Keeping Performance Live

Report and Recommendations

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Contents

1. Introduction

South Western Regional Library Services CIO (SWRLS), with the support of Arts Council England, hosted a national seminar on performing arts collections provision, *Keeping Performance Live*, at Arts Council England's London office on Wednesday 23 October 2019.

30 attendees representing some 23 organisations attended (see Appendix 1 for the attendance list) for the day-long seminar which included extended breakout sessions to discuss key areas.

This report documents the discussions at the event, post-event feedback and consultation and makes recommendations for suggested next steps.

2. Case studies

The day began with four speakers giving case studies of their work:

Sue Crowley of Somerset Council discussed the *Joining the Dots* project, supported by SWRLS in 2017;

Stephen Chartres of Nottingham City Council outlined the award-winning NPALS (Nottingham Performing Arts Library Service) service and system;

Craig Jones of Surrey County Council discussed the latest developments in the change from Surrey Performing Arts Library to its new incarnation as NewSPAL; and

Judy Smith MBE from Community and Youth Music Library (CYML) in Hornsey talked about the Library's development into its current form.

3. Breakout discussions

A key part of the focus of the day was the two-hour breakout session, which split the attendees into four groups, each focusing on one area for 25 minutes. Each group rotated three times, enabling every attendee to feed into all four areas. Below I summarise the discussions from this session, including feedback gathered from attendees pre- and post-event. Each discussion area was provided with some question prompts, and the feedback follows the prompts in each section.

3.1 Advocacy and audience development

This roundtable group had the following prompts in this discussion area:

- **Who are/could be our internal advocates and how do we reach them?**

  New councillors/members – bring them to the library.

  Connect to other departments or service areas – e.g. public health, development, marketing, IT.

- **Who are/could be our external advocates and how do we reach them?**

  BBC Introducing/BBC Music Day – Arts Council England can help broker contacts.

  Education departments/schools.

  Music education hubs.

  Utilise big events using choirs (e.g. English National Opera).

  Homeless choirs etc. – brand association.

  Ask concert organisers to mention library in programme.

  Demonstrate links between community concerts and the role of the library in this.

  Local MP if relevant.

People in the public eye – mayors etc.

Bodies like Arts Council England – invite Arts Council England regional directors to visit.

Arts Council England can help to fund projects to promote collections.

Make collections more visible on local authority websites – track user journeys and web statistics: how are people reaching the collections and where are they dropping off the website?

Develop new skills in digital, marketing and social media.

Use newsletter to promote the broad variety of works in collection and encourage use

Forum for Interlending and Information Delivery (FiL).

- **What information/data/evidence to we need to collect to make the case for our work?**

  Need to understand borrower behaviour – survey music organisations to find out what they want.

  Ask performing groups to use standardised impact surveys or evaluation frameworks to help demonstrate impact of music making.

Make better use of customer data to advocate and develop audiences – need to get houses in order around user data.

Key to advocacy – talking better about what we already do, and showing the difference that this work makes.

Consider building some kind of network or central support, perhaps involving IAML (International Association of Music Libraries), Music Library Trust, Libraries Connected.

Noted that in order to make the case better, there needs to be the infrastructure to support this – e.g. good social media presence, and a website with good visibility for information.

- **Do we know who our current audience is? What evidence do we have of potential?**

  Identify key contacts in performing groups and ask for feedback on service.

  Need to find new ways of asking users to engage in consultation.

- **How can we better understand our current and potential audiences?**

  Need to research new audiences.

  Need to better understand potential customers – think about how we can serve new markets, for example dementia choirs may need different types of score/notation.

  Use segmentation systems to target new audiences. [The Audience Agency could be a good contact for this.]

  Use local or national mapping project to understand potential customer base.

  Music Library Trust is undertaking research into users to help get evidence to advocate for sector – patterns of usage, what people are using, possibly more transactional data – potential to link to previous survey in the 1990s as benchmark data.

  Making Music – helps groups to advocate; has strong statistics about groups and library use; this can be shared so that others can disseminate more widely.

- **How do we retain our current audience whilst building new ones?**

  Develop a marketing strategy and story.

  Identify new groups who could use collections – e.g. prison groups.

  Partner with organisations like MIND to help promote to different groups.

  Train other library staff so they can promote the service.

  Credibility and expertise of staff is key – this is our USP – but may need additional skills around digital and marketing.

  Need to develop a benefactor offer – e.g. to support individual collections.

- **What tools can we use to communicate better with our target audiences?**

  Need to reach out to young people through social media, live events and singing days.

  Need to clarify the offer – shift from a transactional service to a transformational service.

  Host events in libraries for BBC Music Day (Arts Council England can help co-ordinate) or Make Music Day (Making Music can help).

3.2 Development and partnerships

- **Should collections stay in the public sector?**

  Yes – all groups.

  Can charge for these services.

  Collections have conditions when donated – how long do these stay? They would remain publicly available. Is the transfer of collections clear enough?

  Need to ensure they are sustainable.

  Make sure the collections are still available for the public with conditions if possible.

  We could do deals with schools etc. for ex-music stock, or store collections for people who don't have the space, but are happy for others to house their collection and loan

it to others. In the case of donations, users feel that their donation benefits their local community.

- **What could be a suitable governance model e.g. arms-length organisation, charity, regional, national?**

National or regional support. Modernised service. Central system.

Nottingham model? One system for all but still regionally led. Where collections are held varies.

Assets – who owns the collection? Within statutory provision?

Electronic payment – increase usage.

Need admin – national system means costs could be shared.

Collections move through different models through time – they must stay accessible. Core aims are solid but stay flexible with models.

These must be taken through with new team members and pass on institutional knowledge – charities can be vulnerable.

Open software – if we used this who would administer it and who would input into it?

Would authorities like to be part of something national, or would they resent it as losing autonomy of their own assets?

Need clear, core principles.

- **Who/which organisations could we develop partnerships with?**

Making Music,

Music Education Hubs,

Music shops,

Universities,

Venues/promoters,

Schools,

Choirs etc.,

Music/performing arts,

Local authority culture teams & comms department,

Sponsors,

Politicians – elected members, mayors (civic),

Living Knowledge Network,

Theatre and community groups,

Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs),

Bridge organisations,

National bodies,

Sharing between local authorities,

IAML – Encore – joint funding to keep this going,

Working with other music libraries,

National group/body – to speak as one,

Arts Council England,

British Library.

