UNISON
Local Government

The public library service under attack
how cuts are putting individuals and communities at risk and damaging local businesses and economies

a UNISON report by Steve Davies, University of Cardiff

THE DAMAGE

WARNING: DISMANTLING COUNCIL SERVICES WILL SERIOUSLY DAMAGE OUR LIVES AND OUR COMMUNITIES

Contents

Introduction

Since the Coalition government took office in May 2010, there has been a concerted programme of cutbacks in local government funding and this has had a clear impact on public libraries. Net expenditure in the UK public library service declined from £1,066,410,000 in 2010-11 to £1,011,506,000 in 2011-12 and to an estimated £963,284,000 in 2012-13 (CIPFA, 2012a). In its annual survey of the public library service, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) reported that across the UK in 2011-12 there was a cut in the number of library service points of 201, that is, a net reduction of 201 static and mobile libraries. This follows a cut of 146 in the previous year (CIPFA, 2012a) (see Table 1). Between March 2010 and 2012, there was a reduction of almost 350 library service points (Keep and Berman, 2013: 15). Public Libraries News (www.publiclibrariesnews.com) estimates that 78 libraries and 14 mobiles were lost in 2012-13 and reports that since 1 April 2013 a further 280 libraries (245 buildings and 35 mobiles) are under threat, have been closed or have left council control.

In addition to the decline in the number of libraries and mobile libraries, there was a reduction in library staff numbers, in the number of library visits by the public, the number of 'active borrowers', the overall number of books issued, the number of web visits, the number of terminals with library catalogue and internet access and the number of electronic workstations available to users per 10,000 population (see Tables 1, 2 and 3).

Table 1: UK library service points and facilities 2009-10 to 2011-12

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	% change over last year
Number of service points	4,612	4,466	4,265	-4.5%
Number of terminals with library catalogue and internet access	43,294	43,465	43,365	-0.2%
Number of electronic workstations available to users per 10,000 population	7.01	6.98	6.86	-1.8%
Number of web visits (000s)	120,399	114,142	97,721	-14.4%

Source: CIPFA (2012a)

Table 2: UK Visits and Usage

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	% change over last year
Visits to library premises (000s)	322,111	313,987	306,591	-2.4%
Visits per 1,000 population	5,213	5,043	4,849	-3.8%
Active borrowers (000s)	12,078	11,920	11,412	-4.3%

Source: CIPFA (2012a)

The number of visits to libraries, the visits per 1000 population and the number of active borrowers have all fallen over the last year (see Table 2).

Table 3: Changes in total staff (FTE)

Year	Total staff (FTE)	% change over previous year
2007-08	25,769	
2008-09	25,648	-0.5%
2009-10	24,746	-3.5%
2010-11	23,663	-4.4%
2011-12	21,780	-8.0%

Source: CIPFA (2012a)

The number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff has continued to decline (Table 3) with a particularly sharp drop between 2010-11 and 2011-12.

The UK Government recently noted that the library service 'remains strong and popular' (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2013: 3). It also claims:

❝ **This is not a service in crisis. This is a service – together with others – which is delivering against a backdrop of significant public sector efficiencies, to a population which retains an appetite for reading and engagement in council services (ibid).** ❞

This is the backdrop to the following report which is based on a survey of UNISON members in the public library service. The survey data was gathered through an online questionnaire that was made available to members in mid to late November 2012. Where UNISON held individual email addresses of members in the library service, these were contacted directly. Otherwise, library service members were contacted via their branches. The UNISON library service web page also carried details of how to access the survey. 1831 valid responses were received (after cleaning the data to remove responses from members working in school, college or prison libraries).

This report provides information on a series of themes identified from the data:

— Library service governance

— Impact on library services

— Impact on members at work

— Use of volunteers

— Impact on members' attitudes

A detailed breakdown of the sample profile

appears as an Annex to this report.

Key findings

Impact on library services

— 79% of the overall sample felt that they had to work harder to maintain the same standards as existed before the cuts

— 57% agreed or strongly agreed that since the cuts began they were unable to maintain the same standards.

— Almost 40% of the overall sample agreed or strongly agreed that since the cuts began they were trying to find new ways to provide better services

— Although some respondents reported an increase in provision in some services (a quarter reported an increase in Baby Bounce and Rhyme time), close to one fifth reported cuts to both school holiday activities and to outreach with local schools (19% and 20% respectively).

— Over a third of respondents reported more activities for children and babies within the library, while a quarter reported that more activities aimed at young people are carried out.

— Over 40% of respondents reported that their library now had an income target

— A third of respondents reported that their library had introduced charges for services that were previously provided to the public for free.

— Just over a fifth of respondents reported that their library was now a council one-stop shop but of those, only 43% reported that they had received additional training in relation to this change.

— Over a third of respondents (36%) report a decrease in library opening hours, although 11% report an increase.

Impact on members at work

— 61% report a decrease in the number of full time posts in their library and 55% report a decrease in the number of part time posts.

— 18% reported a decrease in paid overtime working and 13% reported an increase in unpaid overtime working. However the most striking figure relates to weekend working in which 30% report a decrease in weekend enhancements since May 2010.

— Just under a quarter of the entire sample reported that they felt stressed at work 'most of the time', 56% reported that they felt stressed at work occasionally, just 12% rarely felt stressed at work and only 2% reported 'never' feeling stressed at work.

— 41% of the sample (44% of those who answered this question) reported that there were occasions when they were required to work alone.

— Of those that are ever required to work alone, 44% are regularly expected to do so during usual opening hours and 32% are regularly expected to do so to provide lunch and break cover.

— 56% of all those required to work alone (and 22% of the entire sample) reported that lone working had increased since May 2010.

Library service governance

— Over 40% of respondents reported that their library service was located within the Leisure and Culture directorate in their local authority.

— Just 15% reported that the library service was represented on the Directorate Management Team or equivalent and 9%

that it was on the Corporate Management Team or equivalent. 60% did not know whether the library service was represented on their local authority's senior management team.

Use of volunteers

— Over half (55%) of all respondents reported that their libraries used volunteers.

— Of those that worked in libraries that used volunteers, 73% reported that the use of volunteers had increased since 2010.

— Just under half of all respondents reported that the volunteers in their library were CRB-checked. A quarter reported that they were not while another 25% did not know.

— Respondents were fairly evenly split over whether volunteers could be a useful supplement to paid staff. 36% of all respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed while 34% agreed or strongly agreed that they could be a useful supplement.

— 92% of those that provided an answer (82% of the entire sample) agreed or strongly agreed with the proposition that volunteers should not be used to replace paid staff.

Impact on members' attitudes

— 40% of the overall sample agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the library service today is run more like a commercial business than a public service.

— 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the public library service is best as a publicly funded service directly provided by the local authority. Just 2.7% disagreed with this and 6.2% were undecided.

— There was little support for either shared services, private contractors or charitable trust or mutual provision.

— Over 80% of the sample (84.3%) report that they engage with the public every day.

— Over three quarters of the entire sample (75.9%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that 'Meaningful public service is important to me'.

— Almost half of the entire sample (47.4%) and over half of those that answered this question (54.8%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I would prefer seeing public officials do what is best for the whole community even if it harmed my interests'.

— 42% of the entire sample and 49% of those that answered the question agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I consider public service my civic duty'.

— Union membership and campaigning

— Almost 60% (57.2%) of the overall sample have been members for 10 years or more.

— Just over 7% of the sample reported that they held a UNISON position of one sort or another.

— Almost half (48.1%) of the sample reported that there was no UNISON rep at their workplace.

— Just under 80% (79.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that library service users are potential allies of the staff in defending a high quality public library service.

— Almost as high a proportion of respondents (67.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that library service users are also potential allies of the staff on the direct workplace issues of defending jobs and conditions in the public library service.

— 65.6% agreed or strongly agreed that union members in the library service should work more closely with local library campaigners to defend the public library service.

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Impact on library services

In the last decade or so, more and more demands have been placed on libraries to expand the range of services that they provide. The survey of UNISON members provides a unique insight into how the changed situation since 2010 has affected these services and how UNISON members are trying to continue to provide a high quality service despite the cuts.

Table 4: Impact of the cuts

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree not Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Valid responses
Since the cuts began myself and my colleagues are working harder to maintain the same standards	25 1.4	41 2.2	108 5.9	516 28.2	924 50.5	1614
Since the cuts began myself and my colleagues are unable to maintain the same standards	31 1.7	234 12.8	308 16.8	592 32.3	446 24.4	1611
Since the cuts began myself and my colleagues are finding new ways to provide better services	76 4.2	280 15.3	522 28.5	593 32.4	137 7.5	

Note: First row of figures in each cell denotes the number of respondents, the second row of figures shows this number as a percentage of the overall response

Members perceive that the changes over the last few years and particularly the recent cuts have had a big impact on the library service. 78.7% of the overall sample felt that they had to work harder to maintain the same standards as existed before the cuts, although 56.7% agreed or strongly agreed that since the cuts began they were unable to maintain the same standards. Fewer than 40% of the overall sample (39.9%) agreed or strongly agreed that since the cuts began they were trying to find new ways to provide better services.

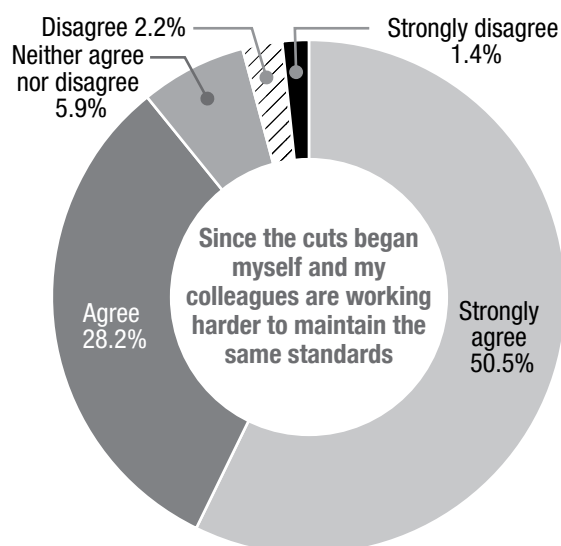**Figure 1: working harder to maintain the same standards**

Disagree 2.2%
Neither agree nor disagree 5.9%
Strongly disagree 1.4%
Agree 28.2%
Since the cuts began myself and my colleagues are working harder to maintain the same standards
Strongly agree 50.5%

Figure 2: unable to maintain the same standards

Since the cuts began myself and my colleagues are unable to maintain the same standards

- Strongly disagree 1.7%
- Disagree 12.8%
- Neither agree nor disagree 16.8%
- Agree 32.3%
- Strongly agree 24.4%

Figure 3: finding new ways to provide better services

Since the cuts began myself and my colleagues are finding new ways to provide better services

- Strongly disagree 4.2%
- Disagree 15.3%
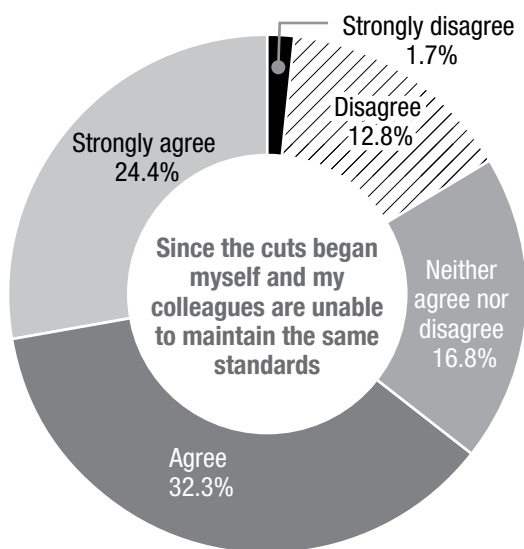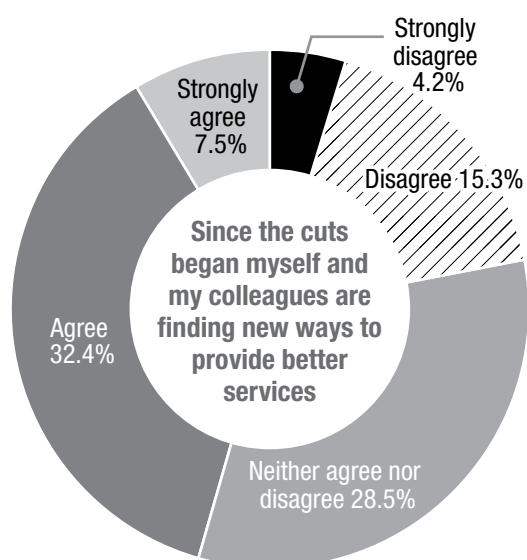- Neither agree nor disagree 28.5%
- Agree 32.4%
- Strongly agree 7.5%

Table 5 provides information on a range of services that are commonly provided by libraries. In most cases, the numbers reporting changes (either in terms of an expansion or a cut) are relatively small – mostly fewer than 10% of respondents. However there are some exceptions to this. The most striking figures relate to the 24% who report an increase in the Baby Bounce and Rhyme time service and the 25% who report increased support for the public with IT training/assistance. On the negative side, most noteworthy are the impacts on schools support with close to one fifth of respondents reporting cuts to both school holiday activities and to outreach with local schools (19% and 20% respectively). Other areas in which more than 10% of respondents reported increases included: reading groups, the

Summer Reading Challenge, supporting the public with CV writing, supporting the public with Job Searching, author talks, school holiday activities, outreach with local schools and home library services.

As the data in Table 5 reveals, the picture is a mixed one with both cuts and expansion of more than 10% being reported for certain activities (obviously taking place in different locations) – supporting the public with IT training/assistance, author talks, school holiday activities and outreach with local schools. This probably reflects the different emphasis that different local authorities place on the role of the library service and whether it should be used to compensate for cuts elsewhere within the authority and/or become a one stop shop or hub for council services.

