

Suffolk's Libraries IPS

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

BOARD MEETING MINUTES - CONFIDENTIAL

Title of Meeting	Suffolk Libraries IPS - Board Meeting
Board Members	Tony Brown (Chair), Sylvia Knights (Vice Chair), Sue Buck, Charlotte Clark, Maureen Garrett-Simpson, Christine Geeson (SCC), Marion Harvey, Sally Irvine, Bruce Leeke, Alison Leyshon, Colin Rockall, Stephen Taylor (SCC), Cllr Paul West (SCC), Sarah Wilson
Date	Thursday 29 August 2019
Place	Riverside Centre, Stratford St Andrew
Time	11.00am – 1.20pm
PRESENT:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tony Brown (Chair) • Sylvia Knights (Vice Chair) • Sue Buck (Board Member) • Sally Irvine (Board Member) • Bruce Leeke (Chief Executive) • Sarah Wilson (Board Member)
In attendance:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sophie Moy (Governance Coordinator) • Mandy Wilkinson (Head of Finance)

		Action
1.	<p>Annual Accounts</p> <p>Giles Kerkham of Larking Gowan attended the meeting for the formal signing of the agreed accounts.</p> <p>Following the discussions at the Finance, Governance and Audit Committee the amendments discussed were taken into account and actioned.</p> <p>It was noted savings had been made during the year, such as bringing IT in house, however, Suffolk Libraries were still budgeting a deficit in 2019-20.</p> <p>The Board noted there was some concerns as to not being reliant on one key person and as such processes were being reviewed. The Committee structure had also been reviewed in order to tighten up on finance.</p> <p>Giles finished his presentation of the accounts by stating that Suffolk Libraries was in a very good and secure position.</p>	

	<p>The accounts were formally signed by the Chair of Finance, Governance and Audit Committee, the Chair of the Board, the Honorary Secretary and Chief Executive.</p> <p>Giles and his team were thanked for their work on the accounts. Suffolk Libraries valued the history of the relationship with Larking Gowen. Thanks were also given to the Head of Finance and her team.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from Jayne Austin (SCC), Maureen Garrett-Simpson, Chrissie Geeson (SCC), Marion Harvey (Library Manager – Ipswich), Alison Leyshon and Colin Rockall.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Minutes of previous meeting 27 June 2019</u></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true and accurate account of discussions subject to a couple of amendments being made to the following item:</p> <p>Item 7 – Governance Review - Confidential</p> <p><u>Matters arising:</u></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Update from Committees:</u></p> <p>Finance Governance and Audit Committee</p> <p>The Chair of the Finance, Governance and Audit Committee informed the Board of discussions which were held at the last meeting which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual accounts. • The potential replacement of public PCs, of which no progress had been made. • Microsoft support would cease as from 2020. • Performance figures would give a clear analysis for the future. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content and Product update. There had been an increase in digital use. • NPO. An event had been held at Felixstowe. The Board were to be invited to future events. Impact to be included in future reports. • An aspirational Environment Policy. <p>She concluded by highlighting that she would continue to liaise with the Head of Finance in light of the gap between Committees and would highlight to the Board any issues which arose.</p> <p>Staffing Committee</p> <p>The Chair of the Staffing Committee informed the Board of discussions held at the meeting on 29 August 2019. The committee discussed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Plan. The promotion of values. Thank you cards would now be used and there was a revised reward process which was up and running. The first Panel meeting would take place on the 10 December 2019. • From October 2019 there would be a detailed GALLUP survey to gauge staff engagement. • Sickness absence was mostly due to mental health problems. • Leadership Course. The Board felt it would be useful if in 6 months' time participants could come and speak to the Board to provide feedback. 	
6.	<p>Management reports</p> <p><u>Key Performance Indicator's (KPIs)</u></p> <p>The Chief Executive presented the report and highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values – there had been a frustrating delay in the full communications of them. This had been caused by slippage of the design deadline for the new logo from July 2019 to August 2019. This was due to the work taking longer than was anticipated. • Customer Service Standard – Nearly on track for the deadline but EARWIG would need to review before it was finally signed off. • Brand Review – not much progress has been made on obtaining a secondment or postholder, but the process was still moving forward. • Prison business unit was performing well. • Suffolk Libraries Day – some library sites had limited ambition which was a concern. Therefore, there was a lower income projection than originally expected. The Business Development Manager was working with sites to affect positive change. The Board felt that Library Managers should work with their friends' groups to increase 	

