

# 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	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2016
Place	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 Sarah Stamp (SCC), Charlotte Clark, Marion Harvey
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)

		Action
1.	<p><b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Tony Brown, Krystal Vittles, Mandy Wilkinson, Sarah Stamp, Richard Hunt, Charlotte Clarke and Paul Howarth.</p> <p>Sylvia Knights (Vice Chair) chaired this meeting in the absence of Tony Brown (Chair).</p>	
2.	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3.	<p><b><u>Minutes of previous meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016</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>Norfolk</u></b></p> <p>The Vice Chair was not aware of any contact between Tony Brown and Norfolk yet. The Chief Executive has spoken with Chris Bally at SCC who mentioned that there could be something, as part of the devolution process, around devolved libraries. This is ongoing and updates will be given when necessary.</p>	

<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Decisions</u></b></p> <p><b>1. <u>Finance Regulations (incl. Public Procurement Regulations Update)</u></b></p> <p>The Finance Regulations were reviewed and agreed at the Finance and Audit meeting in February. The main changes to the document were title changes from Finance Manager to Head of Finance and General Manager to Chief Executive.</p> <p>The Board were in agreement and this policy was adopted.</p> <p><b>2. <u>Environmental Policy</u></b></p> <p>The Environmental policy was reviewed and agreed at the Finance and Audit meeting in February.</p> <p>The Board were in agreement and the policy was adopted.</p> <p><b>3. <u>Board Confidentiality Policy &amp; Procedures</u></b></p> <p>The Board Confidentiality Policy and Procedures were reviewed and agreed at the Governance meeting in February. The main changes to the document were title changes from General Manager to Chief Executive.</p> <p>The Board were in agreement and the policy was adopted. A signed copy will be kept on file.</p> <p><b>4. <u>Board Code of Conduct</u></b></p> <p>The Board Code of Conduct was reviewed and agreed at the Governance meeting in February. The main changes to the document were title changes from General Manager to Chief Executive.</p> <p>The Board were in agreement and the policy was adopted.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Update from Committees</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Finance and Audit</u></b></p> <p>The Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Group Income Protection scheme was discussed. This is an initiative from Human Resources. The benefit scheme for employees on the new terms was reviewed and it was found that this scheme wasn't providing enough cover to employees who had to leave due to ill health. This has now been amended to cover employees on new terms to start after 6 months sickness. This will mean a saving of £3k per annum.</li> <li>• Monthly finance figures.</li> <li>• Funding and contract sum negotiation.</li> <li>• Review of the Finance Regulations.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LBaRT property decision. It was agreed that LBaRT will move to one location (Lowestoft) to save costs. This is on schedule and the relocation will take place in May.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Governance and Membership</u></b></p> <p>The Chair of the Governance Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on Section 106.</li> <li>• Review of Section 106 Handbook for members. Stephen Taylor asked for a copy of this to be sent to him.</li> <li>• The refurbishment of Kesgrave Library.</li> <li>• Review and agreement of the Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Policy.</li> <li>• Library name changes.</li> <li>• A draft Members handbook was reviewed. Sponsorship is being sought for this handbook and this will come to the Board for agreement.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Staffing</u></b></p> <p>The Chair of the Staffing Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in March:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff sickness – the trend increases downwards and absence due to stress has shown a steady decrease which is very good news.</li> <li>• Library activities – the Board is well aware and grateful for all the excellent work and activity in all libraries and are very grateful for all the great and innovative work happening across the County. The Chief Executive will include this in her staff message which is being sent out this week. The Manager at Newmarket is retiring today and has banked over £600 in Friends Group funds.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Business Development and Marketing</u></b></p> <p>The Chair of the Business Development and Marketing Committee updated the Board on discussions at the committee meeting in March:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income priorities.</li> <li>• Fundraising.</li> <li>• Setting up a Marketing Team from current staff members (secondments). This is currently being investigated by Human Resources and the Finance Team regarding the costs and viability and will pull on existing staff knowledge.</li> <li>• Feedback from Suffolk Libraries Advice Forum day and taking this forward.</li> </ul>	KV
<b>6.</b>	<p><b><u>Management Reports</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Monthly Finance Report</u></b></p>	

The Chief Executive gave an update to the Board in the absence of the Head of Finance.

The key statement is that the forecast for year-end is break-even. The service has managed to mitigate the impact of the underperforming self-funding areas such as Lowestoft Café and the Libraries Books and Reading Team.

The Support Services have not recruited to two posts and all areas are looking at reducing costs.

The forecast of overspend for LBaRT of £90k has been mitigated by other areas of the service. This is a credit to the staff of Suffolk Libraries.

Sue Buck asked a question regarding the Hub as the income is low. Marion Harvey responded that more and more bookings are coming through and business is building gradually. A Sharing Skills day which has been planned for the end of this year will involve lots of networking which will promote this area. The layout of this area is being considered to make it more marketable.

The year-end report will be available at the next Board meeting.

Stephen Taylor gave his congratulations to Suffolk Libraries for the hard work and will ensure Cllr Stamp is made aware of the efforts of Suffolk Libraries staff.

### **General Managers Report**

The Vice Chair thanked Paul Howarth for putting the report together in the Chief Executives absence.