Table 5: Changes in library services outside core service (lending books, DVDs, and audio)

	This service has been expanded	This service has been cut	No change	This service has never been provided	Valid responses (of 1831)
Baby Bounce and Rhyme time	443 24.2	161 8.8	871 47.6	135 7.4	1610
Chatterbox Reading Groups	172 9.4	150 8.2	487 26.6	702 38.3	1511
Teenage Reading Groups	143 7.8	143 7.8	428 23.4	801 43.7	1515
Summer Reading Challenge	245 13.4	74 4.0	1292 70.6	26 1.4	1637
Mental health Reading Groups	137 7.5	42 2.3	235 12.8	1063 58.1	1477
Other reading groups	431 23.5	119 6.5	865 47.2	165 9.0	1580
Support public with CV writing	260 14.2	150 8.2	412 22.5	719 39.3	1541
Support public with Job Searching	298 16.3	145 7.9	519 28.3	593 32.4	1555
Support public with IT training/assistance	468 25.6	263 14.4	753 41.1	110 6.0	1594
Reminiscence mornings / support for people with dementia	132 7.2	47 2.6	249 13.6	1093 59.7	1521
Author talks	253 13.8	210 11.5	878 48.0	237 12.9	1578
School holiday activities	250 13.7	344 18.8	924 50.5	76 4.2	1594
Outreach with local schools	271 14.8	367 20.0	836 45.7	93 5.1	1567
Home library services	208 11.4	247 13.5	946 51.7	157 8.6	1558
Exhibitions	163 8.9	167 9.1	979 53.5	224 12.2	1533
Support for Friends of Library Groups	127 6.9	60 3.3	383 20.9	930 50.8	1500
English Language conversation cafes	70 3.8	30 1.6	106 5.8	1308 71.4	1514
Business start up/social enterprise projects	70 3.8	54 2.9	176 9.6	1213 66.2	1513
	Note: First row of figures in each cell denotes the number of respondents, the second row of figures shows this number as a percentage of the overall response				

Figure 4: Changes to services outside core service
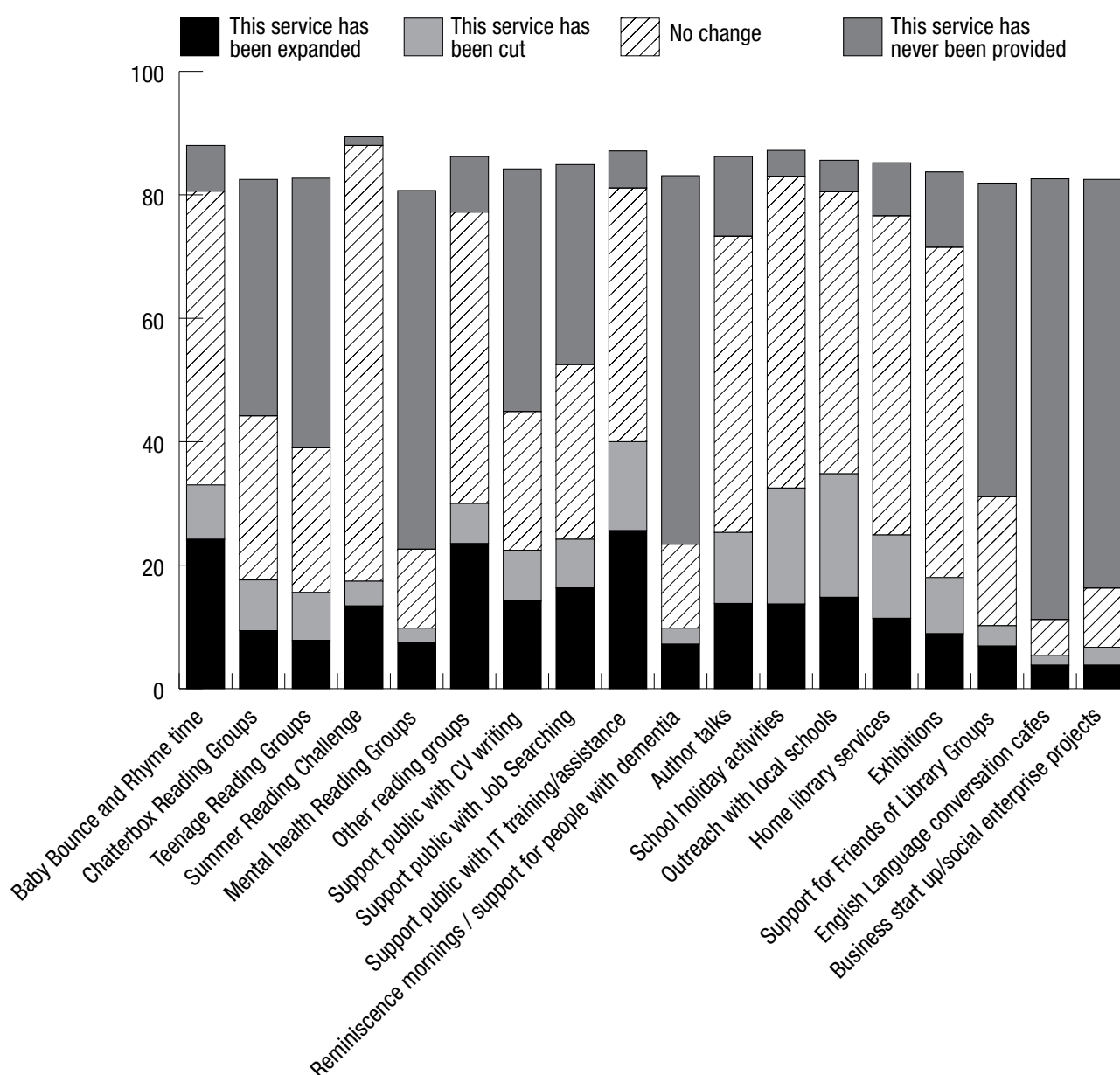
A series of specific users (and services) were identified and respondents were asked whether these had seen an expansion in service since May 2010.

Table 6: Changes in targeted services since May 2010

	Yes	No	Don't know	Valid responses (of 1831)
More activities for young people	458 25.0	1005 54.9	80 4.4	1543
More activities for children and babies	664 36.3	829 45.3	68 3.7	1561
More activities for older people	365 19.9	1075 58.7	92 5.0	1532
More activities for specific equality groups (e.g. BME communities)	165 9.0	1173 64.1	160 8.7	1498
More job search and CV writing activities	376 20.5	1072 58.5	85 4.6	1533
Other council services that have moved into the library	447 24.4	711 38.8	136 7.4	1294
	Note: First row of figures in each cell denotes the number of respondents, the second row of figures shows this number as a percentage of the overall response			

Table 6 shows that over a third (36.3%) of respondents reported more activities for children and babies within the library, while a quarter (25%) report that more activities aimed at young people are carried out. A fifth report more activities for older people and more job search and CV writing activities (19.9% and 20.5% respectively), although less than 10% report more activities for specific equality groups.

These figures are interesting in that a significant proportion of respondents report an expansion of particular services during an overall period of contraction. It is possible that councils are using libraries to compensate for cuts elsewhere, and this is an area that merits further research.

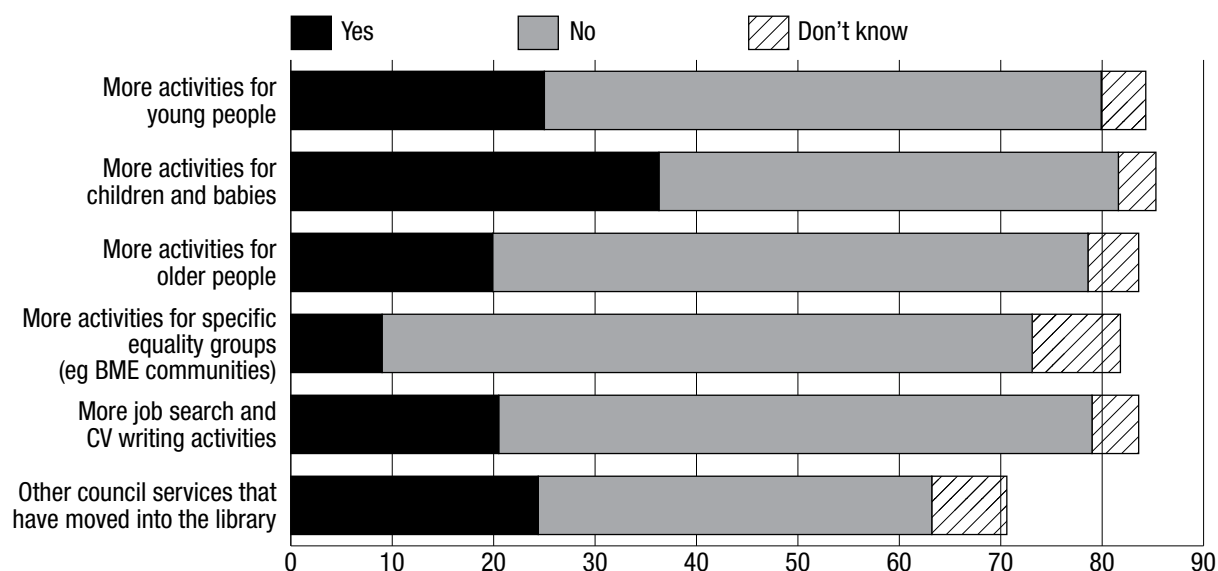**Figure 5: Changes in targeted services since May 2010**

Overall, just under a quarter of respondents reported that other council services had moved in to the library. Respondents were asked to list those services and Figure 6 below provides a wordcloud[1] based upon these responses.

Figure 6: Wordcloud illustrating range of council services moved into libraries

Table 7 and Figure 7: Income target for library

	Count	% of overall sample	% of those answering question
Yes	749	40.9	42
No	273	14.9	15
Don't know	702	38.3	39
Not applicable	60	3.3	4
Valid responses	1784	97.4	100
Missing	47	2.6	
Total	1831	100	

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1   *Word clouds, or text clouds, are visual representations of text, weighted by font size or colour. They allow the reader to visualise at a glance the frequency of use of particular words in a given text (or in this case, a response to an open ended questions). A very simple form of word cloud is used here.*
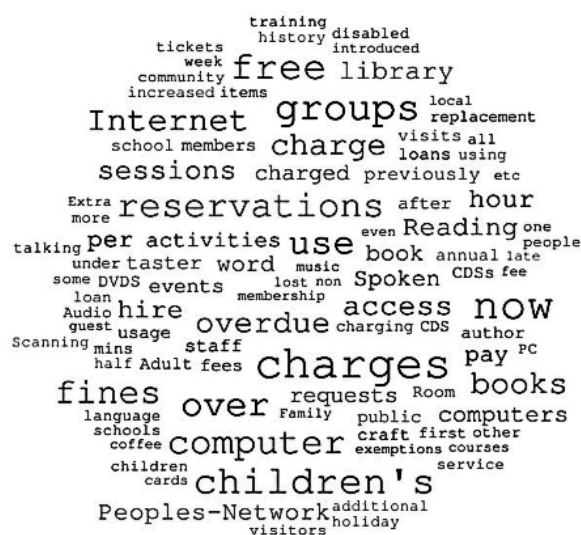
A large number of respondents (42%) reported that their library had an income target (see Table 9). Obviously this would fit in with a shift towards charging for previously free services. One respondent remarked:

66 Customer service should be the top priority of any Library service, NOT income generation. We are here to help the public not fleece them for their cash. 99

As well as a reconfiguration of library services, it is clear that many local authorities have now introduced charges for services that were previously provided to the public for free. A third of respondents (32%) reported this to be the case (see Table 8).

**Table 8 and Figure 8:
Charges introduced since May 2010 for services previously provided for free**

	Count	% of overall sample	% of those answering question
Yes	593	32.4	33
No	1049	57.3	59
Don't know	120	6.6	7
Not applicable	24	1.3	1
Valid responses	1786	97.5	100
Missing	45	2.5	
Total	1831	100.0	

Figure 9: Wordcloud illustrating range of services now with charges previously provided free

Many library service now charge users for services that were previously provided free. Some of these services, such as children's and schools-related services or author visits, are exactly the sort of services that attract new users into the library. Other initiatives have included steep rises in fines in some parts of the country. This led one respondent to comment:

❝ The word 'service' has been demonised and, in the context of libraries, has been crippled by rising charges and fines which are no longer a mild deterrent to keep books in circulation but an income stream with targets and a severe deterrent to use by the less well off in society. ❞

A number of respondents reported that some formerly free services – like access to the internet – now had limits on free access, with the first half hour free and then charged or some variant of this, or some other form of restriction. This is a particularly poorly timed cutback on free access as the Government has declared its objective of taking all services online, beginning with the new Universal Credit system. As one respondent noted:

❝ Libraries now provide the only free source of internet access in the city, the government, Local Authority and Job Centres now expect all users to use online services in order to apply for and access benefits, job hunt and fill in job applications and source any kind of government information. A significant part of the population cannot afford to buy a computer or pay for broadband to access the internet. Consequently the only opportunity this portion of the population has to access the internet is via library services, causing social exclusion. Without libraries and their information and internet resources a significant percentage of [city X's] population would be completely excluded from essential services and resources. ❞
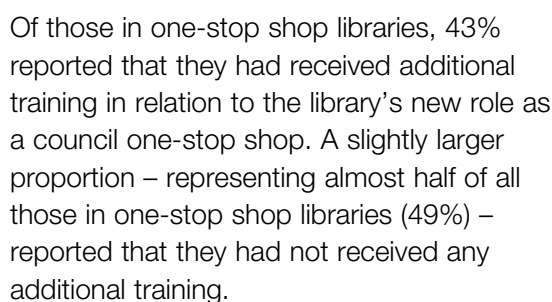
Table 9 and Figure 10: conversion to council one-stop shop

	Count	% of overall sample	% of those answering question
Yes	384	21.0	22
No	1193	65.2	69
Don't know	84	4.6	5
Not applicable	76	4.2	4
Valid responses	1737	94.9	100
Missing	94	5.1	
Total	1831	100.0	
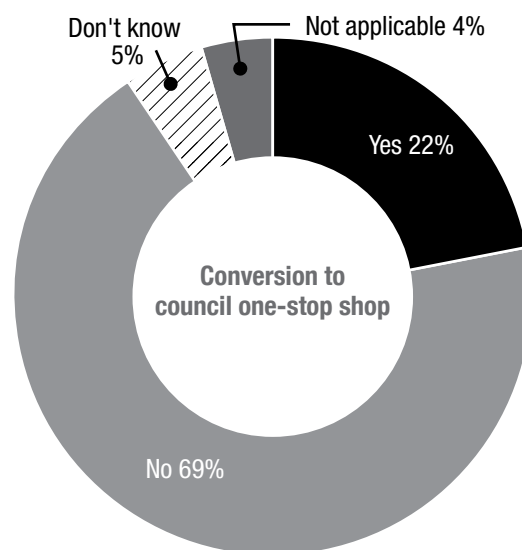
One of the responses to the cuts of some local authorities has been to move other council services into the library (see Table 9) or to co-locate libraries with other services or to turn the libraries into council 'one-stop shops'. Just over a fifth of respondents reported that their library was now a council one-stop shop. 65% reported that that was not the case for them.

