



Board Meeting

**Friday 16th September 2016, South Molton Library, South Molton
10:00 – 12:00**

Our Values

Our organisation is founded on the principles of trust, neutrality and openness and these are our core values:

- Welcoming – we are open, friendly, helpful and inclusive to people and their needs.
- Integrity – we work honestly and openly to build relationships based on trust and mutual respect.
- Creativity – we are dynamic, socially enterprising and creative.
- Collaborative – we are constantly looking for opportunities to work with new people, organisations and communities.
- Enjoyment - we strive to make every experience with our organisation enjoyable and rewarding for everyone involved.

Minutes

Present: Julie Dent (chair), Diane Dean, Ann Draisey, Ciara Eastell, Janet Fisher, Steve Wallwork, David Solomides, Jonathan Stoneman, Paul Love (Head of Finance, Libraries Unlimited), Colin Bray (Service Development Manager – Health and Wellbeing), Roland Pyle (Policy and Partnerships Manager, DCC, present until item 76/16), John Smith (Head of Communities, DCC present until item 76/16), Councillor Roger Croad (Portfolio Holder for Community and Environmental Services, present until item 76/16), Hugh Waters (Exeter University), Caroline Battong (Executive Officer, Libraries Unlimited).

Apologies: Emily Williams, David Lockwood, Jo Launder

70/16 Welcome and apologies

Apologies received, as noted above.

71/16 Declaration of conflicts of interest

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

72/16 a) Minutes of Board meeting on 22nd July 2016 and matters arising

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

b) Matters arising / action log

- There were no matters arising from the minutes.
- There were no outstanding items on the action log.

Protocol for accessing the Members' Register.

The Board noted the protocol for accessing the Members' Register and agreed that business addresses would be used.

Action: Use business addresses on Members' Register.

73/16 Update on the Communications and Marketing Committee

KOR Communications has been appointed to provide communications and marketing support until end of January 2017. Aim is to raise profile of library services and the organisation as a whole and provide a strong platform for the Communications and Marketing Officer who will be appointed in the new year.

The minutes from the Comms and Marketing Committee on 3rd August were noted.

74/16 Overview of Libraries Unlimited's Health and Wellbeing Function – Colin Bray

- Colin gave an overview of current developments in relation to our track record in supporting positive health and wellbeing and highlighted strategic and practical areas where we could further develop our role. Key points noted from his presentation and the discussion that followed included:
- There is a strong partnership with Devon's Public Health team. They have previously funded a number of library service developments and are very supportive of our work.

Books on Prescription

- Every library has collections of books on prescription, young people's mental health and dementia as part of a national initiative called 'Reading Well, Books on Prescription', which forms part of the Universal Health Offer, developed nationally by the Society of Chief Librarians and The Reading Agency. This project has generated 7000 loans across the county to date. The books are meeting a critical need in terms of mental health, dementia and pressures on young people.
- Public Health have tracked data about usage of the collections against needs within local communities and there is a positive correlation between take up of the scheme and need within communities.
- Public Health have previously provided £15k to enable us to purchase the collections. Due to their own budget constraints, they will no longer be able to fund collections moving forward. The next theme will be focusing on long term health issues e.g. Diabetes.

Bookstart Outreach

- Funding from public health has previously enabled us to employ a part-time outreach worker to ensure the Bookstart scheme reaches families who are most in need. As a result of the reduction in public health funding, this is one area where we will need to fundraise in order to sustain the work., which reaches targeted groups e.g. foodbanks, children's centres and very hard to reach families.

Dementia Friendly Libraries

- Many library staff have already received training in becoming dementia friendly and there is scope to do more next year as part of our Strategic Plan to progress staff training in this area.

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

- We are engaged in discussions with several of the CCGs around their transformation plans, which will see a greater focus on resources within local communities. There is further work needed at a strategic level to ensure we are

positioned as a potential resource and building that could support the CCGs as they move through these changes.

Active Life Active Mind Month

- Active Life Active Mind is a month of events in November taking place in libraries across Devon focused on activities which help people get more active and keep mentally alert. This year we are also hosting a conference on 11th November with Exeter University's Centre for Medical Humanities focused on 'balanced lifestyles'.

1 Day Public Health Symposium

- On 11th November Libraries Unlimited are hosting a 1 day workshop symposium as part of the Active Life Active Mind programme. 4 sessions will focus on diet, work life balance and mental health. Julie Dent is involved in the day and all trustees are welcome to attend.

Action: All trustees to let Caroline know if they would like to attend the conference.

- Discussion with trustees highlighted the potential for libraries to provide more support around loneliness. Julie highlighted the new Dean of the Medical School at the University, who is an expert on dementia.
- Recognition that there is more to do with GPs and policy makers to ensure the role and potential contribution of libraries is understood.