The highlights were:

- IT – Libraries will start to move to the new model next month.
  - Suffolk Writes – this project gives local writers a forum for sharing their work using the Overdrive eBook. Alison Bruce (Author) has contributed 5 exclusive short stories currently unpublished anywhere else.
  - Bookfest 2016 – A freelance coordinator has been appointed to work on this project. Work is now underway with local library managers and staff to put together an exciting, attractive programme of events for the festival which will take place between 21<sup>st</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> October 2016. Colin Rockall mentioned that the Lavenham Children's Festival is working together with the Suffolk Libraries Bookfest.
  - Children's Centre Contract – it is very important that this is in place for the start of the new financial year. The Libraries Innovation and Development Manager met with Children's Centre staff last week who stated that they now do not need the librarian support they have received over the past 4 years. TUPE may apply for this role. The Chief Executive and Head of HR will meet tomorrow and if this is not resolved this will be on the agenda for discussion at the meeting with SCC on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016.
  - Chatterbooks – At a recent Raising the Bar event the attendees were given incorrect and misleading information regarding Chatterbooks which showed it in a negative light. The Vice Chair has raised this with Cllr Stamp and Stephen Taylor and is following up with Cllr Gordon Jones. It is understood there is another event taking place soon and this will be addressed with the right message.
- The feedback received so far regarding Chatterbooks has been very

	<p>positive and it is hoped to roll this out further.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edge Conference – Suffolk Libraries received an award at the Edge Conference in Edinburgh for the Stradbroke Library Post Office. Congratulations to Maureen John and Mike Ellwood. The Board are extremely proud of this innovation.</li> <li>• PR – Suffolk Libraries received very positive publicity this week on Radio 4, Radio Suffolk and Look East. Thanks to Ali Hopkins, Maureen John and all those involved for this great publicity. The role of our volunteers was highlighted by this publicity and the Chief Executive suggested that more work should be done with volunteers to highlight all of the different types there are within Suffolk Libraries. There could also be a focus on volunteers at the AGM this year.</li> <li>• National Coverage – The Chief Executive updated the Board that the Libraries Innovation and Development Manager and the Marketing and Communications Manager will be presenting ‘How we market our service’ at the CILIP Conference in July. There is a session on the Suffolk Libraries Governance model at the SCL meeting in York.</li> <li>• Beccles Library Wednesday Afternoon Opening – this will commence from the first Wednesday in April. Stephen Taylor asked how effective the amended opening hours of libraries have been as he has asked individual managers who are not certain. This will be raised at the meeting with SCC on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016.</li> <li>• Signage – Stephen Taylor remarked that the sign at Felixstowe Library does not comply with guidelines as it does not acknowledge SCC funding. The Marketing and Communications Manager will investigate this as this is a shared premises with SCDC. The Vice Chair mentioned that signage has been discussed at Community Group meetings and all are aware that SCC should be included.</li> </ul>	JP
7.	<p><b><u>Contract Sum Negotiation</u></b></p> <p>An Away Day with Board members and the Senior Management Team has been arranged for 21<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to discuss the 17/18 contract and how the service will be taken forward and what the service will look like. The future up to 2020 will also be focused upon as funding both locally and nationally is changing.</p> <p>At the Contract Management meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016 changes to the service specification, as suggested by Stephen Taylor, will be discussed in addition to the ambitions document received from the Libraries Taskforce which states that county councils will need to inform DCMS of any changes they might wish to make to library services.</p> <p>The Library Byelaws, relating to antisocial behaviour, which are stipulated by SCC, will also be discussed in relation to the levy of fines for those who do not adhere to banning letters.</p> <p>Stephen Taylor confirmed that SCC would be open to discuss transformational suggestions, which may attract funding, to take Suffolk Libraries forward. He also stated that SCC may be open to a counter-proposal to achieve the funding reductions for 2017/18.</p>	

<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Lowestoft</u></b></p> <p>Prior to her annual leave the Chief executive attended a UNISON meeting and has put some additional interventions in place to assist with anti-social behaviour in Lowestoft Library. The Chair and the Vice Chair visited Lowestoft Library whilst the Chief Executive was on leave and things have calmed down a little. A Strategic Leadership Team meeting is due to take place in two weeks at Lowestoft Library to show the staff that they are not alone.</p> <p>Antisocial Behaviour byelaws need to be followed up and the changes to the main frontage at Lowestoft Library will assist with the problems when the work is completed.</p> <p>There has also been mandatory training for all staff.</p> <p>Stephen Taylor mentioned that if antisocial behaviour persists and the library needs to close at short notice then SCC will support this action.</p>	
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Paperless Meetings</u></b></p> <p>The Governance Manager gave an update to the Board on the iPad and Board app which is being purchased to enable paperless meetings.</p> <p>The Governance Manager will receive training for the app within the next two weeks and will provide training for the Board once after a meeting. The app will allow the Board to make comments on papers and share these comments with other Board members if they wish. There are a number of other useful aspects of this app which will be covered in detail at the training session.</p>	
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Date of next meeting:</u></b></p> <p>26<sup>th</sup> May 2016, Bury Library</p>	