Table 10 and Figure 11: Additional training for the one-stop shop

	Count	% of respondents in one-stop shop libraries
Yes	163	42.6
No	186	48.6
Don't know	2	0.5
Not applicable	32	8.4
Valid responses	383	100

Of those in one-stop shop libraries, 43% reported that they had received additional training in relation to the library's new role as a council one-stop shop. A slightly larger proportion – representing almost half of all those in one-stop shop libraries (49%) – reported that they had not received any additional training.

Figure 12: Wordcloud illustrating range of queries dealt with in one stop shops

Impact on members at work

Library service staff numbers have been in decline for several years but dropped sharply in the last year (see Table 11). They are likely to drop sharply again this year. Since 2009-10 there has been an overall reduction in staffing numbers of 12%.

Table 11: UK library staff (full time equivalent – FTE)

Year	Total Staff (FTE)	% change over previous year
2007-08	25,769	
2008-09	25,648	-0.5%
2009-10	24,746	-3.5%
2010-11	23,663	-4.4%
2011-12	21,780	-8.0%

Source: CIPFA (2012a)

Over a third of respondents (36%) report a decrease in library opening hours, although 11% report an increase (see Table 12). This apparent paradox may be explained by the differential responses to the funding squeeze. Some authorities have cut the number of libraries but increased the opening hours in some of those that remain.

There is no ambiguity about the figures for staffing. 61% report a decrease in the number of full time posts in their library and 55% report a decrease in the number of part time posts. In many sectors, one response to financial uncertainty is to increase the proportion of casual or agency staff employed and, while 16% report an increase in the number of these staff, more significantly over a quarter of respondents report a decrease in these

numbers as well. At the time of the survey, there appeared to be little significant use of zero hours contracts and not much change in this area, with only 8% of respondents reporting an increase in their use since 2010. However, they do exist – as the member quoted below explains – and may well increase in the future in response to the continuing squeeze on budgets:

"…I don't think there is probably any long term future in the library service for any of the relief staff. I have a contract for three hours and the rest of my library work is on a 0 hours relief contract. I know of people who are desperate to get any type of contract or be offered the chance to gain library qualifications but this is not happening at the moment…"

Table 12: Changes to opening hours and staffing since May 2010

	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Not applicable	Valid responses (of 1831)
Opening hours	197 10.8	656 35.8	791 43.2	18 1.0	12 0.7	1674
Number of full time paid posts	27 1.5	1114 60.8	391 21.4	67 3.7	65 3.5	1664
Number of part time paid posts	147 8.0	1016 55.5	380 20.8	102 5.6	14 0.8	1659
Number of paid casual / agency staff (NOT volunteers)	303 16.5	481 26.3	392 21.4	134 7.3	332 18.1	1642
Use of workers on zero hours contracts	148 8.1	87 4.8	224 12.2	440 24.0	715 39.0	1614
	Note: First row of figures in each cell denotes the number of respondents, the second row of figures shows this number as a percentage of the overall response					

For the vast majority of respondents there has been no change in their contracted hours of work since May 2010 (see Table 13). Just 14% reported a decrease and 7.5% an increase. More interesting are the responses relating to overtime and weekend working. 18% reported a decrease in paid overtime working and 13% reported an increase in unpaid overtime working. However the most striking figure relates to weekend working in which 30% report a decrease in weekend enhancements.

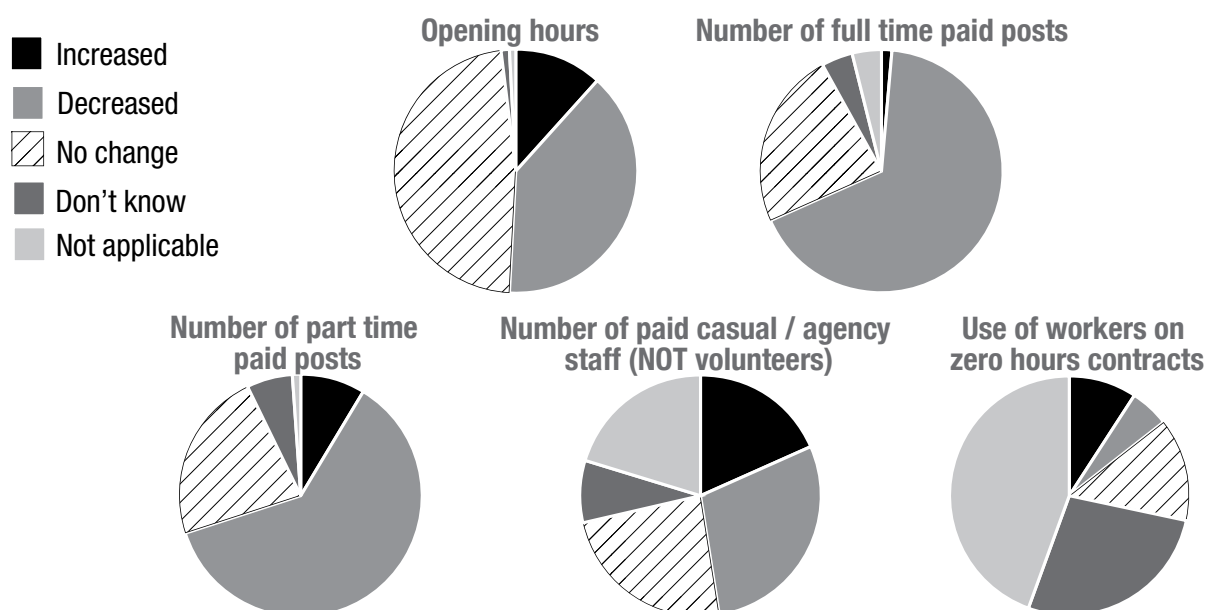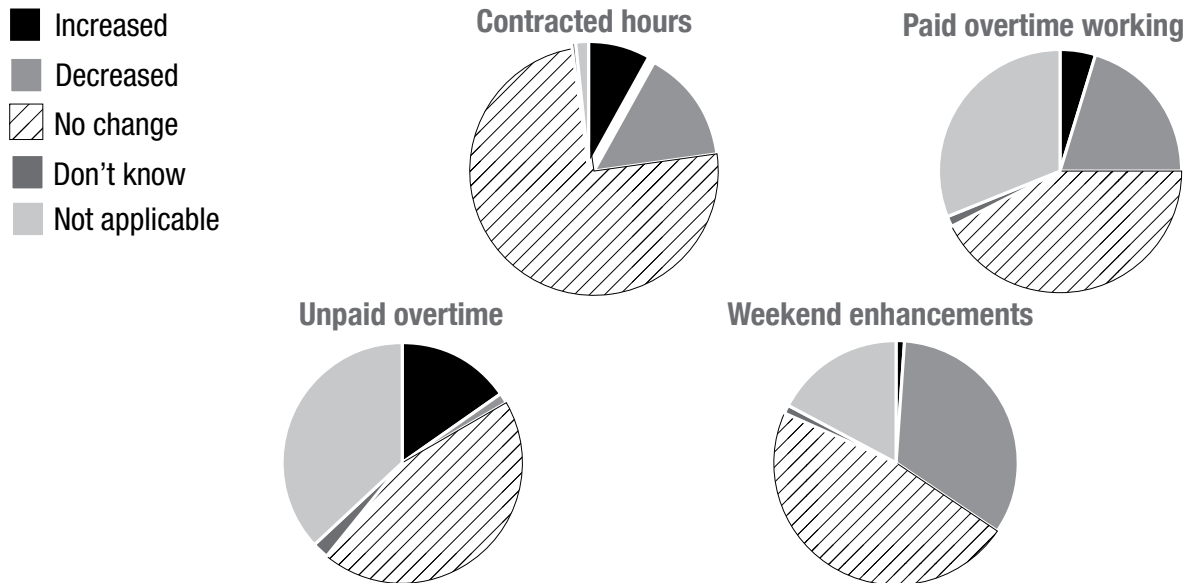**Figure 13: Changes to opening hours and staffing since May 2010**

Table 13: Changes in working hours and enhancements since May 2010

	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Not applicable	Valid responses (of 1831)
Contracted hours	137 7.5	252 13.8	1270 69.4	8 0.4	25 1.4	1692
Paid overtime working	78 4.3	330 18.0	688 37.6	21 1.1	504 27.5	1621
Unpaid overtime	244 13.3	24 1.3	699 38.2	32 1.7	584 31.9	1583
Weekend enhancements	19 1.0	548 29.9	770 42.1	20 1.1	279 15.2	1636
	Note: First row of figures in each cell denotes the number of respondents, the second row of figures shows this number as a percentage of the overall response					

Figure 14: Changes in working hours and enhancements since May 2010

■ Increased
▨ Decreased
▨ No change
▨ Don't know
▨ Not applicable

Contracted hours

Paid overtime working

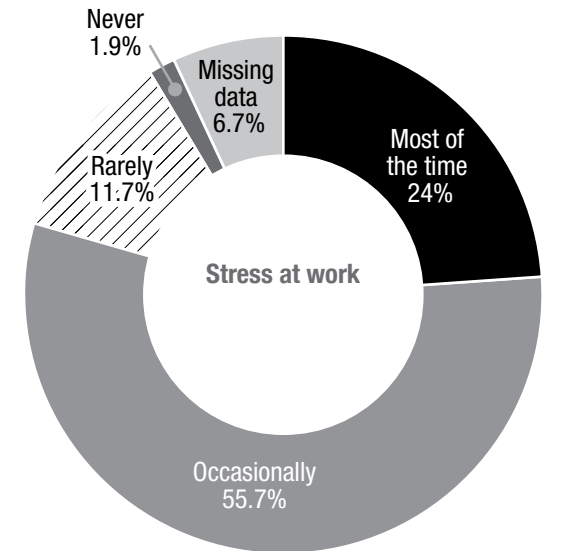Unpaid overtime

Weekend enhancements

Stress and health and safety at work

The cuts in expenditure and associated cuts in staffing levels will inevitably place greater pressures on those staff that remain. There is a possibility of an increase in stress at work as a result. It is also likely that there will be a increase in the requirement of lone working. This can also be a source of stress – partly as the result of having to cover a greater workload but also because of potential personal safety issues. This next section examines some of these questions.

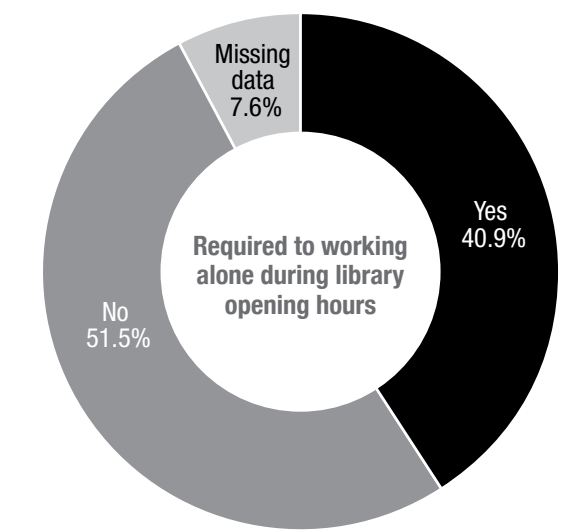Just under a quarter of the entire sample reported that they felt stressed at work 'most of the time', 56% reported that they felt stressed at work occasionally, just 12% rarely felt stressed at work and only 2% reported 'never' feeling stressed at work (Table 14).

Table 15 and Figure 16: Required to working alone during library opening hours

	Count	% of overall sample	% of those answering question
Yes	749	40.9	44.3
No	943	51.5	55.7
Valid responses	1692	92.4	100.0
Missing	139	7.6	
Total	1831	100.0	

Table 14 and Figure 15: stress at work

	Count	% of overall sample	% of those answering question
Most of the time	440	24.0	25.7
Occasionally	1020	55.7	59.7
Rarely	215	11.7	12.6
Never	34	1.9	2.0
Valid responses	1709	93.3	100.0
Missing	122	6.7	
Total	1831	100.0	

Stress at work

Required to working alone during library opening hours

As Table 15 shows, respondents were asked whether they are ever required to work alone in their library during opening hours (including any instances of having to work alone on a particular floor of the library open to the public).

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On the basis of the responses, there is a very high degree of lone working within the public library service with 41% of the sample (44% of those who answered this question) reporting that they were required to work alone, while 51% (55% of those that answered) were not.

Table 16: Details of lone working

	Count	% of overall sample	% of those required to work alone (749)
Occasionally in case of staff sickness or leave	250	13.7	33
Regularly in case of staff sickness or leave	145	7.9	19
Occasionally to provide lunch and break cover	184	10.0	25
Regularly to provide lunch and break cover	243	13.3	32
Occasionally during evening opening hours	83	4.5	11
Regularly during evening opening hours	160	8.7	21
Occasionally during usual opening hours	187	10.2	25
Regularly during usual opening hours	328	17.9	44

Table 16 reveals that a significant group of respondents work alone in a variety of circumstances and with differing degrees of regularity. Of most interest are those who regularly work alone. 8% of the entire sample do so regularly to cover staff sickness or leave. 13% regularly do so to cover lunches or breaks. 9% regularly do so during evening opening hours. But perhaps the most noteworthy result is that 18% regularly work alone during usual opening hours.

The demands made on those that are required to work alone can be seen more clearly from Figure 17 (below) which presents the various categories as proportions of those required to work alone. So, of those that are ever required to work alone, 44% are regularly expected to do so during usual opening hours and 32% are regularly expected to do so to provide lunch and break cover.

Figure 17: Details of lone working (% of those required to work alone)
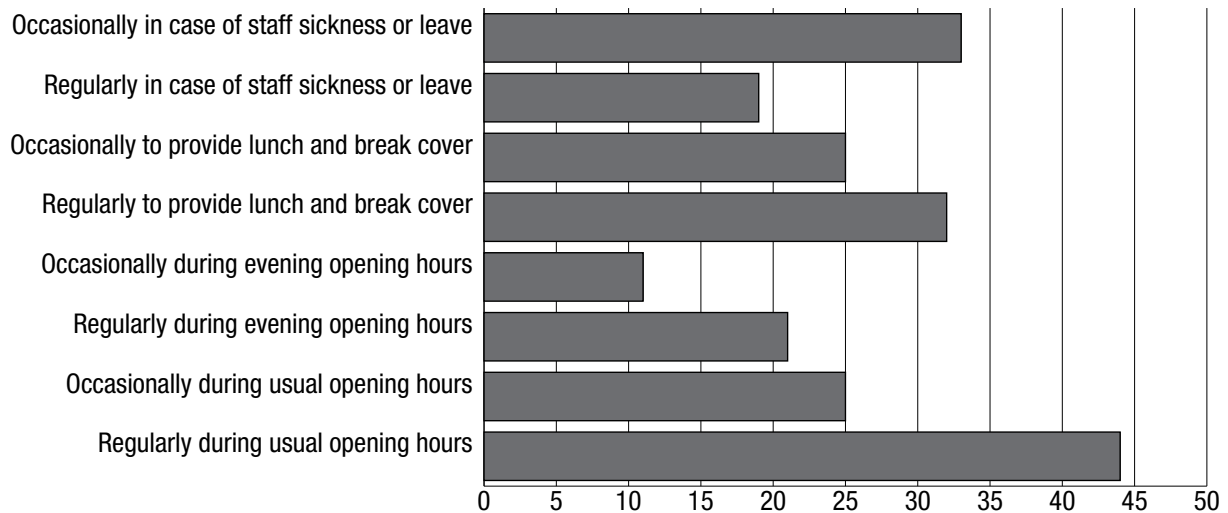
There are a range of issues relating to personal safety here and many respondents expressed concern about having to work alone.

