APPENDIX 2

Essex Future Library Services Strategy - Consultation Response Report

Comments received on Essex Future Library Services Strategy 2019-2024 and Essex County Council's response

Future Library Services Cabinet report: Appendix 2 Consultation Response Report.

1.   Introduction

This report is produced as an appendix to the Cabinet report on the Future Library Services Strategy 2019-2024 (Forward Plan number FP/461/06/19). It is intended to inform decision-makers and others about the range of comments and suggestions received during the public consultation on the draft future library services strategy 2019-2024 (draft strategy). It lists comments received through the consultation survey and other correspondence sent to the Council that are not included in the consultation analysis report, *Essex Future Library Services Consultation 2019*.

1.1   How to read this report

This report should be read in conjunction with the analysis report mentioned above. That report lists the most common comments and suggestions received. It groups comments on the evaluation criteria (survey question 9) and additional comments (survey question 19) into themes.

Section two of this report identifies some overall themes that have emerged from those comments.

Section 3 of this report lists comments and suggestions that fall outside the themes identified in the analysis report. It also groups the suggestions made in response to question 19 into lists, to show things the Council is already doing, ideas that are in the strategy, ideas that may be considered later and ideas that are not appropriate due to law or Council policy.

Sections 4 to 7 contain comments and suggestions from key stakeholder groups: MPs, borough, city and district councils within Essex, town and parish councils within Essex and interested community groups and organisations. Where one of these respondents commented about a specific library or place this is listed in section 9 or 10.

Sections 9 and 10 provide a summary of common comments for each library identified in tier 3 or 4 in the draft strategy, consistent with the themes identified and responded to in sections 2 and 3. Where respondents made comments or suggestions that did not fall into those themes, these are listed in sections 9 and 10.

If you made a particular comment and do not see it spelt out, it will have been captured under one of the themes.

1.2   The Council's Response

The Council has changed the strategy significantly in response to the consultation responses. It is now proposed that all libraries will stay open, and that we will encourage the community to take over running of some libraries as we believe that this is the best way to reinvigorate libraries – Springfield has seen an increase, or at least no drop, in usage and that is largely run by volunteers.

The experience of volunteering to support libraries is positive: the service has around 700 regular volunteers and several hundred more volunteers come forward to support the Summer Reading Challenge each year. The county currently has seven volunteer-run community libraries and 80 expressions of interest in running community libraries were received from local groups in response to the consultation. Nearly 3,000 survey respondents said they were interested in finding out about volunteering roles. Together, these responses demonstrate public engagement in volunteering and support for library services. Some people responded to the consultation to suggest that increased use of well-trained volunteers would be positive for libraries as set out below.

That has to be viewed in the context that some people responded to the consultation to say that they wanted libraries staffed by paid staff as they considered that volunteers would not be sustainable or offer a high-quality service and may lead to libraries not being opened. Our view is that volunteers can provide a sustainable high-quality service and they are already doing so. The community can benefit significantly from having library services which they design to suit their needs and the consultation response shows that there is a lot of interest from the community in volunteering. We recognise that it is important that volunteers do need to be trained in order to provide high quality library services and we ensure that this is the case. Even with paid staff libraries sometimes have to close if an employee is taken ill an volunteers can provide a service which is at least as resilient.

2.   Overall themes

2.1   The survey received 21,961 responses. Nearly half (48%) of the 21,543 individual and family respondents and around a third of the 328 organisations that responded provided additional comments. (90 respondents did not identify as any of the three categories.) Many of those made multiple comments.

2.2   Two survey questions invited comments. Question 9 asked "Are there any other criteria you think we should use to assess need [for library services]?" Question 19 asked "Would you like to add anything else about the Council's proposals that has not been covered above? Please give us any other ideas you may have for improving the service or reducing the cost of the service."

2.3   The survey analysis grouped the responses to each question into themes and identified the volume of responses on those themes. A similar approach was used to analyse comments in letters and emails, using the same themes as question 19 where applicable and creating additional themes for comments not already covered.

2.4 In addition to the survey, the Council received 1,094 emails and letters directly. Many of these were asking for more information, to enable the enquirer to respond to the consultation. Those including comments or suggestions, 844, were included in analysis (741 by Enventure, 103 by the Council's consultation team after identifying them during a quality audit to ensure no comments had been missed). The same themes as identified for Q19 were applied to the analysis of emails and letters as far as possible. Some comments fell outside those themes and were grouped under a new theme or listed separately.

2.5 Some overarching themes have been identified from all the responses and these are set out in the paragraphs below. These group together the detailed themes used by Enventure Research in their analysis. Detailed themes and number of responses for each are set out in the analysis report, appendix 1.

2.6 Many of the comments referred to the value of libraries in promoting learning and literacy, for both children and adults. Respondents provided the Council with many examples of the value of their library or libraries to their community and to their own or their family's education, literacy and wellbeing. The Council runs several key services in this area, which it is proposed will continue through the life of the strategy.

- Free Bookstart packs will continue to be provided to all children at age 0-6 months and age 3-4 years, including packs for children with disabilities or special educational needs. Bookstart supports home learning, early speech, language and communication skills.

- Baby and toddler Rhymetimes, storytelling and other activities for children and young people will continue, both in Council-run libraries and at outreach sessions in community-run libraries, schools, village halls or other community venues depending on need.

- The annual Summer Reading Challenge, which thousands of children take part in, will also continue.

- Other programmes to support children's and adults' learning and literacy include reading recommendations and book groups.

- The Council will continue to invest in new book stock and will review its reservations and stock rotation policies.

- Schools will still be able to arrange visits to the comprehensive library service which the Council will continue to provide, and outreach will bring library activities into schools and other education settings.

- Library services will continue to liaise with other Council functions such as Education and Children and Families to target library activities and outreach according to need.

2.7 The needs assessment process and evaluation criteria

Survey respondents were given a summary of the proposed process for assessing the need for each of the current libraries and of the criteria to be used. A draft needs assessment had been done and libraries had been placed into four tiers, based on the results.

Survey question 9 asked: **"Are there any other criteria you think we should use to assess need?"**

In the survey, 8,554 individuals and 172 organisations responded to this question. Together they made 20,387 comments about the draft needs assessment. 297 letters and emails also commented on the draft needs assessment, about the methodology or suggesting additional evidence or factors that they felt should be considered. In some cases, respondents argued for a recategorization of one or more library. The draft needs assessment evaluated need for each library against five criteria:

- Location: proximity to other libraries

- Usage: the number of active users (people who had used their library card in that library in the previous 12 months)

- Population: the number of libraries per head of population in each district, based on current figures not projected growth.

- Deprivation: deprivation levels in the area immediately around the library's postcode (known as the 'lower layer super output area' (LSOA) as identified in the national Index of Multiple Deprivation)

- Social isolation: the prevalence of new parents and of residents over 65 years old in the district.

These are explained in the draft [needs assessment.](#)

The most common suggestions for other criteria were:

- Footfall/usage by local community groups/other activities and services based in libraries as a central community hub as well as library card use

- Distance to/length of journey to nearest alternate library and/or availability/reliability of public transport

- Impact on geographically isolated communities

- Projected population growth/planned housing developments.

There were also disagreements with the way the existing criteria had been measured. Common comments included:

- Population should be measured at a lower level, eg town, village, ward or library catchment area

- Population should consider projected population growth in the library area

- Adopt lower or higher weightings for the deprivation and social isolation criteria, relative to the others
- Deprivation should consider wider catchment area of the library, not just the Lower-Level Super Output Area in which it was situated.

2.8 Opposition to closures because of the value of libraries to the community

Survey question 19 asked: **"Would you like to add anything else about the Council's proposals that has not been covered above?"**

In the survey, 10,397 individuals and 184 organisations responded to this question. Together they made 7,727 comments citing the value of the library service to the community, as perceived by them or set forth in research. In letters and emails, 1,377 comments were about the community value of library service provision. For many respondents, the value was embodied in their local library and imperilled by the proposed programme of closures.

Common views expressed included:

- Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub
- Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes
- Closing libraries will have an impact on older/retired users, disabled users/those with reduced mobility and people using online services to search for jobs and claim benefits.

2.9 Financial considerations

A range of comments related to the costs of running libraries, the relative benefits they provide and the potential savings that could or could not be made through the strategy.

Question 19 of the survey asked: **"Would you like to add anything else about the Council's proposals that has not been covered above? Please give us any other ideas you may have for improving the service or reducing the cost of the service."**

Altogether 1,713 individuals and 48 organisations completing the survey and 83 letters and emails provided suggestions for reducing cost; 1,308 individuals and 12 organisations completing the survey and 63 letters and emails, provided suggestions for improving the service; 1,046 individuals and eight organisations completing the survey, and 70 letters and emails, provided suggestions for generating income.

Some said the potential impact of closing libraries outweighed the potential savings benefits, and that taxpayers should receive the service they have paid for. Others were in favour of libraries generating income, using existing

funding from developments, such as Section 106 funding or lobbying the Government for more money.

3.   Detailed themes

3.1 Question 9: Comments on evaluation criteria

The analysis report grouped comments on the evaluation criteria into 48 themes. These are listed, together with the number of respondents making these comments, in the analysis report (p59 for individuals and families, p115 for organisations). Additional comments that are not captured under the analysis themes are listed below. In some cases, several comments have been grouped together.

Suggested evaluation criteria
I do not think that population should be considered.
Qualitative not quantitative measures should be used.
Some criteria cannot be measured, eg the pleasure it gives children to go to the library or take part in the Summer Read. The pleasure and happiness that libraries bring to people...it can't be measured crudely.
Tourism. Locally our museum is in Manningtree Library and we get a lot of tourists come through. Some use the internet in the library and visit the museum. Amount of summer visitors requiring help during summer time period ie Tourism help - in places such as Frinton, Brightlingsea, Manningtree and West Mersea.
How many accessible and affordable bookstores are in the area (the less there are, the stronger need for a library). Availability and success of bookshops in the area (if people can afford and are buying books, they won't go to the library - like me)
Areas that have the least strong postal service.
Some libraries, like Debden are poorly visited, a library in the Broadway would be busier and therefore more needed.
The number of people who will just no longer visit a library if you close the one nearest to them.
The quality of the building in which the library is housed. The significance of the library building itself, ie is it an important historic library building - is it listed, was the building constructed as a library - have important events happened at that building. If it is - it has a heritage value within the community for its use within that particular building. Some libraries are beautiful and important buildings in themselves and if made better - then great.
In my view you have covered the main criteria.

Suggested evaluation criteria
How about a person pays over £1000 council tax a year and should get his rubbish taken away once a week and be able to walk in to a library where someone has bought some books in the last decade as a criteria?

3.2 Question 19: Would you like to add anything else about the Council's proposals that has not been covered above?

This question included a request for ideas for improving the service or reducing the cost of the service.

The analysis report grouped these comments into 21 themes, which are shown, together with the number of people making each comment, on p102 of that report (for individuals and families) and p136 (for organisations).

Additional comments that did not fall under those themes are listed below.

Theme and comment
Centralisation
Buy more books and make bigger libraries.
A central library is an excellent idea which is funded well rather than six or seven poorly funded libraries in one town. Also, perhaps adding a mobile library to the system for those less mobile than others.
Council response: Mobile libraries currently serve 217 stops and the service will be regularly reviewed in response to need.
Decentralisation
Your criteria sound to me like you are planning to close smaller libraries and just keep the large ones in larger towns and cities. Could you not utilise some Town Halls to incorporate a library because in most cases our Town Halls are much too large. You have done this for our Police Department in Maldon, so why not for our Library - after all it is only one room that is required.
Look to move local, smaller libraries rather than smaller number of libraries.
Council response: Essex County Council was not involved in the relocation of Maldon police station. This was agreed between Essex Police the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex and Maldon District Council.
Buildings
The value of Colchester Library is of historical significance. The weakening of our local history is not acceptable. Libraries should offer a wide range of quality material, not just tanker to popular trends, which inevitably dampen poor service.
[Consider] suitability of the proposed new building to provide similar or same services.

Theme and comment
Promotion
If there is a children's centre in the village / town they should be encouraged to get all children signed and using the library. Limited access to shops selling books within walking distance.
Funding
It seems pointless and a waste of taxpayers' money to keep open small libraries that nobody uses.
I do not think there is a need for any libraries and the money would be better spent on the police or other services. There is already a mobile library service, which I agree is still needed, whether council or voluntary run, and maybe this service should be expanded.
Compare salaries of Essex County Council's executives and managers in 2001 vs 2018, then compare spending on libraries across Essex in 2001 vs 2018 - let us know which has grown by the most.
So basically - shut more services and pay the same amount of council tax? Trust you will reduce our council tax bill accordingly, or perhaps make some council staff redundant to accommodate.
Cut council staff wages instead of libraries!
How many regular users have stopped using the library due to cuts in the service?
Re-direct the money ECC wastes on not means testing both the free bus passes and winter fuel allowance. Those in genuine need already on benefits who have been means tested would qualify, this is not discrimination, it is discrimination for ECC to put u *(Comment incomplete)*
Council response: The Council is unable to redirect funding as suggested. Budgets for free bus passes and winter fuel allowance cannot be used for library services.)
Range of books
The trend is that more books are being sold therefore there is a greater interest in reading. This point should be considered.
Prioritise having the books that people are more likely to read (dystopians, horror and fantasy are popular in the young adult range).
If libraries were able to order books relevant to customer needs, then I believe foot flow would increase. For instance, just over 12 months ago I attempted to obtain a book on timber frame buildings from Brentwood Library. Not one was available to either collect immediately or order from another library. With many timber framed buildings in Essex I do not believe this was a tall order and purely emphasises the need for improvement. This is not the first occasion where Brentwood Library has not been able to assist.

Theme and comment
Consider whether any deficiency in the current provision at any particular library might be the cause of its underuse, and address that, rather than place it on an endangered list. I would like to see more possibilities for fiction recommendations. Library members / readers may even like to donate a copy of their own favourite book (to save costs). (**Council response**: Libraries regularly recommend both fiction and non-fiction through book displays using both inhouse and publisher-produced promotional materials, in addition to monthly reading ideas promoted on the Council's social media channels, newsletters and the Reading Ideas page of the libraries catalogue.) I would like to see regular interchange of books from one library branch to others, so that I can read all the books by my favourite authors. Increase stock of music books of popular songs.
Approval of strategy
I agree with it all. If this is NOT the end, heralding the demise of hub libraries, the plan appears to be reasonable, in these days of austerity.
Access to service
We use the mobile library service and because of living in a rural area with no public transportation, we find this system vital for us to borrow books. Using the online service to order these is very efficient and convenient. Thinking and acting more for disabled people in the community. I often borrow Ordnance Survey maps when I am going on holiday to take with me. I'm not sure if I would be able to access them digitally. Provide an online remote facility to search for books held by the county library service, i.e. so that you can go to a website and search for specific books or topics held by Essex Libraries. Access should be made available to libraries online from people's homes. **Council response**: There is already online access to both the library catalogue and a range of online resources such as newspapers, magazines, e-books, encyclopaedias and other reference materials. These can be accessed remotely via PCs and mobile devices. The strategy proposes enhancing e-library services so that they are easier to use.
Charges
Consider late fees more ethically. By this I mean under 16s are not charged late fees. However, if they take out an adult book for example an A Level education book and keep it past the allowed time they will be charged late fees for it. This either needs to be stopped because under 16s are not supposed to pay late fees or at least inform the child that the policy does not apply to taking adults' books out on a child card. This shouldn't even be a possibility anyway as the library

Theme and comment
workers should not allow children to take out adult books anyway. (**Council response**: The library management system does not allow adult books to be borrowed using a children's card.)
Offering CD hire is also an important service for people to try new types of music. I do feel that £1.10 is a suitable rate, but feel that 7 days is little time to try the CD and then return it, especially as some libraries do not offer the night drop off box service (South Woodham Ferrers). I cannot understand why Chelmsford Library has so much empty space when it could be used to stock more books.
Basildon Library is just ripping off people.... they are most daylight robbery from taxpayers.... did you seen for children's.... they have to pay 20 pence per day for late submission of books... that's ridiculous... you have to entertain children's for reading books... no one happy with Basildon council library they just ripping off peoples... I never seen this kind of horrible charges like criminal type of fines of young generations and old age people who forgotten to return library books.... if you use any library service they charge like they providing 5 star hotel facility... sooner no one going to use Basildon Library ... that's main reason Basildon local people and students prefer to use another county's library and avoiding even enter in Basildon council operated any library. (**Council response**: Basildon Library is run by Essex County Council, not Basildon Council. Items borrowed on children's cards are not liable for any overdue charges.)
Community library services
[Consider] whether provision of associated services would be affected by a change in the library estate. For example, some third-party lenders on interlibrary loan will only lend some books for use in a public library building.
What are the criteria for a voluntary run library in a village hall or other suitable building? Information to assist Parish Councillors and others to think about opting for this form of library.
Facilities
Access to toilets.
The ambience of the building is very important. Where this service is shared (post office, police) the place is so off putting that one tries to find ways of avoiding it or stop using it altogether.
Provide more of an isolated area for parents and toddlers as it does get rather noisy.
Education
I'm probably in a minority but local history writing has been an interest for 50 years and I wonder what will happen to all the little odd booklets and local village histories tucked in corners I so often consulted, there for years and nowhere else, good for research and not on the internet. Will they vanish in the sands of time in the changes? I remember a time when many sat in that quiet corner.

Theme and comment
Libraries are portals to all the world's knowledge. Only a tiny fraction of the world's information is available for free on the internet. But all of it is available through libraries.
Political
Close libraries in Conservative voting areas.
E-services
The e-book aspect for range and choice is very poor compared with the physical copies available in the library - if the reduction of libraries is to take place the e-book facilities would need to greatly improve.
Library should be an e-service. If you want to borrow a book, order it via email and pick up at a council facility and return the same way. Create a reference library, one per council. I suspect it would not be used as the majority of the population would use the WWW.
You should look at the data compiled by BorrowBox to see how many people have signed up to download from the library.
Outreach
Need to do some outreach - and focus on lived experiences and value.
Staff
Hadleigh Library is local, and the staff are friendly and helpful.
Interlibrary loans
Providing a speciality resource, maybe with other counties in east Anglia, so specialist subjects can be dedicated to certain libraries. All these resources should be accessible online, but it would mean that across the country specialist librarians could be involved in resourcing and maintaining material in their subject area.
Opening hours
Review which libraries have already been cut back in the past few years (eg Danbury has already had its hours cut back) - so this is a double whammy.
Parking
[Consider] if the space taken up by the library would be better used to extend the car park provision.
Security
Ask security to remove all noisy and badly-behaved people immediately.
Stop tramps sleeping in the library.
Ensure homeless people, drug addicts, and individuals are not allowed to enter any library and those who are, should speak quietly and not disturb the atmosphere of the library.
Consultation process

Theme and comment
Your statement that Essex County Council cannot continue to support the 74 libraries it currently runs suggests that the whole consultation process is flawed. It is misleading to call this a consultation when the outcome is pre-decided.
Property
Likelihood of alternative use supporting the wider community or just being turned into residential buildings. More flats are not needed.
Volunteers
Consider using volunteers in the libraries.
Use volunteers (but adequately trained and vetted). Going in partnership is great – lots of churches are used as meeting places and could be approached.
Council response: Essex Libraries have around 700 regular volunteers and several hundred more in summer to support the Summer Reading Challenge.
Quiet space
A silent library (at times) for quiet research, reading and writing.
Promotion and publicity
Advertisement for youngsters and elderly in some way. Making people aware of their local library.
Council response: Marketing will continue as a major element of the implementation plan for the strategy, to promote library services to new and existing audiences.

3.3   Additional correspondence

The analysis report grouped comments via email or letter into 31 themes, many of which are substantially the same as those in 3.2 above. They are shown, together with the number of correspondents making each comment, on p141 of the analysis report.

Listed here are comments and suggestions submitted via email or letter that were not captured in the analysis report.

Theme	Comment
Evaluation criterion: Population	Using district level data does not present a true picture of local communities' needs; Population should be measured at a lower level, eg town, village, ward or library catchment area.
Evaluation criterion: Deprivation	Needs assessment should consider wider catchment area of the library, not just Lower-Level Super Output Area in which it was situated. Evaluating using LSOA has led to

Theme	Comment
	inconsistencies in scoring. Examples were given of deprivation around libraries, outside the LSOA.
Rural communities	The strategy is biased against rural communities.
Partnerships	Partnerships with parish councils and / or community groups should be encouraged to help with running costs and improve the offer.
Role of community archive	The library is a valuable source of local historical information, much of it not digitised, encouraging community identity.
Library closures	Closures aren't inevitable, as other councils facing similar pressures are opening new libraries.
Social justice	Libraries are an essential tool in the fight for social justice / equality.
Finance	Strategy is financially unsound because there have been no calculations of the costs of implementing the proposals.

