

Suffolk's Libraries IPS

The Industrial & Provident Society Limited enabling county-wide library services supported by Suffolk County Council

OPEN BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Title of Meeting	Suffolk Libraries IPS - Board Meeting
Date	26 th May 2016
Place	Castle Hill Community Centre
Time	11.15am – 12.45pm
Attendees	Tony Brown (Chair), Sylvia Knights (Vice Chair), Anne Mallalieu, Alison Wheeler (Chief Executive), Sue Buck, Jonathan Ogden (Honorary Secretary), Colin Rockall, Peter Callaghan, Stephen Taylor (SCC), Richard Hunt (SCC), Cllr Sarah Stamp (SCC), Charlotte Clark, Marion Harvey
Invited	Nikki Sturmey (Governance Manager), Krystal Vittles (Libraries Innovation and Development manager), Peter Baker (Head of IT), Mandy Wilkinson (Head of Finance), Paul Howarth (Stock Manager), Daniel Harvey (Community Team Lead), Paula Phelan (Head of HR), James Powell (Marketing and Communications Manager)

		Action
1.	<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from Cllr Sarah Stamp, Colin Rockall, Marion Harvey, Richard Hunt, Peter Callaghan, Paul Howarth and James Powell.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Minutes of previous meeting of 31st March 2016</u></p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate account of discussions.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p><u>Members Handbook for Section 106</u></p> <p>The Libraries Innovation and Development Manager will send a copy of this handbook to the SCC Commissioner.</p> <p><u>Children's Centre Contract</u></p> <p>The Chief Executive has written to the Assistant Director of CYP to chase this up and received a quick response asking his colleagues to deal with this. A meeting with CYP is still proving very difficult to arrange. Children's Centres are currently using rooms in libraries without a contract being in place.</p>	KV

	<p>The Chair will raise this with Cllr Stamp and the Chief Executive will contact the Director of CYP.</p> <p>Lowestoft</p> <p>The Chief Executive updated the Board that there have been less anti-social behaviour issues at Lowestoft and all recent news has been positive.</p> <p>Paperless Meetings</p> <p>The Governance Manager updated the Board that the next Board meeting in July will be paperless. Board papers will be accessed using an app at future meetings.</p>	TB/AW
4.	<p><u>Decisions</u></p> <p>1. <u>Fixed Asset Review</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee asked the Board to accept the proposal that all assets purchased this year shall be written off as an expense in the year without any value being carried forward on the balance sheet. The effect of capitalizing the assets in the list would be to remove the expense of the purchases 46K and replace it with a depreciation charge in the year of 9K (given an average life of 5 years). This would increase the headline surplus figure by 37K and give readers of the accounts a false sense of the health of the company.</p> <p>The Board agreed unanimously with this review.</p> <p>The SCC Commissioner asked if this review could be shared with his colleagues and this was agreed.</p> <p>2. <u>Review of Directors Terms</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Governance Committee asked the Board to accept the updated terms which were reviewed at the Governance Committee meeting. The Terms had been updated by the Governance Manager to remove details relating to the Interim Board.</p> <p>The Board agreed unanimously to accept this revised policy.</p> <p>3. <u>Opening hours at Broomhill Library</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Governance Committee asked the Board to review and accept the proposal to amend the opening hours of Broomhill Library.</p> <p>This proposal will deliver 7-day opening at the library as well as a two-hour increase in opening hours at no additional cost due to a rearrangement of the library manager's hours. This proposal is supported by the results of consultation and visitor analysis as well as through the various statements of support.</p> <p>The Board agreed unanimously to accept this proposal and are delighted with the</p>	

positive message this gives to the staff and customers of Suffolk Libraries.

4. Opening Hours at Great Cornard Library

The Chair of the Governance Committee asked the Board to review and accept the proposal to amend the opening hours of Great Cornard Library.

Great Cornard Library has submitted a proposal to amend their opening hours. The library is located within Thomas Gainsborough School and operates different opening hours during term time to school holiday time. The change will only affect school holidays and involves closing the library on a Tuesday afternoon and moving these hours to a Monday morning when the library is currently closed all day. This will enable the popular tot rock session to be able to continue to run through the holidays as well as offering an extra day of opening for the participants of the Summer Reading Challenge.

The Board agreed unanimously to accept this proposal.

The SCC Commissioner stated he is happy to see the changes in opening hours of both Broomhill and Great Cornard Libraries and requested for an Equality Impact Assessment for each to be sent to him. These have been completed and the Community Team Lead will forward them.

