

# SUFFOLK LIBRARIES

## BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Title of Meeting	Suffolk Libraries IPS - Board Meeting
Date	Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2020
Place	Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Time	9:30am
Board Members:	Tony Brown, Sylvia Knights, Bruce Leeke (Chief Executive), Sarah Wilson, Maureen Garratt Simpson, Sally Irvine, Sue Buck, Alison Leyshon, Kathy Oliver, Jayne Austin, Gemma Levi
<b>PRESENT:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tony Brown (Chair)</li> <li>• Sylvia Knights</li> <li>• Sue Buck</li> <li>• Bruce Leeke (Chief Executive)</li> <li>• Sarah Wilson</li> <li>• Kathy Oliver</li> <li>• Maureen Garratt Simpson</li> <li>• Sally Irvine</li> <li>• Jayne Austin</li> </ul>
<b>In attendance:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandy Wilkinson (Head of Finance)</li> <li>• Nikki Hulse (Business Development Manager – Minutes)</li> </ul>

		Action
1.	<b>Apologies:</b> Apologies were received from Gemma Levi and Alison Leyshon	Chair
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest:</b> There were no declarations of interest.	Chair
3.	<b>Minutes of previous meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020:</b> The minutes were accepted as a true account of discussions. The Chair thanked Emma for her time and for producing excellent minutes. <b>Matters arising:</b> There were no matters arising.	

4.	<p><b>Updates from Committees:</b></p> <p>The Chair asked the committee Chairs to update the Board.</p> <p><b>Finance and Audit</b></p> <p>SK mentioned that there had been no meeting of the Finance and Audit committee but that a set of papers had been circulated to committee members. The accounts will be covered today and in addition to these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Club Hive – papers from AL regarding co-working. It was hoped for an overview of this work from AL at this meeting. The Chief Executive mentioned that this was a thorough piece of work and it will be interesting to discuss this further with AL when she is able to attend. The discussion will include if the work will be followed-up and to agree if this can be adapted. SK to send a copy of this document to SB.</li> <li>• IT update</li> <li>• NPO update</li> </ul> <p>SK had received no comments or queries from committee members from the papers circulated.</p> <p><b>Governance</b></p> <p>This committee hasn't met since the last Board meeting and it was agreed that a meeting will be arranged for w/c 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020. SI mentioned that it was important to look at risks at this time.</p> <p><b>HR</b></p> <p>This committee hasn't met since the last Board meeting. It has been agreed that the next meeting will take place on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020.</p>	SK
5.	<p><b>New Service Delivery Plan and Vision and Objectives – COVID-19</b></p> <p>The Chief Executive presented the Service Delivery Plan to the Board. This plan has already been shared with all staff.</p> <p>The senior leadership team are currently finalising a Recovery Plan and this will be sent to Board once completed.</p> <p>SI mentioned that things will be very different in the future and 'normal' will also look very different. This will give Suffolk Libraries a big opportunity to view how they do things. It was also suggested whether any 'hero's' can be identified due to the amount of excellent work happening. The Chief Executive mentioned that this would prove difficult as there is so much excellent work taking place but this would be something he would look in to.</p> <p>The Chair congratulated all staff involved in the document which is exemplary in anticipating change and is perfectly expressed. It is very</p>	BL

humbling to see the variety of the offer from Suffolk Libraries. The Chair also suggested that attention should be drawn to the excellent eBook and digital offer which has had further spending to increase the offer.

SK has received lots of feedback relating to all the brilliant work which is taking place. A link to Suffolk Libraries activities for children and young people was included in the newsletter sent out by Alan Cadzow last week.

MGS highlighted how Facebook is extremely busy with the imaginative work from Suffolk Libraries.

SW mentioned that Felixstowe library were sending out a weekly newsletter covering activities from Suffolk Libraries but also general information relating to Felixstowe which was proving popular. It was suggested that there could be more coverage of Suffolk Libraries in the local press and Radio Suffolk. The Chief Executive responded that some work had taken place with the local press and with the BBC relating to BLOC. Lesley Dolphin of Radio Suffolk is on the Friends Group at Felixstowe and SW will contact her to see if Suffolk Libraries can be promoted through her radio programme.

SW

SW also suggested that Friends Groups could send good news stories to the Marketing & Communications Manager who could collate and coordinate them and these could be sent to local media. The Chief Executive responded that an anthology of all the good online work has already been pulled together and a link to this will be sent to Board members.

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KO mentioned that a number of the Friends at Southwold do not use Facebook. The Chief Executive will send a link to the Suffolk Libraries YouTube channel where the videos are available to view.

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SW highlighted the one-page strategy document as an excellent and clear document but queried the goals relating to the number of customers who will be surveyed as being too low at 20. The Chief Executive responded that this figure can be reviewed as the pilot of this scheme is just over one week old.

