

OPEN BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Title of Meeting:	Suffolk's Libraries IPS Board Meeting
Purpose:	To further the development of Suffolk Libraries
Date:	Thursday 28 th October 2021
Place:	Hybrid meeting via Zoom and in person at Ipswich Library
Times:	4pm-6pm
Attendees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruce Leeke (CEO) • Debra Reay (Board Member) • Derrick Haley (Board Member) • Liz Ditton (Board Member) • Kathy Oliver (Board Member) • Maureen Garratt-Simpson (Board Member) • Rebecca Leek (Board Member) • Sylvia Knights (Board Member) • Tony Brown (Board Member)
Standing Invitees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Andrew Reid (SCC) • Gemma Levi (SCC) • Jayne Austin (SCC) • Sam Cayford (SCC)
Invited:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laura Richardson (Governance Coordinator/Minute Taker) • Mandy Wilkinson (Head of Finance)
Observing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belinda Bradley (Potential New Young Trustee) • Krupa Sodha (Potential New Young Trustee)

No.	Item:
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies Apologies: Gemma Levi (SCC), Jayne Austin (SCC)</p>
2.	<p>Agreement of co-options</p> <p>LR confirmed that Tony and Maureen were re-elected at the AGM; board to note that Sheila Fox has resigned since the AGM.</p> <p>LR proposed Co-option of SK (Member co-option) RL (Non-member co-option); group agreed by show of hands.</p> <p>LR introduced Belinda and Krupa who introduced themselves to the group, LR then proposed their co-option as young trustees - group agreed by show of hands.</p>

3.	<p>Election of Chair, Vice Chair, Honorary Secretary</p> <p>EOI's only received from DR for Chair and SK for VC – LR therefore proposed that they are elected – group agreed by show of hands. Volunteer for Hon Sec still needed - MGS offered, group agreed by show of hands.</p>
4.	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>DR took over as Chair at 4.05pm. DR thanked TB for flawless chairing of the board over the past 8 years, and for SKs ongoing support. DR confirmed all to return new pecuniary interest forms by Friday 26th November.</p>
5.	<p>Declarations of the Board Code of Conduct (Decision)</p> <p>Board Code of Conduct attached - amendment to top of page 3 in red - Group raised hands to approve. Items 5 & 12 are linked: DR read out statement in Item 12 to cover under this agenda item.</p>
6.	<p>Minutes of previous meeting of 26 August 2021</p> <p>One amendment made to part 5. Group agreed these were correct.</p>
7.	<p>Appointments to existing committees</p> <p>LR confirmed current members of each committee and asked if anyone wants to change – no changes were made DR suggested Belinda and Krupa are invited to be observers at committees, they can decide later which committees they might like to join. Chairs of committees are elected at the first meeting of each committee.</p>
8.	<p>Review of the terms of references for committees and the Board:</p> <p>SK: All committee TOR will be reviewed by the committees at their first meetings. RL: suggested a discussion about committee structure, is it still appropriate, has experience of finance committees reporting to audit committees, not being the same committee. SK: Was a large review carried out approximately two years ago, but if felt necessary LR could add to each agenda to discuss if group could be amended at all. LD: could HR manager be added as main point of contact on HR TOR – LR to take to first HR committee. All approved by the group.</p>
9.	<p>Establishment of any new committees</p> <p>BL: None currently, LR to add agenda item to next board meeting whether any changes or expansion should be made to the committees. SK: 'The Essential Trustee' document available on charity commission website which may be useful for new members.</p>
10.	<p>Review and adopt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing Orders – TB: point 2.10 regarding CEO appraisal process, responsibility assigned to Chair of the Board. Has feedback either verbally or in written form, not been carried out formally this year. DR as new Chair will take this forward. DR: When is this carried out? TB: Around march/April time. Liaise with MW so can be incorporated into the budget next year. BL: Suggested end of January going forward – LR to arrange dates. Group approved by show of hands. • Finance Regulations – MW: one change which will go to Finance and Audit Committee, a statement discusses collection of cash from libraries by couriers which no longer happens so has been removed. Group approved by show of hands.

<p>11.</p>	<p>Review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back – BL: revised version to be circulated after the meeting with changes highlighted, contract sum needs to be amended and also statement to confirm contract extension is under negotiation currently for the extension to July 2024. MW: School library service has been disbanded. • The Board’s complaints procedure (<i>note pages 4 and 5</i>) • The Board’s procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998 (<i>note pages 12 and 13</i>) <p><i>SK: Both policies have not been amended, just need board approval.</i> <i>DR: Complaints policy does not detail a process for the board making a complaint or a complaint about the board.</i> <i>SK: Policy could be reviewed to discuss where this should be, LR add to next Governance and Risk agenda. Group approved by show of hands.</i></p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Establishing or reviewing the Board’s policy for dealing with the press/media</p> <p>DR read this statement under agenda item 5: Board members should not deal with the press and media, it should all be done through Bruce Leeke and the Marketing Team (<i>agenda point 5 amendment to the Board Code of Conduct was suggested to further support this</i>).</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Agreed dates/times for remainder of 2020/21:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23rd November 2021 10am-3pm – Board Strategy Review Meeting (In person – Ipswich Library) (Board Members only) • 16th December 2021 4-6pm - Board Meeting (Zoom) • 24th February 2022 4-6pm - Board Meeting (Hybrid) • 28th April 2022 4-6pm - Board Meeting (Hybrid) • 23rd June 2022 4-6pm - Board Meeting (Hybrid) • 25th August 2022 4-6pm - Board Meeting (Hybrid) • 23rd November 2022 10am-3pm – Board Strategy Review Meeting (In person– Ipswich Library) (Board Members only) <p>RL: Would guided tours be available for trustees? DR: Encourages visits to libraries, to new members too. BL: Can certainly arrange a colleague to support trustee visits to libraries – LR to arrange. BL: Open invite to all, please visit any library at any time more than welcome, contact Bruce or Laura who can let the library manager know you are visiting. DR: Board members who are linked to their local libraries could invite other board members to visit. TB: Supports and encourages this as was able to visit libraries when joining the board. KO: Support this idea, encourages informal visits to not put pressure on staff. Important to visit all. LR to create central list of board visits to libraries to ensure all are visited by a board member, including the stock unit. SK: Is it possible to arrange visits to the stock unit? BL: Yes. LD: Positive impact on staff when board members have visited libraries. Could advice on best visit times to be made available too? LR/DR to meet to plan this process. MGS: Positive visits to prison libraries in the past, encourages this too.</p>