	<p>understanding that funds should be raised for Suffolk Libraries as a whole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems were still being experienced with footfall counters. <p>The Chief Executive concluded that the KPI sheet was a work in progress.</p> <p><u>Chief Executive Officer report</u></p> <p>The Chief Executive presented the report to the Board and highlighted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics in relation to marketing were encouraging and visitors to the website were up by 11% compared to 2018. • Children’s month prompted a 2% increase in children’s borrowing which was a further indicator of the good work from the Marketing team. • Library performance – footfall counters were not proving to be useful at present but in general the direction of travel was a positive one. Physical loans were in decline; however, this was at a slower rate than nationally. • Staffing – Anti Social Behaviour issues were difficult to predict. The Chief Executive to chase up the Chief Constable. • Bid for funding – Suffolk Libraries had been shortlisted to the last 30 of the NESTA Tech to Connect fund for Happy Place and should find out by the 16 September 2019 if they have been successful in their bid. The Chief Executive hoped this would be a positive story. <p>The Board recognised all the good work which had taken place.</p> <p><u>Monthly Finance Report</u></p> <p>The Head of Finance updated the Board on the management accounts to July 2019 which were below budget with a deficit of £13,000 in the month.</p> <p>The Head of Finance pointed out the reduction in the forecast profit generation for Suffolk Libraries day. Mobile Library costs may increase and was an ongoing project.</p> <p>Finances were steady at present.</p> <p>Thanks, were given to the Head of Finance for a comprehensive report.</p>	BL
7.	<p>Scheme of Delegation/Investment Policy</p> <p>The Head of Finance explained both documents had been through several Committees and reiterated that there was the caveat that these documents would be reviewed on an annual basis.</p>	

	<p>The Board agreed both documents and were happy that they would be reviewed annually.</p> <p>Thanks, were given to those people who put together the documents and found it reassuring that the auditors had also reviewed the document. Both documents had been amended accordingly as per previous recommendations.</p> <p>The Scheme of Delegation and the Investment Policy were approved.</p>	
8.	<p>Any other business:</p> <p>Temporary Closure of Thurston Library -The Board reviewed the proposal which had been put forward in respect of the temporary closure of Thurston library. This was found to be a straightforward decision and the Board were pleased to see a combination of funding sources being used. This proposal was approved.</p> <p>It was noted that there were funding opportunities to be had from both the County Council as well as Districts which could be exploited in the future.</p> <p>Halesworth Library Manager – It was noted that the new Halesworth Library Manager would soon commence her employment. The Board hoped that she would receive appropriate support in order to lay down markers of her role as well as Suffolk Library responsibilities and that of the Friends Group. The Chief Executive would speak with the Head of Community and Performance to ensure this was managed accordingly. The Chair of the Board was also happy to visit as part of the Manager’s induction programme.</p> <p>AGM Nominations – A discussion took place as to the lack of nominations received to join Suffolk Libraries Board. It was therefore agreed to extend the nomination deadline with Board members being proactive in obtaining some interest.</p>	BL
	<p><i>It was agreed that the following items were discussed in private, for Board Members only.</i></p>	
9.	<p><u>CONFIDENTIAL</u></p> <p>Navigating a path to a sustainable future</p> <p>This was a confidential item.</p>	
10.	<p><u>Approach for Business Development Discussions in the future</u></p> <p>This was a confidential item.</p>	
11.		

	<p>Any other business</p> <p>It was noted that this was Alison Leyshon, Co-opted Member, last Board meeting. Alison could be re-co-opted at the next Board meeting after the AGM if she so wished.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>The Governance Coordinator to circulate a draft schedule of meetings which would be agreed at the next Board meeting.</p>	

The meeting closed at 1:20pm

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