

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

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| **Title of Meeting:** | Suffolk Libraries IPS - Board Meeting |
| **Date:** | Thursday 29th October 2020 |
| **Place:** | Virtual Meeting via Zoom |
| **Time:** | 10:00am-12:00pm |
| **Board Members:** | **Name:** | **Month and year of appointment:** |
| Tony Brown (Chair) | September 2013 |
| Sylvia Knights (Vice Chair) | February 2012 |
| Bruce Leeke (Chief Executive) | February 2018 |
| Maureen Garratt Simpson | September 2018 |
| Alison Leyshon | December 2018 |
| Kathryn Oliver | August 2020 |
| Rebecca Leek | August 2020 |
| Sheila Fox | August 2020 |
| Elizabeth Ditton | August 2020 |
| Debra Reay | August 2020 |
| Derrick Haley | August 2020 |
| **PRESENT:** | * Tony Brown **(TB)**
* Sylvia Knights **(SK)**
* Bruce Leeke (Chief Executive) **(BL)**
* Maureen Garratt Simpson **(MGS)**
* Alison Leyshon **(AL)**
* Kathryn Oliver **(KO)**
* Rebecca Leek **(RL)**
* Sheila Fox **(SF)**
* Elizabeth Ditton **(LD)**
* Debra Reay **(DR)**
* Derrick Haley **(DH)**
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| **In attendance:** | * Mandy Wilkinson (Head of Finance) **(MW)**
* Laura Richardson (Clerk to the Board) **(LR)**
* Four observers (potential future trustees)
* Sam Cayford (From SCC ) **(SC)**
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| **No.** | **Agenda Item:** | **Actions:** |
| **1.** | **Welcome and apologies:**No apologies received. Board noted that **LR** is new Governance Coordinator/Clerk to the Board at Suffolk Libraries. **BL** confirmed there are also four observers today, potential trustees. **SK** confirmed to the group re existing policies being reviewed are long standing policies that board members need to be aware of, but group do not need to go through in detail today. Group introduced themselves to each other as there are new members and observers. |  |
| **2.**  | **Notification of election of Chair, Vice Chair, Honorary Secretary and co-options:****BL** confirmed and welcomed new Board Members:* Debra Reay **(DR)**
* Derrick Haley **(DH)**
* Liz Ditton **(LD)**
* Rebecca Leek **(RL)**
* Sheila Fox **(SF)**

**LR** introduced herself and stated that, as part of the Rules of Suffolk Libraries, the Chair and Vice Chair will be voted upon as this is the first meeting after the AGM. Expressions of interest were sought from all Board members and the following have been received:* Chair – Tony Brown **(TB)**
* Vice Chair – Sylvia Knights **(SK)**

LR asked for a proposer and seconder from the Board members for the Chair and Vice Chair roles which were as follows:**Chair role:*** Proposer: Maureen **(MGS)**
* Seconder: Derrick **(DH)**