- **What would we want from such partnerships and what could we give?**

Value of partnerships: advocacy – national scoping project.

Develop aims and objectives – sustainability.

We can give collections – especially for schools and music education hubs.

Music groups need to say music is from the library, which is great promotion.

Use concert programmes to advocate for libraries.

Promotion and advocacy – user engagement.

Investment in national programme – could lever funding.

How to attract sponsors? Great reach – audiences of choirs etc.

Could use Living Knowledge Network as a vehicle for a national voice for performing arts collections in public libraries.

- **What are the barriers to partnership working and how can they be overcome?**

  Time and resources.

  Service buried within rest of library offer.

  Local authorities working together.

  Could Libraries Connected help? A working group?

  Advocacy and promotion – time to make partnerships, access to partners.

  Training, skills and knowledge of staff – need the interest in the service to make partners.

  Need a more formal network of public libraries.

  Lack of will.

  Cost.

  Need to bear in mind that local authorities can be harder to work with due to the bureaucracy involved which may discourage some partnerships.

  We don't want partnerships for partnerships' sake.

- **What are the barriers to interlending? How can they be overcome?**

  Cost, time, administration.

  Differences in local authorities – some are easier than others.

  Capacity – lots of administration.

  Setting up relationships that work.

Other points:

  How do you quantify the reach of music?

  Need to encourage people to think about borrowing something different, to spread the demand on collections.

  Need to get elected members on our side, which can be very difficult – need to be able to show the benefits to them of what we're doing in their communities.

  Promote what we've done in the arts world.

  Get people to understand the value of the

library service – in terms of offer and in terms of savings to them.

3.3 Funding

- **What are the main issues around continued funding? How can these be overcome?**

  Budget cuts.

  Capacity.

  Expertise – loss of the knowledge of specialists in the field.

  Perception not statutory – some saw PACs as just part of the statutory service, but others were definite that they aren't – a lot of debate on this issue.

  Income through hire/subscriptions – this was more about how these could be overcome – income is an issue i.e. loss if the service is closed down, resistance to paying from music groups, but it can also be a way of helping the service survive.

  Other services realising the value – e.g. to health and wellbeing – this was ensuring that other services (within the council) understand the value that these collections can have to the community. Also it's about evidencing how the service can contribute to national and local agenda and priorities e.g. health and wellbeing.

  Evidence base – and this is how we need to show the above – this is linked to the section in 3.1 on data collection. We need a strong evidence base to prove our worth.

  Data collection – linked to above.

  Commercial vs. community.

  Need to advocate.

  How commercial needs match the community needs to ensure not excluded – this is about charging and ensuring we don't charge too much so that groups either can't afford to continue to hire or move to another source for their resources. There is also the issue of discretionary charging e.g. how to determine how much groups could afford

(there was certainly a view that some were quite well off versus groups working with disadvantaged people who perhaps do not have access to funding).

Friends group – raise funds to support service – this is linked to charities being able to apply for funding that statutory services cannot. Friends groups can often access grants that library services wouldn't be able to, so a less formal approach. Friends Groups also useful for fundraising – one service received in the region of £6,000 to help their PAC service.

- **What sources of funding have attendees sought? What for – e.g. revenue/project funding? Was the bid successful? If not, why not?**

Trusts for stock.

Difficult to fund core costs – easier to fundraise for projects and cover running costs in bids.

Arts Council England advised that it would be easier to access funds that support the work that the collection enables, rather than the collection itself.

Very few of the attendees had actually sought funding external to their council – difficult to bid for core funding, though some funding may be available for enhancing collections.

- **What sources of income generation are there? Are they effective?**

Hire costs.

Subscriptions.

Room hire – very limited. Only one service was able to offer this – it's a charity not a library service. Unless the PAC was in a separate building away from the main library, then room hire would be part of the wider service and not attributable to the PAC.

Aim to break even – this seems to be the aim of PACs in public libraries. But the group didn't discuss what break even meant –

for a stand-alone charity this would mean generating all costs whereas if part of a wider library service, some of the costs may be shared or hidden.

Consultancy – skills – sell the skills of the staff – this would be particularly relevant for specialist knowledge and would certainly add value.

Fines – strong views about this – most did not support that fines were income generating. Most services just charge an extra hire fee if set not returned on time.

Partnerships – e.g. SEPSIG (South East Performance Sets Interloans Group) funding comes from membership subscriptions that is used to purchase new sets.

Philanthropy – which organisations might help? – this is linked to the point above re. funding sources. This is really looking at the big philanthropists that may consider large grants.

- **Charities can often access funding that statutory services cannot – is it worth considering collections becoming a charity to access such funding?**

Still an issue being a library – often in criteria – funders either don't specify that libraries can apply or specifically exclude libraries.

Possibly not worth it, unless service under threat – i.e. not worth converting to a charity unless the service was under threat of being closed – this was felt strongly even from those working in charities – there was a strong commitment to keeping the service within the council-run service if possible.

Friends can access the funding (minor) – so no need for collections to become charities – however, Friends can only secure smallish pots of money.

Arts Council England promotion of PALS would help.

Capacity an issue.

Wouldn't work with a regional model.

Links with other Arts Council England officers – e.g. music education, bridge organisations.

What are the networks? – promote services – this is about partnership working.

- **Can collections be made self-financing and if so, how?**

Need to know costs and value to users to create realistic fees/charges – this is a really key issue. No-one attending from library services actually knew the true cost of their service. It seems that it's only when the service is separate that the true cost is evaluated.

Develop a commercial model.

Need to know how to reduce costs – important.

Learn from others – case studies – how have other services managed/reduced costs etc.

Volunteers need to be supported and managed – volunteers give their time for free but there is a cost to managing them and this is often overlooked.

Advocacy important – demonstrate impact.

Traded service.

- **Should there be standardised charging across the country and regionally? How could this be achieved?**

Structure rather than price – e.g. hire for month rather than a range of hire periods – this was about standardising what it is possible to standardise e.g. hire periods rather than hire charges. It was felt that standardising charges wasn't achievable or desirable as we need to reflect different needs.