14. Committee reports:

- Finance and Audit (**SK**) Last meeting July, but have met with Mandy in interim and there was nothing of concern to report. Discussed the Living Wage proposals which are to be presented in Item 16. Also, due to a number of issues regarding the structure and operation of the Friends of Suffolk Libraries CIO it was decided not to proceed with that option at this time, any future options will be brought to the Board.
- Governance and Risk (**BL**) – haven't met since last board meeting, last meeting SK and DH had brief overlook of risk registers and approved. Next meeting will elect new chair.
- HR (**KO**) – discussion around improving staff experience of working at suffolk libraries, pay was mentioned as a survey confirmed managers pay in suffolk is lower than other areas in the country, and will be discussed further in item 16. Noted that recent library manager leavers confirmed pay was main reason for leaving. Six permanent staff being recruited to cover relief, sickness and annual leave hours across the county, they will be managed by Charmain Osborne (Ipswich Library Manager). ELMs have met to share best practice. Accessibility champions have arranged awareness sessions during October on areas such as parkinsons, dementia, hearing loss, etc. and are developing a document to support staff. Praised the WeCare employee assistance programme.
- Health and Safety (**MGS**) – met on 16th September, approved the new Control of Substances Hazardous to Health policy, will be reviewed annually. All libraries have been visited by Health and Safety Executives, no concerns raised. Fire risk assessments have been updated, discussion around providing high visibility vests for fire marshals to easily identify them. Lone worker safety devices are being rolled out to lone workers. In line with this a review of external lighting is underway. No covid update, monitoring government guidance as we move into winter. E-learning still very popular, e-vac chair training taking place soon too.
- Business Development and Sustainability Working Group (**TB**) – Brief meeting held recently, hoping to progress project on market research with University of East Anglia, Leon Paternoster was not available for an update. Focussed on sustainability, TB, DR and BL have since met with Melissa Matthews (creative programmes manager) to further discuss what is currently happening and is planned to support Suffolk libraries in this contributing to this area. BL and MM to meet to further discuss this. Positive meeting. RL: Has met with MM regarding permaculture discussion, hope this was helpful. DR will follow up.

15.	<p>Management reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Executive (BL) – BL gave overview of the report for the new members. Quarterly report for SCC recently highlighted significant improvements/increases in physical lending, online newspaper/magazine loans, e-library loans, pc use in libraries. Website usage has increased by 40% compared to the same time last year. Highlights marketing techniques are encouraging users to come back to the library. Accreditation report also attached, marked high impact in almost every area, great feedback received from libraries connected and the arts council on the report. TB: Passed on congratulations to all involved. Thank you to SCC for taking part too. SK: Summer reading challenge: amazed at number of sign ups and finishes, locally in Bungay a new regular children’s book club has started on a Saturday morning so they can come in and read stories to a volunteer. LD: Event by Kesgrave library held at the community centre today was really successful, all children received a free book and there was a Halloween magic show – full attendance and very well received. DR: Highlighted Stowmarket garden project opening, encourages a visit. LD: Staff Recognition Award Ceremony on 6th October in person was well attended, and great to recognise staff achievements. DH: Support to the winners of the recognition awards. Head of Finance (MW) – £24k surplus, would have been a large deficit if covid grants were not available to support this. some loss of income for room hire where people are used to working from home now. No overriding concern, things going as expected. Rebranding still taking place at libraries, ensuring all libraries receive some form of the new branding. Cashflow: Main grant from SCC given three months in advance which is really helpful (includes VAT). Contract negotiations still ongoing, looking at accounts as if running until July 2024. Property portfolio: 44 sites, some are owned by councils and some in rented spaces, report details changes/progress. Long Melford Library building is being sold, British legion is likely to be new site from March 2022. Discussion around signage issues at some libraries. Any questions to MW by email following the meeting.
16.	<p>Any other business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any questions from new board members – KS: would like to observe business development committee and governance and risk committee to see which one to sit on. BB: would like to visit libraires too. DR: Confirmed both can attend the board strategy review meeting on 23rd November. TB: Wished DR all the best in her new role as Chair, and welcomed KS and BB.
17.	<p>Dates of Upcoming Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4th November 4pm-5.30pm - New Trustee Induction via Zoom 23rd November 2021 10am-3pm – Board Strategy Review Meeting (In person – Ipswich Library) (Board members only) 16th December 2021 4pm-6pm – Virtual Board Meeting via zoom