

Library pre-LTP engagement feedback

1 Purpose of report

The purpose of the report is to present to the Mercury Bay and Tairua-Pauanui Community Boards the community feedback from the library pre-LTP engagement on the levels of service for the Whitianga and Tairua libraries.

2 Background

The Tairua-Pauanui and Mercury Bay Community Boards requested community engagement to determine if their communities were supportive of the levels of service offered by their libraries. This would enable the Council and Community Boards to consider any changes to levels of service in the 2018-28 Long Term Plan.

Library services throughout the district are delivered in different ways with different levels of contributions from Council and users. The services offered by the libraries are also different; some have free computers and wifi with extensive on-line databases; some are part of the national library lending service and some cater for summer holiday makers. One of the big differences between the library services delivered by Council and the libraries delivered by community groups/trusts is that Council is not allowed to charge a membership fee which means the expenditure is covered primarily from Council rates.

A brochure on the different kinds of library service with the associated costs and rates was combined with a submission form. The form is attached for your information. Information on the Pauanui and Whangamata libraries was included as two different models of community-run libraries that operate in the district.

3 Next steps

Staff recommend that the feedback shows overwhelming support from these communities for the services currently offered by these libraries and their manner of operation. No changes to the level of services are recommended as part of the 2018-2028 Long Term Plan.

4 Engagement results

Community engagement was run from 11 November - 15 December 2017 and included hard copy forms being available at the Whitianga, Tairua and Pauanui libraries and information centres and an online survey available through Council's website.

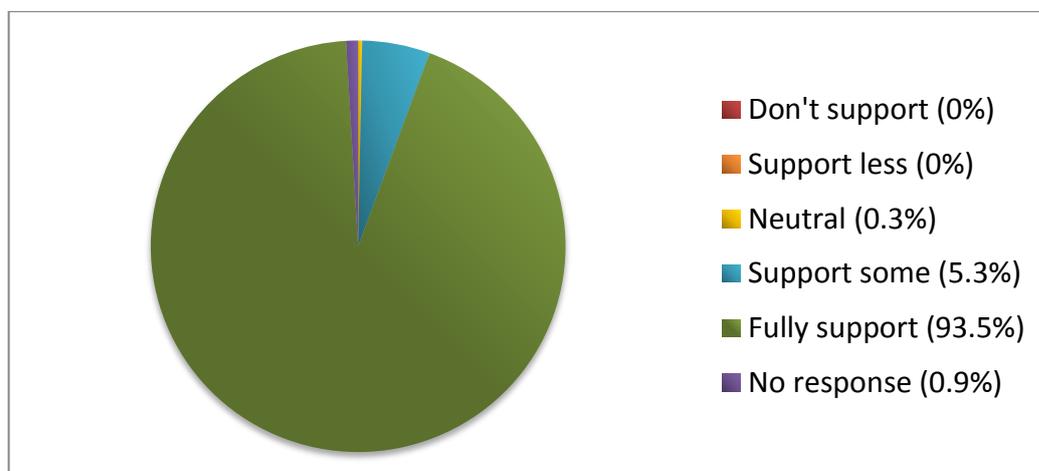
The analysis of the submissions has been segmented in the following way:

- Whitianga Library
- Tairua Library
- Pauanui Library
- Overall

Whitianga Library

We received 321 responses from those who identified Whitianga as their library.

Do you support the services delivered by your library?



The vast majority of submitters **fully supported** (93.5%) the service offered by the Whitianga library. The following points are a summary of the key points from submitters:

