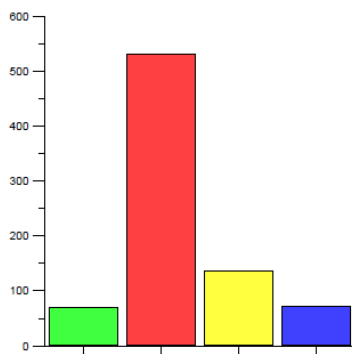


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Positive impact	8.34%	8.53%	69
Negative impact	64.21%	65.64%	531
No personal impact	16.57%	16.93%	137
Don't know	8.71%	8.90%	72
[No Response]	2.18%	--	18
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Free text comments

There were 3 questions where people could enter free text and make comments on –

Which of the following is your preferred option for changes to the library service? Please specify your 'other' preferred option here

What impact do you think that this proposal would have on you personally? Please describe briefly how you think you would be impacted by this proposal?

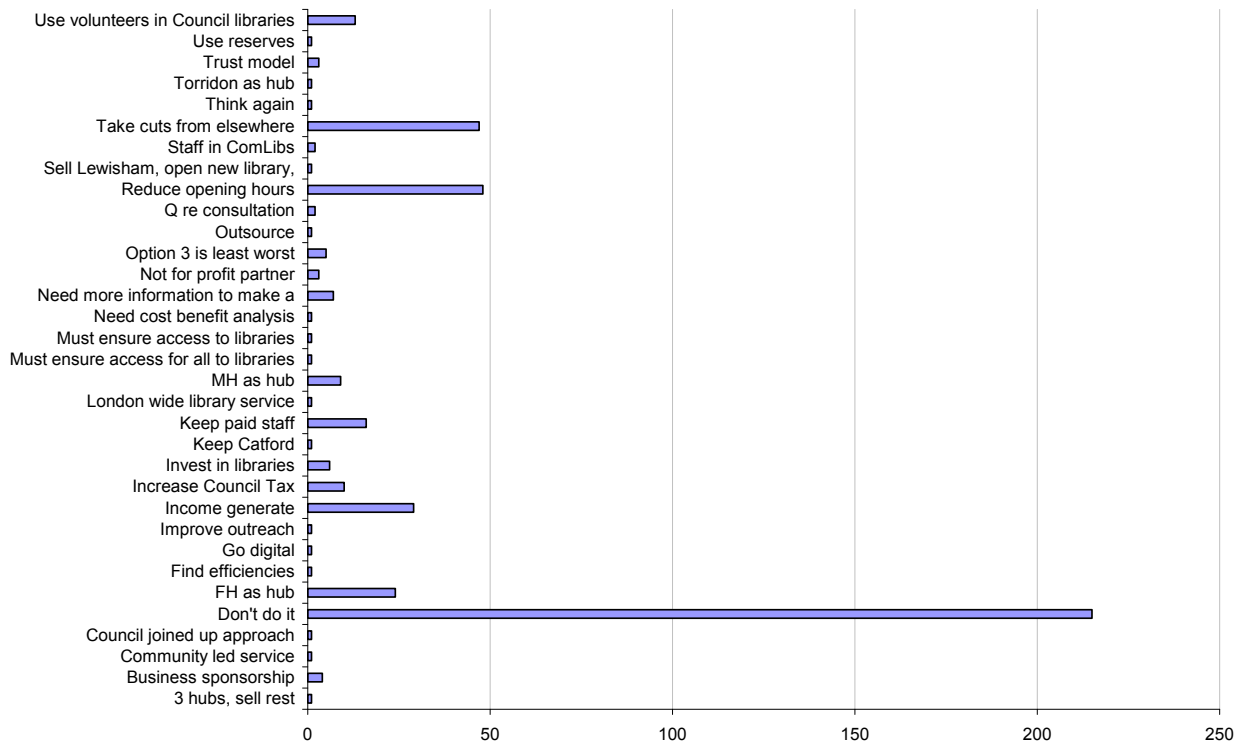
Do you have any other comments on the proposed changes to the library service that you would like to share with us?

Question 1

Which of the following is your preferred option for changes to the library service? Please specify your 'other' preferred option here.

54% or 423 people selected this option. 474 respondents completed a response and these were categorised as follows

Category	No of responses
3 hubs, sell rest	1
Business sponsorship	4
Community led service	1
Council joined up approach	1
Don't do it	215
Forest Hill as hub	24
Find efficiencies	1
Go digital	1
Improve outreach	1
Income generate	29
Increase Council Tax	10
Invest in libraries	6
Keep Catford Library	1
Keep paid staff	16
London wide library service	1
Manor House as hub	9
Must ensure access for all to libraries	1
Must ensure access to libraries	1
Need cost benefit analysis	1
Need more information to make a choice	7
Not for profit partner	3
Option 3 is least worst	5
Outsource	1
Q re consultation	2
Reduce opening hours	48
Sell Lewisham, open new library, close community libraries	1
Staff in community libraries	2
Take cuts from elsewhere	47
Think again	1
Torridon Library as hub	1
Trust model	3
Use reserves	1
Use volunteers in Council libraries	13



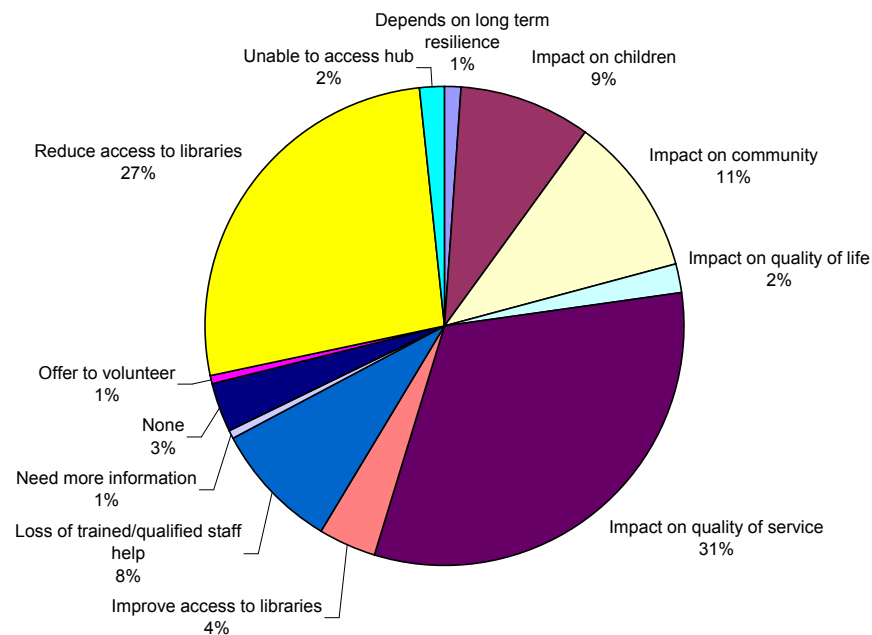
Question 2

**What impact do you think that this proposal would have on you personally?
Please describe briefly how you think you would be impacted by this proposal?**

573 respondents entered a response and these were categorised as follows

Category	No of responses
Depends on long term resilience	6
Impact on children	50
Impact on community	59
Impact on quality of life	11
Impact on quality of service	178
Improve access to libraries	22
Loss of trained/qualified staff help	47
Need more information	3
None	18
Offer to volunteer	3
Reduce access to libraries	149
Unable to access hub	9

Libraries consultation - Impact of proposals



Question 3

Do you have any other comments on the proposed changes to the library service that you would like to share with us?