Table 17 and Figure 18: Changes to lone working since May 2010

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents reporting working alone
Increased	412	22.5	55.8
Decreased	24	1.3	3.3
No change	282	15.4	38.2
Don't know	20	1.1	2.7
Valid responses	738	40.3	100.0
Missing	1093	59.7	
Total	1831	100.0	
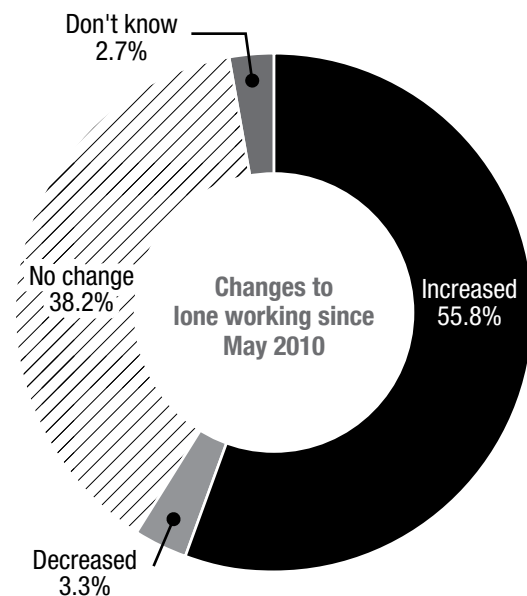
56% of all those required to work alone (and 22% of the entire sample) reported that this had increased since May 2010 (Table 17).

Library service governance

Local government accounts for about a quarter of all public spending (Department for Communities and Local Government, DCLG, 2010) and although spending on the UK public library service is just under £1billion (CIPFA, 2012a) – which is, of course, a large amount of money – it is spread across 206 library authorities in the UK and amounts to only about 1% of local authority spend (IFS, 2012).

Some concerns have been expressed by UNISON members in the past that the library service is not seen as important at senior level within local authorities and that this is reflected in its position within the governance and managerial structures of local government. It is also the case that the library service is a relatively small part of local government and can be submerged within large directorates that cover a range of different services. Many library supporters see this as contributing to the vulnerability of the library service, making it a 'soft target' for councils looking for cuts (Reading Agency, 2010).

With this in mind, respondents were asked about the representation of the library service in the highest levels of strategic management within local authorities. The survey asked respondents for details of the position of the library service within their local council.

42% of respondents reported that the library service was located within Leisure and Culture in their local authority. This was the most common response, although as can be seen from table 18 below library services are placed in a range of different directorates.

Table 18: Location of library service within local authority management structure

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Leisure and Culture	768	41.9	43.2
Corporate/Chief Executive's	43	2.3	2.4
Housing and Regeneration	52	2.8	2.9
Children's Services and Education	98	5.4	5.5
Adult Services	138	7.5	7.8
Don't know	83	4.5	4.7
Not applicable	19	1	1.1
Other	575	31.4	32.4
Total	1776	97	100
Missing	55	3	
Total	1831	100	

Figure 19: Location of library service within local authority management structure
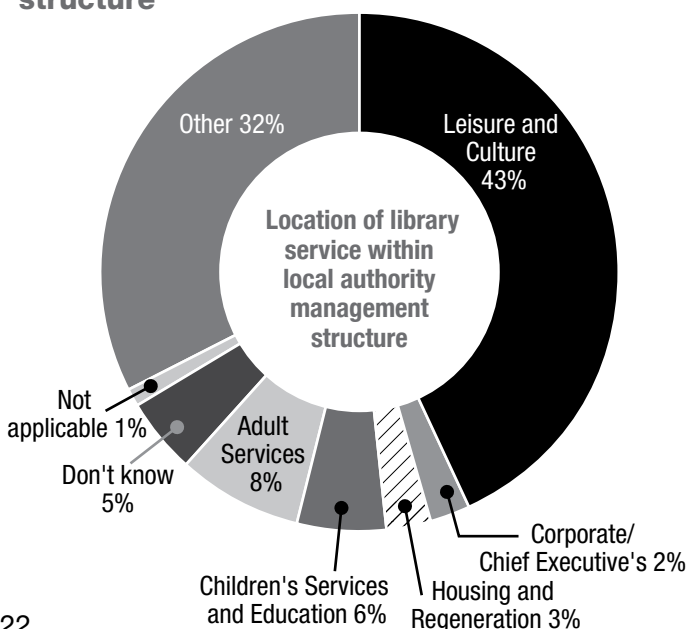

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Table 19: Representation of library service on local authority's senior management team

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Directorate management team or equivalent	278	15.2	15.8
Corporate management team or equivalent	168	9.2	9.5
Both	48	2.6	2.7
Neither	166	9.1	9.4
Don't know	1054	57.6	59.9
Not applicable	30	1.6	1.7
Other strategic group	16	.9	.9
Total	1760	96.1	100.0
Missing	71	3.9	
Total	1831	100.0	

In response to a question about whether the library service was represented on the local authority's senior management team, most respondents were unable to provide an answer. 15.2% reported that it was on the Directorate Management Team or equivalent and 9.2% that it was on the Corporate Management Team or equivalent.

Figure 20: Representation of library service on local authority's senior management team
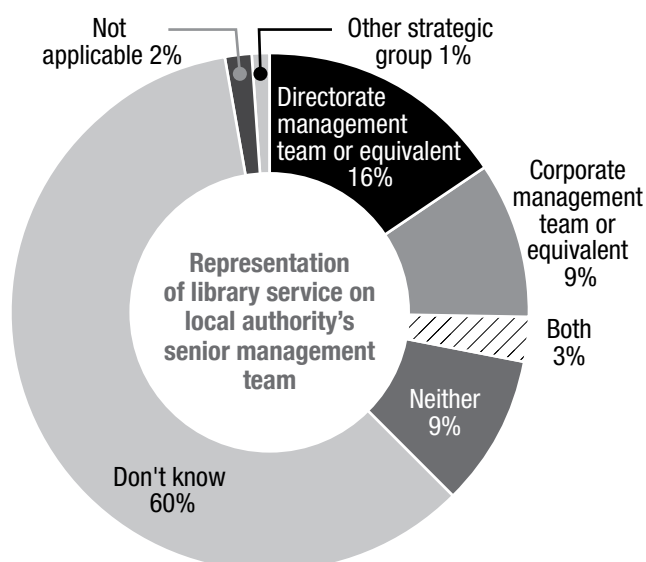
The most significant finding here is the very large proportion of respondents (60%) who do not know whether the library service is represented on their local authority's senior management team.

The findings on library service governance are significant for several reasons. The library service voice needs to be heard at the most senior levels of the local authority. The service is doubly disadvantaged if it is a relatively small service placed within an inappropriate directorate and if it is not represented on the senior management team. Local authorities may also miss the opportunity to take advantage of the fact that libraries contribute to meeting council objectives in several key areas – public access to literature, entertainment and information; education, literacy, and lifelong learning; social inclusion, by helping to bridge the 'digital divide'; and by providing a local link with the community for the council.

The fact that so many respondents did not know whether the library service in their authority is represented on the senior management team has implications for negotiations and lobbying over services and pay and conditions. Finally, if the staff themselves do not know, then it is also unlikely that the public will know who to contact within the senior management about the library service.

Use of Volunteers

The Coalition Government has continued the policy of the previous Labour government in encouraging the use of volunteers within the library service. This initially formed part of the 'Big Society' approach by the Coalition and has been integrated into its austerity programme, in which local libraries are sometimes 'given' to the community. The potential problems with this are only too obvious and the recent report from the Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee warned that:

" Councils which have transferred the running of libraries to community volunteers must, however, continue to give them the necessary support, otherwise they may well wither on the vine and therefore be viewed as closures by stealth (House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2012: 3). "

However, there are also issues around the increased use of volunteers within those libraries that remain under local authority control. In the past, members have expressed a number of concerns about the extensive use of volunteers:

— There are questions about the reliability of volunteers as, by definition, there is no guarantee that they will turn up when they say they will.

— The training needs of volunteers.

— The health and safety implications for both volunteers and paid staff.

— The potential of job replacement and breaches of employment legislation – particularly the National Minimum Wage regulations.

— The resource demands of managing volunteers.

The experience of UNISON members of working with volunteers is extremely mixed. Some local authorities have agreed procedures for use of volunteers, others do not. Some have clear guidelines that volunteers are not to be used in tasks normally or previously done by paid staff, others do not. Many reported that the line has been blurred between what is a task for paid staff and what is one for volunteers. One respondent acknowledged this but pointed out the dilemma:

" The volunteers are doing 'Try It', Ancestry and other work previously done by paid staff. However, as we have lost staff, we wouldn't be able to offer the services without volunteers. Catch 22 situation. "

Some reported that volunteers had made a positive contribution in 'add-on' areas, but were sometimes erratic, as in the case related by this respondent:

" Have provided us with a brilliant home visits service but not always reliable and will come and go with the weather at times. "

The issue of reliability was repeatedly mentioned. This can be a particular problem if a service that was previously provided by paid staff is given to volunteers, as a respondent explained:

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> **One session of 'Storytime' a week went to volunteers but it fizzled out due to lack of interest. It had previously been a thriving event.**

Or

> **The volunteers are not always reliable, and paid staff are left to explain to members of the public arriving for IT sessions that the trainer has not turned up.**

With some volunteers there are multiple problems, as this respondent found out:

> **Some only come in every 3 weeks so need to be shown duties every time as if it's their first day. Some refuse some duties, some are anti youth and young people, lack skills that staff have trained for. Lose us borrowers.**

Table 20: Volunteers in the public library service 2007-08 to 2011-12

| Year	Number of volunteers	% change over previous year
2007-08	15,008	
2008-09	15,894	5.9
2009-10	17,550	10.4
2010-11	21,494	22.5
2011-12	23,397	8.9

Source: CIPFA (2012a)

Although there has clearly been an increase in the number of volunteers within the library service (see Table 20), the figures are a little opaque. CIPFA only collates the numbers of

volunteers. It does not collect data on the hours contributed or the range of tasks carried out. So although we know the number of volunteers involved and can see that this is increasing, we do not know how many hours they contribute, how often they work, what they actually do or how they fit in with the paid staff.

The survey of UNISON members provides some information that helps to supplement the CIPFA data. Table 21 shows that over half (55%) of all respondents reported that their libraries used volunteers with just over a third (35%) reporting that they did not.

Table 21 and Figure 21: Library use of volunteers

	Count	% of overall sample
Yes	1016	55.5
No	641	35.0
Don't know	16	.9
Not applicable	31	1.7
Valid responses	1704	93.1
Missing	127	6.9
Total	1831	100.0
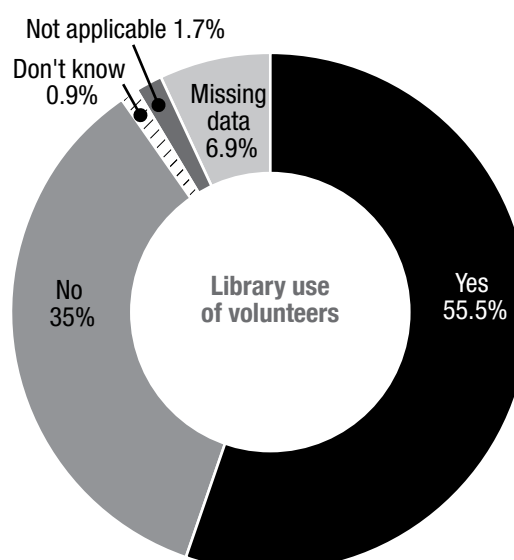
40% of all respondents reported that the use of volunteers had increased since 2010 (see Table 22)

Of those that worked in libraries that used volunteers, this figure was 73%. Just 2% of those working in libraries with volunteers reported a decrease in their use.

Table 22 and Figure 22: Change in use of volunteers since May 2010

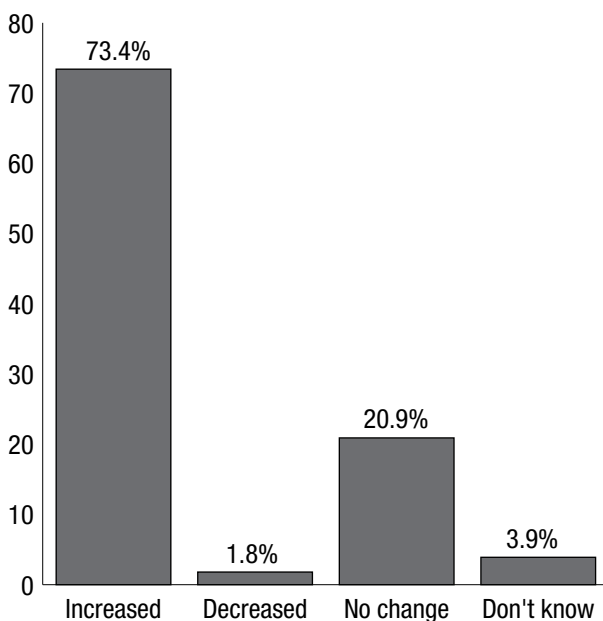|	Count	% of total sample (1831)	% of respondents reporting use of volunteers (1005)
Increased	738	40.3	73.4
Decreased	18	1.0	1.8
No change	210	11.5	20.9
Don't know	39	2.1	3.9
Total valid responses	1005	54.9	100.0
Missing	826	45.1	
Total	1831	100.0	

Table 23 and Figure 23: CRB checks for volunteers

	Count	% of total sample (1831)	% of respondents reporting use of volunteers (1008)
Yes	495	27.0	49.1
No	256	14.0	25.4
Don't know	257	14.0	25.5
Total	1008	55.1	100.0
Missing	823	44.9	
Total	1831	100.0	
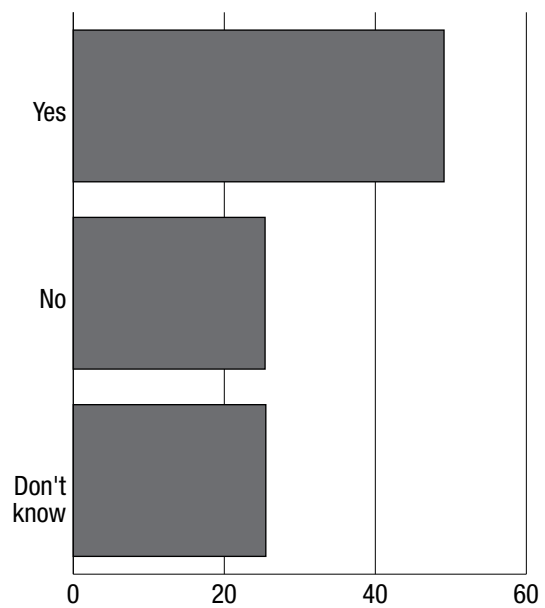
Just under half of all respondents reported that the volunteers in their library were CRB-checked. A quarter reported that they were not while another 25% did not know (see Table 23).

