



Board Meeting

Friday 20 May, The Hayridge, Cullompton, 10am – 12noon

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.

We strive to be a high quality, cutting edge and digitally-driven organisation, constantly seeking better and more effective ways to deliver our services and help our customers and partners.

Minutes

Present: Julie Dent (chair), Ann Draisey, Janet Fisher, Emily Williams, Jonathan Stoneman, David Lockwood, Ciara Eastell, David Solomides.

Apologies: Steve Wallwork, Rachel Kidd, Diane Dean

In Attendance: Paul Love (Interim Head of Finance, Libraries Unlimited), Anna Matthews (Project & Programme Manager, Libraries Unlimited), Matt Little (RIO), Hugh Waters (Exeter University), Keith Fuzeland (Health & Safety advisor – for item 45/16 (c) only)

39/16 Welcome and Apologies

- Apologies were received from trustees Steve Wallwork, Diane Dean, Rachel Kidd and from Sonia Burgess.

40/16 Declaration of conflicts of interest

- No conflicts of interest were declared.

41/16 Minutes of April 13th 2016 Board meeting

- Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting – Libraries Taskforce 'Ambition' workshop on 24th May – trustees asked to prepare by reading Ambition document in advance and to encourage Taskforce to be ambitious especially in terms of engagement with communities.
- Minutes from the previous meeting were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

42/16 (a) Social Value and Performance

- Matt Little (RIO) presented the work undertaken on social value & impact with Devon's libraries developed over the last year which had led to the social value strategy. A clear sense of social value/purpose drives decision-making, making social value an empowering tool. Public Service Mutuals are 'outcome businesses'.
- The social value strategy is intended to be implemented over the next three years in calm, considered way: embed, collect data & align with purposes in year 1; review after 3 years. Those who have developed it need to help leaders and managers to understand it – as a universal service, how do we utilise it for decision-making & improving our impact in a strategic way. For example, identifying where our impact could be greater – with particular social groups, geographical areas/places, etc.
- Julie Dent commented that, as a social enterprise, the bottom line is not just money but balancing impact across the 'four Ps': people, planet, place, profit.
- The Board discussed the importance of books to the social value of libraries: if you don't use the library, you miss out on the (added) social value it offers. To those who don't use the library, a library is only about books. You only know it if you access it. How to reach out, tell the story and communicate a consistent message about what libraries are.
- Matt Little stressed the strength of the core purposes of Libraries Unlimited which could be used as a thread through communications by giving examples of how we deliver each one.
- Matt recommended that Libraries Unlimited finds "owners" of the social value within the organisation to keep a focus on it over the next 3 year and report back on it and to link it to culture change and performance management within the organisation, e.g. built into appraisal framework.

(b) Performance

- The Board considered the performance of Devon Libraries over the last financial year.
- Noted that performance was similar to other library services across the country and the national trend. Noted how important it is that the organisation focuses both on increasing use and ensuring maximum social value and impact of our libraries over the coming years.
- Need to define what drives "success" e.g. opening hours, accessibility, individual managers/staff, attractiveness of physical spaces. Do we celebrate/reward/recognise those who are doing well & share their stories/experience?
- Noted need for more work to establish "Impact" KPIs.

(c) Community Pilot Evaluation Report

- The Board reviewed the Community Pilot Evaluation Report and discussed as follows:
- 6% increase in opening hours at no additional cost. Libraries are open more with community support.
- Significant management involvement to deliver the community pilots.
- Evaluation is focused on helping guide our work with communities day-to-day going forwards.
- Need to develop a culture of improvement – can we offer methodologies/tools in improvements (e.g. PDSA – Plan, Do, Study, Act) to help small changes.
- Board agreed to feed back to Friends Groups. Final version of the report will be ready in next couple of weeks.
- Board noted that an expression of interest to Arts Council England for research funding has been submitted – due to hear outcome today. This would fund further development of the social value framework.