3.4 Suggestions for reducing the cost of library services

The analysis report lists (on p103 for individuals and families and p137 for organisations) suggestions made for reducing the cost of services. The lists below group these into things the Council already does, suggestions that are already in the strategy, suggestions that could be looked at in future and suggestions that are not appropriate due to law or council policy. Additional suggestions identified by the project team have been included.

3.4.1 Suggestions for things the Council already does.

Analysis code	Comment	The Council response
R.1	Offer work placements / internships / apprenticeships	The Council already offers work experience placements for young people with special educational needs and disability to support their route into employment and develop skills and intends to do more of this in the county.
R.2	Reduce energy costs (eg turning down heating / turning off lights)	The Council already takes action to reduce its own energy use and emissions and encourage lower energy use across the county. See

Analysis code	Comment	The Council response
		https://www.essex.gov.uk/reducing-carbon-emissions
R.3	Seek ideas from librarians / successful library services elsewhere	There are leads in the service who are members of national professional bodies and regularly meet colleagues in the region and nationally to exchange ideas and keep up-to-date with service developments.
R.4	Seek ideas from the local community / community groups	The engagement and research in spring 2018 and the draft strategy consultation did this. The service will continue to engage with communities through the Strategy period.
R.5	Send email / text reminders rather than posting letters	The library service emails, texts or writes letters to members according to individual preferences and encourages people to sign-up to electronic communications.

3.4.2 Suggestions received for ideas that are already proposed in the strategy

Analysis code	Comment
R.6	Greater use of technology / self-service / unmanned libraries
R.7	Reduce number of libraries / combine libraries
R.8	Share premises / resources / staff with other libraries / services / councils
R.9	Stop throwing away / selling book stock / redistribute books from closed libraries
R.10	Use volunteers and community groups to run libraries / supplement paid staff

3.4.3 Other suggestions for reducing the cost of the service.

Analysis code	Comment
R.11	Accept second-hand equipment from other government departments
R.12	Adopt Open Source software
R.13	Close all but Tier 1 libraries / close all but town centre libraries
R.14	Close town centre libraries / focus on local libraries
R.15	Decrease use of / stop mobile library service
R.16	Encourage book donations / buy second-hand books
R.17	Encourage friends' groups to contribute to costs
R.18	Focus on physical books / reduce focus on other services
R.19	Follow up on unreturned books
R.20	Greater focus on online services / more e-books / buy fewer physical books
R.21	Greater investment in / focus on mobile libraries
R.22	Increase delivery times for reserved items
R.23	Limit ordering of books
R.24	Local collection points for books in the community
R.25	More focus on book reservations / have a central bank for books
R.26	Outsource library services / bring in private sector
R.27	Partner with universities / colleges
R.28	Receive endorsements from companies
R.29	Reduce opening times / number of days open
R.30	Reduce staff wages
R.31	Reduce the number of books offered
R.32	Reduce the number of events / activities held at libraries
R.33	Reduce the number of paid staff
R.34	Relocate to smaller premises / cheaper areas
R.35	Run libraries like businesses
R.36	Save money elsewhere / use reserves
R.37	Stop allowing phone / laptop charging
R.38	Stop buying foreign language books
R.39	Stop buying / reduce buying of hardback books
R.40	Stop offering CD/DVD rental
R.41	Stop providing computers / internet access
R.42	Stop purchasing newspapers

Analysis code	Comment
R.43	Use refillable ink cartridges

3.4.4 Suggestions that are not appropriate due to law or Council policy

Analysis code	Comment	The Council response
R.44	Charge a deposit to ensure returns of books	It would be unlawful to charge for borrowing books in Essex Libraries as the Council has a statutory duty to provide free loans.
R.45	Stop / reduce Bookstart scheme	This is a national scheme that makes a Bookstart pack available to every child at age 0-6 months and at 3-4 years. The resources given to the Council by Bookstart are worth in retail value up to £600,000 a year. The Council currently contributes £15,000 a year to enable onward distribution to families. Balancing the cost and benefits of this we believe that it would not be appropriate to stop this.

3.5 Suggestions for improving library services

The analysis report lists (on p104 for individuals and families and p137 for organisations) suggestions made for improving library services. The lists below group these into things the Council already does, suggestions that are already in the strategy, suggestions that could be looked at in future and suggestions that are not appropriate due to law or council policy. Additional suggestions identified by the project team have been included.

3.5.1 Suggestions for things the Council already does.

Where more information is appropriate the Council's response is given.

Analysis code	Comment	The Council response
IS.1	Encourage better book selection by asking librarians for suggestions	Library staff and volunteers already suggest books to stock.
IS.2	Encourage parents to get babies their own library card: combine with booklists / incentives scheme.	The Council already does this through Bookstart, baby and toddler Rhymetimes and information for new parents.
IS.3	Ensure libraries are accessible for disabled users / wheelchair users/ those with special needs	Libraries are already largely accessible to users with physical, sensory or learning disabilities or impairments or mental health needs, with a range of relevant books, materials and activities. Information about the accessibility of current libraries is on the website. Access membership cards give users free access to all audio and DVD collections; Memory Support membership cards for adults who have memory problems do not incur any late fees; Access for disabled users and those with special needs will be considered as plans are brought forward for developing or improving Council-run libraries. Community-run libraries will be expected to comply with legislation on disabled access.
IS.4	Introduce library ambassadors	There is a library ambassador scheme, currently limited to 13 to 18-year-olds.
IS.5	More integration with local schools, eg share libraries, book collection from schools, mobile service to schools	Three libraries – North Melbourne, South Woodham Ferrers and Stock – are currently shared with schools. The mobile library service visits several schools. All schools have their own book collections for reading for pleasure and can subscribe to the School Library

Analysis code	Comment	The Council response
		Service provided by [EES for Schools]().
IS.6	Offer bilingual children's sessions	Bilingual Rhymetimes have been run from time to time in various libraries.
IS.7	Offer printing / scanning / photocopying facilities	Printers and photocopiers are available in all static libraries, and scanners in several.
IS.8	Promote / encourage people to use libraries / use social media	Marketing will continue as a major element of the implementation plan for the strategy, to promote library services to new and existing audiences.
IS.9	Provide accessible toilet facilities / baby changing facilities	These are available in some libraries and will be considered when planning improvements to Council-run libraries.
IS.10	Provide children only libraries / separate areas for children	Many libraries have designated children's zones. Chelmsford Library has a separate children and young people's library. Provision of designated areas in Council-run libraries will be considered as part of plans to modernise and improve them.
IS.11	Provide coffee facilities	These are already available in some libraries and will be considered when planning improvements to Council-run libraries.
IS.12	Refund volunteers' out-of-pocket expenses	Volunteers are already encouraged to claim for expenses.
IS.13	Remove borrowing restrictions for teenagers	Subject to permission from parent / guardian being obtained for a Young Adult card, young people aged 12-14 can borrow anything except DVDs classified "15" or "18" which we cannot legally allow them to borrow.

Future Library Services Cabinet report: Appendix 2 Consultation Response Report.

Analysis code	Comment	The Council response
IS.14	Run reading sessions for children	Reading activities for children are a major part of library activities already and will continue within libraries and as outreach activities in local communities.
IS.15	Share resources with other libraries / allow ordering from other libraries	Customers can already reserve items from other library authorities. The Council also lends to other authorities.
IS.16	Suggestion boxes / suggestions email address	The Council already has suggestion boxes in libraries and an online feedback form.
IS.17	Take suggestions from library users to find out what types of books are needed.	This already happens. Better IT systems and customer service will enable greater use of customer insight to inform the type of stock held in libraries in future.
IS.18	Direct delivery for disabled people	The Home Library Service or Friends and Family Membership are available to anyone unable to get to a library due to age, disability or caring responsibilities. Volunteers or friends/family bring books and other items to people in their own homes.

3.5.2 Suggestions for ideas already proposed in the strategy.

Analysis code	Comment
IS.19	Better rotation of books from other libraries
IS.20	Greater use of library for other purposes – multi-purpose use
IS.21	Improve digital services
IS.22	Improve / more investment in Home Library Service
IS.23	Improve / simplify the reservation system
IS.24	Improve website / online search facilities / provide a mobile app
IS.25	Increase opening times / weekend opening / evening opening

Future Library Services Cabinet report: Appendix 2 Consultation Response Report.

Analysis code	Comment
IS.26	Introduce sensory areas
IS.27	Modernise / refurbish library buildings
IS.28	Reinvestment of funds from closed libraries into remaining libraries
IS.29	Relocate libraries to more accessible locations

3.5.3 Other suggestions for improving the service

Analysis code	Comment
IS.30	Allow card payments
IS.31	Allow computers to be used for more than one hour
IS.32	Allow greater use by community (eg groups, exhibition space)
IS.33	Approach publishers for permission to make available more e-books / audiobooks
IS.34	Automatic enrolment at birth
IS.35	Ban food consumption in libraries
IS.36	Better computers / wi-fi provision / internet security
IS.37	Better online facilities (eg online renewals, access to Summer Reading Challenge, access to online reference materials, access to online newspapers)
IS.38	Better organisation of books / library space (eg categorise by age, sort all fiction alphabetically, promote new items)
IS.39	Ensure collection points (in shops etc.) have good parking and people don't have to queue
IS.40	Expand library catalogue / more new books
IS.41	Extend reading challenge to other times besides summer
IS.42	Free CD / DVD borrowing
IS.43	Get more young people / ethnic minorities involved to increase diversity
IS.44	Greater focus on sustainability / green issues
IS.45	Greater links with libraries in other areas, eg sharing of books.
IS.46	Improve access to libraries, eg investment in public transport
IS.47	Improve / more investment in mobile library service, eg more stops, greater choice of books, more frequent visits

Analysis code	Comment
IS.48	Increase length of borrowing period
IS.49	Introduce family membership cards
IS.50	Lend more types of items, eg toys, baby equipment, tools, mobility scooters, e-readers.
IS.51	Make it easier to contact the library, eg via telephone, email
IS.52	Make libraries more attractive to children to encourage use
IS.53	More academic / reference books
IS.54	More alternative book collection and drop-off points / click and collect service / post-box for out-of-hours returns
IS.55	More audiobooks / large print books
IS.56	More car parking / free car parking / validated parking
IS.57	More clubs / social activities / events
IS.58	More helpful library staff
IS.59	More investment in e-library / greater range of e-books / increase number of licences for e-books
IS.60	More security / enforcement of behavioural standards
IS.61	No reduction of any library services
IS.62	Offer courses / training events / adult learning
IS.63	Offer a greater selection of CDs / DVDs
IS.64	Offer postal book service
IS.65	Offer training for using smart technology
IS.66	Partner with community groups
IS.67	Partner with local high streets / shops, eg discount schemes
IS.68	Provide more daily newspapers / a greater range of newspapers
IS.69	Provide more electrical ports for charging phones / laptops
IS.70	Provide quiet study areas / introduce quiet periods / adult only periods
IS.71	Remove fines / introduce alternative fines, eg time penalties
IS.72	Restrict computer use / don't allow use for games
IS.73	Seek ideas from successful library services elsewhere
IS.74	Specialised libraries, eg IT centres

3.5.4 Suggestion that is not appropriate due to law or Council policy

Analysis code	Comment	The Council response
IS.75	Invest in technology so those with Kindles can borrow e-books.	This has been explored before but is currently not possible due to Amazon's closed digital rights system. The Council is unable to purchase eBooks in Kindle format.
		Library e-books can be accessed via Borrowbox and read on a range of devices and operating systems including iOS (eg iPad, iPhone, iPod), Android (eg tablet, smartphone, Kindle Fire), Kobo, Nook, Sony Reader.
		E-magazines, newspapers and comics can be read using Press Reader or RBDigital e-reading apps. For information on the e-library see https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/e-books-e-audio-e-magazines-and-book-groups/.

3.6 Suggestions for generating income for library services

The analysis report lists (on p105 for individuals and families and p137 for organisations) suggestions made for generating income for library services. The lists below group these into things the Council already does, suggestions that are already in the strategy, suggestions that could be looked at in future and suggestions that are not appropriate due to law or council policy. Additional suggestions identified by the project team have been included.

3.6.1 Suggestions for things the Council already does.

Where more information is appropriate the Council's response is given.

Analysis code	Comment	The Council response
G.1	Hire out CDs/DVDs/games	Libraries already lend CDs and DVDs, for a small fee
G.2	Offer venue hire for events / meetings etc.	Many library spaces are already offered for hire . A new initiative offers library spaces for hire for birthday parties. Plans to

Analysis code	Comment	The Council response
		modernise Council-run libraries during the strategy period will include making the spaces flexible for hire and use for a range of activities.
G.3	Pursue grants eg Future High Streets Fund / charity status etc.	
G.4	Put on fee-paying events, eg author Q&As, lectures, community cinema etc.	Some events in libraries are free, some are fee-paying.
G.5	Run a café / sell refreshments / use for community tearoom	Some libraries already have a café area.
G.6	Sell unwanted books / CDs / DVDs etc.	
G.7	Work with publishers to promote books / authors	The Council works with the Reading Agency and publishers to promote new books, book prizes, etc. via publishers' promotional materials. Publishers also provide copies of new titles for the Council to offer to book groups. The Council holds several author events throughout the year with the key focus on the Essex Book Festival.

3.6.2 Other suggestions for generating income

Analysis code	Comment
G.8	Charge book clubs to borrow books
G.9	Charge for reserving books
G.10	Charge for computer use / internet access
G.11	Charge for key fobs to access libraries out of hours
G.12	Charge for / encourage donations for activities, e.g. Rhymetime, craft sessions etc.
G.13	Charge for parking

Analysis code	Comment
G.14	Crowdfunding
G.15	Encourage / allow cash donations
G.16	Ensure fines are paid/increase late fees
G.17	Hire out car parks, eg for fruit/vegetable stalls
G.18	Hire out meeting equipment, eg projectors
G.19	Hold fundraising events / run a lottery
G.20	Increase Council Tax
G.21	Introduce drop-off points for parcels
G.22	Partner with community groups to pursue funding opportunities
G.23	Partner with local businesses, eg selling items / sponsorship / advertising opportunities
G.24	Provide advertising space for rent
G.25	Reduce current venue hire fees to make them more attractive
G.26	Run a play area
G.27	Run a shop / sell items in the library
G.28	Seek additional funding from parish councils
G.29	Seek contributions from land developers
G.30	Sell closed library buildings / unused land

3.6.3 Suggestions that are not appropriate due to law or Council policy

Analysis code	Comment	The Council response
G.31	Charge for borrowing books	It would be unlawful to charge for borrowing books in Essex Libraries as the Council has a statutory duty to provide free loans of books.
G.32	Introduce a joining fee / annual membership fee	This would also be unlawful - see response to G.31 above.

4.   Responses from MPs

4.1   Checklist of responses

The Council received correspondence from the MP's set out below. A summary of the points raised by them and the Councils response are provided within the paragraphs that follow:

1	Letter from 12 Essex MPs
2	Alex Burghart MP, Brentwood and Ongar
3	James Duddridge MP, Rochford and Southend East
4	Vicky Ford MP, Chelmsford
5	Rt Hon Mark Francois MP, Rayleigh and Wickford
6	Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Harlow
7	Rebecca Harris MP, Castle Point
8	Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, Harwich and North Essex
9	Rt Hon Priti Patel MP, Witham
10	Will Quince MP, Colchester
11	Giles Watling MP, Clacton

4.2   Summaries of the responses

4.2.1 A letter from 12 Essex MPs (Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Stephen Metcalfe MP, Giles Watling MP, Will Quince MP, Vicky Ford MP, Rebecca Harris MP, Kemi Badenoch MP, Rt Hon Mark Francois MP, James Cleverly MP, Rt Hon Priti Patel MP, Rt Hon John Whittingdale MP, and Alex Burghart MP). A summary of the points raised is set out below:

- … Not opposed to the aims of the Council proposals but take issue with the suggestion that modernising services and retaining buildings are mutually exclusive.

- … Libraries hold an important social value.

- … Partnerships with district and parish councils and community groups should be explored to share running costs and improve the offer.

- … Other county councils are expanding their library services.

- … Needs assessment is deeply flawed. By focussing on decline in book lending, the Council is not considering other library uses.

- … Computers and tablets in libraries enable work on educational and life skills courses, Internet browsing and applications for universal credit. If

26

libraries are closed, other public spaces with free computer access will need to be made available.

- …Libraries and the library offer can be better marketed, and this should be tried before libraries are closed.

- …The weighting of the needs assessment criteria is concerning. Conclusions are motivated by statistics rather than social value.

- …Location doesn't consider public transport networks. Free access is important for people and that includes getting to the library.

- …Deprivation and social isolation should be weighted higher given that these are the people libraries can benefit most. Without the groups that libraries host, there may be more pressure on public services.

- …We should be encouraging children from disadvantaged backgrounds to take up reading and improve literacy levels. We should encourage people to take advantage of free careers advice in libraries.

- …Closing libraries in deprived areas will have a damaging effect on the fight for social justice.

4.2.2 **Alex Burghart MP** (Brentwood and Ongar)

- …The online survey takes too long to fill in, is not easy for older people to take part in because it is only online and has been virtually impossible to access as a hard copy. This causes difficulties for older, less computer-literate or time-poor people.

- …Activities which don't require use of library cards appear to have been excluded from the consultation criteria.

- …North Weald: three temporary hostels are situated in North Weald. These have poor internet connections. The deprivation score may not include these, and overall the score seems very low.

- …North Weald Parish Council is concerned that closure will leave them without a base of operations.

- …Shenfield should be Tier 2, given its level of deprivation, and a high number of active users and community groups using it.

- …Ingatestone hosts a popular sight-impaired group.

- …There is concern that local business might suffer if it closes.

- …There's concern that the libraries may be sold for development. It would be possible to redevelop both Shenfield and North Weald to generate additional revenue while leaving a library in situ.

4.2.3 **James Duddridge MP** (Rochford and Southend East)

- … Great Wakering Library should be retained. It serves a large elderly population with relatively little public transport. A large number rely on these services; closure could cause them to become isolated as the nearest alternatives are many miles away.

- … Should changes be required, please consider moving these key services into the old school. Please look at all options available.

4.2.4 **Vicky Ford MP** (Chelmsford)

- … Galleywood and Springfield Libraries provide vital community hubs, used for much more than traditional library services.

- … They're vitally important educational work spaces, used by children as homework and study areas.

- … Urges us to work with Chelmsford City Council and parish councils to ensure these community assets are maintained.

4.2.5 **Rt Hon Mark Francois MP** (Rayleigh and Wickford)

- … Held meetings with local communities at Hockley and Hullbridge both of which are determined they shouldn't close.

- … Hockley should be upgraded to Tier 2 because:
  - It only fell 2 points short of achieving Tier 2 status.
  - It is a highly popular library with an important role in the community – also in Hawkwell. Hosts many community groups and exhibitions.
  - Location: Hockley is almost 3 miles from nearest library and served by one bus route which is itself under consultation.
  - Population: There has been considerable building in the area in the last few years.
  - Usage: This has gone down partly because of cuts in opening hours. However the recent book raid shows how popular Hockley is capable of being.

- … Hullbridge should be upgraded to Tier 2 because:
  - Used by many community groups.
  - Location: Over 3 miles to Rayleigh Library. Walking route far from ideal and served by one intermittent bus service.
  - Social Isolation: Has one of the highest proportions of senior citizens in Essex. The mobile home parks are overwhelmingly populated with senior citizens, many of whom rely on Hullbridge for their community services.

28

- …Libraries generally have an extremely important role in combatting social isolation and have great community benefits. They should be invested in not cut back.

- …Advises the Council that the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is ready to step in with a local enquiry if needed.

- …It is nonsensical that a council with £250million in reserves should be seeking to save £1m a year in this way, given the benefits stated. Whatever the economics it is very bad politics!

- …We should listen to the strong opinions of residents and drop the closure programme altogether.

4.2.6 **Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP** (Harlow)

- …Not clear what level of response would be necessary to keep the libraries in Harlow open. Summarises his other actions including joint MPs' letter, school's petition, correspondence with Michael Ellis MP and question in the House.

- …If the libraries in Great Parndon, Tye Green and Mark Hall are closed it is questionable whether we're fulfilling our statutory duty. This is principally because of the following flaws in the way the proposals have been developed:

  - Loan statistics do not provide true picture of level of need for libraries eg computers for learning, welfare and leisure, community groups, book clubs.

  - E-libraries can aid efficiency but are no substitute for physical buildings in the locality. They are often used for printing eg homework, CVs, other important documents. Digital library no use for people without home computer access or printers. Therefore equal access to information is lost.

  - Hub libraries rely on transport, difficult through limited mobility, poor parking availability, poor or unaffordable public transport or no car ownership. Alternatives such as mobiles or Home Library Service fail to provide social benefits that libraries do and are unsustainable.

  - Community activities could take place in alternative locations if there is space available, otherwise they will disappear (or not remain free). The Council should investigate such availability before deciding whether to close libraries.

  - Social isolation is recognised to a certain extent by the Council but not enough. Staffed neighbourhood libraries provide face-to-face support and social contact. Live chat is no substitute with regard to these aspects.