Different needs – this was about flexibility in recognising that we need to consider the needs of the different groups of hirers – one size doesn't fit all. We need to reflect disadvantaged groups and hopefully be able to offer them reduced hire fees. This will vary across the country – each service will

have some disadvantaged groups, but some services will have a lot more.

Standardised approach.

If have national catalogue would need standardised charging – is it possible to reflect different hire charges?

- **Should interlending between library services be free or should the cost of hire be passed on?**

Hire charges should be passed on. – there was a strong feeling that the cost of hire should be charged to the borrowing service who would then pass on to the hirer. This doesn't happen with partnerships e.g. SWRLS members interlend for free to other members and so this again needs far more consideration.

Customer wants ILL – library services also need ILL – there aren't many services that would have sufficient copies to loan to a large choir for instance.

Should pass on extra chargers to hirer – linked to first point – any extra cost of hiring e.g. postal costs etc. should be passed on to hirer.

3.4 Systems and management

- **Is there a need for a national catalogue?**

Yes – but needs not to be resource intensive.

What if there was a catalogue held at a small number of hubs?

Current systems/databases can be labour intensive.

Variations in charging models/payment systems.

Could an IT professional build a national system? How would this be resourced and paid for? Investment needed.

Case needs to be made and communicated re the above e.g. a database needs to be maintained and this needs on-going funding.

Nottingham have automated some aspects of their database, after cleaning up data – used volunteers for this.

How to integrate varying systems across each library service.

- **Could we build on systems already available? Are there barriers to this?**

Barriers include commitment to making investment in new system – particularly the investment in time and resource.

Need for senior management buy-in.

Needs national driver, backed up by evidence of benefit and data on true cost to local authorities of providing services individually.

Possibility of building on Encore database to make it fit for purpose? With additional features and usability. Noted that Encore 21 is a MARC-based cataloguing system with authority control but was ever intended to hold or manage real-time data.

Difficulties with this – cleaning up and adding data, programming new features e.g. landing page, reservations, live updating, resources – needs ownership – currently hosted for free by a Norwegian company through personal contacts.

Difficulty of linking existing system to a variety of LMSs.

Work with system developer to explore what is possible – buy-in expertise – funding project?

Possibility of scaling Nottingham/Surrey work?

Barrier of justifying another system to each council – need to demonstrate savings e.g. of having a few hubs instead of ILL.

Start with regional offers then scaling this up to national level – regional pilot to start?

Need integration of payment systems.

- **How do we influence decision makers to integrate and streamline systems?**

Communicate/publicise what PACs do – benefits – change the narrative – show evidence.

Possibility of an NPO bringing this in for the next round – scoping costs and making it part of their NPO application next round as national lead/deliverer.

Important to get support of leadership.

Align to council priorities – evidence of benefit – health and wellbeing is crucial to this.

Collection data focussed on users – human interest story.

Need to raise the debate above local level but difficult to do this with challenges and priorities of each council.

As part of research project – cost modelling of national approach that can be adapted to each council's costs and show savings.

Libraries struggling to get new approaches through council decision making process – need to harbour support of users/volunteers to do this, make the case.

Role of Arts Council England, Libraries Connected and other stakeholders in influencing.

- **Should there be a national policy on PACs and who should own/develop this?**

Multi-agency approach?

Bringing in expertise from PACs.

Need for paid professional support since PAC sector is held up by volunteers.

Do IAML have policies already that could be used a starting point?

Useful to advocate importance of PACs to local authorities.

Baselining what is available, what challenges and needs are, networking.

Pooling the models.

Is there a core offer – what can people expect to get from PACs – like Universal Offers – clear message for customers and decision makers.

Maybe the above rather than a formal policy.

Local authorities often in reactive position to review PACs and make savings – need to be proactive and do this ahead of time.

- **What is Arts Council England's role?**

  Advocacy, convening, leadership – link to Arts Council England's new ten year strategy, particularly focusing on culture and creativity in the community, and links to health and wellbeing.

  Funding – e.g. research project into systems – needs, modelling, sampling, bringing in IT/ programmer expertise.

  Linking to Arts Council England's national music team and publicising what PACs do.

- **Is there a need for a UK-wide approach and what would/could a national service look like?**

  National campaign on what PACs do, advocacy.

  Intellectual property issues – Nottingham currently dealing with this with Surrey and this is a scalable model.

  ILL system – possibility of a number of regional hubs to reduce load in terms of admin and capacity.

  Need baseline data on what is currently available.

  Users crossing county boundaries to borrow.

  What's the value of our collections across the UK – who are they for, what's the content, do we have the right stuff etc.? Evaluate quality.

  Potential for working with Music Education Hubs to support schools.

  What's the impact if PACs weren't there? E.g. for music, arts, communities, on costs. Who else would provide this if libraries didn't?

Cost of starting again if service is lost?

Efficiencies for working together e.g. buying and storing materials according to demand – economies of scale – especially for smaller authorities.

Using, for example, Nottingham model, would be cheaper than buying from a commercial software company.

- **What statistical info would it be useful to collect?**

  Matching this to council priorities.

  See appendix to Somerset report as starting point.

  Demonstrating impact – tracking and showing benefit – can then use this with decision makers e.g. wellbeing benefit for their particular communities.

  Idea of sending evaluation form with music sets – same questions across the country – to build up a national picture.

4. Additional feedback

All attendees were given a paper evaluation questionnaire about the event, the key purpose of which was to solicit additional feedback on relevant issues, rather than feedback on the day itself, although this was also within the scope of the questionnaire.

22 completed questionnaires were received and five further questionnaires through Survey Monkey, which again focused primarily on any additional feedback on the four key areas (above) plus any further developments within their organisation post-event. Appendix 2 contains anonymised responses from the paper questionnaires and Appendix 3 contains anonymised responses from the Survey Monkey questionnaires.

Based on feedback from the questionnaires, it was clear that there was huge support for the core purpose of the day and that the majority of participants very much appreciated the opportunity to discuss these issues with colleagues, suggesting that there would be an appetite and capacity for involvement in follow-up work and possible steering or working groups.