**Table 24 and Figure 24:
Use of volunteers to cover
for staff absence**

	Count	% of total sample (1831)	% of respondents reporting use of volunteers (1006)
Yes	41	2.2	4.1
No	886	48.4	88.1
Don't know	79	4.3	7.9
Total	1006	54.9	100.0
Missing	825	45.1	
Total	1831	100.0	

**Table 25 and Figure 25:
Use of volunteers to do jobs
that were previously done by paid
members of staff**

	Count	% of total sample (1831)	% of respondents reporting use of volunteers (1004)
Yes	454	24.8	45.2
No	486	26.5	48.4
Don't know	64	3.5	6.4
Total	1004	54.8	100.0
Missing	827	45.2	
Total	1831	100.0	

Yes 4.1%
Don't know 7.9%
Use of volunteers to cover for staff absence
No 88.1%

Don't know 6.4%
Use of volunteers to do jobs that were previously done by paid members of staff
Yes 45.2%
No 48.4%

The vast majority of respondents (88%) reported that volunteers were not used to cover for staff absence (see Table 24). However, 45% said that volunteers were used to do jobs that were previously done by paid members of staff (see Table 25). Slightly more (48%) said that this was not the case in their library.
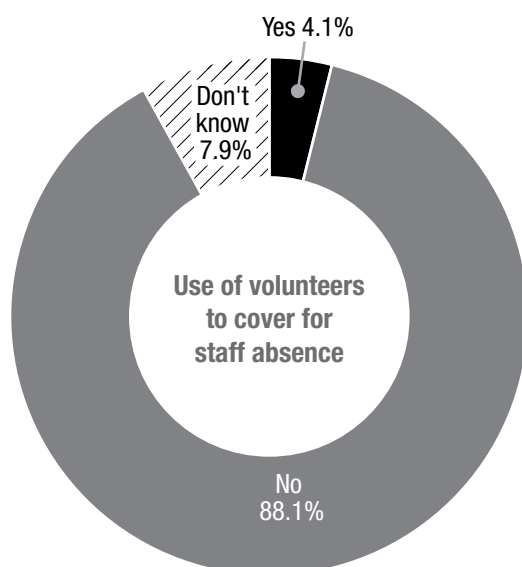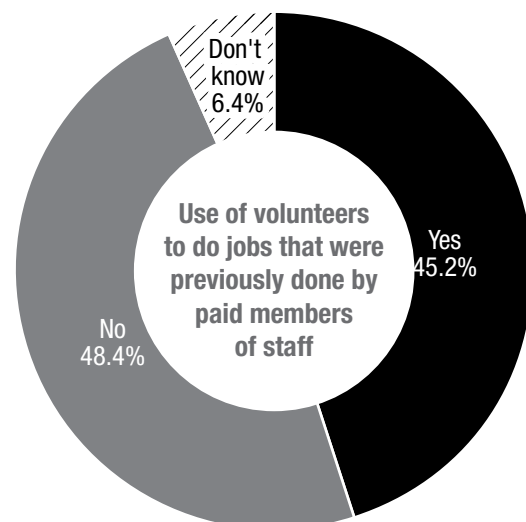
**Table 26 and Figure 26:
Responsibility for managing volunteers**

|	Count	% of total sample (1831)	% of respondents reporting use of volunteers (994)
Our manager	405	22.1	40.7
I am	204	11.1	20.5
Another colleague	317	17.3	31.9
Don't know	68	3.7	6.8
Total	994	54.3	100.0
Missing	837	45.7	
Total	1831	100.0	
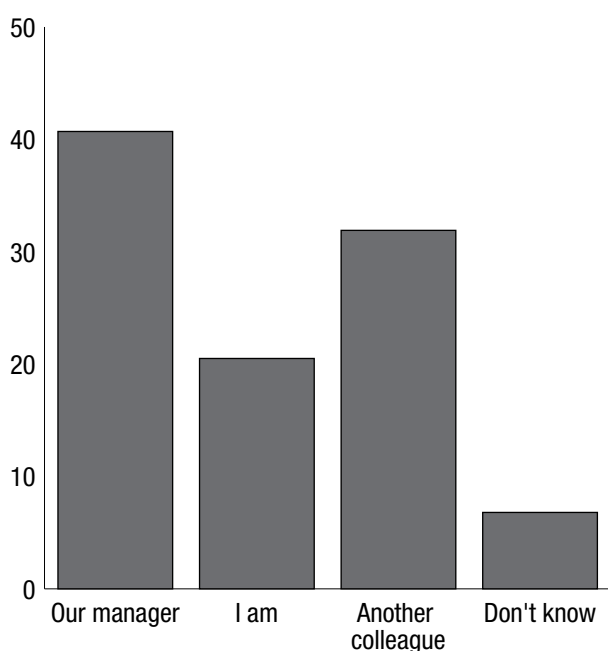
20% of those working in libraries with volunteers were themselves responsible for managing them (see Table 26). A further 41% reported that this was the task of their manager, while 32% said that this was the responsibility of another colleague. This illustrates the point that volunteers are not a 'free good' and that there are resource implications to their use in terms of the time required of paid staff to supervise them.

**Table 27 and Figure 27:
Members' attitudes towards volunteers
1: a useful supplement to paid staff?**

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents answering question
Strongly disagree	330	18.0	20.4
Disagree	330	18.0	20.4
Neither Agree nor Disagree	341	18.6	21.1
Agree	547	29.9	33.9
Strongly Agree	67	3.7	4.1
Valid responses	1615	88.2	100.0
Missing	216	11.8	
Total	1831	100.0	
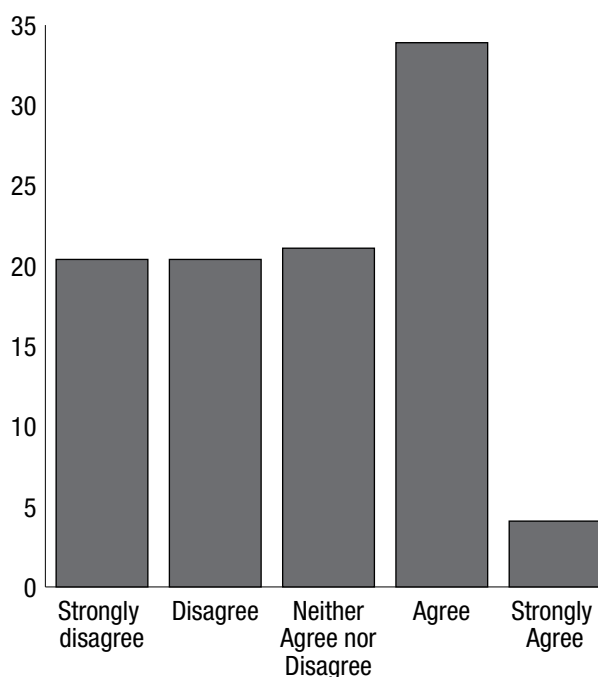
Respondents were fairly evenly split over whether volunteers could be a useful supplement to paid staff. 36% of all respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed while 34% agreed or strongly agreed that they could be a useful supplement. A further 18% were undecided.

Table 28 and Figure 28: Members' attitudes towards volunteers 2: Should not be used as replacements for paid staff?

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents answering question
Strongly disagree	87	4.8	5.4
Disagree	18	1.0	1.1
Neither Agree nor Disagree	24	1.3	1.5
Agree	186	10.2	11.5
Strongly Agree	1304	71.2	80.5
Valid responses	1619	88.4	100.0
Missing	212	11.6	
Total	1831	100.0	
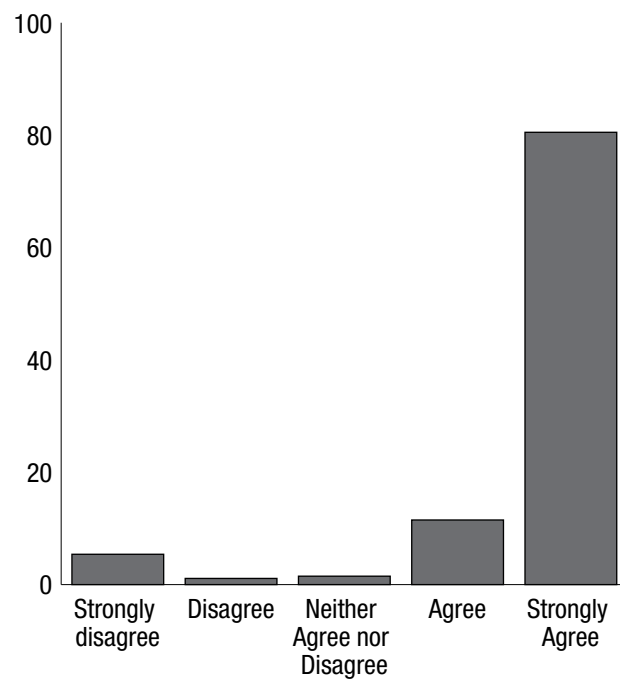
Not surprisingly perhaps, views were much more strongly held as to whether volunteers should be used to replace paid staff. 92% of those that provided an answer (82% of the entire sample) agreed or strongly agreed with the proposition that volunteers should not be used to replace paid staff. A small proportion agreed or strongly agreed (6%) and only 1% had no view, indicating how strongly held were opinions on this issue.

Impact on members' attitudes

Table 29: commercial business or public service?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Valid responses
The library service today is run more like a commercial business than a public service	120 6.6	385 21.0	372 20.3	561 30.6	176 9.6	1614
	Note: First row of figures in each cell denotes the number of respondents, the second row of figures shows this number as a percentage of the overall response					

Members perceive that the changes over the last few years and particularly the recent cuts have had a big impact on the library service. 40% of the overall sample agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the library service today is run more like a commercial business than a public service. 28% disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 20% neither agreed nor disagreed. Of those that responded to this question 45.7% agreed or strongly agreed with that the library service today is run more like a commercial business than a public service.
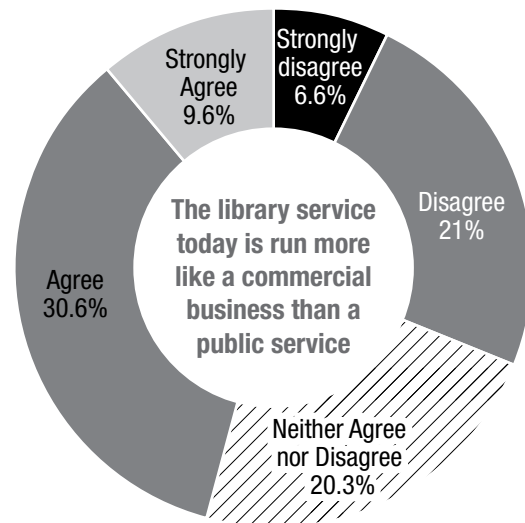
Figure 29: commercial business or public service

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Table 30: Best mode of provision for the public library service

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Missing
The public library service is best as a publicly funded service directly provided by the local authority	27 1.5	22 1.2	113 6.2	456 24.9	1003 54.8	210 11.5
The public library service is best as a service provided under a shared services contract with another local authority	236 12.9	582 31.8	610 33.3	147 8.0	31 1.7	225 12.3
The public library service is best as a service provide by a private sector company under contract to the local authority	1074 58.7	367 20.0	136. 7.4	12 0.7	15 0.8	227 12.4
The public library service is best as a service provided by a charitable trust or mutual.	751 41.0	502 27.4	298 16.3	41 2.2	16 0.9	223 12.2

Note: First row of figures in each cell denotes the number of respondents, the second row of figures shows this number as a percentage of the overall response

Respondents were asked a series of questions about the running and funding of the public library service. 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the public library service is best as a publicly funded service directly provided by the local authority. Just 2.7% disagreed with this and 6.2% were undecided.

On the other hand, less than 10% saw the solution as resting with a service provided under a shared services contract with another local authority. A large proportion (one third) were undecided on the merits of this idea, but over half (53.7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this option.

68% also disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that the public library service is best as a service provided by a charitable trust or mutual. Just 3% agreed or strongly agreed and 16% were undecided.

In almost a mirror image of the support for direct funding and provision, just under 80% (78.7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the public library service should be provided by a

private sector company under contract to the local authority. Only 1.5% agreed or strongly agreed and 7.4% were undecided.

Figure 30: Best mode of provision for the public library service

31
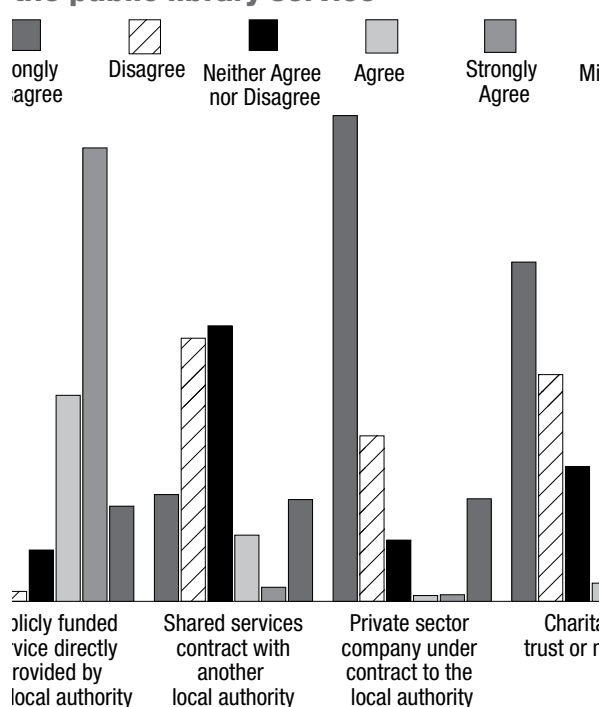
There is clearly little support for any of the three main alternatives to direct provision that are being proposed by central government and canvassed or implemented by some local authorities.

