



Report on the public  
consultation on reduced library  
opening hours

October 2019



# Introduction

CultureNL library service is required to find efficiency savings of £400,000. In previous years the service has achieved savings by focussing on library closures, reduction in opening hours and implementing efficiencies particularly in stock and IT management. In order to retain a library presence in local communities, the service decided not to put forward library closures as part of the savings process, but to focus on reduced opening hours instead.

CultureNL held a public consultation on reduced library opening hours between 22 July and 19 August 2019. The consultation focussed on gathering the public's views on certain amended opening hours for static libraries. As intimated during the consultation process a number of opening hour changes could not be consulted on and will be implemented. They are as follows:

- Chapelhall, New Stevenston and Shotts libraries will close on Saturdays.
- Abronhill, Chapelhall, Condorrat, New Stevenston, Newmains, Moodiesburn, Shotts, Stepps and Viewpark Libraries, will close at 2pm on Fridays.
- The number of late nights (open until 7pm), Bellshill Cultural Centre is open will reduce from two to one, by only opening on Thursday nights.
- Late night opening in Cleland, Chryston and Newarthill libraries will be removed

# 3

## Methodology

The methodology adopted for the consultation exercise consisted of a number of elements to ensure the widest access to the consultation process by residents and other interested parties. An online questionnaire, (SurveyMonkey), was made public on 22nd July, coupled to this hard copies of the questionnaire were made available in libraries across the authority. An email distribution to the members on the library email distribution list was completed. Specific partners who currently use the library service were also informed and sent copies (e.g. Routes to Work etc.).

Twitter, Facebook and Instagram campaigns, and a high profile web presence on the CultureNL website were also developed.

During the course of the consultation there was a total reach of 32,077 and 1,233 engagements (comments, likes, shares, or clicking upon particular elements of the post) on our 15 Facebook messages. We also had 5,103 impressions and 277 engagements of which 29 were retweets on our 15 Twitter messages. Five articles in local papers highlighted the survey and required reductions in hours.

## General responses

The public consultation exercise received a total of 966 responses. 473 online responses (including comments via social media) and 493 hard copy responses (including 4 submitted by letter, from the Scottish Library & Information Council, the Chartered Institute of Library & Information Professionals in Scotland, the Literature Alliance Scotland and the Airdrie Astronomical Society, and 6 standard letters). No online or hard copy petitions, complaints or alternative methods of response were submitted.

## Analysing the data

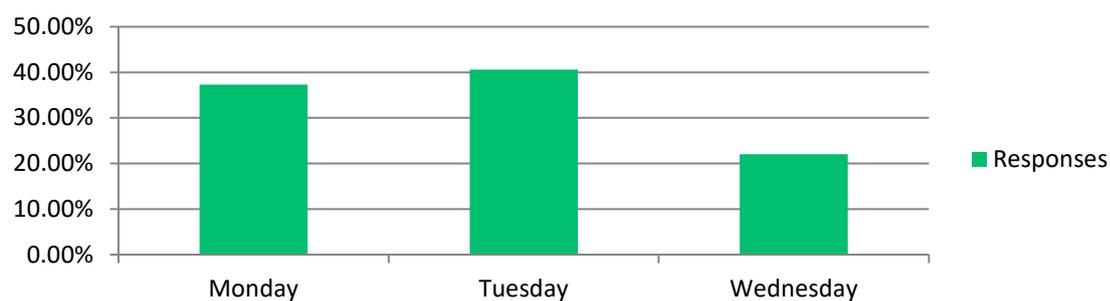
The analysis of submissions covers all the 'closed' questions (i.e. tick-box) and an analysis of comments received via the online survey, hard copy returns, letters and social media comments. All of these have been read and analysed in detail. Due to the volume of comments received they have been arranged into categories. The categories are outlined in the relevant section later in this report.

# Responses to survey questions

## Question 1

Your submissions

We are reducing the number of late nights (open until 7pm) we are open in Airdrie Library from four to two. We will retain late night opening on Thursday as the data shows this is the busiest night. Please select one further late night from the three days.



Answer Choices	% Response	No. of Responses
Monday	<b>37.31%</b>	<b>225</b>
Tuesday	<b>40.63%</b>	<b>245</b>
Wednesday	<b>22.06%</b>	<b>133</b>

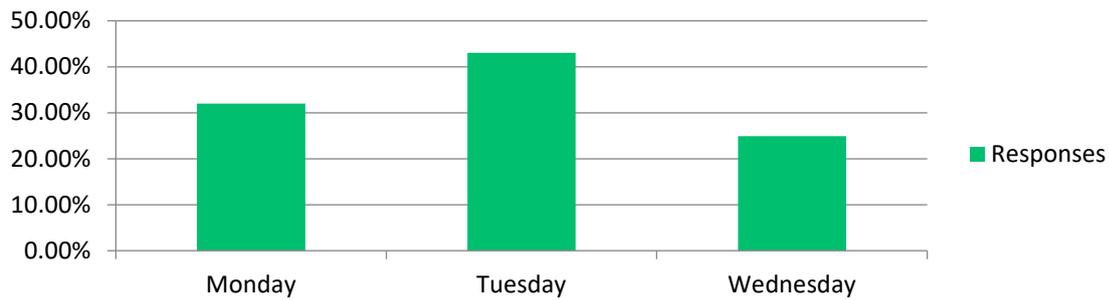
Our response

Responses indicate a preference for late night opening on Tuesdays. The service will therefore remain open until 7pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Airdrie Library.

