

# 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 <sup>th</sup> November 2015
Place	Castle Hill Community Centre
Time	3.15pm – 4.45pm
Attendees	Tony Brown (Chair), Sylvia Knights (Vice Chair), Anne Mallalieu, Alison Wheeler (General Manager), 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 Sturmeay (Governance Manager), Krystal Vittles (Libraries Innovation and Development manager), James Hargrave (Head of IT), Mandy Wilkinson (Finance Manager), Paul Howarth (Stock Manager), Daniel Harvey (Community Team Lead), Paula Phelan (HR Manager), James Powell (Marketing & Communications Manager)

		Action
1.	<p><b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Sylvia Knights, Charlotte Clark and Richard Hunt.</p>	
2.	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>The Chair declared an interest in Item 4, Beccles Opening Hours.</p>	
3.	<p><b><u>Minutes of previous meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015</u></b></p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate account of discussions.</p> <p><b><u>Matters Arising</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Lowestoft Library</u></b></p> <p>The café at Lowestoft Library will be closed by Christmas 2015.</p> <p><b><u>Leadership Libraries Task Force</u></b></p> <p>The task force will be visiting Suffolk in early 2016. The dates will be sent to Board members when they have been notified.</p>	
4.	<p><b><u>Decisions</u></b></p>	

	<p><b>1. <u>Hadleigh Library change of hours</u></b></p> <p>Hadleigh Library has submitted a proposal to make an amendment to their opening hours which will see the library open for 30 minutes longer per week, at no additional cost due to realignment in staff. The change would see the library close at 5pm instead of 7.30pm on Friday, with the two and a half hours opening being moved elsewhere during the week in addition to the further 30 minutes.</p> <p>The Board were all in agreement with this proposal.</p> <p><b>2. <u>Beccles Library change of hours</u></b></p> <p>Beccles Library is open till at least 5pm each weekday, except Wednesdays when it closes at 1pm. It has been identified that there is customer demand for the library to open until 5pm on Wednesdays. It is proposed that the community group in Beccles (Beccles Library Community Trust) underwrite the additional associated costs. This increase is for an initial period of 2 years but with the expectation that it will continue beyond then.</p> <p>The Board were all in agreement with this proposal. Peter Callaghan stated that Beccles are in an extremely lucky position as most community groups could not afford this.</p> <p><b>3. <u>Fixed Asset Review</u></b></p> <p>This review has arisen from a long discussion with Larking Gowan auditors relating to spending by community groups and how this appears in the accounts of Suffolk Libraries. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.</p> <p>The board were all in agreement with this proposal.</p> <p><b>4. <u>Staffing Committee Terms of Reference</u></b></p> <p>The terms of reference for the staffing committee were reviewed. There has been one addition, as follows:  ‘Conduct and annual review of the Board member’s skills and make recommendations for the need for co-options to the Board arising from this review’.</p> <p>The Board were in full agreement and accepted the terms.</p> <p><b>5. <u>Business Development and Marketing Committee Terms of Reference</u></b></p> <p>The terms were discussed and the Board were in full agreement.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Update from Committees</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Finance and Audit</u></b></li> </ul> <p>In the absence of the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee the General Manager gave a brief update of the meeting in October detailing that the primary focus of the discussions at the meeting were around the contract sum.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Governance and Membership</u></b></li> </ul> <p>The Chair of the Governance Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in October:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Changes in Library opening hours.</li> <li>○ Lowestoft Cafe</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Staffing</u></b></li> </ul> <p>The Chair of the Staffing Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in November:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Performance Management is now underway.</li> <li>○ IT Recruitment – the current Head of IT is leaving at the end of this year and a selection process has taken place for the new Head of IT.</li> <li>○ Staff Development Day feedback – the Chair shared the feedback report from this event stating that it was a very positive day and very well received by the staff. There were 2 local author speeches and staff had the opportunity to meet Board members.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Business Development and Marketing</u></b></li> </ul> <p>The Chair of the Business Development and Marketing Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in November:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There was a discussion around an approach to Norfolk which will be made in 2016.</li> <li>○ Libraries Books and Reading Team update.</li> <li>○ Fundraising discussions – there is an archive on horseracing history in Newmarket Library which could potentially attract sponsorship.</li> <li>○ Branding guidelines – these were reviewed and agreed.</li> <li>○ Fundraising events – such as gala dinners to raise money were discussed.</li> </ul>	
6.	<p><b><u>Management Reports</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Monthly Finance Report</u></b></li> </ul> <p>The Finance Manager briefly updated the Board on the Management Account figures for October 2015. The highlights were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Support services – the area needs to be viewed in tandem with the Employee costs at the moment as the savings on salary costs in Central office are offsetting the increase in Direct Library costs.</li> <li>○ Library Income - Library fees and charges are under budget but this is being offset by the increase in printer and photocopier charges and Management recharges.</li> <li>○ Friends Group Activities – the main spend this month has been from Elmswell for the library refit.</li> <li>○ Prisons – all purchase order numbers have now been received and the management charges have been made. As the management</li> </ul>	