- o Social isolation and deprivation should have been weighted higher. The Council should do all it can to improve life prospects and literacy. Many cannot afford books, computers and learning resources. They need quiet space away from home. Library access can also be a bulwark against anti-social behaviour, not considered in the consultation. Ready access to computers is a life-line to those struggling on low incomes.

  - o Location does not take into account poor public transport routes – Harlow has recently been subject to a reduction in bus transport – the cost of travel or limited parking. Reliance on a hub library would also increase traffic congestion. The overall effect of the proposals may be to discourage library use.

- •...Acknowledges that the Council is under pressure to save but closing libraries is not the answer. Other councils under similar pressures are opening new ones. Suggestions:

  - o Reduce staffing costs

  - o Partner with community groups eg by hiring out spaces

  - o Reduce number of staffed hours and introduce smart out-of-hours access

- •...Would be pleased to work with the Council and assist community engagement in any way he can.

- •..."Number of libraries per head" statistics presented in a misleading way in the strategy. As the Council serves one of the largest populations these statistics are correlative and don't justify closures.

- •...Statutorily the Council is obliged to encourage use of the library service, but marketing could be much better.

- •...Ends with suggestions for making offer more multi-functional and appealing:

  - o Café; create additional income and jobs

  - o House art exhibitions eg by local school children

  - o Celebrate local news and achievements

  - o Hosting sales of work and second-hand goods

  - o Hosting themed nights

  - o Introduce sensory spaces

  - o Introduce specific devices such as memory boxes and sound booths

  - o Host health and wellbeing events and courses

- •...Encloses many comments from constituents.

In additional comments Mr Halfon argues against closure of Tye Green and Mark Hall because of their close proximity to secondary schools, and that libraries have a key role to play in the fight for equality.

4.2.7 **Rebecca Harris MP** (Castle Point)

- …Libraries help tackle loneliness, provide an outlet for community groups and help residents access council services.

- …It's right that Canvey should be retained as Tier 1 but unacceptable to leave mainland Castle Point without a static library. Residents of Benfleet, Thundersley and Hadleigh find Canvey inaccessible and use Hadleigh and Benfleet Libraries well.

- …Any solution should ensure a continued base of operations for the registrar service and the Home Library Service.

- …Mainland Castle Point deserves at the very least a Tier 1 library. Supports Castle Point Council's statistical analysis demonstrating why. Ms Harris's preference is for the current provision to be maintained in partnership with the local community. Benfleet councillors are bringing forward a solution for South Benfleet. Hadleigh "island" is being redeveloped and there's an expectation that library provision would be included there. Holy Family Catholic Church is developing a proposal for Great Tarpots.

- …Essex County Council has Ms Harris's support in pursuing any option to keep Castle Point libraries open.

4.2.8 **Sir Bernard Jenkin MP** (Harwich and North Essex)

- …Wishes the Council to look closely at the future of the County libraries in Manningtree, Wivenhoe, West Mersea and Harwich. Refers to response from Library supporters in Manningtree.

- …The Council accounts for the cost of its libraries but does not see the value of all the ancillary benefits of their buildings and facilities to communities and in the delivery of other public sector provided services, such as access through computers to the benefits system.

- …Many public libraries in other counties are being transferred to charitable trusts and community groups. What consideration is being given to this?

- …Why should the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) not be required to contribute something to the cost of facilities which are provided for benefit claimants? This is particularly important in rural areas where people often live far from their DWP Job Centre Plus.

4.2.9 **Rt Hon Priti Patel MP** (Witham)

- …There is strong opposition and concerns regarding the draft strategy from residents across the Witham constituency, but some appetite for community-based solutions.

- …Seven out of eight libraries in the constituency will potentially be lost as will two libraries sitting just outside it.

- …In other local authority areas libraries are being transformed by a mixture of community management, co-location and the introduction of new services.

- …The MP would be glad to explore with local communities the opportunities for new library models and pilot them, and to that end will contact parish councils where Tier 3 and 4 libraries are based seeking views on prospects for developing community models. She will share this feedback and map out some options.

- …Sought information on what new and different models the Council has considered introducing to improve the viability of local libraries, what alternative models are available and how communities in the Witham constituency can work constructively with the Council and with her to set up some viable working pilots.

4.2.10 **Will Quince MP** (Colchester)

- …Closing Prettygate would have a detrimental effect on the community. Alternatives mean driving into Colchester centre and parking – leisure use of the library being difficult if an eye has to be kept on the parking meter – or taking the bus. Neither option is easy with young children.

- … It's important to get children interested in reading and this will be hampered by closure of Prettygate. Please explore other options.

- …There's no central meeting place in Prettygate other than the library and the churches.

- …A coffee shop alongside the library would prove popular and encourage use of the library.

4.2.11 **Giles Watling MP (Clacton)**

- …Approves ECC's appreciation of the need to change radically. Would have appreciated a pre-consultation meeting so he and colleagues could feed into the emerging options.

- …His constituency has an older population who are more reliant on community facilities, and its remoteness from urban centres makes it more liable to be overlooked.

- …**Clacton:** approves Tier 1 status but argues it's in need of investment.

- …**Frinton** and **Walton:** downgrade to Tier 3 is worrying. Frinton in particular serves as a focal point for many large wards with few public facilities. Suggests a merger to create one full hub would be capable of serving the entire area.

- …**Holland:** other constituencies have at least one Tier 2 library. His constituency is amongst the most economically inactive.

- …**Deprivation** and **social isolation** should have been weighted higher. His constituency contains the most deprived ward in the nation, Jaywick.

- …Suggests:

  o   Co-location of libraries with school library services where appropriate

  o   Facilitating health and community groups via libraries

- …The three Tier 3 libraries in his constituency (**Frinton, Walton** and **West Clacton**) are vital to local communities. To survive they need to turn to local organisations and community groups. He would be willing to help in this matter.

5.   Responses from district, borough and city councils

This section, and those following, includes responses submitted by survey, email or letter, and motions passed at council meetings.

5.1   Checklist of responses and motions

	Council	Response method
1	Basildon Borough Council	Survey, letter and motion
2	Brentwood Borough Council	Motions
3	Castle Point Borough Council	Letter
4	Chelmsford City Council	Motion
5	Colchester Borough Council	Survey, letter and motions
6	Harlow Council	Letter and motion
7	Rochford District Council	Motion
8	Tendring District Council	Survey
9	Uttlesford District Council	Survey and motion

5.2   Summaries of the responses

5.2.1   Basildon Borough Council

Basildon Council submitted a survey response, a letter providing more detailed responses to survey questions and passed a motion at its full council on 28 March 2019.

Future Library Services Cabinet report: Appendix 2 Consultation Response Report.

The [motion](#), in relation to a report on changes to the scheme of Council Tax Discounts and Premiums, was: "To support the maximum increases to the long term empty property premium starting from 1 April 2019. That the Council make the strongest possible representations to colleagues at Essex County Council to seek unequivocal agreement to ring fence their share of this additional income to prevent both Vange and Fryerns Libraries from closing or changing existing operational terms and conditions, although this would not be conditional on these technical changes being agreed and implemented from 1 April 2019. Full Council receives a report no later than the first full Council of the municipal year in 2019."

To date the Council has received no direct representation from Basildon Council in relation to this motion; we have learnt about this motion from other sources.

Basildon Council's key arguments in its survey response and letter were:

An assessment of the social value contribution of existing library services should be included in the criteria and weighted accordingly. This would capture the breadth of other activity delivered from libraries and the social return on investment achieved from the library service. Gathering such information may also inform a more collaborative approach across the Council with regards to the future of local libraries.

Strongly disagree with the five ambitions of the draft strategy. They should be broadened to reflect:

- …The evolution of library services and the role that libraries play in modern society, their social value and contribution, and relationship to the Council's broader responsibilities and priorities as set out in Essex Vision.

- …Libraries' use as community hubs hosting a range of community activities which benefit the Council, particularly regarding social care and education.

- …The range of other services currently provided from the libraries in both Vange and Fryerns.

Basildon Council would be keen to work with the Council to ensure such valuable community resources continue to be available in the locality.

Strongly disagree with the evaluation criteria.

- …Using district-level data masks the significant disadvantage experienced in communities supported by Vange and Fryerns libraries and does not provide a true representation of the needs of these areas.

- …The lack of locality-based EqIAs further increases the risk of decisions being based on unrepresentative data.

- …Greater effort should be made to use data available at a LSOA level, where available; where not, be proactive in obtaining relevant insight eg by collecting protected characteristic data as part of library membership.

- …Usage - does not capture true footfall or reflect library usage

- … Location - does not give due consideration to barriers that would prevent residents accessing other library services.

- … Needs assessment assumes that 78% of households in the borough have access to one or more car or van. Using Acorn segmentation data it is predicted that only 66% of Vange residents and 69% of Fryerns residents would have access to a car. In addition, lower levels of income may also act as a barrier to using public transport.

- … Population – does not provide additional weighting where the proposals will further increase the ratio of people per library.

- … The borough's libraries already serve a higher number of residents than the national average. Loss of 2 libraries would leave a managed library for every 37,419 residents. This ratio is above the national average figure and 5,000 residents per library more than the county of Worcestershire's average (which had the highest level of residents per managed library in the CIPFA population per library comparator English counties 2016-17).

- … Assumptions have been based on current population figures which do not reflect that Basildon will grow in population far more rapidly than other areas in Essex, nor does it consider the projected increase in population anticipated as result of the Local Plan.

- … Deprivation – 15% weighting is too low, dismissive of the negative impact deprivation has on life chances, does not recognise differences in deprivation levels nor seeks to address disadvantage. Fryerns and Vange wards both rank in the most deprived 5% of wards in Essex (Vange 3rd and Fryerns 11th out of 258 wards); have a low percentage of school-ready children, higher than average persistent secondary school absenteeism, high rates of children in care, high rates of child poverty and fewer pupils than average that aspire to go to university.

- … Social Isolation – A further indicator of the risk of social isolation is the number of pensioners who live alone. 32.2% of Basildon borough pensioners live alone (worse than the England average of 31.5% and the Essex average of 29.9%). 41% of pensioners live alone in Vange and 34% in Fryerns.

- … In Vange the population estimate for under 9s is higher than the Essex average at 7.6% and 8.1% in Fryerns. This would suggest that there are more parents with young families in these communities and potentially a greater risk of social isolation.

- … Social isolation weighting is too low given the consequences to local authorities and communities of contributing to increased social isolation through service reduction.

- … Suggested criterion to assess need: social value contribution of existing library services

Disagree that the proposals provide a reasonable range of different ways for people to access library services according to their needs.

- ... Unclear whether the services that remain will be accessible to existing users of Vange and Fryerns libraries due to a lack of accurate user data as set out in the EqIA.

Strongly disagree with proposal to invite community groups or other organisations to run 19 libraries in tier 3.

- ... Basildon Council unaffected as no tier 3 libraries in the borough.

- ... Had sought to explore capacity of local communities to run Fryerns and Vange libraries. It is evident that capacity is significantly reduced in communities facing multiple challenges when compared to communities that have the capacity to organise, such as those that have a Parish council. It should not be assumed that all communities are willing or able to take on responsibility for service provision and delivery.

Disagree with idea of some library services being available in places other than libraries (outreach).

- ... Idea has merit in principle but the proposal relies on availability of suitable locations within communities. In deprived areas in cannot be assumed that village halls, community halls, leisure centres or even shops exist or have capacity to accommodate the service.

Basildon Council would be interested to explore how the council's existing community hall provision could be developed to accommodate those aspects of the existing library service that are utilised and valued by the community. This could facilitate the growth of community spaces and allow flexibility for our residents to continue to use books and access library services.

Having longer opening hours would be a priority for those libraries in the borough identified as tier 1 and 2. Given the potential closure of two libraries in the borough, it would seem sensible and necessary to increase the accessibility of remaining libraries by increasing open hours and extending this across the weekend.

Vange and Fryerns are two of the most deprived areas in Essex. The withdrawal of a library service in these areas would have adverse effects on the local communities. Access to digital technology, cars, books and a safe work environment is significantly lower in deprived areas, which will inadvertently affect education, attainment, employment opportunities, community cohesion, happiness, and social isolation.

The proposal also appears to disproportionately impact on groups with protected characteristics including older people, children/young people and pregnant women/new mothers who make up a significant majority of existing users.

There also appears to be a lack of insight on the part of the Council on how the proposals will impact on those with a disability or from a BME group.

Basildon Borough Council would not be interested in partnering to support the delivery of library services run by Essex County Council in tier 2, 3 or 4.

Basildon Borough Council would not be interested in running or being involved with a community-run library in a tier 3 or tier 4 location. However, should the Council receive notification of community interest in running either Vange or Fryerns libraries, Basildon Council would welcome the opportunity to discuss the council's potential contribution.

5.2.2 Brentwood Borough Council

Council meeting 5 December 2018

The following motion was carried:

"This Council welcomes the review and public consultation that has been launched by Essex County Council in regards to library provision across the county, including within the borough of Brentwood. We recognise and agree that the current library service is outdated and needs modernising. Therefore, Brentwood Borough Council pledges to work with our County Council partners in this regard and will consider options around location, service access and opening hours as part of this review. We will support efforts to involve the local community in both shaping and delivering future library provision in the borough, with particular focus on both Shenfield and Ingatestone libraries, identified as "tier 3" in the review."

Council meeting 27 February 2019

The following motion was carried:

"This Council is concerned about the methodology and information relied on by the County Council to list Shenfield Library as tier 3. We call on Essex County Council to reconsider its findings and recognise that Shenfield Library should be listed as tier 2."

The following arguments were advanced in support of the above motion.

- ...Residents of Shenfield and Hutton could lose a book lending service that is more used than any other ECC tier 2 or 3 library

- ...Could lose an asset that is highly valued by the community, a valuable hub and service beyond traditional library use with 75,000 visits, support for children's reading and young mothers, meeting place for groups including elderly and use as a polling station

- ...Over 8,000 residents signed a petition, believed to be the largest ever in Brentwood

- ...Flaws in the needs assessment and grounds for re-examining Shenfield's ranking in tier 3:
  - Usage should have highest weighting, above location and population

- o Arbitrary weighting given to population and inconsistent scoring; Shenfield and Ingatestone have third highest head of population per library [in the county] but second lowest score

- o Compares population scores for Shenfield and Ingatestone against those for libraries in other boroughs and districts to illustrate point above, using data from the needs assessment.

Explanatory note from Essex County Council: Libraries were scored in two rounds in the needs assessment. In round 1, they were allocated a score for population based on the number of libraries in the district per head of population. Tier 4 libraries were identified in round 1. Libraries were then scored again, based on the impact on the number of libraries per head of population if tier 4 libraries were closed. As Brentwood did not have any libraries that were identified as tier 4, the scores for Ingatestone and Shenfield did not change. In other districts that did have libraries identified in tier 4, the population scores for the remaining libraries increased in round 2.

The following motion was also carried

"This Council supports the level of response from the local community in regards to Ingatestone Library, including on questioning the information in the consultation document and calls upon ECC to give detailed consideration to all responses, including those which have challenged the underpinning data. Furthermore, it should be remembered that that the library is used out of library hours by the local community and the parish council. And that proper use of the available assets has not been considered."

Community, Health and Housing Committee meeting 5 March 2019

It was resolved unanimously that Shenfield and Ingatestone Libraries be listed as Assets of Community Value.

5.2.3 Castle Point Borough Council

Recognises that library service must remain fit for purpose.

Supports the proposal that Canvey is a Tier 1 library.

Unless sustainable community management solutions are agreed, the other three libraries could be under threat of closure. This would leave a community of 50,000 people without any local library provision.

Hadleigh Library should be at least Tier 2 because:

- •.... In the first round of scoring it scored second out of 59 libraries
- •.... The process by which it sunk to 17th in the second round was arbitrary. In particular the second round took account of the loss of Tier 4 libraries but not Tier 3. The criterion of libraries per head of population per district also

> > fails to take account of a library's true catchment area: a main consideration in Castle Point.

> > - …. The usage figures were not similarly adjusted in the second round, suggesting that full and proper analysis has been undertaken [sic].

There should be a Tier 1 library on the Castle Point mainland because:

> > - …. By aggregating the three Tier 3 communities on the Castle Point mainland and comparing them with Billericay, Wickford and Witham (each with a Tier 1 library) it can be seen there's enough usage, population and demographics to justify one.

Further work is required to better explore the impact of closures not only on the core services libraries provided, but also services such as the Registry Office and Home Library Services Volunteers base at South Benfleet, their use as community spaces, associations with schools and early years groups and the impact on vulnerable groups and older people.

Castle Point Council would welcome discussions with the County Council to find a sustainable solution to the library service within the Borough.

5.2.4 Chelmsford City Council

Council meeting 5 December 2018

The following motion was carried:

"This Council has been briefed on the review and public consultation that has been launched by Essex County Council in regards to library provision across the county, including within the City of Chelmsford. We recognise and agree that the current library service is in need of modernising in the light of changing usage by the public. Therefore, Chelmsford City Council pledges to work with our County Council partners in this regard and will consider options around location, service access and opening hours as part of this review. We will support efforts to involve the local community in both shaping and delivering future library provision in the City, with particular focus on Springfield Library, shown as Tier 3 and the five libraries identified as Tier 4."

5.2.5 Colchester Borough Council

Health & Wellbeing

- Libraries provide a local community-based space that supports and contributes to improved health and wellbeing outcomes for the residents of Colchester. Community groups and individuals can use these spaces to meet up, make new connections and socialise which in turn contributes to reducing social isolation and loneliness.

- Young people can do their homework in a library (and improve their life chances as a result) which isn't always possible at home for many reasons. People who don't have a computer or only have limited access, can become digitally excluded. People who have literacy / numeracy issues can develop those skills in a safe space within a library.

- A proposed reduction in the existing library service provision coincides with key programmes of work in Colchester and North East Essex looking to maximise existing community assets and resources. The potential for the existing libraries to contribute to and support this emerging programme of work needs to be fully explored and understood before any changes are implemented.

- Libraries already help people access a wide range of local services, either by operating out of the same building, providing space for regular drop-ins or advice sessions, or by sign-posting people to other services. Libraries are at the heart of our communities, where people go for advice, information or to see other service providers such as local councils, Citizens Advice or job clubs.

Reduced Accessibility

- Reduced opening times would be less accessible for all, but having members of the public as 'key holders,' would provide out of hours access for the working population.

- The proposal to close the library in Mersea will have an adverse effect on the higher than average elderly population there. Isolation is an issue in this locality for this specific cohort of people

- Removing the library in Wivenhoe would impact the high number of students in the locality.

Prettygate Library

- Population has increased in Prettygate between 2011-2017 by 40.8%, over 6,000 being aged 40 years and over.

- This library has a higher usage amongst 0-9 years (28%) compared to the Essex Library average for 0-9 years (23%). Additionally, Prettygate Library also has a higher usage amongst 0-19 years (43%) compared to the Essex Library average for 0-19 years (37%)

- Within the library sits Colchester Toy Library.

- A range of other nearby community assets is listed. Home Farm Primary School could be used as an alternative library and community space. Straight Road Community Centre, Kingsland Church and St Leonards Church Hall are all in proximity and could provide alternative community space.

Survey response asked us to consider

- The foot fall into the library, the home delivered books and the difficulty in getting to the remaining library in the event of closure

Council meeting 6 December 2018

The following motions were both carried:

1 **"**This Council notes with sadness, the review and public consultation that has been launched by Essex County Council in regards to library provision across the county, including within the borough of Colchester to meet the modern day demands of our residents. We recognise and agree that some library buildings are outdated and should be modernised. Therefore, Colchester Borough Council pledges to work with our County Council partners. We will ensure the local community is involved in shaping, improving and enhancing future library service provision across our borough."

2 ""This Council notes with sadness the public consultation launched by Essex County Council to close libraries across the county, including within the borough of Colchester. Whether complete closure or transition to volunteer run services, this Council cannot accept the irreversible impact such plans have upon the social mobility and educational opportunities of our residents. This Council believes that education and information are fundamental for individuals to be socially mobile. For centuries, Libraries have provided people with available and accessible books, information and educational resources. This historic principle is now under threat in our borough. Colchester Borough residents access many services provided at our libraries, not just books, but free Internet, DVDs, audio texts, a range of Council Services, CAB support and much more. Libraries form a bedrock of our communities and their social fabric. Therefore, we call upon the Leader of the Council to write directly to the Leader of Essex County Council to suspend the consultation and halt the closure plans and enter into a meaningful dialogue to shape, improve and enhance library services in our Borough. The Council calls upon the Leader of the Council to also write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Education and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to truly end austerity and provide local government with the resources it needs to fund vital services in the future."

5.2.6 Harlow Council

Council meeting 18 December 2018

The following motion was carried:

"This Council is concerned by Essex County Council's plans to close public libraries in Harlow. Libraries are vital to promoting literacy and fostering a love of reading amongst all people. They are used by pre-school children taking their first steps towards reading, those at the other end of the school journey and by young adults studying for their exams. Libraries also provide essential services for the least well off in society, providing computer access to people looking for jobs and accommodation, completing Universal Credit forms and for those filling out online

school admission applications. This Council believes that library closures run counter to the County's health and wellbeing agenda and therefore requests that the Leader of the Council writes to the County Council urging it to keep all of Harlow's libraries open and invites the Leader of the Opposition to sign the letter."

