Members survey to inform strategy

11 March 2015

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Background

- Survey results were collected between Wednesday 25 February and Tuesday 10 March.

- 90 responses were received from 87 institutions out of a total of 174 members, giving a response rate of 50%.

- The survey was conducted in order to inform the SCONUL Board's thinking in developing the new organisational strategy for SCONUL which will run from 2016-2019.

- For further information on the survey, please contact Ann Rossiter, Executive Director, SCONUL at ann.rossiter@sconul.ac.uk.
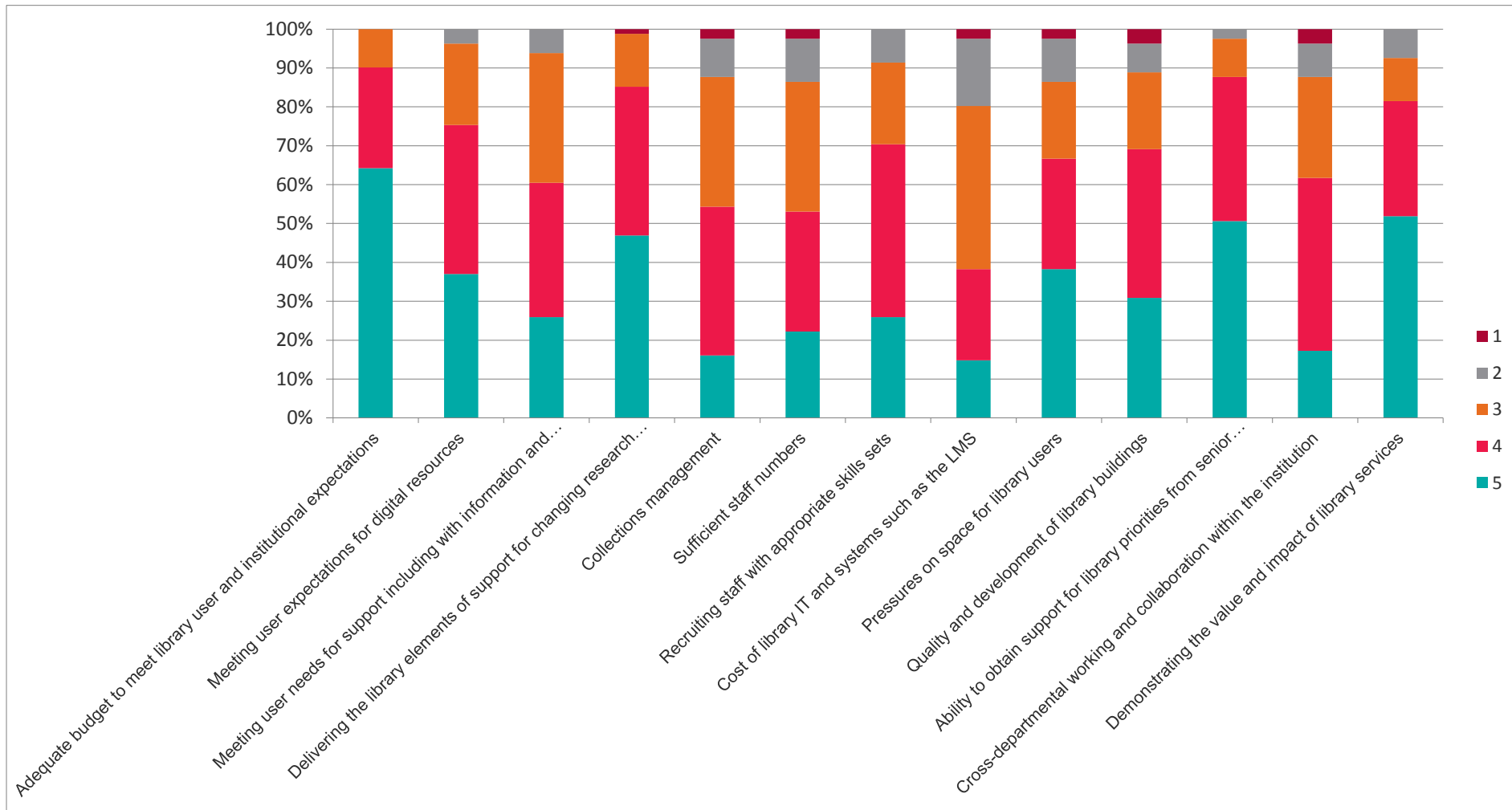
Q1: Who responded?

- 50% of overall SCONUL members
- 52% of RLUK members (23)
- 56% of CONUL members (5)
- 35% of SCURL members (7)
- 40% of WHELF members (4)

Of the responses, 90% were received from heads of services and /or SCONUL representatives. The other 10% were from deputy heads of service.

