

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL LIBRARIES, REGISTRATION AND ARCHIVES SERVICE CONSULTATION

Prepared by Lake Market Research for Kent County Council

Date: 11th May 2015

This report complies with ISO: 20252 standards and other relevant forms of conduct



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1. RESEARCH CONTEXT

1.1 BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Kent County Council's Libraries, Registration and Archive Service launched a public consultation on the future of the service on the 12th January 2015. The Consultation document featured sixteen pages of A4 (see Appendix A for full text) detailing:

- A foreword written by Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services
- An overview of what the current Libraries, Registration and Archive Service delivers across Kent
- The Libraries, Registration and Archive Service's mission for the future
- The need for change to the service
- Options that have been considered with regard to change
- A more detailed look at KCC's preferred option to establish a Charitable Trust
- An Appendix noting the outcomes of the qualitative findings conducted prior to the Consultation

The consultation questionnaire was designed by Kent County Council and featured a number of open ended questions together with five closed questions:

1. *Having read Kent County Council's mission for the future of its Libraries, Registration and Archives, which of the following statements best describes your thoughts? (Strongly agree/Agree/Neither agree nor disagree/Disagree/Strongly disagree/Don't know)*
2. *If there are any other services you would like to suggest or anything you would like to see the Libraries, Registration and Archive service deliver that it doesn't at present (Free text)*
3. *Having read Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust, which of the following statements best describes your thoughts? (Strongly agree/Agree/Neither agree nor disagree/Disagree/Strongly disagree/Don't know)*
4. *Please let us know the reasons for your choice (Free text)*
5. *Which of the following statements best describes the impact you feel the proposed charitable trust model will have on you/your organisation? (The proposed changes will not affect me/my organisation / The proposed changes will have some impact on me/my organisation / The proposed changes will have a significant impact on me/my organisation / Don't know)*

6. *If you feel that the proposed changes to the Library, Registration and Archive service will have some or a significant impact on you/your organisation, whether positive or negative, or you have any other comments you wish to make, please provide details (Free text)*
7. *If you have any alternative ideas of how we should deliver the Library, Registration and Archive service or if you consider any of the other options to be preferable, please tell us? (Free text)*
8. *When did you last use the Library, Registration and Archive Service (In the last month/between 2 and 6 months/between 7 and 12 months/more than 12 months)*
9. *If you have not visited the service in the last 12 month, please tell us why (Free text)*
10. *We have completed an Equality Impact Assessment and we welcome your views on the assumptions we have made. (Free text)*

1.2 METHODOLOGY

Consultees were invited to submit their views on the proposals via each of the following channels:

1. An online questionnaire featured on the kent.gov website
2. In paper form via any of the Library, Registration and Archive buildings themselves
3. At a series of roadshow events across Kent at libraries and town centres

The consultation period ran for a period of twelve weeks from 12th January to 8th April 2015 (allowing a little extra time due to the Easter holiday period). All paper questionnaires received by 15th April were reviewed and processed by the data entry team at Lake Market Research. These questionnaires were then combined with the online responses received at Kent County Council to produce overall statistics for this report.

42 Easy Read versions of the questionnaire were returned in total.

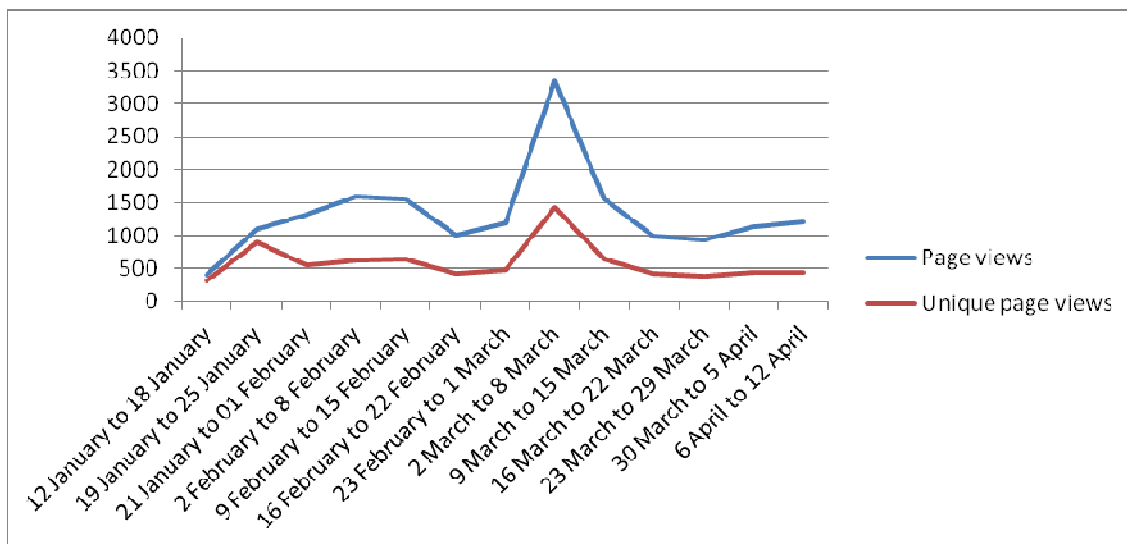
Emails / letters were also sent directly to Kent County Council by Individuals as well as Groups / Organisations in response to this Consultation. These have been reviewed to ensure consistency with the findings of the questionnaire and some of the free text comments received have been included in this report.

1.3 CONSULTATION REACH

Throughout the consultation, relevant pages on the Kent County Council website carried promotional messages and banners encouraging people to take part and share their views:

- Kent.gov homepage banner from 12th January to 15th March
- Libraries landing page banner and link from 12th January to 8th April
- History and heritage landing page banner from 12th January to 8th April
- Registrations landing page banner from 12th January to 8th April

The main call to action was to visit the Libraries, Registration and Archives consultation pages at the online consultation directory, where residents could access the key documents and fill in the online consultation form. The below chart summarises the number of views obtained (both in total and uniquely):



Visitors to the consultation pages peaked in the first half of March (consistent with an internal mailout to Libraries' customers who had opted in to receiving marketing updates).

Weekly tweets were also sent out via @kent_cc, Kent County Council's corporate twitter handle.

Libraries, Registration and Archive staff encouraged customers to take part in the consultation. All service points carried promotional posters and fliers. In addition to this, the 20 highest footfall Libraries in Kent displayed pull up banners encouraging people to take part in the consultation.

12 roadshow events were publicised on the Kent County Council website. These roadshows were an opportunity for the public to discuss the proposals with LRA managers, to ask questions and to fill out the consultation document. These roadshows were promoted via Kent.gov, LRA staff and local media.

The table below summarises the number of people spoken to with regard to the Consultation and the number of people approached but not spoken to. As perhaps expected, there was a higher proportion of people who were approached but not spoken to in the town centre / retail roadshows compared to the library roadshows.

	Number of people spoken to	Number of people approached but not spoken to
Roadshow and date		
Ashford- MacArthur Glen	77	75
Dartford - Orchard Shopping Centre	13	0
Maidstone - The Mall	42	29
Dover - Market Square	26	24
Gravesend - St Georges Centre	76	22
Margate - Westwood Cross	71	168
Sittingbourne - Sainsbury's foyer	114	94
Folkestone - Bouverie Place	75	56
The Eden Centre	24	4
Total	518	472

	Number of people spoken to	Number of people approached but not spoken to
Roadshow and date		
Sheerness Gateway	40	14
Coldharbour Library	25	0
Temple Hill Library	8	0
Tenterden Library	49	18
Staplehurst Library	45	1
Tonbridge Library	44	0
Larkfield Library	35	13
Paddock Wood Library	30	5
Tunbridge Wells - Outside library	67	52
Ramsgate Library	18	3
Margate Library	24	5
Sevenoaks Kaleidoscope	47	15
Canterbury Beaney	83	39
Herne Bay Library	41	31
Faversham Library	25	3
Deal Library	23	3
Sandwich Library	10	5
Hythe Library	15	45
Total	629	252

Information was issued to media in the lead up to and throughout the consultation.

- 11th September 2014 – Cabinet Member briefing to media included KM group and Radio Kent
- 7th January 2015 – Press release announcing start of consultation
- 16th February 2015 – Press release outlining dates of forthcoming roadshow events
- 30th March 15 – Reminder about the consultation closing date asking media to encourage people to take part.

In addition, the press office responded to requests for statements / information throughout the consultation.

The consultation received county-wide coverage in local papers, with the following estimated reach proportions:

Published	Headline	Publication	Reach
09/04/2015	Residents share fears over libraries	East Kent Mercury	9,712
03/04/2015	Have your say on library changes	Kent Messenger (Weald)	31,780
08/04/2015	Help write a new chapter	KM Sheerness Times Guardian	6,418
03/04/2015	Have your say on library changes	Kent Messenger (Malling)	31,780
08/04/2015	TIME UP:	Dartford News Shopper	26,657
04/04/2015	Library petition needs your help	Kent On Series	117,195
04/04/2015	Library petition needs your help	Kent On Series (Northwest)	117,195
03/04/2015	Give your view on libraries	Isle of Thanet Gazette	9,867
03/04/2015	LIBRARIES Still time to sign petition	Isle of Thanet Gazette	9,867
02/04/2015	Sign up to help save our libraries	Herne Bay Gazette	2,041
02/04/2015	Sign petition to keep our libraries	KM Faversham News	2,149
02/04/2015	Sign up to help save our libraries	Whitstable Gazette	9,789
02/04/2015	Speak up loudly for our libraries	Kentish Gazette (Canterbury)	9,789
03/04/2015	Services better run in-house	Kent & Sussex Courier (Tonbridge)	24,064
02/04/2015	Flood of press releases follows beginning of official campaign	Ashford Herald	10,000
02/04/2015	Library review	Ashford Herald	10,000
02/04/2015	LIBRARY TRUST Still time to sign petition	Folkestone Herald Dover Express	29,588
02/04/2015	Flood of press releases follows beginning of official campaign	Folkestone Herald Dover Express	29,588
03/04/2015	Services better run in-house	Kent & Sussex Courier (East Sussex)	24,064
03/04/2015	Last chance for say on libraries	Kent & Sussex Courier (East Sussex)	24,064

02/04/2015	Library review	Folkestone Herald Dover Express	29,588
02/04/2015	Flood of press releases follows beginning of official campaign	Dover Express (Folkestone)	6,294
02/04/2015	Show you care, sign petition	Sevenoaks Chronicle	10,111
02/04/2015	Still time to sign petition	Dover Express (Folkestone)	6,294
02/04/2015	Library review	Dover Express (Folkestone)	6,294
02/04/2015	Library review	Dover Express (Ashford)	6,294
01/04/2015	On the right path for better coastal walks...	Adscene (Canterbury, Whitstable, Herne Bay)	28,601
26/03/2015	Let them know what you think	East Kent Mercury	9,712
26/03/2015	Library run by trust could offer bespoke services	East Kent Mercury	9,712
01/03/2015	West Mailing Parish Council	Downs Mail (Malling)	23,950
26/03/2015	Let them know what you think	Dover Mercury	10,096
26/03/2015	Labour Party campaigners oppose cuts to libraries	Herne Bay Gazette	2,041
25/03/2015	Public sector swings and roundabouts	Sittingbourne News Extra	10,459
19/03/2015	Concern for the county's libraries	Herne Bay Gazette	2,041
19/03/2015	Anger seems to be in the news	Whitstable Gazette	9,789
19/03/2015	Concern for the county's libraries	Whitstable Gazette	9,789
19/03/2015	Concern for the county's libraries	Kentish Gazette (Canterbury)	9,789
19/03/2015	ASH	East Kent Mercury	9,712
19/03/2015	ASH	Kentish Gazette (Canterbury)	9,789
19/03/2015	Don't experiment with our libraries	KM Dartford Messenger	5,099
19/03/2015	Don't experiment with our libraries	Gravesend Messenger	4,946
21/03/2015	Libraries will be cut yet again	Kent On Series	117,195
21/03/2015	Libraries will be cut yet again	Kent On Series (Northwest)	117,195
20/03/2015	Westgate and Westbrook Residents Association	Isle of Thanet Gazette	9,867
19/03/2015	POLITICIANS	Dover Express	6,294
19/03/2015	LIBRARY TRUST A dangerous experiment	Sevenoaks Chronicle	10,111
08/03/2015	Registering my library concern	Kent on Sunday	155,101
07/03/2015	Registering my library concern	Kent On Series	117,195
07/03/2015	Registering my library concern	Kent On Series (Northwest)	117,195
06/03/2015	Find out about libraries' future	Isle of Thanet Gazette	9,867
05/03/2015	Act now to save your libraries	Kentish Gazette (Canterbury)	9,789
05/03/2015	Petition problem has been solved	Whitstable Gazette	9,789
05/03/2015	A chance to sign libraries petition	Herne Bay Gazette	2,041
04/03/2015	Online library petition launched	Canterbury Times (Whitstable)	28,601

04/03/2015	Online library petition launched	Canterbury Times (Faversham)	28,601
04/03/2015	Online library petition launched	Canterbury Times (Herne Bay)	28,601
26/02/2015	Don't close book on our libraries future	Kentish Gazette (Canterbury)	9,789
01/03/2015	Protect our much loved libraries	Kent on Sunday	155,101
26/02/2015	Don't close book on our libraries future	Whitstable Gazette	9,789
26/02/2015	Don't close book on our libraries	Herne Bay Gazette	2,041
25/02/2015	We must fight to protect our libraries	Kent Extra (Thanet)	9,867
26/02/2015	Help protect our libraries	Sevenoaks Chronicle	10,111
25/02/2015	Find out about future of libraries	Sittingbourne News Extra	10,459
26/02/2015	Concerns over future of Sandwich Library as Kent County Council launches consultation	East Kent Mercury (Web)	437
01/02/2015	Call for views on library trust	Downs Mail (Malling)	23,950
22/02/2015	Protect our library service with petition	Kent on Sunday	155,101
21/02/2015	Protect our library service with petition	Kent On Series	117,195
21/02/2015	Protect our library service with petition	Kent On Series (Northwest)	117,195
20/02/2015	Book staff do a fantastic job	Kent & Sussex Courier (Edenbridge)	24,064
19/02/2015	Sign online petition for library as well	Whitstable Gazette	9,789
19/02/2015	Oppose trust Trojan horse	Sevenoaks Chronicle	10,111
18/02/2015	Roadshow on future of libraries	Sittingbourne News Extra	10,459
13/02/2015	Petition launched in bid to save county libraries	Kent & Sussex Courier (Tunbridge Wells)	24,064
13/02/2015	Petition launched in bid to save county libraries	Kent & Sussex Courier (Edenbridge)	24,064
13/02/2015	Petition launched in bid to save county libraries	Kent & Sussex Courier (Tonbridge)	24,064
13/02/2015	Petition launched in bid to save county libraries	Kent & Sussex Courier (Paddock Wood)	24,064
12/02/2015	Bid to "save" public libraries in Kent	Kent & Sussex Courier (Web)	9,794
13/02/2015	Petition launched in bid to save county libraries	Kent & Sussex Courier (East Sussex)	24,064
11/02/2015	Protesters urge council to keep libraries as a service	Adscene (Canterbury, Whitstable, Herne Bay)	28,601

In addition to the activities above, the Libraries, Registration and Archives team directly engaged a wide range of stakeholders and interested parties around the consultation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Interested groups including local history groups, reading groups, etc.
- Community and Voluntary Sector
- Kent Youth County Council

- Archive depositors
- MPs, District Councils, Town and Parish Councils
- Approved premises, clergy and registered buildings
- Maternity units, hospitals and funeral directors
- National bodies included the Society of Chief Librarians, the Chartered Institute of Information Professionals, Arts Council England, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and the Department of Work and Pensions
- Other public sector partners including the Kent Prison Service and the London Borough of Bexley

1.4 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETING THE DATA

It should be noted that a proportion of Kent residents participated in this Consultation rather than all residents of the Kent County Council area; and the results are therefore subject to sampling error, which means that not all differences are statistically significant.

Given the self-selecting nature of this consultation, it was expected that the majority of those completing the Consultation document would be users of the Libraries, Registration and Archive service. This expectation was realised with the final profile of Consultees responding at 98% last usage in the last 12 months and 92% last usage in the last month. It is therefore important to note that the findings of this Consultation are likely to be based on frequent users of the Library, Registration and Archive Service and do not therefore represent Kent residents as a whole. Kent County Council estimate 20% of Kent's population use the Kent Library and Archive service.

With these assumptions in mind and according to Kent County Council's borrower profile, 179,261 borrowers actively borrowed items from the library during 2014-15. For the purposes of this report, we have used this figure to calculate the confidence level and confidence interval that the Consultation results can be based on. With a sample size of 1,969 Individuals taking part in this Consultation for example, we can assume that results are accurate to a +/- 2.2% at a 95% confidence level. For example, with a confidence interval of 2% and 47% percent of your sample picking an answer you can be "sure" that if you had asked the question of the entire relevant population between 45% (47-2) and 49% (47+2) would have picked that answer. The 95% confidence level means you can be 95% certain of the percentage shown is accurate to +/- 2%. It is worth noting however that it is likely that given the nature of this Consultation, the most positive and the most concerned residents have taken part at an overall level.

No weighting has been applied to the data received and all open questions were reviewed and coded into “themes” to provide quantitative analysis in this report, alongside residents free text comments.

1.5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the team at Kent County Council for all their work in developing the project. We would also like to thank all the residents and Groups/Organisations who took the time to complete the Consultation documentation.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 CONSULTATION RESPONSE PROFILE

2,143 responses have been recorded for this Consultation across Individuals and Groups/Organisations. Individuals account for 92% of the sample in total, Groups/Organisations account for 6%. 2% of those responding left this question blank.

The gender and age profile of the Individual Consultees responding broadly reflects the Libraries, Registration and Archive service profile provided by Kent County Council. The Libraries, Registration and Archive service borrower profile is skewed towards an older age profile (compared to wider 2011 Census statistics); the profile of known Individuals taking part in the Consultation is however more heavily skewed towards residents aged 60 and over.

Representation across Kent areas / districts has been achieved. The area profile of known Individual Consultees broadly reflects the Libraries, Registration and Archive service borrower profile. It is however worth noting that the Consultation has received a higher proportion of responses than perhaps anticipated from residents living in Canterbury and Dover. This is perhaps a result of outside resident activity highlighting the Consultation's existence and at times some vocal concerns and petitions with regard to its purpose and impact on those using the local service.

Of the Group / Organisation representatives responding, 40 indicated they are a Public Sector partner to Kent County Council and 59 indicated they operate in the Voluntary, Community or Faith sector. 14 representatives from Book / Reading groups across the County also responded.

2.2 USE OF LIBRARIES, REGISTRATION AND ARCHIVE SERVICE

The vast majority of Consultees indicated that they last used the Library, Registration and Archive service in the last month. 6% last used in the last year. Amongst Individual Consultees, there are significant differences observed with a significantly higher proportion of female Individual Consultees indicating they last used the service in the last month.

Recent usage is consistently high amongst Individuals from all areas / districts (all 89% and above). There are no significant differences observed.

Last use of the Library, Registration and Archive service is also high amongst the Group / Organisation representatives taking part (81%). A significantly higher proportion of Voluntary, Community or Faith sector representatives indicated their last use was in the last month (92%) compared to Public Sector partner representatives.