The subsequent letter from Cllr Ingall, Leader of Harlow Council, and Cllr Johnson, Leader of the Opposition, made the following points:

Libraries provide:

- Reading, guidance and quiet study space

- Free broadband – least well off who cannot afford it at home rely on this

- Meeting points for the community – an essential service in combatting social isolation

- Community hubs, gallery spaces and places for public meetings

Libraries cannot change if they are closed. Closing three out of five would run counter to the needs of the town.

Council meeting 4 April 2019

The following motion was carried:

"Essex County Council (ECC) have not responded adequately to the letter of concern about library closures sent by the Leader of Harlow District Council and co-signed by the Leader of the opposition on 7 January 2019.

At the meeting of ECC on 12 March 2019, that council had concluded that as the libraries consultation had only just closed, it was too early to put forward a decision to their Cabinet on the matter and therefore a final closure decision has yet to be taken;

and this council urges:

i)   the Leader to write again to the Portfolio Holder responsible for the consultation around library closures asking for ECC to reconsider particularly in light of the (disproportionate) effect the proposed closures in this and immediately surrounding areas; and

ii) Members to support the motion and this council's position, both at district level and ECC members when the matter comes before them for decision."

To date Essex County Council has received no direct representation from Harlow Council in relation to this latter motion.

5.2.7 Rochford District Council

Council meeting 11 December 2018

The following motion was carried:

"This Council has noted the review and public consultation that has been launched by Essex County Council in regard to the library provision across the County, including the District of Rochford. The District Council also recognise that the current library service is outdated and needs modernising. We encourage all to respond to the consultation as this will shape the way the future service will be delivered. However, we are mindful that the County Council also has a duty under the 1964 Libraries and Museums Act to provide a library service for our residents. We are largely rural communities and we will endeavour to ensure that Essex County Council also considers this within its review, taking into account the Equality Act 2010 and access to services. Therefore, this Council pledges to work alongside Essex County Council and the local community in both shaping and delivering future library provision throughout the District and will support the retention of a library service in all the current five existing areas in the District."

5.2.8 Tendring District Council

Usage - we do not consider that it is an accurate reflection of the use of libraries just to rely on where a library card has been used. Many people use the library for other reasons including research, social engagement and access to IT. Social Isolation - in many communities the library is a place where people can go to engage with others. With loneliness as an ever-growing issue, particularly, amongst the elderly population, Tendring Council feels it is counter intuitive to be considering closing libraries when these are often the places that are at the heart of communities. Population - Tendring District Council is disappointed that no account has been taken of projected population. There is in Tendring, as in many other areas, an extensive range of house building taking place with a consequent growth in local population and we feel that this should be taken account of.

It is felt that using volunteers is not always reliable and could result in libraries not being manned or not being open. There is also a loss of knowledge which experienced librarians have. It is also felt that the strategy has been developed without the full assessment of responses to the consultation and that the thrust of the approach should be about how to keep libraries open rather than potential for closure.

5.2.9 Uttlesford District Council

Council meeting 4 December 2018

The following motion was carried:

"This Council asks the Cabinet member for communities and partnerships to work with Essex County Council, parish/town councils, voluntary organisations and residents to explore ways in which the library service in Uttlesford is maintained and enhanced, in light of the county council's major consultation on the proposed future strategy for the county's libraries."

43

Future Library Services Cabinet report: Appendix 2 Consultation Response Report.

<u>Council meeting 9 April 2019</u>

The following motion was carried:

"This Council recognises that libraries make a significant contribution to education, well-being and community activities. Any library closures or reductions in services could potentially affect the well-being of children and young families, the elderly, the unemployed and other vulnerable groups and increase their social isolation. At the December Council meeting, it was 'RESOLVED this Council asks the Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships to work with Essex County Council, parish/town councils, voluntary organisations and residents to explore ways in which the library service in Uttlesford is maintained and enhanced, in light of the County Council's major consultation on the proposed future strategy for the county's libraries' and we will continue to do this."

Survey response: In a relatively sparsely populated predominantly rural area like Uttlesford using the number of libraries per head of population underplays accessibility issues. It is not appropriate to expect users to travel 10 miles to reach their nearest library. The criteria need to reflect the diverse character of Essex and avoid weighting the assessment towards the needs of urban areas.

At the UDC Council Meeting in December 2018 it was resolved that the Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships would work with ECC, parish/ town councils, voluntary organisations and residents to explore ways in which the library service in Uttlesford is maintained and enhanced in the light of the county council's major consultation on the proposed future strategy for the county's libraries, and we will continue to do this.

Loss of library services in Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted would have adverse impacts in particular on the wellbeing of children and young families, older persons, the unemployed and other vulnerable groups at risk of social isolation.

6. Responses from town and parish councils

6.1 Checklist of responses

Comments made by town and parish councils about libraries that were identified as tier 3 or tier 4 in the original draft strategy are listed and responded to in sections 9 and 10 below. General comments not covered in the tables and sections above are listed below this table.

	Council	Response method
1	Ashingdon Parish Council	Email

Future Library Services Cabinet report: Appendix 2 Consultation Response Report.

	Council	Response method
2	Bradwell on Sea Parish Council	Survey
3	Brightlingsea Town Council	Letter
4	Broomfield Parish Council	Survey
5	Buckhurst Hill Parish Council	Survey
6	Canewdon Parish Council	Survey and email
7	Clavering Parish Council	Survey
8	Coggeshall Parish Council	Letter
9	Colne Engaine Parish Council	Letter
10	Danbury Parish Council	Survey
11	Elsenham Parish Council	Survey and letter
12	Farnham Parish Council	Letter
13	Feering Parish Council	Survey
14	Galleywood Parish Council	Survey
15	Great Baddow Parish Council	Survey
16	Great Burstead and South Green Parish Council	Survey
17	Great Dunmow Town Council	Survey and letter
18	Harwich Town Council	Letter
19	Hatfield Broad Oak Parish Council	Survey
20	Hatfield Peverel Parish Council	Survey
21	Hawkwell Parish Council	Letter
22	Hockley Parish Council	Survey and letter
23	Hullbridge Parish Council	Survey and email
24	Kelvedon Parish Council	Survey
25	Kelvedon and Feering Parish Councils	Email
26	Langford and Ulting Parish Council	Survey
27	Lawford Parish Council	Survey
28	Little Baddow Parish Council	Survey
29	Little Braxted Parish Council	Survey
30	Loughton Town Council	Letter
31	Manningtree Town Council	Survey and letter
32	Mistley Parish Council	Letter
33	Noak Bridge Parish Council	Survey
34	North Fambridge Parish Council	Survey

	Council	Response method
35	North Weald Parish Council	Survey and email
36	Rayleigh Town Council	Survey
37	Saffron Walden Town Council	Letter
38	South Woodham Ferrers Town Council	Survey
39	Springfield Parish Council	Survey and letter
40	St Osyth Parish Council	Survey
41	Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council	Survey, letter and email
42	Stock Parish Council	Survey
43	Thaxted Parish Council (incorporates formal complaint to Michael Ellis MP)	Survey and letter
44	Tiptree Parish Council	Survey and email
45	Toppesfield Parish Council	Letter
46	West Mersea Parish Council	Survey and letter
47	Wickham Bishops Parish Council	Survey
48	Winstred Hundred and East Mersea Parish Councils	Email
49	Witham Town Council	Letter
50	Wivenhoe Town Council	Survey and email
51	Woodham Walter Parish Council	Survey
52	Joint evidential response by councillors from Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford Parish Councils, and from Tendring District Council	Letter

6.2   Summaries of the responses

Comments by town and parish councils echoed the themes listed above and therefore will not be repeated or responded to in detail. Where a council raised a point not covered above, they are listed below. Where a council has only made comments that are specific to a named community-run library, these are shown in sections 9 and 10 below.

6.2.1 Canewdon Parish Council

Suggest that the County Council consider what hard copy books are available throughout Essex given that hard copy books can be transferred from one library to another.

6.2.2 Coggeshall Parish Council

Note that parish clerks and councils could be involved in running community libraries and feel that this conflicts with Section 101 of Local Government Act 1972 prohibiting a local authority from discharging its functions to another local authority.

6.2.3 Farnham Parish Council

The mobile library visit time was altered by the county council without consultation with the Parish Council. (Note: The change to the mobile stop in Farnham came about in April 2018 following an extensive consultation about the mobile service. All town and parish councils on the Council's comprehensive list were sent notifications about this consultation in September 2017. The Council is likely to be reviewing mobile stops later in the year and will do so regularly thereafter, adjusting the routes and timetable according to need for the service.)

6.2.4 Galleywood Parish Council

All needs assessment criteria should be used in relation to each other, e.g. usage to population, deprivation to population.

The five measurement criteria should not be used to set communities against each other in a battle for resources showing division and discord. The Carnegie UK Shining A Light report says we should measure the impact of public libraries on wellbeing, a shift away from measuring inputs (costs) towards methods for measuring participation and impact (measuring participation in all programmes of activity and courses). Policies based on outcomes will better guide decision makers. Library services must align services with community needs and the priorities and policies of funders and public policy decision makers. The replacement by dispersal of the offering runs a higher risk to the public service failure or deterioration. Any add-on service should be seen as supplementary and not replacement, online offering will exclude many of the current user community of they have no access to online suite of tools.

The Parish Council would like to see the Council adopt, invest and expand the strategy.

It would like to see the Council actively promote, increase the range of services, become creative not destructive with public service library services by way of the following: longer opening hours, encouraging a larger footfall, improving investment and use of technology. Improve service link up with the Council's well-being and mental health policies. Reduce cost of the service by looking at overhead costs e.g. cleaning and staff costs.

6.2.5 Great Baddow Parish Council

- …PC expects to be consulted as part of any future discussions on the future level of services at Great Baddow Library.

- …Withdrawal of service from Great Baddow Library would destroy opportunities for working together, for example on an exhibition and utilising library contacts and resources for this. The library also acts as a point of contact for people to find out about contact points and services offered by the council.

6.2.6 Great Dunmow Town Council

- …Business opportunities should be included as a criterion in the needs assessment.

- …Tourist Information Centre is sited in the library.

- …Suggestions: commercial partnerships, refreshments/coffee machine, room lettings at commercial rate, use outside regular opening hours, book signings, virtual reality gaming.

6.2.7 Hatfield Broad Oak Parish Council

Uttlesford has a greater number of smaller primary schools often serving a larger catchment area. These are often in groups and depend upon smaller libraries - not only Dunmow but Thaxted and Stansted - for introduction to the library and what it can offer. Mobile library services to Hatfield Broad Oak have been reduced from 1 hour every week to half an hour every 3 weeks. Public transport is concentrated on Stansted Airport and Bishop's Stortford and access to libraries is only feasible by car.

6.2.8 Loughton Town Council

Shorter opening hours at Loughton Library would affect opening hours of Citizens Advice and Loughton Town Council which have their offices there. Comments about Debden Library are shown in section 10.

6.2.9 Manningtree Town Council

The Assessment carried out in Spring 2018 which has formed the basis on which the Strategy has been formulated is not robust, comprehensive, nor informative enough to justify its proposals. Most of the crucial information will be supplied as a result of this current consultation, only then should a meaningful strategy have been put in place and shared with the public.

The population in our two closest neighbouring parishes Lawford and Mistley is estimated to increase by 42% over the next few years.

6.2.10 North Fambridge Parish Council

No bus service to Maldon and only once a week bus to South Woodham Ferrers.

6.2.11 South Woodham Ferrers Town Council

In the Social Isolation criterion, the age bracket is not suitable. From public research within our area parents of all ages use the library for their reading challenges, nursery rhyme and singing sessions and themed days and nights.

Concern that outreach activities in other buildings (eg Rhymetimes) will be charged for, excluding those who can't afford them.

6.2.12 Tiptree Parish Council

The strategy may end up with people paying twice over, once via their ECC charge and again via the precept required to cover capital and running costs of a volunteer library.

6.2.13 Willingale Parish Council

The Parish Council does not own or manage any premises.

6.2.14 Witham Town Council

With the closure of neighbouring libraries there will be additional footfall in Witham's library. It was therefore felt important that at least local papers should be available in the library.

7. Responses from community and other organisations

7.1 Checklist of responses

Comments made organisations about particular community-run libraries are listed and responded to in sections 9 and 10 below. General comments not covered in the tables and sections above are listed below this table.

	Organisation	Category	Response method
1	1st Coggeshall Scout Group	Youth group	Survey
2	Acorn Village	Residential home	Survey
3	Age UK Essex Befriending	Social	Survey
4	All Saints' Reading Group	Book group	Survey
5	Appetite Book Club	Book group	Survey
6	Archives	History	Survey
7	Arterial Culture CIC	Arts	Survey
8	Ashingdon Primary Academy	School	Survey
9	Barnardo's	Public body	Survey
10	Barnardo's, Saffron Walden (Essex Child & Family Wellbeing Service)	Public body	Survey
11	Beacon Hill Rovers FC	Sports	Survey
12	Becca's Book Club	Book group	Survey
13	Benfleet Community Archive	History	Survey
14	Benfleet U3A (University of the Third Age)	U3A	Survey

	Organisation	Category	Response method
15	Bentfield Primary School	School	Survey
16	Billericay Methodist Preschool	Preschool	Survey
17	Book Club, Galleywood	Book group	Survey
18	Book Group, Kelvedon	Book group	Survey
19	Book Group, Shenfield	Book group	Survey
20	Book Talk Book Club, Buckhurst Hill	Book group	Survey
21	Book Talk Book Group	Book group	Survey
22	Booklets Book Group, Brightlingsea	Book group	Survey
23	Boxted Mobile Library Van Users	Library	Survey
24	Bradfield WI Book Group	Book group	Survey
25	Braintree Area Foodbank Ltd	Foodbank	Survey
26	Brentwood Choral Society	Music and theatre	Survey
27	Brightlingsea Book Club	Book group	Survey
28	Brightlingsea Playreading Group	Book group	Survey
29	Broomfield Green Zone	Environment	Survey
30	Broomfield SOLE (Save Our Libraries Essex)	Library	Survey
31	Broomfield U3A	U3A	Survey
32	Cheeky Monkeys Nursery, Earls Colne	Preschool	Survey
33	Chelmsford Community Transport	Community	Survey
34	Chicken and Frog Bookshop / Brentwood Children's Literary Festival	Literary	Survey
35	Childminder, Harlow	Preschool	Survey
36	Childminding	Preschool	Survey
37	Chipping Hill Book Club	Book group	Survey
38	Chipping Hill Primary School	School	Survey
39	Citizens' Advice Essex	Citizens advice	Survey
40	Citizens' Advice South Essex	Citizens advice	Survey
41	Coastliners	Book group	Survey
42	Coffee Mates Ladies' Club	Social	Survey
43	Coggeshall Community Library Group	Library	Survey

	Organisation	Category	Response method
44	Colchester Sixth Form College	School	Survey
45	Colne Place Residential Home	Residential home	Survey
46	Cygnets Mothers and Toddlers	Preschool	Survey
47	Dedham Primary School	School	Survey
48	Dovercourt Choral Society	Music and theatre	Survey
49	Earls Colne Community Library Group	Library	Survey
50	Edward Bear, Wickham Bishops	Preschool	Survey
51	Elsenham Village Hall	Community	Survey
52	Emma Durrant Childcare	Preschool	Survey
53	Epping Forest Conservative Association, Buckhurst Hill Branch	Political party	Survey
54	Epping Forest Foodbank	Foodbank	Survey
55	EPUT (Essex Partnership University NHS Trust)	Public body	Survey
56	Essex and Harlow Symphony Orchestras	Music and theatre	Survey
57	Essex Cares Ltd (ECL)	Public body	Survey
58	Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service	Public body	Survey
59	Essex Knitters and Stitchers	Arts	Survey
60	Essex Lifestyle Service	Public body	Survey
61	Essex Partnership NHS Trust (Brockfield House)	Public body	Survey
62	Essex Society for Archaeology and History	History	Letter
63	Essex Society for Family History	History	Survey
64	Feering WI	Community	Survey
65	Finchingfield Community Library	Library	Survey
66	French Club, West Mersea	Adult Learning	Survey
67	Friends of Hullbridge Library Group	Library	Survey
68	Frinton Chapel Preschool	Preschool	Survey
69	Fryatt in Harwich	Community	Survey
70	Fyfield Book Club	Book group	Survey

	Organisation	Category	Response method
71	George Book Lovers, Braintree	Book group	Survey
72	Great Baddow Booktalk	Book group	Survey
73	Great Baddow Village Market	Community	Survey
74	Great Tey Women's Institute Book Club	Book group	Survey
75	Grove Preschool, Stanway	Preschool	Survey
76	H&TCA (Hadleigh and Thundersley Community Archive)	History	Survey
77	Hadleigh Castle U3A	U3A	Survey
78	Hadleigh Community Group	Community	Survey
79	Halstead and District U3A	U3A	Survey
80	Hamelin Trust	Residential home	Survey
81	Hands Off Thaxted	Library	Letter
82	Hanover Court, Dovercourt	Residential home	Survey
83	Harlow Alliance Party	Political party	Survey
84	Harlow Civic Society	Community	Letter and survey
85	Harlow Common Residents' Forum	Residents	Survey
86	Harlow Ethnic Minority Umbrella	Community	Survey
87	Harlow Talking News	Community	Survey
88	Harwich Festival of the Arts	Arts	Survey
89	Harwich Reading Group	Book group	Survey
90	Hawkwell Residents' Association	Residents	Survey
91	Hazelmere Infant School and Nursery	School	Survey
92	Helping Hands Essex	Community	Survey
93	Holland Residents' Association	Residents	Email and survey
94	HomeStart Essex	Community	Survey
95	HPFT (Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust)	Public body	Survey
96	Hullbridge Residents' Association	Residents	Letter
97	Hundred Parishes Society	History	Survey
98	Inform Galleywood	Community	Survey

Future Library Services Cabinet report: Appendix 2 Consultation Response Report.

	Organisation	Category	Response method
99	Integration Support Services	Community	Survey
100	Islanders Book Group	Book group	Survey
101	Jack and Jill Preschool, Brentwood	Preschool	Survey
102	Jean's Book Club	Book group	Survey
103	Kayte's House	Preschool	Survey
104	Kelvedon and Feering Heritage Society	History	Letter
105	Kelvedon Roman Catholic Church	Church	Survey
106	Kelvedon St Mary's Primary Academy and Autism Hub	School	Survey
107	Kingston Primary School	School	Survey
108	Kool Carers South East Ltd	Care	Survey
109	Layer de la Haye Primary School	School	Email
110	Lindsell Bookclub	Book group	Survey
111	Little Pickles Nursery	Preschool	Survey
112	Little Smarties Nursery	Preschool	Survey
113	Longridge and Literary Friendship Book Club	Book group	Survey
114	Loughton Voluntary Care Association	Care	Survey
115	Love Stanway	Community	Survey
116	Macmillan	Care	Survey
117	Magna Carta Primary Academy	School	Survey
118	Manningtree Museum & Local History Group	History	Letter
119	Maylandsea Primary School	School	Survey
120	Meadows Montessori	Preschool	Survey
121	Mersea and Pyefleet Branch, Labour Party	Political party	Survey
122	Mersea Community Support	Community	Survey
123	Mersea Island Library Enthusiasts	Library	Survey
124	Mersea Island School	School	Survey
125	Mersea Island Society	Community	Email and survey
126	Mersea Island Trust (Mersea Court)	Residential home	Survey

	Organisation	Category	Response method
127	MICA (Mersea Island Community Association)	Community	Survey
128	Millfields Primary School	School	Survey
129	Monday Shakespeare Group, Old Harlow	Book group / Literary	Survey
130	Mulberry Book Club	Book group	Survey
131	Mulberry Bush Montessori Ltd	Preschool	Survey
132	Mum and Toddler Group, Hadleigh	Preschool	Survey
133	Museums Essex	History	Survey
134	National Education Union North East Essex	Trade union	Letter
135	National Education Union North Essex	Trade union	Survey
136	National Education Union West Essex	Trade union	Survey
137	National Jazz Archive	Arts	Survey
138	Normski Readers	Book group	Survey
139	NWES (Norfolk and Waveney Enterprise Services)	Business support	Survey
140	NWR Bookworms	Book group	Survey
141	OWLs (Older Wiser Links) Brightlingsea	Social	Letter
142	Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Shenfield	Church	Letter
143	Passmores Academy	School	Survey
144	Paycockes WI	Community	Survey
145	Plume Academy	School	Survey
146	Prettygate Baptist Church	Church	Survey
147	Prettygate Reading Group	Book group	Email
148	Puffins Reading Group	Book group	Survey
149	Purford Green School	School	Survey
150	Rainbow Pre-School, Stansted	Preschool	Email and survey
151	Ramsden Hall School	School	Survey
152	Rayleigh Library (Tuesday) Writers' Group	Literary	Survey
153	Rayleigh Mount WI	Community	Survey
154	Reading Between the Lines	Book group	Survey

Future Library Services Cabinet report: Appendix 2 Consultation Response Report.