The discussion ended by the Chair asking for his thanks to be sent to the website team who have made great improvement to the site over the past few weeks.

### **Performance**

The Chief Executive presented the performance figures since lock down but stressed these figures were now over one week old.

The Chair suggested that the information was rather too general and not quite specific enough. The Chief Executive responded that some of the

	<p>activities are very diverse and it has been difficult to capture them but an Infographic will be produced which will pull out the highlights.</p> <p>KO suggested that a footnote on the column of 'other activities' would be useful to indicate what these activities were.</p> <p>JA mentioned that this information is very helpful for elected members but they would wish to see more trends such as uplift in numbers. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Head of Community and Performance will be working on this.</p> <p>The Chair asked the Chief Executive to pass on sincere condolences to the Head of Community and Performance upon hearing of the passing of his father.</p>	BL
6.	<p><b>Revised Budget 2020-21 – COVID-19:</b></p> <p>The Head of Finance presented to revised budget for 20/21 to the Board.</p> <p>It has been necessary to review the already agreed budget in light of the global pandemic. The revision takes in to account the current lock down against two scenarios; the lock down lasting until July 2020 and October 2020.</p> <p>The format of the report has been amended to provide greater clarity and include the year-end statement for 19-20 to better allow for comparison against the approved budget and the two scenarios.</p> <p>The outcome of the current situation is that the expected deficit will increase due to loss of income outside of the SCC grant due to reduced book fees and loss of rental income.</p> <p>The Head of Finance explained the reasoning behind withdrawing £750k from the deposit account. This is due to the interest rate being reduced and the 45-day lead time to withdraw funds and the decision was made prior to confirmation that SCC would continue to pay the contract whilst libraries are closed. This money is the reserves of Suffolk Libraries and may be needed in the coming months.</p> <p>Suffolk Libraries are continuing to pay their major contractors, such as Vertas, throughout this period.</p> <p>SW queried the increase in the marketing budget and the Chief Executive explained that this was to invest further money to improve the website which will, in turn, assist with a more blended offer in the future.</p> <p>The Board were happy to accept the revised budget.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Finance Reports:</b></p> <p><b>Year End Financial Report 2019-20 and Year End Accounts 2019-20</b></p>	

	<p>The Chief Executive mentioned that the deficit of £43k for the current year is a good outcome but different ways of working will need to be explored for next year due to many corporates currently being closed and the knock-on effect being their reduced income.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Governance During a Time of Crisis:</b></p> <p><b>AGM</b></p> <p>The Business Development Manager had put together a contingency plan for the AGM should it not be able to take place on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. Government have eased some of the guidelines, but these do not apply to Suffolk Libraries at this time due to the lead time for the AGM.</p> <p>The Business Development did highlight that the AGM must take place within 6-months of year-end and asked should the agreed date be reviewed. SK felt that this would not be necessary due to it being by only one day.</p> <p>The two scenarios which were discussed are either ‘business as usual’ AGM or a hybrid of a quorate meeting (at least 5 members) and a video conference.</p> <p>The advice will be regularly checked by the Business Development Manager and the Board will be informed of any changes.</p> <p>SK mentioned that she has suggested that Friends Groups postpone their AGMs rather than cancel them, following Charity Commission advice. It was also suggested that this will give the friends an opportunity to meet again after such difficult times.</p> <p><b>Committees</b></p> <p>It was agreed that Committee meetings were required and should continue to go ahead as scheduled.</p> <p>The Chief Executive mentioned that HR issues were covered at the Health &amp; Safety Committee last week and it has been decided to defer the next HR Committee meeting until July.</p> <p>SI mentioned that reviewing risk is very important at the moment and the Governance Committee should take place within the next two-weeks. SK responded that the Chair of the Governance Committee is very busy in her own job at the moment but the Chief Executive will make contact to see when she might be free to attend a meeting.</p> <p>The Chair mentioned that he is happy to be guided by the individual Chairs as to whether the meetings will be required.</p>	BL

	<p><b>Board Recruitment</b></p> <p>The Business Development Manager will review the retirement cycle to see which Board members will be required to step down at the next AGM.</p> <p>The Chief Executive will ascertain if there were any responses received from the campaign to recruit a young person to the Board.</p> <p>JA suggested that the Museum of East Anglian Life had just recruited 6 new Board members and it would be worthwhile to contact them to look at their recruitment process as this could assist with the imbalance of gender and diversity of the current Suffolk Libraries Board. They are an NPO and have thought carefully about where they advertised for these roles.</p> <p>The Chair mentioned that Suffolk Libraries will be looking to expand and extend the Board in the coming months.</p>	NH BL
9.	<p><b>Date of next Meeting:</b></p> <p>The next meeting will take place on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>There was no other business to discuss.</p>	

The meeting closed at 10.47am