

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	27 th October 2016	
Place	Bury Library	
Time	11.15am – 1.15pm	
Attendees	Tony Brown, Sylvia Knights, Alison Wheeler (Chief Executive), Maureen Garrett Simpson, Jonathan Ogden, Colin Rockall, Peter Callaghan, Stephen Taylor (SCC), Richard Hunt (SCC), Cllr Richard Smith (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 & Content Manager), Daniel Harvey (Community Team Lead), Paula Phelan (Head of HR), Matt Shenton (Literacy Ambassador), Diane Moore (Community Libraries Manager), Jack Norman (Community Libraries Manager)	
		Action
1.	<p><u>Notification of election of Chair, Vice Chair and Honorary Secretary and Co-options</u></p> <p>The vote for these positions was conducted during the closed session with the results announced at the beginning of this meeting.</p> <p>For the period of 2016/17, until the first Board meeting after the AGM 2017, the Board roles are as follows:</p> <p>Chair – Tony Brown Vice Chair – Sylvia Knights Honorary Secretary – Maureen Garrett Simpson</p>	
2.	<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from Charlotte Clark, Marion Harvey and Colin Rockall. Stephen Taylor stated that Richard Hunt had also given his apologies.</p>	

3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Minutes of previous meeting 28th July 2016</u></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true and accurate account of discussions.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>Newmarket</p> <p>The grand reopening of the newly refurbished Newmarket Library took place two weeks ago and was a huge success. This was a celebration of the exceptional hard work by all the staff. The Chief Executive expressed her thanks and congratulations to all involved.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Declarations of the Board Code of Conduct</u></p> <p>The Code of Conduct was reviewed, signed and agreed unanimously by all Board members.</p>	

<p>6.</p>	<p>Committees</p> <p>1. Review of membership of committees</p> <p>The membership of the Committees was discussed and agreed as follows:</p> <p>Finance, Governance and Audit Sylvia Knights Maureen Garrett Simpson Jonathan Ogden Sarah Wilson Colin Rockall Tony Brown stated he would be happy to be a 'reserve' if a meeting is not quorate.</p> <p>Business Development and Marketing Tony Brown Sylvia Knights Sarah Wilson Maureen Garrett Simpson</p> <p>Staffing Colin Rockall Tony Brown Maureen Garrett Simpson Peter Callaghan Jonathan Ogden</p> <p>Health and Safety Peter Callaghan Jonathan Ogden</p> <p>The role of Chair in each Committee will be decided at the first meeting of each respective Committee.</p> <p>2. Review TOR for committees</p> <p>All Terms of Reference were reviewed and agreed subject to one amendment in the Finance, Governance and Audit Committee meeting (2.2) where the Board have asked the Governance Manager to amend the number of Board attendees from 3 to 5. These Terms of Reference will be reviewed again by each Committee at the first meeting</p> <p>3. Consider need for any new committees</p> <p>It was agreed that there is no requirement for another Committee.</p>	<p>NS</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Review and adopt Standing Orders and Finance Regulations</p> <p>The Standing Orders were agreed and adopted by the Board.</p>	

<p>8.</p>	<p>Review of:</p> <p>1. Representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back</p> <p>The Contract Executive Summary was agreed by the Board subject to amending the wording from School Library Service to Literacy, Books and Reading Team.</p> <p>The Chair mentioned that, as part of their induction, both MGS and SW would find it interesting to visit prison libraries, the Literacy Books and Reading Team and the Stock Unit.</p> <p>2. Board complaints procedure</p> <p>The complaints procedure was reviewed and adopted by the Board.</p> <p>3. Board procedures for handling requests made under FOI and Data Protection</p> <p>This policy was reviewed and accepted by the Board. The SCC Commissioner mentioned that the co-operation he receives from Suffolk Libraries for FOI requests is very much appreciated.</p> <p>4. Board policy for dealing with press/media</p> <p>The policy for dealing with the press and media was reviewed and adopted by the Board.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Set dates/times for 2016/17</p> <p>The Board reviewed and accepted the suggested meeting dates for 2016/17.</p>	

10. Management Reports:

1. Head of Finance (incl. Contract Cleaning Update)

The Head of Finance updated the Board on the monthly accounts as at end of September 2016. The headline figures for the total business in September 2016 were as follows:

Month – overspend budget (24K), overspend actual (18K)
Year to date – underspend budget 7K, underspend actual 61K

The highlights are as follows:

Property costs - Reviews of rate demands coming though are not causing concern and property costs are as expected.

Library income – September saw a high level of music and drama sales (£3K in total) but this is expected to drop again in October. DVD's and printing income all did well.

Vertas cleaning contract – The review meeting of the Vertas cleaning contract took place last week and feedback from library managers has indicated a small increase in satisfaction for this service. Vertas have been addressing areas where equipment is poor e.g. hoovers.

Time and attendance of cleaners is being logged via a telephone. Another review meeting has been booked for December 2016 and the contract is due to be renewed in February 2017. The Head of Finance mentioned that there are still a few tweaks required for a satisfactory service.

Cllr Smith mentioned that he is meeting with the CEO of Vertas next week and asked if there was anything he could raise on behalf of Suffolk Libraries. The Head of Finance stated that the Vertas team are working hard and there is a willingness to improve so as long as the improvement is maintained there should be no further issue.

Mental Health fund – This project is showing as £11K underspent for the first 6 months but activities are planned. This is funding so can't be used as surplus.

Mobile costs – the mobile library costs given to SCC relating to prior years has been agreed with a compromise being made on the insurance. This means that Suffolk Libraries have an additional £30K one off return. This will show in the accounts when the invoice has been paid.