	Organisation	Category	Response method
155	Realise Futures	Employment	Survey
156	Recorders of Uttlesford History	History	Letter
157	Residents 4 Uttlesford	Political party	Letter and survey
158	Richmond Preschool	Preschool	Survey
159	Riverside Primary School	School	Survey
160	Rochford and Southend East Constituency Labour Party	Political party	Survey
161	Save Coggeshall Library Campaign	Library	Survey
162	Save Manningtree Library Action Group	Library	Letter
163	Saxon Amateur Theatre Group	Music and theatre	Survey
164	SeeHistory	Literary	Survey
165	Shenfield and Hutton Morning WI	Community	Survey
166	Shenfield Library Friday Book Group	Book group	Survey
167	Shenfield Readers	Book group	Survey
168	Sible Hedingham Book Group	Book group	Survey
169	Sible Hedingham Save Our Libraries	Library	Survey
170	Sid Bolan Big Band	Music and theatre	Survey
171	Signpost (Colchester) Ltd	Community	Survey
172	Singing Book Club, Brightlingsea	Book group	Survey
173	Smiles Montessori Preschool	Preschool	Survey
174	Sounds Right Phonics for Kids	Preschool	Survey
175	South Woodham Ferrers U3A Play Reading Group	Book group	Survey
176	Southminster CE Primary School	School	Survey
177	St Cedd's Reading Group	Book group	Survey
178	St John's Buckhurst Hill Book Club	Book group	Survey
179	St John's C of E Primary School	School	Survey
180	St Luke's Church, Tiptree	Church	Survey
181	St Mary's CE Church, Ardleigh	Church	Survey
182	St Mary's Music Association	Music and theatre	Survey

	Organisation	Category	Response method
183	St Mary's Primary School, Stansted	School	Survey
184	St Michael and All Angels Church, Galleywood	Church	Letter and survey
185	St Michael's CE Junior School, Galleywood	School	Survey
186	St Peter's Church Reading Group	Book group	Survey
187	St Peter's Primary School	School	Survey
188	Stambridge Primary School	School	Survey
189	Stansted Free Church	Church	Survey
190	Stansted is Well Read Book Group	Book group	Survey
191	Stanway Village Hall Management Committee	Community	Survey
192	Stondon Singers	Music and theatre	Survey
193	Team to Save Hockley Library	Library	Letter
194	Teen Talk, Clacton/Walton	Community	Survey
195	Thaxted Primary School	School	Email
196	Thaxted Society	History	Letter and survey
197	Thorpe le Soken WI	Community	Survey
198	Tiptree Choral Society	Music and theatre	Letter
199	Tiptree Preschool Playgroup	Preschool	Survey
200	Tiptree U3A	U3A	Email
201	Toad Hall Day Nursery, Castle Point	Preschool	Survey
202	Tolleshunt d'Arcy Book Group	Book group	Survey
203	Totham Hill Book Club	Book group	Survey
204	Twinkling Tots	Preschool	Survey
205	Tye Green Leisure and Community Association	Community	Letter
206	U3A Book Group, Shenfield	Book group	Survey
207	U3A Essex	U3A	Survey
208	U3A Family History, Hockley	History	Survey
209	U3A Play Readers, Hadleigh	Book group	Survey

	Organisation	Category	Response method
210	U3A Playreading 2, Hadleigh	Book group	Survey
211	UNISON Essex County Branch	Trade union	Letter
212	Uplanders Book Group, West Mersea	Book group	Survey
213	Uttlesford Citizens Advice (incorporates formal complaint to Michael Ellis MP)	Citizens advice	Letter and survey
214	Walkers Book Group	Book group	Survey
215	Walton Community Forum	Community	Survey
216	Water Lane Primary Academy	School	Survey
217	West Horndon Art Group	Arts	Survey
218	Westcliff High School for Girls	School	Survey
219	Westerings Primary Academy	School	Survey
220	WI Book Group, Manuden	Book group	Survey
221	WI Orchard Springs Reading Group	Book group	Survey
222	Wickford Community Projects	Community	Survey
223	Wickham Bishops Baby and Toddler Rhymetime Group	Preschool	Survey
224	Wickham Bishops with Little Braxted Parish Church Council	Church	Survey
225	Willingale Book Club	Book group	Email and survey
226	Witham Choral	Music and theatre	Survey
227	Wivenhoe Open Air Shakespeare	Music and theatre	Survey
228	Wivenhoe Orchestra	Music and theatre	Survey
229	Workers' Educational Association Essex	Adult education	Survey
230	Workers' Educational Association Brightlingsea	Adult education	Survey
231	Workers' Educational Association Halstead	Adult education	Survey
232	Workers' Educational Association Writtle	Adult education	Survey
233	Writtle Infant School	School	Survey

There were also 21 survey responses from unidentified organisations.

7.2 Summaries of the responses

Comments by organisations echoed the themes listed in section 3 and therefore will not be listed again here. Where an organisation raised a point not covered above, they are listed below.

Two classes of organisation have specific needs, involving dealing with large numbers of books, which were often iterated in their responses. These are book groups, of which Essex Libraries supports over 700, and performing arts groups, 102 of whom subscribe to Essex Libraries' Performing Arts Service.

7.2.1 Book groups

48 book groups responded to the consultation. Frequent comments included:

- …Assumption or apprehension that book group loans will not be available from community library services

- …Book group management typically involves one person in the group collecting from and returning to the library multiple copies of books. This will become difficult / impossible if they're obliged to travel further to an alternative library. The difficulties already considered under 3.1 (distance, parking, availability of public transport, cost) are exacerbated by the weight of the multiple copies.

- …Many book group members are elderly.

- …Book group loans are issued on one card per group. By not counting book groups supported per library, the active user criterion in the needs assessment ignores the fact that several people are actively using the same card.

- …The potential closure of many libraries implies considerable reduction of the overall bookstock. This will make it difficult, and in some cases no doubt impossible, to gather together enough copies of a requested book to satisfy book group needs.

- …Many groups rely upon staff knowledge for their reading choices, and it's felt that volunteers will lack the knowledge to assist them in this.

- …Most book groups who responded stated that they would have to close if their local library were closed, or if the book group loan service were made unavailable there.

Book Talk Book Club, Buckhurst Hill

Book groups are a great way to contribute to the fabric of society and motivate and galvanise people about local issues. In ours, we regularly discuss all manner of community topics from policing, schools, transport, high streets and in doing so, we play a more active part in local issues. Book groups can provide a vital role in helping people with mental health issues and dementia.

It's important from a cultural point of view that authors are supported, and book groups have a key role to play in doing this.

Booktalk Book Group

Responses to the consultation should have been used as criteria for the needs assessment.

Great Baddow Booktalk

Please look at what the Thimblemill Library, Sandwell, West Midlands, is doing to see the potential of community involvement in activities and social evenings held there varying from folk evenings, talks, small theatre groups etc.

NWR Bookworms, Harwich

Suggested needs assessment criterion: Distance of libraries from other libraries where that distance is more than 3 miles. Libraries further than 3 miles from their closest library should be given a higher priority, especially in semi-rural areas with poor public transport as that will prevent many customers from visiting libraries.

Uplanders Book Group, West Mersea

Cultural education should have been included as a criterion in the needs assessment.

Willingale Book Club

There's currently a book swap in the village hall and they were wondering if they should expand and enhance this. Not offering to run a community library.

7.2.2 Performing arts groups

11 music and theatre groups responded to the consultation. (Play reading groups, which belong to both classes, have been included with book groups above.) Frequent comments included:

- …Assumption or apprehension that performing arts loans will not be available from community library services

- …Typically, one person in the group collects from and returns to the library multiple copies of books or scores. In the case of the largest choirs, this may amount to several boxes full of heavy hardback scores. This will become difficult / impossible if they're obliged to travel further to an alternative library.

7.2.3 Archives, archaeology and historical societies

Archives

Metrics on how the Libraries are also being used creatively should be included in the needs assessment.

Essex Society for Archaeology and History

It's important we recognise the social and health value of walking to a library, especially when many other facilities such as shops or banks are closing.

Essex Society for Family History

Family historians make extensive use of the reference materials currently only available in libraries. There include Ancestry, Find My Past, National Newspaper Archive, Dictionary of National Biography, Who was Who etc. As the number of libraries is to be significantly reduced can these reference sources be available using a library card from home computers? (Note: The Guardian, Observer and Times archives, the Dictionary of National Biography and Who Was Who are currently available online to library users from home. Ancestry, Find My Past, and the British Newspaper Archive are currently available online in libraries only, but the possibility of making them accessible from home will be explored during the strategy period.)

Recorders of Uttlesford History (signed by representatives of 20 parishes in Uttlesford)

Access to the Town Library with its valuable role in research would be compromised by reduced opening hours at Saffron Walden; out-of-hours access would be no good for the Town Library. Reduced opening hours would also affect the Essex Record Office Access Point at Saffron Walden.

7.2.4 Foodbanks

Braintree Area Foodbank Ltd

Confidential space for emergency help would be a tremendous benefit to clients in crisis and needing food. Foodbanks could have volunteers working out of libraries maybe a couple of hours each day.

The library is a safe space for those who need to access computers for benefit links and to use the Turn2Us link for benefit advice and information.

Epping Forest Foodbank

Epping Forest Foodbank serves 3-day emergency food parcels to local people in crisis, referred to the Foodbank by front line professionals. If you close Debden Library the Distribution Centre that the Foodbank runs from there would also have to close/relocate creating problems for people who desperately need supplies and who rely on being able to access them via the service run from Debden Library. Debden Library is the 2nd most visited distribution centre out of the 3 in Epping Forest.

7.2.5 Chelmsford Community Transport

Suggestion: Memory Cafes where people can reminisce about the local community.

7.2.6 Childminder, Harlow

Suggestion: Having post offices in libraries to generate income to support the libraries.

7.2.7 Citizens Advice Essex

We would like to offer to be one of the community groups running some of the tier 3 and possibly tier 4 libraries. We plan to prepare for you a more comprehensive business case to explain how we work with volunteers, how Citizens Advice is running libraries elsewhere in the Country and different models available. We feel we are well placed with a wide Essex network, a brand the public recognise and trust to provide Essex County Council a viable alternative community offer for some libraries. We would welcome an opportunity to discuss this with you further.

7.2.8 Citizens Advice South Essex

Citizens Advice South Essex would like to discuss working with the Council particularly regarding the Tier 2 and 3 libraries.

7.2.9 Colchester Sixth Form College

The loss of our weekly delivery van was regrettable and has substantially reduced the amount of inter library loans we place. Extra time is required by our staff to return books, usually individually. Statistically this means although we value the service, we are unable to use it as much. We value the ability to borrow books but are unable to maintain it as a promoted service, therefore reducing issue stats.

7.2.10 Dedham Primary School

Suggestions: Is it possible to get involved with NCT groups/playgroups/nurseries so that the message about the importance of making time for children's reading gets out as early as possible? Lots of our children sign up to the Summer Reading Challenge and therefore perhaps something ongoing throughout the year to encourage reading would be possible? Our parents are always looking for after school clubs/childcare opportunities and therefore perhaps there are possibilities for book clubs/holiday clubs etc?

7.2.11 Elsenham Village Hall

If the nearest library building closes and the Council needs to find alternative spaces to run activities, our organisation (village hall) will need to consider stepping in to offer a venue. However, we feel strongly that library services should be provided by professional trained staff in a purpose-designed space

7.2.12 Essex Knitters and Stitchers

Knitters and Stitchers groups meet in various libraries including Tiptree, Kelvedon and Hatfield Peverel, making items for local charities. Many of the

ladies involved would possibly not see or talk to anyone if they did not come along to the knitting groups.

7.2.13 Essex Partnership University NHS Trust (Brockfield House, Wickford)

Mental health organisations such as Brockfield House in Wickford have patients who undergo extensive rehabilitation and re-integrate them with the real world. Many of our patients have IT skills, customer service skills and volunteer in community organisations before discharge. Some of them also do paid employment. It will be useful for libraries to partner with us to identify and utilise such talent as it is mutually beneficial. Also, our unit will be willing to host a part of library services within our unit by providing space, utilise any smart services library can offer for our service users and staff. Being a 98 bedded unit, at any time, we have 98 patients and 100 staff on the unit. As such, it's a community of 200 people at any point of day or night! Having a 'library hub' on site in collaboration with Essex library services will be a useful way of extending this vital service to our community, increase uptake of library services and thus contributing to improving our communities.

7.2.14 Harlow Alliance Party

The Harlow Alliance Party would like to see Harlow Council decentralise some of its services to neighbourhoods and we are now making the case that they look to offer to share space in libraries (and costs) so that the library service can remain where it is now.

7.2.15 Home-Start Essex

School readiness should have been used as a needs assessment criterion.

7.2.16 Integration Support Services, Harlow

The majority of our users speak English as a Second Language (ESL). They are therefore reliant upon libraries to improve their English and integrate.

7.2.17 Millfields Primary School

No weighting is given to the number of school age children in a community.

7.2.18 National Education Union, North Essex

Suggested needs assessment criterion: The use of libraries by children and by secondary and sixth form students as peaceful places in which to study or do homework, especially students who do not live near a tier 1 library.

7.2.19 National Jazz Archive (NJA)

The criteria are for the most part entirely appropriate. However, they do not include important criteria relevant to the NJA which is based at Loughton Library. NJA holds a collection of national and international significance. It receives visitors and enquiries from around the UK and around the world.

It is a remarkable tribute to Essex County Council that it has hitherto provided generous support to such an important institution. This has enabled NJA to

achieve its current status and has helped to raise the profile of Essex County Council. NJA keeps a detailed record of visitors and enquiries and its outreach work. NJA also engages a number of volunteers. These are all important criteria which should be taken into account in deciding on the value of retaining Loughton Library and retaining NJA at Loughton Library.

The National Jazz Archive hopes that the consultation will take into account the importance of NJA as a national and international institution. Accommodation at Loughton Library is critical to its ongoing survival.

7.2.20 Ramsden Hall School

Suggested needs assessment criterion: Community access for pupils and students that are not in full time school. Without access to a library it would be increasingly difficult to tutor the most vulnerable young people in our community.

7.2.21 Rayleigh Library Writers' Group

Rayleigh Writers meets each month at Rayleigh Library. Formed in 2002, following an initiative by the library, it has provided a valuable resource for local writers, helping many of them to develop their skills and become published authors. The Group has produced eight anthologies of short stories and poems which it sells in support of the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance. In 2013 the Group was awarded a 'Special Certificate' for its services to Rayleigh by Rayleigh Town Council. None of this would have happened without the help and support of Rayleigh Library. Closure would deprive us of our meeting place and the help and support of library staff.

7.2.22 Reading Between the Lines

Suggestion: Reduce the number of new books into smaller libraries. Ask the staff to pick a small selection from the books being sent to the larger ones. The librarians know what their customers want.

7.2.23 Realise Futures

As an example of space sharing for drop-in sessions, in Colchester Library there could be space for Realise Futures, Signpost, Purple, Citizens Advice, Mencap and Shelter to offer advice and expertise on Employment/Training/Job Searching/Disability, CV writing and skills, finance queries and advice, mental ill health and homelessness.

The use of the cafeteria area would be increased bringing in more money, and volunteering is a huge part of building work experience, so it would even be possible for us to source suitable volunteers locally from a Realise Futures perspective. Would be willing to discuss further.

7.2.24 Residents 4 Uttlesford

- ....Libraries are more important in remote rural communities. Saffron Walden and Dunmow are 14 miles apart; Stansted and Thaxted are in the middle

of the district serving villages between. Proportionally more important due to poor physical connectivity, poor rural broadband and remoteness from other services.

- ....Using a measure of local fertility rates [for the social isolation criterion] is wholly inadequate as it fails to measure the number of new people moving to the area.

- ....Financial case not proven and identified costs do not outweigh benefits

- ....Thaxted and Stansted libraries have already been paid for by developer contributions paid to Essex County Council when new homes are built, and ought to have been generating a surplus for ECC.

- ....Uttlesford is disproportionately underfunded, receiving 4% of library funding for 6% of Essex residents.

- ....When Thaxted Library building was sold residents were told the proceeds would guarantee provision for many years; in fact using figures provided under FOI it should be guaranteed for over 100 years.

7.2.25 SeeHistory

SeeHistory produces books in hard copy and e-book versions. We would love to be able to expand this in conjunction with the library to include books for the poorly sighted etc.

7.2.26 Shenfield and Hutton Morning WI

Suggested criterion for needs assessment: Main criterion should be education and public service.

7.2.27 Shenfield Readers

Suggestions: Classes on all manner of subjects could be held. Why was the orange sack service withdrawn from Shenfield?

7.2.28 Signpost (Colchester) Ltd

Signpost is a registered charity that helps Colchester residents back in to work by providing employability support services. We based ourselves on the first floor of Greenstead Library due to high unemployment in the area and the need for our support - our model is to base ourselves in areas of deprivation. As we have use of the first floor of the building two days a week when the library is closed, it seems sensible to explore ways of joint working with Essex Libraries to help deliver services as a partner organisation.

7.2.29 Singing Book Club, Brightlingsea

Suggested criterion for needs assessment: Manual handling - book groups have to carry larger numbers of books.

7.2.30 Southminster C of E Primary School

Suggested needs assessment criterion: Active outreach to schools.

As a school we are keen to actively engage in the new model of library services, from hosting activities to lending space and encouraging volunteers. Southminster School and St Cedd's Primary in Bradwell on Sea work closely together, sharing resources & staff and would therefore be able to support in 2 communities. We are also interested in exploring how our 2 minibuses might find a role within this model.

7.2.31 Stanway Village Hall Management Committee

Suggestion: Have you asked the financial sector if they would be willing to support libraries and have some banking facilities available? It cannot always be about cost of the individual facility as closure often leads to problems elsewhere that eventually cost the Council more money.

7.2.32 Tolleshunt d'Arcy Book Group

Maldon Library, our next nearest library would need more staff to take on other book groups from libraries which have closed.   I think they already have in excess of 30 groups.

7.2.33 Twinkling Tots

Suggestion: Make the Rhymetime sessions interactive - allow children to dress up and encourage them to act out parts of a story - this would also encourage more participation from groups/ schools/ childminders/ nurseries and greatly help disadvantaged children to love books.

7.2.34 UNISON Essex County Branch

- … Urges further investment (including technology) to deliver new and more efficient ways of working.
- … Online and digital challenges:
  - o Issues with the current market for eBooks – both in terms of extent to which publishers support and issues with compatibility of current platforms.
  - o How digital access and increased knowledge/skills in this area will be supported given this will be limited to tier 1 & 2 libraries.
- … Learning: Recommends more joined up working with Adult Community Learning (ACL) to support learning needs.
- … Concerned that it is a "cash raising plan" to use funds from sale of buildings etc. to "defray costs such as redundancy, or to bail out other services".
- … Concerned that proposals to raise local funds for tier 1 & 2 libraries be used as additional income not to prop up core service provision.
- … Concerned that Smart libraries risk effectively excluding children and literacy levels will suffer.

- ...Concerned that increasing revenue by charging for services will drive people away.

7.2.35 Uttlesford Citizens Advice

Suggestion: A model of encouraging second hand exchange or purchase could be a viable alternative, possibly run in conjunction with like-minded charities; this could save money, whilst preserving the social space. Lending services could then focus on specialized materials such as large print, Braille and talking books.

Having worked locally in Thaxted and Stansted, we know there are no alternative sites for free public access to computers or the internet in these villages.

Made a formal complaint to Michael Ellis MP, Minister for Libraries, expressing concern about proposals to close Thaxted and Stansted libraries.

- ...The consultation and business planning process used by the Council was flawed

- ...Asked for a Local Inquiry by the Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport to stop the consultation process.

- ...The assessment criteria and weighting in the needs assessment take no account of the rural nature of Thaxted or Stansted and the surrounding villages; therefore the outcome of the proposal promotes a bias against rural library provision.

- ...Needs assessment used book borrowing statistics only; Stansted library was operating a reduced service from temporary premises prior to a move into a new community hub.

- ...needs assessment fails to consider library use for other purposes, eg internet access; a safe, warm place to sit; a meeting place; a source of local information; for research or homework.

- ...Loss of library services in our rural area will disproportionately affect the elderly, the young, those on low incomes and those who are already socially isolated and lonely.

- ...Nearest alternative libraries are between 6 and 10 miles away. Public transport in Uttlesford is already prohibitively expensive for many clients, so closure would mean a complete loss of access to library services.

- ...A large number of Citizens Advice clients do not have a computer or access to the internet at home so they use the library and support of the librarians to apply for jobs, manage their finances and household bills and apply for welfare benefits. No other locations provide free access to computers in Thaxted or Stansted.