5. Follow-up telephone interviews

In addition to reporting on the findings of the seminar, I undertook a number of follow-up telephone interviews with an agreed range of respondents, as follows:

Stephen Chartres, Nottingham City Council

Sue Crowley, Somerset County Council

Barbara Eifler, Making Music

Shelagh Levett, SWRLS

Sue Williamson, Arts Council England

Anna Wright, IAML/NewSPAL

The questions I asked each respondent were framed as follows:

- What the key issues would be in relation to rolling out the NPALS system either nationally or to a number of further regional centres in terms of cost, logistics, lead times, likely buy-in, technical/operational and any other relevant issues. Based on your experience, it would be good to talk through what the likely stumbling blocks to this might be, and how these could be mitigated.

- How this might fit into the development of a national (live) database, and what role the existing Encore database could have in this.

- What structures might be needed to support this – e.g. the establishment of a national working group – and what this might look like? Who might the members be and how formally would it need to be established to access any necessary funding?

- In addition to a working group, how best to get buy-in to this process from decision makers, based on your experience?

- Your thoughts on capturing data/evidence from service users and the resources required to roll this out nationally so that comparable data is captured across the UK (i.e. technical resources, who might design the content, who might collate the findings etc.) and whether any of this has already been actioned in whole or in part in your organisation/area?

I have summarised below the responses to each of these areas.

5.1 NPALS roll-out issues

There was a split of views about the suitability for NPALS to roll out either nationally or to a number of regional centres. These variances of opinion centred around how important it would be for the system to link to other existing systems – from one librarianship perspective, the fact that the NPALS system is not based on a recognised cataloguing system and cannot currently import or export bibliographic records was problematic. All other respondents, including librarians, were happy with the limitations of the current system in this regard and did not see it as a problem in terms of future roll-out of the system. In terms of linking to other systems, it was noted that because there are such a variety of LMSs in operation across the country, designing an NPALS-type system to work with any or all of these would be impractical. In terms of the import/export issues, Volunteers for Surrey NewSPAL are currently manually inputting records relating to their holdings, which is a very lengthy job. However, once this process is completed, the system should cover the vast

majority of repertoire available nationally, so the issue of import and export of records will be much less important. Taking a pragmatic approach to adding further new repertoire – for example, starting only with materials that have been borrowed in the last x years – would also help speed up this process. New users to the system are able to use barcode readers to update the available repertoire on the system with their existing stock. It was also recognised that there was an inherent value in the process of getting each library's stock onto a new system – for example, Nottingham used this as an opportunity to review, update and cull its existing stock as appropriate, and got rid of about 25% of its stock during this process.

Underlying the discussions about the suitability of NPALS for roll-out was a fundamental shift required in thinking about the point of the system – based on the conversations I had, it is clear that a different perspective on this may be required. One respondent commented: "It's not a library system – it's a shop", and another reiterated that the transition needs to be made so that it isn't run like a library service. This chimes with my own research in 2015[1], which highlighted that one of the most effective PALs then, Yorkshire Music Library, was based on this philosophy. The NPALS system is a practical response to the needs of users, as a user-focused system designed to give an end-to-end service to customers, who can check stock availability, order and pay. This reduces or removes the need for staff involvement in this process, and frees up staff time to focus on more complex and specialist librarianship queries, which the initial Nottingham customer research identified as important to users. Resolving this fundamental shift in perspective will be crucial to moving forward as well as the recognition that, although the service is library-based, it needs to be driven primarily by the needs of users. This would seem to sit well with the fact that the performing arts service has such different requirements from other library services offered, including provision of single music copies.

There is an opportunity offered by the work currently being undertaken at NewSPAL, which would effectively enable future users to piggyback on the existing groundwork undertaken by Nottingham and Surrey. In addition to being able to utilise the existing and significant repertoire soon to be on the NewSPAL system, the work in Surrey has included updating NPALS to be integrated with World Pay, rather than Nottingham's own local authority payment gateway. The next challenge is to develop and streamline the courier options for users, as this is more relevant in Surrey than for NPALS users, who typically pick up stock at a local library.

The scale at which NPALS could be rolled out was discussed – Nottingham's view is that it doesn't make sense to work on an individual authority basis, and it needs to be scaled up. Trying to find an appropriate number of regional partners in order to make this possible could be problematic, particularly given the different agendas, politics, priorities and working practices of different authorities, including how stock is treated and owned. Being able to overcome any restrictions on stock usage by users outside the authority area could be a stumbling block, although presumably the ILLs system also has to negotiate this issue.

Identifying potential partners at the right time is crucial to any roll-out: it is clear that time is very much of the essence, and that it is only when the performance of the PAL is at the top of the agenda – typically because it is in danger of being withdrawn – that there is the political will to invest time in potential changes.

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[1] For Nottingham City Libraries on behalf of Making Music – 'Music library services: research report', March 2015

5.2 Database

There were widely diverging views on the relevance of Encore 21[2] in a future system designed to show live product availability – again, this comes back to the fundamental question about the role of the system and its core purpose. Some respondents (mirroring some of the responses to the paper and online surveys) were keen to ensure that there was a future for Encore 21 in a new system, rather than starting from scratch, whereas others simply could not see the relevance in a system which was unsustainable, given that it is based on manual updates. One respondent queried whether Encore 21 could be built into NPALS, and another noted that many stakeholders were invested in Encore 21, suggesting that a discussion about its future needs to be incorporated into any further work on a national live database. One further suggestion was to review how cataloguing works regionally, for example within the London Libraries Consortium, Greater Manchester or SPINE, to support the development of a similar model.

5.3 Steering group and buy-in

A number of partners were suggested as potential members of a steering group to take this work forward, many of whom were mentioned in the breakout sessions:

- **Arts Council England** – Sue Williamson will continue to be a key contact at Arts Council England but in addition to Sue, Chris Fardon the Relationship Manager leading on this project, may be able to support the work of a steering group. Other Arts Council England stakeholders include Claire Mera-Nelson, Director of Music, and James Urquhart, who in his role as Senior Manager, Libraries and Literature, may be able to advise on funding processes relating to the development budget.

- **Libraries Connected** – its involvement was seen as crucial to unlocking local authority support, although it was noted that Scotland is outside LC's scope. LC already has a special collections working group, so perhaps a similar working group could be set up?