## Question 2

Your submissions

We are reducing the number of late nights (open until 7pm) we are open in Coatbridge Library from four to two. We will retain late night opening on Thursday as the data shows this is the busiest night. Please select one further late night from the three days.



Answer Choices	% Responses	No. of Responses
Monday	<b>32.03%</b>	<b>180</b>
Tuesday	<b>43.06%</b>	<b>242</b>
Wednesday	<b>24.91%</b>	<b>140</b>

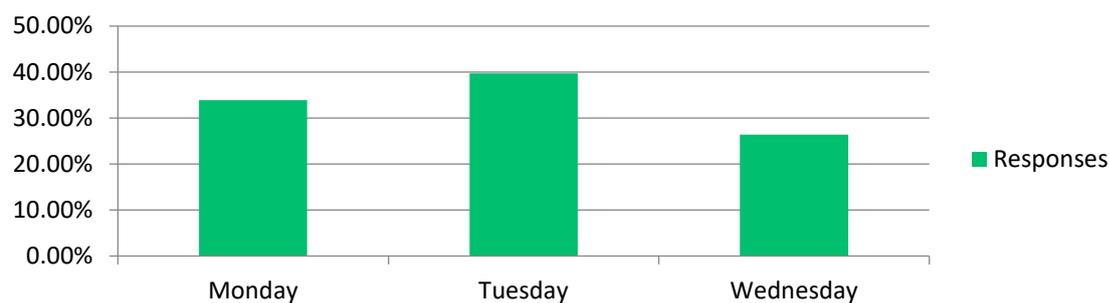
Our response

Responses indicate a preference for late night opening on Tuesdays. The service will therefore remain open until 7pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Coatbridge Library.

## Question 3

### Your submissions

We are reducing the number of late nights (open until 7pm) we are open in Cumbernauld Library from four to two. We will retain late night opening on Thursday as the data shows this is the busiest night. Please select one further late night from the three days.



Answer Choices	% Responses	No. of Responses
Monday	<b>33.89%</b>	<b>203</b>
Tuesday	<b>39.73%</b>	<b>238</b>
Wednesday	<b>26.38%</b>	<b>158</b>

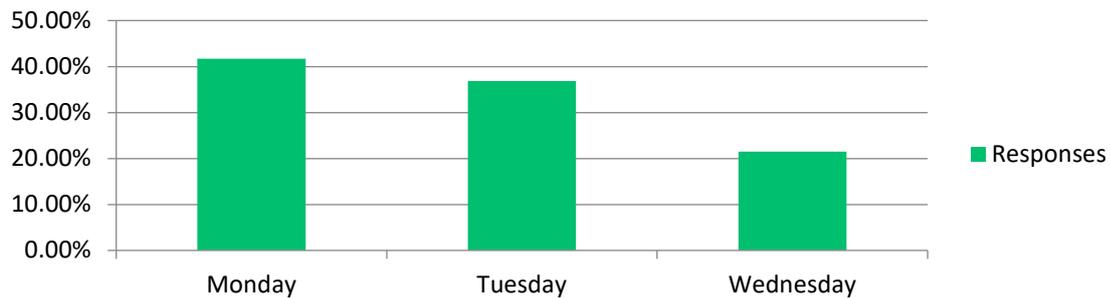
### Our response

Responses indicate a preference for late night opening on Tuesdays. The service will therefore remain open until 7pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Cumbernauld Library.

## Question 4

Your submissions

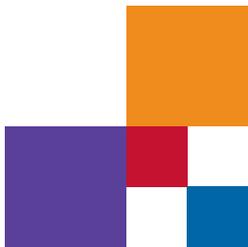
We are reducing the number of late nights (open until 7pm) we are open in Motherwell Library from four to two. We will retain late night opening on Thursday as the data shows this is the busiest night. Please select one further late night from the three days.



Answer Choices	% Responses	No. of Responses
Monday	<b>41.69%</b>	<b>256</b>
Tuesday	<b>36.81%</b>	<b>226</b>
Wednesday	<b>21.50%</b>	<b>132</b>

Our response

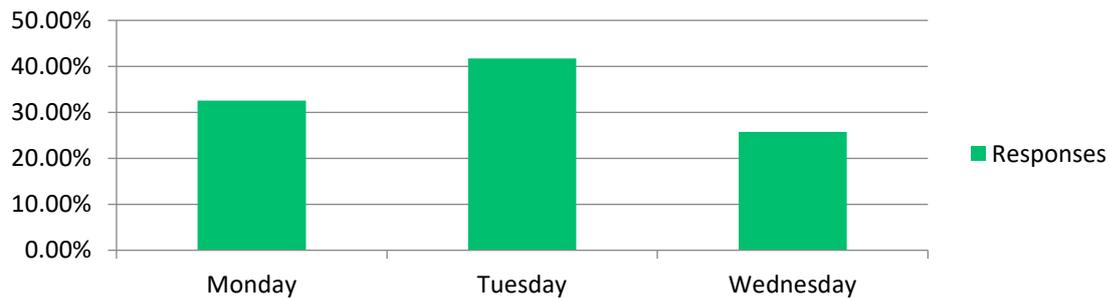
Responses indicate a preference for late night opening on Mondays. The service will therefore remain open until 7pm on Mondays and Thursdays in Motherwell Library.



## Question 5

### Your submissions

We are reducing the number of late nights (open until 7pm) we are open in Wishaw Library from four to two. We will retain late night opening on Thursday as the data shows this is the busiest night. Please select one further late night from the three days.