- ...Clients struggling or unable to heat their homes are encouraged to use libraries as safe, warm, free places to spend time and find companionship.

- ...CA Uttlesford uses Thaxted and Stansted libraries to meet and advise clients unable to travel to Great Dunmow and Saffron Walden currently provide a fortnightly service from Thaxted, which has been identified as a 'Model Community Library' by Essex County Council and have an agreement in place to provide our service from the new community hub in Stansted once it is reopened.

- ...Libraries are so much more than just a place to borrow books. They provide a vital service to rural communities, facilitating social interaction, reducing disadvantage and improving access to other services.

7.2.36 Water Lane Primary Academy, Harlow

Would like mobile service to continue, but to remain at school for longer than 30 minutes to an hour, as this limits the number of children who can make use of the service. The pupils would not otherwise be able to access library books.

7.2.37 West Horndon Art Group

Our Art Group regularly exhibits at Essex Libraries (8, over the years). This is not just a cosmetic function but represents an essential part of the painting process - the artist needs to accept that their work will be viewed by strangers - and challenges their creative and compositional skills. The Libraries have provided a valuable aid to Essex residents in this regard over the years. The inability to exhibit undermines a 'well-being' activity for groups of Essex residents (mostly pensioners) and takes away an opportunity for confidence boosting & self-esteem enhancement.

7.2.38 Westerings Academy, Hockley

The lasting impact of its closure would be felt for generations, as we would be unable to facilitate a three mile walk to our next local library for our pupils. (Other schools made a similar point.)

7.2.39 Anonymous response:

One response suggested the five-year time frame for the strategy is too short.

8   Petitions

Fifty-seven petitions were received during the consultation period, containing 60,000 signatures. Where petitions were from the same organisation or about the same library they were pooled, with permission of the lead petitioner. Petitions are listed below in order of size. Please note that the Council can only consider petitions that have been closed and submitted to the Council. Petitions that are still open cannot be considered.

Future Library Services Cabinet report: Appendix 2 Consultation Response Report.

Library/area	Petition title	Number of signatures
All libraries	SOLE Save our Libraries Essex (5 petitions) We oppose the downgrading and closure of libraries in Essex. All libraries must remain open and with paid staff to ensure a safe and proper service. The proposed saving of less than £3.50 per household per year is not justified against the loss to the community.	15,382
Shenfield	Save Shenfield Library (3 petitions) We call on ECC to maintain Shenfield Library as at present. Using ECC tiering methodology, this would require ECC to upgrade Shenfield Library from a tier 3 library to a tier 2 library.	8,789
Hockley	Save Hockley Library (2 petitions) We call on ECC to retain Hockley Library as a fully funded library service with full digital access, funded, staffed and serviced by ECC.	8,028
Buckhurst Hill	Save Buckhurst Hill Library (2 petitions) Buckhurst Hill Library is an essential part of our community encouraging reading and learning for the young, providing access to computers for the poorest, used as a community hub providing classes for mums and toddlers and safe meeting spaces. Instead of thinking creatively about how to use the space ECC just want to close the library to save money. We call on ECC to remove Buckhurst Hill Library from their list of libraries earmarked for potential closure.	3,043
Great Tarpots	Save Great Tarpots Library (2 petitions)	2,538

Library/area	Petition title	Number of signatures
	We object to the closure of Great Tarpots Library.	
Coggeshall	Save Coggeshall Library (2 petitions) We wish the council to retain Coggeshall Library as a fully funded library service with full digital access; funded, staffed and serviced by ECC.	2,278
All libraries	Save our Essex Libraries (Lib Dem) We call on ECC to abandon its plan to close 24 libraries and possibly 19 more.	2,259
Manningtree	Manningtree Library (2 petitions) Manningtree Library has been highlighted as at risk of closure in the next two years. It is a vital community hub, we cannot afford to lose it. We urge our council leaders to act now to save Manningtree Library.	1,852
Hadleigh	Save Hadleigh Library (3 petitions) ECC propose to change Hadleigh to a community run establishment with no guarantee of it staying open if a suitable partner cannot be found. Hadleigh is a busy and well-run library used by various local community groups and a vital hub of the area. We urge our leaders to act now to keep Hadleigh Library open and within ECC to maintain its quality of service to the community.	1,730
Chigwell	Chigwell Library (2 petitions) ECC wants to close Chigwell Library, but it is an essential part of our community. It encourages children, young people, elderly and people with learning disabilities to have space and time to learn and meet others in a learning environment. We call on ECC to save Chigwell Library from closure.	1,662

Future Library Services Cabinet report: Appendix 2 Consultation Response Report.

Library/area	Petition title	Number of signatures
Fryerns and Vange	Fryerns and Vange Libraries (2 petitions) We are concerned that Fryerns and Vange Libraries are threatened with closure. We call upon the council to ensure that these libraries remain open under ECC management.	1,620
South Benfleet	South Benfleet Library (3 petitions) We call on ECC to retain South Benfleet Library as a fully funded library service with full digital access, funded, staffed and serviced by ECC.	1,232
Wivenhoe	Save Wivenhoe Library and Librarians (2 petitions) Essex libraries are threatened with closure, Wivenhoe to be downgraded to volunteer-run. ECC and MP Bernard Jenkin, please fund our libraries. For learning, love of reading and community, nothing can replace a thriving library.	1,226
Hullbridge	Hullbridge Library (2 petitions) We call on ECC to retain Hullbridge Library as a fully funded library service with full digital access funded, staffed and serviced by ECC. We believe that further use of the existing library premises should be explored and call on ECC to retain this important community hub.	1,141
Thaxted	Thaxted Library We are appalled that ECC has announced that 25 libraries are earmarked for closure and we wish to make a particular plea to oppose the closure of Thaxted Library. This is a model of what a good, modern community library should be, and it is serving the people of Thaxted well. It is more than just a building, it	898

Library/area	Petition title	Number of signatures
	provides a service that is inclusive and vibrant, and enables users to learn, engage and remain connected to the community. The library has already been forcibly down-sized from larger premises so that Clarence House could be sold by ECC. Since this was an important educational centre for Thaxted, some of the proceeds from this sale should have been reinvested in Thaxted's educational infrastructure to compensate for its loss. [Other points repeat those listed in section 3 above, and in the submissions by Uttlesford District Council and Thaxted Parish Council.]	
Tendring libraries	Save Tendring's public libraries ECC have announced a list of 44 libraries across the county which are at risk of closing including the four in Tendring. Libraries are a part of the fabric of our local community which have provided generations of families with access to literature, education, knowledge, learning and support. Libraries are an essential part of public services, enabling poor children from disadvantaged families to access information, knowledge and skills to give them a decent chance in life. Libraries are fantastic assets to the community and need to be saved for future generations.	877
Holland	Holland-on-Sea Library (2 petitions) We demand that Holland Library remains open. It provides vital services for the local community which help to reduce social costs such as reliance on the NHS and other publicly funded organisations. It provides access to a variety of	755

Library/area	Petition title	Number of signatures
	learning materials for people of all age groups in an area that is expanding and attracting many young families. We sincerely hope that ECC will reconsider its intentions to significantly reduce the number of libraries in Essex, particularly small ones like ours, which provide a service that is unique and not found elsewhere in the community.	
Writtle	Writtle Library Writtle Library is a valuable resource for the villagers. It fosters a love of reading within the youngest to the oldest in our community, is a meeting space for various local groups and organisations and provides IT resources for those who do not have their own. It is central to village life and without it the village and residents will be substantially worse off.	695
Silver End	Silver End Library The current Silver End Library was opened by ECC less than 2 years ago. It would be a waste of that investment to close it now. The library is part of the hub services at the Village Hall that help to support the local community. With Silver End set to have over 1000 more residents within the next 10 years, it will need better, not reduced services. We call on ECC to keep Silver End Library open and to withdraw the closure proposal.	650
Great Wakering	Save Great Wakering Library (3 petitions) We object to the closure of Great Wakering Library. We remind ECC of their statutory duty under the Public	532

Library/area	Petition title	Number of signatures
	Libraries and Museums Act 1964 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons.' Also that ECC must legally take into consideration section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 - when applying the Equality Duty, consideration should be given to certain data sets, for example, accessibility (analysed by public transport).	
Brightlingsea	Save Brightlingsea Library (2 petitions) We call on ECC to stop the 12-week consultation to close 25 libraries across the county.	527
Mark Hall	Mark Hall Library Please don't close Mark Hall Library. Books are very important to us, and our library is a place where we can read and discover them. Walt Disney once said. "There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's loot on treasure island." Please don't take away our treasure.	444
Kelvedon	Save Kelvedon Library (2 petitions) Kelvedon Library is a much-valued local community asset used by young and old for a variety of community activities. We call upon ECC to reconsider its closure plan and keep Kelvedon Library open.	407
Ingatestone	Save Ingatestone Library Under this proposal and with adjacent Shenfield, Writtle, Galleywood and Stock Libraries also under threat, and with a shrinking public transport service, people of all ages who rely on Ingatestone library will struggle to find alternative opportunities for guaranteed access to books and	310

Library/area	Petition title	Number of signatures
	computers, and will suffer from increased social isolation. The library is one of the only safe, quiet public spaces to study in Ingatestone. For the youngest villagers, there is no substitute for picking out new picture books. It offers choice over reading topics and encourages a love of the physical element of reading. These are vital building blocks of literacy. Ingatestone is a growing village, so more people will need access to these services in future. We call on ECC to guarantee the future of Ingatestone Library, by accepting responsibility for its funding and by designating it as a tier 2 service.	
West Mersea	Save West Mersea Library We call on ECC not to reduce funding to West Mersea Library, and to withdraw the consultation regarding libraries.	284
Nine libraries **(Coggeshall, Earls Colne, Hatfield Peverel, Kelvedon, Sible Hedingham, Silver End, Stanway, Tiptree and Wickham Bishops)**	Defend your local library ECC plans to decimate library services across the county with libraries in Coggeshall, Earls Colne, Hatfield Peverel, Kelvedon, Sible Hedingham, Silver End, Stanway, Tiptree and Wickham Bishops under threat of closure. These plans are unimaginative, short sighted and further undermine community life in our small towns and villages. We call upon ECC to rethink their closure plans and develop proposals for an inclusive and properly supported library service fit for future needs.	246
Hatfield Peverel	Hatfield Peverel Library We wish to express our concern at the proposed closure of our library. We feel that this has been actioned	227

Library/area	Petition title	Number of signatures
	without due consideration for the social consequences for our younger residents and our older and less able residents. Our community will have nowhere to meet, and we fear it will cause social isolation for young mothers and the older generation in need of a social hub. We have successful groups meeting within the library and are concerned that there appears to be no room for consultation on alternatives such as a volunteer led library.	
All libraries	Stop the loss of our libraries	139
Mark Hall and Tye Green	Mark Hall and Tye Green We call on ECC to stop the 12-week consultation to close 25 libraries across the county.	79
Waltham Abbey	Waltham Abbey Library ECC has announced plans to close 25 libraries and to turn a further 19 over to be run by local communities to save money. Waltham Abbey's library could have its hours cut from the current 48 per week to just 16, with the majority of staff expected to be volunteers. This could drastically reduce accessibility for working families, put community facilities such as drop-ins under threat and throw away years of experience gained by our paid, dedicated librarians. We call on ECC to preserve Waltham Abbey Library's current hours, services and paid staffing levels.	73
All libraries	Essex Libraries We call on ECC to stop the 12-week consultation to close 25 libraries across the county.	36
Prettygate	Prettygate Library	28

Library/area	Petition title	Number of signatures
	We ask that you stop the plan to close Prettygate Library and that the consultation process is halted because the information in the document provided is wrong. Councillor Sue Lissimore has already publicly agreed that Prettygate Library has the highest use of all, after Colchester Central Library. The strategy document places Prettygate Library within Tier 4 "low evidence of need". This is clearly false. [Other points repeat those listed in section 3 above, and in the paragraph on book groups in section 7.]	
Rochford	Rochford Library We call on ECC to retain Rochford Library as a fully funded 'hub' library service with full digital access; funded, staffed, and serviced by Essex County Council.	13

In addition, Kelvedon St Mary's Primary Academy submitted a petition with 422 signatures requesting that the Council retain Kelvedon Library as a fully funded service with funded staff, full digital access and serviced by the Council. The signatories were all primary school children. This petition has been excluded from the main table above in accordance with the provision in the Council's petitions policy, 'A person signing should normally be at least 12 years of age'."

9   Responses by Tier 3 library

In their responses to question 3 of the survey, individual respondents to the survey cited specific tier 3 libraries 9,186 times as libraries they visited frequently. Organisations responding to the survey cited specific tier 3 libraries 121 times. Hadleigh Library had the greatest number of mentions (1,118), followed by Shenfield with 1,061. Letters and emails cited specific Tier 3 libraries 340 times, of which Brightlingsea had the greatest number of mentions (88).

9.1   Key comments about specific libraries

Below, under each library are listed the key overall concerns that consultation respondents raised. Additional analysis identified the three most suggested criteria for the needs assessment by users of the library, based on answers to question 9 of the survey; the three classes of comment most often made in responses to question 19 of the survey; and the three classes of comment most often made by people who submitted emails and letters (where nine or more mentioning that library have been received). When reading the entry for an individual library it is also worth referring to sections 4 to 7 to see comments from MPs, local councils or community groups that may be relevant to that library.

Brightlingsea

416 survey respondents use this library (2% of survey respondents).

Key overall concerns

Concerns about capability and longevity of a volunteer-run service; high percentage of elderly people; distance to and accessibility of alternative libraries if Brightlingsea closed; challenge to lack of recognition of soft evidence (eg book clubs); planned housing and population growth in local area.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (62 individuals, 1 organisation), Availability /reliability of public transport (37 individuals, 2 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (38 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (55 individuals, 2 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (51 individuals, 1 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (47 individuals, 1 organisations).

Emails and letters (88 correspondents)

Most frequent comments: Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (66 correspondents), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (42), I/others will find it difficult to travel/reduce usage/stop using libraries (41).

Specific comments not covered above.

Usage as recorded is not a true picture of usage. Books reserved online should have been counted twice

Coggeshall

371 survey respondents use this library (2%).

Key overall concerns

Challenge to lack of recognition of soft evidence (eg book clubs); concerns about capability and longevity of a volunteer-run service.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (54 individuals, 1 organisation), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (36 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (25 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (46 individuals, 2 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (39 individuals, 3 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (36 individuals, 1 organisations).

Emails and letters (12)

Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (7), Library staff are helpful/trained staff are important/reservations about using volunteers (7), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (5).

Specific comments not covered above.

1st Coggeshall Scout Group

- …Withdrawal of the service at Coggeshall would mean they wouldn't be able to do some badge work.

Save Coggeshall Library Campaign

- …We would be interested in volunteering if it meant the library staying open; however currently the libraries have trained librarians for obvious reasons.

Earls Colne

218 survey respondents use this library (1%).

Key overall concerns

No specific enquiries raised against library.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (15 individuals, 0 organisations), Usage by local community groups/other activities services

based in libraries as a central community hub (13 individuals, 1 organisation), Impact on children/young families (13 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (24 individuals, 0 organisations), Alternative suggestions - ideas for reducing the cost of the service (21 individuals, 2 organisations), Not everyone can access online services/eBooks/smart technology/physical books are important (18 individuals, 1 organisation).

There were two emails and letters mentioning this library.

Specific comments not covered above.

Cheeky Monkeys Nursery, Earls Colne

Where can we put a library facility in Earls Colne? We have already lost our post office and preschool. Not sure there is anywhere else. We would be happy to support it at the nursery but there is no public transport to our site.

Frinton

435 survey respondents use this library (2%).

Key overall concerns

Challenge to lack of recognition of soft evidence (eg book clubs).

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (46 individuals, 2 organisations), Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (34 individuals, 0 organisations), Impact on older/retired users (25 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (42 individuals, 2 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (40 individuals, 1 organisation), Trained staff are important/jobs would be lost/reservations about using volunteers (39 individuals, 2 organisations).

There were three emails and letters mentioning this library.

There are no additional comments about this library.

Great Parndon

131 survey respondents use this library (1%).

Key overall concerns

No specific enquiries raised against library.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (15 individuals, 0 organisations), Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (13 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (13 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (13 individuals, 0 organisations), Alternative suggestions - ideas for improving the service (13 individuals, 0 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (11 individuals, 0 organisations).

Emails and letters (20)

Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (12), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (12), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (12).

There are no additional comments about this library.

Great Tarpots

399 survey respondents use this library (2%).

Key overall concerns

Consider impact of Great Tarpots and South Benfleet, both in Benfleet, both being community-run libraries.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (56 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (27 individuals, 0 organisations), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (23 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (49 individuals, 1 organisation), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (36 individuals, 0 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (34 individuals, 1 organisation).

There were eight emails and letters mentioning this library.

Specific comments not covered above.

See comments for Hadleigh.

Hadleigh

1,118 survey respondents use this library (6%).

Key overall concerns

Challenge to lack of recognition of soft evidence (eg book clubs); accessibility of Canvey Island alternative in the event of closure; challenge to close scoring in Needs Assessment compared with Canvey Island (tier 1); relatively high percentage of elderly people; Castle Point Local Plan has referenced provision of a new library service.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (196 individuals, 3 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (109 individuals, 1 organisation), Impact on older/retired users (75 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (150 individuals, 1 organisation), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (114 individuals, 1 organisation), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (112 individuals, 1 organisation).

Emails and letters (29)

Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (19), Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries/consider other factors/based on inaccurate data (18), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (15).

Specific comments not covered above.

- ... Canvey was deemed to be the Tier 1 for Castle Point and Hadleigh Tier 3. The Benfleet Creek which divides the two major parts of the Borough is a very serious "divide" both in terms of the community and from the perspective of accessibility. The roads onto and off the island are dire for car drivers, and the buses are not that frequent and from Hadleigh the route is a lengthy one via the A13 and Tarpots.

- ... Hadleigh has an ageing population. The Mean Age is 43.2 as opposed to the UK Mean Age 39.3. The population of Hadleigh as a whole is older than the national average.

- ... There is a need to have a library facility both on Canvey Island and on the mainland. Since Hadleigh scored the highest on the mainland of the three libraries, it would seem logical for it to be Hadleigh that remains.

H&TCA (Hadleigh and Thundersley Community Archive)

o The proximity of Hadleigh to Benfleet and Tarpots has been used to propose that all three be considered Tier 3 sites. This appears illogical, as the absence of one, presumably, should allow the others to be retained. As Tarpots lease is not being renewed, Benfleet and Hadleigh Libraries should, therefore, be (at least) upgraded to Tier 2.

o Hadleigh and Canvey libraries score the same on the strategic criteria but this is not apparently reflected in the evaluation. 'Hadleigh is the busiest library in this district for physical visits and loans and renewals' is a quote from the Castle Point infographic sent to Castle Point councillors, but this does not appear to have formed part of the evaluation criteria.

o Canvey has weaker transport links on the extreme edge of Castle Point, logistically a Tier 2 location. Hadleigh has excellent transport links, growth initiatives and focus on community which should be imbedded in the Library strategy. Our archive group's view of Hadleigh Library as deserving of Tier 1 status reflects the dynamic interplay between the Library and the Archive, working together to promote successful Local History days, integrating several local groups and speakers. Along with other groups, we also conduct drop-in opportunities which both benefit from existing Library footfall and bring additional people to the library. In addition, Hadleigh Library already achieves the community contact which should be part of the strategy.

Hockley

870 survey respondents use this library (4%).

Key overall concerns

Challenge to lack of recognition of soft evidence (eg book clubs); concern about capability and longevity of volunteer run service; proximity to and usage by nearby schools; concern about accuracy of population data used against wider conurbation.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (106 individuals, 1 organisation), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (85 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (60 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (93 individuals, 2 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (87 individuals, 0 organisations), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (73 individuals, 2 organisations).

Emails and letters (30)

Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries/consider other factors/based on inaccurate data (17), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (16), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (12).

Specific comments not covered above.

- ... Hockley has higher usage, footfall and population than Rochford but is a tier less. The difference between Canvey and Hockley also seems to be minimal, despite the former's Tier 1 rating.

- ... Hockley is only one point below tier 2 in the needs assessment scoring.

- ... Needs assessment is flawed as it uses 2015 population data and does not take account of housing growth, does not consider pockets of deprivation outside LSOA in which the library is based

- ... Location: The nearest library to Hockley is Rayleigh, 3.3 miles away. Some areas of Ashingdon are also nearer to Hockley Library than to Rochford Library.

- ... Population: Arguably part of Ashingdon should also be classed as Hockley.

- ... Social isolation: there is greater social isolation in Hockley than in Rochford. New births also appear not to have been calculated correctly.

- ... Hockley has more facilities near the library than Rochford.

- ... Use the High Street Initiative to keep Hockley library

- ... The true intention is to knock the library down and replace it with flats.

Ashingdon Parish Council: Owing to parking issues and the presence at Hockley of a surgery, social centre and shopping facilities, Hockley Library has become as important as Rochford to parishioners.