Q2: Top issues rated 4 or 5

- Adequate library budget to meet library user and institutional expectations (73%)

- Ability to obtain support for library priorities from senior institutional leadership (71%)

- Delivering the library elements of support for changing research practices (69%)

- Demonstrating the value and impact of library services (66%)

- Meeting user expectations for digital resources (61%)

Q3: Which one management or leadership issue do you anticipate being most challenging over the next three years?

Overall, comments coalesced around a constellation of concerns: increasing demand, including from OA and RDM requirements, on library services and the need to win institutional backing and budget to deliver user and institutional needs.

Maintaining strategic importance within the institution

Senior buy in for investing in the digital library experience

Demonstrating sufficient value to protect us from anticipated budget squeeze in 2016/17

Meeting a wide range of institutional priorities (e,g, partnerships and collaboration, OA, RDM) within limited financial resources.

Q3: Which one management or leadership issue do you anticipate being most challenging over the next three years?
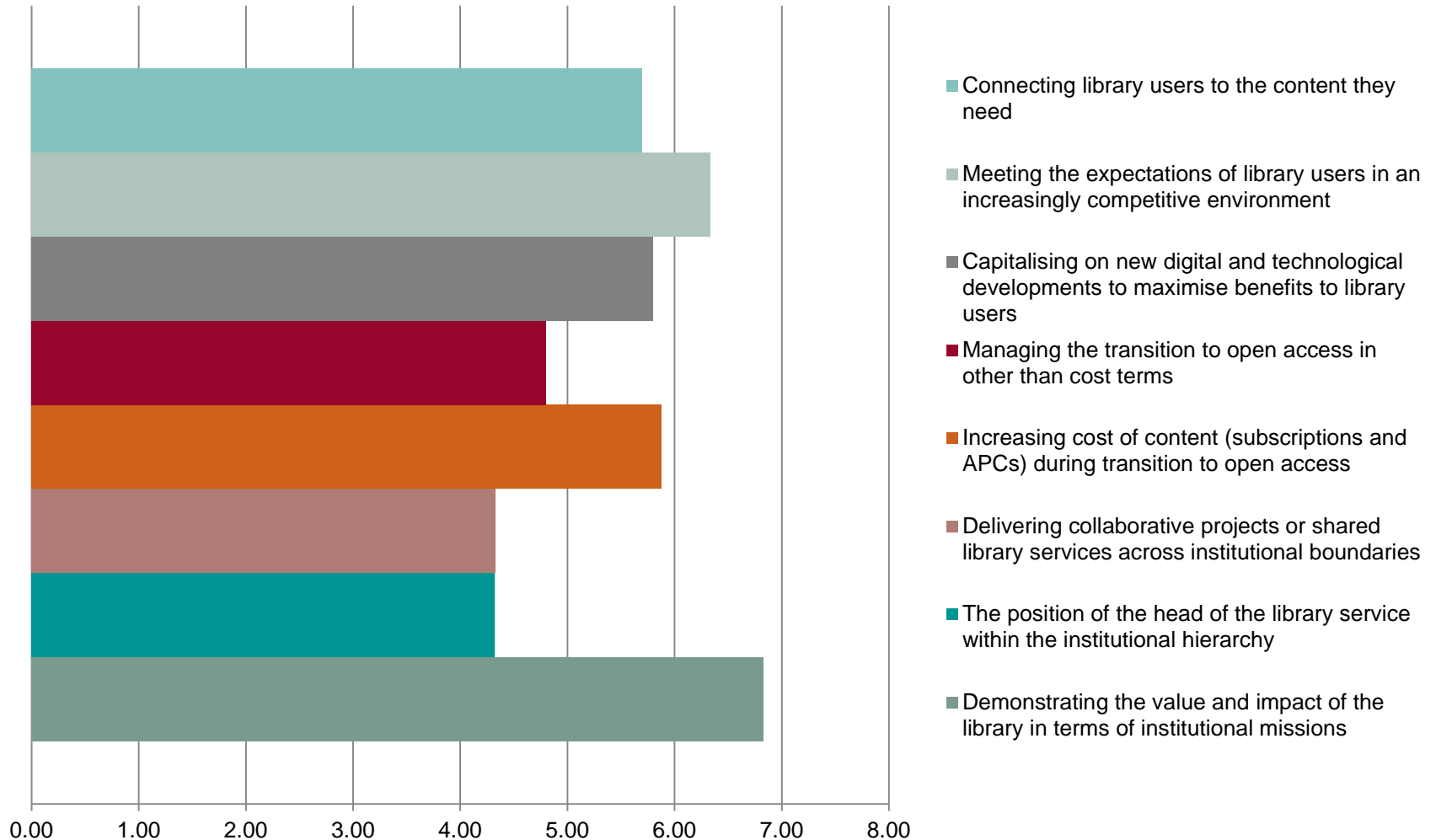
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Other related issues were also mentioned by several respondents: specific challenges around OA and RDM; developing or recruiting staff with necessary skills; and reconfiguring space.