- **British Library** – see Appendix 4 for reference to British Library's strategic plan. Richard Chesser, Head of Music, is a trustee of the Music Libraries Trust, and works alongside Rupert Ridgewell. The potential to use space at BL's Boston Spa facility to house any future collection has already been discussed between Richard Chesser and Andy Appleyard, Head of Operations (North).

- **Making Music** – ensuring that future developments are user-focused will be crucial to their success, and Making Music has a strong track record of leadership and proactive support for a number of PALs nationally.

- **IAML**

- **NPALS**

- **Music librarians and heads of service**, including attendees at Keeping Performance Live

It was confirmed by Sue Williamson that any steering group would not need to be formally constituted to access funding but could simply work under the umbrella of Libraries Connected.

In order to gain buy-in from a broader range of stakeholders, it was suggested that the steering group would need to consider involvement of the following partners:

- **Local Government Association** – Ian Leete is Senior Advisor, Culture, Tourism and Sport. Putting together relevant case studies – for example, about the work in Nottingham, Surrey and Norfolk – may help make the case better for local authorities. Making the case for PACs and their role in public health and strengthening communities will be important – see Suffolk Libraries' research into the social value as a possible example (Appendix 4).

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[2] Encore 21 is a MARC based cataloguing system which lists the holdings of 95 participating libraries, primarily public and academic libraries.

- **Music Libraries Trust** – the Trust's imminent research into libraries and their users (see Appendix 4) could be extremely helpful in terms of providing baseline data for future funding and advocacy work.

5.4 Capturing evidence and data

It was recognised by all consultees that capturing evidence and data would be a crucial part of the process, and that one of the first actions of the steering group should be to commission some research to gather baseline data on local authorities. This initial work would aim to provide an overview of all relevant local authorities and their current situations, in order to be able to identify those most urgently requiring intervention, as well as evaluating which authorities may be motivated and ready to participate in a joint project.

The Music Libraries Trust's research project is extremely timely and if the research is well supported by libraries and users, will hopefully provide some key data in making the case for further support for PALs going forward. All respondents were keenly aware of the current gaps in information – both in terms of libraries' own data on their true running costs and output and also the real outputs in terms of events and audiences. In the medium term, it was agreed that a simple system for collecting comparable core data from both libraries and users, such as that outlined in the *Joining the Dots* report, would be important.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

At the end of the seminar, I suggested that time, evidence, people and motivation would be key issues to consider in moving this work forward. Time is very much of the essence in that there is a finite window in which this work needs to move forward, otherwise more services will be in danger of being threatened, reduced or lost, stock will continue to deteriorate and the wholly digital era continues to advance. These collections are a vital part of the UK music ecology and without them, music-making across the UK would be greatly diminished. In order both to protect and maximise the value of these important collections, it will be crucial to find the evidence to support the work going forward, and many good suggestions were made during the seminar and in follow-up interviews about the scope for such work, in order both to benchmark existing services and users, and to capture data on the social return on investment of these collections. Identifying the correct stakeholders both to support the work practically, in a working or steering group, as well as further partners who can unlock the support of decision makers, will be vital. Acting at the right time, with appropriate evidence and the right stakeholders, will ensure that everyone is motivated to undertake the step change necessary to making a real difference to the future of performing arts collections in the UK.

The following recommendations are based on all the feedback and discussions received above, and set out a framework for next steps, during which there will necessarily be in-depth discussions of the detail required to move the project forward:

1. **Establish a steering group** of relevant organisations in order to take the project forward, focused on finding regional and national solutions. Specifically, I would recommend that the group comprises:

   • Arts Council England

   • Libraries Connected

   • Making Music

   • IAML

   • NPALS

   • British Library

   • SWRLS

   • Heads of service and music librarians as appropriate – potential participants could be identified from key attendees of the seminar, as well as others as appropriate

In recruiting members to the steering group, it will be important to recognise that the group will need to be proactive and its members ready both to input into discussions but also to take on a share of the workload. One suggestion had been that this group could work on the back of an already-established working group including Libraries Connected and Arts Council England looking at special collections – at this stage, I would suggest that keeping the focus on the specific and well-defined issues of performing arts collections would enable the work of the group to be more effective and therefore more satisfying to participants. The steering group will need to agree an effective scope for its work – e.g. how much of the UK will it cover, and how much its

work will be focused on public libraries rather than non-public and private libraries, including holdings at conservatoires and universities.

2. The steering group will need to work on several related strands of activity, sometimes in parallel: taking these in order, I think the first action **will be to agree the scope for a piece of research and consultancy** showing the national picture for performing arts library collections. Depending on the outcomes of the Music Libraries Trust research, this piece of work will hopefully complement that project and give an overview of provision at UK-wide local authorities (and the definition of what will be included in UK-wide will need to be agreed), to result in a health-check of different local authority holdings and services, with the aim of identifying potential partners amongst those where services are in danger of being reduced or withdrawn, and to identify case studies as appropriate. This first piece of work will hopefully be able to show both the need or motivation for potential partners to be involved in any future regional or national solutions, and to identify potential stumbling blocks to their inclusion. It will be important that the outcomes of this audit reflect both the operational and decision-making levels of participating organisations, and reflect their different motivations and priorities. Additional case studies and consultees may be included in the scope for this work, including Sophie Anderson of OCLC, formerly of Yorkshire Music Library[3].

3. There is also clearly a need for the steering group to **review the future evidence base required to support the project's development**, including social return on investment. Depending on how the project will be funded (see 4), it may be that this is a piece of work that is also commissioned at the initial phase, to run alongside the audit work, above, or that it forms part of the fuller bid (see 6). Ensuring that any future joined-up

system builds relevant data collection into its development will be important to the future sustainability of the project, and in making the case for its funding and development.

4. **Identify suitable funding to support the initial research and any time-limited project support in developing the project to full funding**. My conversation with Sue Williamson suggested that the steering group would not need to be formally established in order to access Arts Council England development funds but could perhaps work under the umbrella of Libraries Connected. Our conversation also suggested that, under the current structure, Arts Council England would not be able to fund something that local government could or should support – however, following discussion to shape the ask appropriately, the group could apply in the first instance to that development budget. As this budget is allocated for the current financial year, an application in the next 3 – 4 months could be appropriate. Match funding is welcome but not a prerequisite, and in-kind support – which this project would have written in by the sheer volume of work going into the steering group – would count. Sue Williamson is hopeful that funding in support of the project might be available from a charitable trust or foundation, and would be willing to take that forward, following some initial encouraging conversations.