Answer Choices	% Responses	No. of Responses
Monday	<b>32.54%</b>	<b>191</b>
Tuesday	<b>41.74%</b>	<b>245</b>
Wednesday	<b>25.72%</b>	<b>151</b>

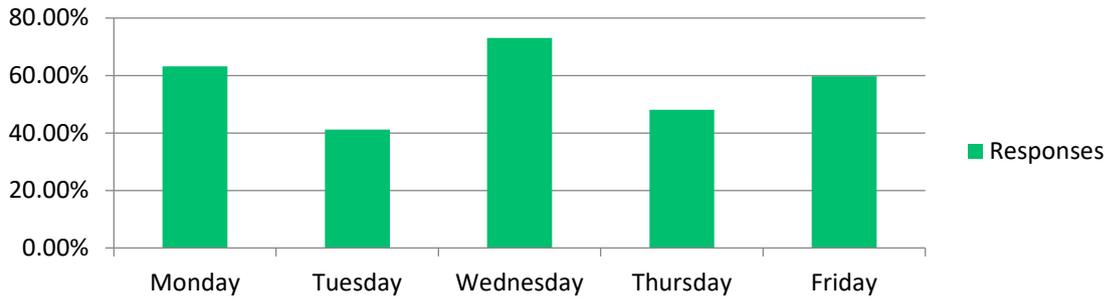
### Our response

Responses indicate a preference for late night opening on Tuesdays. The service will therefore remain open until 7pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Wishaw Library.

## Question 6

Your submissions

We are reducing the number of days we are open in Chryston library, between 10am - 5pm (closed for lunch between 1pm-2pm), to three. Please indicate the three preferred days when you would like the library to be open from the list below:



Answer Choices	%Responses	No. of Responses
Monday	<b>63.16%</b>	<b>348</b>
Tuesday	<b>41.20%</b>	<b>227</b>
Wednesday	<b>73.14%</b>	<b>403</b>
Thursday	<b>48.09%</b>	<b>265</b>
Friday	<b>59.71%</b>	<b>329</b>

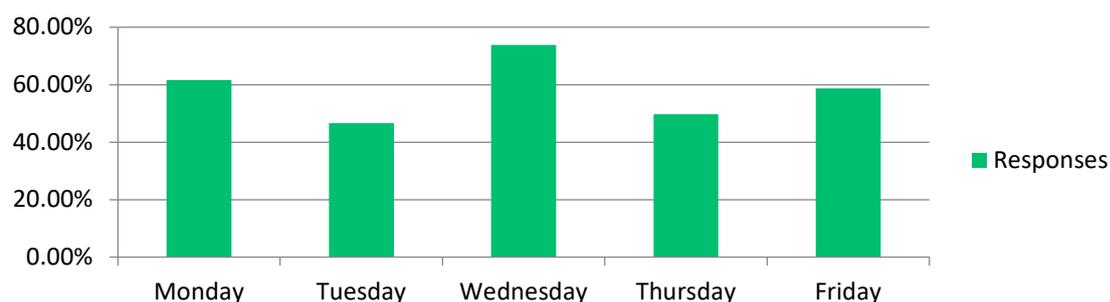
Our response

Responses indicate a preference for opening on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The service will therefore be open, between 10am-5pm (closed for lunch between 1pm-2pm), on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in Chryston Library.

## Question 7

Your submissions

We are reducing the number of days we are open in Newarthill library, between 10am - 5pm (closed for lunch between 1pm-2pm), to three. Please indicate the three preferred days when you would like the library to be open from the list below:



Answer Choices	% Responses	No. of Responses
Monday	<b>61.62%</b>	<b>342</b>
Tuesday	<b>46.67%</b>	<b>259</b>
Wednesday	<b>73.87%</b>	<b>410</b>
Thursday	<b>49.73%</b>	<b>276</b>
Friday	<b>58.74%</b>	<b>326</b>

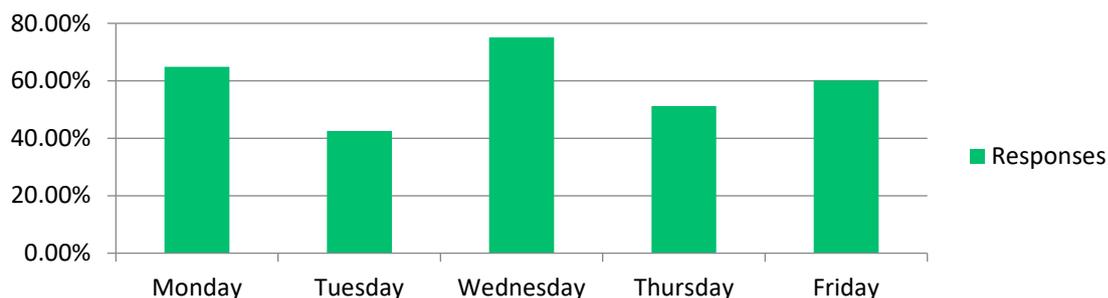
Our response

Responses indicate a preference for opening on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The service will therefore be open, between 10am-5pm (closed for lunch between 1pm-2pm), on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in Newarthill Library.