**Vice Chair Role:*** Proposer: Alison **(AL)**
* Seconder: Bruce **(BL)**

**LR** asked for a show of hands if all are in agreement, this was therefore then agreed by the other Board members. Thanks, from **TB** and **SK** to the group as they remain the Chair and Vice Chair.  |  |
| **3.** | **Declarations of the Board Code of Conduct:**Honorary Secretary Role was discussed, **MGS** is to continue, proposer **TB**, seconder **SK**. All agreed.**TB** welcomed any questions/comments from the group.**DH**: comprehensive and acceptable, others agreed. Discussion around signing the document, **TB**: will need to be signed in person.**LR** to send out to the group via email, to be returned to **LR** via email or to Ipswich Library (via internal or external post). If anyone would prefer this posted to them please let **LR** know where to send to.**RL** suggested to add more re: ‘abuse of power’ to this document **TB** agreed to add to next Governance Committee agenda, **action** **LR** | **LR✓****ALL****LR✓** |
| **4.** | **Minutes of previous meeting of 27 August 2020****Matters arising:****AL** query on page 1 an attendee of the meeting, confirmed it was **SC** (SCC member) Group discussion around detail needed in minutes, agreed to minimise minute content and **action LR** to make a clearer actions column, group to feedback on this at next meeting.**AL** query page 4, action for **AL** but not clear what it is for –**LR** looked into after the meeting and cannot see an action in the minutes, likely a typing error.Queries were made re meanings of acronyms for SPINE (Sharing of library resources with Cambridge and Peterborough), BLOC (Arts group funding) A Glossary of terms will be supplied to Board (**action LR).**The minutes were then accepted by attendees of the previous meeting as a true account of discussions. | **LR✓****LR** |
| **5.** | **Review of delegation arrangements to committees and executives**.Led by **TB**.**BL** attends all committees.* **Finance and Audit Committee** will be attended by **DH**, **SK**, **AL** and **MGS**.
* **Governance and risk committee** will be attended by **AL**, **DH**, **TB**, **RL** and **SK**
* **Health and Safety Committee** will be attended by **MGS** and **LD**
* **HR and Staffing Committee** will be attended by **LD**, **SF**, **KO**, **TB**, and **MGS**
* **Business Development and Marketing Committee** – **LD**, **KO** and **RL** would like to join if the committee is reconvened in future.
* **BL: Arts Council Representative, Trustee Representative** is needed, meets 4 times a year, run by programmes manager Mellissa Mathews, offer kindly by **DH** and **DR**, however **DR** will take up this position as she has great relevant experience.

**TB**: chairs for each meeting will be elected at the first meeting each year, **action all** - please let **LR** know if you would like to be put forward for these positions. | **ALL** |
| **6.** | **Review of the terms of references for committees and the Board:****TB**: These are reviewed at first committee meeting of each year. Linked below for everyone’s information:* Business Development & Marketing Committee
* Finance and Audit Committee
* Governance and Risk Committee
* Health & Safety Committee
* HR- Staffing Committee

Board Terms of Reference:**AL**: section 4, ref to election of chair, change wording to: ‘may not vote on committees not part of(…)’ All agreed. **Action AL** to send to **LR** exact wording, **action LR** to add to this to the Terms of Reference document. | **AL✓****LR✓** |
| **7.** | **Establishment of any new committees, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute Directors) and appointments to them.**No new committees were formed at this meeting.  |  |
| **8.** | **Review and adopt Standing Orders and Finance Regulations**General discussion around this, **AL** raised a point regarding insurance, the board is responsible for determining and annually reviewing which risks Suffolk Libraries should be insured for, **TB/BL/AL** agreed to add to agenda of next Governance and Risk Committee meeting (**action LR**), and then feedback to the board at the next board meeting. Group agreed the documents:* Proposer: **SK**
* Seconder: **DH**

Documents adopted by the group. | **LR✓** |
| **9.** | **Review of:*** **Representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back:**

**TB:** no previous issues* **The Board’s complaints procedure the Board’s procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998**:

**TB:** important policy, no issues raised regarding the procedures of the Board.**LD**: pg. 3 query, ICO is Information Commissioners Office, also Track and Trace slips in libraries, is there a system for destroying of this? **BL**: confirmed kept in date order and destroyed after 3/4 weeks **action BL** will check with library managers and **ME** (Mike Ellwood, Compliance Manager) to confirm process of checking this has been done. **KO**: confirmed it is 21 days, and people can also use QR code to confirm their attendance, **BL**: cannot enforce this though. **Action LR** to find confirmation it is 21 days to hold then destroy – “keep these records of customers, visitors and staff for 21 days and provide data to NHS Test and Trace if requested” (*taken from:* [*https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace 29/10/20 15:40*](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace%2029/10/20%2015%3A40)) **RL**: who is data protection officer, **BL** it is **ME**. Documents agreed by the group. | **BL****LR✓** |
| **10.** | **Establishing or reviewing the Board’s policy for dealing with the press/media** **TB**: always room for improvement on this policy.Congratulations extended to **KV** (Krystal Vittles) on getting her article in the Guardian.**LD**: can references to individual Libraries include reference that Suffolk libraries is a Charity, also can this document be shared with individual libraries and community groups to raise awareness of Suffolk Libraries charity status?**AL**: discussion around whether this was guidance or a policy, is there a separate policy stating who is authorised to talk to press, and is this just the supporting guidance?**SK/BL**: discussion around previous guidance and whether this was shared to community groups/individual libraries, need to check if there is a policy in place for this, **action** **LR** to follow up. **RL**: consistency is mentioned in this document, suggested to add a summary of ‘Suffolk Libraries is a Charity…’ e.g. to each policy/guidance. Also, section re ‘photos’ needs further description, refer to the policy on this perhaps – **action LR** to follow up with **ME/BL**.**LD**: Suffolk archives – contact regarding ‘thriving during lockdown’ section and quotes, perhaps send this to them – **BL to action**.**TB**: asked group to share ideas of how the message that Suffolk Libraries is a charity welcomed – **action all**. **LD**: bookmark that has been going into reserve books has been a great idea as mentions Charity status and what its supporting, **BL**: there is standard wording, will share with the Board – **action BL**.**DH**: dealing with the media, appropriate to add to guidance/policy who can talk to the media e.g. the Chair and CEO only and made clear to all staff, **TB**: mainly go through James Powell as his job role, but could add this caveat for clarity – **action LR/BL/ME****KO**: query because locally library manager regular writes into local paper, **BL** confirmed this is just guidance/policy for the Board, not the whole organisation, at a local level are aware of their expectations and procedures**RL**: is mentioned in code of conduct, refer to this in policy/guidance – **action LR/BL/ME** | **LR****LR/BL****BL****ALL****BL****LR/BL****LR/BL** |
| **11.** | **Set dates/times for remainder of 2020/21****BL**: issues have been raised previously around attendance of meetings on a Thursday, no further issues were raised around this at the meeting.**AL**: in discussion re changing date of first governance meeting – likely to be Wednesday 18th November.**Action: LR** will send out outlook invites to all as meeting dates were agreed by the Board. | **LR** |
| **12.** | **Declarations of interest**There were no declarations of interest. This item will be higher on the agenda in all meetings.  |  |
| **13.** | **Committee reports:*** **Finance and Audit** – **SK**: hasn’t been an F&A since the last Board Meeting, **MW** sent a report to **SK** to check, nothing of concern from august report. All agreed.
* **Governance and Risk** – **AL**: haven’t met yet, first item will be to review the risk register, need **BL**’s team to complete their review of this first. **AL** meeting **ME** 30/10 to discuss the agenda etc. Meeting should be held in the next 2/3 weeks. **BL**: no feedback received so will agree as is.
* **HR** – **BL**: representing today as previous chair no longer a member, staff welfare paramount since reopening from Covid closures, using Gallop12 Covid survey for staff regarding safety mainly, all responses were well above benchmark meaning happy with procedures in place to keep them safe, won’t get complacent with this. ‘Making your life better’ staff engagement programme meeting regularly, **action LR** add to next agenda item, leads will attend and raise key priorities/recommendations regarding this.
* **Health and Safety** – **MGS**: August meeting was focussed on Covid precautions, approached occupational therapists for vulnerable costumers and staff, resource available on intranet, risk assessments carried out at each site, improved cleaning, social distancing measures, perspex screens everywhere now, face visors and masks in use, uncomfortable but necessary. Book returns are quarantined for 72 hours, expanded on psychological training etc. as mentioned by **BL** above. Covid situation ever changing. **TB**: praised all who worked on the 44 risk assessments and all Covid safety measures that have been carried out. **LD** praised everyone for their hard work for a safe reopening. Thank you from **BL** for the positive comments from the Board. **RL/BL**: discussion around continuity plans, expecting to switch to virtual offer soon as Covid ongoing, successfully ran services during lockdown, extended this offer, teams prepared for ongoing online service, teams prepped for recording content, engaging with communities to find out what they need and switching to online service at any point if needed. Monitoring of staff wellbeing will continue during this.
 | **LR** |
| **14.** | **Management reports:** **Chief Executive** – please see attached report for further detail. * **BL**: Activity summary covering four pillars, idea is that it is in this format to see how services link to these pillars, further into the report is HR statistics, social media engagement etc.
* Report is a snapshot of strategic development ongoing at the moment.
* Alison: amazing progress getting onto broader agenda, asked for further clarification around the app development, **BL** confirmed hoping for funding from NHS to develop the app, local pilot with view to develop nationally.
* Barclays funding iPads, will these be taken off site? **BL**: have some funding for buying devices, Barclays to provide further funding for this, to develop wider pool of devices (particularly cellular technology so no need for WIFI at their home), so people can loan them to take home and return much like borrowing a book (already do this but want to make a bigger service). **AL**: concerns around safeguarding access to certain ‘dark web’ sites through the iPad’s and prevention of them being stolen etc, **BL**: this will all be looked at once the project progresses. Alison had difficulty accessing online shop, **action BL** will look into making this clearer.
* **TB**: exemplary management report, demonstrates amazing ground coverage of the organisation. Praise to **BL** and team for raising Suffolk libraries to national attention, applause for the team.