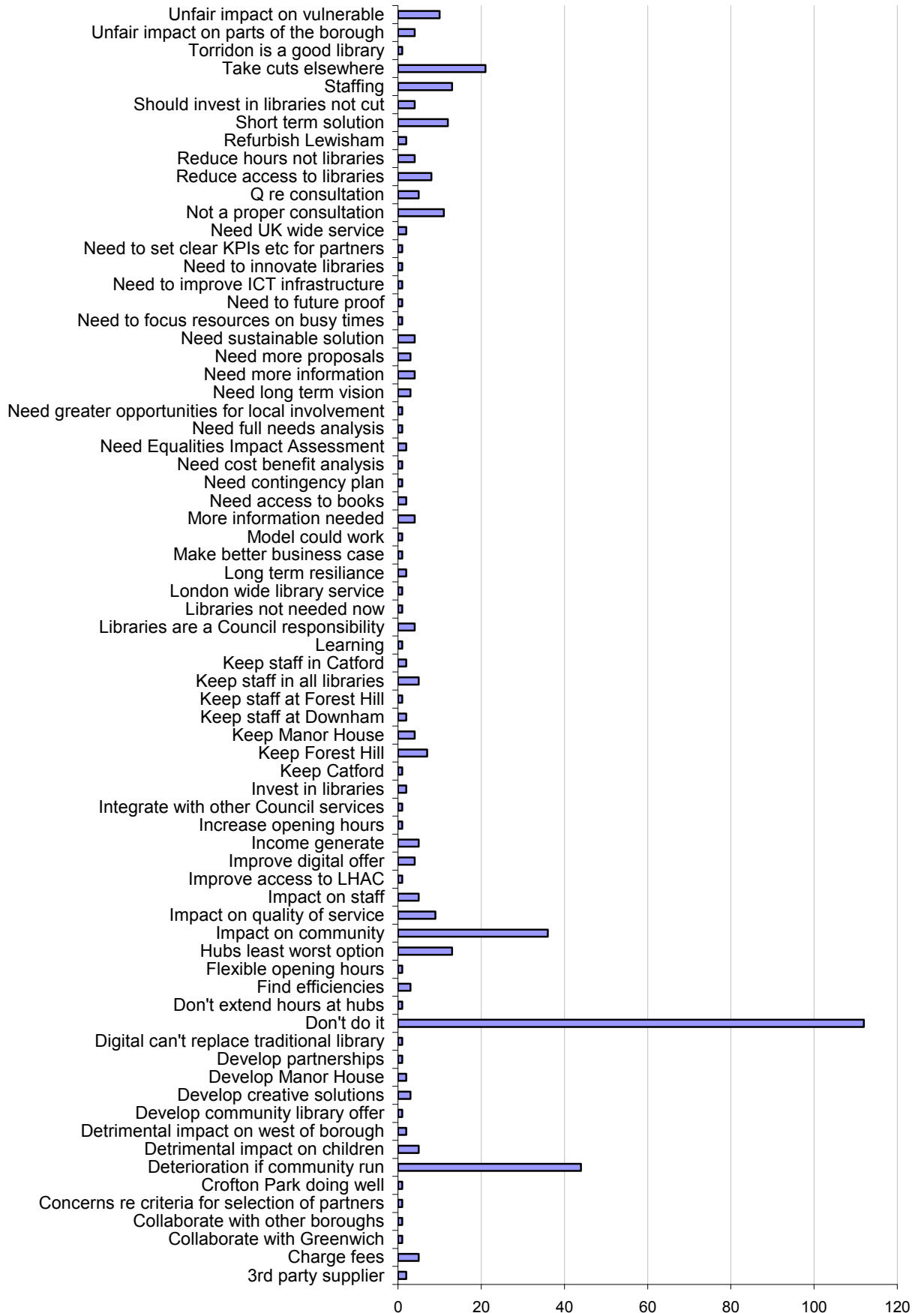
444 respondents entered a response.

These covered a wide range of subjects which were categorised as follows –

Category	No of responses
3rd party supplier	2
Charge fees	5
Collaborate with Greenwich	1
Collaborate with other boroughs	1
Concerns re criteria for selection of partners	1
Crofton Park doing well	1
Deterioration if community run	44
Detrimental impact on children	5
Detrimental impact on west of borough	2
Develop community library offer	1
Develop creative solutions	3
Develop Manor House	2
Develop partnerships	1
Digital can't replace traditional library	1
Don't do it	112
Don't extend hours at hubs	1
Find efficiencies	3
Flexible opening hours	1
Hubs least worst option	13
Impact on community	36
Impact on quality of service	9
Impact on staff	5
Improve access to LHAC	1
Improve digital offer	4
Income generate	5
Increase opening hours	1
Integrate with other Council services	1
Invest in libraries	2
Keep Catford	1
Keep Forest Hill	7
Keep Manor House	4
Keep staff at Downham	2
Keep staff at Forest Hill	1
Keep staff in all libraries	5
Keep staff in Catford	2
Learning	1
Libraries are a Council responsibility	4
Libraries not needed now	1
London wide library service	1
Long term resilience	2
Make better business case	1
Model could work	1
More information needed	4

Category	No of responses
Need access to books	2
Need contingency plan	1
Need cost benefit analysis	1
Need Equalities Impact Assessment	2
Need full needs analysis	1
Need greater opportunities for local involvement	1
Need long term vision	3
Need more information	4
Need more proposals	3
Need sustainable solution	4
Need to focus resources on busy times	1
Need to future proof	1
Need to improve ICT infrastructure	1
Need to innovate libraries	1
Need to set clear KPIs etc for partners	1
Need UK wide service	2
Not a proper consultation	11
Q re consultation	5
Reduce access to libraries	8
Reduce hours not libraries	4
Refurbish Lewisham	2
Short term solution	12
Should invest in libraries not cut	4
Staffing	13
Take cuts elsewhere	21
Torridon is a good library	1
Unfair impact on parts of the borough	4
Unfair impact on vulnerable	10

Free text comments



Respondent types

92% of respondents live in Lewisham and 15% work and 3% study in the borough
(This was a multiple choice question)

Respondent types

Question responses: **816 (98.67%)**

Which of the following best describes you?

Table .1

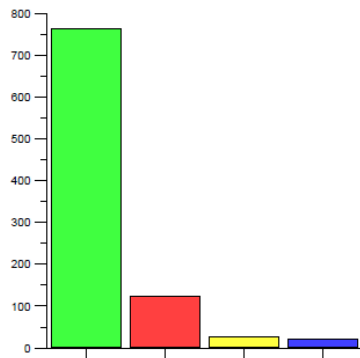


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
I live in the borough of Lewisham	80.83%	81.78%	92.26%	763
I work in the borough of Lewisham	13.14%	13.29%	14.99%	124
I study in the borough of Lewisham	2.65%	2.68%	3.02%	25
None of the above	2.22%	2.25%	2.54%	21
[No Response]	1.17%	--	1.33%	11
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	944

Frequency of use

The majority of respondents are regular library users and visit a Lewisham library weekly – 44% or monthly 30%

Frequency of use

Question responses: 817 (98.79%)

How often do you use any of the public libraries in Lewisham?

Table .1

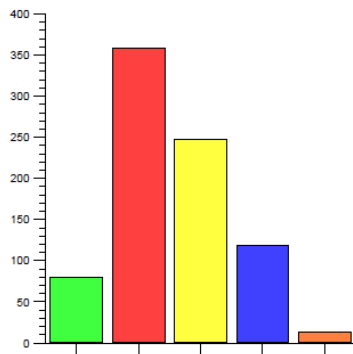


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Daily	9.55%	9.67%	79
Weekly	43.29%	43.82%	358
Monthly	29.99%	30.35%	248
Less often than monthly	14.39%	14.57%	119
Never	1.57%	1.59%	13
[No Response]	1.21%	--	10
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Which library do you use

The majority of responses came from users of Manor House (30%) and Forest Hill (24%) libraries, followed by Lewisham (11%), Catford (9%) and Torrington Road (9%) libraries

Which library

Question responses: **820 (99.15%)**

Which one of Lewisham's public libraries do you use the most often?