## Question 8

Your submissions

We are reducing the number of days we are open in Cleland library, between 10am - 5pm (closed for lunch between 1pm-2pm), to three. Please indicate the three preferred days when you would like the library to be open from the list below:



Answer Choices	% Responses	No. of Responses
Monday	<b>61.62%</b>	<b>342</b>
Tuesday	<b>46.67%</b>	<b>259</b>
Wednesday	<b>73.87%</b>	<b>410</b>
Thursday	<b>49.73%</b>	<b>276</b>
Friday	<b>58.74%</b>	<b>326</b>

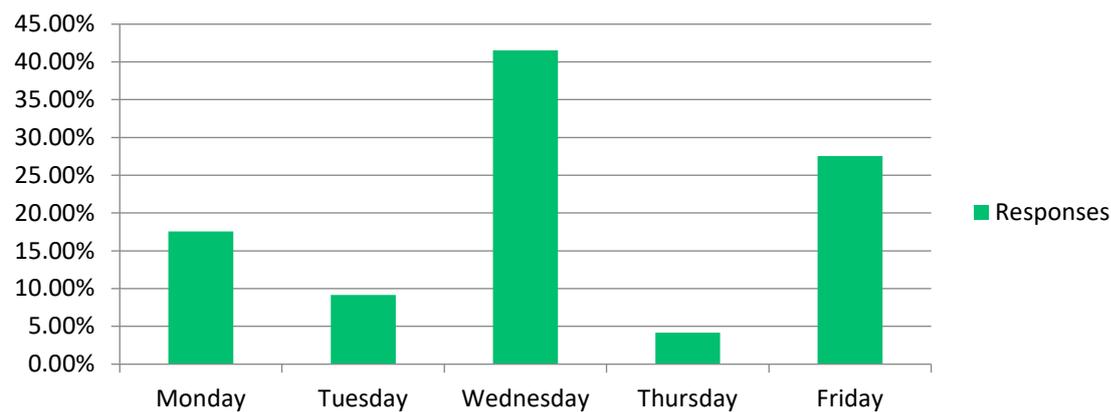
Our response

Responses indicate a preference for opening on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The service will therefore be open, between 10am-5pm (closed for lunch between 1pm-2pm), on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in Cleland Library.

## Question 9

Your submissions

We are removing one afternoon opening in Kilsyth library. Please indicate what your preferred day for afternoon closure, would be, from the list below:



Answer Choices	% Responses	No. of Responses
Monday	<b>17.56%</b>	<b>88</b>
Tuesday	<b>9.18%</b>	<b>46</b>
Wednesday	<b>41.52%</b>	<b>208</b>
Thursday	<b>4.19%</b>	<b>21</b>
Friday	<b>27.54%</b>	<b>138</b>

Our response

Responses indicate a preference for closing on a Wednesday afternoon. The service will therefore close on Wednesday afternoons in Kilsyth Library.

## Additional comments submitted

338 additional comments were received via the hard copy and online questionnaires. While it is not possible to respond, in this report, to every comment made, a breakdown of comments by general category has been developed (listed below), and a response to each category of comments is included.

Category	Response Percent
Objection to reduction in late night openings	4.2%
Importance of library services to communities	11.8%
Objection to removal of an afternoon opening	3.5%
Objection to reduction in library opening hours in general	16.4%
Change in opening hours affecting members of the public's access to services	7.6%
Suggested alternative preferences	18.1%
Objection to consultation process	3.5%
Comments relating to specific libraries	6.9%
Objection to cuts in general	3.5%
General comments	24.5%

4.2% of responses expressed an objection to the proposed reduction in late night openings. Specific comments ranged from references to retaining the current levels of late night opening "prefer Motherwell library to keep all late nights as at present (Mon-Thurs) as only 2 late nights limits time available in the library," and "please keep late opening nights for Cumbernauld library as I work within the centre and this is the only time I can use the services the library provides," to expressing disappointment at the planned proposals "disappointed that Newarthill will not open late. We have had a book club in there for almost two years, with a good turn-out. Another village club needs to stop because of cut backs." While the service takes note of all comments submitted, a reduction in late night openings in specific venues is based around

overall usage figures which indicate these to be the quietest times and therefore the times least likely to impact on the majority of the public when reviewing a reduction in library opening hours as part of a budget savings exercise.

11.8% of returns outlined the importance of library services to communities. Comments focussed specifically on how important the library service is as a community resource, "Libraries are a critical resource for the local community. Reducing access to knowledge for those least able to afford alternatives is further diminishing the opportunities for people to self-improve and build a better future for themselves and the wider community," "the library is an integral part of the community for old, young alike also the use of computers which not

everyone has the luxury of at home,” “libraries are necessary for communities, not only for the provision of lending books but for the service it provides for universal credit applicants.” A number of respondents also took the opportunity to register their opposition to the reduction in opening hours at this point. “Cuts to public services that enrich the culture and communities of society must stop.” “As an NLC resident and former teacher I am disappointed in your decision to limit access to literacy for our communities. “Disappointed in this and any future cuts to this very valuable service to our community.”

3.5% of respondents objected to the removal of an afternoon opening. These comments predominantly related to Kilsyth library. However a number of comments were also received regarding: Abronhill, New Stevenston and Stepps libraries. “I feel Kilsyth Library is always used in afternoon with the locals, I personally would struggle as I use the Library very frequent in afternoon and I have struggled with study time with it being closed earlier in the evening now.” “Don’t close New Stevenston on Friday afternoon as needed to help parents getting kids from school.” “Not happy with Stepps closing at 2pm on a Friday.” “I attend Abronhill Library and I will find it very inconvenient if Abronhill Library is closed at 2pm on a Friday.” 501 respondents to the survey indicated a preference for an afternoon closure in Kilsyth library, with 208, 41.5% indicating a preference for a closure on a Wednesday afternoon. While the service recognises the inconvenience specific reduction in library opening hours will cause. The reductions taking place have been based around overall usage figures which indicate these to be the quietest times and therefore the times least likely to impact on the majority of customers.