Support for research (including collections development, research skills support, dissemination of research outputs)

Taking staff with senior management through change including need for new skills

Pressure on space for library users linked to the quality and development of library buildings

Q4: Please rate the following challenges for the SCONUL community in terms of their importance.

Legend:
- Connecting library users to the content they need
- Meeting the expectations of library users in an increasingly competitive environment
- Capitalising on new digital and technological developments to maximise benefits to library users
- Managing the transition to open access in other than cost terms
- Increasing cost of content (subscriptions and APCs) during transition to open access
- Delivering collaborative projects or shared library services across institutional boundaries
- The position of the head of the library service within the institutional hierarchy
- Demonstrating the value and impact of the library in terms of institutional missions

Q5: Are there other major challenges for the libraries which the community needs to address?

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Four issues were identified more than a handful of times: international campuses and competition; succession planning, workforce planning and recruiting skills; ebooks; and space planning.

Recognition that the traditional library models of e-book delivery are breaking down

Internationalisation of the curriculum and university mission

Addressing the gap between student requirements for library space and an institution's lack of understanding that this is an on-going need!

Succession planning and ensuring library training fits the bill. Increasingly few people feel that staff are coming up through the ranks with the right skills for the future.

Q6: How do you rate SCONUL's effectiveness in the following six areas?
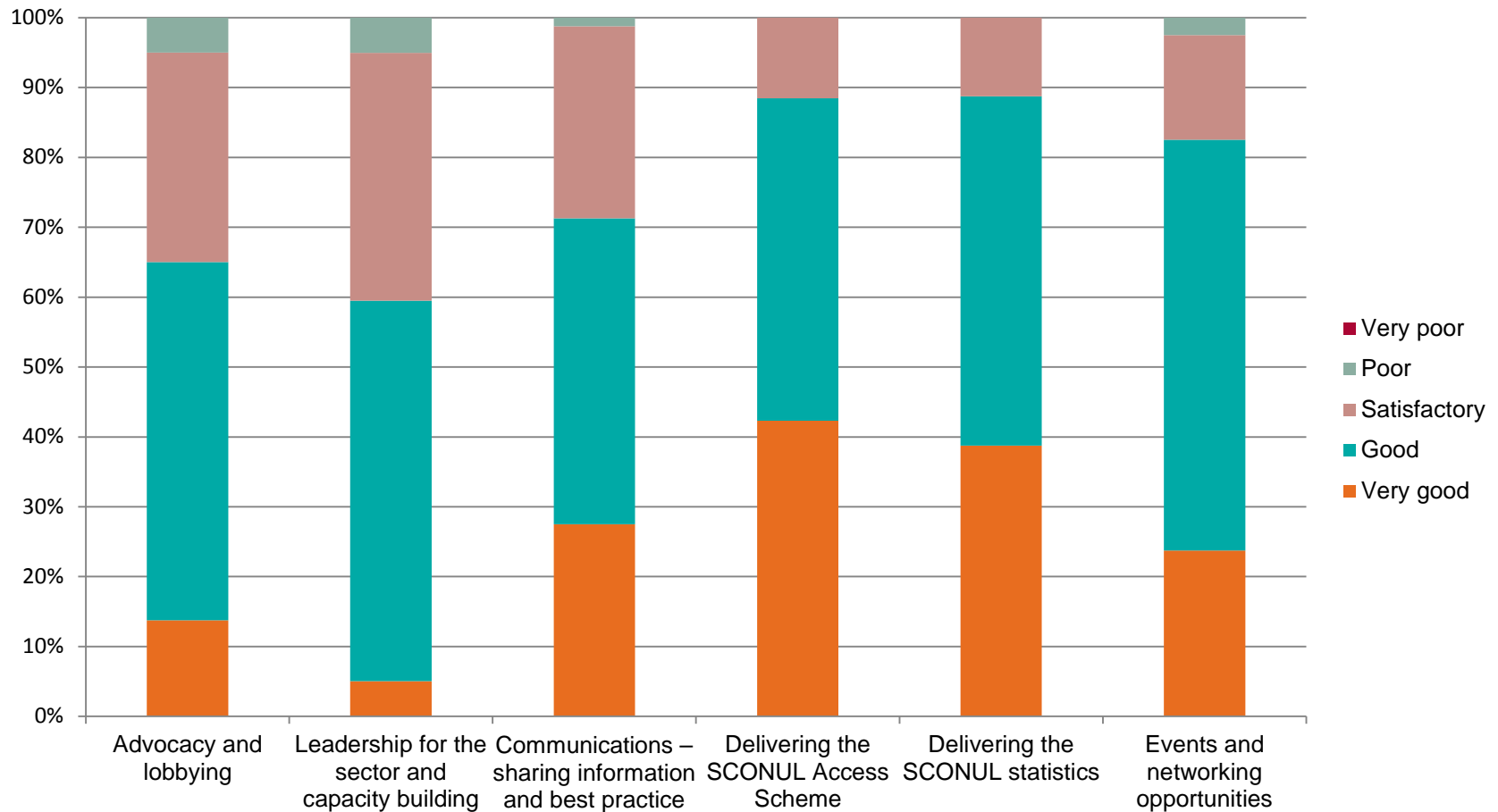
Q7: **If you had to pick one new service or area of work that SCONUL could provide for you, what would this be?**