2.3 SUPPORT FOR LIBRARIES, REGISTRATION AND ARCHIVE SERVICE MISSION

52% of all Consultees support Kent County Council's mission for the future of its Libraries, Registration and Archive service. 18% indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed or were unsure. 30% indicated they disagree with the mission proposed.

52% of Individual Consultees support Kent County Council's mission for the future of its Libraries, Registration and Archive service. There are marked significant differences by area / district with a significantly higher proportion of residents living in West and Mid Kent supporting the mission compared to residents of East Kent. Lower proportions are observed in Canterbury, Dover and Thanet. At present, it is uncertain as to whether this is an accurate reflection of resident feeling in these areas or whether the publicised concerns (for example, <https://clikent.wordpress.com/>) with regard to the Consultation's purpose and impact on those using the local service has had a direct result on feedback from these areas.

47% of Group / Organisation representatives support the mission. There are no significant differences when comparing Public Sector partners and Voluntary, Community & Faith sector representatives.

2.4 SUPPORT FOR CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

39% of all Consultees support Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust for the Libraries, Registration and Archive service. 19% indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed or were unsure. 43% indicated they disagree with the proposal to establish a charitable trust as it was proposed.

39% of Individual Consultees support Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust for the Libraries, Registration and Archive service. There is an indication that the more frequent service users are less favourable towards the proposal to establish a charitable trust with a significantly lower proportion who last used the library in the last month agreeing with the proposal.

There are marked significant differences by area / district with a significantly higher proportion of residents living in West, Mid and North Kent supporting the proposal to establish a charitable trust. Consistent with perceptions regarding the mission, lower proportions are observed in Canterbury, Dover and Thanet. At present, it is uncertain as to whether this is an accurate reflection of resident feeling in these areas or whether the publicised concerns (for example, <https://clikent.wordpress.com/>) with regard to the Consultation's purpose and impact on those using the local service has had a direct result on feedback from these areas.

34% of Group / Organisation representatives support the proposal to establish a charitable trust. There are no significant differences in terms of overall agreement when comparing Public Sector partners and Voluntary, Community & Faith sector representatives, but a significantly higher proportion of Public Sector partners indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

Amongst those in favour, the overwhelming theme coming through was that they consider the charitable trust proposal to be the best option to move forward with to protect the existing service. References are also made to the key benefits highlighted in the Consultation documents with regard to funding, flexibility, community involvement and business rate savings.

There are a number of key themes that are evident in Consultees reasoning for not supporting the proposal for a charitable trust:

1. Set up / service concerns

- Concerns over Trustees / needs to be carefully set up / funded / managed / who will appoint
- Concerns over professional expertise / librarians losing jobs / pensions / negative service impact
- Cuts to services / outsourcing leading to reduced opening / lower quality service

2. Service should stay as it is

- Happy with present service / has always worked this way / is a vital service
- Library, Registration and Archive Services should continue to be run by KCC / local government / remain in the Public Sector
- Kent County Council should make savings elsewhere / stop wasting money / pursue other sources of funding

3. Uncertainty

- Risky / uncertain / not guaranteed / concerns about safeguards / public accountability / inclusivity
- No guarantee Libraries will not close / will receive funding needed / tax relief may be withdrawn
- Outsourcing to Charitable Trusts has been proven to fail / don't trust Trusts
- Concerns about volunteers - not trained / not as knowledgeable
- Concerns about third party outsourcing / motivated by profit / no longer free / increased charges

4. Doubt / scepticism

- Will cost more in long run / won't save money / will cost tax payers

- Just a way for KCC to avoid responsibility / passing on blame for cuts / closures
- Just a cost cutting exercise / way to reduce services
- Believe decision has already been made by KCC

5. Request for more information / detail on the proposal as well as the other alternatives to make a fair conclusion

There is also a considerable amount of uncertainty in Consultees responses that need to be taken into account. To summarise:

1. 33% agree with the Charitable Trust proposal and Mission put forward
2. 9% disagree with the Charitable Trust proposal put forward but agree with the Vision
3. 32% neither agreed nor disagreed at one or both of the questions put forward concerning the Charitable Trust proposal or the Mission
4. 26% disagree with the Charitable Trust proposal and the Mission put forward

The distinguishing factors between those who are unsure about both aspects (Group 3 - 32%) and those who agree with the Mission but disagree with the Charitable Trust proposal (Group 2 - 9%), compared to those that disagree with both aspects, are:

- Uncertainty concerns (risky /not guaranteed / concerns about safeguards / public accountability);
- Doubt (will it cost more in the long run);
- The need for more information / detail on the proposal as well as the other alternatives to make a fair conclusion.

Depending on the set up and structure of the Charitable Trust, it is possible that there could be more support for the Charitable Trust proposal than that outlined directly here – providing the main concerns are addressed.

2.5 PERCEIVED IMPACT OF CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

55% of all Consultees believe the proposal to establish a charitable trust would have a significant or some impact on them. 24% indicated the proposed changes will not affect them and 22% were unsure.

54% of Individual Consultees believe the proposal to establish a charitable trust would have a significant or some impact on them. As expected, there is an indication that those that last used the service in the last month (our proxy for the more frequent service users) believe the impact will be more significant compared to others.

67% of Group / Organisation representatives believe the proposal to establish a charitable trust would have a significant or some impact on them. There are significant differences in terms of overall agreement when comparing Public Sector partners and Voluntary, Community & Faith sector representatives at 53% and 80% respectively.

In contrast to patterns observed for overall opinion towards the proposal, open ended comments with regard to impact were dominated by those who believed the proposal would have a significant impact on them.

There are a number of key themes that are evident in Consultees reasoning for not supporting the proposal for a charitable trust:

1. Set up / service concerns

- Will reduce services / degrade services / remove services / negative impact
- Volunteers will lack necessary skills & training / may have difficulty recruiting
- Concerns about stock levels being maintained / Range of books will reduce
- Limited opening times / Reduced accessibility
- Group activities may cease / loss of amenities / book clubs / reading groups
- Will impact strongly on vulnerable groups e.g. the elderly / low income
- Mobile library service cuts / concerns about Home Library Service

2. Uncertainty

- Closure for Libraries in rural locations / small villages / concerns about closures
- Will increase costs / charge for certain services / become money making exercise
- Concerned it may to be transferred back / Trust losing funding / No guarantees
- Loss of Public accountability / FOI exempt / Councillors will have no influence

3. Service should stay as it is

- Happy with the way things are / Regular user / Essential service / Maintain standards
- Libraries should remain publically funded / free service / Run by KCC / remain in-house

4. Staff concerns

- Concerns for current staff / Potential job losses / cuts to salaries / Unable to maintain professional expertise
- Negative impact on employment with the LRA service / loss of pensions / changes to terms & conditions of employment

5. Request for more information / detail on the proposal as well as the other alternatives to make a fair conclusion

6. Doubt / scepticism

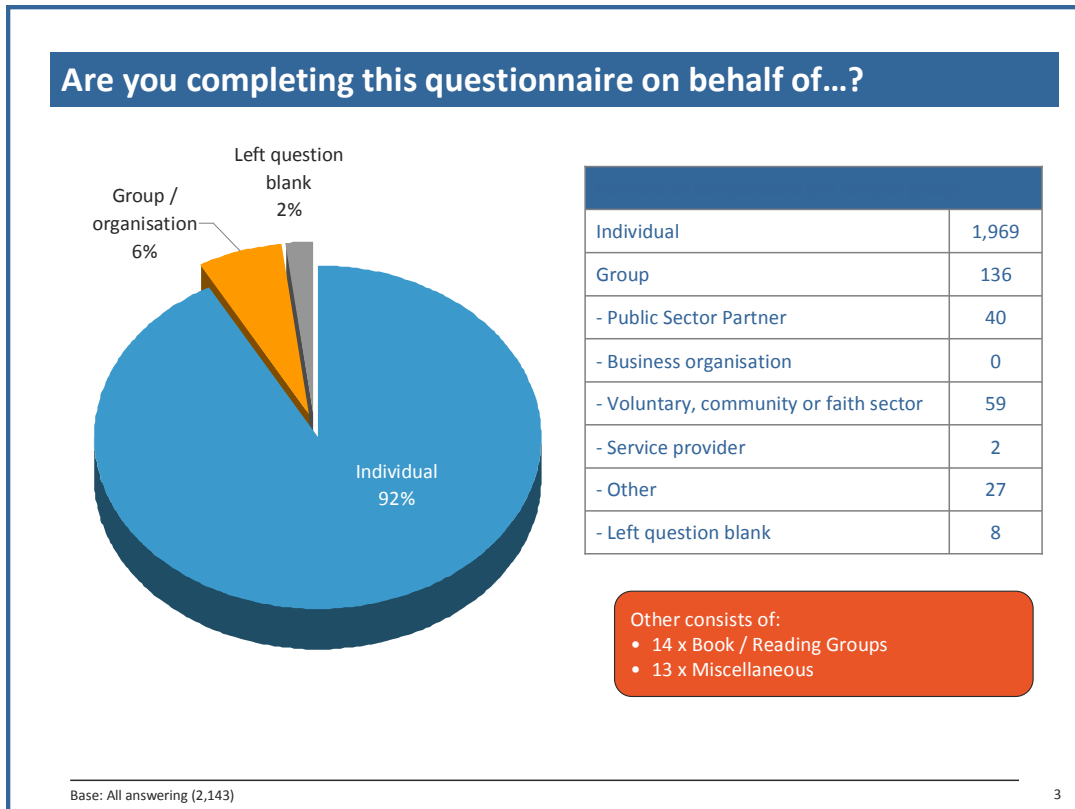
- Just cost cutting exercise / reduced funding / savings in rates may impact on Council funds
- KCC are just abrogating responsibility / Passing the buck / Off-loading responsibility

3. CONSULTATION RESPONSE PROFILE

2,143 responses have been recorded for this Consultation across Individuals and Groups/Organisations:

- 1,969 Individuals (accounting for 92% of the sample)
- 136 Group / Organisation representatives (accounting for 6% of the sample)
- 2% of those responding to the Consultation did not identify themselves and left the question blank.

Of the Group / Organisation representatives responding, 40 indicated that they are a Public Sector Partner to Kent County Council and 59 indicated they operate in the Voluntary, Community or Faith Sector. 14 representatives from Book / Reading Groups across the County also responded.



3.1 PROFILE OF INDIVIDUALS RESPONDING

The Individuals responding to the Consultation are from a range of age groupings and both gender groups. 15% of the Individuals responding to the Consultation preferred not to provide their age. 66% of the Individuals responding are aged 55 and over. 57% of the Individuals responding are female.

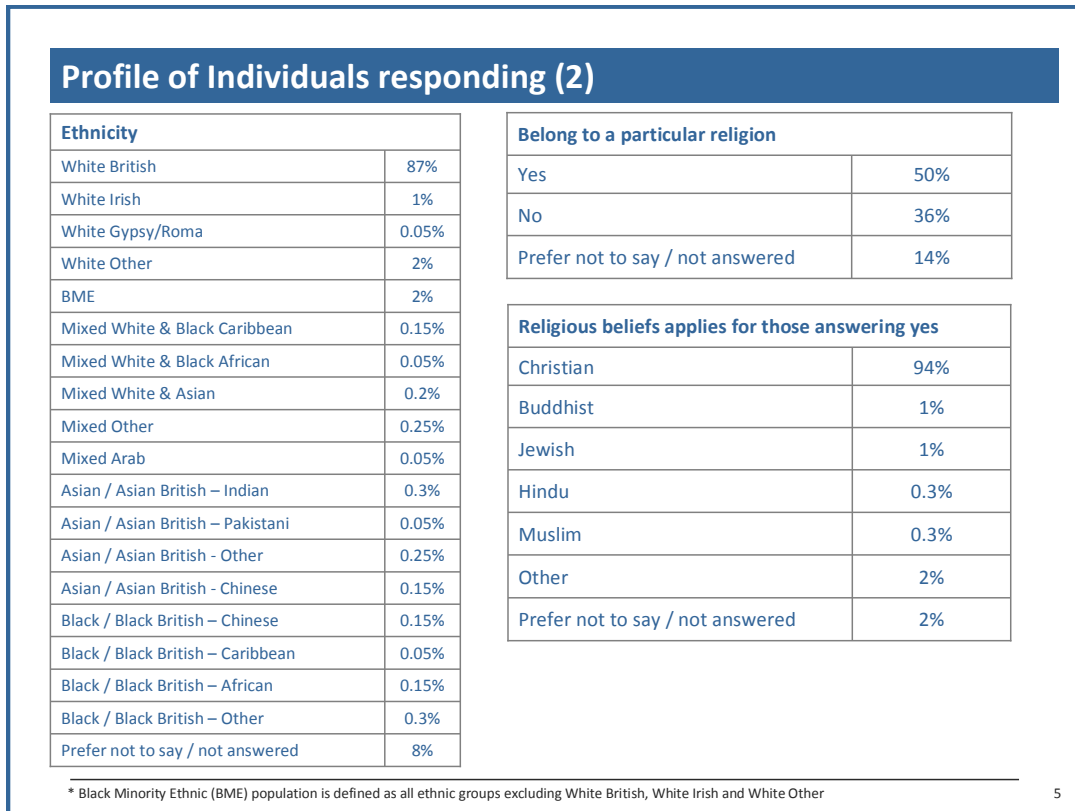
12% of those responding consider themselves disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010. 49% of these indicated they have a physical impairment and 24% indicated they have a sensory impairment. 37% indicated they have a long standing illness or health condition.

Paper was the most popular completion method with 67% taking part in the Consultation via the paper questionnaires provided. 33% submitted their response online.

Profile of Individuals responding (1)	
Gender	
Male	38%
Female	57%
Prefer not to say / not answered	5%
Age	
15 - 34	4%
35 - 54	16%
55 - 64	20%
65 - 74	27%
75 and over	19%
Prefer not to say / not answered	15%
Method of completion	
Paper	67%
Online	33%
Disabled as set out in Equality Act 2010	
Yes	12%
No	77%
Prefer not to say / not answered	10%
Type of impairment applies for those answering yes	
Physical impairment	49% (120)
Sensory impairment	24% (59)
Long standing illness or health condition	37% (92)
Mental health condition	12% (29)
Learning disability	8% (20)
Other	11% (27)
Prefer not to say / not answered	5% (13)

8% of the Individuals responding to the Consultation preferred not to answer the ethnicity question. 87% of the Individuals responding indicated they are White British; 2% indicated they are of BME origin.

14% of the Individuals responding to the Consultation preferred not to disclose their religious beliefs. 50% of the Individuals responding indicated they belong to a religion.



At the end of the questionnaire, Individual Consultees were asked to enter their postcode for classification purposes. The postcodes collected have been assigned to an area/district accordingly for analysis purposes.

The table below represents the proportions of questionnaires submitted by residents living in each of the Kent areas/districts. Representation has been achieved across all areas; validating the Consultation approach (i.e. library activity together with online availability). 13% of Individuals responding preferred to not identify their postcode.

Profile of Individuals responding (3)	
AREA	
Ashford	4%
Canterbury	16%
Dartford	4%
Dover	10%
Gravesham	3%
Maidstone	7%
Sevenoaks	6%
Shepway	8%
Swale	6%
Thanet	7%
Tonbridge & Malling	7%
Tunbridge Wells	8%
Outside Kent	0.5%
Prefer not to answer / not answered	13%

6

3.2 PROFILE OF INDIVIDUALS RESPONDING VS. LIBRARIES, REGISTRATION AND ARCHIVE BORROWER PROFILE AND CENSUS STATISTICS

The table below compares:

- 1) The 2011 Census Population statistics for Kent by gender and age;
- 2) The Kent County Council Libraries, Registration and Archive profile by gender and age sourced from Borrowers recorded between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2014;
- 3) The profile of known Individuals taking part in the Consultation by gender and age.

Comparing these statistics reveals that the gender profile of those taking part broadly reflects the Libraries, Registration and Archive Service borrower profile. Whilst the Libraries, Registration and Archive Service borrower profile is skewed towards an older age profile, the profile of known Individuals taking part in the Consultation is more heavily skewed towards residents aged 60 and over.

Profile of Known Individuals responding VS. LRA borrower profile and Census statistics (1)			
	2011 Census Population statistics *1	Kent LRA Borrower Profile*2	Profile of LRA Consultation response
GENDER			
Male	48%	37%	40%
Female	52%	63%	60%
AGE			
20 – 29	15%	10%	3%
30 – 39	16%	16%	6%
40 – 49	20%	19%	9%
50 – 59	16%	14%	15%
60 and over	33%	41%	68%

*1 Source: 2011 Census Statistics as published on Kent County Council's website. 18-34 figures reference 20-34 year olds

*2 Source: Kent LRA Borrower Profile - Customer information sourced from Borrowers between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014. Approximate indication only as blank replies were received. Percentages recalculated based on borrowers over 20, reflecting the nature of this consultation.

6

The table below compares:

- 1) The 2011 Census Population statistics for Kent by area of residence;
- 2) Usage of the libraries in each area/district sourced from Borrowers recorded between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015 (please note that double counting does feature in this figure as some residents use libraries across multiple areas/districts);
- 3) The profile of known Individuals taking part in the Consultation by area.

Comparing these statistics reveals that the area profile of those taking part broadly reflects the Libraries, Registration and Archive Service borrower profile. It is however worth noting that the Consultation has received a higher proportion of responses than perhaps anticipated from residents living in Canterbury and Dover. This is perhaps a result of outside resident activity highlighting the Consultation's existence and at times some vocal concerns and petitions with regard to its purpose and impact on those using the local service.