Hockley Parish Council

Hockley Library belongs to J9 scheme [a domestic abuse initiative] for vulnerable people.

Should ECC be looking at developing current library site, provision needs to be made for an alternative community hub in Hockley which would incorporate library facilities and enable the community to have a point of contact for other

services such, Police, health, social services, a meeting area for local groups and public toilets.

Team to Save Hockley Library

- The assertion that funding will run out in five years hasn't been substantiated.

- The survey is generalised. If you're proposing to close a library, you need to consult on that particular library.

- There are five schools within a mile of the library, with 2,905 pupils, all of whom need access to a library to research, borrow books and seek information.

- Maintenance costs of Hockley library should be lower than others because it is a modern building

Ingatestone

382 survey respondents use this library (2%).

Key overall concerns

Concern about capability and longevity of volunteer run service; distance to and accessibility of alternative libraries if Ingatestone closed; challenge to lack of recognition of soft evidence (e.g. book clubs); high percentage of elderly people.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (51 individuals, 0 organisations), Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (43 individuals, 0 organisations), Impact on older/retired users (21 individuals, 0 organisations), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (21 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (21 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (37 individuals,0 organisations), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (36 individuals, 0 organisations), Alternative suggestions - ideas for generating income for the service (33 individuals, 0 organisations).

Emails and letters (17)

Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (10), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (9), I/others will find it difficult to travel/reduce usage/stop

using libraries (9), Library staff are helpful/trained staff are important/reservations about using volunteers (9).

Specific comments not covered above.

Ingatestone Parish Council

The parish council holds all its meetings in the library due to a lack of meeting space owned by the parish council. We would therefore have to source meeting space that equals the library's accessibility. It affects the community as other support groups meet in the library due to its location and accessibility.

Manningtree

586 survey respondents use this library (3%).

Key overall concerns

Distance to and accessibility of alternative libraries if Manningtree closed; planned housing and population growth in local area; challenge to lack of recognition of soft evidence (e.g. book clubs); serves a number of villages in surrounding area - suggestion of 'urban bias'; concern about capability and longevity of volunteer run service; proximity to and usage by nearby schools; impact on disabled people - used by Acorn Village Care Home.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (94 individuals, 3 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (68 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (47 individuals, 2 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (66 individuals, 4 organisations), Trained staff are important/jobs would be lost/reservations about using volunteers (67 individuals, 2 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (66 individuals, 2 organisations).

Emails and letters (63)

Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries/consider other factors/based on inaccurate data (44), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (42), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (37).

Specific comments not covered above.

• From the consultation web pages and documents some residents think that the library will not exist in the same premises after five years. The High Street

location is ideal, and they would like to see a library presence in the same building.

- o There's no evidence in the strategy documents to show why Tendring should have only one Tier 1 and one Tier 2 library.
- o In rural areas such as Manningtree, location should have been given a higher weighting than 30%
- o Usage should have been calculated on the basis of all footfall given the range of activities, which for Manningtree would have produced a figure twice what was recorded

Joint evidential response by councillors from Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford Parish Councils, and from Tendring District Council

- o A large proportion of Manningtree's catchment area lies in Suffolk and was not considered in the population metric.
- o Usage by under 9s and over 60s is well above the county average.

Manningtree Museum & Local History Group

- o Museum based in library premises (old Corn Exchange building) since early days of the library service in Manningtree. Only able to operate thanks to support in kind from ECC.
- o Would be pleased to work with any community organisation ECC decides to partner with, but unclear as to whether such an organisation would have the benefit of the current building. The Museum could not operate on anything close to commercial rates (and would thus be unable to pay for the building themselves).
- o Manningtree has no public or village hall, nor have ECC or the Town Council any premises in the village.
- o Unless ECC is able to provide ongoing annual support directly or indirectly, a move to a more commercial arrangement is not sustainable and the Museum would be forced to close.

Museums Essex

- o Supports the submission of Manningtree Museum (above) regarding the retention of Manningtree Library in its current form.

Shenfield

1,061 survey respondents use this library (5%).

Key overall concerns

Concern about capability and longevity of volunteer run service; challenge to lack of recognition of soft evidence (eg book clubs).

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (163 individuals, 2 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (85 individuals, 0 organisations), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (80 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (132 individuals, 0 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (103 individuals, 0 organisations), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (103 individuals, 1 organisation).

Emails and letters (33)

Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (20), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (20), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (20).

Specific comments not covered above.

There has been significant feedback about Shenfield area, with challenge on the scoring system, particularly the second round of scoring. The deprivation score has been challenged as not taking account of deprivation within areas of Hutton.

South Benfleet

618 survey respondents use this library (3%).

Key overall concerns

Challenge to lack of recognition of soft evidence (eg book clubs); consider impact of Great Tarpots and South Benfleet, both in Benfleet, both being community-run; more would use South Benfleet than Canvey - consider relative populations; consider merging with Great Tarpots and Hadleigh at Castle Point Borough Council office.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (96 individuals, 1 organisation), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (46 individuals, 1 organisation), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (40 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (65 individuals, 0 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (54 individuals, 1 organisation), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (54 individuals, 0 organisations).

Emails and letters (11)

Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries/consider other factors/based on inaccurate data (10), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (7), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (7).

Specific comments not covered above.

Also see comments for Hadleigh.

- …A geographical divide exists in the minds of most people in Castle Point. It is very rare that people from Benfleet travel to Canvey to access community facilities (with the exception of the local leisure centre which is literally a short walking distance from Benfleet Station) and vice versa. Many residents in the mainland of Castle Point will simply go without a library service as they do not view the library on Canvey as easily accessible.

- …Some form of library service should also be maintained by the Council on the site of the South Benfleet library. The Council should fully explore the option of keeping a library space on the majority of the ground floor of the current South Benfleet Library site, fully staffed and maintained by the Council, and realise the rest of the space, and the vertical space above it, for residential purposes. This would allow residents to continue to access and enjoy a library service at the heart of the South Benfleet community. It would also allow the Council to create a modern purpose built library space with reduced building operation and maintenance costs. It would be in keeping with the Council's policy of helping realise its own and other public sector land to help meet the housing need of local authorities and provide a capital receipt to spend on other council projects. It would have the added benefit of growing the customer pool of our local convenience based High Road economy.

- …Provision for a registration service in Castle Point, currently based in South Benfleet Library, is required whatever the outcome of the consultation.

- …The library is used as a base for the local Home Library Service

Benfleet Community Archive

South Benfleet Library is our access to the public and we would be lost without it, putting the future of our site (set up by Essex Libraries) at risk.

Springfield

327 survey respondents use this library (2%).

Key overall concerns

Planned housing and population growth in local area; provides volunteering opportunities for disabled people (via MENCAP).

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Projected population growth/planned housing developments (27 individuals, 1 organisation), Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (24 individuals, 0 organisations), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (22 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (23 individuals, 0 organisations), Alternative suggestions - ideas for reducing the cost of the service (22 individuals, 1 organisation), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (22 individuals, 0 organisations), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (22 individuals, 0 organisations), Alternative suggestions - ideas for improving the service (22 individuals, 0 organisations).

There were three emails and letters mentioning this library.

Specific comments not covered above.

Springfield Parish Council

Usage figures have been increasing, reversing the trend elsewhere.

Any changes will involve renegotiation of 99-year lease agreed with ECC.

Survey response: The parish council is keen to explore a working partnership with ECC that will keep its library open. The possibilities of extended opening hours and revenue support may be considered by the parish council, but within this consideration the vital support of ECC continuing with IT/loan supported software and supply of books will need to be guaranteed. The suggested number of 200 books being supplied every 6 months to a community library serving a population of 20,000 residents will in no circumstance accommodate the 46,000 loans per year currently issued. The parish council is led to believe that the completion of this consultation document will lead to further discussion and negotiation with ECC to retain a library in Springfield. If this is not the case please can the parish council be notified of such and advised of the procedure needed to be undertaken to enable further discussions with the Council.

Springfield has a growing population with predicted influx of residents in new areas development such as Beaulieu Park (3,500 homes), Channels (1,500 homes) in the next 10-year period, this is in addition to some 20,000 residents.

Stanway

427 survey respondents use this library (2%).

Key overall concerns

No specific enquiries raised against library.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (37 individuals, 0 organisations), Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (31 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (31 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (50 individuals, 0 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (40 individuals, 1 organisation), Trained staff are important/jobs would be lost/reservations about using volunteers (38 individuals, 1 organisation).

There were three emails and letters mentioning this library.

Specific comments not covered above.

Love Stanway

As an organisation we have an interest to possibly get involved to keep this service running in Stanway come what may.

Tiptree

487 survey respondents use this library (2%).

Key overall concerns

Concern about capability and longevity of volunteer run service.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (50 individuals, 0 organisations), Impact on older/retired users (27 individuals, 1 organisation), Availability /reliability of public transport (27 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (50 individuals, 0 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (41 individuals, 0 organisations), Alternative suggestions - ideas for reducing the cost of the service (38 individuals, 1 organisation).

Emails and letters (9)

Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (5), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (4), Library staff are helpful/trained staff are important/reservations about using volunteers (4).

There are no additional comments about this library.

Walton

244 survey respondents use this library (1%).

Key overall concerns

High percentage of elderly people; distance to and accessibility of alternative libraries if Walton closed.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (27 individuals, 1 organisation), Ability to travel two miles independently (e.g. non-drivers, disabled users, vulnerable people) (23 individuals, 0 organisations), Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (21 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (23 individuals, 1 organisation), Trained staff are important/jobs would be lost/reservations about using volunteers (23 individuals, 1 organisation), Not everyone can access online services/eBooks/smart technology/physical books are important (20 individuals, 2 organisations).

There were five emails and letters mentioning this library.

Specific comments not covered above.

● ...Walton has a very high percentage of elderly people who also live alone and whose main source of social interaction is the library, it has a very high population of deprived and poor residents, it is an extremely needy town with much of its population falling in to the disadvantaged and requiring additional support and approximately 50% of the Walton primary school pupils are pupil premium.

Walton Community Forum

We believe the town library has an important role to play in creating a strong and vibrant community and are willing to work with ECC to ensure that this facility continues to contribute.

West Clacton

76 survey respondents use this library (<1%).

Key overall concerns

No specific enquiries raised against library.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Impact on older/retired users (4 individuals, 0 organisations), Impact on disabled users/those with reduced mobility (4 individuals, 0 organisations), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (4 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (4 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Trained staff are important/jobs would be lost/reservations about using volunteers (8 individuals, 0 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (7 individuals, 0 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (7 individuals, 0 organisations), Not everyone can access online services/eBooks/smart technology/physical books are important (7 individuals, 0 organisations).

No emails or letters mentioned this library.

There are no additional comments about this library.

West Mersea

551 survey respondents use this library (3%).

Key overall concerns

High percentage of elderly people; deprivation levels questioned; semi-permanent population base not accounted for (eg holiday homes, caravans); distance to and accessibility of alternative libraries if West Mersea closed; lack of alternative community buildings; challenge to lack of recognition of soft evidence (e.g. book clubs); concern about capability and longevity of volunteer run service.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (64 individuals, 2 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on

social isolation/mental health (54 individuals, 2 organisations), Impact on older/retired users (48 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (74 individuals, 2 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (64 individuals, 4 organisations), Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries (66 individuals, 0 organisations).

Emails and letters (25)

Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries/consider other factors/based on inaccurate data (16), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (13), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (13).

Specific comments not covered above.

- …Mersea is an island frequently cut off by the tide and /or traffic for several hours. It is 9.2 miles from central Colchester. There is no lateral communication due to the geography of rivers and estuaries so in the absence of Mersea library there would be no provision in the whole of the Winstree Hundred. The bus takes 45 mins to get to Colchester and costs £5 for a single ticket, a car journey would cost a minimum of £6 including parking.

- …the demographics of Mersea are not the same as the rest of Colchester, it is a retirement community. The statistics used in the needs assessment are those of Colchester Borough as a whole. The percentage of over 65s in Mersea are twice that of Colchester as a whole.

- …Deprivation:- 10% of our older population are affected by income deprivation according to 2015 IMD

  o Social isolation:- in Mersea and Pyefleet ward the number of people over 65 is 33% of the total of 10,000, significantly higher that Colchester as a whole. Many of the elderly rely on mobility scooters that prevent the use of public transport. We have blind folk who rely on talking books from the library. There are parts of the island that have no internet access, the library provides the only means to access the now paperless local government.

  o Usage:- As well as the books, CDs and talking books collected in person, there are the home delivery books, I do not know the figures for these but with the age demographics it will be sizeable. The library is also used by Children's French Club, Baby and Toddler Rhyme Time, Book Club, Stretch and Tone, internet access and picking up recycling bags. The zone warden also holds a drop-in session to assist

those needing help with the internet. There is no alternative venue for these and other groups as everything is heavily subscribed.

West Mersea Parish Council

o Mersea is regularly inaccessible during high tides.

French Club, West Mersea

o It was not viable to hire the library space to run a French group for children, so the club has been running voluntarily for a year at West Mersea Library with the support of librarians there. This means it has been open to all children aged 4-9 as a resource.

Mersea Island Library Enthusiasts

o Mersea Library should be larger to allow for all the different groups that use it to function without having an impact on other library users. In the last two months, two new groups have formed that take place in the library. All the parents of the Rhymetime group believe that it should not take place in a different building as the whole point of Rhymetime is to introduce the next generation to books and develop a love of books.

o Suggestion: Get paid library staff into schools to encourage the use of libraries.

Mersea Island School

o Classification of community, eg hamlet, village, town, should have been used as a criterion in the needs assessment.

Mersea Island Society

o Location: Mersea is regularly cut off from the mainland. (Many Mersea Island organisations made this point.)

o Social Isolation: the population of over 65s across Colchester District was used for the Needs Assessment, but Mersea has fully twice the average across the district as a whole.

o Usage: The strategy quoted an active use figure across the county of 16% of the population. In Mersea however the figure is 21.5% indicating that the local library is popular. It's also used by groups and individuals for a variety of purposes.

Wivenhoe

590 survey respondents use this library (3%).

Key overall concerns

No specific enquiries raised against library.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (70 individuals, 1 organisation), Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (68 individuals, 1 organisation), Impact on children/young families (48 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Trained staff are important/jobs would be lost/reservations about using volunteers (93 individuals, 0 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (88 individuals, 1 organisation), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (71 individuals, 1 organisation).

Emails and letters (17)

Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (9), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (8), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (7).

Specific comments not covered above.

Wivenhoe Town Council

If there is anything the Town Council can do to support Wivenhoe Library, Town Councillors have made it clear that they will be fully motivated to do so.

Wivenhoe Orchestra

Wivenhoe Library is the venue where Wivenhoe Orchestra rehearses every other week. We have also given concerts in the library so that would be lost to the local community as well were the library to close.

10. Responses by Tier 4 library

In their responses to question 3 of the survey, individual respondents to the survey cited specific tier 4 libraries 6,337 times as libraries they visited frequently. Organisations responding to the survey cited specific tier 4 libraries 101 times. Prettygate Library had the greatest number of mentions (1,015). It was followed by Buckhurst Hill with 392 mentions. Letters and emails cited specific Tier 4 libraries 270 times, of which Thaxted had the greatest number of mentions (38).

10. 1 Key comments about specific libraries

Below, under each library are listed the key overall concerns that consultation respondents raised. Additional analysis identified the three most suggested criteria for the needs assessment by users of each library, based on answers to question 9 of the survey; the three classes of comment most often made in responses to question 19 of the survey; and the three classes of comment

most often made by people who submitted emails and letters (where nine or more mentioning that library have been received). When reading the entry for an individual library it is also worth referring to sections 4 to 7 to see comments from MPs, local councils or community groups that may be relevant to that library.

Broomfield

295 survey respondents use this library frequently (1% of survey respondents).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses, value to community: children/social isolation.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (61 individuals, 1 organisation), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (40 individuals, 1 organisation), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (37 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (37 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (65 individuals, 3 organisations), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (64 individuals, 3 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (54 individuals, 1 organisation).

Five emails and letters mentioned this library.

Specific comments not covered above.

Broomfield Parish Council: There is no capacity to be able to host groups (eg Children's activities, several book groups and board games groups etc.) elsewhere in the village. The Village Hall is currently used to capacity.

Without our local library service and the use that is currently made of the building, the Parish Council would not be able to either provide the space for activities nor advice, local information etc that currently occur at the Library.

Broomfield Green Zone

Suggestion: Gift the library building to the community to run as a hub with cafe/shop etc.

Broomfield SOLE (Save Our Libraries Essex)

A 2-mile walk carrying books is far too far. Average walking speed is put at 1 mile in 20 minutes so that is a round trip of 80 minutes or 1 hour 20 minutes

for an average fit healthy walker not someone with mobility problems or walking with 1 or more small children. Planners think that people will only use a bus if it is within a ½ mile or 10-minute walk of their house. Therefore 1 mile is the most users should be expected to walk.

More qualified librarians should be employed specially to help those not computer literate.

Buckhurst Hill

392 survey respondents use this library frequently (2%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses; don't make cuts/invest more.

Issues: Regularly used by school children (convenience).

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (81 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (57 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (46 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (102 individuals, 2 organisations), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcome (67 individuals, 0 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (57 individuals, 1 organisation).

Emails and letters (23)

Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (15), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (12), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (10).

There are no additional comments about this library.

Chigwell

207 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses; don't make cuts/invest more.

Issues: Access issues for elderly / disabled at other alternatives due to lack of parking and poor public transport.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (46 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (29 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (25 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (59 individuals, 2 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (48 individuals, 0 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (40 individuals, 1 organisation).

Emails and letters (7).

There are no additional comments about this library.

Danbury

297 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses, value to community: social isolation.

Parish Council submitted Expression of Interest in community-run library.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (60 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (51 individuals, 1 organisation), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (44 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (70 individuals, 3 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (57 individuals, 2 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (55 individuals, 1 organisation).

Eight emails and letters mentioned this library.

There are no additional comments about this library.

Debden

121 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses; don't make cuts/invest more.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (37 individuals, 1 organisation), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (21 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (21 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (36 individuals, 4 organisations), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (23 individuals, 5 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (25 individuals, 2 organisations).

Two emails and letters mentioned this library.

Specific comments not covered above

Loughton Town Council: Opposes closure of Debden Library which if relocated to a more convenient site would sustain doubling of usage and lending.

Fryerns

139 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Social benefits – proximity to schools/colleges; don't make cuts/invest more.

Issues: Basildon Council in favour of giving greater weight to deprivation.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (25 individuals, 0 organisations), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (23 individuals, 0 organisations), Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (19 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (33 individuals, 1 organisation), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (29 individuals, 0 organisations), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (28 individuals, 2 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (28 individuals, 1 organisation).

Three emails and letters mentioned this library.

Specific comments not covered above

See also comments from Basildon Council.

Essex Cares Ltd (ECL)

ECL work with vulnerable older people and people with learning/physical disabilities and sensory impairment. The library at Fryerns is next door to our Ashleigh Wellbeing Centre. There is real opportunity for people with Learning Disabilities to use this library. ECL are interested in having a conversation with the Council regarding the running of Fryerns Library.

Galleywood

337 survey respondents use this library frequently (2%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses, social benefits; impact on social isolation, would have to travel/stop using, don't make cuts/invest more.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (91 individuals, 1 organisation), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (75 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (61 individuals, 2 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (71 individuals, 3 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (68 individuals, 3 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (67 individuals, 4 organisations).

Emails and letters (11)

Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (6), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (6), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (6).

Specific comments not covered above

- ...Travel to the north of Chelmsford from the south is difficult due to the lack of south-north communication infrastructure.

Galleywood Parish Council made some general comments, covered in section 6.

St Michael and All Angels Church, Galleywood

- …Although the documents give little idea what kind of proposal might be sought from communities, or what potential costings are, the church would be prepared to support in considering any proposal the parish council might put forward to keep the library open.

Great Wakering

162 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Would have to travel/stop using; consider footfall/other uses.

Issues: High percentage of elderly people; access issues for elderly / disabled at other alternatives due to lack of parking and poor public transport.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (37 individuals, 0 organisations), Projected population growth/planned housing developments (24 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (24 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (43 individuals, 1 organisation), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (33 individuals, 1 organisation), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (33 individuals, 0 organisations).

Six emails and letters mentioned this library.

Specific comments not covered above

o Usage has not been calculated on a pro-rata basis, based on the number of hours a library is open

The main factor in the case of **Great Wakering** is premises costs. Once these are removed the library provides value for money.

ECC is sole trustee of the Old Caretaker's House next to the current Community Centre. This is an ideal location, easy to access with easy parking. The Old Caretaker's House should be refurbished at a cost to ECC and offered to the Community Association within their lease on the condition they house the library within it. The Community Association are open to this suggestion. Suggests ECC looks to work with the Community Association as the latter may be able to lever in funding streams that ECC cannot access.

Hatfield Peverel

219 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Don't make cuts/invest more, important for children; consider footfall/other uses.