Table .1

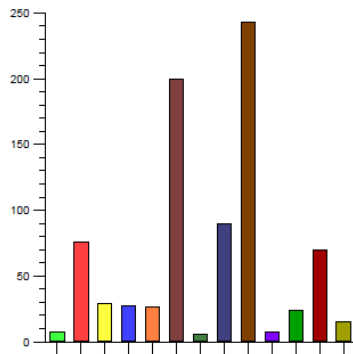


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Blackheath	0.85%	0.85%	7
Catford	9.19%	9.27%	76
Crofton Park	3.51%	3.54%	29
Deptford Lounge	3.26%	3.29%	27
Downham	3.14%	3.17%	26
Forest Hill	24.18%	24.39%	200
Grove Park	0.73%	0.73%	6
Lewisham	10.88%	10.98%	90
Manor House	29.38%	29.63%	243
New Cross	0.85%	0.85%	7
Sydenham	2.90%	2.93%	24
Torrington Road	8.46%	8.54%	70

Age of respondents

The responses came from a broad range of age groups, the highest being the over 65s (17%) and 40-44 years (16%). This was followed by the 35-39 years (15%), 45-49 years (10%), 30-34 years (10%) and the 50-54 years (9%).

Age

Question responses: 819 (99.03%)

Please select your age group

Table .1

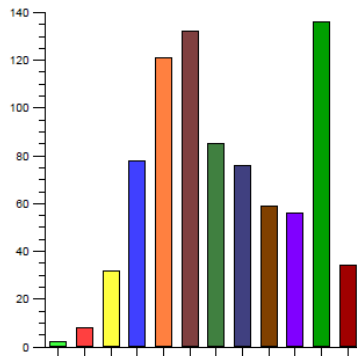


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Under 18 years	0.24%	0.24%	2
18-24	0.97%	0.98%	8
25-29	3.87%	3.91%	32
30-34	9.43%	9.52%	78
35-39	14.63%	14.77%	121
40-44	15.96%	16.12%	132
45-49	10.28%	10.38%	85
50-54	9.19%	9.28%	76
55-59	7.13%	7.20%	59
60-64	6.77%	6.84%	56
65+	16.44%	16.61%	136
I'd rather not say	4.11%	4.15%	34

Ethnicity of respondents

The majority of responses came from White British and White other ethnic groups – 79%, with Black African, Caribbean, British providing 7%.

Ethnicity

Question responses: 800 (96.74%)

What is your ethnic group?

Table .1

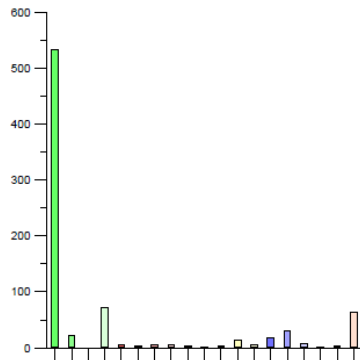


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
White			
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	64.45%	66.63%	533
Irish	2.66%	2.75%	22
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%	0.00%	0
Any other White background	8.71%	9.00%	72
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups			
White and Asian	0.73%	0.75%	6
White and Black African	0.48%	0.50%	4
White and Black Caribbean	0.60%	0.63%	5
Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background	0.60%	0.63%	5
Asian/Asian British			
	% Total	% Answer	Count
Chinese	0.48%	0.50%	4
Bangladeshi	0.24%	0.25%	2
Pakistani	0.48%	0.50%	4
Indian	1.57%	1.63%	13
Any other Asian background	0.60%	0.63%	5
Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British			
African	2.18%	2.25%	18
Caribbean	3.63%	3.75%	30
Any other Black/ African/ Caribbean background	0.97%	1.00%	8
Any other ethnic group			
Arab	0.24%	0.25%	2
Other ethnic group	0.48%	0.50%	4
I'd rather not say	7.62%	7.88%	63
[No Response]	3.26%	--	27
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Gender of respondents

64% of responses came from Women and 30% from men, with 6% preferring not to say.

Gender

Question responses: **806 (97.46%)**

Are you:

Table .1

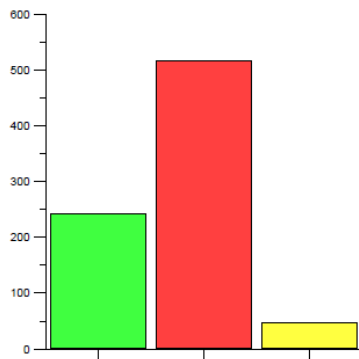


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Male	29.38%	30.15%	243
Female	62.39%	64.02%	516
I'd rather not say	5.68%	5.83%	47
[No Response]	2.54%	--	21
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Transgender responses

Transgender respondents supplied 6% of responses with 10% preferring not to say.

Transgender

Question responses: 661 (79.93%)

Is your gender identity different from the gender you were assigned at birth?

Table .1

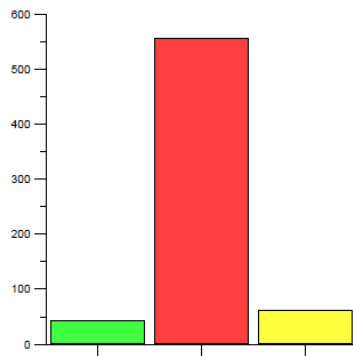


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Yes	5.08%	6.35%	42
No	67.35%	84.27%	557
I'd rather not say	7.50%	9.38%	62
[No Response]	20.07%	--	166
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Disability

12% of respondents were people who considered themselves to be disabled

Disability

Question responses: 783 (94.68%)

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

Table .1

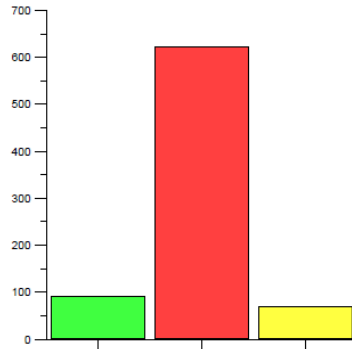


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Yes	11.12%	11.75%	92
No	75.09%	79.31%	621
I'd rather not say	8.46%	8.94%	70
[No Response]	5.32%	--	44
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

25% of these respondents had a long standing illness or health condition, 18% a physical impairment, 16% a mental health condition, 14% a learning disability and 13% a sensory impairment.

Please state the type of impairment that applies to you

Question responses: 92 (11.12%)

Please state the type of impairment that applies to you.

Table .1

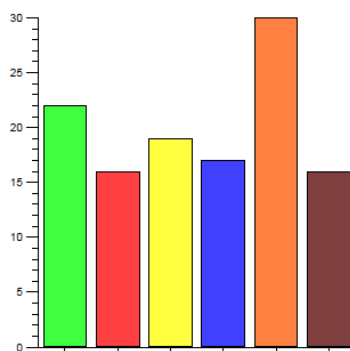


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Physical impairment, such as difficulty using your arms or mobility issues which means using a wheelchair or crutches	2.57%	18.33%	2.66%	22
Sensory impairment, such as being blind/ having a serious visual impairment or being deaf/ having a serious hearing impairment	1.87%	13.33%	1.93%	16
Mental health condition, such as depression or schizophrenia	2.22%	15.83%	2.30%	19
Learning disability/difficulty, such as Down's Syndrome or dyslexia or cognitive impairment, such as autistic spectrum disorder	1.99%	14.17%	2.06%	17
Long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy	3.51%	25.00%	3.63%	30
Other	1.87%	13.33%	1.93%	16

Religion and Belief

46% of those responding said they had no religion, 33% said they were Christian (all denominations) and 14% preferred not to say.