75/16 DCC Objectives and Priorities for 2017-2018 – Cllr Roger Croad, John Smith and Roland Pyle

- DCC attended the meeting to provide context on DCC's priorities for the next financial year. This is to inform the development of our Service Plan for 17/18, which needs to be lodged with DCC in mid-November.
- From 31st October John Smith will no longer have responsibility for libraries. The Communities function in DCC, which currently commissions us, the youth service, the voluntary sector and the South West Heritage Trust, will now sit alongside Public Health under Virginia Pearson. John Smith and Roland Pyle will continue to work with the new team from 1st November 2016 to ensure there is a good handover.

Priority objectives from DCC for Libraries Unlimited:

- DCC representatives indicated that there were three key areas where they would like to see us develop our focus during 2017/18 to ensure alignment with the priorities of DCC. These are:
- Health and wellbeing – recognising that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) has highlighted that the prevalence of social isolation and loneliness are higher in Devon than the rest of the region and the country as a whole. In addition, the JSNA has also flagged mental health as an area where Devon has particular need. There was agreement from DCC and the Board that libraries have a significant contribution to make to these areas.
- Access to information and digital literacy – a recent survey undertaken by the County Council indicates that libraries are playing an important role in enabling people to have access to information, primarily by supporting people to engage with services online.
- Strong and resilient communities – recognition that libraries have an important role to play in their local communities. There was a discussion about the role libraries can play (working with partners including the youth service) on enabling access to good social and cultural opportunities.

Premises Arrangements:

- Principles underpinning head of terms are almost concluded. More discussion and agreement required on the budget provided to us to deliver our obligations in

terms of repair and maintenance. A realistic timetable for arrangements to be all in place (eg all leases to be in place) is the end of January 2017.

IT Arrangements

- Discussions around future IT arrangements are moving forward. Jason Allen from DCC has begun providing some project management support and the new Head of IT and Digital will be moving this forward.

Youth Service

- The Devon Youth Service will, from 1 Feb 2017, be provided on the Council's behalf by a staff-led mutual. The County Council's Cabinet made the decision on 14.09.2016. The bid from DYS Space Ltd (the in-house youth service) has, subject to the mandatory standstill period, been awarded the contract. This is a fantastic opportunity for encouraging partnership working between Libraries Unlimited and DYS Space Ltd. There may be potential to share costs and submit joint bids.

Action: Ciara Eastell to invite Virginia Pearson to the next Board meeting on 11th November 2016.

76/16 Service Plan 2016-2017 and 2017-2018

- We need to lodge our service plan for 2017/18 with DDC by mid November 2016. Trustees considered progression in delivering this year's service plan and new areas of work which will need to be undertaken this autumn in order to meet our budget targets for 2017/18.
- In terms of 2016/17, we are on track with the delivery of the actions set out in this year's Service Plan. There is still a significant amount to achieve in the remainder of this financial year.
- The Board considered several key areas for staff consultation which will need to be progressed this financial year. These include:
 - A consultation with all staff on the potential removal of enhanced pay for weekend working
 - Consultation with the Stock Services Team on new roles and a change of working base
 - Consultation with Barnstaple Library team on new roles.
- It was agreed that these are sensitive areas of work which the Senior Management Team will need to handle carefully.
- Other key areas of work anticipated for 2017/18 include:

IT Strategy

- This is a huge piece of work including involving migration from DCC's Wide Area Network to our own network and other related issues. This will be a significant piece of work and will involve negotiating an appropriate amount of budget transfer from DCC.

Re-tender of cleaning, catering and facilities management

Work will be initiated in the autumn to re-tender for cleaning, catering and facilities management across the organisation. Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO)

- We will need to consider our potential bid to become a NPO which will need to be worked on during the autumn. If successful, it could provide us with around £250K p.a. for 4 years from 2018 onwards.

Action: Ciara to bring a briefing on NPO to next Board meeting.

- The Board recognised the substantial workload ahead as we move into the next phase of developing Libraries Unlimited as a robust and sustainable organisation.

77/16 Business and Operations

a) LMS Update

- Progress is being made on testing the new 'Spark' system provided by Axiell but the progress is not as swift as we would like. There remains a significant risk that the system will not deliver what was procured by DCC. Paul confirmed that Axiell have put forward a goodwill compensation offer which relieves the financial pressures arising from the delay in implementation for the time being. However this only covers the period to 31 August 2017, and any maintenance charge for the existing Galaxy system beyond 30 September would become a financial pressure for us in the second half of 2016/17.
- *Action: Ciara to bring a paper to the next Board meeting (depending on progress in the intervening period).*