Much of the rhetoric of the cuts is based around the calls to cut an 'unnecessary, self-interested bureaucracy' and redirect resources towards 'customer-facing', front-line staff. The table below reveals that the library service overwhelmingly consists of staff that deal with the public every single working day. Over 80% of the sample (84.3%) report that they engage with the public every day, and just 0.5% never engage with the public in their working lives.

This is the basis of the attitudinal data about the public, the public service and the public service ethos that is set out below.

Table 31 and Figure 31: Engagement with the public

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Every day	1543	84.3	86.2
Occasionally	180	9.8	10.1
Rarely	57	3.1	3.2
Never	10	.5	.6
Total	1790	97.8	100.0
Missing	41	2.2	
Total	1831	100.0	

Engagement with the public

Rarely 3.2%
Never 0.6%
Occasionally 10.1%
Every day 86.2%
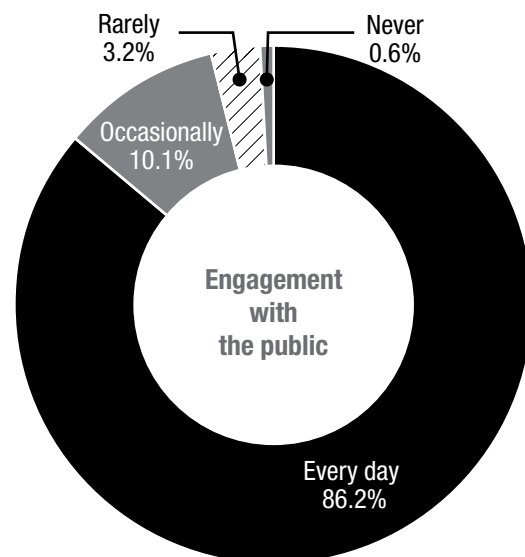
Many respondents no doubt fear job loss and a deterioration in conditions of service if the library service is no longer directly provided by the local authority. However, given the attacks on jobs and conditions anyway and the likely continuation of the impact of the UK government's austerity programme, there may be other explanations for the continuing commitment to public provision. A series of questions relating to public service and the public service ethos were included in the survey to attempt to throw some light on the reasons for members' commitment to public provision in the library service.

Table 32 and Figure 32: Importance of meaningful public service

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents answering question
Strongly disagree	19	1.0	1.2
Disagree	15	.8	.9
Neither Agree nor Disagree	164	9.0	10.3
Agree	768	41.9	48.3
Strongly Agree	623	34.0	39.2
Total	1589	86.8	100.0
Missing	242	13.2	
Total	1831	100.0	
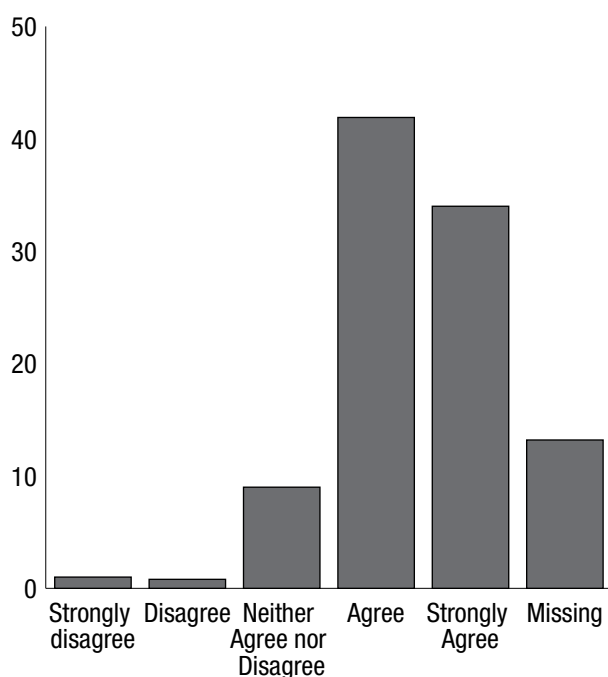
Respondents were asked for their attitude to the statement: 'Meaningful public service is important to me'. Over three quarters of the entire sample (75.9%) and almost 90% of those that provided an answer to this question (87.5%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Table 33 and Figure 33: The interests of the community before self interest

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents answering question
Strongly disagree	23	1.3	1.5
Disagree	123	6.7	7.8
Neither Agree nor Disagree	569	31.1	35.9
Agree	681	37.2	43.0
Strongly Agree	187	10.2	11.8
Total	1583	86.5	100.0
Missing	248	13.5	
Total	1831	100.0	
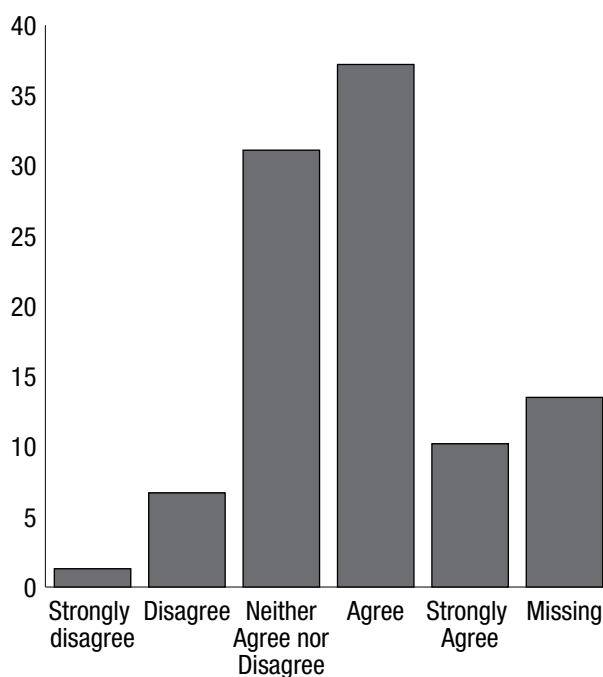
Respondents were asked for their attitude to the statement:

❝ I would prefer seeing public officials do what is best for the whole community even if it harmed my interests. ❞

Almost half of the entire sample (47.4%) and over half of those that answered this question (54.8%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Just 8% of the sample disagreed or strongly disagreed with 31% undecided.

Table 34 and Figure 34:
Public service as a civic duty

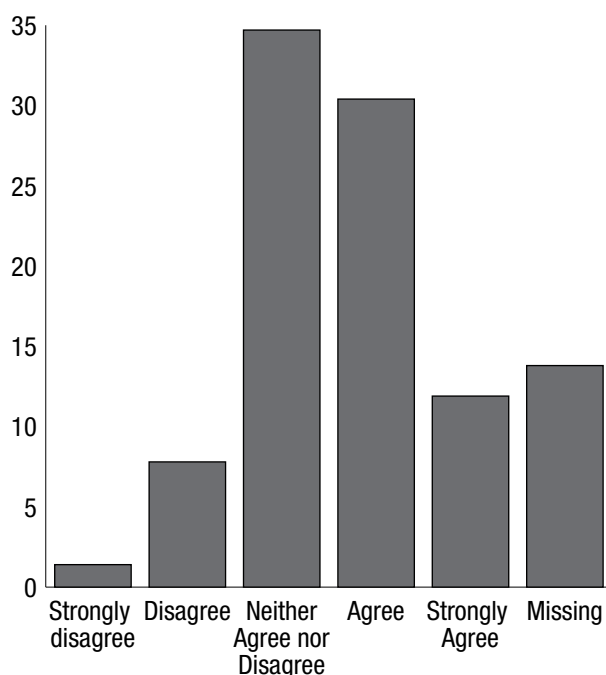|	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents answering question
Strongly disagree	26	1.4	1.6
Disagree	143	7.8	9.1
Neither Agree nor Disagree	636	34.7	40.3
Agree	556	30.4	35.2
Strongly Agree	217	11.9	13.8
Total	1578	86.2	100.0
Missing	253	13.8	
Total	1831	100.0	

Finally respondents were asked for their attitude towards the statement:

> ❝ **I consider public service my civic duty.** ❞

42% of the entire sample and 49% of those that answered the question agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Less than 10% (9.2%) of the overall sample disagreed or strongly disagreed although over a third (34.7%) were undecided.

These responses are interesting because they show that there is a continuing commitment to the idea that the library service is fundamentally a public service that should be directly provided by the public sector itself. The data also shows a strong belief in the concept of public service among the staff themselves, a conviction in its importance and of its place as a civic duty.

What is remarkable about the data is that these views remain so strong despite three decades of Governmental support for the virtues of market efficiency and hostility to the notion of public service. Associated with this has been a rejection by Government of the idea that the public sector should be a model employer. Instead there appears to be a view that the public sector should slavishly replicate some of the employment practices of the worst private sector employers – in terms of jobs, pay, and pensions. The 'public service bargain' in which public service employers committed to decent pay and conditions for staff (and which many believed underpinned the public service ethos) has been abandoned across much of the public sector. And yet UNISON members within the library service remain committed to public service.

Union membership and campaigning

As you might expect in a comparatively long serving and mature workforce in a relatively well-organised sector like local government, most respondents are long time members of UNISON. Almost 60% (57.2%) of the overall sample have been members for 10 years or more, with a third (32.7%) having been members for 20 years or more.

Table 35: Years in membership of UNISON (or predecessor)

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Less than 5 years	370	20.2	21.8
5-9 years	285	15.6	16.8
10-14 years	258	14.1	15.2
15-19 years	190	10.4	11.2
20-24 years	185	10.1	10.9
25 years or more	413	22.6	24.3
Total	1701	92.9	100.0
Missing	130	7.1	
Total	1831	100.0	

Just over 7% of the sample reported that they held a UNISON position of one sort or another.

Table 36: Do you hold any position in UNISON?

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents answering question
Yes	134	7.3	7.9
No	1567	85.6	92.1
Total	1701	92.9	100.0
Missing	130	7.1	
Total	1831	100.0	

Table 37: Is there a UNISON rep in your workplace?

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents answering question
Yes	592	32.3	38.4
No	881	48.1	57.1
Don't know	70	3.8	4.5
Total	1543	84.3	100.0
Missing	288	15.7	
Total	1831	100.0	

Almost half (48.1%) of the sample reported that there was no UNISON rep at their workplace. This is obviously a matter of concern for the union, but this should be kept in perspective as almost a quarter of respondents (23.2%) work in workplaces with fewer than five workers. However, this does raise questions about ensuring that members in smaller workplaces are properly integrated into the work of the branch in general and that of the library service membership in particular.

Long term membership of the union may contribute to an explanation of the continued

commitment to public service as the union itself has a strong commitment to the values of public service. Importantly, this member commitment to public service may also lay the basis for collaborations with service users. Many branches are already engaged in joint activity with service users' groups or Friends of Libraries organisations. Members' attitudes towards such alliances can be gauged from the answers to three questions as set out in Table 38 below.

Table 38: Attitudes towards alliances with service users

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Missing
Library service users are potential allies of the staff in defending a high quality public library service	27 1.5	27 1.5	98 5.4	575 31.4	887 48.4	217 11.9
Library service users are potential allies of the staff in defending jobs and conditions in the public library service	32 1.7	84 4.6	264 14.4	591 32.3	646 35.3	214 11.7
Union members in the library service should work more closely with local library campaigners to defend the public library service	32 1.7	42 2.3	348 19.0	667 36.4	534 29.2	208 11.4
	Note: First row of figures in each cell denotes the number of respondents from a total of 1831 – the second row of figures shows this number as a percentage of the overall response					

Just under 80% (79.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that library service users are potential allies of the staff in defending a high quality public library service. Just 3% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this proposition. Interestingly, only 5.4% were undecided, suggesting that this is a topic on which members hold very strong views.

Almost as high a proportion of respondents (67.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that library service users are also potential allies of the staff on the direct workplace issues of defending jobs and conditions in the public library service.

Only 6.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed while 14.4% were undecided.

A majority of members clearly want to see these attitudes put into action with 65.6% agreeing or strongly agreeing that union members in the library service should work more closely with local library campaigners to defend the public library service. This was opposed by just 4% of the sample, with an additional 19% undecided.

Figure 35: Members and library users
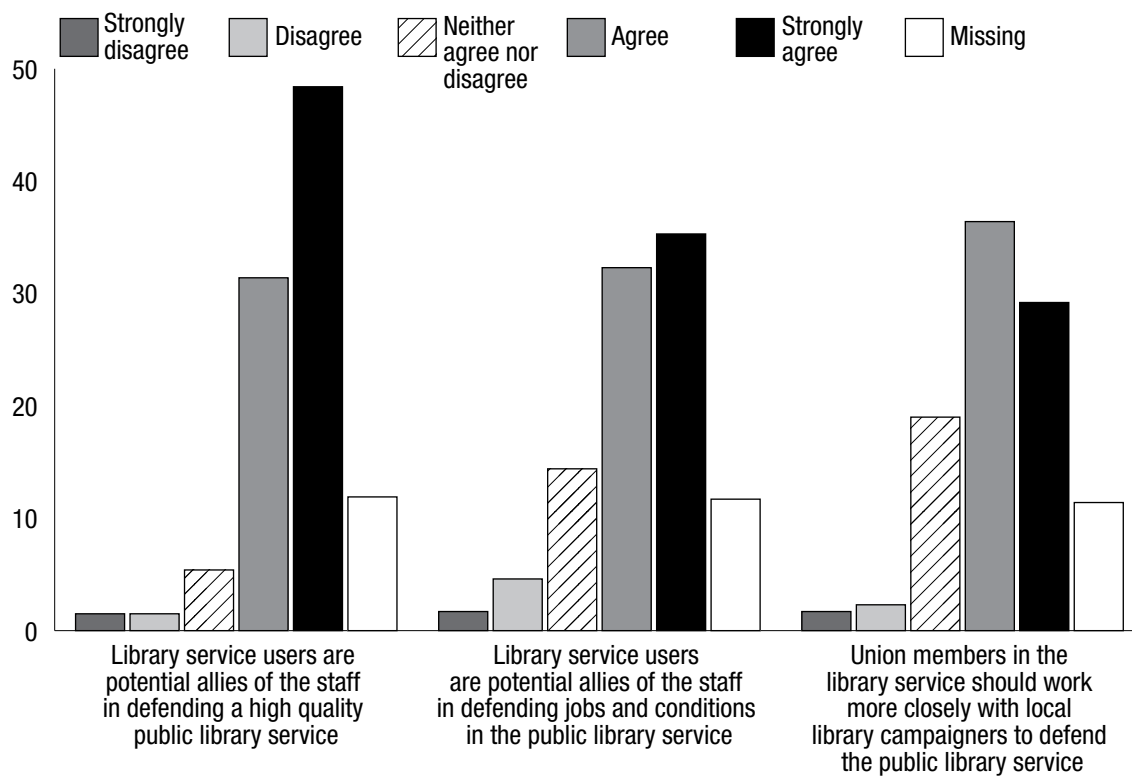
Annex: The sample

Introduction

There were 1831 valid responses to the survey. This is a significant response but it is not possible to provide an accurate response rate as the number of potential respondents is not known. CIPFA (2012a) report that in 2011-12 there were 21,780 full time equivalent (FTE) staff in UK libraries. UNISON claim to represent a majority of these staff, although membership records are unable to satisfactorily identify all library staff in membership. The total numbers have certainly declined since the last CIPFA survey and there are an unknown number of part time workers in the public library service.