43/16 (a) Finance & Audit Sub-Committee (May 6th 2016) and Finance Update

- Reserves policy was brought to whole Board: target of 7% annual expenditure over next 5 years. Mutual Ventures had recommended to aim for 3 months' reserves but FAC assessed risk to our organisation is relatively low compared to other charities (80% funding from 5 year contract) and the Charity Commission guidance is that charities should only have sufficient reserves for protection; should use money if they have, rather than accruing it. Impact on cash flow – cash flow is stronger than then P&O position as we receive quarterly payments in advance. Will review annually as will depend on income.
- Bank Account - now working effectively. Paul Love proposed a deposit account for cash (e.g. interest of 0.3% at Barclays which is not bad for current market; instant access and linked to current account).
- The Board approved the Reserves Policy and the opening of a deposit account.
- Capitalisation policy also discussed by FAC at their meeting.
- Target date of 22nd July for a recommendation to the Board for the appointment of a statutory auditor. Process of selection: looking at medium-sized firms, a long list of 6 with 3 to be shortlisted to deliver presentations to FAC. No significant benefit to using same auditor as Devon County Council.
- The FAC paper covers off other areas of finance discussed. First financial reporting will be in May (mth 2). Aiming for real-time financial information rather than year end.

44/16 (a) Workforce, Remuneration & Resources Sub-Committee (WRRC)

- The WRRC has had 2 meetings since the Board last met including on Wednesday this week (for which minutes have not yet been prepared).
- Statutory HR policies reviewed and need finalising; committee happy. These will apply to new staff only but have been harmonised with policies which have been TUPE'd across with transferred staff.
- T&Cs for new staff (see minutes from first meeting) agreed – have moved away from local authority approach, e.g. driven by aim to be an employer of choice. Still need to agree a few areas which have been delegated to SMT.
- Further work is needed on a pay and reward policy.
- Need a framework to come to Board of all the policies we have so they can be reviewed annually/biannually.
- Appraisal process – will aim to appraise all staff at the same point in the year in future to help feed into training plan for each yr. All leadership done (35 days in). Targets for this year: equality/diversity training for all staff; all libraries to run bounce and rhyme and storytime; room hire targets; Summer Reading Challenge targets. Aim is to have all appraisals to be completed by end of July.
- Relationship with Trade Unions and pay negotiations is on the agenda for the next Workforce Committee.
- New staff forum – nominations close next week with 5 places available, open to all staff.

(b) Recruitment

- Libraries Unlimited will advertise 6 new posts next week (Head of Commercial & Innovation, Head of IT & Digital, HR Manager, Premises Manager, Communications & Marketing Officer and Executive Officer) plus Centre Manager for Exeter Library.
- Will be advertised on Reed, our own website and through our networks and the 2 most senior jobs will be on the Guardian website as well.
- Selection will be through assessment days for each post and will have some Board involvement.

- Impact on accommodation strategy – Libraries Unlimited will have 3 strategic centres (Exeter, Cullompton and Newton Abbot).

45/16 Business and operations

a) Room Hire

- £377k target for income from room hire 16/17- challenging and ambitious but achievable based on past growth.
- The Board recognised that the increase in hire to date is very good. Will need to be aware of economics around accommodation strategy versus room hire income. Will reflect in targets.
- Training for staff around income/rental – invested in the managers of the 4 largest sites already. Will need backing up by Head of Commercial & Innovation once in post.
- The Board discussed the tension around hire charges & partnership relationships/non-financial benefits noted, the challenge to balance this and the potential for a policy to be drafted to assist local staff.
- The Board suggested adding an occupancy target alongside the financial target.
- The potential to service public sector organisations was noted – we can offer more affordable rooms than hotels/private sector.
- Paul Love confirmed a query regarding corporation tax on room hire income: pro bono advice from a charitable accountant clarified that there is a lettings exemption in charitable law so no corporation tax would be payable and some add-on services like caretaking are under the threshold. No need to run through subsidiary company.