Profile of Known Individuals responding VS. LRA borrower profile and Census statistics (2)			
	2011 Census Population statistics *1	Kent LRA Borrower Profile*2	Profile of LRA Consultation response
AREA			
Ashford	8%	8%	5%
Canterbury	10%	11%	19%
Dartford	7%	5%	5%
Dover	8%	7%	12%
Gravesham	7%	7%	4%
Maidstone	11%	11%	8%
Sevenoaks	8%	8%	7%
Shepway	8%	7%	9%
Swale	9%	7%	7%
Thanet	9%	10%	8%
Tonbridge & Malling	8%	9%	8%
Tunbridge Wells	8%	10%	9%
Outside Kent	n/a	n/a	1%

4. USE OF LIBRARIES, REGISTRATION AND ARCHIVE SERVICE

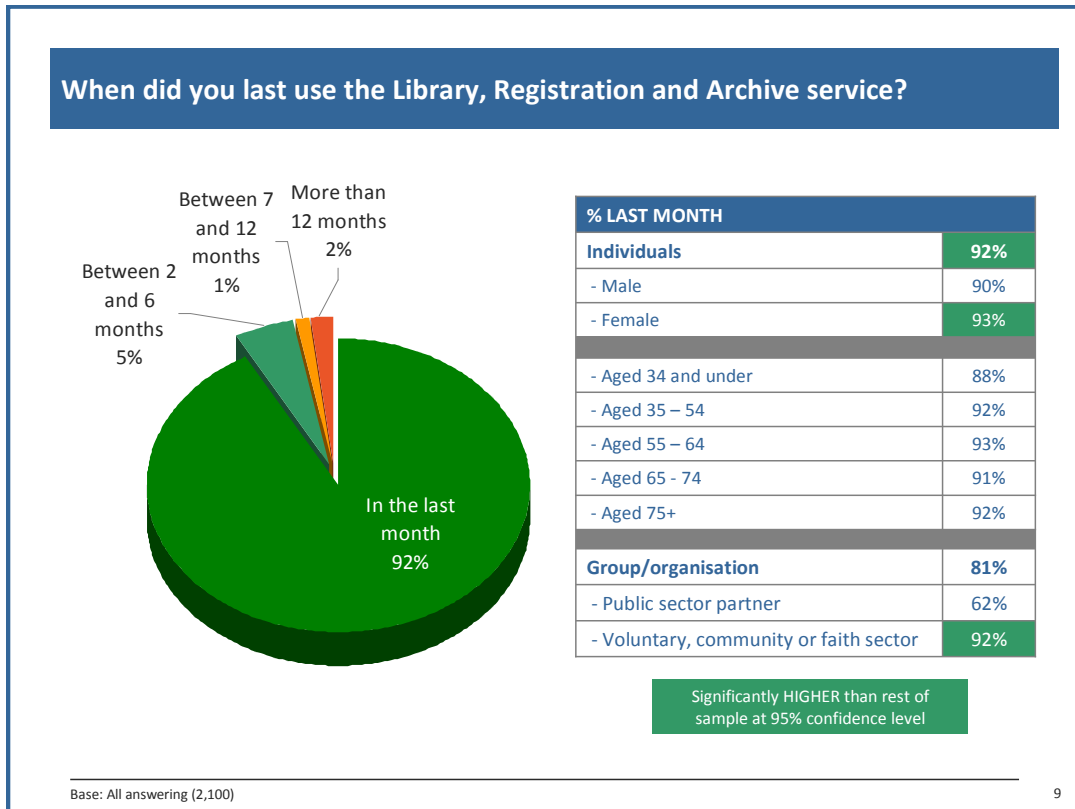
As indicated previously, the vast majority of Consultees (92%) indicated that they last used the Library, Registration and Archive service in the last month. 6% last used in the last year.

INDIVIDUALS

The vast majority of Individual Consultees (92%) indicated that they used the Library, Registration and Archive service in the last month. There are significant differences observed by gender with a significantly higher proportion of female Individual Consultees indicating they last used the service in the last month (93% for female Consultees, 90% for male Consultees). There are no significant differences observed by age.

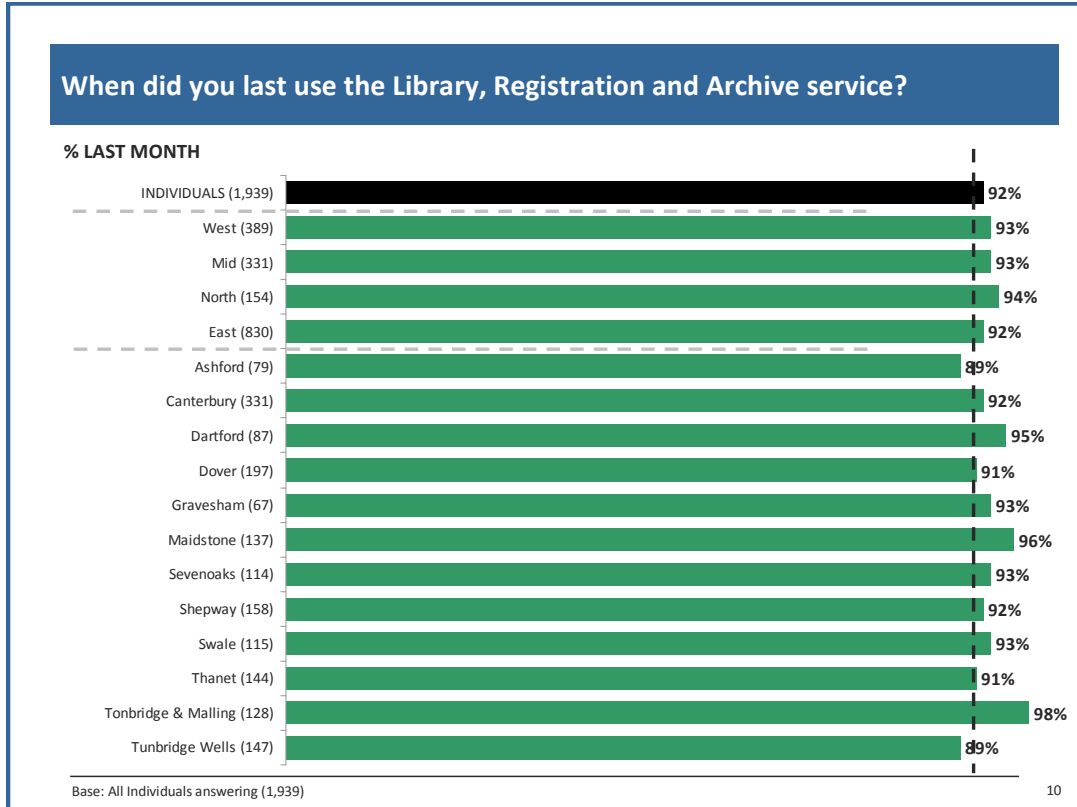
GROUPS / ORGANISATIONS

The vast majority of Group / Organisation representatives (81%) also indicated that they used the Library, Registration and Archive service in the last month. There are significant differences observed by type of group / organisation with a significantly higher proportion of Voluntary, Community or Faith sector representatives indicating they last used the service in the last month (92% for Voluntary, Community or Faith sector representatives, 62% for Public Sector partners).



AREA

Recent usage is consistently high amongst Individual Consultees from all areas / districts (notably Tonbridge and Malling). There are no significant differences observed by area / district.



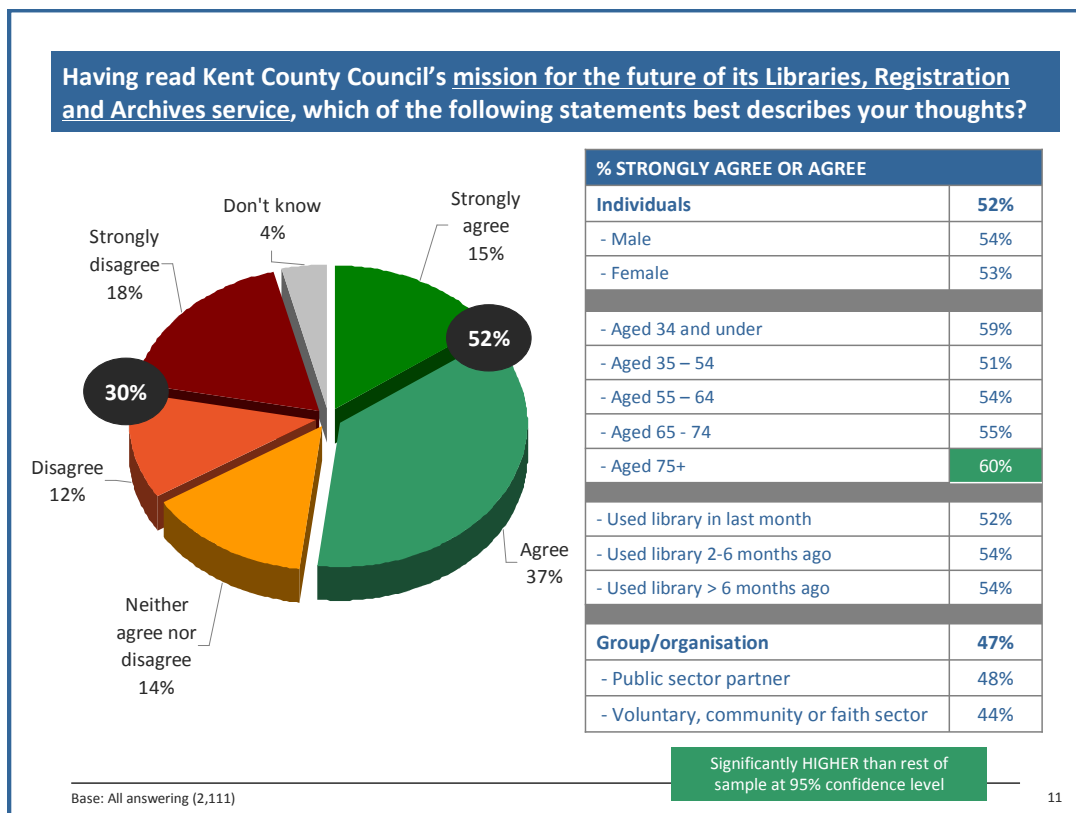
5. SUPPORT FOR LIBRARIES, REGISTRATION AND ARCHIVE SERVICE MISSION

Further to their review of the Consultation document, Consultees were first asked to indicate their agreement with Kent County Council’s mission for the future of its Libraries, Registration and Archive service. It is worth noting that although this question asked for specific agreement with the Mission outlined in the Consultation, it is likely that Consultees were thinking of the wider text and information contained in the Consultation document (i.e. preference towards a Charitable Trust model) when answering.

52% of all Consultees support Kent County Council’s mission for the future of its Libraries, Registration and Archive service. 18% of all Consultees indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed or were unsure. 30% of all Consultees indicated they disagree with Kent County Council’s mission.

INDIVIDUALS

52% of Individual Consultees support Kent County Council’s mission for the future of its Libraries, Registration and Archive service. There are no significant differences observed by gender or by timing of the last use of the service. A significantly higher proportion of Individual Consultees aged 75 and over agree with the mission for the future of the service (60%) compared to other age groups.



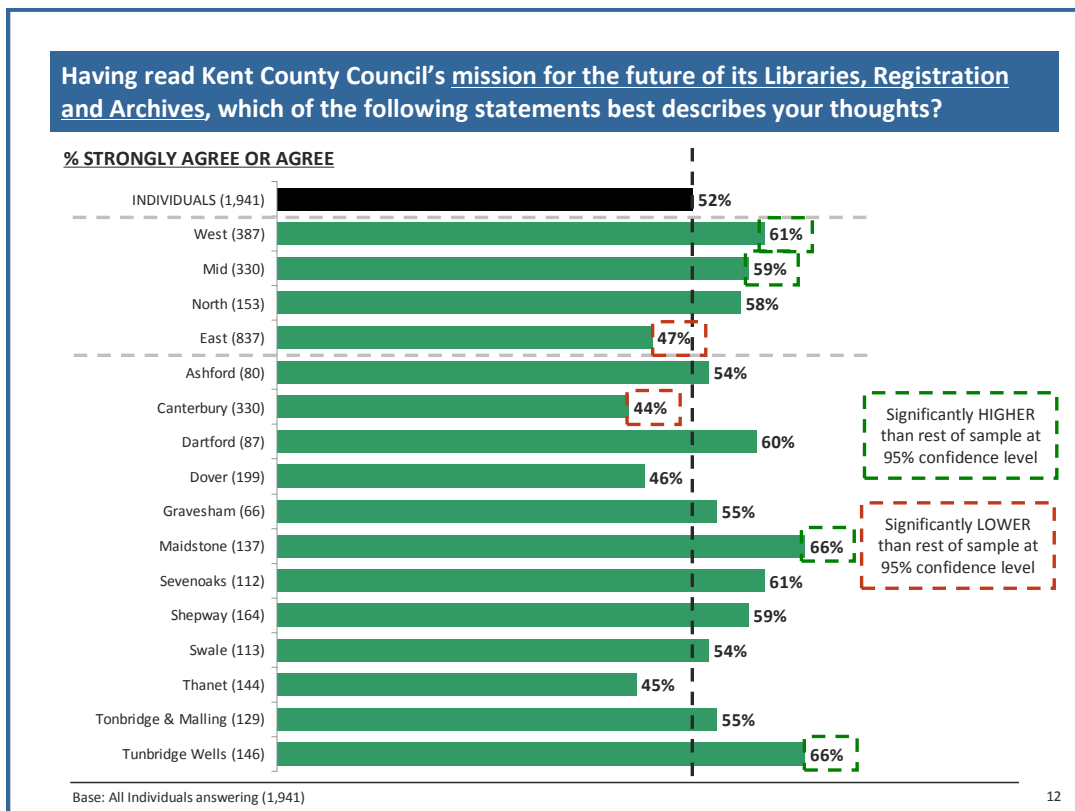
GROUPS / ORGANISATIONS

47% of Group / Organisation representatives support Kent County Council’s mission for the future of its Libraries, Registration and Archive service. There are no significant differences observed by type of group / organisation.

AREA

There are marked significant differences by area / district:

- A significantly higher proportion of residents living in West and Mid Kent support Kent County Council’s mission for the future (61% and 59% respectively). In particular, a significantly higher proportion of residents living in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells support the mission (66% for both areas).
- A significantly lower proportion of residents living in East Kent support Kent County Council’s mission for the future (47%). In particular, a significantly lower proportion of residents living in Canterbury support the mission (44%). Lower proportions are also observed amongst Dover and Thanet residents.



6. SUPPORT FOR CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

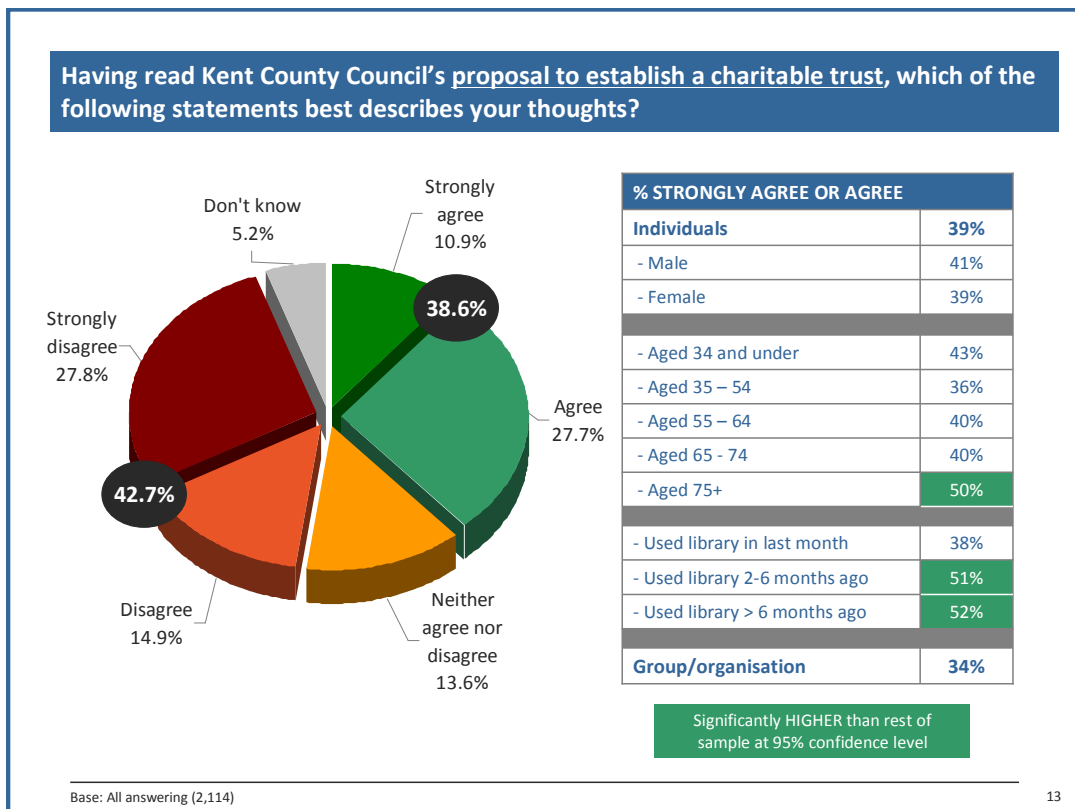
6.1 PROPORTIONS SUPPORTING CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL OUTLINED

Consultees were then asked to indicate their agreement with Kent County Council’s proposal to establish a charitable trust for the Libraries, Registration and Archive service. 39% of all Consultees support Kent County Council’s proposal to establish a charitable trust for the Libraries, Registration and Archive service. 19% of all Consultees indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed or were unsure. 43% of all Consultees indicated they disagree with Kent County Council’s proposal to establish a charitable trust.

INDIVIDUALS

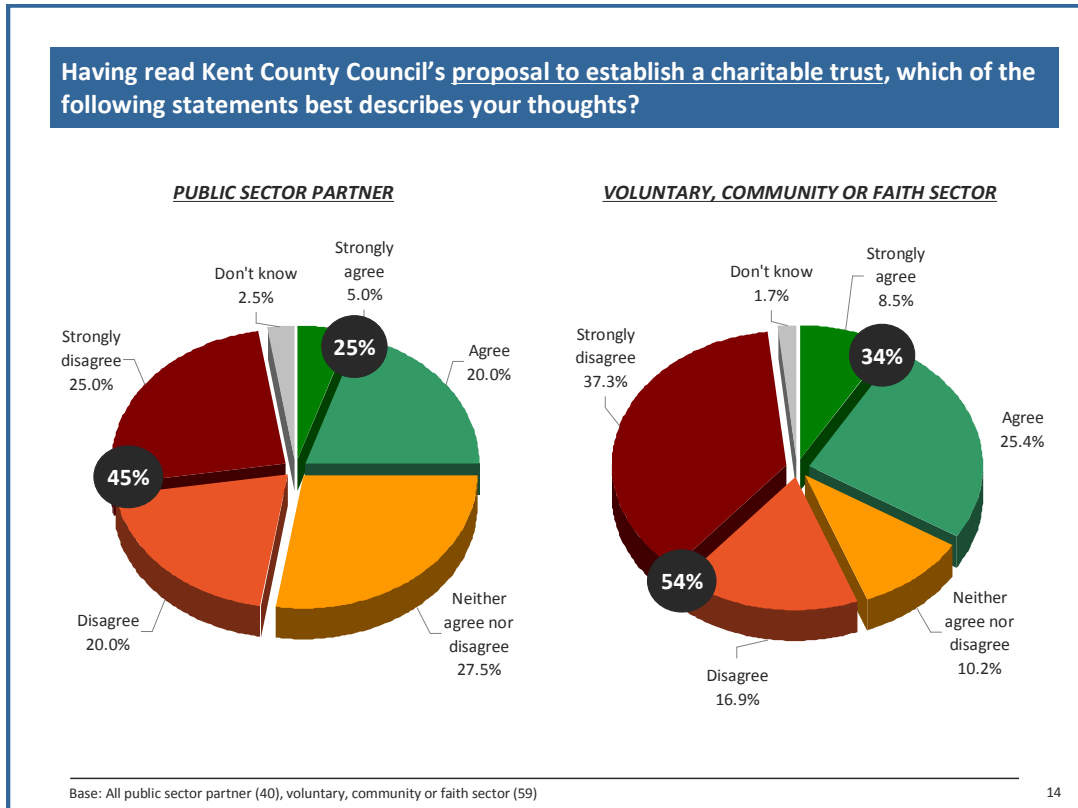
39% of Individual Consultees support Kent County Council’s proposal to establish a charitable trust for the Libraries, Registration and Archive service. There are no significant differences observed by gender. Consistent with the pattern observed for KCC’s mission, a significantly higher proportion of Individual Consultees aged 75 and over agree with the proposal to establish a charitable trust (50%) compared to other age groups.

There is an indication that the more frequent service users are less favourable towards the proposal to establish a charitable trust. A significantly lower proportion of Individual Consultees who last used the library in the last month agree with the proposal (a likely proxy for frequent users).