16.4 of respondents indicated an objection to a reduction in library opening hours in general. Comments included: “Libraries should not be closed or hours cut they provide a valuable service especially in village settings.” “I oppose these proposals.” “I am very disappointed to hear that my local library is reducing its times as I regularly use it for books printing and using computer.” “I think it’s a great pity that the library service is being reduced in this manner. Perhaps proposals could be put forward to increase the amount paid in council

tax?” “There should be no reduction in any library.” “Libraries are one of the most important buildings in all our communities, no closures would be my preference.” “Please leave hours as they are.” The service notes the objections to reduced opening hours. As previously stated the library service is required to find £400,000 of savings in 2019/20 and feels that the reduction in opening hours, in order to maintain a service presence in local communities, minimises the impact on the majority of the public.

7.6% of respondents outlined how the reduction in opening hours would affect their access to services. “Due to work hours late nights are my only opportunity to visit the library, any further reduction in the late openings at Cumbernauld would begin to make use of the library untenable on a regular basis.” “Closing early is a problem for those who work or study full time. Resources for evening classes or community groups are already limited for those who are not retired or unemployed. Perhaps if you intend to reduce hours, maybe open later instead of closing earlier?” “These later opening hours will help the working people get in after work, therefore helpful to everyone.” The service has continued to develop alternative online methods of access to specific resources and will ensure, via the new opening hours that access to library services, across North Lanarkshire, is available at various times of the day and early evenings.

18.1% of respondents submitted alternative preferences which included suggestions ranging from - “Alternate late nights between branches.” “It might be useful to rotate which branches are open late so there is always a branch open late one night of the week.” “Library closing Monday afternoons would be better.” “Start recruiting local volunteers to help run opening of these important resources in our communities.” “Why not close a couple of libraries or a few of the libraries that are not used as much as say Motherwell and Wishaw and keep the late nights?” “Self-checkout machines would be welcome.” “Think that Wishaw library should have a half day Wednesday as all the shops still close on a wed afternoon and just open 9-1.” “After 2pm - it’s dead on Saturday afternoon.” The range of responses, while welcome and informative, included many suggestions that would not minimise the impact on local communities (close smaller branches) or would lead to closure when

use of services during the week is higher (closing Wishaw library on a Wednesday afternoon). Some suggestions would have the potential to increase costs ("Close Coatbridge Library on Monday but open on Sunday"). When balanced against the proposals put forward by the service and measured against the large number of responses received regarding the service proposals in the consultation, it has been decided that the proposals as they stand are more appropriate.

3.5% of respondents objected to the consultation process. Comments received included: "This is not really a consultation but an attempt to justify already decided savings." "Not a great survey. Many people only use one or two libraries so what's the point in having to answer questions for other libraries." "I think only the customers and staff at the particular branches affected should be commenting on the late nights." While it is correct to state that a proportion of the savings could not be consulted on (this was stated in the survey), a range of choices had been made available within the parameters of the opening hours exercise conducted. The survey was made available to all those who live, work or study in North Lanarkshire. No restrictions were put on which questions respondents could answer as all residents and council tax payers must have the opportunity to answer questions relating to all the services they have access to. The option to skip a question was available if a respondent did not wish to give an answer and most respondents took the opportunity to skip questions.

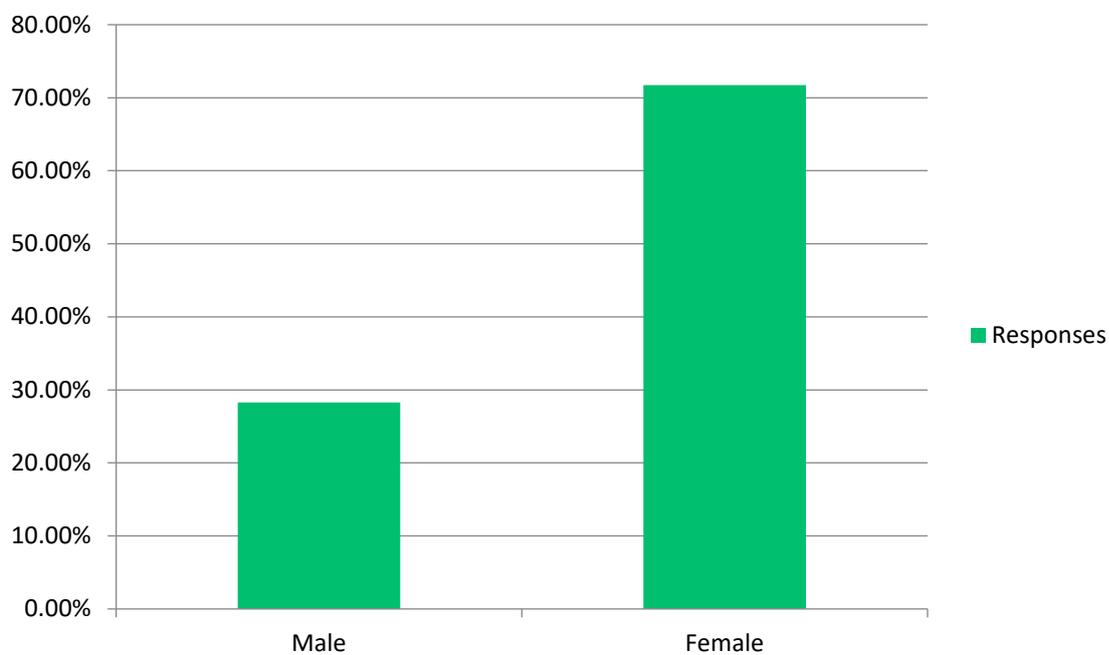
6.9% of responses related to specific libraries. These included: "I stay in Moodiesburn and can't afford a computer. Need to use library for printer and scanner too." "No mention of Saturdays for Motherwell Library." "Very disappointed love my local library at Chryston." "Closing Chapelhall Library is not right because the local people including adults and children use the library." "I strongly oppose the proposal of closing Shotts library on Saturdays." "I understand Newmains is to close at 2pm which seems foolish to me." Most comments received stated an opposition to the proposals being consulted on. While the service recognises respondent's opposition, no proposals submitted included alternative options which would realise the £400,000 of savings required during 2019/20.