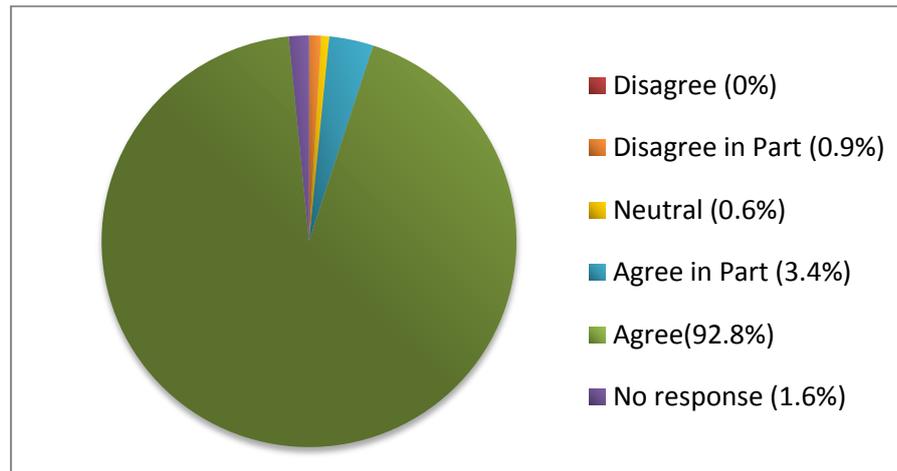
- The library provides a full and comprehensive service, with:
 - a combination of printed books and electronic books,
 - DVD's and magazines,
 - Programmes for all parts of the community,
 - advising people about books and what they might like to read,
 - helping fill out application forms (both online and physically),
 - supporting people in creating CVs and job applications,
 - providing computers and Wi-Fi access free of charge,
 - genealogy services,
 - access to all district libraries ranges.
- The library is an essential service meeting the educational, information and social needs of a broad range of people in the community.
- Supports the 'Aging Strategy' with services for the elderly, the 'Youth Strategy' with services to the young people accessing information, pre-school activities, holiday programmes all of which encourage literacy.
- Happy and supportive of current service, do not make any changes, any cut in services would be at a terrible loss to the community.
- The staff are very friendly and have an excellent knowledge base.

The submitters who **supported some** (5.3%) of the services delivered by the library provided in their feedback that overall they were happy and supportive of the services provided. The following is a summary of the suggested changes for the level of service provided:

- Wi-Fi should only be free for residents and ratepayers and tourists should be charged.
- Find a way to make it feasible to have a jointly run Council/Community library.
- Extend the children's area as this is too small, this is a popular part of the library that provides a lot of different programmes.
- Whitianga library should open Saturdays of long weekends as this is the only time some ratepayers can access the library.
- Enhance the status quo, longer hours and more computer access, more staff, meet the demands of tourism.

There were no submitters that **supported less** or **didn't support** the services provided at the Whitianga Library.

Are the rates spent on your library good value for money?



The vast majority of submitters **agree** (92.8%) that the rates spent on the Whitianga library was good value for money. The following is a summary of key points from the submitters:

- The library is underfunded and worth far more than we pay, would pay more to retain this service.
- Increase funding to the library to enable increase book selection (including more large print books), more computers, extend the size of the library and pay librarians more.
- Maintain the current management and funding system.
- Happy that rates go towards paying the knowledgeable and helpful library staff.
- Prefer paying through rates than a membership fee, if membership fees are charged it will disadvantage those on low incomes who then won't be able to be members.

The following is a summary of the feedback from the submitters who **agree in part** (3.4%) that the rates spent on the Whitianga library was good value for money:

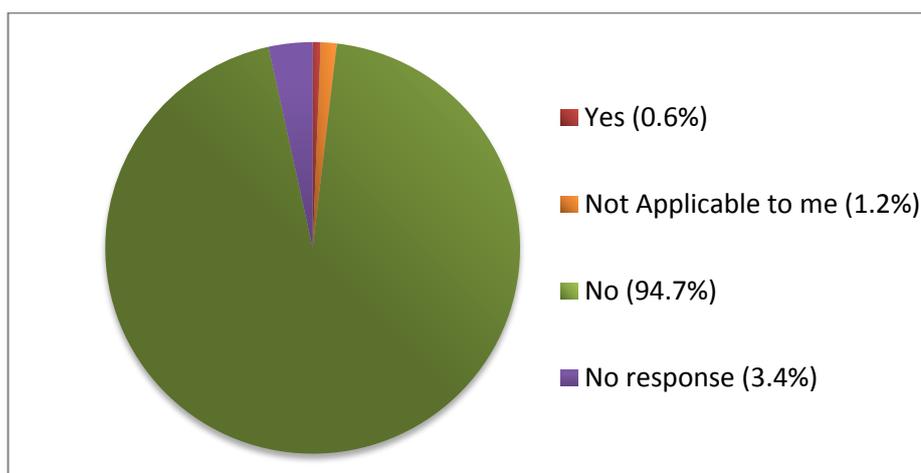
- Although there are savings that could be made similar to that of the Whangamata community model these are offset by the additional services provided by the Whitianga library.
- The Whitianga library needs more funding from Council.
- Tourists and or non-library members should have to pay for the provision of Wi-Fi at the Whitianga Library to help offset the costs.