b) Library Management System

- The Board received an oral update on the Library Management System upgrade project and noted its risks. To be revisited at the next Board meeting.

c) Health & Safety Policy

- Keith Furzeland (DCC Health and Safety) outlined the draft Health & Safety policy for Libraries Unlimited and confirmed to the Board that a Competent Person had been appointed as an interim measure (until Libraries Unlimited has its own appointed person) and that risk assessments, professional advice & support and training was available to Libraries Unlimited through the Devon Health & Safety service
- KF confirmed that, whilst in the Council, Devon Libraries had a good knowledge and understanding of health & safety across service. Libraries were audited about 4 yrs. ago & shortcomings have been addressed. No concerns at present.
- Once appointed, the Premises Manager will be responsible for H&S so Libraries Unlimited will be building its own capacity in this area.
- The draft Health & Safety Policy was signed off by the Board.
- The Board requires an annual report on H&S going forwards.

46/16 Governance – Applications for Membership

- The Board noted that Libraries Unlimited currently has approximately 250 staff members and that there were about 12 Friends Groups still to join. Work is ongoing to ensure everyone who wants to signs up as members.
- The Board gave approval for the new membership applications presented.

47/16 Affiliation to libraries, library tours & Friends Group Meetings

- Each Board member will be affiliated to a number of libraries. A tour of libraries is also being arranged for the Board. Trustees are requested to email Sonia Burgess to sign up to a tour.

- Some swaps in affiliation were requested – all to email Sonia with their final lists. Staff will be informed via an email introduction. Affiliation is intended for Trustees to attend events and visit their libraries during the year – not to be mystery shoppers or to run the library!
- Friends Group meetings take place on 28th and 29th June. Julie is unable to attend so Trustee support is welcomed. Lesley Salter will email details.

48/16 Feedback on trip to libraries in Delft and Amsterdam

- Ciara and Julie fed back on their recent visit to libraries in Delft and Amsterdam in the Netherlands, including a number of innovations:
- Noted the importance of excellent design and use of space.
- Quality of café – an “eating destination”
- Use of space/repositioning – choosing what not to have in order to make use of space in new ways to meet demand.
- Library cards in Holland have a value. No cash exchanged in the library – cards are charged with money in advance – so the card is paid for but it gives you discounts elsewhere.
- How to build our own innovation to help other services? To inform design & aspiration for Ottery St Mary library, Bampton library & others. Twinning between libraries in the twinning towns?
- Considered vision evolving in the Netherlands – libraries as ‘educational playgrounds for the future’ with learning as the library’s key area of focus.

49/16 Key messages for Staff and Friends Groups

- Social value & the difference we want to make
- Trustees building awareness of and engaging with libraries
- The Board considered updates in key areas
- The Board talked about new ideas & innovation in library services.

50/16 Any Other Business

- The Board are invited to an ACE funding training session following this meeting.
- Social media content – we would like to feature individual trustees (all agreed)
- Guidelines for Friends – to be discussed at Friends Meetings
- Engaging with MPs. Agreed the need for further engagement for autumn.
- Two Libraries Unlimited teams are running in the Exeter 4X4 relay race tonight.
- “Project Search” – can libraries link up with it? David to pass details to Ciara.
- CE to pick up on protection/trademarking of Libraries Unlimited intellectual property.

51/16 (a) Forward plan

- Health & Wellbeing focus for Sept Board
- Procedures and checks in place regarding access to the Register of Members

(b) Board meetings

All Board meetings will run from 10 am until 12 noon

- Sept 16th – South Molton Library (**NB This will be a whole day session to allow for a half day Board development session**)
- November 11th – Barnstaple Library
- January 20th – Exeter Library
- March 17th – Passmore Edwards Centre, Newton Abbot

Signed as a true record following approval at Board Meeting July 22nd 2016 (subject to any handwritten corrections)

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

..... **Anna Matthews, minute-taker.**