Religion and belief

Question responses: 796 (96.25%)

Table .1

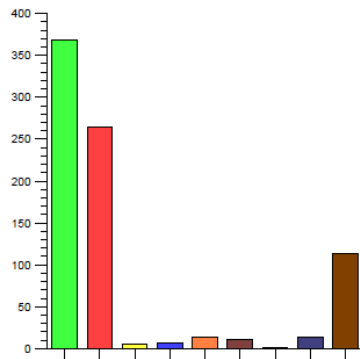


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
None	44.50%	46.23%	368
Christian (all denominations)	31.92%	33.17%	264
Buddhist	0.60%	0.63%	5
Hindu	0.73%	0.75%	6
Jewish	1.69%	1.76%	14
Muslim	1.33%	1.38%	11
Sikh	0.12%	0.13%	1
Any other religion/ belief	1.69%	1.76%	14
I'd rather not say	13.66%	14.20%	113
[No Response]	3.75%	--	31
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Sexual orientation

73% of respondents said they were straight/heterosexual, 21% preferred not to say, 3% were Gay/lesbian and 2% were Bisexual.

Sexual Orientation

Question responses: 769 (92.99%)

How would you define your sexual orientation?

Table .1

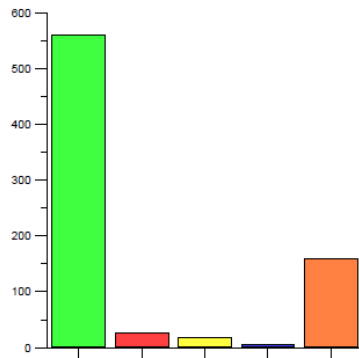


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Straight/ heterosexual	67.84%	72.95%	561
Gay/ lesbian	3.14%	3.38%	26
Bisexual	2.06%	2.21%	17
Other	0.60%	0.65%	5
I'd rather not say	19.35%	20.81%	160
[No Response]	7.01%	--	58
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Pregnancy and maternity

4% of respondents were pregnant or on maternity leave while 10% preferred not to say.

Pregnancy & Maternity

Question responses: 738 (89.24%)

Are you pregnant or on maternity leave?

Table .1

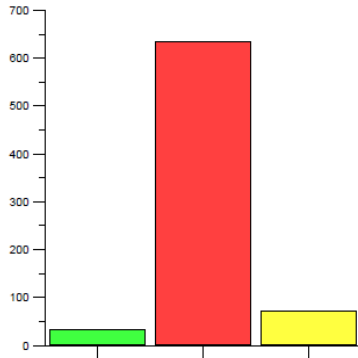


Table .2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Yes	3.87%	4.34%	32
No	76.78%	86.04%	635
Prefer not to say	8.59%	9.62%	71
[No Response]	10.76%	--	89
Total	100.00%	100.00%	827

Consultation meetings

211 people attended the 5 consultation meetings

Date attendees	Location	No of
Wednesday 7 October	Broadway Theatre, Catford SE6 4RU	27
Monday 12 October	Trinity School, Lee SE12 8PD	46
Monday 19 October	Sydenham School, Forest Hill, SE26 4RD	55
Thursday 22 October	Sandhurst Junior School, Catford SE6 1NW	55
Wednesday 4 November	St Dunstan's Jubilee Hall, Catford SE6 4SW	28

Summary of concerns raised

- Concern over the loss of valued community and heritage assets and the impact of this on the local community
- Concern over the lack of precise detail on the current financial costs and the detail and impact of the proposed savings. Several attendees requested detailed financial details of the saving for their local library
- Concern as to whether the proposed changes will actually deliver the required savings
- Need for alternative revenue streams as opposed to cuts, i.e. charges, income generation, hiring out library spaces, improving café offer
- Concern that this was not a 'proper consultation', that the decision had already been made
- Is the timetable realistic – very short timescale to deliver these changes if they go ahead
- Concern over the level of redundancies among library staff – number and financial details were requested
- Concern over the loss of qualified librarians and trained staff and the potential deterioration in service at the proposed community libraries
- What is the potential for using volunteers in the Council run libraries and using this to support keeping Council library staff in all the community libraries
- Concern over the potential deterioration in stock and resources at the proposed community libraries
- Concern over the potential impact on services to children and families – ie Under 5s sessions, Baby Bounce, Summer Reading Challenge – and the need to maintain these
- How will potential partners be selected and will the local community have a role in the selection as this will be of major importance to them
- What contracts will be specified and how will they be monitored. Will local library groups have any input
- How will the 'peripatetic' service provided by the Community Engagement Team work in practice, how much time will be allocated to each library
- Why does the Council not just say no to the government and not implement any cuts
- Why does the Council not use money from the reserves instead of making cuts

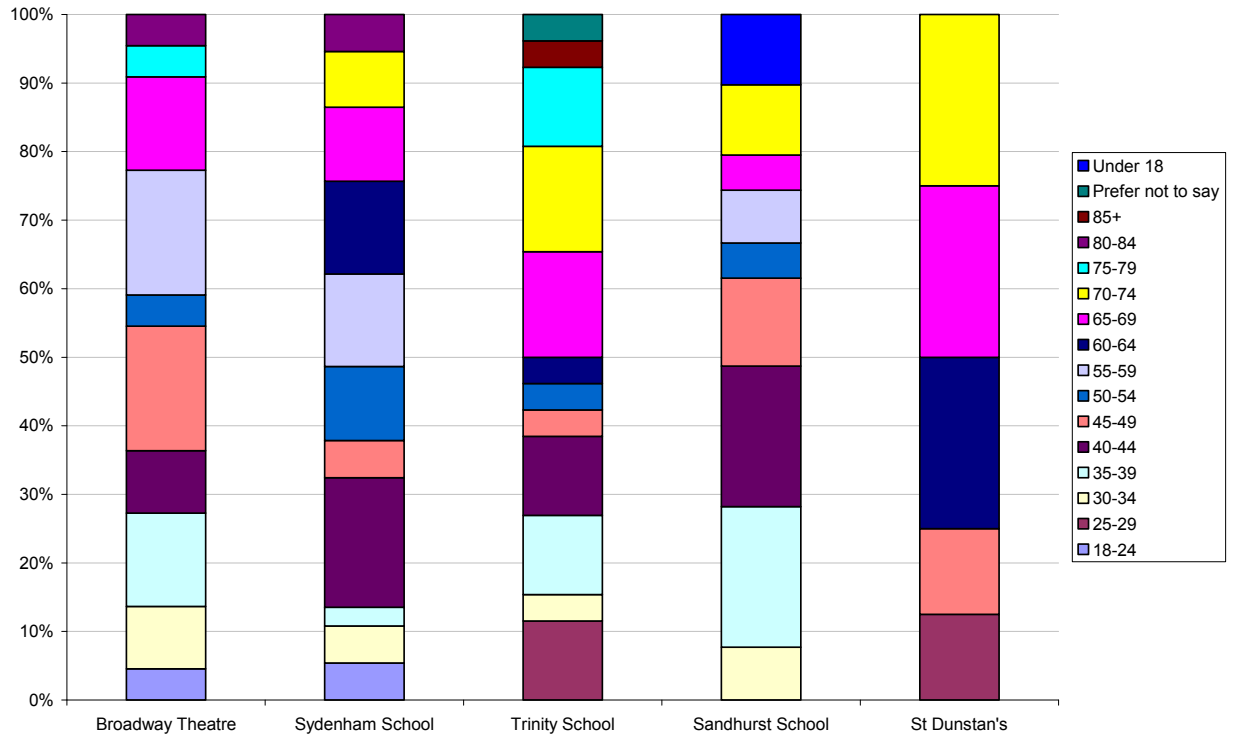
Specific to Forest Hill

- Why was Forest Hill chosen over Downham as a potential community library given that it has high usage – borrowers and footfall
- This would leave a large part of the borough without close access to a hub library as Deptford, Downham and Lewisham are too far to travel to from the Forest Hill area