3.5% of respondents indicated their objection to cuts in general. Comments included: "I would like it known that I find it extremely disappointing that a service like public libraries has to suffer because of lack of funding." "I think it's ridiculous that public libraries are being closed at all." "These proposals are the thin end of the wedge. I fear for the library provision in NLC." "I think this is outrageous as our local library is so important for all generations." The comments received were of a general nature and do not require a direct response from the service.

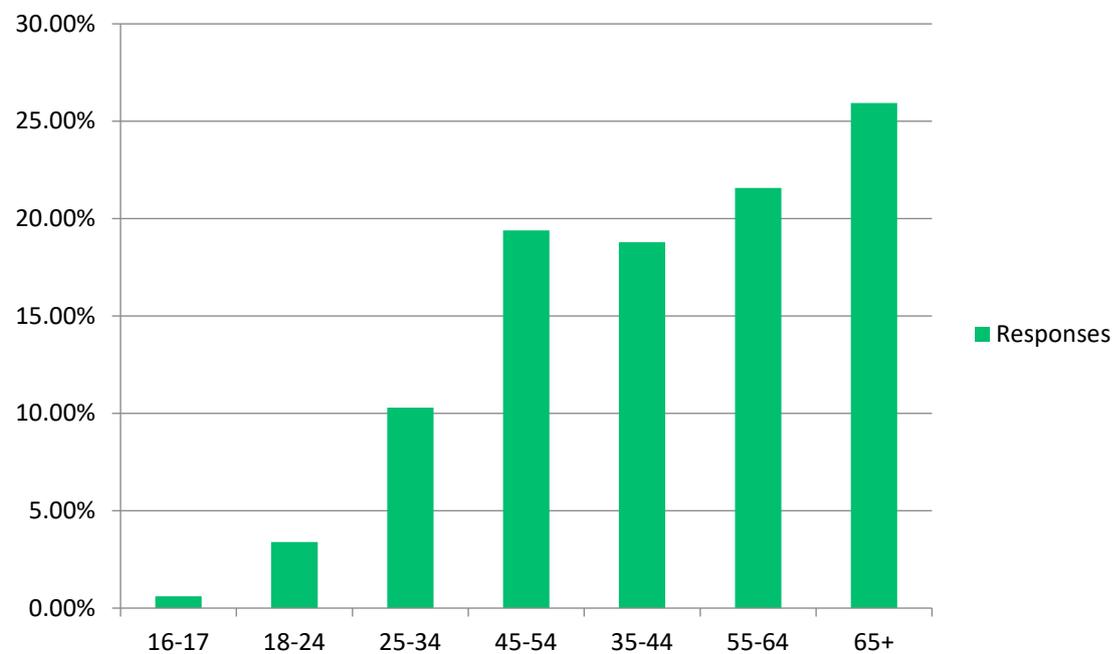
24.5% of comments received were of a general nature. Comments were centred around a number of areas including respondents indicating they were happy for hours to be reduced as long as there were no closures "I use Newarthill Library and I'm happy that there is a service, even if only 3 days a week. This is much preferable to closure." "I don't mind the hours in the Library as long as it is not closed permanently as a lot of people depend on it especially for the computers, Although I don't like the idea of libraries closing, I understand the need if it's proven that people are not using them regularly and that reduced opening hours will help stop them closing permanently," respondents indicating they were sad to see the reduction in opening hours taking place. "Sad to see these further reductions in library services." "I am sad to see the cuts happening to Libraries." And a variety of general statements and comments including – "I haven't used your libraries in years," "cuts everywhere need to share resources e.g, space with rooms to reduce costs," "I hope these cutbacks are not the tip of the iceberg. Libraries are vital for communities especially the elderly for company and those on low income who cannot afford to purchase their own books. The computer facilities are also vital." And "I read lots of books that I get from Moodiesburn Library. I go there very often." The general nature of the comments and statements received do not require a direct response from the service, however each comment has been reviewed and general statements taken into consideration during the review process.