GROUPS / ORGANISATIONS

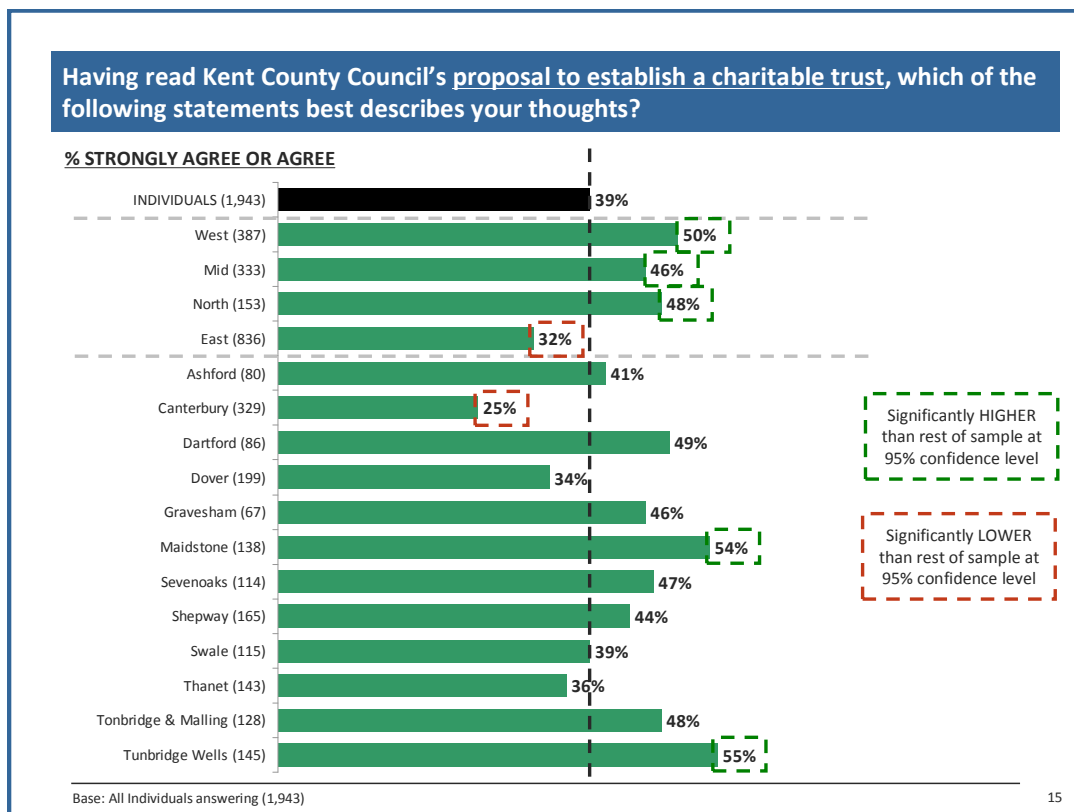
34% of Group / Organisation representatives support Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust for the Libraries, Registration and Archive service. There are no significant differences observed by type of group / organisation in terms of overall agreement but a significantly higher proportion of public sector partners indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.



AREA

There are marked significant differences by area / district:

- A significantly higher proportion of residents living in West, Mid and North Kent support Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust for the Libraries, Registration and Archive service (50%, 46% and 48% respectively). In particular, a significantly higher proportion of residents living in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells support the proposal (54% and 55% respectively).
- A significantly lower proportion of residents living in East Kent support Kent County Council's support Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust for the Libraries, Registration and Archive service (32%). In particular, a significantly lower proportion of residents living in Canterbury support the proposal (25%). Lower proportions are also observed amongst Dover and Thanet residents.



6.2 REASONS FOR SUPPORTING THE PROPOSAL – INDIVIDUALS

Consultees were then asked to describe their reasons in their own words for stating whether they supported or didn't support the proposal to establish a charitable trust. The free text comments were reviewed and coded into "themes" to provide quantitative analysis for this question.

Of the Individual Consultees that indicated they agree with the proposal for a charitable trust (39%), the vast majority of those answering made a positive comment (92%). 26% of Consultees who agreed with the proposal for a charitable trust left this question blank.

The overwhelming theme coming through was that they consider the charitable trust proposal to be the best option to move forward with to protect the existing service:

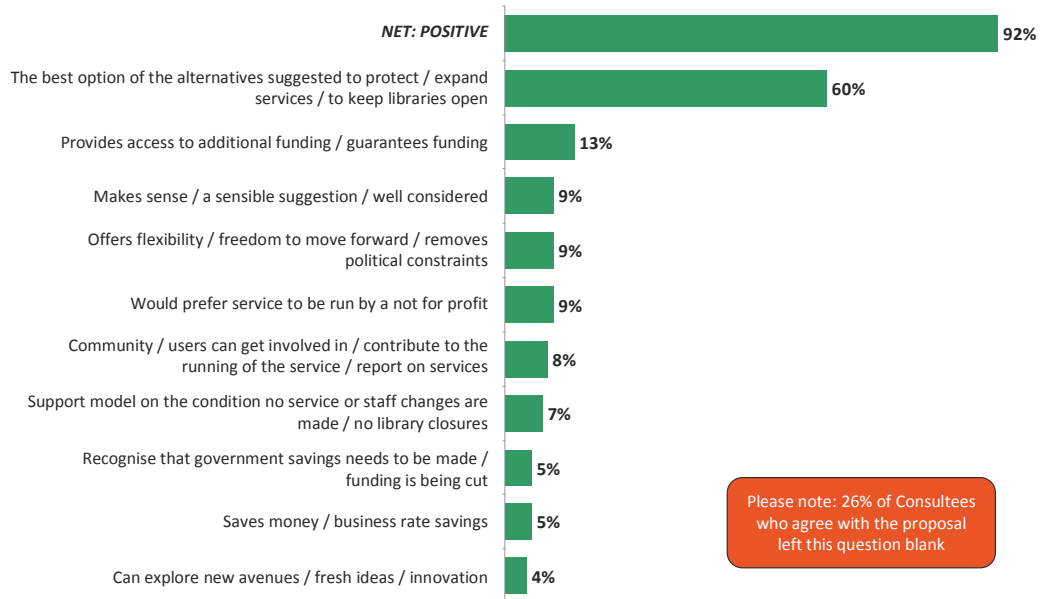
- 60% consider it the best of the alternatives suggested to protect / expand the service and to keep libraries open.
- 9% believe it is a sensible suggestion and is well considered.
- 7% indicated they would support the model on the condition that no service or staff changes were made / no libraries were closed

References were also made to the key benefits highlighted in the Consultation document:

- 13% believe it will provide access to additional funding / guarantees funding
- 9% believe it offers flexibility / freedom to move forward
- 8% believe the community / users will be able to get involved in / contribute to the running of the service
- 5% believe it will save money / achieve business rate savings
- 4% believe it will offer the chance to explore new avenues / fresh ideas / innovation

INDIVIDUALS WHO AGREE WITH PROPOSAL FOR A CHARITABLE TRUST ONLY

Please let us know your reasons for your choice, having read Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust?



Base: All Individuals agree with proposal for a Charitable Trust (557)

16

SOME EXAMPLE COMMENTS FROM INDIVIDUAL CONSULTEES WHO STRONGLY AGREE WITH CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

"I like the idea that by setting up a charitable trust they would have access to funding not available to KCC thus enabling future development of these services."

"Having read all aspects of this booklet is reason enough to accept and agree to its content, it's well thought out and thorough."

"Can act more commercially, not tied down by Government bureaucracy. Can be a community facility in its largest sense."

"Have always used the library and would not want to lose the service our children would not know what it is like to have this facility, it should be saved for future generations. Where would we be able to obtain information about ancestors and what their lives were like it would be criminal if this was not available. Also a charitable trust would safe guard this service and all that goes with it."

"I think that a charitable trust will be more accountable to the community visions. I think there is a risk of losing services if a private company takes over and a business model is used."

"I want the library services to go forward, they are giving a marvellous service right across the board and we don't want to lose any of it through lack of funding."

"It is the best option in particular looking at funding cuts by central government; this option provides protection from this. Outsourcing may sound an attractive option but as other institutions and businesses have shown, once committed then in the long term you will lose out when they want to make or improve profits (e.g. MoD and Government outsourcing) local needs and control is lost."

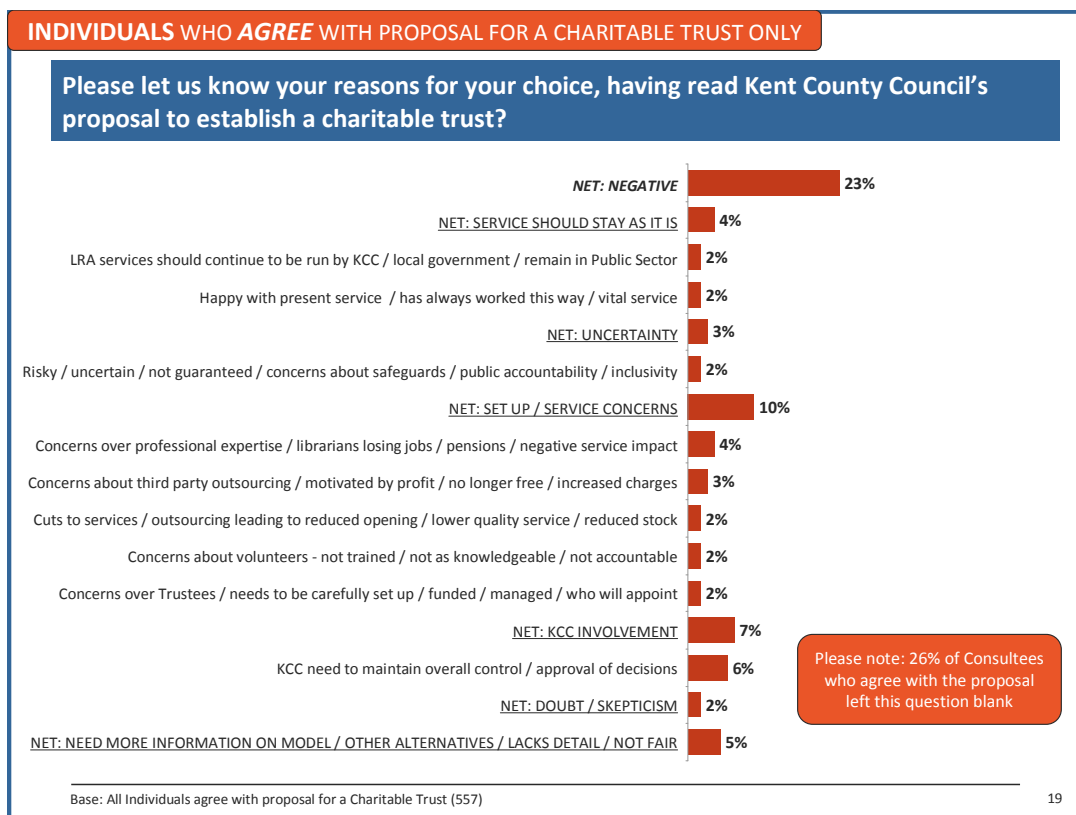
"We need libraries within the community; they are a fantastic benefit for all. Keeping as many open as possible is important, and by establishing a charitable trust is the best way to achieve this."

"Of all the options, it is the only one that seems to and is noted as being able to cut costs and talk of generating income streams. It also seems to me, to be the only one who will have the interests of the service at heart. rather than financial."

It should be noted that amongst those that agree with the proposal to establish a charitable trust, there were also some concerns noted in their free text responses. 23% of Individual Consultees made a cautionary / negative comment.

In Consultees responses there were a number of common themes emerging:

- 4% believe the service should ultimately stay as it is and remain in the public sector
- 10% have set up / service concerns with regard to professional expertise, outsourcing and increased charges
- 7% suggested they need reassurance that KCC will remain involved / maintain overall control and approval of decisions
- 5% suggested they need more information / detail on the proposal as well as the other alternatives to make a fair conclusion



SOME EXAMPLE COMMENTS FROM INDIVIDUAL CONSULTEES WHO AGREE WITH CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

"I believe the service would be best run directly by the council, but of the other options, the charitable trust is by far the best."

"I would support a trust that would not reduce services or reduce staff numbers or conditions."

"Hope that as this proposal will save KCC money, rural and smaller libraries will not have to close, they are important part of local communities."

"If the charitable trust is carefully set up and rules to stop the huge salaries to those running the trust are agreed then it has a chance. Trusts set up in recent years have failed due to greed and incompetence."

"Agree r.e. libraries, however KCC has a statutory duty to provide registration services. How will these be protected and remain under KCC jurisdiction and control."

"I agree in principle as a trust can be more flexible and adaptable to local needs. My reservations however are as follows: 1. The trust needs to employ professional people, e.g. registrars to conduct marriages, librarians to oversee all aspects of running the libraries, although they may be supported by volunteers. 2. If the Trust is unable to raise the required revenue as outlined in their budget for any one year, or it goes bankrupt then the KCC must have an insurance policy to cover any such situation."

"I appreciate the need to balance costs against services and this seems a sensible way to achieve this. I am concerned though that there is no mention of what will happen to existing staff or opening hours. I feel therefore that the proposal doesn't provide enough information."

"I like the idea of becoming a charitable trust provided KCC still pays for the service and that the staff, books, computers are not cut. Also don't let volunteers take over the running of the library, they do this in Sandgate and they are useless!!"

6.3 REASONS FOR NEUTRAL / UNSURE RESPONSES THE PROPOSAL – INDIVIDUALS

Of the Individual Consultees that indicated they neither agree nor disagree with the proposal for a charitable trust or indicated that they didn't know (19%), 19% of those answering made a positive comment and 85% made a cautionary / negative comment. 18% of Consultees who neither agree nor disagree with the proposal for a charitable trust or indicated that they didn't know left this question blank.

The overwhelming theme coming through was the request for more information / detail on the proposal as well as the other alternatives to make a fair conclusion (45%). Four additional themes were also evident in their reasoning:

1. Set up / service concerns (35% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Concerns over Trustees / needs to be carefully set up / funded / managed / who will appoint – 16%
- Concerns over professional expertise / librarians losing jobs / pensions / negative service impact – 13%
- Cuts to services / outsourcing leading to reduced opening / lower quality service – 10%
- Concerns about volunteers - not trained / not as knowledgeable – 8%
- Concerns about third party outsourcing / motivated by profit / no longer free / increased charges – 2%

2. Uncertainty (24% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Risky / uncertain / not guaranteed / concerns about safeguards / public accountability / inclusivity – 14%
- No guarantee Libraries will not close / will receive funding needed / tax relief may be withdrawn – 11%

3. Service should stay as it is (17% selecting at least one of the codes below)

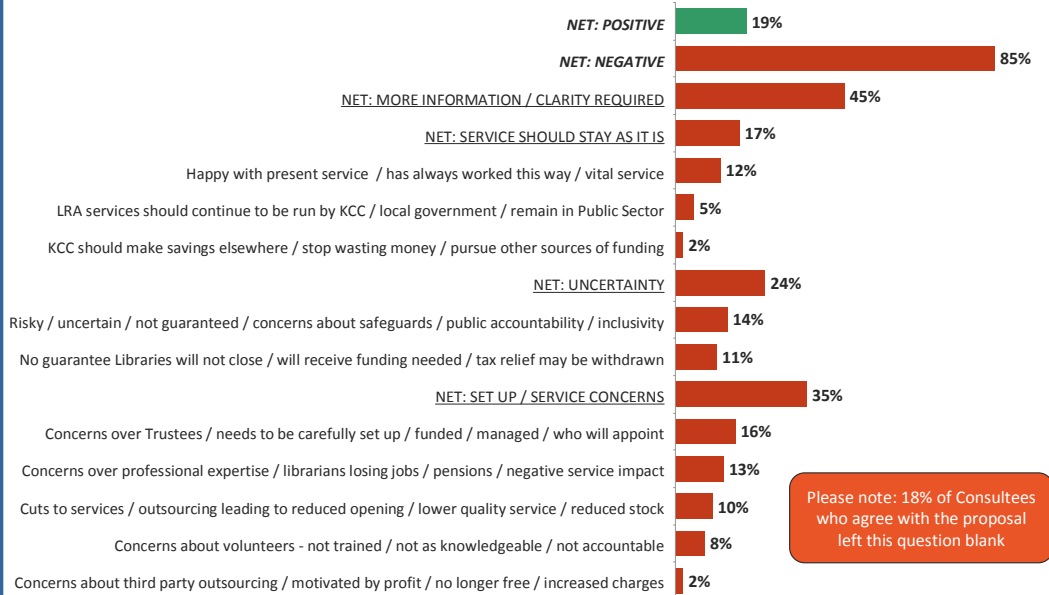
- Happy with present service / has always worked this way / is a vital service – 12%
- Library, Registration and Archive Services should continue to be run by KCC / local government / remain in the Public Sector - 5%
- Kent County Council should make savings elsewhere / stop wasting money / pursue other sources of funding – 2%

4. Doubt / scepticism (10% selected at least one of the code below)

- Will cost more in long run / won't save money / will cost tax payers – 4%
- Believe decision has already been made by KCC – 3%
- Just a way for KCC to avoid responsibility / passing on blame for cuts / closures – 2%

INDIVIDUALS WHO NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE/UNSURE OF PROPOSAL FOR CHARITABLE TRUST

Please let us know your reasons for your choice, having read Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust?

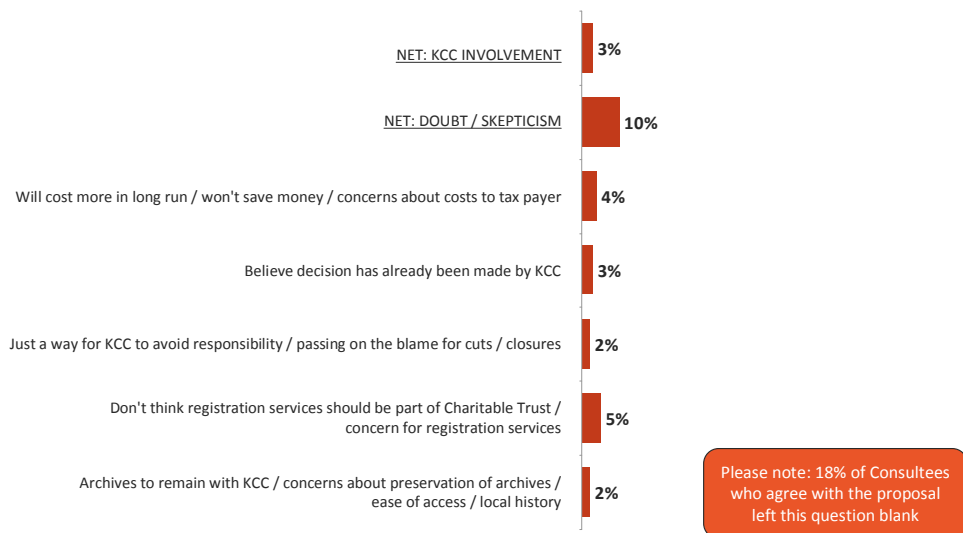


Base: All Individuals neither agree nor disagree / unsure of proposal for a Charitable Trust (323)

20

INDIVIDUALS WHO NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE/UNSURE OF PROPOSAL FOR CHARITABLE TRUST

Please let us know your reasons for your choice, having read Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust?