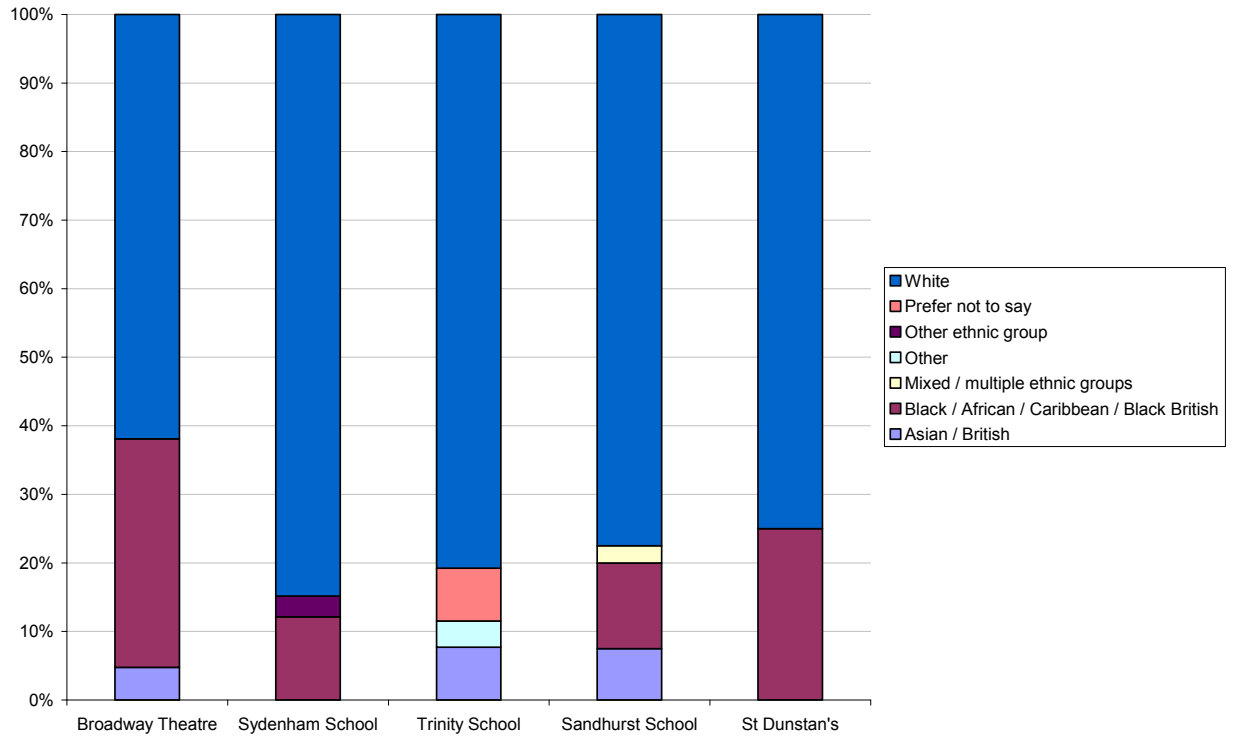
Specific to Manor House

- Manor House is a Grade II* listed building and an important heritage and community asset that the Council has invested a large amount of money in to restore and maintain