Issues: Impact on village as library is seen as community hub.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (47 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (34 individuals, 1 organisation), Projected population growth/planned housing developments (22 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (46 individuals, 4 organisations), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (45 individuals, 1 organisation), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (41 individuals, 3 organisations).

Five emails and letters mentioned this library.

Specific comments not covered above

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council

- …LOCATION: The closest library to Hatfield Peverel is Witham - over a two-mile walk, but also this walk would have to encounter the A12 which is not practical. There have also been recent bus route cancellations which further prevents access to Witham unless you have a car.

- …Hatfield Peverel has many elderly residents and young families - these groups meet regularly at the library for various clubs and activities. It is not an option for them to meet elsewhere as these are free clubs and if held elsewhere, would incur a hire charge.

Holland-on-Sea

305 survey respondents use this library frequently 1%).

Key overall concerns

Would have to travel/stop using, impact on social isolation etc.; don't make cuts/invest more; social benefits; impact on elderly.

Issues: High percentage of elderly people; distance contested as greater than 2 miles from nearest library.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (54 individuals, 0

organisations), Impact on older/retired users (49 individuals, 1 organisation), Ability to travel two miles independently (eg non-drivers, disabled users, vulnerable people (36 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (58 individuals, 1 organisation), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (58 individuals, 0 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (56 individuals, 1 organisation).

Emails and letters (18)

Most frequent comments: Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (13), I/others will find it difficult to travel/reduce usage/stop using libraries (8), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (7), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (7).

Specific comments that are not covered above.

- …the distance measure between Holland-on-Sea library and Clacton library was contested. By Trumeter measure it was more than a two-mile walk.

- …Holland-on-Sea has a high elderly population who would be negatively impacted if it closed

Holland Residents' Association

- We have arranged for CAB sessions to start in the Holland on Sea library in January together with computer training and access to on line services for those unable to do so themselves. Closure would result in residents not able to access CAB services locally.

- The Association would welcome the opportunity to work with ECC to seek new and innovative ways of providing a library service in Holland.

Hullbridge

317 survey respondents use this library frequently (2%).

Key overall concerns

Don't make cuts/invest more; consider footfall/other uses.

Issues: Planned population growth in area.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (68 individuals, 0 organisations), Projected population growth/planned housing developments (52 individuals, 0 organsiations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (38 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (66 individuals, 3 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (58 individuals, 2 organisations), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (52 individuals, 3 organisations).

Emails and letters (11)

I/others will find it difficult to travel/reduce usage/stop using libraries (8), Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries/consider other factors/based on inaccurate data (8), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (7), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (7).

Specific comments that are not covered above.

- ... The amount of social housing in Hullbridge has not been considered in the population figures used in the needs assessment.

Hullbridge Parish Council: Hullbridge Library has an active Library Committee [Friends of Hullbridge Library] who organise an array of activities at the Library including games nights, book sales etc. which are well attended.

Hullbridge Residents Association

- Supports Friends of Hullbridge Library in their call for a review of proposal to close the library

- Projected population growth of 119% by 2034 would change Hullbridge from a village to a town. This would have implications for local government and the status of the parish council. Their understanding is that a town should have a library as part of a statutory service

- Applaud and agree with the Council's perceived ambition to improve the services provided by our libraries to facilitate services for all ages.

Kelvedon

370 survey respondents use this library frequently (2%).

Key overall concerns

Don't make cuts/invest more, would have to travel/stop using; consider footfall/other uses, social benefits.

Issues: Proximity to and usage by nearby schools; planned housing and population growth in local area.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (76 individuals, 1 organisation), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on

social isolation/mental health (49 individuals, 2 organisations), Impact on children/young families (42 individuals, 2 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (83 individuals, 3 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (72 individuals, 2 organisations), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (69 individuals, 2 organisations).

Emails and letters (11)

Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries/consider other factors/based on inaccurate data (6), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (5), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (5).

Specific comments that are not covered above.

Feering Parish Council: Working with Kelvedon Parish Council and residents of both villages to save Kelvedon Library. Would welcome the opportunity to discuss the next steps and options with ECC.

Kelvedon and Feering Parish Councils

Kelvedon should be recategorized as Tier 3 because:

- …As around half of Braintree District is empty, the relatively populous area in the south of the District loses out when this statistic is measured at district level
- …Kelvedon and Feering set to add 1,600 dwellings in the not too distant future
- …ECC do not own Kelvedon Library, so there's no asset for them to sell
- …A bank of over 60 volunteers has been identified who are willing to assist with staffing and activities
- …Building owner Ayletts Foundation Trust has offered assistance in setting up a community library.

Kelvedon Roman Catholic Church

- …Kelvedon Library is rented from a Trust for a peppercorn rent. £50 per annum is not too much to ask from the local authority if it can be kept open with community support.

Kelvedon St Mary's Primary Academy and Autism Hub

- …The Autism Hub try to visit Kelvedon Library every term for a sensory story.

Mark Hall

161 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Important for children, don't make cuts/invest more; social benefits.

Issues: Deprivation levels.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Impact on deprived areas/demographics resulting in deprivation (32 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (30 individuals, 0 organisations), Ability to travel two miles independently (eg non-drivers, disabled users, vulnerable people) (24 individuals, 1 organisation), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (24 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (47 individuals, 1 organisation), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (43 individuals, 4 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (37 individuals, 1 organisation).

Emails and letters (26)

Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (17), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (17), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (16),

Specific comments that are not covered above.

See also responses from Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP and Harlow Council.

Harlow Civic Society

Mark Hall and Tye Green libraries should not close because two neighbourhood libraries aren't enough for a town the size of Harlow, and is detrimental to its design as an interconnected set of local communities, serving needs from cradle to grave.

North Weald

232 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Don't make cuts/invest more, would have to travel/stop using; consider footfall/other uses.

Issues: Shared premises with and volunteer opening by North Weald Parish Council; deprivation levels queried - 3 homeless hostels in North Weald (Norway House, the Phoenix Hotel and Bassetfields).

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (42 individuals, 2 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (37 individuals, 1 organisation), Projected population growth/planned housing developments (25 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (39 individuals, 3 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (37 individuals, 1 organisation), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (33 individuals, 4 organisations).

Emails and letters (9)

Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (6), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (6), I/others will find it difficult to travel/reduce usage/stop using libraries (3), Decision already made/a done deal (3), Don't rely on borrowing figures/footfall more relevant (3).

Specific comments that are not covered above.

North Weald Parish Council: The parish Council has run North Weald Library since 2010, for 4 hours a day, 3 days a week. If closure was implemented there would be an impact on the administration of North Weald Bassett Cemetery. The Parish Council would not have an office and there is no alternative meeting place for the Parish Council or Planning Committee Meetings.

Prettygate

1,015 survey respondents use this library frequently (5%).

Key overall concerns

Social benefits, consider footfall/other uses, ability to travel.

Issues: Poor facilities (e.g. toilet); lack of alternative community buildings; high percentage of elderly people; used by multiple groups/clubs/schools etc.; high usage; serves Lexden and Shrub End; strong campaign; already co-located; access restrictions with Colchester alternative (parking).

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (134 individuals, 1 organisation), Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (124 individuals, 1

organisation), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (84 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (163 individuals, 4 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (163 individuals, 2 organisations), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (160 individuals, 1 organisation).

Emails and letters (30)

I/others will find it difficult to travel/reduce usage/stop using libraries (23), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (22), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (20).

Specific comments not covered above

See also response from Will Quince MP and Colchester Borough Council.

Layer de la Haye Primary School

- o Visiting the local library (Prettygate) with their parents provides young people with valuable lessons on how to behave in public places.

Prettygate Baptist Church

- o It's suggested that present library services of libraries in Tier 4 could be made available from other premises. But in Prettygate the only premises are the Prettygate Pub, inappropriate for this use. Apart from local churches and the activities we provide, the Library provides the only community space in Prettygate.

- o If the library had toilets, families and the elderly would use the library services far more. If there was a volunteer community cafe it would be vastly more attractive (as we have discovered in our once a month cafe at Prettygate Baptist Church). There is a real need to strengthen community in Prettygate. Removing the library would be damaging.

Prettygate Reading Group

- o The library houses the Registrar and a toy library.

Sible Hedingham

190 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses, social benefits - isolation; provides variety of important services, effect on social isolation.

Issues: Planned housing and population growth in local area.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (44 individuals, 2 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (32 individuals, 1 organisation), Projected population growth/planned housing developments (27 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (37 individuals, 4 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (34 individuals, 4 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (33 individuals, 3 organisations).

Emails and letters (10)

Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (7), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (6), Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries/consider other factors/based on inaccurate data (5), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (5).

Specific comments that are not covered above.

Sible Hedingham Book Group

People from Sible Hedingham gravitate to Sudbury, Haverhill and Bury for shopping, eating out, music and theatre, not the proposed hub areas of Halstead and Braintree. If Sible Hedingham Library closes, Essex County Council will seem even more remote and irrelevant to people's lives.

One anonymous response said the Gosfield Shop is over-subscribed for volunteers, many of whom would like to assist in the running of [Sible Hedingham] library to keep it open.

Silver End

94 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses, social benefits – isolation; important for children, don't make cuts/invest more.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (24 individuals, 2 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on

social isolation/mental health (21 individuals, 1 organisation), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (15 individuals, 2 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (30 individuals, 2 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (28 individuals, 4 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (25 individuals, 1 organisation).

Four emails and letters mentioned this library.

Specific comments that are not covered above.

- ...The petition handed in by Cllr James Abbott at Full Council on 11 December 2018 made the point that Silver End library was only moved to the village hall less than two years ago and it would be a waste of investment to close it now.

- ...As a result of the move the library is already co-located in a large community hub with the Children's Centre, a pre-school and the parish council office.

- ...Silver End residents receive little for the taxes they pay.

- ...The village has lost other services over recent years.

- ...Lack of paper copies of the survey until late in the consultation period may have affected potential respondents who do not have internet access

- ...Silver End also serves Cressing; planning consents have been granted for 61 new homes in Silver End and 421 in Cressing.

- ...Compared to 10 years ago, Silver End has retained 84% of active membership and 64% of visits.

- ...If Silver End, Kelvedon and Coggeshall libraries were to close the nearest library access for villages in the area would be Braintree or Witham. Suggesting that residents should walk more than two miles across rural rights of way, which tend to be muddy, or roads with no footways and 60mph speed limits is unacceptable.

Southminster

121 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses, social benefits – isolation; don't make cuts/invest more, would have to travel/stop using.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (18 individuals, 1 organisation), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (16 individuals, 1 organisation), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (13 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (29 individuals, 1 organisation), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (25 individuals, 1 organisation), Trained staff are important/jobs would be lost/reservations about using volunteers (23 individuals, 2 organisations).

There were no emails or letters mentioning this library.

There are no additional comments about this library.

Stansted

295 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Deprivation levels - highest in Uttlesford; temporary arrangements while library moved and impact on usage not accounted for?; planned population growth in area (Foresthall & Wcommunity-run libraryole Farm Developments); high percentage of elderly people; alternative nearby libraries in Herts (Bishops Stortford) only available to those who live, work or study in Herts.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Projected population growth/planned housing developments (39 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (30 individuals, 2 organisations), Impact on children/young families (25 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries (94 individuals, 1 organisation), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (61 individuals, 3 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (59 individuals, 3 organisations).

Emails and letters (26)

Reconsider tier proposals/re-categorise libraries/consider other factors/based on inaccurate data (18), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (12), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (11).

Specific comments not covered above

Elsenham Parish Council: Stansted has one of the highest levels of child poverty in Uttlesford, with 26.2% of children in poverty after housing costs. £1.2 million had been spent on Mountfitchet Exchange with no indication from ECC that it would withdraw support from library.

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

Deprivation

- …Needs assessment score suffers because Stansted Library is in quite an affluent LSOA. Other nearby LSOAs including one just over 100m away, have much greater levels of deprivation. Taking these into account would add 7.5 to the score.

Usage

- …Needs assessment score suffers because during period when usage data was gathered a mobile library was providing the service, followed by a small room in the parish council offices. This was poorly publicised. Data from before the temporary relocation would support the addition of another 7.5 points to the score.

Access to a comprehensive service

- …Closure of two out of four Uttlesford libraries would leave one library per 4nji2000 residents (1 per 50000 if projected population increase is taken into account) – worst in England.

Addition of 15 points to first round score as earlier discussed would make Stansted a Tier 3, not 4, library.

Stansted Mountfitchet PC was not informed of the March 2018 public engagement. The proposals in the engagement report for creating community hubs, reducing social isolation and extending the service offer would all be enhanced by the hub planned for Stansted prior to the consultation.

Hub as proposed in discussions with parish council and as partly staffed by them could create a vibrant multi-functional cultural and creative facility. A range of existing groups plus Business Forum would support. It already fits "What does a good community library look like?" on p40 of draft strategy. Uttlesford already receives less funding for the library service than its population warrants.

Stansted also pays the same in rates as larger conurbations, but sees less in the way of cultural and community support.

They would not have committed public money to the hub project, had they known the Council would not support a library service there.

The parish council had almost completed the process of partnering with the Council to deliver library and community services under one roof for Stansted and surrounding area and believe the Council has an overwhelming obligation to see this project through to completion.

Stock

75 survey respondents use this library frequently (<1%).

Key overall concerns

Proximity to schools and colleges, social benefits.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (17 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (17 individuals, 0 organisations), Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (15 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (21 individuals, 1 organisation), Trained staff are important/jobs would be lost/reservations about using volunteers (19 individuals, 1 organisation), Not everyone can access online services/eBooks/smart technology/physical books are important (19 individuals, 1 organisation).

There were no emails or letters mentioning this library.

There are no additional comments about this library.

Thaxted

276 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses, reconsider proposals/recategorize.

Issues: Parish Council lodged formal complaint with DCMS: consultation and business planning processes flawed; sought halt to consultation; DCMS replied, will await decision; functions already as a Community Hub (co-located with other services); distance to other libraries & public transport deficiencies; increasing population yet declining local amenities; distance to Saffron Walden & Dunmow; level of usage by schools and other groups not accounted for; most cost effective library in Essex - little financial sense in closing; Uttlesford receives 4% of library funding yet serves 6% of county households; rural deprivation in surrounding areas.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (43 individuals, 2 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (34 individuals, 3 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (26 individuals, 2 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (48 individuals, 4 organisations), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (46 individuals, 5 organisations), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (44 individuals, 4 organisations).

Emails and letters (38)

Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (23), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (22), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (21), I/others will find it difficult to travel/reduce usage/stop using libraries (21).

Specific comments not covered above

Thaxted Parish Council

Thaxted is the least expensive ECC library to operate.

Cites UNESCO manifesto: "Freedom, Prosperity and the Development of society and individuals are fundamental human values. They will only be attained through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in society. Constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information."
Survey response:

We disagree with the factor that more affluent areas are identified by having use of more than one car. The proposal to place 2 of the 4 libraries within UDC in Tier 4 equates to 50% of Libraries in UDC being at risk of closure which is against policy. The Food bank run from here, the CAB use an office, a social worker regularly meets vulnerable clients and the Parish Council and Community information centre are also based within the Library. Uttlesford is set to have the highest percentage forecast growth, at 32.2%. The statement 'There is no reason to keep a library if it is the only community service in the area if there is no need for a library service' is utterly ridiculous.

Thaxted Parish Council subsequently made a **formal complaint** to Michael Ellis MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Arts, Tourism and Heritage.

- ... The consultation survey is biased and the questions are designed to elicit the answer ECC wants

- ... Previous requests to ECC to review and reconsider have been ignored

- ... Needs assessment is based on limited data and over-reliant on borrowing statistics

- … In addition to the arguments presented earlier, the deprivation catchment area should have been expanded to include the areas of rural hinterland around Thaxted

- … The population demographics are changing, contributing more young users and potential book group members.

Thaxted Society

- 149 Thaxted homes currently lack superfast broadband.

- We stand ready to target a community-based solution where there is robust and well-intentioned support from ECC.

Tye Green

170 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses, proximity to schools/colleges; don't make cuts/invest more, important for children.

Issues: Deprivation levels.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (27 individuals, 1 organisation), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (26 individuals, 1 organisation), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (22 individuals, 2 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (43 individuals, 4 organisations), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (42 individuals, 2 organisations), Trained staff are important/jobs would be lost/reservations about using volunteers (30 individuals, 3 organisations).

Emails and letters (27)

Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (19), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (18), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (15).

Specific comments not covered above

See also comments for Mark Hall and comments from Robert Halfon MP and Harlow Council.

Purford Green School

We take Year 1 and 2 children to Tye Green Library every three weeks. Without the library being in walking distance this will stop.

Tye Green Leisure and Community Association

Expressing an interest in taking over the property to enhance their community services, providing after school clubs, breakfast clubs, perhaps full day care.

Vange

122 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Don't make cuts/invest more; consider footfall/other uses, social benefits.

Issues: Deprivation levels; poor literacy levels / educational attainment?; Basildon Council wish higher weight to be given to deprivation.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (31 individuals, 1 organisation), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (27 individuals, 0 organisations), Proximity to local schools/colleges/universities/impact on education and performance figures (17 individuals, 0 organisations), Ability to travel two miles independently (eg non-drivers, disabled users, vulnerable people) (17 individuals, 0 organisations) .

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (44 individuals, 1 organisation), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (30 individuals, 1 organisation), Libraries provide a variety of important services/are not just about books (29 individuals, 2 organisations), Trained staff are important/jobs would be lost/reservations about using volunteers (29 individuals, 2 organisations).

Four emails and letters mentioned this library.

There are no additional comments about this library but see the response from Basildon Council, above.

Wickham Bishops

224 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Don't make cuts/invest more, impact on social isolation etc.; consider footfall/other uses, social benefits.

Issues: Poor infrastructure (lack of footpaths) or decent transport links to alternatives: Maldon/Witham; high percentage of elderly people; village location: cannot walk to nearest alternative – Witham.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (42 individuals, 1 organisation), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (41 individuals, 2 organisations), Impact on children/young families (24 individuals, 1 organisation).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (54 individuals, 2 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (47 individuals, 2 organisations), I/others would have to travel further/reduce usage/stop using libraries (40 individuals, 0 organisations).

Emails and letters (19)

Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (15), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (13), Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (13).

Specific comments not covered above

Wickham Bishops Parish Council

Specific comments on the criteria used and weighting of categories:

Location: If the footfall measure is set against the population at a district level this is essentially double counting in favour of densely populated areas and against less populated villages

Usage: It is unclear if PC usage has been considered. Instead there is a count for book renewals and Wi-Fi usage. Many older parishioners don't use Wi-Fi but do use the PCs as a lifeline.

Deprivation: Is there any evidence of a proven link between deprivation and library usage? If not, then the selection of it as a criterion distraught the assessment of need.

Social Isolation: reference to new parents (i.e. the very young) and those over 65. This should be based on the catchment area and actual usage. The libraries have records of the actual members so more accurate data could have been used. Instead the data at a district level is used.

ECC's own statistics in the needs assessment showed that 71% of Wickham Bishops library users are under the age of 19, or over 60. The same figure for Maldon is 62%.

Would welcome the opportunity to discuss with the Council ways in which costs could be saved.

Question 14 ought to have offered organisations the opportunity to run Tier 4 libraries, not just Tier 3 libraries, as community libraries.

Writtle

302 survey respondents use this library frequently (1%).

Key overall concerns

Consider footfall/other uses, social benefits; important for children, don't make cuts/invest more, impact on social isolation etc.

Issues: Expression of Interest in buying building.

Question 9

Criteria the Council should use to measure need: Usage by local community groups/other activities services based in libraries as a central community hub (87 individuals, 0 organisations), Social benefits provided by libraries/effect on social isolation/mental health (65 individuals, 0 organisations), Footfall/type of usage-not used by card (52 individuals, 0 organisations).

Question 19

Most frequent comments: Libraries are important for children/reading habits/education/long term outcomes (85 individuals, 1 organisation), Don't make cuts/invest more in the library service (82 individuals, 2 organisations), Closing libraries will increase social isolation/reduce wellbeing/libraries provide a social hub (81 individuals, 1 organisation).

One email or letter mentioned this library.

Specific comments not covered above

Workers' Educational Association Writtle

- Using the library for community use is important as other halls in the village are booked. Need library within walking distance as traffic in area is often gridlocked. Subjects close to lectures being taken in village hall.

Writtle Infant School

- Suggested needs assessment criterion: Whether the existing library building can be used for anything else.

- Writtle is due to have about 600 new houses. In addition, the existing building cannot be sold as it has a covenant on it.

11. Website feedback

A further 361 items of feedback were received via the dedicated website during the consultation. Of these, 141 were about the survey, mostly about

difficulties finding or accessing it via the site. There were 130 comments about the strategy: 97 that information was unclear, lacking or misleading, 17 that it was clear/easy to understand, nine negative comments about the consultation approach, three positive comments in agreement with the strategy, three about design issues and one technical issue.

The Council response: The Council will take on board the comments to improve the way information and consultations are written and presented on the website in future.