5. **Identify additional partners to support the work strategically** – as noted above, this may include representatives from the Local Government Association or other public sector contacts through Libraries Connected. CILIP, the library and information association, was also mentioned as a possible partner, as was the Music Libraries Trust, representatives from music education hubs, Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs), politicians and elected members.

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[3] Another consultee could be JISC, whose Library Hub Discover was recommended as a potential model for a national catalogue, although this is not a real time user-based tool but a catalogue.

6. Working with the outcomes of the research and consultancy, to **develop a proposal for a national or regional hub model** for combined performing arts libraries holdings, based on the NPALS system. Based on the various input to this report, I believe there is strong support for a solution of this type that will:

- Enable access to a system designed with the user in mind, to deliver an end-to-end service that is self-service and greatly reduces or removes library staff time in administering most requests.

- Encourage review and evaluation of existing holdings, ensuring that the stock that goes onto the new system is accurate and fit for purpose

- Maximise income potential by reducing staff overheads, providing a better service for users, and using the opportunity of a relaunch to reach out to new customers

- Link up increasing numbers of holdings across the UK and making the process more efficient for all users.

There are obviously many issues to be overcome in developing such a system, and it will be the job of the working group – and any time-limited staff resource – to find workable solutions to these. Based on the input to this report, I believe that the most difficult barriers to overcome will be cultural rather than practical – i.e. if the group can identify initial partners who are appropriately motivated to participate, then solutions will be found to the other problems. Taking the development of NPALS as a case study, it is clear that buy-in and support from a strategic level of Nottingham City Council meant that Stephen Chartres' team was able to be focused on finding solutions, rather than fighting decision making. A carrot and stick approach may need to be taken with other less enlightened local authorities, to present a realistic picture of current costs and issues, alongside a potential solution which is joined-up, entrepreneurial and future-proofed. Based on my experience, even trying to ascertain

the true cost of current provision in different authorities is a huge challenge so this should not be underestimated.

In developing a working proposal, the steering group should review the role of the existing Encore 21 database in any future solution. It is however crucial that any future solution continues to be driven by user needs primarily, in order for there to be a viable future for the service. In finding a solution that works for users, libraries will be able to focus their limited resources on customer service, utilising their specialist knowledge to support the sectors' needs.

Appendix 1:
Keeping Performance Live attendees

Name	Organisation
Adam Barham	Leeds Libraries
Rebecca Bolton	Wiltshire Council
Bronwyn Brady	Leeds Libraries
Barbara Bragg	Kent County Council
Stephen Chartres	Nottingham City Council
Jacquie Crosby	Lancashire County Council
Sue Crowley	Somerset County Council
Kate Earl	Arts Council England
Rosalind Edwards	Manchester City Council
Barbara Eifler	Making Music
Fiona Goh	Fiona Goh Consulting
Oli Griffiths	Manchester City Council
Janet Holden	Norfolk Library and Information Service
Paul Howarth	Suffolk Libraries
Isobel Hunter	Libraries Connected
Charlotte Jones	City Of London (Barbican Music Library)
Craig Jones	Surrey Libraries
Denise Jones	Liverpool Libraries and Information Services
Shelagh Levett	SWRLS CIO
Ceri Mann	Community and Youth Music Library
Katie Matthews	Hertfordshire Libraries
Barry Meehan	BCP Council
Marian Morgan-Bindon	Oxfordshire County Council
Lucy Pick	Hampshire County Council
Harriet Randall	Kent County Council
Rupert Ridgewell	British Library
Claire Robe	Arts Council England
Judy Smith MBE	Community and Youth Music Library
Carl Stevens	Arts Council England
Sue Williamson	Arts Council England

Appendix 2: anonymised feedback from evaluation questionnaires

Did the programme fit together: ISH

If not, why not? What would you have changed?

Things have moved on since the report – would have been good to hear about more

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Meeting lots of music libraries and their champions in one room

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

I represent users. So many services still don't use users to help them redefine services and design the future. Use us!

Were the right people attending: ish

If no, who was missing?

IAML, NewSPAL – I was here but not able to speak, Music Libraries Trust

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

What would you have liked to have said that you weren't able to?

Would have liked ten minutes to address room on updates to our work in last two years

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Round table – teasing the information out

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very

Were the right people attending:

No

If no, who was missing?

IAML (party) though several of us are/were members

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Other comments:

IAML not consulted nor invited as an advocate and knowledgeable partner

[N.B. A representative from IAML was invited but was unable to attend due to illness]

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Table discussions – hearing other voices

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Some. Interesting to hear other views.

Were the right people attending:

No

If no, who was missing?

More London boroughs – e.g. Westminster. More music librarians. More IAML reps.

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Other comments:

More involvement/consultation in organisation of seminar from IAML?

Why was IAML apparently not consulted about Joining the Dots?

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Presentations: excellent selection that showed different perspectives. Delegates seemed to value the networking opportunities.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very – we are not a library service as such. But focused on supporting great stock and collections and services.

Were the right people attending:

Yes

If no, who was missing?

For a future meeting: Arts Council England staff from music, community arts etc., senior decision makers, funders, partners – need a more shaped-up proposition.

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Group discussion and feedback

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very – thank you so much!

Were the right people attending:

Yes

Other comments:

I would like this to happen on a more regular basis. Every 3-6 months – it would be so useful to meet with people from other music libraries.

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

The afternoon conversations that produced some great ideas that we can all use and should help to shape next steps for PALS collectively.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very relevant and timely

Were the right people attending:

Yes

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables? Was leading – difficult to address specific questions for each group but there was a constistency in the comments/suggestions being offered.

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

General discussions. Asking questions not had opportunity to before. V interesting talks particularly CYML and Surrey.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very – although we have no collection we are regular ILL borrowers.

Were the right people attending:

Yes but

If no, who was missing?

More IAML reps? Was great to have Arts Council England in attendance.

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

What would you have liked to have said that you weren't able to?