**Head of Finance** –please see attached reports for further detail. * **MW**: Aim is to make the accounts as transparent as possible; any questions please just ask or contact MW after the meeting if it would be helpful. Covid grants have been invaluable, Auditors agreed they will be declared in 2020/21 accounts. Without their support SL would have a YTD loss of £220,000, really helping to support us, main loss has been through loss of paid room bookings, book fees and charges etc.
* Spent £35,000 on protecting members of staff, cleaning, moving of desks, perspex screens, PPE etc. Didn’t fit into criteria for the 2nd round of funding as we had higher reserves, always looking for funding options available.
* re generating late fees from late book returns – SL earns 100% of commission on all fees levied by SCC, this means customers are not charged VAT on the fees. The commission provides £180,000 income a year, this hasn’t been received this year due to Covid restrictions/closures.
* Rebranding of Suffolk libraries: may roll out into more libraries in future when possible/in line with refurbishments.
* Delay in recruitment etc. due to later than expected opening of libraries has mitigated this loss.
* Main hub in Ipswich library, now split in 3 areas, depreciation costs of £25,000 a year are incurred with no income to offset as closed due to Covid.
* Current loss YTD is £222,000 (without Covid Grants) reopening of libraries were delayed by 2 months than budgeted. The forecast is not set in stone and things that are taken into consideration are stated on the report.
* Every library has its own friends group, enabled refurbishments to take place. SL does still need funding for running costs, therefore creating a ‘Friends of Suffolk libraries’ to help support this, and this will also provide the Charity Commission registered charity number which is much needed as it is widely understood by the public.
* SL are also creating a separate trading company that will own the APP which is being created if grant funding/partner funding can be achieved. It will be a separate legal entity from Suffolk libraries and any profit will be donated to SL at the end of each financial year.
* **LD**: cost of Ipswich library clean? **MW**: if building closed for 72 hours it is safe, all surfaces are then cleaned and materials have to be thrown away, cost was £125, asking for breakdown of this to confirm. Extra steam cleaning took place for staff peace of mind which was £100.
* **DR**: delighted to hear of friends of Suffolk Libraries initiative

**TB**: thanked Mandy for her update, gave overview of why we are transparent, for good governance and so everyone is up to speed. **MW**: for new members, we are paid from SCC in advance each quarter, EG invoiced beg of march paid end of march, for period April – May. **SK**: reserves available are not as large as they ought to be for organisation size, regular annual conversation with auditors, because SCC funding is in advance it makes this acceptable for the auditors. | **BL✓** |
| **15.** | **Any other business:*** **New Trustee Induction** – **TB**: two hours constructive session has been done, any further questions from anyone please ask **TB** or **BL**.
* **Any questions from new board members** – No further questions from the group. **TB**: in future may focus one hour on reports, and one hour on exploratory conversations. **SC**: grateful for Suffolk Libraries reaction to Covid situation, promoting Library work to SCC with **BL**, newsletter has been sent out. **TB**: thanks to **SC** for update and attendance.
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| **16.** | **Date of Next Meeting:*** 17th December 2020 – 10am-12pm
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**The meeting closed at: 12:04pm**