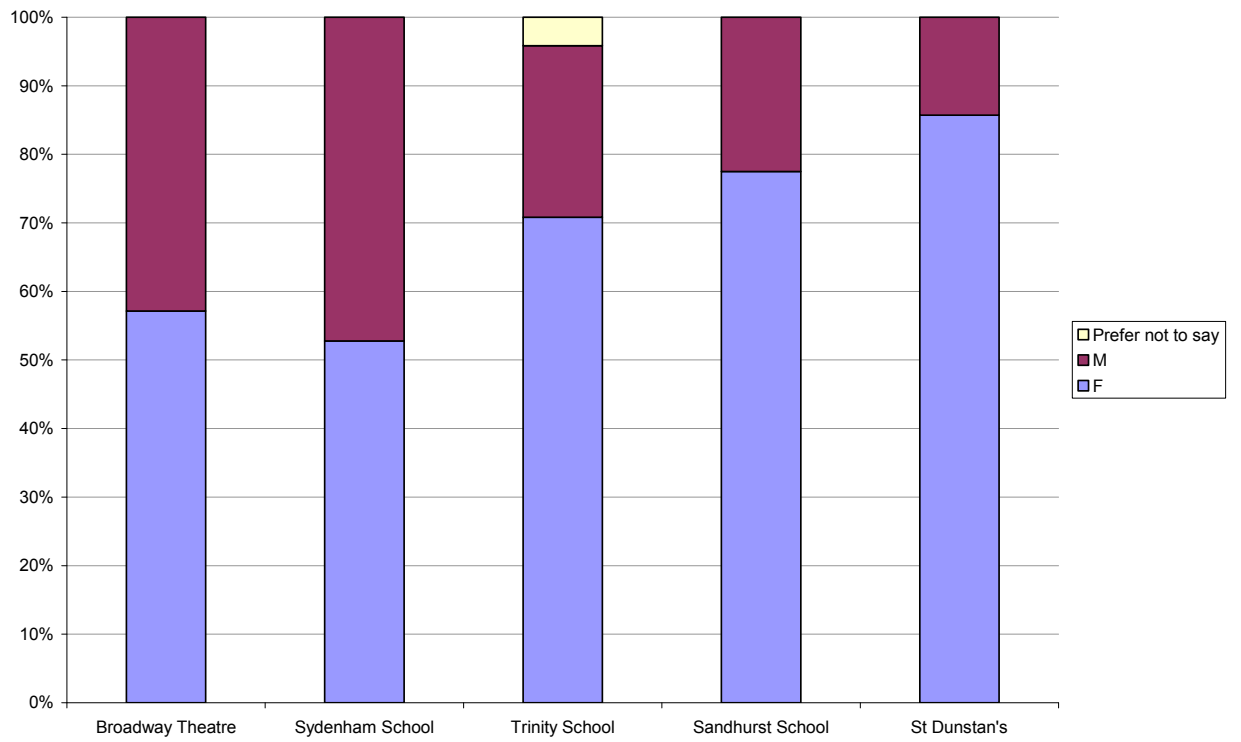
Breakdown of attendees by age



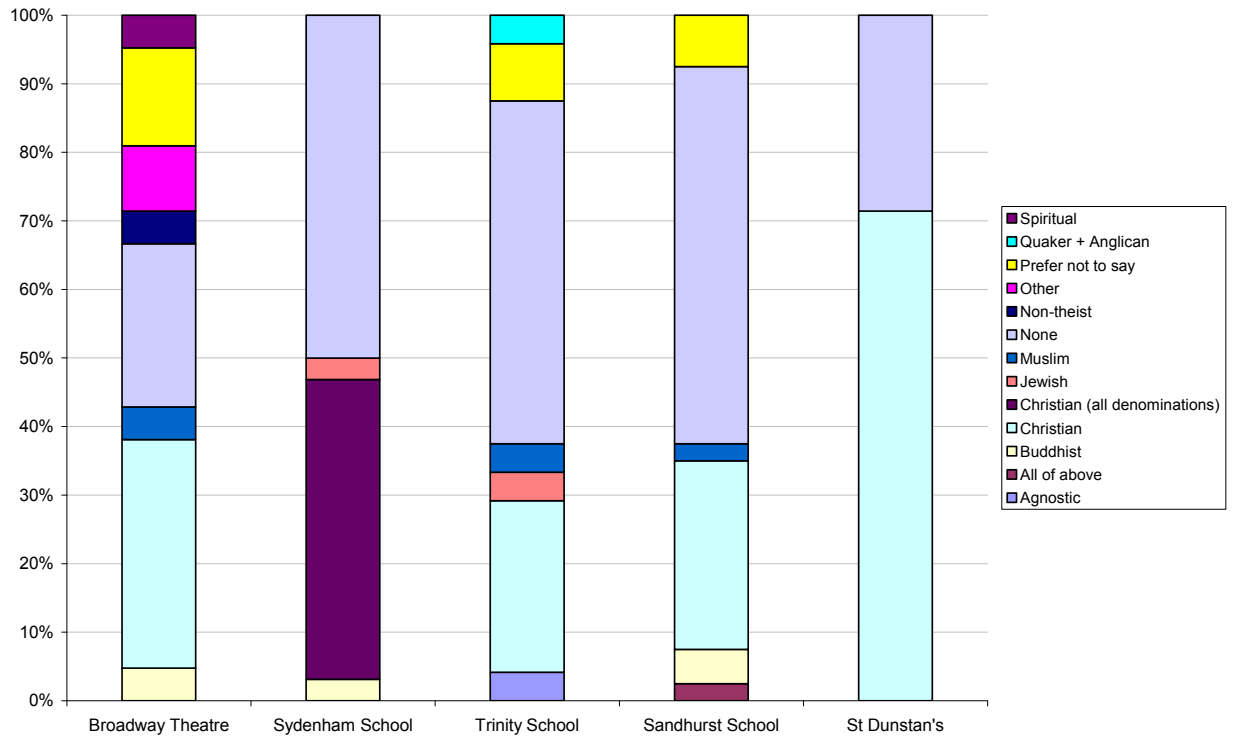
Breakdown of attendees by ethnicity



Breakdown of attendees by gender



Breakdown of attendees by belief



Focus groups and stakeholder meeting

44 people attended the 4 focus groups
21 people attended the stakeholder meeting

Monday 2 November	Young Mayor's Advisors	25
Thursday 5 November	Positive Ageing Council	12
Wednesday 11 November	School teachers and librarians	3
Thursday 12 November	Lewisham Disability Coalition	4
Monday 16 November	Manor House Library stakeholders	21

Monday 2 November Young Mayor's Advisors

The Young Mayor and young advisers have a direct involvement in the process of determining council grant allocation to youth service initiatives, experiencing some of the real complexities of political decision-making and public service delivery, looking at key decision-making reports and engaging with service managers, policy-makers and elected members to both hear and comment on plans and strategies for the delivery of services.

Young advisers come from a wide range of young people's involvement initiatives including youth and community projects, specialist groups, neighbourhood forums, volunteering initiatives and school or college councils, as well as those from Lewisham's Young Citizens' Panel.

Concerns raised included

- How could £1 million be saved by outsourcing
- How could £1 million be saved by extending the community library model, what will be the impact on staff
- Could the savings be achieved in any other way – crowd funding, service charges, income generation
- Has becoming a mutual organisation been considered
- How the proposed changes could impact on young people – lack of study space, reduced hours to access libraries
- Need to raise profile of libraries to encourage use
- Need to develop libraries so they are more relevant and attractive to young people

Thursday 5 November Positive Ageing Council

The Positive Ageing Council was set up in 2011 to help give older people a voice, share views and ideas, meet new people and join in with free social activities. The group is open to anyone aged 60 years or over who lives, works, learns or volunteers in the borough. They meet as an open forum four times a year to discuss issues that have a real effect on the lives of older people.

Concerns raised included

- Concern re the closure of local community facilities for older people generally, including community centres and the increased pressure on remaining services
- Long term viability of the proposed option and the availability of volunteers to support
- Long term viability of the proposed option and implications if a partner organisation was unable to continue. Would this mean library closures
- Loss of access to trained / qualified staff
- Availability of library service at Catford

Wednesday 11 November School teachers and librarians

A range of teachers and school librarians at Lewisham primary and secondary schools were approached to attend

Concerns raised included

- Long term viability – if Council funding was restored would the libraries be brought back under direct Council management
- Concerned over the erosion of services - Is this a 'race to the bottom'
- Need for an impact assessment on the existing community libraries
- Need to raise profile of the Community Engagement Team so that schools can access their support more easily
- How can the schools work with the community libraries to support childrens' reading
- Concerns re safeguarding and responsibility of DBS checks, especially if partners are using volunteers
- Impact of the community model on book stock in libraries and need to maintain quality
- Loss of access to trained / qualified staff
- Need for libraries to remain a safe place, providing consistency, knowledge and quality of service

Thursday 12 November Lewisham Disability Coalition

Lewisham Disability Coalition (LDC) works to promote equality for disabled people and to provide services that support Independent Living. It provides information, support and advice to people and carers living with a long-term health problem or disability, The LDC has a drop in service once weekly where residents needing advice can go for 1:1 advice and practical help with issues relating to disability.

Concerns raised included

- Access to the Home Library Service
- Need to find a non-profit partner rather than commercial
- Loss of access to trained / qualified staff
- Need to encourage more people to use libraries
- Impact on children and young people of reduction in library services

Monday 16 November Manor House Library stakeholders

Attendees included representatives from a number of local organisations

Lee Manor Society
Users & Friends of Manor House Library
Lee Green Assembly
Website
Lee Forum
Good Shepherd and St Peters Churches

Concerns raised included

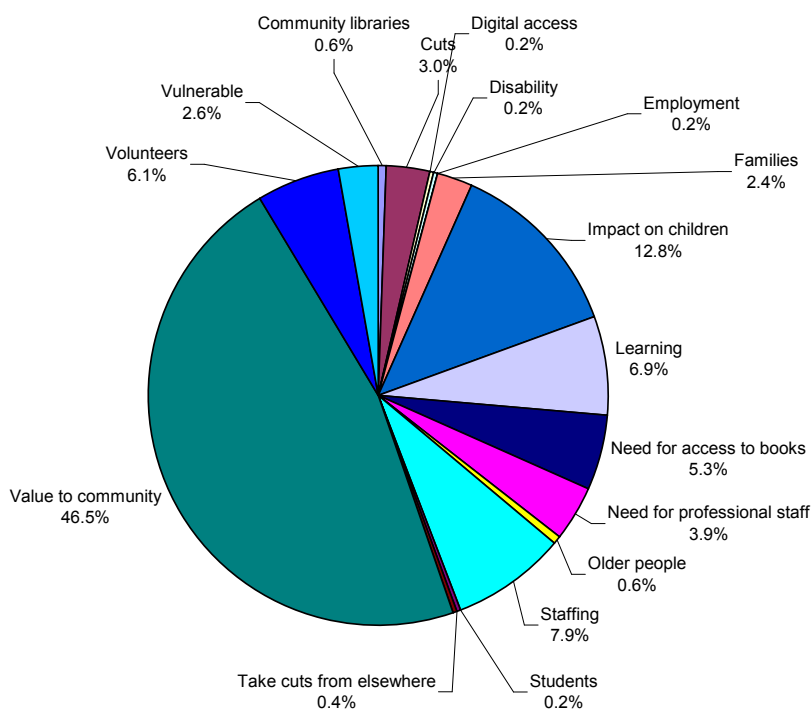
- Manor House is a significant public asset – Grade II* listed building and an integral part of the gardens and the cultural heritage of the area. Large investment has been made by the Council in restoring the building
- Long term viability of the proposed option – financial and social
- Financial implications - maintenance costs and responsibility, income generation
- How the Library Service would be delivered in the proposed option and the relationship between any partner and the Council
- Lack of access to trained / qualified staff as opposed to volunteers
- How the Library Service would support library services in Manor House
- How a potential partner/manager of the building would be selected

Social media

The 'Save Lewisham Libraries' campaign ran an online petition where people were encourage to state the reason they had signed the petition. The petition was submitted as part of the consultation and had 1,310 signatories with 363 had left a comment.

These were categorised as follows –

Reason for signing petition	No of responses
Value to community	229
Impact on children	63
Staffing	39
Learning	34
Volunteers	30
Need for access to books	26
Need for professional staff	19
Cuts wrong	15
Vulnerable	13
Families	12
Older people	3
Community libraries poor alternative	3
Take cuts from elsewhere	2
Students	1
Employment	1
Disability	1
Digital access	1



Comments from the Save Lewisham Libraries petition

The SE23 Forum ran an online discussion thread on Forest Hill Library which attracted 100 comments during the consultation period. The majority of these opposed the preferred option and the extension of the community library model to Forest Hill Library. There was also concern at the distance from Forest Hill to the new proposed hub libraries at Deptford Lounge, Lewisham and Downham Health & Leisure Centre and the potential impact of any changes on children and families.

