

APPENDIX 2

The Library Strategy defines our Libraries as; “A Wirral Library is a friendly accessible place that provides a safe trusted and welcoming resource aimed at meeting the needs of the local community. Its focus is on providing information, knowledge and reading for self improvement and enjoyment”. Do you agree with this definition of a Library?

Q1 Do you agree with the strategy’s definition of a Library?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 66% |
| Agree | 29% |
| No opinion | 2% |
| Disagree | 2% |
| Strongly disagree | 1% |

At the heart of the library changes will be the link between libraries and One Stop Shops which will make both services available at all sites and will make more efficient use of buildings and staff. Do you agree with this initiative?

Q2 Do you agree with the initiative to bring together Library and One Stop Shop provision?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 26% |
| Agree | 42% |
| No opinion | 13% |
| Disagree | 12% |
| Strongly disagree | 7% |

The vast majority of responses were with “agree” or “strongly agree” with 19% in disagreement with the proposal. Most of the respondents commented that although they were broadly in agreement/disagreement with the proposal they had concerns.

These generally can be placed in the following categories;

1. Loss of Library Space/Services
2. Losing Expertise in Both Services
3. Change to Library Environment
4. Privacy

A number of comments also raised the issue that many people had little knowledge of service of a One Stop Shop and some also had a negative perception of One Stop Shops;

All libraries will offer a basic One Stop Shop service as well as signposting for Council and a range of partner organisation services. Some libraries already share a building with a One Stop Shop which can offer an enhanced service and deal with more complex enquiries. This enhanced service will be introduced to other libraries where the need is identified. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q3 Do you agree with the proposal to enhanced One Stop Shop provision where the need is identified?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 25% |
| Agree | 46% |
| No opinion | 12% |
| Disagree | 11% |
| Strongly disagree | 6% |

The chart shows the vast majority of respondents are in agreement with the proposal but, as in the previous question, their comments show that their agreement is conditional.

Many respondents commented that this question was a reiteration of Q2 (above) and therefore gave the same answers.

Therefore the issues raised are similar to the previous question and can be categorised the same;

1. Loss of Library Space/Services
2. Losing Expertise in Both Services
3. Change to Library Environment
4. Privacy

We propose that the library service will have the following clearly defined functions: Reading for Pleasure; Information for Study, research, self improvement and knowledge; The development of individual literacy; A source of local community information; A source of public service information. Do you agree with these proposals?

Q4 Do you agree with the Library Functions outlined?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 59% |
| Agree | 35% |
| No opinion | 3% |
| Disagree | 2% |
| Strongly disagree | 1% |

The vast majority of people agreed/strongly agreed with the proposed functions. However, many of the people responding felt Wirral Libraries already fulfilled these functions and also that what is already available is not well publicised. Some people felt that the functions were poorly defined while a number of respondents pointed out functions they felt were missing from the list.

Q5 Is there anything not included in these proposals that you would like to see in your library?

It became clear from the responses that most people have read this question as anything they would like to see in their libraries and not necessarily answered the question in reference to the proposal of the library services "clearly defined functions".

Example of support for proposed services; "Café"

Also people have put forward proposals that are already in place demonstrating that members of the public are not fully aware of what is already available to them.

Examples of support/requests for existing services (may not currently be available in all sites);

"Councillors on site on a regular basis to deal with enquiries and advise on future plans for area"

"Access and availability to ICT and as a place for learning e.g. ICT and lifelong learning opportunities"

"Family history research facilities"

"Children's story time for little ones"

"Audio and video material should be available"

"A facility to download books onto my own computer, iPad etc"

"Outreach into schools"

"School holiday events for children, Reading groups etc for the wider community"

"Special activities such as reading groups, encouragement of children's love of books, author visits, art/craft exhibitions"

"There needs to be internet facilities. Also, the CD & DVD library is desirable"

Example of new proposals / suggestions;

"Fast drop box to return DVDs and books"

"A library also needs to be able to provide social interaction for its users especially the young and old population. For some elderly people it can provide a valuable source of company"

We propose that only the 4 main libraries at West Kirby, Wallasey, Birkenhead and Bebington will maintain evening openings to allow for Wednesday openings across all libraries. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q6 Do you agree only 4 main libraries should maintain evening opening?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 19% |
| Agree | 36% |
| No opinion | 11% |
| Disagree | 19% |
| Strongly disagree | 15% |

Although just over half of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed this was a question that had a huge number of comments; showing what a big issue opening hours is and the strength of feeling there is on the subject;