Base: All Individuals neither agree nor disagree / unsure of proposal for a Charitable Trust (323)

21

SOME EXAMPLE COMMENTS FROM INDIVIDUAL CONSULTEES WHO NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL OR ARE UNSURE

"The answers given in the questions posed are not positive enough to think services will be safeguarded. I understand this. What are the experiences of authorities that have already adopted this idea? An obvious question that has not been put."

"Although the idea of a charitable trust seems like a good idea, what safeguards are being put in place to guarantee the same level of service being offered now? It is stated that current commitments will be met by the charity - what happens after that?"

"There is not enough detail to enable a definite conclusion, nor to judge the possible consequences for me; no mention of effect on retention of village branches; no mention of effect on costs, how much money the charity would need to raise etc."

"It's just another attempt to down grade library and other services and you are sitting on hundreds of millions of pounds of our money and start spending it to save our services?"

"Insufficient information provided to make an informed choice, specifically very little financial information. In the Q&A document it states that savings of £1.95m are anticipated but there is no explanation of how this will be achieved, or whether it is based on robust evidence from other similar initiatives. The options appraisal document is very high level. Where is the detail?"

"The information makes no mention of level of potential savings, it makes no new mention for archives which are my main interest, this I was given no information on which to base a judgement."

"There seems to be no guarantee that the current level of paid staffing will be continued for any fixed period once the libraries are turned over to charitable status. The libraries are not just for borrowing books, they are a community hub and information point. Trained and paid full time staff are essential for this. Also although you keep saying that the charity model is still up for discussion you are still really giving the impression that it is the only option and set in stone to go ahead."

In addition, 5% indicated they believe registration services should not be part of a Charitable Trust and 2% indicated a concern for the preservation / access of Archives and that it should remain with KCC.

6.4 REASONS FOR NOT SUPPORTING THE PROPOSAL – INDIVIDUALS

Of the Individual Consultees that indicated they disagree with the proposal for a charitable trust, 98% made a cautionary / negative comment at the free text question. 12% of Individual Consultees who disagreed with the proposal for a charitable trust left this question blank.

Consultees who disagreed with the proposal were quite detailed in their comments at this question and often a number of reasons were given. The main issues concern a perceived disruption to the service they use and a belief that the service should continue to run under local authority management and control.

Response by the five key themes identified previously are as follows:

1. Set up / service concerns (46% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Concerns over Trustees / needs to be carefully set up / funded / managed / who will appoint – 21%
- Concerns over professional expertise / librarians losing jobs / pensions / negative service impact – 14%
- Cuts to services / outsourcing leading to reduced opening / lower quality service – 14%

2. Service should stay as it is (43% selecting at least one of the codes below)

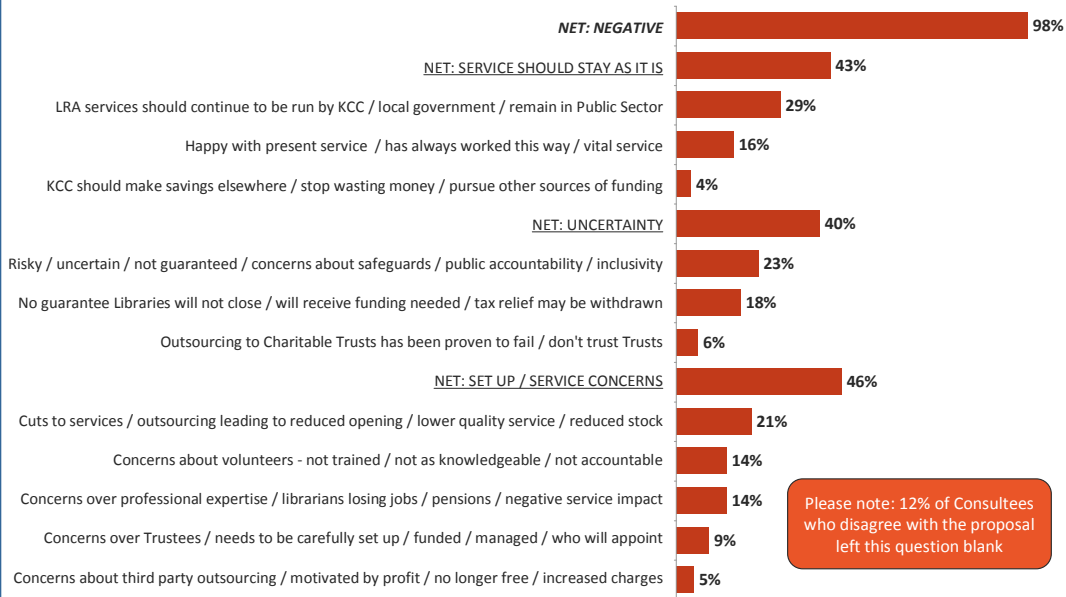
- Happy with present service / has always worked this way / is a vital service – 29%
- Library, Registration and Archive Services should continue to be run by KCC / local government / remain in the Public Sector - 16%
- Kent County Council should make savings elsewhere / stop wasting money / pursue other sources of funding – 4%

3. Uncertainty (40% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Risky / uncertain / not guaranteed / concerns about safeguards / public accountability / inclusivity – 23%
- No guarantee Libraries will not close / will receive funding needed / tax relief may be withdrawn – 18%
- Outsourcing to Charitable Trusts has been proven to fail / don't trust Trusts - 6%
- Concerns about volunteers - not trained / not as knowledgeable – 9%
- Concerns about third party outsourcing / motivated by profit / no longer free / increased charges – 5%

INDIVIDUALS WHO *DISAGREE* WITH PROPOSAL FOR A CHARITABLE TRUST ONLY

Please let us know your reasons for your choice, having read Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust?



Base: All Individuals disagree with proposal for a Charitable Trust (718)

23

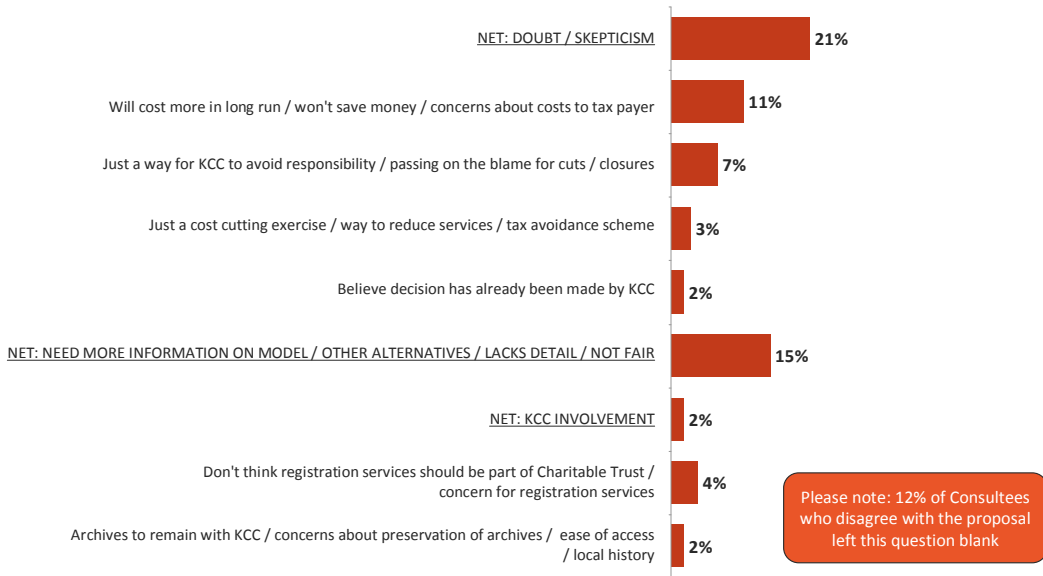
4. Doubt / scepticism (21% selected at least one of the code below)

- Will cost more in long run / won't save money / will cost tax payers – 11%
- Just a way for KCC to avoid responsibility / passing on blame for cuts / closures – 7%
- Just a cost cutting exercise / way to reduce services – 3%
- Believe decision has already been made by KCC – 2%

5. Request for more information / detail on the proposal as well as the other alternatives to make a fair conclusion – 15%

INDIVIDUALS WHO *DISAGREE* WITH PROPOSAL FOR A CHARITABLE TRUST ONLY

Please let us know your reasons for your choice, having read Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust?



Base: All Individuals disagree with proposal for a Charitable Trust (718)

24

SOME EXAMPLE COMMENTS FROM INDIVIDUAL CONSULTEES WHO DISAGREE WITH THE CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

"There are a number of areas which require clarification: - Will it be guaranteed that libraries will remain free, open to all, and linked to others in the country? - Will minimum levels of library-trained staff and paid staff be set? - What will happen if the trust fails or is deemed unsatisfactory."

"I go to my local library at Minster, Isle of Sheppey, Kent and also visit Sheerness library. Both of these libraries are run very well and I do not think that a charitable trust is necessary. Leave things as they are - that would be best."

"Any changes would take away from the existing high level of service. Charitable trusts would end up giving it up when volunteers failed to materialise and the going got tough. We would then have no library."

"A charitable Trust will almost certainly reduce the service. This has been the case in other parts of the country. Greater use of volunteers for example will equate in a reduction in the quality of service. I would have to be sure financing would be available to at least keep the current standard before I could approve."

"If a significant percentage of the financial advantage is to arise via business preferential rates it is robbing Peter to pay Paul or tax avoidance? I do not take to the idea of significant powers being transferred to volunteers."

"I understand the reasoning behind the proposal but I am concerned that once it is removed from council control, there will be a gradual degradation of the service and we will be constantly asked to make donations. I think that libraries is an area that should be funded by the government and that representations should be made to central government for more funding for this"

"You say charitable status will reduce the business rate that libraries have to pay - since they pay this to KCC i.e. their funding body, how does this reduce KCC costs? Also, since KCC is already cutting funding to libraries, if the library service becomes a separate trust, what guarantee is there that KCC"

"I am involved in many charities and I know that it is increasingly difficult to find people willing and able to volunteer. Everyone is too busy working. Library services are too important to be left to the vagaries of finding enough volunteers, with the right skills, to deliver a decent service."

SOME EXAMPLE COMMENTS FROM INDIVIDUAL CONSULTEES WHO STRONGLY DISAGREE WITH THE CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

"Conflicts and exclusions are likely to arise from the definition of charitable purpose. There are sound reasons why libraries are not, currently, charitable trusts. The funding mechanisms in place make libraries far more secure entities than as charitable trusts. The ways in which trusts are run would suggest to me that those governing the futures of libraries might have agendas which differ from the principles I would associate with public library provision."

"These services should be kept in house, in the public sector and accountable. It is a way of saving money there should be no cuts. A trust will look to close libraries and reduce services. Library budget is a small part of KCC budget and should not be cut."

"The libraries run a highly effective and friendly service. It is a vital part of local communities and after years of reshuffles and changes we have finally reached a comfortable middle ground. Any changes jeopardises the hard work put in by staff and volunteers alike."

"Library services are important and should be provided by the local authority, free of charge, we already pay for them through taxation, they should not be provided by a"

"This document is over wordy but lacking substance, it is explicitly biased so in no way presents any facts customers can use to make an informed decision e.g. charitable trust, most flexible model, you don't explain how, it currently stinks of a KCC money saving venture, if KCC paid less to it's upper management and disbursed money more evenly there would be no need for"

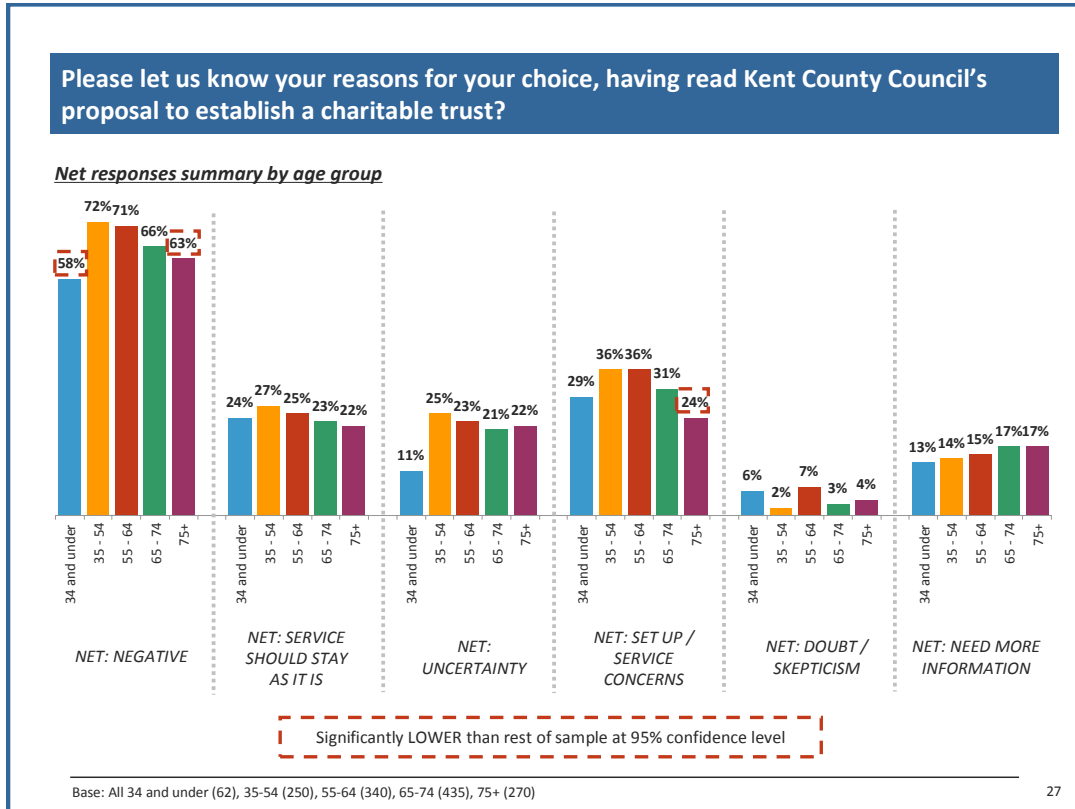
"The main motivation seems to be savings in business rates but that just means a loss in income for other councils and therefore cuts elsewhere. Where are you going to find people willing and more importantly able to be unpaid trustees? If you pass the service to a charitable trust you will lose control of it so how can you be sure that they will fulfil your aspirations for the service? Looks like you are trying to separate yourselves from possible difficult decisions later on. Library provision is a statutory service not a charitable one and I think this is an abuse of charitable status - I'm surprised the Charity Commission doesn't see it that way."

"Charitable trusts are just a way of foisting off responsibility for a public service. I want a library service that is run by an elected local government not a well meaning group of amateurs."

6.5 DIFFERENCES BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS – INDIVIDUAL CONSULTEES

AGE

Whilst concerns are evident across all age groups, there are some significant differences to note. Concerns are fewer amongst Individual Consultees aged 34 and under and aged 75 and over; consistent with overall agreement patterns. Set up and service concerns distinguish Individual Consultees aged 35-64 years old and could have informed their lower perceptions at an overall level.

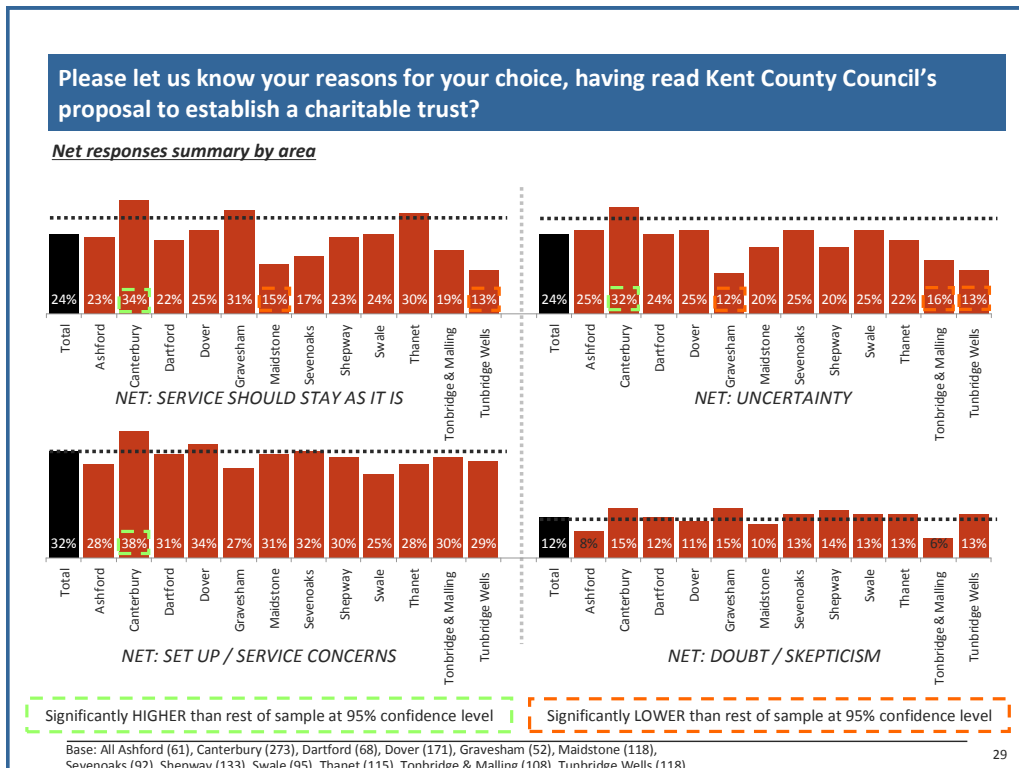
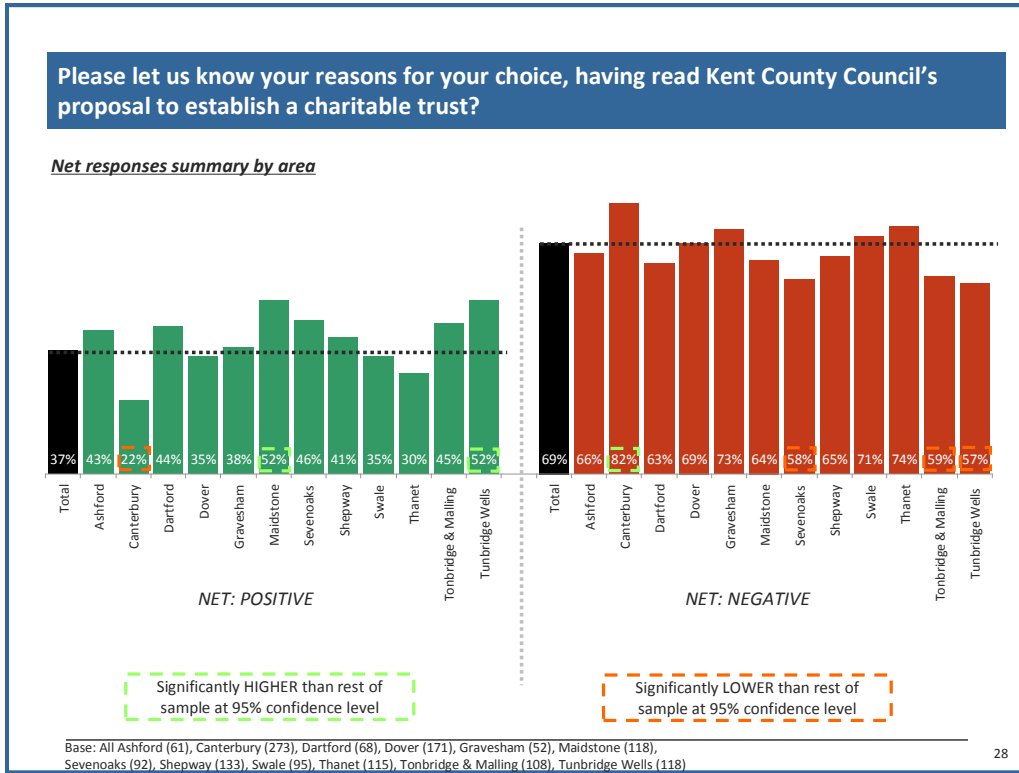


AREA

There are marked significant differences by area/district, consistent with overall agreement patterns. A significantly higher proportion of Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells residents made a positive comment and encouraging proportions made a positive comment amongst Ashford, Dartford, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge & Malling residents.