Appendices

Consultation survey

Written responses were received from -

Forest Hill Society
Forest Hill Traders Association
Lee Manor Society
Defend Torridon road Library

Petitions were received from –

‘Please support our local libraries to stay open’
‘Save Lewisham Libraries’

Letters were received from –

Judith Corbyn
Michael Muldoon

Emails were received from –

Emma Johnson
Georgia Dobbs
G. Englefield
Stephen Thomas
Jeannine Dowling-Jones
Simon Jennings
Sue Hyam
Mrs F I Al-Ghraifi
Pauline Wright

Proposed changes to Library and Information Service

Consultation survey

This is a transcript of the consultation questionnaire

About this consultation

We are proposing changes to the way that the Council provides library services and we want your views.

We welcome the views of all Lewisham residents, whether you are a current user of library services or not. We are also interested in hearing from organisations that may be affected by our proposed changes.

This consultation will close at midnight on **Sunday 15 November 2015**.

How to respond

In addition to this survey, you are also welcome to attend one of the following consultation meetings, all of which start at **7.30pm**:

7 October – Broadway Theatre, Catford, SE6 4RU

12 October – Trinity School, Taunton Rd, Lee, SE12 8PD

19 October – Sydenham School, Dartmouth Rd, SE26 4RD

22 October – Sandhurst Junior School, Minard Rd, SE6 1NW

4 November – St Dunstan's Jubilee Hall, Canadian Ave, SE6 4SW

Printed copies of this consultation are available upon request. Please email library.consultation@lewisham.gov.uk.

After the consultation

Once the consultation has closed all responses will be considered and a summary of responses will be included in a report to the meeting of Lewisham's Mayor and Cabinet on 9 December 2015. This report will seek a decision on the future plan for library services and approval to proceed with implementation.

Addition information

Additional information concerning the Library and Information Service, including further detail on budget saving proposals can be reviewed at: www.lewisham.gov.uk/libraryconsultation.

Background

Lewisham Council believes that the public library service and library buildings provide easy access to information, learning and culture. They help bring communities together and are an important interface between residents and the Council.

The Lewisham Library and Information Service is one of the most successful library services in London. It has often outperformed national trends, attracting increasing numbers of users and extending both

opening hours and geographical reach. The service has also led the way implementing new ways to work with local communities.

The service currently operates through seven buildings that the Council owns and manages (Catford, Deptford, Downham, Forest Hill, Lewisham, Manor House and Torrison Road) and six buildings that are owned and/or managed by community and voluntary organisations (Blackheath, Crofton Park, Grove Park, New Cross, Sydenham, and Pepys).

In the buildings run by others, the service is run on a self-service infrastructure supported by an outreach team. The Lewisham Model is different from other “community library” solutions in that the Council owns and manages the stock and the systems that allow residents to access the library service. The library service that is delivered in partnership with the community libraries is therefore fully integrated with the rest of the service.

The service also includes the Home Library Service that supports residents who cannot visit a library building, the Archives and the Local History Service.

Beyond traditional services such as the lending of books, reading promotions, information services, the Library & Information Service provides room hire, access to computers (PC and Apple), Wi-Fi, a vast collection of digital content (newspapers, magazines, reference material), and support to eAdmissions, parking permits and registrar services.

Rationale for changing the library service

The Lewisham Mayor’s Commission on Libraries and Adult Learning, published in 2009, defined the library service as the one that offers “unbiased access to information and works of the creative imagination” and relies on open, trusted, public spaces available to citizens.

Lewisham’s approach to the delivery of Library and Information Services reflects these principles, and the changes to the service implemented in 2011 with the introduction of community libraries were shaped by them.

In considering further change we are taking account of three specific needs:

- the expectation of 24/7 online service provision
- the need to sustain quality and reach, while serving a growing and changing population
- the continued pressure on the Council to reduce expenditure.

Online service provision

The Council is increasingly moving services online to meet the expectations and demands of our residents and service users.

However we continue to recognise the value of face-to-face interaction and the need to provide for those who – for whatever reason – seek support to access, or interpret, online resources. Library staff are particularly skilled in providing this support. Since the late 1990s public libraries have offered free access to computers, training, and support for information seekers, learners, and more. Lewisham libraries offer PCs, Apple Macs, Wi-Fi, and online collections of reference materials, eBooks, eAudio books, substantial collections of online magazines and newspapers and access to research papers.

In developing proposals for the future delivery of the service it is important to maintain the service's ability to expand the digital presence and equip staff with even better skills to support the move to digital in years to come.

Sustaining quality and reach for a growing population

Lewisham's resident population is one of the fastest growing in the capital. In response, the Library and Information Service has increased the number of venues where library services can be accessed from, the investment in digital resources and introduced a new Community Engagement Team. A new and additional library presence is planned for the PLACE/Ladywell development on the site of the former Ladywell leisure centre. It is important to build on this success.

Budget pressures

From 2010 to 2015 Lewisham Council made savings of over £120 million. The Council needs to identify a further £45million savings over the next two years. For this reason the Council has been undertaking a fundamental review of all its budgets, including the Library and Information Service.

The library service has been asked to contribute savings of £1 million over the next two financial years.

Possible options

In considering how to deliver the Library and Information Service in the future, the Council has looked at the following three options:

Option 1: Commission a third party to deliver the service on a contract basis.

Some local authorities have outsourced the provision of library services to third party organisations. In this case, the service is regulated by a contract that sets out the specifications of the service against which the contractor delivers.

Pros: A tried and tested option that other councils have adopted. A new external provider could bring new skills and capacity to the service.

Cons: This approach alone is unlikely to deliver the scale of savings required as staff costs would be transferred to the new provider under TUPE legislation. The ability for the service to operate as a main interface between the Council and residents may be compromised.

This option is not favoured.

Option 2: Reduce opening hours and/or close libraries.

This option relies on the reduction of services to match the resources available while keeping it in house. Lewisham has managed to consistently increase opening hours in spite of budget reductions in

the past. This option departs substantially from the strategy adopted so far by the Council and relies on reduced costs and much reduced services, which may involve the closure of most buildings.

Pros: Could deliver the required level of saving.

Cons: This option is not consistent with the principles of the 2009 Mayoral Commission and would not sustain service reach or enhance its capacity to support online services.

This option is not favoured.

Option 3: Extend the Lewisham community library model.

Establish three hub libraries at Deptford Lounge, Lewisham and Downham Health and Leisure Centre. These three libraries are the most popular with very large numbers of visitors every month. A reorganisation of the staff and new roles would deliver increased opening hours, allowing the three hubs to be open 85 hours per week each, taking Lewisham and Downham to the level of Deptford Lounge.

Transform Forest Hill, Torridon Road and Manor House into community libraries. These would become self-service libraries and would operate in a very similar way to the current community libraries. There would be a full staff reorganisation of the service and library staff would be withdrawn from these buildings prior to the move to the community library model.

Potential partner organisations will be asked to express an interest in occupying Forest Hill, Manor House and Torridon Road library buildings on the basis that they work with the service to support the continued provision of library services as well as providing other community benefits.

In Catford, create self-service library provision in a redesigned ground floor space in Laurence House integrated with other council services. The self-service provision would be supported by the other Council staff working on the ground floor. This change would only take place as part of a wider review of the use of the ground floor in Laurence House. This review is expected at some point as part of the Council's customer service transformation programme. In the meantime the library space would remain unchanged.

Pros: This approach would deliver the required £1m savings through a reduction of £800,000 in the staff salaries budget, £150,000 through contract efficiencies in the service, and £50,000 efficiencies from the Deptford Lounge premises budget.

This approach safeguards the fundamental principles that the Mayoral Commission identified for the library service while continuing to deliver cost effective, quality library services to Lewisham residents and supporting digital service delivery across the Council.

Cons: The proposal is reliant on identifying suitable partner organisations for three buildings. The service offer at the four self-service libraries will change, although this may be mitigated by new services provided by the partner organisations.