b) Axminster Library

- The Board considered various options put forward by the Senior Management Team to improve provision and resources at Axminster in the light of a recent meeting involving Julie, Ciara and Jonathan with the Support for Axminster Library group.
- Key points from the discussion included:
 - The anticipated growth of Axminster in the future and the inadequate size and facilities of the current library to meet increased demand.
 - The Support Group's desire for increased opening hours for Axminster Library and the recognition by the trustees that we would also like to see increased opening hours at Axminster and many other libraries.
 - The current cramped layout and lack of investment in the existing building and the opportunity for a refurbishment, along with several other high priority libraries in Devon.
 - The recent discussion with Cllr Andrew Moulding as the local DCC elected member, who is keen to support the library and to engage the wider community of Axminster, particularly in terms of setting up a Friends Group.
 - Agreed the option recommended by SMT that, following conclusion of the premises negotiations and lease work with DCC, Axminster be identified along with several other libraries as a library needing investment and improvement. The relevant managers will work with the staff team and the wider local community to explore options for increasing opening hours. It was agreed that it was not financially possible to put increased staffing into Axminster to extend the opening hours nor was it operationally possible to take hours from other libraries in order to increase Axminster's opening hours.
 - The Board agreed that it was important to continue to make the case for a larger, modern library fit for a growing town.

Action: SMT to progress the agreed option and to liaise with Cllr Andrew Moulding regarding the Friends Group.

c) Recruitment Update

- Steve Turner takes up his role as Beth Reynolds has been appointed as HR Manager with a start date of 23rd November 2016. We continue to seek advice as needed on a pay as you go basis with DCC HR.
- Phil Blay has been appointed as Head of IT and Digital and starts on the 10th October 2016.

d) Property update

- Discussions with DCC around property are ongoing as outlined in 75/16. Progress is being made on a new library for Ottery.

e) Prisons' Contract

- Paul provided an update on the new contract to provide prison libraries. There is further discussion needed regarding funding for Exeter Prison Library.
Julie confirmed she remains the trustee affiliated to prison libraries.

f) Big Potential

Paul confirmed we have submitted a bid with Mutual Ventures to the Big Potential fund to enable us to be contract ready for both the Torbay contract and the Arts Council NPO bid. If successful, we will have extra bid capacity through the involvement of Mutual Ventures in the work. We expect to hear at the beginning of October.

78/16 Governance

a) Update on Charity Commission application

- The Charity Commission have indicated that we will be accepted as a registered charity. The Board of Trustees request that an emergency general meeting be held at 10:00 on Thursday 13th October at Exeter Library to consider and vote on a special resolution to amend Libraries Unlimited Mems and Arts to comply with the Charity Commission's request in relation to securing charitable status.
- East Devon has confirmed that we don't have to be a registered charity to apply for rate relief. All districts seem to be operating differently in their approach to charitable relief and we retain contact with each charging council.

Action: Paul Love and Ciara Eastell to pick up General Meeting date and finance meeting timing.

b) Staff Survey

- The Board discussed the potential date for an initial staff survey to check out early feedback from staff on the new organisation and to enable staff to contribute to the development of next year's Service Plan.

Action: SMT to explore potential timescales and involve the Staff Forum as appropriate.

c) Trustee vacancies and recruitment

- Libraries Unlimited will be running a Staff Trustee election to fill the place of Rachel Kidd who has resigned from the Board due to ill health.
- Libraries Unlimited will be running a Community Trustee election to fill the place of Jonathan Stoneman who has moved away from Ottery and is no longer a member of the Friends Group. He will remain on the Board as a co-opted Independent trustee.

Action: Sonia Burgess and Caroline Battong will be leading on the Staff and Community Trustee elections.

d) Nominees and election to Finance Sub-Committee

There may be a need for an additional member for the Finance and Audit Committee in the next few months.

e) Applications for Membership

- The application was accepted and approved.

f) Staff Forum notes

- This paper will go to the Workforce committee with only headlines being brought to the Board in future meetings.

79/16 Key Messages for Staff and Friends Groups

Big Potential, DCC Change, Axminster added to refurbished libraries list and Summer Reading Challenge.

81/16 Any Other Business

- Ciara will write and formally invite Michael Morpurgo to be a Patron of Libraries Unlimited.
- Paul Love said the contract for print facilities requires a waiver. He will send appropriate paperwork in line with the Financial Regulations to the Board via email. .
- The Business and Intellectual Property Launch at Exeter Library is on Thursday 10th November from 17:30 – 20:00.
- Summer Reading Challenge Update: At the mid-point libraries had 9000 starters. Friends group have funded events and finishing parties. We are seeing growing evidence of the impact of social media with 1000's of shares. The Roald Dahl theme helped to generate lots of interest.
- Ann highlighted concerns about the current approach to absence management.
- Minutes of previous Board meetings will be published on the Libraries Unlimited website.

Action: Ciara to pass on the thanks of the Board to all staff involved in the Summer Reading Challenge.

82/16 (a) Forward plan

(b) Board meetings

- All Board meetings will run from 10:00 – 12:30
- November 11th – Exeter Library
- January 20th – Barnstaple Library
- March 17th – Passmore Edwards Centre, Newton Abbot

**Signed as a true record following approval at Board Meeting 11th November 2016
(subject to any handwritten corrections)**

..... **Julie Dent, Chair**

..... **Caroline Battong, minute-taker.**