	<p>charge has not increased in three years there will be negotiations with the prisons in the next few months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lowestoft Café – the decision to close Lowestoft Café was taken in October.</li> <li>○ LBaRT (SLS) – CYP have been invoiced their service charge for the year which has given a boost to LBaRT. Refunds have been minor and the team can now concentrate on moving forward.</li> </ul> <p>• <b><u>General Managers Report</u></b></p> <p>The General manager presented the November Management report to the Board and gave the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The BBC launched their national Make to Digital initiative including Weather Watchers during October and Suffolk Libraries were the first library service to beta test their new web pages.</li> <li>○ At the launch of the new national learning offer for Libraries in Camden the film commissioned about libraries included the Aldeburgh learning and the new Code Green Guide on Digital Making which included a Suffolk case study.</li> <li>○ The staff sickness absence rate has decreased compared to the same period in 2014.</li> <li>○ There is planning underway for a literacy conference in April 2016. This will be aimed at school leaders and other organisations working with young people. The emphasis for the conference will be about how to use books and reading for pleasure to help children and young people’s wellbeing and mental health in schools</li> <li>○ Publicity - Police Dog Hogan live music event at Ipswich County Library was published by BBC Radio Suffolk, Suffolk Live, EADT and the Ipswich Star. Band member and Guardian columnist Tim Dowling also reported favourably on his library experience in his latest column.</li> <li>○ Lowestoft anti-social behaviour has escalated and the decision has been taken to close the Library at 5pm daily for a short period of time to meet with local community leaders to see if the situation can be addressed. The meeting will take place on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015. Suffolk Libraries has worked very hard with SCC on dealing with these issues. The guidelines for dealing with anti-social behaviour will be put on the staff intranet.</li> </ul> <p>The Community Team Lead stated that there have been 4490 events held in libraries for the first 6 months this year, with over 75,000 attendees. The Chair mentioned that he found the statistics of events and activities extremely interesting but would like to have some narrative for the key areas for collated statistics.</p>	<p>JP</p> <p>DH</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b><u>Contract Sum Negotiation</u></b></p> <p>The General Manager presented the Contract Sum 2016/17 paper to the Board. The paper recommended the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To propose to SCC for a contract sum with a reduction of £300,000 for 2016/17.</li> <li>○ To negotiate with SCC on the contract sum for 2017/18, timetable yet to</li> </ul>	

	<p>be agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To engage in the development of a strategic vision for 2017 and beyond.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that it is everybody's interest that this sum is agreed as soon as possible and the timescales on the agreement for 2017, and beyond, are confirmed.</p> <p>The Chair stated that he had felt encouraged and supported by Cllr Stamp after attending the SCC Scrutiny Committee meeting earlier today.</p> <p>Stephen Taylor thanked the Board for the proposal and stated that this needed to be taken away to discuss with colleagues. He agreed that it would be ideal if this could be agreed prior to the next scheduled meeting in December.</p> <p>Cllr Stamp agreed that the discussions had been positive and appreciated that the offer from Suffolk Libraries has been returned so quickly. SCC will seek to respond in a timely fashion.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Cllr Stamp for the shared intent for looking at the future and Cllr Stamp confirmed that she is a staunch ambassador for the libraries whilst recognising that financial cuts need to be made. Cllr Stamp is thankful for the realistic conversations and the forward thinking of Suffolk Libraries and acknowledges that finding £300,000 in savings is going to be very difficult.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that Suffolk Libraries are looking forward to the response and will be as constructive as possible in future discussions.</p>	
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b><u>LBaRT Update</u></b></p> <p>The Libraries Innovation and Development Manager gave an verbal update on the Libraries Books and Reading Team following the presentation to the Business Development and Marketing Committee from the Business Manager of LBaRT, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The new refined service has now bedded down.</li> <li>○ Cambridgeshire has no schools service so will be approached for business. Other areas are being investigated.</li> <li>○ Property location – currently this service runs out of two buildings and one property is now being investigated.</li> <li>○ Staffing changes – the new Librarian has started and a current valued team member is leaving. This role will not be recruited to and the responsibilities will be shared.</li> <li>○ All stock has been transferred to Spydus.</li> <li>○ There will be a staff development say on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015 where new ways of working will be discussed.</li> <li>○ Most customers have been retained and small pockets of growth are being seen. The Business Manager is working on increasing the customer base.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p>	

	<p><b><u>Customer Survey Overview</u></b></p> <p>The Marketing and Communications Manager gave an update on the customer survey responses to date.</p> <p>Hard copies of this survey continue to be received and logged and to date 1495 have been received. This is already a higher response to the survey in 2013.</p> <p>Some of the results so far include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 96% of customers think the service is the same, or better, than when the service was under SCC.</li> <li>○ 80% of the respondees are over 45 years old.</li> <li>○ 93% felt events at libraries were either excellent, very good or good.</li> </ul> <p>There will be a more thorough comparison completed for the next meeting once all the responses have been logged.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Marketing and Communications Manager for his hard work on this and was very pleased with the positive response from customers.</p> <p><b><u>Head of IT</u></b></p> <p>The Chair and Board thanked the Head of IT for all the hard work he has done since he started working with Suffolk Libraries and wished him all the very best for the future and his new role in Cambridge.</p>	<b>JP</b>
<b>10.</b>	<p><b><u>Date of Next Meeting:</u></b></p> <p>28<sup>th</sup> January 2016, Bury Library</p>	