1. Working People/Students/Children

"All services should be available to all members of the community, by closing libraries or not having them open during the evening you are alienating those who are working or attending full time education. In the future when other community services are incorporated within the library building you would be denying the public access to these services by limiting the opening time"

"I work Mon Sat; if you do this I will not be able to access my local library (Rock Ferry) public transport links in the evenings are too poor from Birkenhead /Bebington. Why discriminate against people who work? Better to have one extra day that all libraries are shut, rather than most never having evening hours"

"Libraries need to be open for children and young people in the evening to support learning and provide a place of peace and quiet, and to read. This is especially true of areas of greater social deprivation such as Seacombe, so for these areas I would urge evenings are more important than Wednesday opening"

"There are families and students who will not be able to get to those four libraries. I think local libraries should remain open if there is a demand for it. If they are not being used during the evening then it is okay to close them but you cannot close them if the demand is there. I would not want my 13 year old daughter to have to travel around Wirral in the dark winter months if there was a library nearby"

"I disagree if it will mean that school pupils will no longer have a quiet venue for completing homework or research particularly in less affluent areas. It will also be difficult for employed adults to use the local service apart from Saturdays"

"You are once again forgetting that the tax payer (those who work) wish to use their local library, once again, those people who work will be penalised as their local library is unavailable during the evening"

"Not everyone can visit their library between 9 5. Some children rely on using the computers and printers at their local library increasingly homework is set on school web sites"

"Evening opening is essential working parents with school age children as it is one of the few times they can go to the library together"

"What about people at work or children wanting to use the computer or other material some cannot study at home"

"Families who cannot afford to run a car or spend a fortune on public transport will suffer there are households who cannot afford home computers, and their children will miss out. Libraries are safe place for children to visit alone but only if they are on the doorstep"

2. Evening Events/Groups

"Could libraries that normally do not open in evening be allowed to open in the evening for certain events?"

"You should have all day Wednesday opening AND at least one evening to allow volunteer groups (e.g. Reading Groups) to meet when people are home from work. Otherwise, some groups will cease meeting."

3. Distance/Accessibility

"Would like to see either Bromborough or Eastham library open at least one evening a week - we always feel slightly out on a limb down here."

"The local, smaller libraries need to be open late, as people who work and finish at 5 pm and have no form of transport other than public transport will not be able to access the other main libraries."

"For people in Eastham, it is a considerable and expensive travel to even get to Bebington, and takes well over half an hour by the time they have walked to and from public transport (car ownership is low in Eastham, especially in the poorer groups), which reduces the time available to use the library. Local libraries MUST be open at times needed by the local community. Those who have always had a car available need to try getting around without one and make decisions based on that. Eastham often feels out on a limb hence the battle to save our library from closure"

4. Wednesday Openings

"I think it has been a disgrace that libraries have been closed on Wednesdays for as long as they have. It is also a shame that they are not open on Sundays when people are available to use them"

"Not everybody has easy access to the main libraries, and I think evening opening makes more sense, even if they don't open on a Wednesday"

"I work full time so evening & weekend opening is more important to me than Wednesday opening"

"Makes it difficult for working people and children doing homework. We are now used to Wednesday closing"

5. Other Suggestions/ Comments

"Whilst having ONLY the four libraries mentioned open to evening sessions it would be fairer to have a ""four evening"" rotating system of opening thus giving all current libraries an equal opportunity to access library services in the evening"

"Hours should be limited and if necessary later opening for later closing"

"The option of attending all libraries on at least 1 evening a week should be provided"

