

Agenda Item: 8 v)

January 2018

Engagement, Participation and Involvement Team
Northamptonshire County Council,
One Angel Square,
Angel Street,
Northampton,
NN1 1ED

To whom it may concern,

This is Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire's response to Northamptonshire's Library consultation. A separate response will be sent from Healthwatch Northamptonshire.

Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire held a meeting in December where the Easy Read version of the library consultation was discussed. The views below are the result of that meeting and the views and opinions of Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire, written in their words.

Closing libraries would impact many people lives around Northampton; children would no longer have access to further learning resources, parents would have less day facilities for their young children and less adults can partake in workshops to enhance their knowledge. Regarding the options, Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire decided that **option 1** would be the best route you could take to prevent major losses.

Option 1 allows the maximum number of libraries to stay up and running and also allows more Library To You services which will help make the library experiences easily accessible for everyone. By keeping the largest and medium libraries open lets people use the facilities how they currently do, people will be able to borrow books, attend workshops, use printing facilities and any other things they use the libraries for. However, volunteering opportunities for young people our age who would struggle to access libraries further away would be limited. Also, by looking for more library services in Corby allows libraries be easier to attend. Depending on whether the local communities would want to fund the 21 smaller libraries means there will be libraries dotted around for everyone and are closer for people to attend.

Option 2 and 3 minimise the opportunities for further studying in a safe environment. If there are less spaces for quiet independent studying, students cannot fully commit and focus on their learning. If things are hectic at home, students tend to go to libraries to focus; this would be affected if libraries are shut down. There will also be less resources for the public; people cannot use the internet if they aren't able to access it at home, they cannot use the printers.



Additional help such as support for blue badges and family advice which the library staff are trained in is valuable. We are not only losing physical resources that are essential for us but also the support the staff give to the public. Libraries effect different families, not just students who use the facilities but the elderly, big families and low income families and many more individuals that rely on their local libraries. Less privileged families may not be able to get school ready. They might be held back educationally and socially. The library isn't just a place to borrow books from, it is much more than that it helps 1000's of people in their everyday life and without these libraries those individuals will struggle to complete their tasks.

In an ideal world, Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire would like no libraries to be shut down; we would like all facilities to stay open however given the circumstances, Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire choose Option 1 to take effect for the above reasons.

Yours sincerely,



Moriam Chaudhury,
Chair, Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire



Anya Mejer,
Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire
Member