However, despite those caveats, the sheer number of respondents in this survey provides us with some reassurance about the representativeness of the sample. Another point of reassurance is the fact that there is such a widespread geographical response to the survey, with responses from 191 of a potential 206 library authorities in the UK. The profile of the workforce is set out in the following section.

The picture painted by the data is one of a very experienced, highly qualified workforce. The vast majority of staff are women and, there are potential equalities issues that both councillors and UNISON members need to be aware of if the main thrust of the cuts is directed at lower paid women staff. Far from being the back office bureaucrats portrayed by many enthusiasts for the cuts, the evidence shows that most staff engage with the public every single working day – the classic 'customer-facing workforce' beloved of all those management consultants. The age profile of the workforce means that a combination of retirement and cuts over the next few years is likely to lead to a major loss of experience within

the service. To avoid this, local authorities need to improve training and support for current staff, including the provision of opportunities for staff to gain new qualifications

The data

Table 39 and Figure 36: Age

Age	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Below 20	0	0	0
21-30	89	4.9	4.9
31-40	245	13.4	13.5
41-50	491	26.8	27.1
51-60	811	44.3	44.8
Over 60	176	9.6	9.7
Total	1812	99.0	100.0
Missing	19	1.0	
Total	1831	100.0	
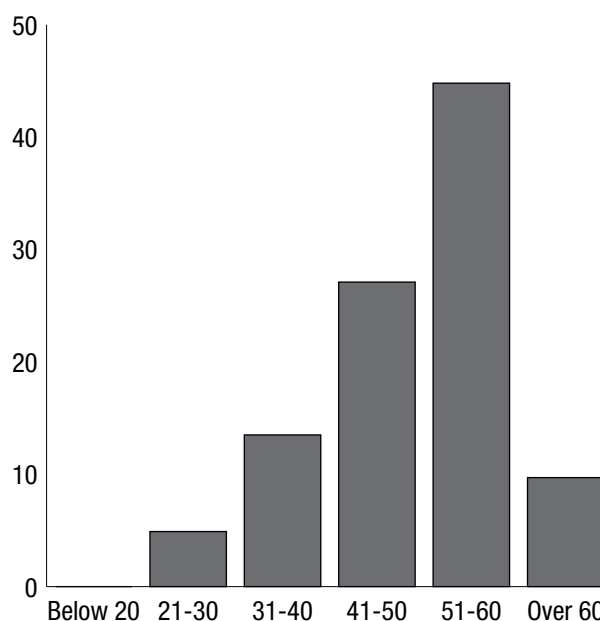
The library workforce is a mature workforce with more than half (53.9%) over the age of 50, and only 5% aged 30 or below.

More women than men work in the public library service. Over 80% are female.

Table 40 and Figure 37: Gender

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Male	328	17.9	18.2
Female	1477	80.7	81.8
Total	1805	98.6	100.0
Missing	26	1.4	
Total	1831	100.0	
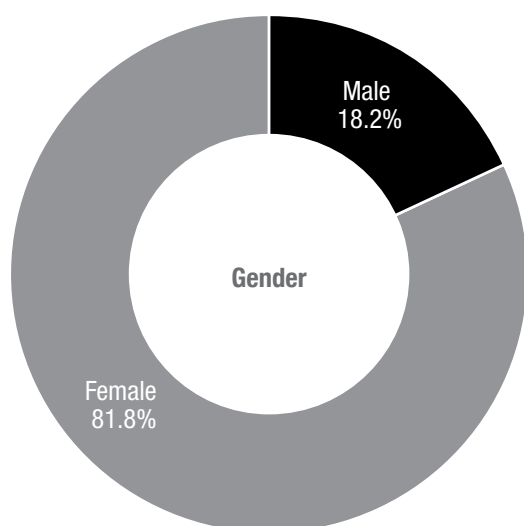
The workforce is well educated. Only 1% has no formal qualification, while almost half (48.1%) report that their highest qualification is either a degree or a higher degree (usually a Masters or PhD).

Table 41: Highest level of education completed

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
No qualification	21	1.1	1.2
GCSE/O level/ Standard Grade	315	17.2	17.5
GCE/A level/ Higher/Advanced Higher	371	20.3	20.6
First Degree (BSc, BA, BEd, HND, HNC etc)	559	30.5	31.0
Higher Degree (MSc, MA, PGCE, PhD)	323	17.6	17.9
Some other qualification	212	11.6	11.8
Total	1801	98.4	100.0
Missing	30	1.6	
Total	1831	100.0	

Figure 38: Highest level of education completed
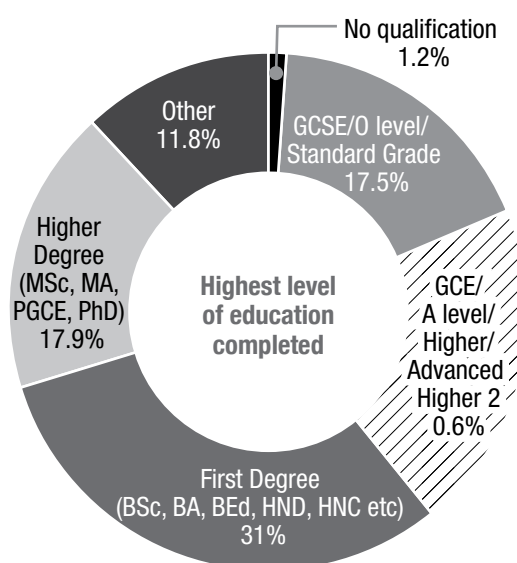
Almost a third (29%) of the sample reported that they held a professional librarianship qualification.

Table 42 and Figure 39:
Professional librarianship qualification

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Yes	531	29.0	29.7
No	1258	68.7	70.3
Total	1789	97.7	100.0
Missing	42	2.3	
Total	1831	100.0	

Professional librarianship qualification — Yes 29.7%, No 70.3%
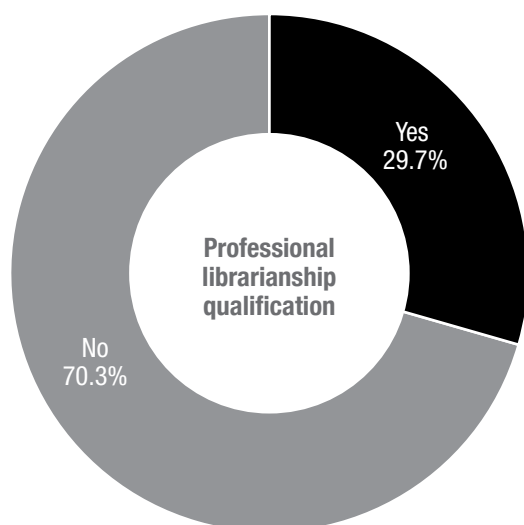
Table 43 and Figure 40:
Supervision of other members of staff

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Yes	820	44.8	45.8
No	970	53.0	54.2
Total	1790	97.8	100.0
Missing	41	2.2	
Total	1831	100.0	

Supervision of other members of staff — Yes 45.8%, No 54.2%
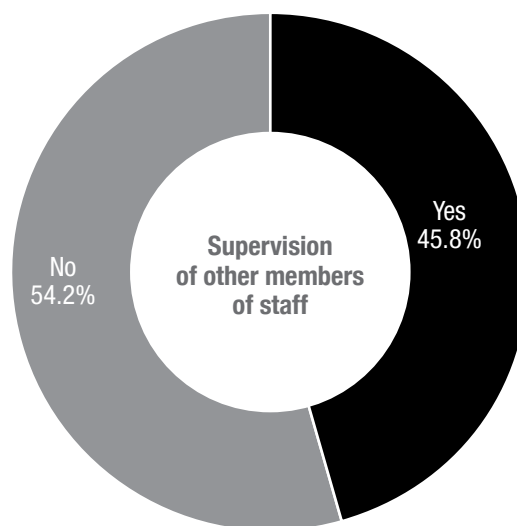
Just under half (44.8%) supervised other members of staff in their daily work.

Figure 41: Employer

Employer — Trusts or contractors 4%, Joint authorities 0.4%, Missing data 3%, Individual local authorities 93%
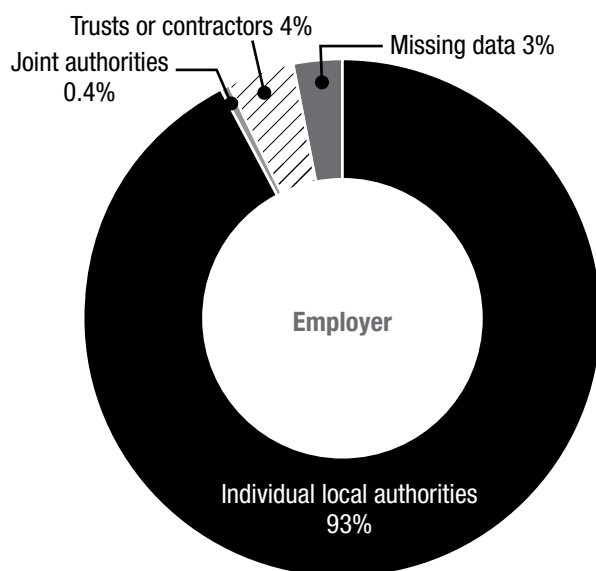
The vast majority of respondents worked directly for local authorities. A small proportion (just over 4%) worked for trusts or contractors. Full details are shown in Tables 44 and 45 below.

40

Table 44: Respondents working directly for local authority employers

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question		Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Aberdeen City	14	.8	.8	Cheshire West and Chester	28	1.5	1.7
Aberdeenshire	12	.7	.7	City of Edinburgh	31	1.7	1.8
Angus	6	.3	.4	City of London	2	.1	.1
Argyll and Bute	2	.1	.1	City of Westminster	19	1.0	1.1
Barnet	12	.7	.7	Clackmannanshire	1	.1	.1
Barnsley	7	.4	.4	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	3	.2	.2
Bath and NE Somerset	18	1.0	1.1	Conwy	4	.2	.2
Bedford	1	.1	.1	Cornwall	11	.6	.6
Bexley	4	.2	.2	Coventry	11	.6	.6
Birmingham	46	2.5	2.7	Croydon	8	.4	.5
Blackburn with Darwen	8	.4	.5	Cumbria	11	.6	.6
Blackpool	5	.3	.3	Denbighshire	5	.3	.3
Blaenau Gwent	1	.1	.1	Derby	7	.4	.4
Bolton	9	.5	.5	Derbyshire	40	2.2	2.4
Bournemouth	20	1.1	1.2	Devon	23	1.3	1.4
Bracknell Forest	1	.1	.1	Doncaster	3	.2	.2
Bradford	3	.2	.2	Dorset	17	.9	1.0
Brent	2	.1	.1	Dudley	8	.4	.5
Bridgend	9	.5	.5	Dumfries and Galloway	2	.1	.1
Brighton and Hove	11	.6	.6	Durham	24	1.3	1.4
Bristol	20	1.1	1.2	Ealing	4	.2	.2
Bromley	2	.1	.1	East Ayrshire	3	.2	.2
Buckinghamshire	1	.1	.1	East Dunbartonshire	2	.1	.1
Bury	1	.1	.1	East Lothian	4	.2	.2
Caerphilly	6	.3	.4	East Renfrewshire	6	.3	.4
Calderdale	6	.3	.4	East Riding of Yorkshire	3	.2	.2
Cambridgeshire	20	1.1	1.2	East Sussex	8	.4	.5
Camden	13	.7	.8	Enfield	4	.2	.2
Cardiff	6	.3	.4	Essex	22	1.2	1.3
Carmarthenshire	2	.1	.1	Fife	1	.1	.1
Central Bedfordshire	5	.3	.3	Flintshire	7	.4	.4
Ceredigion	3	.2	.2	Gateshead	9	.5	.5
Cheshire East	8	.4	.5				

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Glasgow	12	.7	.7
Gloucestershire	12	.7	.7
Gwynedd	1	.1	.1
Hackney	7	.4	.4
Halton	4	.2	.2
Hammersmith and Fulham	1	.1	.1
Hampshire	36	2.0	2.1
Haringey	10	.5	.6
Harrow	6	.3	.4
Hartlepool	9	.5	.5
Havering	9	.5	.5
Herefordshire	8	.4	.5
Hertfordshire	25	1.4	1.5
Highland	1	.1	.1
Hillingdon	2	.1	.1
Inverclyde	5	.3	.3
Isle of Anglesey	1	.1	.1
Isle of Wight	6	.3	.4
Islington	9	.5	.5
Kensington and Chelsea	4	.2	.2
Kent	29	1.6	1.7
Kingston Upon Hull	5	.3	.3
Kingston upon Thames	1	.1	.1
Kirklees	3	.2	.2
Knowsley	5	.3	.3
Lambeth	15	.8	.9
Lancashire	24	1.3	1.4
Leeds	19	1.0	1.1
Leicester	4	.2	.2
Leicestershire	18	1.0	1.1
Lewisham	8	.4	.5
Libraries NI	4	.2	.2
Lincolnshire	12	.7	.7
Liverpool	7	.4	.4