Conversely, a significantly lower proportion of Canterbury residents made a cautionary / negative comment. When focusing on the themes coming through by area/district, it appears that the higher proportion of cautionary / negative comments amongst Canterbury residents stems from a higher proportion indicating:

- There is uncertainty with regard to the proposal;
- They have set up / service concerns;
- A stronger belief that the service should continue to run under local authority control.



6.6 INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES SUMMARISED

We have combined the responses of Individual Consultees from the two pre coded questions concerning agreement (see below) to develop an overview of Individual Consultee opinion:

- Having read Kent County Council's mission for the future of its Libraries, Registration and Archives service, which of the following statements best describes your thoughts?
- Having read Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust, which of the following statements best describes your thoughts?

To summarise:

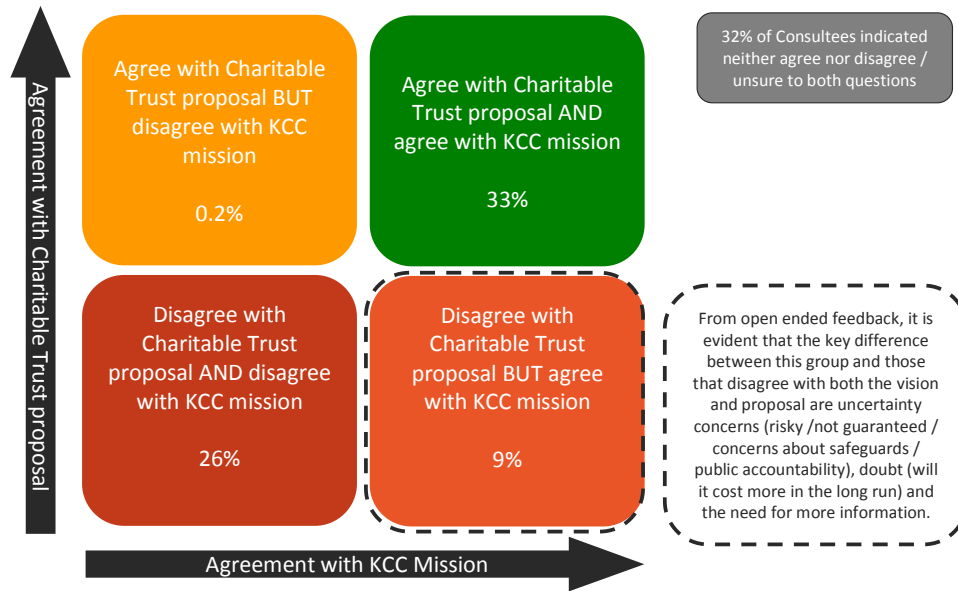
5. 33% agree with the Charitable Trust proposal and Mission put forward
6. 9% disagree with the Charitable Trust proposal put forward but agree with the Vision
7. 32% neither agreed nor disagreed at one or both of the questions put forward concerning the Charitable Trust proposal or the Mission
8. 26% disagree with the Charitable Trust proposal and the Mission put forward

The distinguishing factors between those who are unsure about both aspects (Group 3 - 32%) and those who agree with the Mission but disagree with the Charitable Trust proposal (Group 2 - 9%), compared to those that disagree with both aspects, are:

- Uncertainty concerns (risky /not guaranteed / concerns about safeguards / public accountability);
- Doubt (will it cost more in the long run);
- The need for more information / detail on the proposal as well as the other alternatives to make a fair conclusion.

Depending on the set up and structure of the Charitable Trust, it is possible that there could be more support for the Charitable Trust proposal than that outlined directly here – providing the main concerns are addressed.

Comparing overall opinions of KCC Mission and Charitable Trust proposal



30

6.7 REASONS FOR SUPPORTING THE PROPOSAL – GROUP / ORGANISATION CONSULTEES

Focusing on Group / Organisation representatives specifically, just under a third of those answering made a positive comment (32%). 18% of Group / Organisation representatives who agreed with the proposal for a charitable trust left this question blank.

Of those that made a positive comment the most popular reasons were based on the fact that it was the best option to move forward with to protect the existing service:

- 18% consider it the best of the alternatives suggested to protect / expand the service and to keep libraries open.
- 3% believe it is a sensible suggestion and is well considered.
- 3% indicated they would support the model on the condition that no service or staff changes were made / no libraries were closed

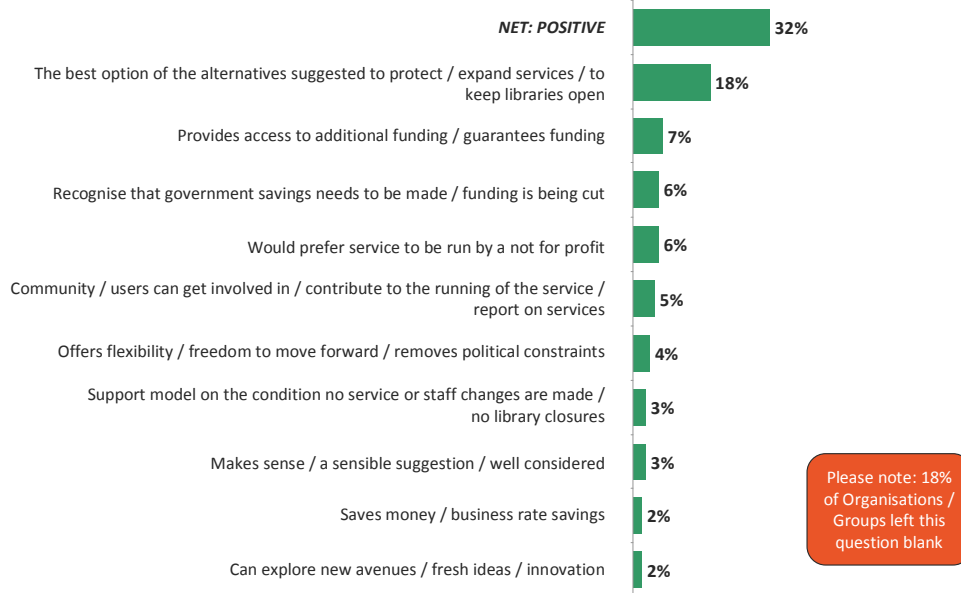
Consistent with findings from Individual Consultees, references were also made to the key benefits highlighted in the Consultation document:

- 7% believe it will provide access to additional funding / guarantees funding
- 4% believe it offers flexibility / freedom to move forward
- 5% believe the community / users will be able to get involved in / contribute to the running of the service
- 2% believe it will save money / achieve business rate savings
- 2% believe it will offer the chance to explore new avenues / fresh ideas / innovation.

6% recognise that government savings need to be made / funding is being cut.

ORGANISATIONS / GROUPS TOTAL

Please let us know your reasons for your choice, having read Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust?



Base: All Groups / Organisations (136)

31

SOME EXAMPLE COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERS WHO AGREE OR NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE WITH THE CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

"Like many I believe that library resources are essential to a community but I understand the financial challenges that mean decisions have to be made regarding the administration. The charitable option gives the service the opportunity to raise more funding than the council can offer and puts responsibly for the quality of service in the hands of the community."

"KCC presents 4 options for the way forward and gives their case for their preferred option - a change to Charitable Trust Status (Option 2). The justification for the changes seems plausible but there is concern that the benefits as presented can indeed be realised in practice. An independent evaluation would have helped in this respect. The bottom line is "are we going to lose our local library". The answer appears to be "no not now" but once the Charitable Trust is set up changes could well be made."

"Transferring to a charitable trust may not be ideal as staying with KCC would offer continuity of service, however if change is inevitable this would appear to be a better option than outsourcing to a 3rd party - where the interest of the community may not be best served. Your document demonstrates some positives of a charitable trust, although we do remain concerned that if money is drying up we may lose services."

"At this initial stage of the consultation process, we neither agree or disagree and wish to maintain an open mind on the funding issue. We understand the need for KCC to cut expenditure and funding will always be an issue whether the service is run by KCC (as now) or by other means. In either case funding should be safeguarded but be more accountable to public scrutiny. The consultation should not just be about saving KCC money, but also as an opportunity to review and refocus the role of the library's services towards being an improved local asset for community enjoyment and social use. The transfer of operations to a charitable trust would hopefully give more opportunities to tailor the services to the needs of the local population, but the Parish Council has serious concerns relating to how funding sustainability will be maintained. We would generally favour change if it provides opportunities to obtain additional outside funding to improve the service and widen the scope of the local service delivery."

SOME EXAMPLE COMMENTS FROM VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY OR FAITH SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES WHO AGREE OR NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE WITH THE CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

"It would remove the service from the political tug-of war that accompanies an election let provider. It would enable the Charitable Trust to apply for grants and would restrict the Trust from inappropriate activities."

"Local authorities such as KCC have a long and respected tradition as a quality provider of LRA services. But it is clear that funding this is now a major challenge which requires new support routes. There are risks and gains, and only time will show which. On balance I support charitable trust status. I have enough experience of external funding opportunities to know, if successfully pursued (and competition is fierce), the potential for positive impact on aspects of LRA. External trustees with a range of experience could also make further big impact - including on service planning, performance management, and customer satisfaction. Choice of trustees will be crucial, and there needs to be some externally verified merit standard to avoid political placement/women. There also needs to be some route for democratic voice in selection of trustees - perhaps

"Library services are essential - if this is the way to preserve them then I agree with proposal - third party private suppliers not an option."

"It depends on how much power they have and whether the trust will include members who have actually worked in local libraries for their experience and members of user groups for their

"It seems the best option in order to maintain and library service in the community, the worst care scenario is for our library services to

"I use my local library (at Seal) a lot because the Seal history group archives are stored there. In the past while writing the recent history of Seal, published 2007 I have also used the county archives at Maidstone a lot, given the financial constraints, I think the charitable option is likely to prove the best one."

6.8 REASONS FOR NOT SUPPORTING THE PROPOSAL – GROUP / ORGANISATION CONSULTEES

70% of Group / Organisation representatives made a cautionary / negative comment at the free text question. 18% of Individual Consultees who disagreed with the proposal for a charitable trust left this question blank.

Consultees who disagreed with the proposal were quite detailed in their comments at this question and often a number of reasons were given. The main issues concern a perceived disruption to the service they use and a belief that the service should continue to run under local authority management and control.

Response by the five key themes identified previously are as follows:

1. Set up / service concerns (34% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Cuts to services / outsourcing leading to reduced opening / lower quality service – 16%
- Concerns over professional expertise / librarians losing jobs / pensions / negative service impact – 13%
- Concerns over Trustees / needs to be carefully set up / funded / managed / who will appoint – 13%
- Concerns about volunteers - not trained / not as knowledgeable – 11%

2. Uncertainty (29% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Risky / uncertain / not guaranteed / concerns about safeguards / public accountability / inclusivity – 16%
- No guarantee Libraries will not close / will receive funding needed / tax relief may be withdrawn – 14%

3. Service should stay as it is (14% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Library, Registration and Archive Services should continue to be run by KCC / local government / remain in the Public Sector - 7%
- Happy with present service / has always worked this way / is a vital service – 5%

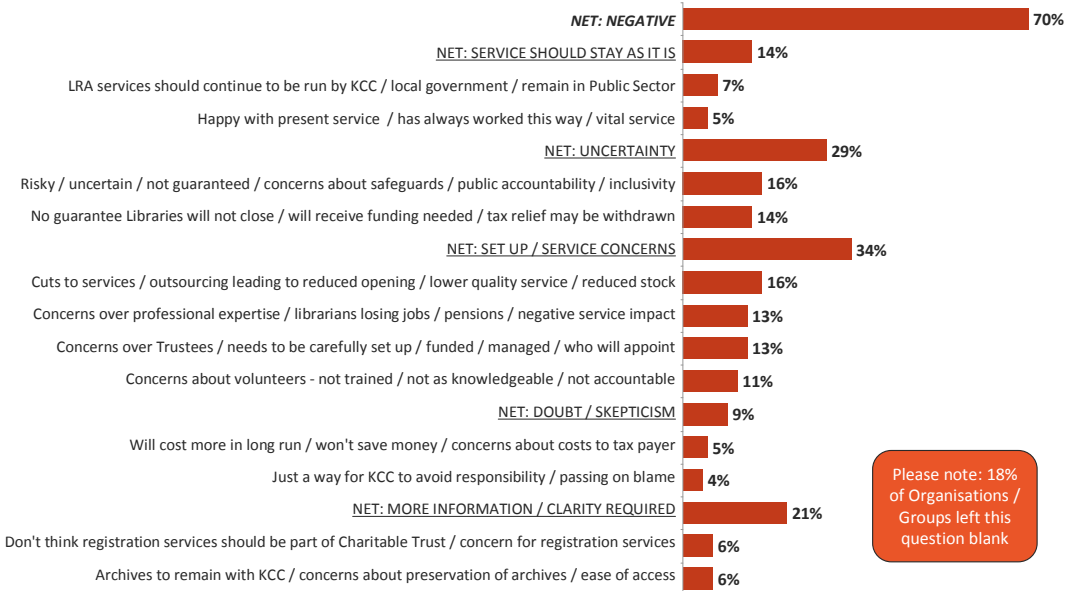
4. Request for more information / detail on the proposal as well as the other alternatives to make a fair conclusion – 21%

5. Doubt / scepticism (9% selected at least one of the code below)

- Will cost more in long run / won't save money / will cost tax payers – 5%
- Just a way for KCC to avoid responsibility / passing on blame for cuts / closures – 4%

ORGANISATIONS / GROUPS TOTAL

Please let us know your reasons for your choice, having read Kent County Council's proposal to establish a charitable trust?



Please note: 18% of Organisations / Groups left this question blank

Base: All Groups / Organisations (136)

34

SOME EXAMPLE COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERS WHO DISAGREE WITH THE CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

"Not enough information provided to date to make a fully informed comment. These decisions usually tend to prove more expensive than at first thought probably less costly to retain services in house."

"I am completing this survey on behalf of a Parish Council. The Parish Council's preference is for the service to be kept in house. Members expressed concern about KCC's abdication of responsibility and questioned what level of charitable funds the service would actually be able to attract. There was also concern about future cuts and the potential vulnerability of any future partnership."

"Insufficient information at this stage to allow for a 'vote' to agree, e.g. procedures for establishing a trust (you admit that you are "still working through how this would work in practice") and financial commitments (e.g. what happens if the trust 'fails'); no indication of the geographical scope of such a trust and how an individual village library might be affected."

"If savings of £3 million are to be made it cannot be achieved through further staff reduction or rent/rate rebates. It is doubtful if there will be enough sponsorship so savings will have to be achieved via cuts to services (mobile libraries), charges for IT or archive retrieval and relying on volunteers rather than paid and qualified staff. It is strongly doubted that savings will be achievable by the formation of a"

"Lack of accountability, too much employment of volunteers, will cut wages and conditions of staff and reduced numbers of professional quality staff."

"Once the service is outsourced there is less public control over how, what and where the service is provided. Local government has been shown to be extremely poor at managing contracts and procurement. There is no guarantee that under a charitable trust the library and archiving services would remain available to all, of the standard they are now or better and free."

SOME EXAMPLE COMMENTS FROM VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY OR FAITH SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES WHO DISAGREE WITH THE CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

"Would prefer KCC to retain control of the service, if money is the prime reason for the change then consider charging library users for what is provided. There is no evidence on which to base an assessment of a new model, it is by its nature untested. There will or could be increased running costs, not savings."

"The proposals are too vague to enable informed judgement by the public. This is an inadequate consultation document which has cost money to produce but which contains no useful information."

"The County Council should remain in complete control of all library services and their staffing. It should remain a service and not a charity or voluntary body."

"I have no confidence that the proposal will improve the service. There is nothing significant a trust could achieve which could not be done by efficient and imaginative management by KCC. The effect (beyond an unjustified cut in costs to KCC) would be to diminish the accountability of those running the service and therefore the effectiveness of the services."

"I'm sure librarians will lose their jobs. They do a wonderful job and are very helpful. If replaced by volunteers the service will diminish and probably result in chaos."

"Further reductions will be made to government services (due to a combination of cost savings required as our population ages and an ideological driven desire to shrink the state) and this change will make it easier for KCC to 'walk away' from providing these essential

"I feel that this can only result in a reduced level of provision and service, and even less public accountability. This is a STATUTORY service."

"We are already concerned about the safety and security of our documents, which need to be catalogued, conserved and secured. Many contain confidential information and are therefore restricted access. De-professionalisation of the service is already causing concern, and may well get worse in private hands."

"My concern is over future of Kent Archive and does not appear to have considered in depth the implication to other archive and library users or how funding will be obtained to sustain this unique facility for future generations plus retaining skilled and knowledgeable staff."

"We are regular users of the archive service. The service is already under pressure from a dilution of professional expertise in the name of economy. Further dilution resulting from this transfer will be highly detrimental to the quality of service. Archives are a specialist professional expertise and it is simply unacceptable to expect non-specialist staff to provide a decent level of service. The County archive is a public treasure which must not be put at risk in this way."

"The details of the proposal are not clear or sufficient enough for anyone to make an informed decision or support the proposals as they stand. There is a danger under the proposals that should the service fail to achieve Archive Service Accreditation its Place of Deposit status. Important collections could be removed from the service's custody, resulting in bad publicity for the spun-out service and KCC care for and pride in its archival heritage. Equally should any proposed Trust fail there has been no consideration of what would then happen to Libraries/Archives. No real details have been given about any proposed Charitable Trust Governance, its make up, who would select Trustees, the requirements it would have to meet or any obligation to consult with the public and the users of the Archives and Libraries. There are no details that convincingly give the fundraising options which would be available to the charitable trust but not to the County Council. The particular needs of the archives have not been adequately considered; they are not even mentioned in the Appendices to the consultation document. There are other options that could be considered e.g. that the Archives be split from the Libraries and to remain with KCC. Grant opportunities are available to the archive service at the present time, but do not seem to be used."