## Some information about who took part in the survey

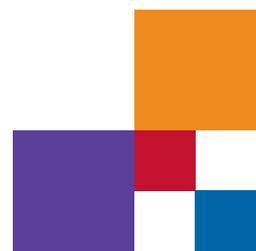
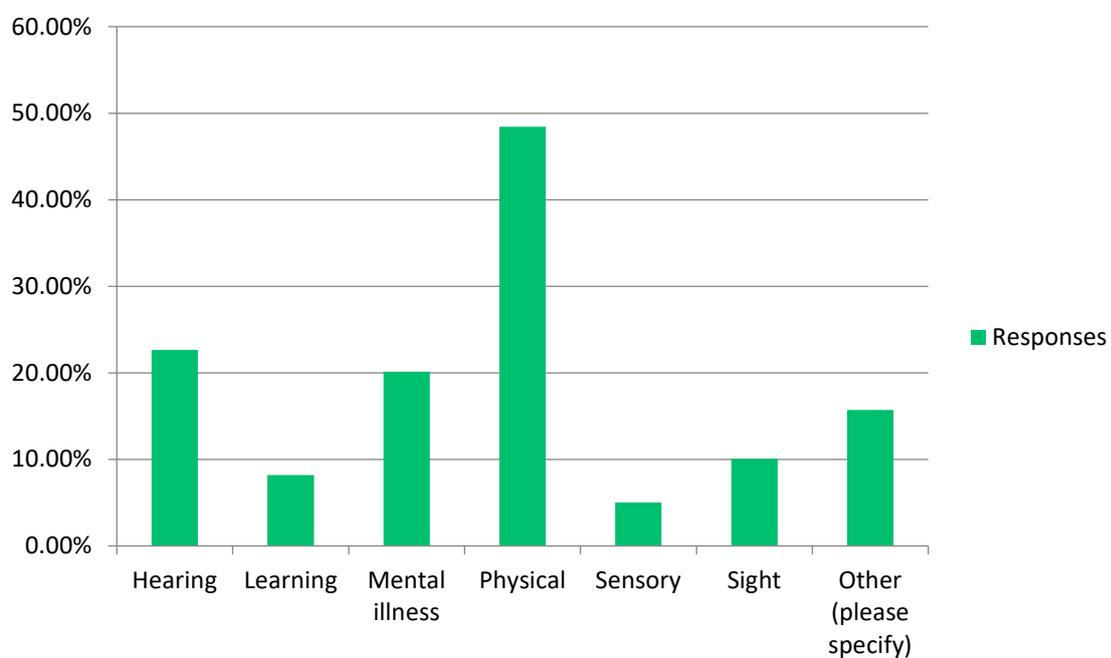
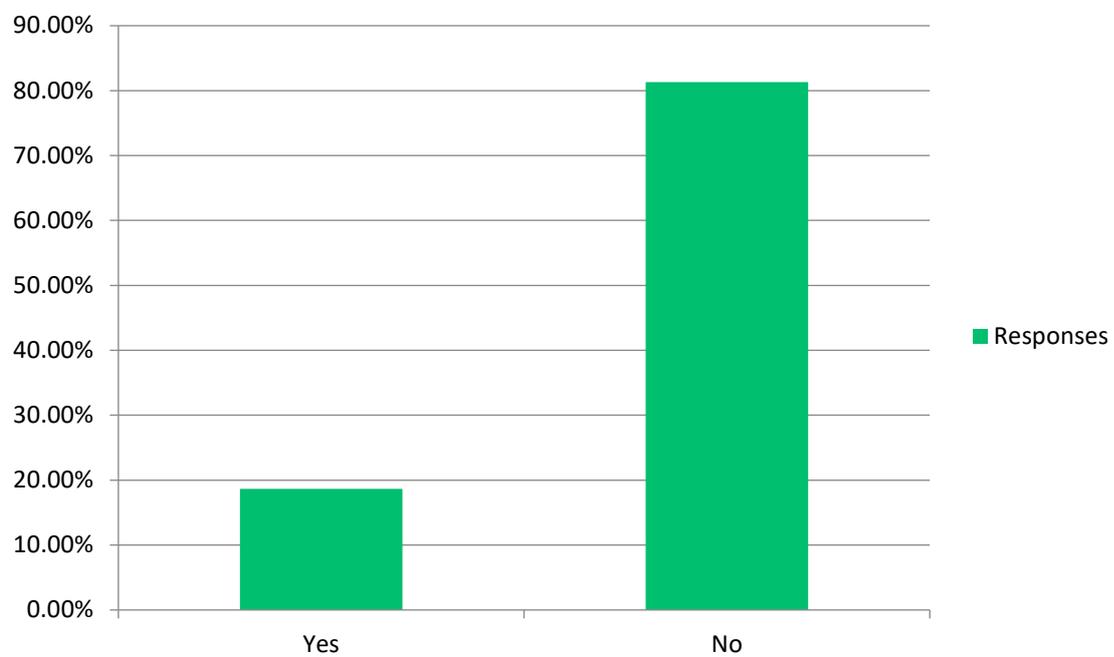
Gender