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Luton	1	.1	.1
Manchester	15	.8	.9
Medway	15	.8	.9
Merton	2	.1	.1
Middlesbrough	6	.3	.4
Midlothian	7	.4	.4
Milton Keynes	9	.5	.5
Monmouthshire	1	.1	.1
Moray	4	.2	.2
Neath Port Talbot	2	.1	.1
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	26	1.4	1.5
Newport	6	.3	.4
Norfolk	26	1.4	1.5
North Ayrshire	2	.1	.1
North East Lincolnshire	5	.3	.3
North Lanarkshire	12	.7	.7
North Lincolnshire	3	.2	.2
North Somerset	5	.3	.3
North Tyneside	5	.3	.3
North Yorkshire	6	.3	.4
Northamptonshire	14	.8	.8
Northumberland	11	.6	.6
Nottingham City	17	.9	1.0
Nottinghamshire	39	2.1	2.3
Oxfordshire	7	.4	.4
Pembrokeshire	4	.2	.2
Perth and Kinross	5	.3	.3
Poole	7	.4	.4
Portsmouth	14	.8	.8
Powys	6	.3	.4
Reading	8	.4	.5
Redbridge	2	.1	.1
Redcar & Cleveland	3	.2	.2
Renfrewshire	12	.7	.7

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Rhondda Cynon Taff	4	.2	.2
Richmond upon Thames	1	.1	.1
Rochdale	5	.3	.3
Rotherham	2	.1	.1
Rutland	1	.1	.1
Salford	1	.1	.1
Sandwell	10	.5	.6
Scottish Borders	2	.1	.1
Sefton	9	.5	.5
Sheffield	21	1.1	1.2
Shetland Islands	2	.1	.1
Shropshire	6	.3	.4
Slough	3	.2	.2
Solihull	8	.4	.5
Somerset	22	1.2	1.3
South Ayrshire	4	.2	.2
South Gloucestershire	7	.4	.4
South Lanarkshire	3	.2	.2
South Tyneside	6	.3	.4
Southampton	13	.7	.8
Southend on Sea	10	.5	.6
Southwark	6	.3	.4
St Helens	4	.2	.2
Staffordshire	18	1.0	1.1
Stirling	9	.5	.5
Stockport	9	.5	.5
Stockton-on-Tees	14	.8	.8
Stoke-on-Trent	3	.2	.2
Suffolk	4	.2	.2
Sunderland	13	.7	.8
Surrey	21	1.1	1.2
Sutton	6	.3	.4
Swansea	11	.6	.6
Swindon	7	.4	.4

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Tameside	7	.4	.4
Telford & Wrekin	1	.1	.1
Thurrock	1	.1	.1
Torbay	6	.3	.4
Torfaen	1	.1	.1
Tower Hamlets	3	.2	.2
Trafford	4	.2	.2
Vale of Glamorgan	18	1.0	1.1
Wakefield	16	.9	.9
Walsall	8	.4	.5
Waltham Forest	7	.4	.4
Wandsworth	14	.8	.8
Warwickshire	9	.5	.5
West Berkshire	6	.3	.4
West Lothian	3	.2	.2
West Sussex	23	1.3	1.4
Wigan	3	.2	.2
Wiltshire	11	.6	.6
Windsor and Maidenhead Royal Borough	6	.3	.4
Wirral	19	1.0	1.1
Wolverhampton	3	.2	.2
Worcestershire	5	.3	.3
Wrexham	6	.3	.4
York	4	.2	.2
Total	1693	92.5	100.0
Missing	138	7.5	
Total	1831	100.0	

The survey received responses from 191 library authorities (of a potential 206) representing 93% of all library authorities in the UK.

Table 45: Respondents working for trusts and contractors

	Count	% of overall sample (1831)		Count	% of overall sample (1831)
Bingham Trust	1	.1%	Work under two authorities: Essex and Slough.	1	.1%
East Dunbartonshire Culture & Leisure Trust	5	.3%	'Also work in the London Borough of Havering, but the above question would only let me make one choice'	1	.1%
Falkirk Community Trust	7	.4%			
Fife Cultural Trust	8	.4%			
Glasgow Life	14	.8%	Funded externally by 22 NW Library authorities	1	.1%
High Life Highland	3	.2%	TalNet (Anglesey, Conwy and Gwynedd Network)	1	.1%
John Laing Integrated Services	2	.1%	The Libraries' Hub – shared service between Bedford & Central Bedfordshire	1	.1%
Leisure and Culture Dundee	3	.2%			
Library Services Slough Ltd	1	.1%			
Livewire Warrington	2	.1%	Joint authorities	**5**	**.3%**
Luton Cultural Services Trust	4	.2%	Libraries NI	1	.1%
Salford Community Leisure Ltd	2	.1%	Upper Norwood Joint Library	1	.1%
GLL (soon – 2013)	1	.1%	Others	2	.1%
South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Ltd	7	.4%	Total	**87**	**5.0%**
Suffolk Libraries IPS	6	.3%			
Vision Redbridge	6	.3%			
Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust	6	.3%			
Total named trusts and contractors	**78**	**4.2%**			
Leisure and Culture Trust	1	.1%			
IPS	1	.1%			
Total trusts and contractors	**80**	**4.4%**			

A small number of respondents (80 or 4.4% of the sample) reported working for trusts or contractors. This reflects the fact that at the time of the survey, this was a relatively under-developed area in what is a rapidly changing position.

Table 46: Workplace

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Branch library	886	48.4	49.3
Central library or equivalent	416	22.7	23.1
Mobile library	42	2.3	2.3
Large reference library	22	1.2	1.2
Central support in the library service	121	6.6	6.7
Combination of the above (moving between several different workplaces)	213	11.6	11.9
Other (please specify)	97	5.3	5.4
Total	1797	98.1	100.0
Missing	34	1.9	
Total	1831	100.0	

Most respondents worked at either a branch library (48.4%) or a central library (22.7%).
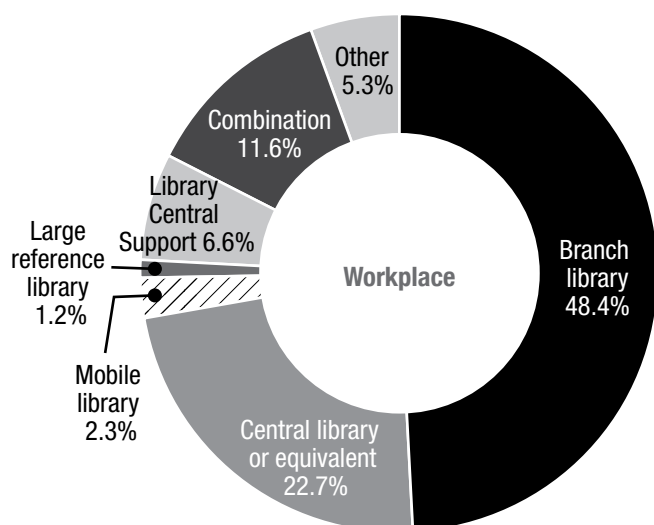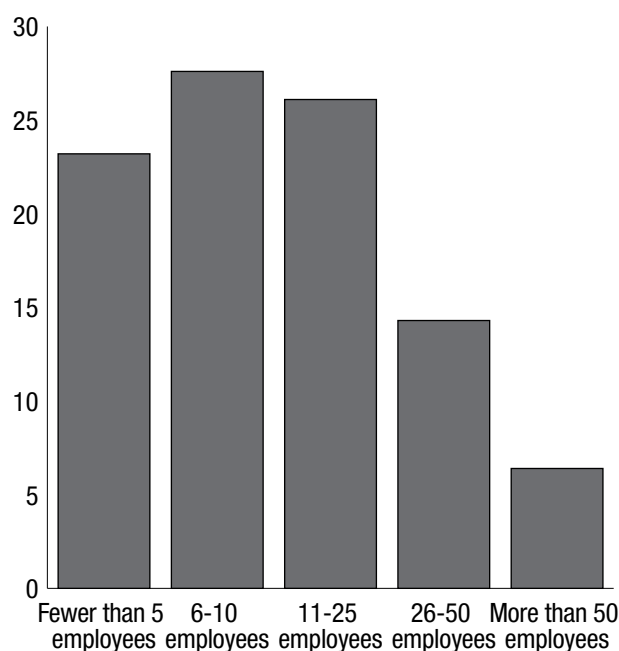
Figure 42: Workplace

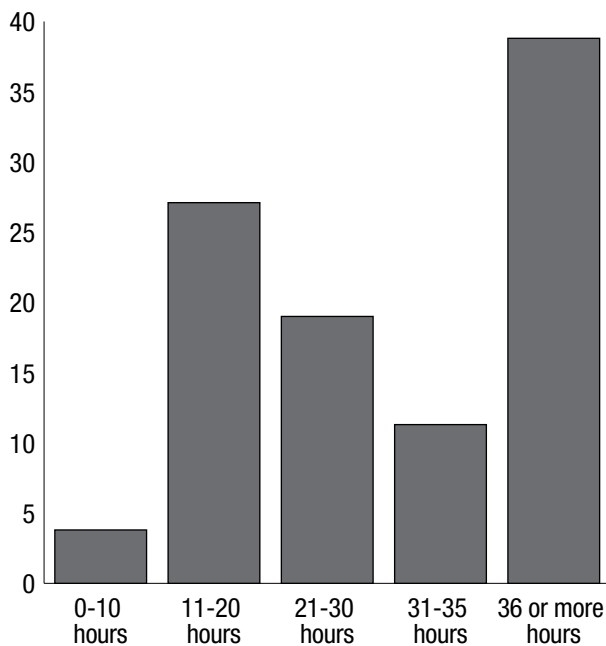**Table 47 and Figure 43: Number of paid staff in workplace**

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Fewer than 5 employees	424	23.2	23.8
6-10 employees	506	27.6	28.3
11-25 employees	477	26.1	26.7
25-50 employees	261	14.3	14.6
More than 50 employees	117	6.4	6.6
Total	1785	97.5	100.0
Missing	46	2.5	
Total	1831	100.0	

Just over half of the sample reported working in workplaces with 10 or fewer paid staff. This obviously reflects the nature of library work. It remains to be seen what will be the effect of the increasing level of closures, rationalisation, co-location and one-stop shops over the next few years.

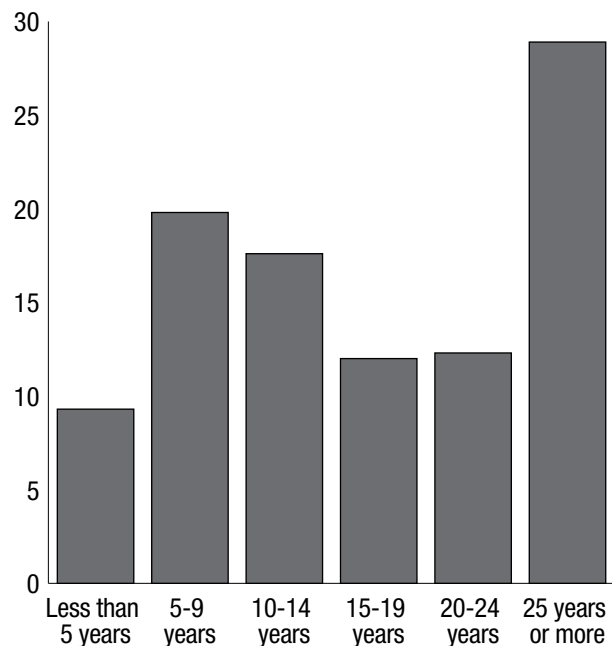**Table 48 and Figure 44: Contracted hours worked per week**

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
0-10 hours	68	3.7	3.8
11-20 hours	484	26.4	27.1
21-30 hours	340	18.6	19.0
31-35 hours	202	11.0	11.3
36 or more hours	694	37.9	38.8
Total	1788	97.7	100.0
Missing	43	2.3	
Total	1831	100.0	

Table 49 and Figure 45: Years employed in the public library service

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Less than 5 years	166	9.1	9.3
5-9 years	352	19.2	19.8
10-14 years	313	17.1	17.6
15-19 years	213	11.6	12.0
20-24 years	219	12.0	12.3
25 years or more	513	28.0	28.9
Total	1776	97.0	100.0
Missing	55	3.0	
Total	1831	100.0	

Just under half of all respondents (48.9%) worked 31 hours a week or more. 37.9% worked 36 or more hours. By contrast, a little under a third (30.1%) worked 20 hours or fewer a week.

51.6% of respondents had worked in the library service for 15 or more years (40% for 20 years or more). The workforce is a long serving one with a long term commitment to the job.

Table 50 and Figure 46:
Years employed in current post

	Count	% of overall sample	% of respondents that answered question
Less than 5 years	640	35.0	35.6
5-9 years	480	26.2	26.7
10-14 years	295	16.1	16.4
15-19 years	141	7.7	7.9
20-24 years	112	6.1	6.2
25 years or more	128	7.0	7.1
Total	1796	98.1	100.0
Missing	35	1.9	
Total	1831	100.0	
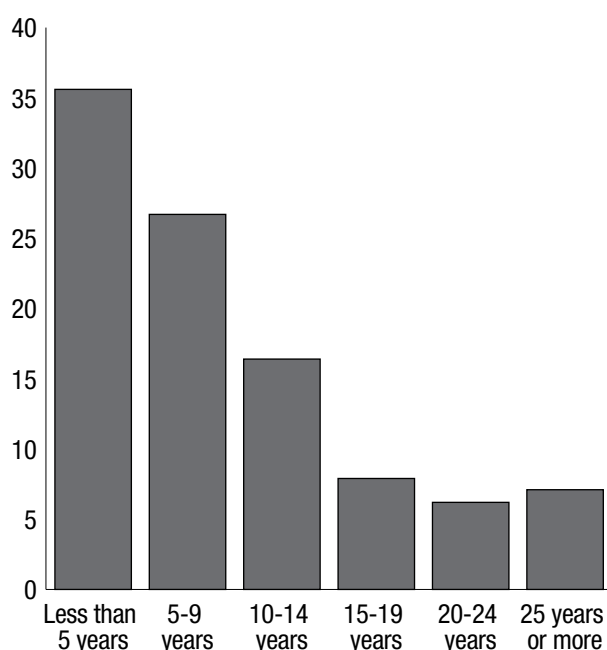
Although most workers are long serving in terms of the service as a whole, this is not the case in relation to their current post. 35% had been in it for less than 5 years. Over 60% (61.2%) had been in their current post for 9 years or less. Just 7% had been in their current post for 25 years or more and 13.1% for 20 years or more.

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UNISON
Local Government

THE DAMAGE

WARNING: DISMANTLING COUNCIL SERVICES WILL SERIOUSLY DAMAGE OUR LIVES AND OUR COMMUNITIES

This UNISON report is one in a series of studies looking at some of the vital services provided by councils. In it we explore the long-term damage to the public and to the economy caused by ongoing austerity cuts.

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