Those submitters who were **neutral** (0.6%) about the value of rates spent on their library noted that the library should be a free service provided to its community by the Council so its accessible to all of the community, but noted that tourists should be charged a fee for its use.

The submitters who **disagree in part** (0.9%) that the rates spent on the Whitianga library was good value for money provided the feedback that libraries are an essential service and sufficient rates need to be allocated to ensure their survival.

There were no submitters who **disagreed** that rates spent the Whitianga library was good value for money.

Would you prefer the services, fees and costs of a community-run library instead of your council-run library?



The vast majority of submitters did **not** want (94.7%) a community-run library instead of their council run library. The following is a summary of the key points from submitters:

- A well-funded council-run library is a crucial part of the town.
- It would be a step backwards to have a community run library in Whitianga.
- Community run libraries are open for fewer hours and therefore limit the communities' ability to access the library.
- Whitianga is a growing town and is going to need a greater level of service rather than a reduced one that would be offered by a community-run library.
- With an increase in Aucklanders moving into Whitianga there is an expectation of a higher level of service.
- Local government expects too much of the volunteer labour force as it is, if volunteers are not available the services reduce at a great cost to the community and volunteers, however involved, would not have the training or expertise of librarians.
- Any decision which is made should be on a cost-benefit analysis in which both sides of the equation are fully considered not simply financial models.
- There would be significant administrative pressures with having to put around 4000 members into a new system if it were community run.

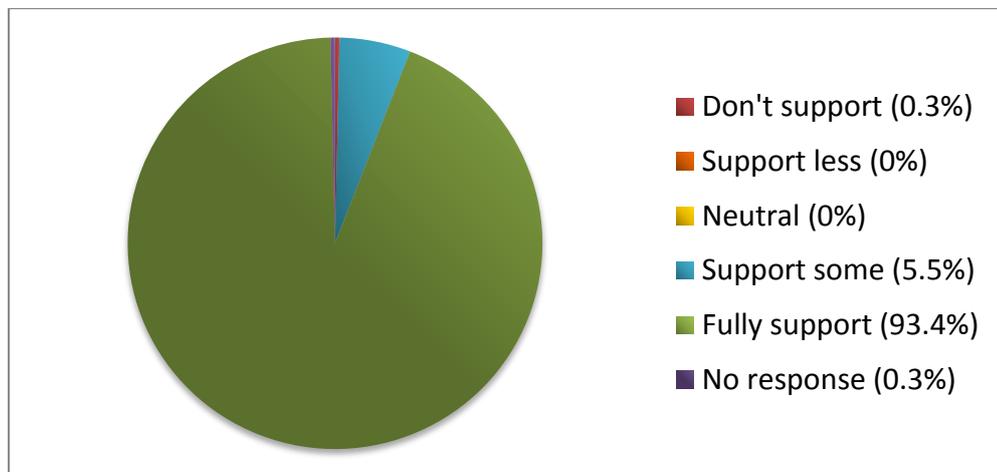
The following is a summary of feedback from those who **do** (0.6%) prefer a community-run library instead of the council run library:

- The current service does not cater to the needs of those in wheelchairs or disabled.
- There is a poor selection and what's there is too expensive or taken over by tourists.
- A rural van should be provided.
- Rates are highest across the peninsula which needs addressing.
- The library is a community provision and should be run by the community.

Tairua Library

We received 289 responses for those who identified Tairua as their library.