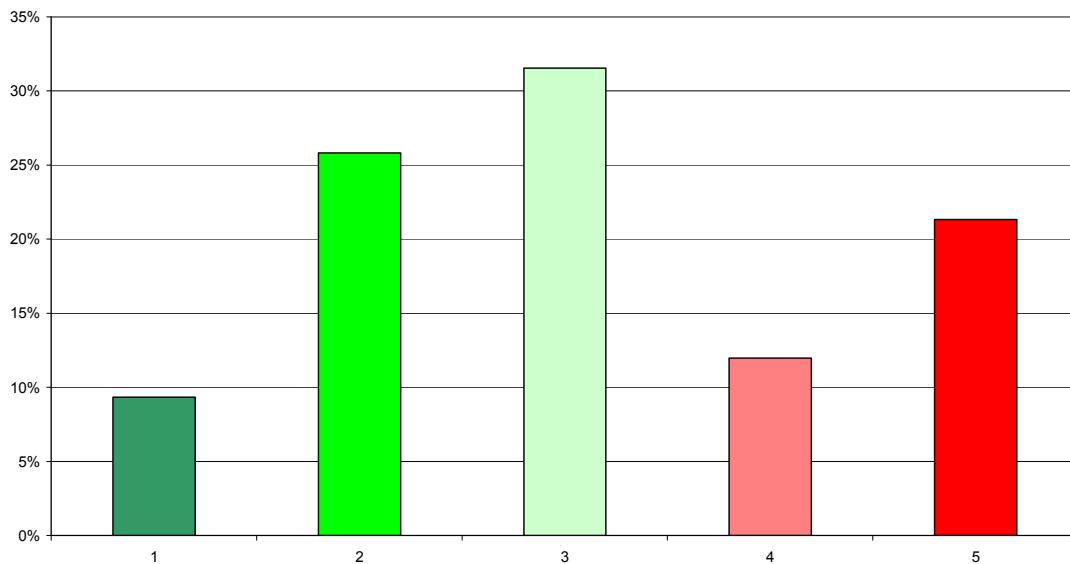
"I think this is a fabulous idea"

"This is a VERY BAD idea. If local libraries are not open in the evenings then anyone who works normal hours from 9.00 a. m. to 5.00 p. m., will not be able to access a library all week unless they can travel. It would be better to go back to the idea of libraries opening at 10.00 a. m. and therefore with the 6 hours saved, local libraries could open two evenings a week and Wednesday mornings"

Bearing in mind that only the 4 Central Libraries (Birkenhead Central, Wallasey Central, West Kirby and Bebington Central) will be open in the evenings, and that there are staffing and accommodation costs to keeping the library open, how many evenings do you think these libraries should be open?

Question 7

7 Number of evenings 4 main libraries should open



A lot of the respondents on this question repeated their previous statements (above question).

The vast majority of comments were suggestions to keep all libraries open at least one night a week;

There were a lot of comments on how the question was written which caused some concern/confusion

Question 8 listed the core facilities that all libraries will provide and the additional facilities that will be available in the Central libraries. Respondents were asked if they agreed with these proposals.

Q8 Do you agree with the Core Facilities and Central Library facilities proposals?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 50% |
| Agree | 43% |
| No opinion | 2% |
| Disagree | 4% |
| Strongly disagree | 1% |

The vast majority of respondents agreed with these proposals. There were a great many comments about the café which are repeated again in question 10. The other main themes amongst the responses were;

1. Library Environment
2. Facilities
3. Library Services
4. Additional comments included;
Publicity and staffing levels

Q9 Is there anything not included in these lists that you would like to see in your library?

1. EBooks - "*Stock Improvement*"
2. Toilet Facilities
3. Local Information
4. Events/Courses
5. Extended Services in the Library
6. Environment in the Library

Do you agree that a Café would be a positive addition to Libraries where space allows?

Q10 Do you agree that a café area would be a positive addition to libraries where space allows?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 32% |
| Agree | 37% |
| No opinion | 14% |
| Disagree | 11% |
| Strongly disagree | 6% |

There is a lot of agreement for a café area in libraries. The comments received can be put into the following categories;

1. Library Environment
2. Social Aspect
3. Service
4. Revenue/Pricing

We are planning to introduce self service machines (RFID) for checking books in and out and making library payments. This will free up staff to deal with more complex enquiries and manage activities, displays and promotions. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q11 Do you agree with the introduction of Self Service Machines?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 23% |
| Agree | 41% |
| No opinion | 12% |
| Disagree | 15% |
| Strongly disagree | 9% |

There is a lot of support for this proposal though there are concerns raised in the comments received;

1. Human Contact via Staff
2. Support with Technology

This section was about responses to specific proposals in the Library Strategy and required reading of the document to enable full understanding of the proposals.