DH

5. Refurbishment at Aldeburgh Library

The Chair of the Governance Committee asked the Board to review and accept the proposal for the closure of Aldeburgh library to allow for refurbishment.

The refurbishment of Aldeburgh library will incorporate new carpet tiles, installing internal glazing panels in the foyer, new shelving on wheels and walled shelving and IT areas.

To allow this work to take place a closure of just over two-weeks will be required. The Library will close on 1st September 2016 and re-open on 19th September 2016.

The Board agreed unanimously to accept this proposal.

6. Flexible Retirement

The Chair of the Staffing Committee asked the Board to review and accept the proposal to update the Flexible Retirement Policy.

This policy is an update from the SCC Flexible Retirement Policy which came across with divestment. The Board were asked to review the options and adopt the option which allows for changes around working fewer hours so that eligible employees can claim their pensions.

The expectation is that employees will discuss their short, medium and long-term career plans with their managers. These discussions will enable Suffolk Libraries to undertake workforce successions planning whilst also providing support and development opportunities for its employees.

The Board unanimously agreed to adopt this updated policy.

	<p style="text-align: center;">7. <u>Marketing & Fundraising Research Group</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Business Development and Marketing Committee recommended to the Board, following a discussion at the recent Business Development and Marketing Committee meeting, that Suffolk Libraries should commission an external person(s) with specialist knowledge in the area of marketing and fundraising for a short period of time.</p> <p>It was explored and agreed at the committee meeting that Suffolk libraries does not have the skills or capacity to carry out this type of work. Along with a group of staff members the role will look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and exploiting new market opportunities (market research and intelligence) • Raising the status and visibility of the brand. • Developing mutually advantageous relationships with potential commercial partners. • Identifying and exploiting funding opportunities locally, countywide and nationally. <p>The entire cost of this exercise will not cost more than £15k with the intention of generating a larger return on investment.</p> <p>The Board unanimously agreed to this proposal.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>Update from Committees</u></p> <p><u>Finance and Audit</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in April:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A session with Birketts Solicitors to clarify some issues. • Year-end and audit. The year ended with a small surplus so it was agreed to give all staff members a small reward. • Fixed asset review. • Children’s centres. • Future funding. <p><u>Governance and Membership</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Governance Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in April:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of Aldeburgh Library. • Change on opening hours at Broomhill Library. • Change of opening hours at Great Cornard Library. • Future funding. • AGM update and funding. • 106 update. <p><u>Staffing</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Staffing Committee updated the Board on discussions at the</p>	

	<p>committee meeting in May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness - this has recently been more concentrated and affecting fewer staff • Review of new staff appraisal system – this has received very positive responses from managers. There will be a further review in June once the next round of appraisals have taken place. • HR structures – the Board agreed to the permanent arrangement of the interim HR team structure with Laura Cook temporarily acting as Senior HR Advisor. It was proposed that a proper job evaluation for this role is carried out with an amended role profile to reflect the permanent change in duties. The Board agreed to this proposal and thanked the HR team for all their hard work. • Revised staff survey – this will be sent out in June 2016. • Staff reward scheme – this has now been running for two years and has been reviewed following issues raised by a library manager. These issues were considered by the Staff Advisory Group who gained further feedback from other staff members. It was agreed that guidance will be re-issued and invite a manager to sit on the panel who decide rewards. The Chair mentioned that it is heartening that Suffolk libraries can react to these issues so positively. <p><u>Business Development and Marketing</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Business Development and Marketing Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing and fundraising group decision paper. • Cluster marketing – it was agreed that Suffolk Libraries can improve in cluster marketing, working with local libraries, cross promotion etc. 	
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Management Reports</u></p> <p><u>Monthly Finance Report</u></p> <p>The Head of Finance presented the month accounts for April 2016.</p> <p>This is the first month of the new financial year and the following was highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relief staff costs were high in comparison to last year. This may be due to the where Easter fell and school holidays being the two weeks after Easter. This area will continue to be reviewed in the coming months. • The Hub – activity in this area has increased slightly and a review of the space is being undertaken. The British Library wish to use The Hub for their Business and Intellectual Property Hubs project and there is a meeting in July to find out more about this. • Children & Young People have failed to provide purchase orders for room hire or an agreement on the requirement for library services. The Chief Executive has requested an explanation of the delay and stated Suffolk Libraries position of not being able to provide a service without the required agreement in place. • Suffolk Coastal have approached Suffolk Libraries with a view to taking over 	