Asked more about context for initial report. Identifying any issues we have in first place such as working out what we might want in current national database.

Did the programme fit together:

Sort of

If not, why not? What would you have changed?

The afternoon discussions were quite broad. It would have been good if it was possible to explore fewer fundamental questions in more detail, particularly ones identified by the morning speakers.

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

The interesting series of speakers in the morning.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very relevant

Were the right people attending:

Yes

If no, who was missing?

Speakers connected with Encore and music cataloguing?

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

If no, why not? What prevented you from contributing?

Unfortunately, however one speaker dominated in my discussions which stifled potentially useful discussion and potential ways forward.

What would you have liked to have said that you weren't able to?

More discussions on the way forward.

Other comments:

Extremely worthwhile event – hope it leads to some concrete steps forward. I suspect agreeing national ways forward will be extremely difficult, developments on a small scale – i.e. authorities which take a lead and encourage others to join. It may be that some funding is needed to facilitate this – to get the ball rolling.

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

All of it – presentations were good and relevant and the round-table discussions interesting. Good networking opportunity too.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very relevant. I have learned a lot, taken lots of ideas back and it is exciting to be involved in this conversation now.

Were the right people attending:

Yes

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Did the programme fit together:

Yes – combination of case studies to inform wider debate worked well – especially around barriers and lessons learnt.

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Hearing what other authorities are doing and linking to national policy debates useful.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Really important in terms of advocating a regional approach follow NPALS model

If no, who was missing?

Decision makers may be useful to hear the debate. Senior influencers.

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes – I was group chair. Was able to promote the NPALS model.

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

The pm discussions but the presentations set a useful context.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Less relevant to Surrey as we are losing our collection so future development isn't so important.

Were the right people attending:

Yes

If no, who was missing?

I think senior staff/elected members need to be present where possible to give them the scale of the issue.

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Other comments:

A very interesting day, which hopefully will lead to change.

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

All very helpful, but especially opportunity to discuss issue in the afternoon session.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very relevant

Were the right people attending:

Yes

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Discussions round the table – the questions in advance to discuss with teams. Feedback and summary at the end.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very informative, very useful.

Were the right people attending:

Yes

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Meeting others and networking

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very

Were the right people attending:

Yes?

If no, who was missing?

We were surprised some LAs were not here and we needed more of the music librarians here

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

What would you have liked to have said that you weren't able to?

I forgot to raise the need to fund Encore 21, which is urgently needed. I suggest Making Music could add 10p per year to their membership charges and use that £35k for Encore. This could be enhanced by a levy on lending. There would need to be a central body – British Library working jointly with IAML? – to manage and monitor Encore 21. I would have liked to have heard more about the ways in which Arts Council England could be an effective advocate for performance sets services, as well as working within Arts Council England to identify some funding, and encourage major and minor trusts to support funding for core costs for the independent music hire libraries.

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

The talks were very helpful in seeing what's happening (small case studies) in other locations. Equally the roundtables were interesting and thought provoking.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Relevant

Were the right people attending:

Yes

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Ideas about national catalogue/service.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very relevant.

Were the right people attending:

Yes

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

No

If not, why not? What preventing you from contributing?

Less experience than others!

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

If no, why not? What would you have changed?

An earlier start/finish

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

The workshop in the afternoon. Got to the nitty gritty.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

It was useful as it posed questions about performing sets services and made me think about value and impact.

Were the right people attending:

Yes

If no, who/which services and/or organisations were missing?

Some of the larger music libraries.

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Other comments:

A social return on investment piece of work to demonstrate the value and impact of music/plays.

A standard way of evaluating impact.

A change from transactional to transformational – to strengthen the argument about why it's important to 'save' the service.

An Arts Council England bid to develop a pilot regional approach – shared management, shared LMS, shared resources, shared policies and procedures.

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Discussions

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Interesting as an area we might be asked to support.

Were the right people attending:

Yes – although someone from Audiences Agency and philanthropy [could be helpful attendees in future, I presume]

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Any comments: Just one thought: by staying in the same group – a lot of the points were covered in different ways, it might have been helpful to hear different views.

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Awareness of similar issues with regards to these services and exploring alternative provision.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very relevant with regards to pressures and need for development in order to preserve for the future.

Were the right people attending:

Yes

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes – I think everything was expressed in discussions.

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

The morning speakers. Good overview.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Excellent way to learn a lot about provision around the country.

Were the right people attending:

Yes – but I would have liked to talk to Plymouth.

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes and no

If no, why not? What prevented you from contributing?

We had a very vocal contributor, who made some valid points but meant others had to jump in when breath was drawn.

What would you have liked to have said that you weren't able to?

In terms of having a collection that contains material modern community choirs want, requires funding Need investment to ensure collection is fit for purpose. Ours is getting 'elderly'!

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Experiences and views of others.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Very relevant and interesting.

Were the right people attending:

Yes

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes. – Nothing [to add] – was all very open and free speaking.

Other comments:

There needs to be an efficient way of connecting the lending organisations to know about outcomes of this and the ongoing initiatives.

Did the programme fit together:

Yes

What was the most helpful part of the seminar and why?

Hearing about the experiences and work in other libraries/services.

How relevant was the seminar to you and your service?

Potentially very relevant – we are at a point where we need to refocus/revitalise our music and drama offer and this has given some good ideas and information.

Were the right people attending:

Yes

Were you able to fully contribute to the round tables?

Yes

Appendix 3: Post-event Survey Monkey questionnaire responses

1. **Since attending the Keeping Performance Live event, have you had any additional thoughts or feedback on the issues raised that you would like to share with us, please? We have split the answers into the key areas in the breakout groups for ease of reference – thank you.**

(a) Advocacy and audience development including: what data we need to collect in order to make the case for our work; how to identify and reach internal and external advocates; identifying and better communicating with current and future audiences. *Two responses:*

- National/regional and county figures for numbers of potential groups we could serve?