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- Support, mentoring and CPD for library leaders

- More support on benchmarking and demonstrating value and impact

- Requests for general or specific shared services

- Advocacy and lobbying, particularly around content costs

- Staff training and support, including workforce planning

- More briefings or information sharing generally.

Q7: If you had to pick one new service or area of work that SCONUL could provide for you, what would this be?

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Better advocacy with University vice-chancellors

Identifying opportunities for collaborative / shared partnerships (e.g. service delivery) between institutions

I like the toolkits e.g. recent ones on open access, copyright etc

Help with metrics to prove impact, beyond the SCONUL stats

Library training for mid-range staff who don't have library qualifications or experience

More senior level CPD e.g. mentor scheme with external organisations, income generation/business links etc.

Q8: If SCONUL had to stop doing one thing, what would that be?

- Largest response was for "nothing"

- Some support for looking again at SCONUL Focus (6 responses)

- Question mark over the usefulness of conference schedule (7 responses)

- 3 responses suggested we drop the library design awards.

Q9: Overall, has SCONUL become more or less effective in the last three years?
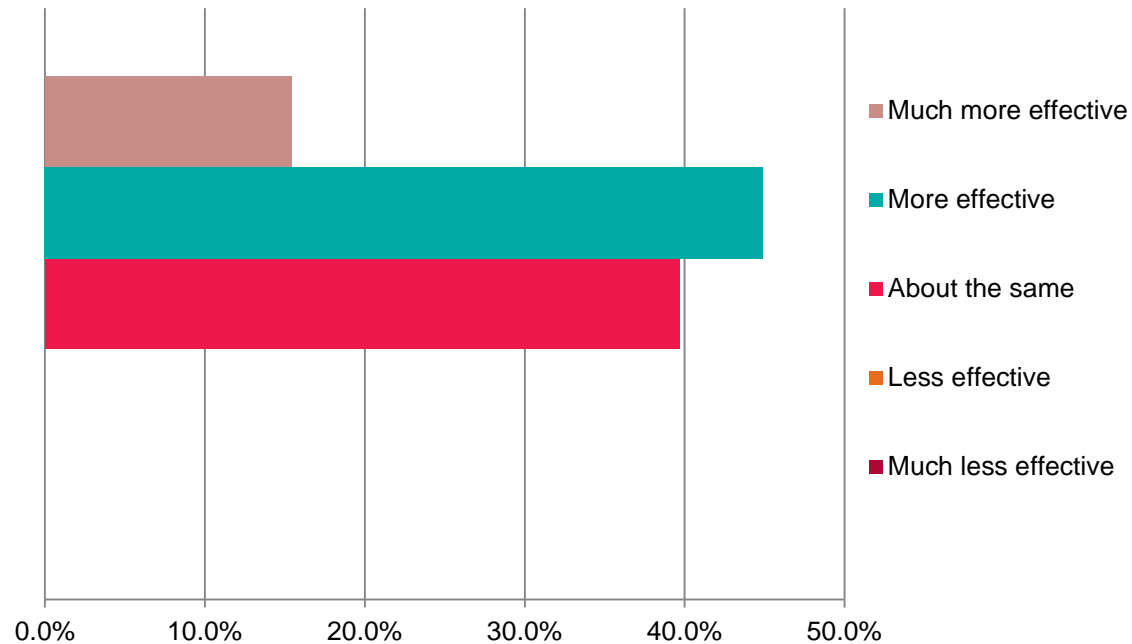
Q10: How do you rate the value for money provided by your SCONUL membership?