

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	28 th July 2016
Place	Council Chamber, Eye Town Hall
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 Richard Smith (SCC), Charlotte Clark, Marion Harvey, Esseleta Williams (SCC)
Invited	Nikki Sturmeay (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) Item 1 – 3 Only Luke Morris (Larking Gowan), Giles Kerkham (Larking Gowan)

		Action
1.	<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from James Powell, Paula Phelan, Daniel Harvey, Charlotte Clark, Esseleta Williams and Richard Hunt.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Cllr Richard Smith to his first Suffolk Libraries Board meeting and Luke Morris and Giles Kerkham from Larking Gowan.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	

<p>3.</p>	<p><u>Signing of Annual Accounts</u></p> <p>Giles Kerkham and Luke Morris of Larking Gowen attended this item of the meeting for the formal signing of the accounts. This is a formality for the Board to approve the accounts as this has already been through the audit process and a detailed report has been discussed at the Finance and Audit Committee meeting. The process has been slightly different this year as Larking Gowan have produced the report.</p> <p>Giles and Luke wished to thank the Finance Manager and her team for their hard work in producing the accounts and stated that the accounts were clean and unqualified.</p> <p>The accounts need to be signed by four Board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tony Brown (Chair) • Sylvia Knights (Vice-Chair) • Jonathan Ogden (Treasurer) • Alison Wheeler (General Manager) <p>All Board members were in full agreement with the Accounts and they were accepted. It was agreed, so as not to delay the meeting, that the papers would be signed at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Smith stated that these are an excellent set of accounts but queried why the audit fee had gone up by 11% this year. Giles Kerkham responded that this was the charge for this year plus an adjustment from last year through insufficient accruals and this will reduce next year.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Finance Manager and her team and Larking Gowen and for all their hard work to produce these accounts.</p> <p>Giles Kerkham and Luke Morris left the meeting.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p><u>Minutes of previous meeting of 26th May 2016</u></p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate account of discussions.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>Children's Centres</p> <p><i>Redacted.</i></p>	

5.

Decisions

1. Application of Membership for Sudbury Library

The Chair of the Governance Committee asked the Board to accept the application for membership from the Friends of Sudbury Library which had been reviewed and agreed at the Governance Committee meeting.

Sudbury Town Council have been the member group for Sudbury Library since 26th March 2013 and have been working in partnership with the friends of Sudbury Library. The Friends of Sudbury Library are now taking over the official membership with agreement from the Town Council.

The Board were in agreement with this.

2. Southwold Library Closure Request

The Chair of the Governance Committee asked the Board to accept the proposed 1 day closure of Southwold Library to enable new shelving to be fitted which had been reviewed and agreed at the Governance Committee meeting.

New shelving, funded by the friends group, has been ordered for Southwold Library which will require 1 day of closing for fitting. The date is to be confirmed depending upon delivery of the shelving.

The Board were in agreement with this and asked the Governance Manager to inform them of the closing date when confirmed.

3. Refurbishment of Newmarket Library Closure Request

The Chair of the Governance Committee asked the Board to accept the proposed three week closure of Newmarket Library to enable a refurbishment incorporating a new counter, new carpeting, new shelving, redecoration and making good throughout the entire upstairs of the library which had been reviewed and agreed at the Governance Committee meeting.

This will be funded by Section 106 monies and grants. The proposed dates of the closure are from 12th September 2016 with the library re-opening on 4th October 2016.

The Board were in agreement with this.

4. Auto-enrolment Pension

The Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee asked the Board to accept the proposed option for auto-enrolment pension which had been reviewed and agreed at the Finance and Audit Committee meeting.

Currently Suffolk libraries offer the pension to new employees at IPS rates, with a low take-up. From May 2017 if employees make no decision regarding their pension they will have to join the pension and then choose to opt-out if they wish.

Suffolk Libraries deadline for auto-enrolling eligible employees that are not

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6. Update from Committees

Finance and Audit

The Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in June:

- Review of the annual Accounts. A number of Committee members were unable to attend this meeting which was close to not being quorate. The Chair of Finance and Audit requested that all Board members are invited to the review of the annual Accounts next year. This was agreed.

Other topics discussed:

- Auto-enrolment pension.
- Monthly accounts.
- Section 106 update.
- Modelling and plans for future fundraising and contract sum negotiations.
- Proposal to move the savings deposit account from Barclays to Cambridge and Counties Bank due to the higher rate of interest offered following appropriate due diligence. This had been discussed previous to this meeting and all Board members were in agreement.

Governance and Membership

The Chair of the Governance Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in June:

- Friends of Sudbury Library Membership.
- Proposed closure of Southwold Library for the fitting of new shelving.
- Proposed closure of Newmarket Library for refurbishment.

Staffing

The Chair of the Staffing Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in July:

- There has been a slight reduction in the full time equivalent numbers of staff, now at 176, due to the non-replacement of some staff.
- Staff survey – the results of the recent staff survey were shared with the Board. This is the third staff survey and the board were very encouraged by the results. The Board takes this feedback very seriously and aim to shape future policies from these results. The section of feedback regarding 'My Manager' was extremely encouraging which may have coincided with the rolling out of the new appraisal system. In this survey it also enabled the senior management team to see individual results from different size libraries to see if A libraries had differing issues to single-staffed libraries.