Do you support the services delivered by your library?



The vast majority of submitters **fully supported** (93.4%) the service offered by the Tairua library. The following points are a summary of the key points from submitters:

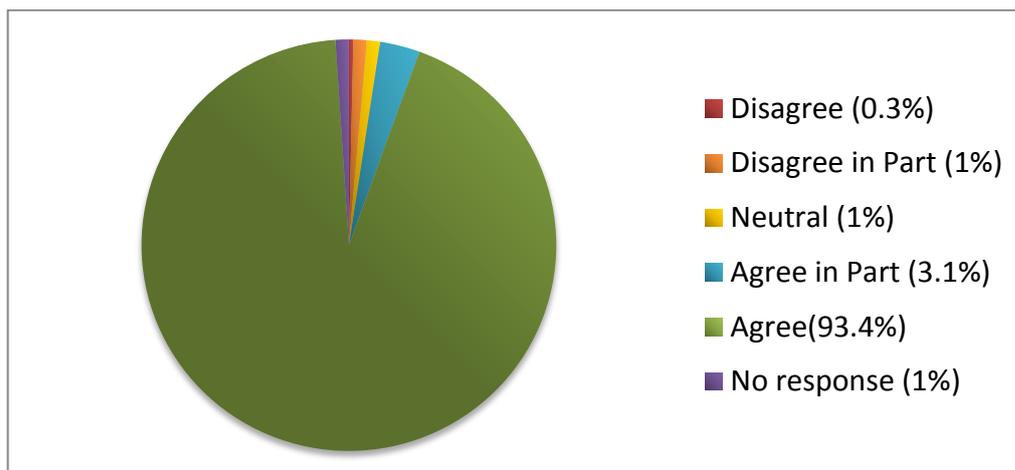
- The preference is for a Council run library, the services delivered by the library are excellent and no changes should be made.
- The library is a hub for the community that is utilised by a large range of different people and groups.
- It allows sharing and collaboration between the Council run libraries with events and item transfers.
- Libraries are more than just buildings with books, they provide company, a public safe space, education and inspiration.
- Internet connection and computer access is of growing importance, particularly to tourists who are the backbone of the economy.
- Conference room is an excellent part of the service provided by the library.
- Programmes provided by the library are valued greatly by young and old alike.

The submitters who **supported some** (5.5%) of the services delivered by the library provided the feedback that overall they were happy and supportive of the services provided, the following is a summary of some of the suggested changes for the level of service provided:

- Find a way to make it feasible to have a jointly run Council/Community library.
- Increase the service for the same cost.
- Make the library activity a district activity to more fairly spread the cost.
- Charge non-ratepayers for access to the internet.
- To save money do not open on a Saturday morning.
- Merge the library service and tourist information service as both are to provide information and this would improve the service of both functions and reduce the cost.
- In the Bay of Plenty the Libraries have introduced One Card across six different Councils so you can borrow books with your local card from all areas, we should look at implementing something similar in this district with neighbouring Councils.

The one submitter who **didn't support** (0.3%) the service provided feedback that the old library had provided adequate service and the new library was excessive.

Are the rates spent on your library good value for money?



The vast majority of submitters **agree** (93.4%) the rates spent on the Tairua library was good value for money. The following is a summary of key points from the submitters:

- The cost is very similar between community and council run libraries and yet community run libraries would be open less and provide less services.
- The current focus of using targeted rates is highly divisive and penalises the many smaller communities in the Coromandel.
- All ratepayers of the district should pay the same rates for their libraries and receive the same level of service, no matter where they live.

The following is a summary of the feedback from the submitters who **agree in part** (3.1%) the rates spent on their library was good value for money:

- This exercise is a cost cutting exercise and instead should be focusing on how to better support library staff to reach their communities.
- The Tairua-Pauanui Community Board should have more important things to focus on.
- The library is a good use of ratepayer money.