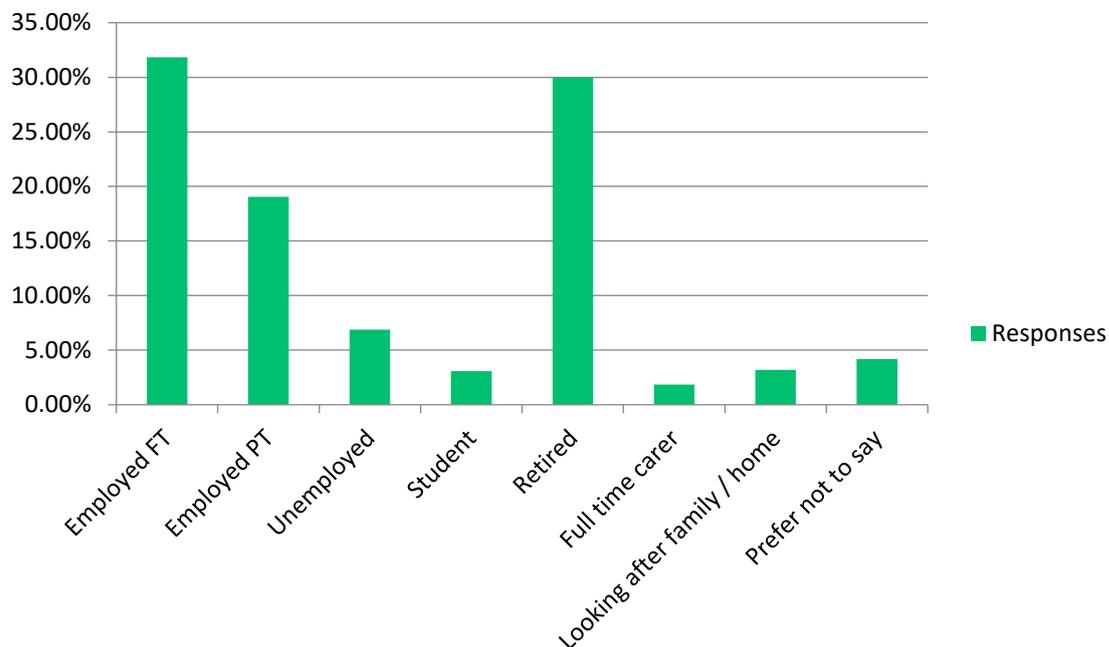
Age range



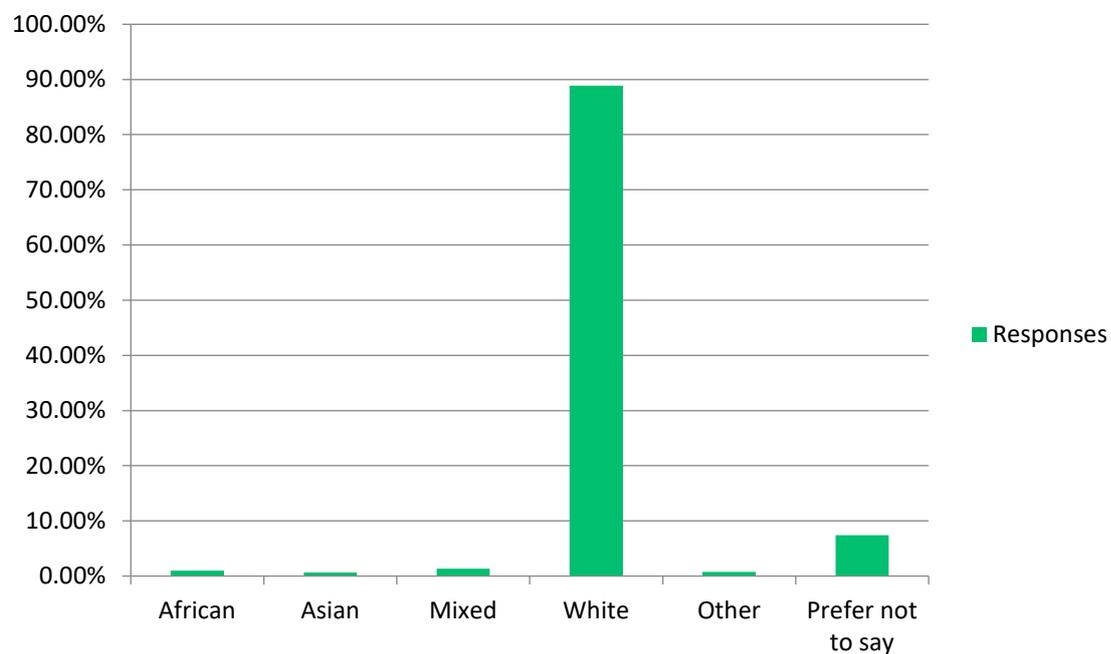
## Disability



## Employment



## Ethnic background



New opening hours based on customer feedback

	Airdrie, Coatbridge, Cumbernauld, Wishaw	Motherwell	Bellshill Cultural Centre	Kilsyth	Abronnhill, Condorrat, Newmains, Moodiesburn, Stepps, Viewpark	Chapelhall, New Stevenston, Shotts	Chryston, Cleland, Newarthill
Monday	9am-5pm	9am-7pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-1pm, 2pm-5pm
Tuesday	9am-7pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	CLOSED
Wednesday	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-2pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-1pm, 2pm-5pm
Thursday	9am-7pm	9am-7pm	9am-7pm	2pm-7pm	2pm-7pm	2pm-7pm	CLOSED
Friday	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	10am-2pm	10am-2pm	10am-1pm, 2pm-5pm
Saturday	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-1pm	10am-1pm	CLOSED	CLOSED



This information can be made available in a range of languages and formats, including large print, braille, audio, electronic and accessible formats.

如果你需要用其他语言或者其他格式表示这些信息，请与我们联系以便讨论你的要求。

Jeżeli potrzebujesz tą informację w innym języku lub formacie, proszę, skontaktuj się z nami, żeby przedyskutować Twoją potrzebę.

اگر آپ کو دوسری زبان میں یہ معلومات درکار ہو تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے مندرجہ ذیل پتے پر رابطہ کریں

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