Preferred option: On balance we believe that extending the Lewisham community library model is the best way to continue to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service within reducing resources.

Consultation questions

We welcome comments on this consultation and we are particularly keen to hear your views on the following:

Which of the following best describes you?

(please select all that apply)

- I live in the borough of Lewisham
- I work in the borough of Lewisham
- I study in the borough of Lewisham
- None of the above

How often do you use any of the public libraries in Lewisham?

(please select one answer)

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Less often than monthly
- Never

Which one of Lewisham's public libraries do you use the most often?

(please select one answer)

- Blackheath
- Catford
- Crofton Park
- Deptford Lounge
- Downham
- Forest Hill
- Grove Park
- Lewisham
- Manor House
- New Cross
- Sydenham
- Torridon Road
- I do not use the libraries in Lewisham

To what extent do you agree or disagree that changes to the Council's public library service are necessary?

(please select one answer)

- Strongly agree
- Agree

- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please read the '**Possible Options**' page of this survey before answering the following question.

Which of the following is your preferred option for changes to the library service?

(please select one answer)

- Outsourcing the library service to a third party organisation
- Reducing opening hours and closing libraries
- Creating three fully staffed hub libraries with longer opening hours and extending the community library model to three more buildings
- Other....please specify below

Please specify your 'other' preferred option.

Please read the '**Possible Options**' page of this survey before answering the following question.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Council's preferred option to create three fully staffed hub libraries with longer opening hours while extending the community model to three more buildings?

(please select one answer)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Our preferred proposal is based on creating three fully staffed hub libraries with longer opening hours and on extending the community library model to three more buildings.

What impact do you think that this proposal would have on you personally?

(please select one answer)

- Positive impact
- Negative impact
- No personal impact
- Don't know

Please describe briefly how you think you would be impacted by this proposal?

Do you have any other comments on the proposed changes to the library service that you would like to share with us?

If you are responding to this consultation on behalf of a voluntary or community group, then please provide the name of the organisation below:

About you

The following questions are for the specified purpose of the monitoring of our services, to ensure that Lewisham Council is being fair and inclusive. We need to know who our customers are to check that everyone in the borough is accessing the services they are entitled to, and that nobody is discriminated against unlawfully. All questions on the form are voluntary and you do not have to answer them. Any information that you do choose to provide on this form will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Age

Please select your age group

(please select one answer)

- Under 18 years
- 18-24
- 25-29
- 30-34
- 35-39
- 40-44
- 45-49
- 50-54
- 55-59
- 60-64
- 65+
- I'd rather not say

Ethnicity

What is your ethnic group?

(please select one answer)

White

- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other White background

Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups

- White and Asian

- White and Black African
- White and Black Caribbean
- Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background

Asian/Asian British

- Chinese Bangladeshi
- Pakistani
- Indian
- Any other Asian background

Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British

- African
- Caribbean
- Any other Black/ African/ Caribbean background

Any other ethnic group

- Arab
- Other ethnic group
- I'd rather not say

Any other White background (please specify)

Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background (please specify)

Any other Asian background (please specify)

Any other Black/ African/ Caribbean background (please specify)

Any other ethnic group (please specify)

Gender

Are you:

(please select one answer)

- Male
- Female
- I'd rather not say

Transgender

Is your gender identity different from the gender you were assigned at birth?

(please select one answer)

- Yes
- No
- I'd rather not say

Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010 a person is considered to have a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a sustained and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. This also includes people with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis (MS).

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

(please select one answer)

- Yes
- No
- I'd rather not say

Please state the type of impairment that applies to you

People may experience more than one type of impairment, in which case you may indicate more than one. If none of the categories apply, please mark 'Other' and specify the type of impairment.

Please state the type of impairment that applies to you.

(please select all that apply)

- Physical impairment, such as difficulty using your arms or mobility issues which means using a wheelchair or crutches
- Sensory impairment, such as being blind/ having a serious visual impairment or being deaf/ having a serious hearing impairment
- Mental health condition, such as depression or schizophrenia
- Learning disability/difficulty, such as Down's Syndrome or dyslexia or cognitive impairment, such as autistic spectrum disorder
- Long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy
- Other

Any other disability (please specify)

Religion and belief

(please select one answer)

- None
- Christian (all denominations)
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim

- Sikh
- Any other religion/ belief
- I'd rather not say

Any other religion (please specify)

Sexual Orientation

How would you define your sexual orientation?

(please select one answer)

- Straight/ heterosexual
- Gay/ lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other
- I'd rather not say

Any other sexual orientation (please specify)

Pregnancy & Maternity

Are you pregnant or on maternity leave?

(please select one answer)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Would you like to receive the Lewisham Life e-newsletter for local events and things to do, news, discounts and other consultations?

(please select all that apply)

- Yes please
- No thanks

If yes please provide your email address

Frequently asked questions

Is Lewisham closing four libraries?

No. The preferred approach on which we are consulting is based on the four library buildings continuing to provide library services, but on the basis of the existing community libraries.

What will happen to my library?

Deptford Lounge: Very little will change at the Lounge, which is still the most successful library in Lewisham.

Lewisham: Opening hours will increase to match Deptford Lounge. The proposal will also require some improvements to the building, including the lift and other minor adjustments.

Downham: Opening hours will increase to match Deptford Lounge.

Catford: The library space will operate on a self-service basis, while other council services are integrated across the whole ground floor of Laurence House.

Forest Hill, Manor House, and Torridon Road: We will seek partners willing to manage the space while supporting the provision of library services in the building. We would expect the opening hours to remain unchanged and the floor space of the library may reduce where other activities are being developed by the partner organisation. The partners are likely to be different to reflect the different potential uses of the three sites.

Blackheath, Crofton Park, Grove Park, Sydenham, and New Cross: The existing community libraries will continue to operate as at present.

How do community libraries work in Lewisham?

The community library is a service delivered in partnership with others in buildings that used to be wholly managed by the council or in buildings owned outright by the partner organisation.

The Council is responsible for buying the books, maintaining the stock, providing self-service terminals, for organising reading events, and for supporting the partner organisation with training.

Residents can still join the library service, reserve a book, borrow and return books, ask for information, and more.

What will happen to library staff?

There will be a full reorganisation of the service with the introduction of new, enhanced front line roles. This will see a reduction to the number of library staff. The reorganisation will be based on all remaining staff being moved to the hub libraries before the proposed extension of the community library model to the four buildings.

What options are there to outsource the library service?

These depend very much on what you are trying to achieve through outsourcing. What follows is not an exhaustive list, but may offer a few examples of what is possible:

1. If you want to secure significant staff engagement in the ownership, leadership, and design of the library service an employee owned social enterprise may be the way forward.
2. If you want to secure direct library user engagement in the leadership, design, and delivery of the service a mutual or co-operative model may be appropriate.
3. If you want commercial financial discipline and a business focus, a local authority trading company may be appropriate. (as in Essex and Slough)
4. If you want to manage and develop libraries as community assets over the long-term a charitable trust may be appropriate (Wigan, Salford, Luton, Greenwich, although these are leisure trusts that also run libraries).
5. If you want to transfer risk and decision-making to the private sector, (joint) procurement of an independent provider may be appropriate (as Wandsworth and Croydon and Bexley and Bromley have done).
6. If you want to secure economies of scale in management and service delivery cross-borough collaboration may be appropriate.

It would be possible to consider any of the above at a future date for the newly reconfigured service.

Key dates

1 October 2015 - Consultation opens.

15 November 2015 - Consultation closes.

30 November 2015 - Outcome of consultation considered by Safer Stronger Select Committee.

9 December 2015 - Outcome of consultation reported to Mayor and Cabinet and decision sought on future approach for the service.

January 2016 - Implementation of new approach commences, including staff consultation.

August 2016 - New approach fully implemented.

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

If you require any further information then please contact library.consultation@lewisham.gov.uk.