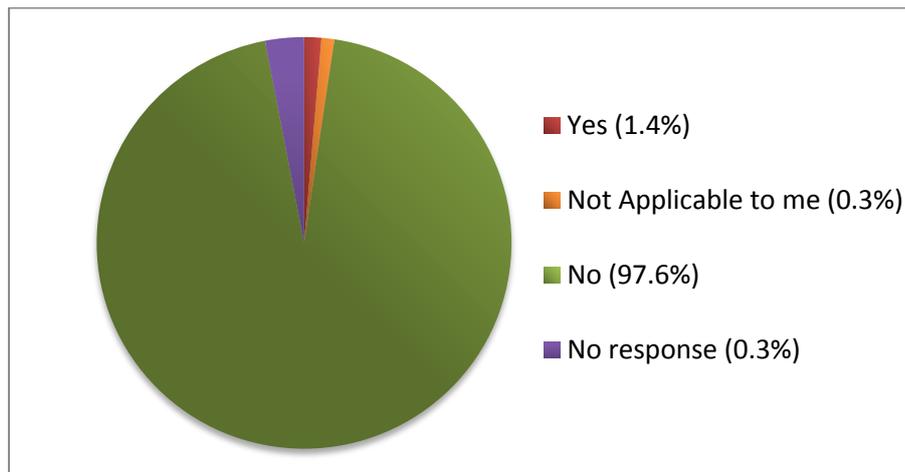
Those submitters who were **neutral** (1%) that the rates spent on their library was good value for money provided the feedback that the libraries and volunteers do an amazing job, all are helpful and able to cater to the specific needs of the individuals using the library.

The following is a summary of the feedback from the submitters who **disagree in part** (1%) the rates spent on their library was good value for money:

- The Thames Library should be the only district funded library with the others being community run based on the Whangamata model, this should still allow each community to create a library which meets their individual needs.
- The cost is overall too much for the Tairua Library, they should get rid of the computers and renting DVDs/CDs and if internet is provided it should be at a cost, therefore a community based library would meet these reduced needs.
- Council run library appears to cost less than a community based service is expected to therefore the council run library is better value for money.

The one submitter who **doesn't agree** the rates spent on their library was good value for money provided feedback that the increasing costs and were wants versus needs (wifi, new books).

Would you prefer the services, fees and costs of a community-run library instead of your council-run library?



The vast majority of submitters did **not** want (97.6%) a community-run library instead of their council run library. The following points are a summary of the key points from submitters:

- Council run libraries can work together with events and items can be transferred between them.
- A community run library for Tairua is a bad idea it would mean no computers, no wifi and no books for exchange between other district libraries.
- Tairua has a growing resident population and therefore requires a Council run library, any reduction in service would be a backwards step.
- Community run libraries like Whangamata run the risk of not retaining important collections as not owned by the Council.
- Tairua is not big enough for a well-run community library

Those who responded that it was **not applicable** to them lived outside of the area however were fully supportive of the council-run library in Tairua and were happy with the services provided.

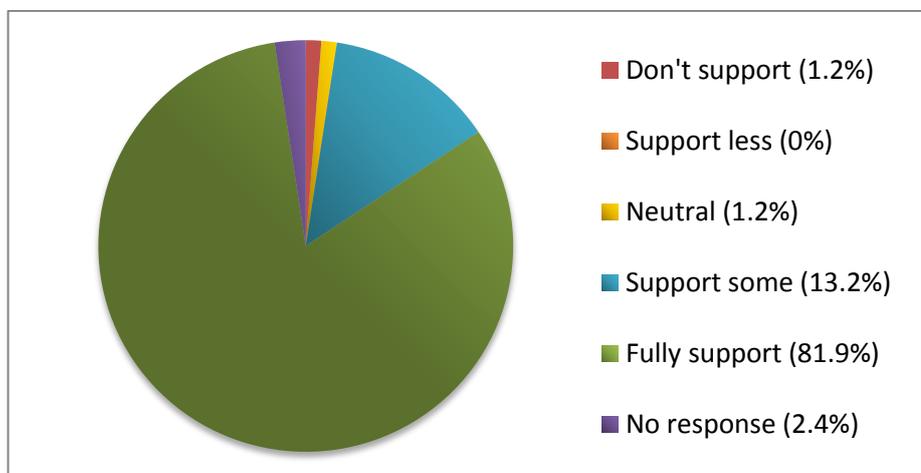
The following is a summary of feedback from those who **do** prefer a community-run library instead of the council run library:

- Based on the number of ratepayers Tairua cannot justify a district library service.
- The service is excessive for the needs of the community, the new books, wifi, computers and renting of dvds/cds is not required.