7. **Management Reports**

Monthly Finance Report

The Head of Finance presented the monthly accounts for June 2016 to the Board.

The highlights of the report are:

- The total business monthly underspend of June 2016 is a surplus of £5K and the year to date underspend is a surplus of £8K.
- The employee costs are on target for both the month and year to date.
- There is a small variance in property costs due to a one-off back cost for Thurston rates which belonged to last year.
- Library income is showing a surplus of £19K. This is due to the ticket sales for Latitude of which Suffolk Libraries only retains a small transaction fee.
- Self-funding activities – Hollesley Bay prison management charge is still outstanding and there is a meeting with them next week.
- The Hub is showing a slow increase in activity. The British Library have stated they want to use this space as a business and enterprise hub which is likely to bring in further business. Events will be held and the income will stay with Suffolk Libraries.
- Debenham Library has moved location at a cost of over £50K. This has been covered by various different funds from SCC and local councils. The Debenham Library Friends will pay £7,500 this year leaving a £7k gap which will be covered by income through fundraising and educational classes. Suffolk Libraries have supported Debenham Library Friends to make this improvement from Suffolk County Councils funds held for Suffolk Libraries.
- A bench-marking exercise is being undertaken with the cleaning contract with Vertas as this is one of the largest contracts. Norse have been asked to provide details to the Head of Finance to provide this service for Suffolk Libraries.
Cllr Smith stated that Vertas is owned by Suffolk County Council and Norse is funded by Norfolk County Council and this contract should be reviewed very carefully. The Head of Finance stated that, as Suffolk Libraries are responsible for their own finances, the most cost-effective option must be chosen in light of the expected cost-savings.

Chief Executive Report

The Chief Executive presented highlights of the Suffolk Libraries Management report to the Board, as follows:

- Ipswich County Library Code Club has successfully applied and is now recognised as a Star Code Club. Star Code Clubs are recognised as outstanding and promoted as exemplars.
- A letter will be sent to the new Minister for Libraries, Rob Wilson, welcoming him to the new role and inviting him to visit Suffolk.
- Bookfest – planning for the 2016 Bookfest is now well underway. Key events confirmed so far feature Barbara Erskine, Elly Griffiths and James Runcie. Tickets are now on sale and more active

8. Marketing & Fundraising

The Chair presented this project which is to set-up external help to raise the profile of Suffolk Libraries and potential income opportunities.

The Chair stated that this initiative begun in response to the limited capacity Suffolk Libraries has regarding business development in the organisation versus the cost savings expected to made.

An invitation to tender generated 8 responses and Shared Intelligence were, by far, the best response. This project will look at social trends, income generation, economic development and digital literacy. 16 colleagues, from all parts of the service, are attending workshops with Shared Intelligence to discuss these points. The first meeting took place this week and was very fast-paced and positive. 4 programmes have arisen out of this meeting and will be worked upon prior to the next meeting, these are:

- Library venues
- Suffolk Libraries Extra
- Live at the Library
- Building a network of teenage volunteers to help older people with digital skills.

The Board will be updated as these programmes move forward.

9.

Modelling and plans for future funding and contract sum negotiation

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the approach which has been taken to deliver the reductions in cost, without reductions in service, proposed to SCC.

The Senior Management Team and Board have been discussing how this can be achieved and now require some feedback and a schedule of decision making so this can be taken forward.

The SCC Commissioner stated that he is waiting for a sign-off on the replacement and improvement of the self-service offer in libraries and the person responsible for this is due back to work next week.

The Suffolk Libraries Business Case will be discussed at the ACS Management Team meeting on 17th August 2016 and there will be a decision soon after this on the different aspects of the business case. The SCC Commissioner has stressed that a decision is crucial.

Cllr Smith accepted that Suffolk Libraries need to be made aware of the decision but stated that there is a Cabinet Meeting in September and the ACS Management decision may be overruled as SCC need to make £38m in savings which may mean further reductions.

Anne Mallalieu asked Cllr Smith to evaluate the added value of the library service in Suffolk and Cllr Smith appreciated this but also stressed that SCC face other priorities.

<p>10.</p>	<p><u>Reading for Pleasure</u></p> <p>The Libraries Innovation and Development Manager has recently received a distinction in her degree, graduated with a first and received a glowing account from her tutors for her dissertation on 'Reading for Pleasure' and the Chair congratulated her and asked for a brief overview of this project.</p> <p>The Reading for Pleasure project used evaluation using one cohort from a school by means of questionnaires and interviews</p> <p>The findings of this evaluation were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitudes and frequency increased • Attitudes to public libraries improved • Young people are driven by worry about future outcomes and not by receiving 'rewards' <p>The project was overall very successful but would require intense support from the Literacy Ambassador and full buy-in and belief from the schools involved if it were to be taken forward. Future application would require revision to reflect this.</p> <p>The Board gave their thanks and congratulations to the Libraries Innovation and Development Manager.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p><u>Debenham Library</u></p> <p>The Chief Executive stated that the official opening for Debenham Library is due to take place on 22nd September 2016 at 11am.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p><u>Date of next meeting:</u></p> <p>27th October 2016, Bury Library</p>	