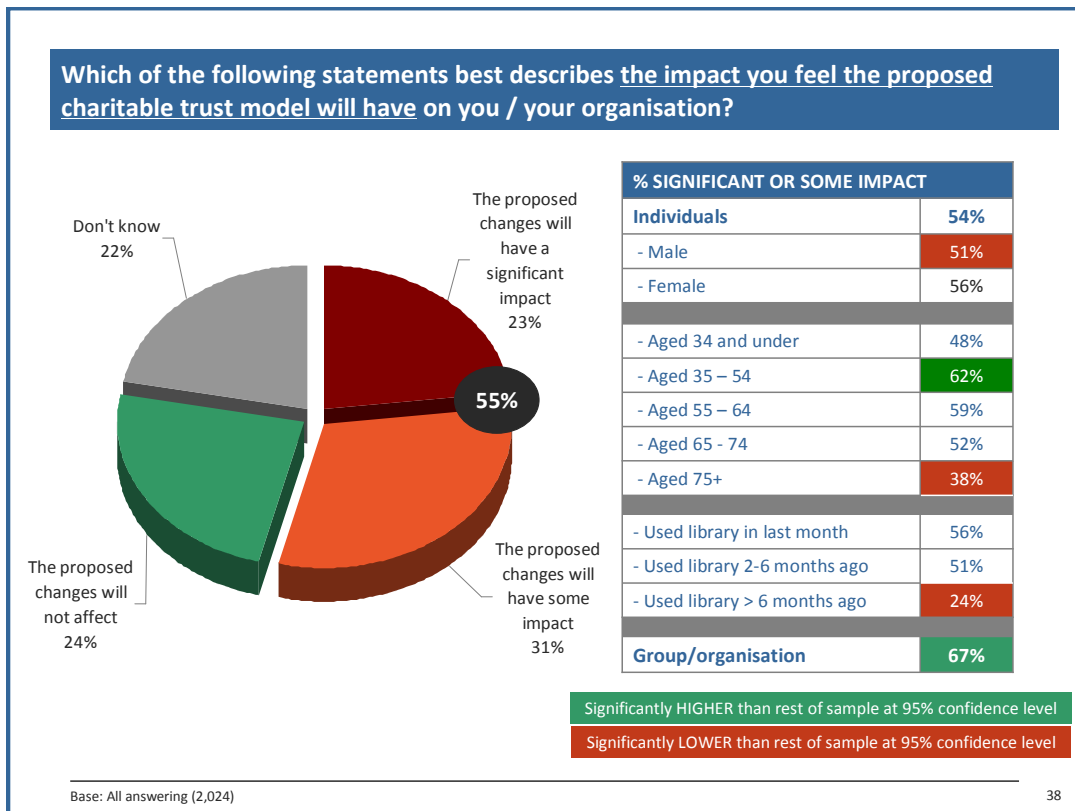
7. PERCEIVED IMPACT OF CHARITABLE TRUST PROPOSAL

7.1 STATED PERCEIVED IMPACT

Consultees were then asked to rate the impact they felt the proposed charitable trust proposal would have on them. 55% of all Consultees indicated the proposed changes would have a significant or some impact on them (23% significantly). This proportion supports overall agreement levels with some service users adopting the charitable trust as a sensible move forward (and would therefore have limited impact on them) and those that are strongly against the proposal (and would therefore impact them significantly).

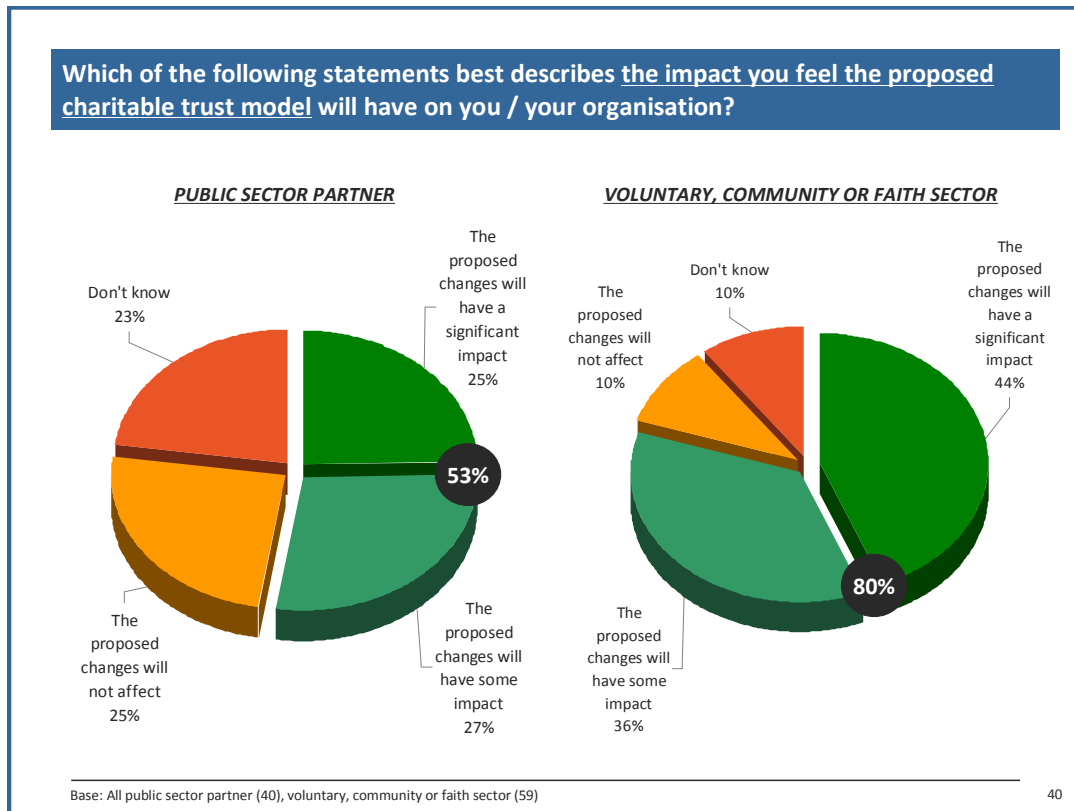
INDIVIDUALS

54% of Individual Consultees indicated the proposed changes would have a significant or some impact on them. A significantly higher proportion of female Consultees believe the proposed changes will impact them (56% compared to 51% of male Consultees). A significantly higher proportion of Individual Consultees aged 35-54 believe the proposed changes will impact them; consistent with set up / service concern patterns observed previously. As expected, there is an indication that those that last used the service in the last month (our proxy for the more frequent service users) believe the impact will be more significant compared to others.



GROUPS / ORGANISATIONS

67% of Group / Organisation representatives indicated the proposed changes would have a significant or some impact on them. There are significant differences observed by type of group / organisation with a significantly higher proportion of representatives from the Voluntary, Community or Faith sector indicating it will affect them (80% compared to 53% of Public Sector partners).



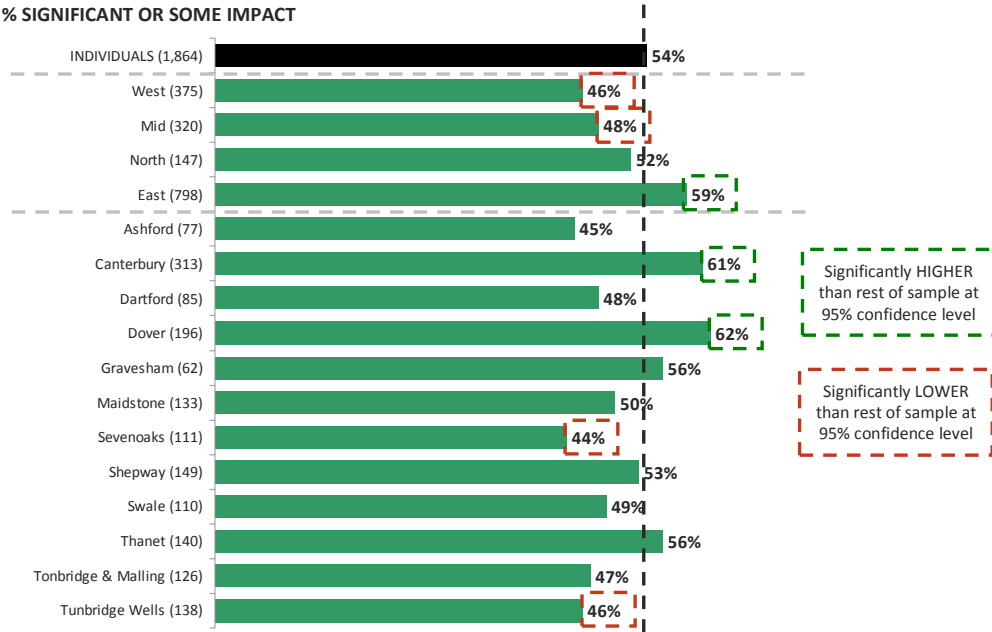
AREA

There are marked significant differences by area / district:

- A significantly lower proportion of residents living in West and Mid Kent indicated the proposed changes would have a significant or some impact on them (46% and 48% respectively). In particular, a significantly lower proportion of residents living in Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells believe it will impact them (44% and 46% of residents). Lower proportions are also observed amongst Ashford residents.
- A significantly higher proportion of residents living in East Kent indicated the proposed changes would have a significant or some impact on them (59%). In particular, a significantly higher proportion of residents living in Canterbury and Dover believe it will impact them (61% and 62% respectively).

Which of the following statements best describes the impact you feel the proposed charitable trust model will have on you / your organisation?

% SIGNIFICANT OR SOME IMPACT



Base: All Individuals answering (1,864)

39

7.2 REASONS FOR IMPACT RATING – INDIVIDUAL CONSULTEES

Consultees were then asked to describe the impact they felt the proposed charitable trust would have on them. The free text comments were reviewed and coded into “themes” to provide quantitative analysis for this question. Please note that 56% of Individual Consultees left this question blank; inferring those answering are in reality a reflection of Consultees who consider the proposal to significantly affect them.

Of the Individual Consultees that answered the question, 8% made a positive comment. 93% made a cautionary / negative comment.

In contrast to patterns observed at the previous open ended question, the main issue dominating response here is a perceived disruption to the service they use and concern for how the trust is set up. In addition, there are some concerns for staff currently employed to run the service.

Response by the key themes identified are as follows:

1. Set up / service concerns (43% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Will reduce services / Degrade services / Remove services / Negative impact – 23%
- Volunteers will lack necessary skills & training / may have difficulty recruiting – 11%
- Concerns about stock levels being maintained / Range of books will reduce - 6%
- Limited opening times / Reduced accessibility – 6%
- Group activities may cease / loss of amenities / book clubs / reading groups – 4%
- Will impact strongly on vulnerable groups e.g. the elderly / low income – 3%
- Mobile library service cuts / concerns about Home Library Service – 3%

2. Uncertainty (27% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Closure for Libraries in rural locations / small villages / concerns about closures – 13%
- Will increase costs / charge for certain services / become money making exercise – 9%
- Concerned it may be transferred back / Trust losing funding / No guarantees – 5%
- Loss of Public accountability / FOI exempt / Councillors will have no influence – 4%

3. Service should stay as it is (27% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Happy with the way things are / Regular user / Essential service / Maintain standards – 20%
- Libraries should remain publically funded / free service / Run by KCC / remain in-house – 8%

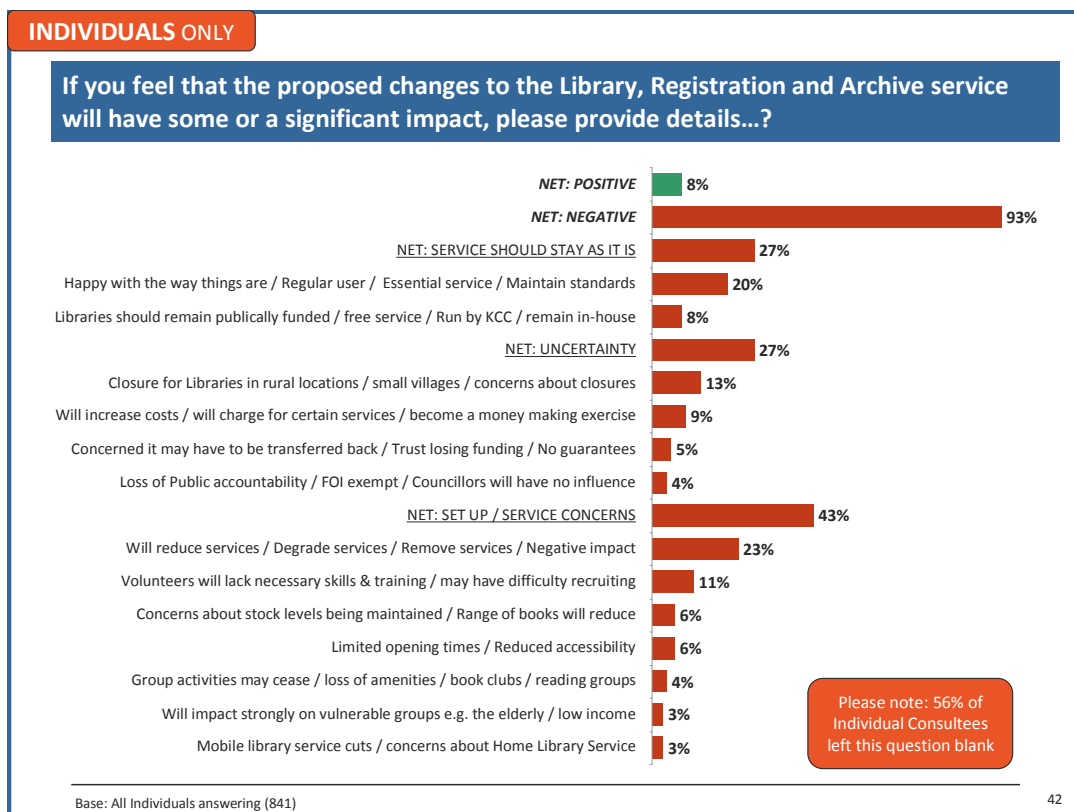
4. Staff concerns (14% selected at least one of the codes below)

- Concerns for current staff / Potential job losses / cuts to salaries / Unable to maintain professional expertise – 12%
- Negative impact on employment with the LRA service / loss of pensions / changes to terms & conditions of employment – 3%

5. Request for more information / detail on the proposal as well as the other alternatives to make a fair conclusion – 13%

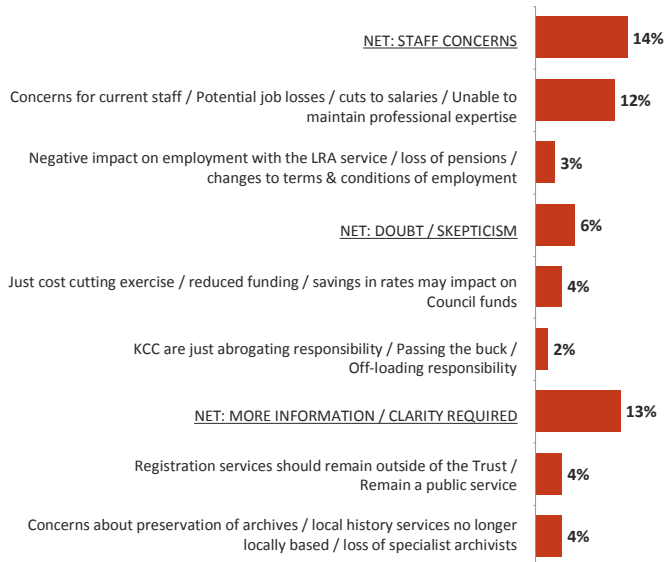
6. Doubt / scepticism (6% selected at least one of the code below)

- Just cost cutting exercise / reduced funding / savings in rates may impact on Council funds – 4%
- KCC are just abrogating responsibility / Passing the buck / Off-loading responsibility – 2%



INDIVIDUALS ONLY

If you feel that the proposed changes to the Library, Registration and Archive service will have some or a significant impact, please provide details...?



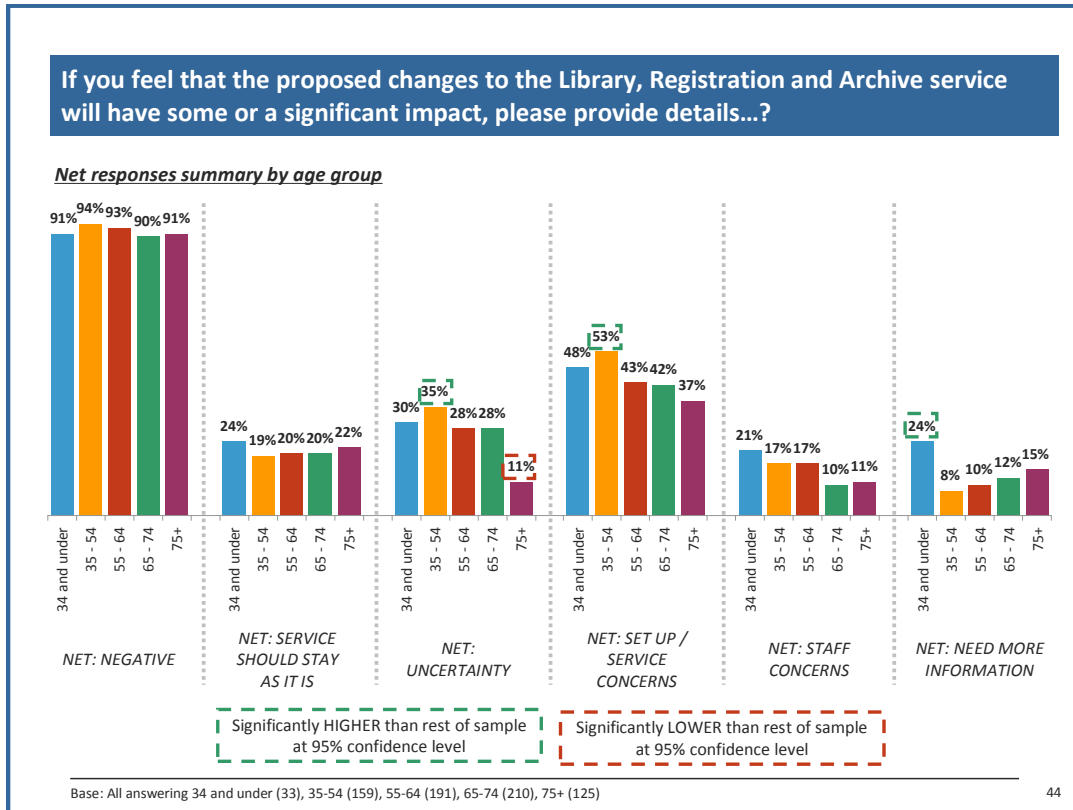
Please note: 56% of Individual Consultees left this question blank

Base: All Individuals answering (841)

43

AGE

Whilst the perceived impact is evident across all age groups, there are some significant differences to note. Uncertainty concerns are fewer amongst Individual Consultees aged 34 and under. Consistent with earlier patterns observed, set up and service concerns and uncertainty concerns distinguish Individual Consultees aged 35-54 years old.