	<p>the cleaning contract from Vertas. A meeting has been arranged for the end of May.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chubb have been doing a review of all properties for intruder alarms, fire alarms, fire equipment and monitoring. If the price is favourable it will be useful to have just one point of contact for all libraries and to remove the need to contact SCC Property. The Head of IT will check all phone lines going to all libraries (for alarms) to see if they tally up. • The audit is taking place 23rd to 27th May. This year Larking Gowan are inputting the accounts and the report into new software to enable consistency in formatting and a reduction in time spent reviewing and changing small items of inconsistency generated by spread sheet and word documents. An error had been discovered due to manual input and this has been rectified successfully. In light of this procedures have been reviewed. <p><u>Chief Executive Report</u></p> <p>The Chief Executive presented the management report to the Board and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Mental Health and Wellbeing information service has been renamed New Chapters, accompanied by a new logo and leaflets which were released during mental health awareness week. A free radio advert for the relaunch was secured with Town 102 which will be played three times a day for a month (reaching 70,000+ listeners), along with a press release to help raise awareness of the change and of the service itself. • There has been a very positive response to the Suffolk Writes project. To date there have been 29 self-published books uploaded. This includes a mixture of poetry, short stories, novels, children's stories and family history. The selection also includes the winner of the East Anglian Magazines short story writing competition and the winner and runner up of the Student New Angle prize. The most popular Suffolk Reads eBook has been borrowed 29 times since February. • The Cloud Library eBook platform is now becoming established and a picture is emerging of its strengths and weaknesses in comparison to the longer established Overdrive service. A formal evaluation is beginning with the aim of enabling a decision in the early autumn. • The Head of IT gave an update on the new self-service machines. IT are preparing a request to tender document in order to select a partner to work with Suffolk Libraries on the development aspects of the new self-service solution. As this is being funded by SCC there is a strict and lengthy procurement process to adhere to. The assumption is that the hardware will be tablets, the development work will be for approximately 3-months and it is expected that delivery will be towards the end of 2016. The Chair mentioned that this is very timely in the strategic development for Suffolk Libraries and there will be lots of opportunity for Suffolk Libraries to move to an internet model. • A complaint had been received at Ipswich County Library about the way an unattended bag was dealt with. The Compliance Manager carried out an investigation where it was found that this incident has indicated that refresher training is needed on handling complaints. Practical guidance will be given on dealing with unattended bags. 	PB
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<p>7.</p>	<p><u>Modelling and plans for future funding and contract sum negotiation</u></p> <p>The Chief Executive, Vice Chair and a number of other staff and friends group members of Suffolk Libraries recently attended an Ambitions Workshop organised by DCMS. The Vice Chair updated the Board on the workshop as follows:</p> <p>There was no local government attendance as these meetings will be behind closed doors. The ambitions blueprint offered looks very similar to what Suffolk Libraries are offering now which is very heartening. The SCC Commissioner stated that SCC have responded to the DCMS document in draft and agreed that most suggestions are currently being covered by Suffolk Libraries. Sue Buck also attended the workshop and stated that she is very proud to be involved with Suffolk Libraries as this is such a positive model.</p> <p>The Chief Executive mentioned that the document lacks dynamism and it could be seen that the suggested accreditation and self-assessment could be seen as a step backwards, the SCC Commissioner agreed with this. Moving forward there will be a redefinition of the library experience and it was agreed at a discussion in the closed Board session that this will need ambition. There is a shared interest with SCC in trying to maintain the current offer whilst continuing to develop the service offered by Suffolk Libraries, in the context of shrinking funding.</p> <p>A business case has been discussed and is being finely tuned and will be presented to the SCC Commissioner next week which will suggest projected savings over the next three years. It is important that Suffolk Libraries continues to do more for less and builds on the offer. This will be achieved by working together with SCC to anticipate and work through problems together.</p> <p>The SCC Commissioner thanked the Board and is looking forward to receiving the business case which he believes will align with SCC thoughts.</p> <p>The SCC Commissioner mentioned that a formal invitation will be sent to the Chair, the Chief Executive and a friends group member for the SCC Scrutiny Committee meeting on 29th June 2016. This meeting will, essentially, be a progress update and what may happen next. Some financial errors from the previous Scrutiny report will be addressed. The brief and the final questions for Scrutiny are expected soon and the SCC Commissioner will send these through when he receives them.</p>	<p>AW</p> <p>ST</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>There was no other business to discuss.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p><u>Date of next meeting:</u></p> <p>28th July 2016, Eye Town Hall</p>	