Pauanui Library

We received 83 responses for those who identified Pauanui as their library.

Do you support the services delivered by your library?



The vast majority of submitters **fully supported** (81.9%) the service offered by the Pauanui library. The following points are a summary of the key points from submitters:

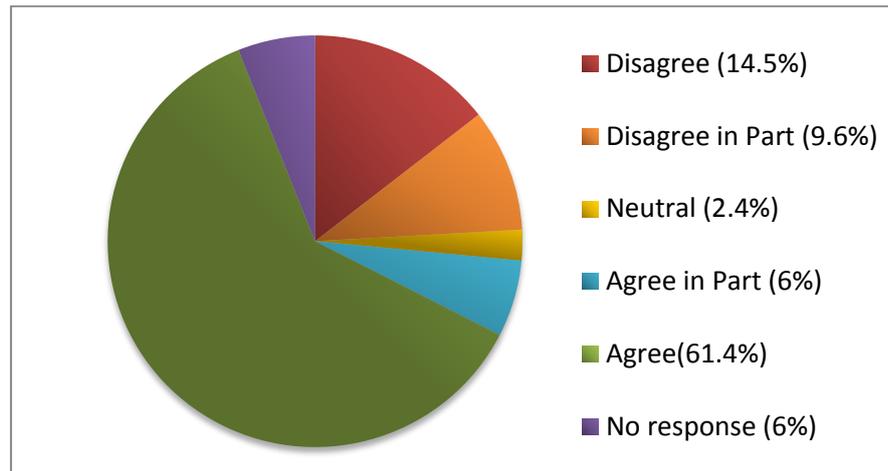
- Wonderful library with large and wide selection, constant supply of new and near-new donated books at no extra cost - no late fees, community drop off points at Richardsons and Information Centre for out-of-hours.
- The library provides a good service which meets the needs of out-of-town owners as well, with many "weekenders" who live elsewhere remark on the quality of the Pauanui Library, sometimes in preference to their own local library.
- The Pauanui Library runs very well with the team of volunteers and council support.

The following is a summary of the suggested changes from submitters who **supported some** (13.2%) of the services delivered by the Pauanui library:

- Increase library opening hours and include the national lending service.
- Look at running adult and children's events and programmes at the Pauanui Library.
- Change to the community library paid staff and volunteer model.
- Decrease Tairua Library hours and make it a community model to reduce the cost burden on Pauanui and the saving used to avoid the membership fees paid in Pauanui.
- The services applied across the libraries need to be fair and equitable with a bias towards library services that include schools and or retiree's in their respective catchments.

The one submitter who **didn't support** (1.2%) the Pauanui Library service suggested they did not need a library at all and that could be removed from their rates.

Are the rates spent on your library good value for money?



The majority of submitters **agree** (61.4%) the rates spent on the Pauanui library was good value for money. The following is a summary of key points from the submitters:

- Happy to pay the \$20 annual membership but would not want to pay anymore considering the additional costs on rates.
- It is inappropriate that Pauanui ratepayers pay rates towards the Tairua library as well, this is a disadvantage to Pauanui.
- Supportive of having various models of libraries which are paid for at a district level and allowing communities to decide what model meets their needs.
- The annual fee is excellent value, there is no additional charges for new items, magazines or overdue books which is popular and means there are no additional costs.

The following is a summary of the feedback from the submitters who **agree in part** (6%) the rates spent on the Pauanui library was good value for money:

- Pauanui ratepayers should not be paying for the Tairua Library service when they don't use it.
- Tairua receives four times as much funding than the Pauanui Library with less members, more hours and greater service applied, Tairua should become a community library and use the money to increase the services offered at Pauanui including the national lending service and longer hours etc.
- Spend more of library rates at Pauanui.
- Unreasonable to expect Pauanui residents to have to pay for a library that costs around \$15 each way in fuel to get to, when most of them choose to pay the one off \$20 annual fee for the Pauanui library.