People Counters – The reason for this project is the known unreliability of the results given by the people counters. This is due to the age of this equipment. There is a reputational risk to Suffolk Libraries using data which may be incorrect and cannot be substantiated. The Chair welcomed this improvement.

Friends groups – money raised by Friends Groups is £68K to date; this funding has been donated for specific projects.

The SCC Commissioner asked whether the £10K Section 106 monies which Suffolk Libraries are holding for Felixstowe is reflected in the figures.

<p>11.</p>	<p>Decisions</p> <p>1. E-book Platform</p> <p>The Stock and Content Manager presented the review of eBook and eAudio platforms.</p> <p>Suffolk Libraries has a well-established and continuously growing offer of digital, downloadable resources and recently took part in the 3M Cloud Library Advisory Council to compare and contrast the existing Overdrive service with others to ensure Suffolk Libraries are providing the best experience for their customers and the best possible value from the cost to the service.</p> <p>Three products and providers were evaluated for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs of the service subscription and content • Customer experience • Range of content available • Staff experience of site admin and content selection/purchase • Support and service received from the supplier <p>The Stock and Content Manager asked the Board to review the report and recommended that Suffolk Libraries continue to use Overdrive as the primary digital content provider. It was also recommended that Suffolk Libraries continues to supplement the eAudio offer using Borrowbox.</p> <p>The Stock and Content Manager suggested that, as this area changes and develops rapidly, this is reviewed regularly.</p> <p>The Vice Chair mentioned that this paper would normally go to the Finance, Governance and Audit Committee first but, as there was no meeting and a decision needed to be made, she reviewed the paper and thanked the Stock and Content Manager on this excellent piece of work.</p> <p>The Vice Chair proposed to agree this proposal and all Board members were in agreement.</p> <p>The Chief Executive updated that there are national negotiations on eBook licensing around publishers and authors and a potential change in legislation around Public Lending Right.</p>
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12. Modelling Plans for Future Funding and Contract Sum Negotiations

The Chair stated that a Transition Board meeting had taken place specifically for the consideration of pop-up libraries and a Project Officer will be in place soon for this piece of work. In addition to this a Contract Sum meeting took place last week with SCC colleagues. At this meeting Suffolk Libraries were presented with a revised budget saving figure and work still needs to be done to form a response to SCC.

The Chair mentioned, to give context to this, that the Business Case presented 4 months ago by Suffolk Libraries regarding the savings over the next three-years included a request to SCC to fund a Project Officer to assist in initiating these savings, and SCC agreed to this.

The gradual achievement of savings by Suffolk Libraries does not appear to have been accepted by SCC and the revised savings will be shown in the SCC published budget next month as part of their Scrutiny process.

Suffolk Libraries believes it cannot make any further savings without damage to the service and the revised figure requested by SCC will damage the service significantly. The Chair feels it's regrettable that the relationship between SCC and Suffolk Libraries has been successful to date and would like to see recognition that £3 million of savings have been achieved over the past 3 years.

The changes implied by the threatened budget cuts are likely to be highly visible to staff, Community Groups, customers and the media at a sensitive time. Given the amount of work that went in to preparing the Business Case, and the time that has passed since it was presented, it was disappointing that SCC did not seem to have recognised the negative impact of further damaging cuts.

Cllr Smith responded that the negotiation of the savings is in the hands of the SCC officers but to give some context he also stated that austerity started in 2010 and there are no signs of an end to this. After 7 years of adjusting budgets the forecast for SCC budget overspend is £9 million and major savings need to be made in the coming years.

Cllr Smith stated that the current negotiations with the SCC Officers are genuine negotiations.

The Chair thanked Cllr Smith for his response and stated that there are three groups of staff currently working on income generation and these will be presented to the Board in December.

The Chair also stated that it is crucial that Suffolk Libraries is a viable organisation as funding bids are dependent upon this.

13.	Plans and Priorities Update The Chief Executive stated that, subject to the negotiations which will impact next year, the Plans and Priorities will be discussed at the Finance, Governance and Audit Committee meeting at the end of November. It is expected that the plan will be reviewed and agreed prior to bringing to the Board meeting in December for adoption.	NS
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14. Any Other Business

Self Service Review

The self-service software used by Suffolk Libraries is out of date and SCC has agreed to fund its replacement up to a value of £90K. A request to tender was sent to four organisations and it was decided to accept the tender of Dootrix.

The tender process was robust with no risk of any potential challenge and the SCC Commissioner stated that he was very pleased to endorse this decision.

This piece of work is very important to Suffolk Libraries and it must move forward as quickly as it can.

The Vice Chair proposed to accept this proposal and all Board members were in agreement.

Staffing Committee Policies

The Chief Executive gave an update to the Board following the recent Staffing Committee meeting where three new policies were agreed and adopted.

- Adoption Policy
- Maternity Policy
- Paternity Policy

The amendments to these policies was not substantial and incorporated legislation updates.

The Chief Executive offered to send these policies to any Board members who wish to see them.

Finance & Audit Committee

As there has been no Finance and Audit Committee meeting since July the Vice Chair has met with the Head of Finance to oversee the finances.

Artemis Cooper event

The Vice Chair mentioned that Elizabeth Jane Howard (author) was a resident of Bungay and passed away 2-years ago. Artemis Cooper published a biography of Elizabeth Jane Howard and recently had an author event at Bungay Library which was hugely successful and a sell-out.

AGM

The AGM on 29th September was a huge success and everybody who attended enjoyed themselves. The Chair gave thanks to all who were involved.

15.	Date of next meeting: 15th December 2016, Riverside Community Centre, Stratford St. Andrew Cllr Smith has offered his apologies for this meeting.	
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