From many of the comments it is clear that the respondents have not or could not read the document;

In section 5.5 of the strategy we have outlined what we plan to do to promote Reading for Pleasure. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q12 Do you agree with the proposal to promote Reading for Pleasure?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 34% |
| Agree | 51% |
| No opinion | 13% |
| Disagree | 2% |
| Strongly disagree | 0% |

85% of people responding agreed with this proposal, the main areas for comment were;

1. Book Stock
2. EBooks
3. Opening Hours
4. Other Comments

"Children, young people and adults have the opportunity to hear words read out loud it brings reading for pleasure to life"

"Better publicity is needed"

In section 5.6 of the Library Strategy we have outlined what we plan to do to make a library a place to visit for information for study, research, self improvement and knowledge. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q13 Do you agree with the proposal to promote Library use for Study, Research and Knowledge?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 39% |
| Agree | 51% |
| No opinion | 9% |
| Disagree | 1% |
| Strongly disagree | 0% |

90% of people who responded to the survey agreed with this proposal raising a few areas of concern as listed below;

1. Reference Services
2. I.T.
3. Opening Hours

In section 5.8 of the Library Strategy we have outlined what we plan to do to make a library a source of local community information. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q14 Do you agree Libraries should be a source of local community information?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 37% |
| Agree | 48% |
| No opinion | 11% |
| Disagree | 3% |
| Strongly disagree | 1% |

The vast majority of respondents were in agreement with this proposal,

In section 5.9 of the Library Strategy we have outlined what we plan to do to make a library a source of public service information. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q15 Do you agree Libraries should be a source of Public Service information?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 32% |
| Agree | 48% |
| No opinion | 16% |
| Disagree | 3% |
| Strongly disagree | 1% |

Although the vast majority of people agreed with this proposal it became apparent through comments that a lot of people did not fully understand paragraph 5.9.1;

In section 6.2 of the Library Strategy we have outlined what we plan to do to contribute to the Council's key objective to support families. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q16 Do you agree with the proposal to contribute to the Council's key objective to Support Families?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 27% |
| Agree | 45% |
| No opinion | 24% |
| Disagree | 3% |
| Strongly disagree | 1% |

The majority of respondents agreed with this proposal. A lot of comments made were in reference to opening hours;

In section 6.3 of the Library Strategy we have outlined what we plan to do to contribute to the Council's key objective to support vulnerable adults. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q17 Do you agree with the proposal to contribute to the Council's key objective to Support Vulnerable Adults?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 28% |
| Agree | 45% |
| No opinion | 22% |
| Disagree | 4% |
| Strongly disagree | 1% |

This proposal was agreed with by a large number of respondents, comments that came up included;

In section 6.4 of the Library Strategy we have outlined what we plan to do to contribute to the council's key objective to develop cohesive neighbourhoods. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q18 Do you agree with the proposal to contribute to the Council's key objective to develop Cohesive Neighbourhoods?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 23% |
| Agree | 44% |
| No opinion | 27% |
| Disagree | 5% |
| Strongly disagree | 1% |

This proposal was agreed with by the majority of people though a lot of comments raised the issue of opening hours;

In section 6.5 of the Library Strategy we have outlined what we plan to do to contribute to the Council's key objective to increase employment in Wirral. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q19 Do you agree with the proposal to contribute to the Council's key objective to Increase Employment?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 31% |
| Agree | 47% |
| No opinion | 18% |
| Disagree | 3% |
| Strongly disagree | 1% |

78% agreed with this proposal. The reoccurring theme among the comments was of opening hours

In section 6.6 of the Library Strategy we have outlined what we plan to do to increase the involvement of the independent, voluntary, community and faith sectors in Council service delivery and transfer more power to neighbourhoods. Do you agree with this proposal?

Q20 Do you agree with the proposal to contribute to the Council's key objective to increase the involvement of the VCF sector?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 21% |
| Agree | 37% |
| No opinion | 27% |
| Disagree | 10% |
| Strongly disagree | 5% |

The above chart shows 58% of people responded in agreement with the proposal though comments received show some concern over the use of volunteers and the involvement of faith groups;

Do you agree that this strategy fits Wirral's needs?

We asked people if they thought the Draft Libraries Strategy fits Wirral's needs, this is how they responded:

Q21 Do you agree that this strategy fits Wirral's needs?

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly agree | 18% |
| Agree | 54% |
| No opinion | 18% |
| Disagree | 7% |
| Strongly disagree | 3% |

The responses clearly show that the large majority of people either "agree" or "strongly agree" that the strategy fits Wirral's needs with a small percentage (10%) disagreeing/strongly disagreeing.

Many of the comments agreeing/strongly agreeing with this question also raised concerns over the possibility of losing library space/services to One Stop Shops or losing facilities from their "local" library to the 4 "Central" libraries.

A reoccurring theme raised in the responses to this question was the issue of evening opening hours and how the reduction of these is in contradiction to many of the strategies aims.

From the responses it became apparent that many of the respondents had not read the strategy either because of lack of time, length of document or unsure where/how to access it.