Those submitters who were **neutral** (2.4%) that the rates spent on the Pauanui library was good value for money provided the feedback that the rates for Pauanui and Tairua should be separated, with the lowest costing library and higher membership suggests more council money should be put into the Pauanui Library which would allow for dropping the membership fee.

The following is a summary of the feedback from submitters who **disagreed in part** (9.6%) the rates spent on the Pauanui library was good value for money:

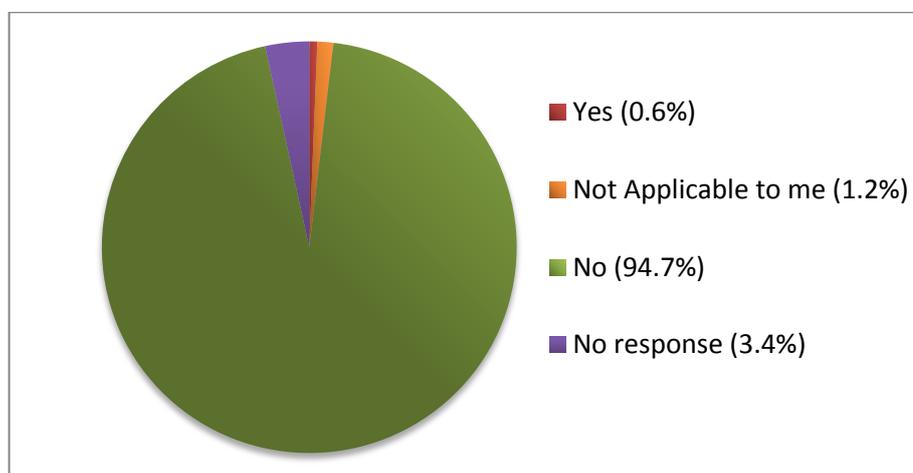
- Pauanui should not be subsidising the Tairua library, they should have to pay a membership fee also.
- Although Pauanui pay the most in their rates for library services they get the least services provided.

The following is a summary from the submitters who **disagreed** (14.5%) that the rates spent on the Pauanui library was good value for money.

- Pauanui should not be paying for the Tairua Library as they do not get use of the services and then don't get access at Pauanui to the National Library services and activities provided by the Council run libraries.
- Separate the costs for the Pauanui and Tairua libraries.
- Pauanui does not need a library, cease the service and take the library fees out of the Pauanui rates.
- Pauanui needs more value for rates.
- Either decrease the library rates for Pauanui or increase the level of service proportionate to the service provided.

Would you prefer the services, fees and costs of a community-run library instead of your council-run library?

Pauanui residents have responded to the question from the view of "Would you prefer the services, fees and costs of a council-run library instead of your community-run library?"



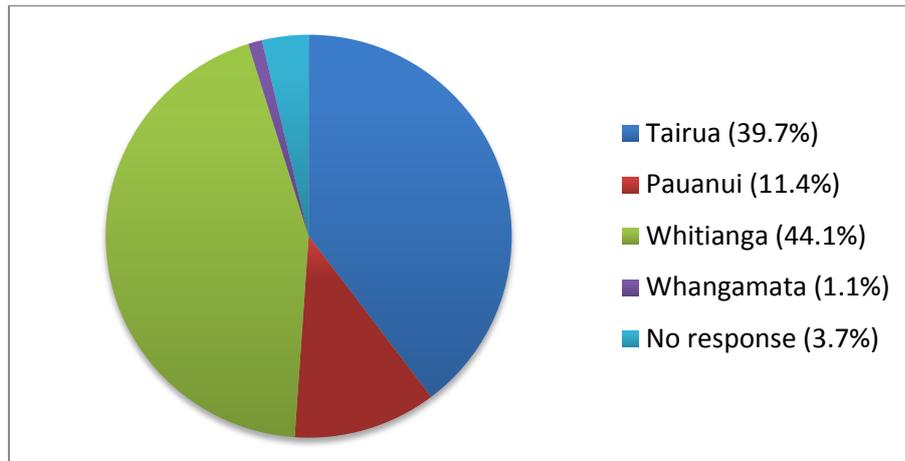
The vast majority of submitters did **not** want (94.7%) a council-run library instead of their community run library. The following points are a summary of the key points from submitters:

- Great having no charge for books or overdue fees.
- Paying a membership fee to the library ensures the money is going into the community.
- Community run model is a good thing and all libraries in the district should be run this way.

Those who provided feedback that **do** prefer (0.6%) a council-run library instead of the community run library suggested a different model could add to the existing services and reduce the rates.

Overall

A total of 694 submissions were received and the percentage of which libraries they used were:

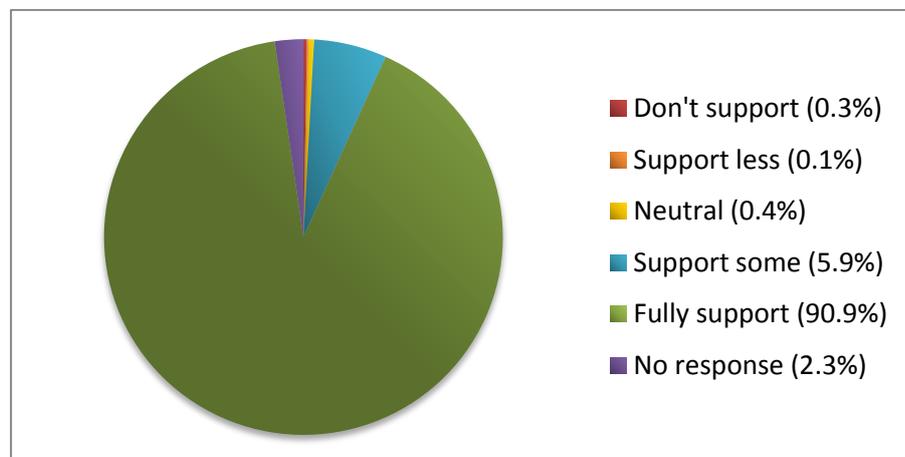


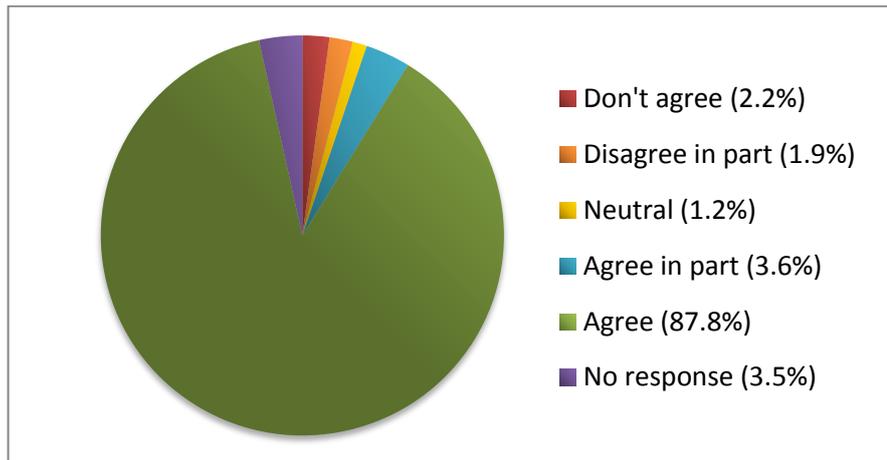
Explanation of the low numbers for Whangamata

We did not expect Whangamata library users to complete a form and did not supply hard copy forms to the Whangamata area. We did advise the library group that the engagement was occurring and that their model of community-run library was described in the brochure.

The overall response to the questions:

Do you support the services delivered by your library?



Are the rates spent on your library good value for money?**Would you prefer the services, fees and costs of a community-run library instead of your council-run library?**