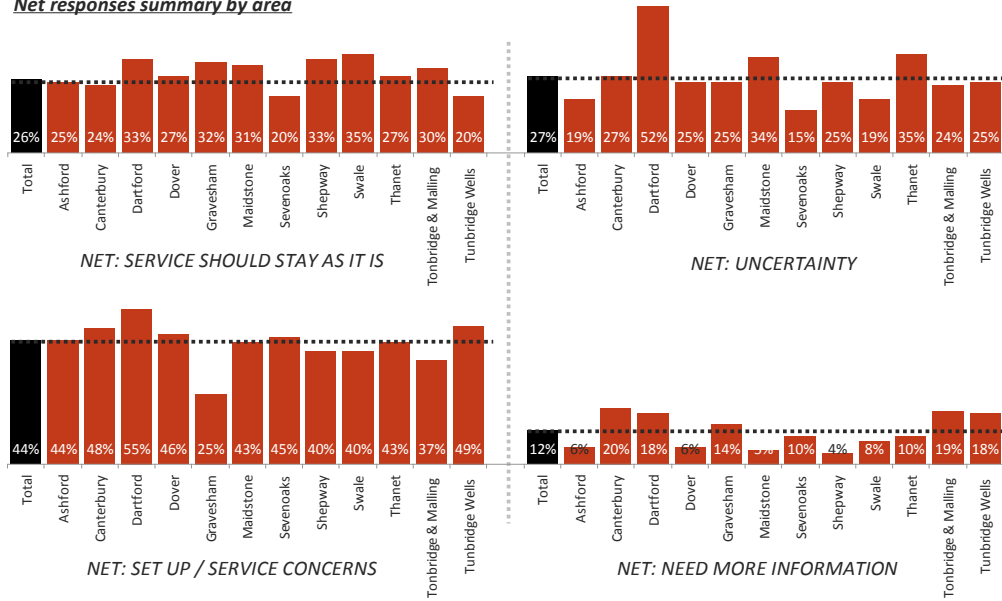
AREA

Whilst not significant (largely due to base sizes), there are some differences by area/district.

- A higher proportion indicating uncertainty and set up / service concerns in Dartford;
- A higher proportion indicating the need for more information in Canterbury, Dartford, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells

If you feel that the proposed changes to the Library, Registration and Archive service will have some or a significant impact, please provide details...?

Net responses summary by area



Base: All Ashford (32), Canterbury (174), Dartford (33), Dover (97), Gravesham (28), Maidstone (58), Sevenoaks (40), Shepway (72), Swale (48), Thanet (51), Tonbridge & Malling (54), Tunbridge Wells (61)

7.3 REASONS FOR IMPACT RATING – GROUP / ORGANISATION CONSULTEES

Consistent with the pattern observed for Individual Consultees, 41% of Group / Organisation representatives left this question blank; inferring those answering are in reality a reflection of Consultees who consider the proposal to significantly affect them.

Of the Group / Organisation representatives that answered the question, 5% made a positive comment. 87% made a cautionary / negative comment.

In contrast to patterns observed at the previous open ended question, the main issue dominating response here is a perceived disruption to the service they use and concern for how the trust is set up. In keeping with the sample group in question, there is a stronger concern for a potential loss of group activities.

Response by the key themes identified are as follows:

1. Set up / service concerns (48% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Will reduce services / Degrade services / Remove services / Negative impact – 17%
- Volunteers will lack necessary skills & training / may have difficulty recruiting – 12%
- Group activities may cease / loss of amenities / book clubs / reading groups – 12%
- Will impact strongly on vulnerable groups e.g. the elderly / low income – 6%
- Concerns about stock levels being maintained / Range of books will reduce – 4%
- Limited opening times / Reduced accessibility – 4%
- Mobile library service cuts / concerns about Home Library Service – 4%

2. Uncertainty (27% selecting at least one of the codes below)

- Closure for Libraries in rural locations / small villages / concerns about closures – 12%
- Will increase costs / will charge for certain services / become a money making exercise – 3%
- Concerned it may have to be transferred back / Trust losing funding / No guarantees – 4%
- Loss of Public accountability / FOI exempt / Councillors will have no influence – 4%

3. Service should stay as it is (18% selecting at least one of the codes below)

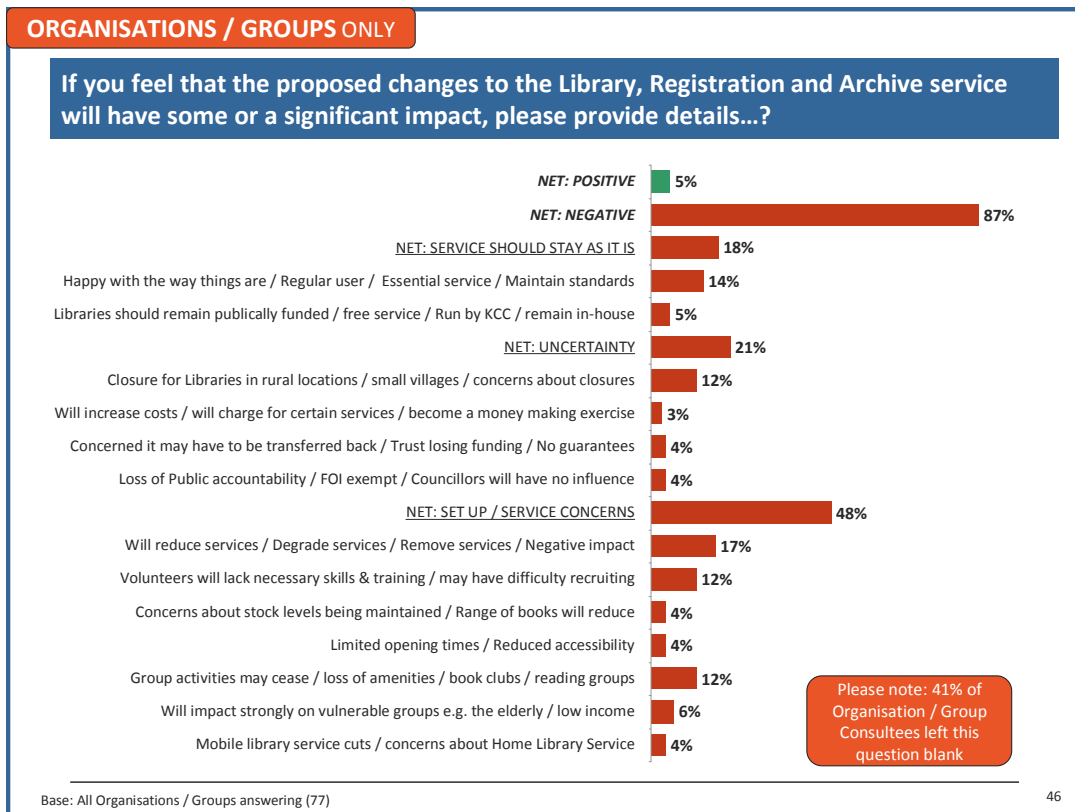
- Happy with the way things are / Regular user / Essential service / Maintain standards – 14%
- Libraries should remain publically funded / free service / Run by KCC / remain in-house – 5%

4. Request for more information / detail on the proposal as well as the other alternatives to make a fair conclusion – 10%

5. Staff concerns - 5%

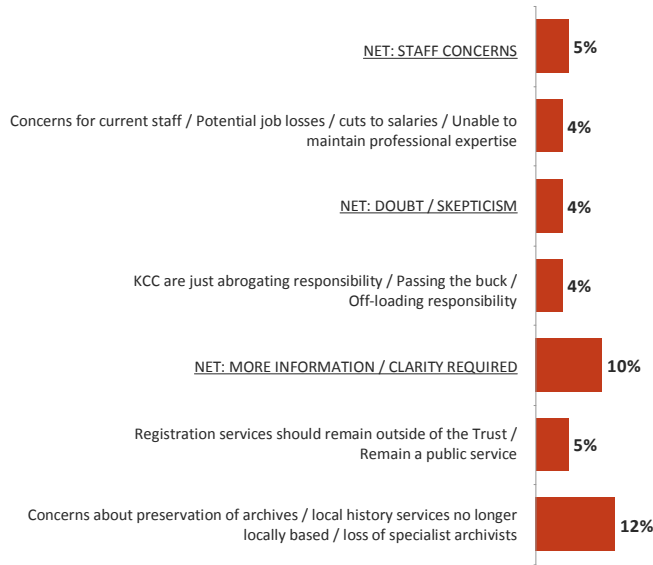
6. Doubt / scepticism - 4%

- Just cost cutting exercise / reduced funding / savings in rates may impact on Council funds – 4%
- KCC are just abrogating responsibility / Passing the buck / Off-loading responsibility – 2%



ORGANISATIONS / GROUPS ONLY

If you feel that the proposed changes to the Library, Registration and Archive service will have some or a significant impact, please provide details...?



Please note: 41% of Organisation / Group Consultees left this question blank

Base: All Organisations / Groups answering (77)

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

Consultees were asked to describe any other options that they would like to see considered or anything else they would like to see the Libraries, Registration and Archive service deliver that it doesn't at present.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the main focus of the Consultation document, 63% of Consultees left this question blank. In addition, 21% of those that answered indicated they wouldn't suggest anything and that they are happy with current high quality services being delivered.

Of the alternatives suggested, some referenced more communal activities such as:

- Forums / Links / Space for community activities / elderly / charities / educational clubs
- Book Clubs / Reading Groups / Workshops / Lectures / Talks / outings
- Adult education / assisting adult literacy / CV clinics / Job Club / U3A

Some referenced more commercial / diversified activities such as:

- WiFi access / Expand IT access / More PC's (computers) to be made available
- Café / Coffee Shop / Franchises / Catering facilities / micropub
- Gateway / Government - Community Hub / Citizens advice
- Tourist information / notice boards / local information desks
- Rooms available to rent / hire for meetings / Groups / make full use of space

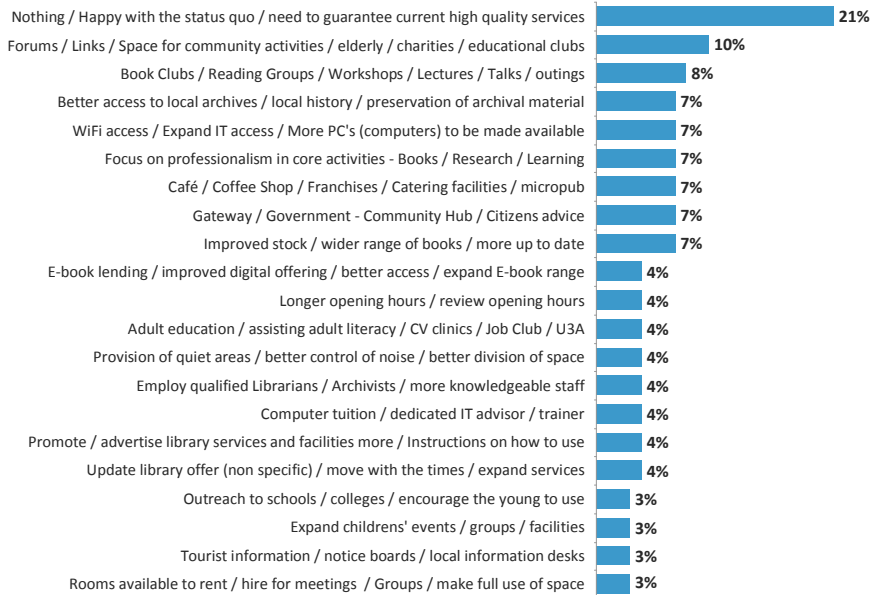
In addition, some referenced the advertising and promotion of the services currently offered:

- Promote / advertise library services and facilities more / Instructions on how to use
- Update library offer (non specific) / move with the times / expand services

7% of Consultees referenced better access to local archives / local history / better preservation of Archive material.

Are there any other services you would like to suggest or anything you would like to see the Libraries, Registration and Archive service deliver that it doesn't at present?

Please note: 63% of Consultees left this question blank



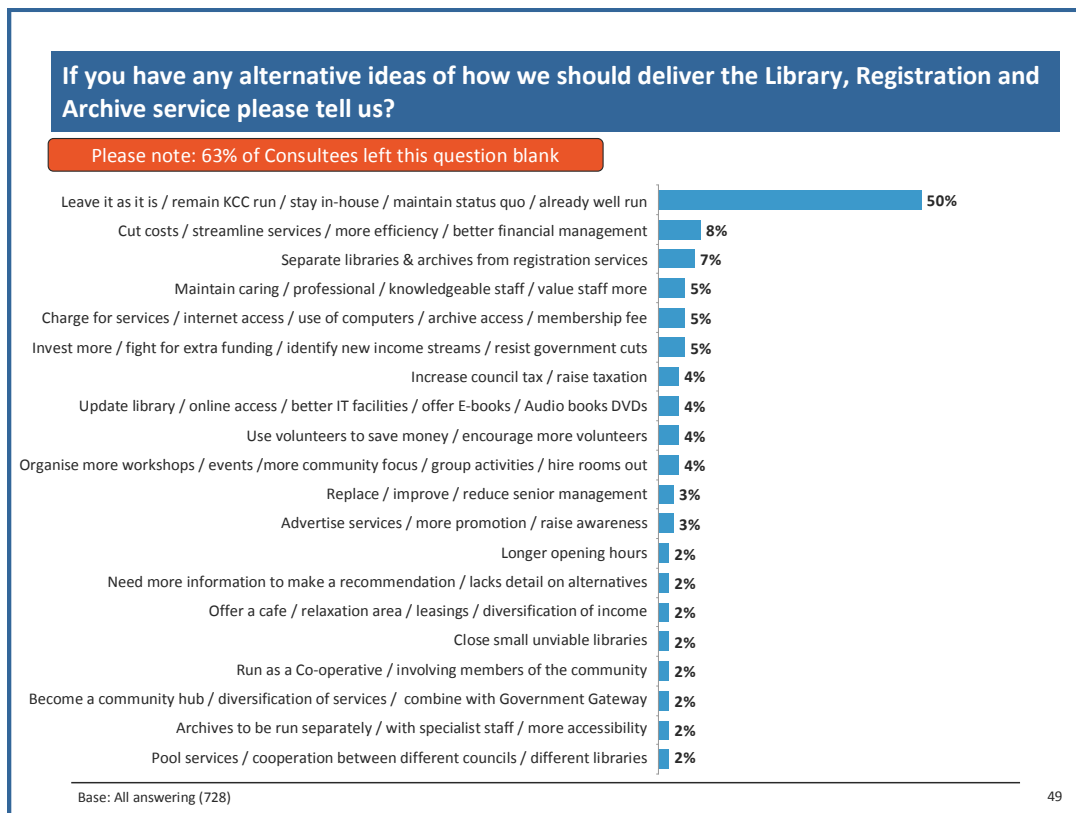
Base: All answering (721)

48

Consultees were asked to describe any alternative ideas of how the Library, Registration and Archive service should be delivered.

Consistent with the previous question, 63% of Consultees left this question blank. In addition, 50% of those that answered indicated they wouldn't suggest anything and that they are happy with current high quality services being delivered. Other alternatives suggested are broadly consistent with those identified previously.

7% of Consultees referenced the need to separate libraries & archives from registration services moving forward.

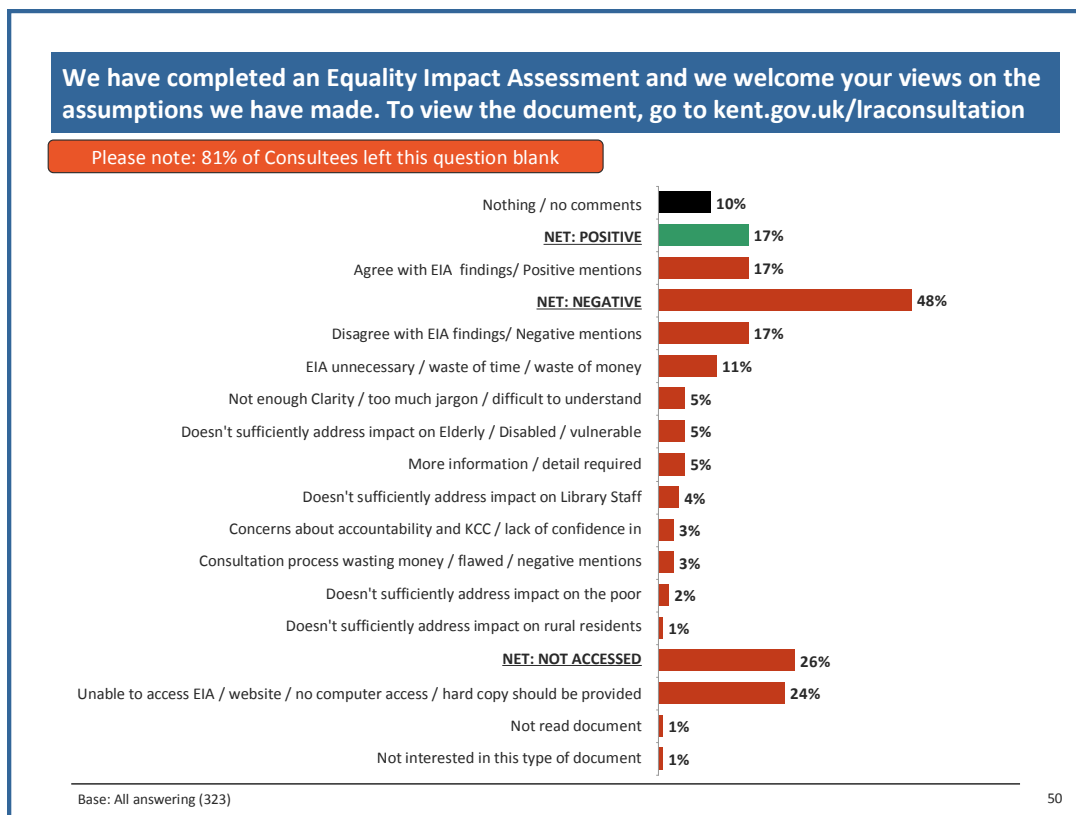


9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND OTHER COMMENTS

Kent County Council completed an Equality Impact Assessment to see if the service change could affect anyone unfairly. The Consultation questionnaire invited Consultees to note their views on the assumptions that had been made and the conclusions drawn. The Consultation document provided a link to the Assessment conducted.

81% of Consultees left this question blank. 10% noted that they had nothing to add, 17% of those answering made a positive comment and 48% of those answering made a cautionary / negative comment. 26% indicated that had not accessed the Equality Impact Assessment (largely due to lack of computer / internet access).

17% indicated that they disagree with the findings and 11% indicated they felt the Equality Impact Assessment was a waste of time and money.



"I am for equality, but not if the policy is to try to aim for the lowest common denominator, which actually means that no one's needs are properly catered for."

"I'm surprised to see every box labelled as low risk. on what basis was this decision made? is this one person's opinion? If the new trustees of the new trust's board are unelected, how will it be accountable for decisions it makes regarding equality. Furthermore. how will it be guaranteed to be a diverse board?"

"So much emphasis on equality waters down service for others e.g. the Shaping the future of the LRA service in Kent booklet, is almost an insult to the ability of the general public to grasp any concepts."

"The document does not seem to address the main issue which would be between those who are poor and those who are not. The poor would suffer most by a loss in library services. Although society as a whole would suffer if library services were not providing the vital life-enhancing services they do. So I have not answered the questions below as I do not think they are relevant."

"Well, the assumptions are exactly what they are described as - assumptions. It seems very glib that the possible negative impacts of a trust - across all the protected characteristics - are 'low'. KCC has gained equality, diversity and inclusion experience, and knowledge and expertise in equality legislation, over many years. How would a trust match that in the short, medium and long term?"

"I don't feel you have given the full picture having gone through a similar process when the organisation I worked for was made a charitable trust, I know only too well how it affects the existing staff. The money that is allocated to the scheme will be eaten up by the KCC and very little of it will actually arrive at the LRA department to run their services."

10. APPENDIX

A copy of the full Consultation document (including the questionnaire) can be found below:



LRA Consultation
document