- We need to have a baseline nationally of those using performing arts library services, and then their reach in terms of impact on communities and individuals who benefit. Having strong and accurate data will be required to influence decision and policy makers against key priorities. Such a project could be something proposed for an Arts Council funding bid

(b) Development and partnerships including: whether collections should stay in the public sector; suitable governance models for managing the work; which organisations to partner with; barriers to partnership working; barriers to interlending and how these barriers can be overcome. *Two responses:*

- Collections should definitely stay in the public sector as the local authority library service offers an existing framework

of collection points (i.e. libraries and a transport system between buildings within that local authority), which avoids the additional problems of packing and postage. If collections really are at risk of break-up, then a charitable company would seem to be the best way of keeping that collection in circulation, and a CIO governance offers a good model, but a stand alone CIO requires external funding support at a higher rate than a well-managed local authority system with a realistic charging plan. The charity option becomes less expensive to run if the local authority can provide premises at a peppercorn rent. Partnerships between local authorities has some back office value, but if distances are too great, presents collection by borrower problems. The only real barrier to interlending is austerity; if a realistic charging system is in place the lending of performance items can work well within the overall library system.

- Whilst it is recognised that a local authority may best positioned to be custodians for these collections due to their importance for communities, the current financial pressure facing local authorities as well as competing priorities does mean that decisions made about, and in particular in relation to Library services, does mean that service continues to be put at risk. Ownership and management of the service should be considered on who best can offer and deliver a sustainable future for the service. Trusts, or social enterprise organisations, could equally be able to run the service and have access to resources and funding not necessarily available to local authorities

(c) Funding including: identifying key funding issues and how they may be overcome; evaluating the effectiveness of different funding sources; the relative importance of becoming a registered charity; whether and how collections could be made self-financing; whether charges could be standardised across the UK; whether interlending should be free or the charges always passed on. *3 responses:*

• Funding is the elephant in the room. The provision of a loan service of performance works to amateur music and drama groups (choirs, orchestras, amateur drama etc) only works if the charges are reasonable and whether a local authority or a charity, the income from charges will probably never cover all costs, although it will cover a greater proportion of the cost if the collection remains in the local authority library system. It is unlikely that the lending of performance sets which involved quantity of copies or orchestral parts can ever be self-financing if they follow a charging pattern that is realistic to borrowers. Local authority subsidy must come from the authorities' central funds, but certainly need not be so great as the funding required by a charity (the exception for charities is whether they have peppercorn rent premises). A charity (and it is essential that an organisation taking over a collection IS a charity) has to seek funding from grant making trusts or a national funder such as the Lottery or Arts Council and they look for sound governance which being a charity offers. Fund raising by new schemes such as crowd funding can work occasionally, but these schemes are mainly successful when for a specific project, not year-round core costs such as staff, rent, etc. Grant making trusts do not include libraries in their criteria. I would suggest it is unrealistic to expect the lending or interlending of performance works should be free, but charges must be affordable to the widest possible community. To be able to borrow a major choral work at around £1 instead of having to purchase it at between £9.99 and £14.99 ensures many can take part, instead of just a few. When setting charges the lender also has to take into account the fact that the borrower will also be paying a fee to join the choir or orchestra. Trying to standardise charges across the UK will be near impossible unless all collections are held by local authorities the difference in core costs for LAs and charities is too great.

• One of the barriers we have is the lack of money to invest in the collection new business would generate income but to serve new audiences we'd need seed funding, something the council isn't going to provide. Would national provision give us greater buying power to cut costs? A simpler 'one service' message is easier to promote?

• It is difficult to know whether the service can be completely self financing, without having the baseline understanding of demand and use as well as true costs. Certainly the NPALS regional model using a bespoke IT self serve online system has created significant operational and administrative savings. Charges would be difficult to be standardised unless the service operates on a national basis with regional hubs, from a single catalogue and ordering system with interlending between a smaller number of providers. A review of inter library loans is required.

(d) Systems and management including: whether a national catalogue is necessary and how it could be achieved; what the pros and cons of building on existing systems might be; whether there should be a national policy for PACs and if so, who drives it; the role of the Arts Council(s) in this UK-wide development; what statistical information needs to be collected. *3 responses:*

• We already have the basis of an extremely good national catalogue and this should be built upon, not ditched to start all over again. Work on improving existing digital lending systems is required, and national use of the same system would be an advantage and

would cut the cost of running performance lending. The role of the Arts Council is crucial they have been handed the task of supporting libraries and encouraging the use of libraries however, if no libraries exist they are hard put to encourage the use of libraries. That means that they must start with securing the future of performance libraries before they try to move on to encouraging their use.

- Access to collections online is a must going forward. The ability for customers to search and make decisions on their loans is essential to ensure the limited amount of staffing is there to support people who need help to access collections rather than do the button pushing for people who can do it themselves!

- A national catalogue is required however this needs to be properly resourced to ensure it is managed and maintained. Ideally if the catalogue can then allow viewing of availability and ordering, this would create time and management efficiencies. This would a significant project and require significant time and investment working across authorities all with conflicting priorities and financial pressures. Raising the importance of the service with key decision makers will be crucial for any change to take place, but this needs to have a strong evidence base, of the outcomes of the service to communities and individuals and also the impact if the services have to be closed and limited in access.

2. **Have there been any relevant developments since your attendance of the event that you would like to share with us please?** *3 responses:*

- I find it difficult to answer this question before the report of the day is available recommendations resulting from the views set out on the day and in this survey will I hope result in an Action Plan that everyone can sign up to helping to secure the future of performance set lending, leading to all the health and wellbeing improvements that those of us in this 'business' know are essential and can be achieved.

- Have had a first meeting with our Music Hub and we've already identified ways to raise the profile of our collection using their website to signpost to our holdings catalogues and I'm going along to one of their Cultural Education Partnerships in the New Year to give a presentation on how the service supports their aims.

- We are continuing to work with NewSPAL to secure operating their service using the NPALS IT system, building consistency and the potential integration for the future.

Appendix 4: relevant resources

Suffolk Libraries' research into the value of their work, undertaken by Moore Kingston Smith in September 2019, shows a £1 investment in the libraries yields an £8 return in terms of social value created:

https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/assets/pdf/suffolk-libraries-a-predictive-impact-analysis.pdf

British Library's Living Knowledge sets out the strategic priorities for the British library up until 2023, including custodianship and culture. One listed priority is "Develop our collection management capacity at Boston Spa in West Yorkshire to offer shared services that help deliver efficiencies for other public organisations."

https://www.bl.uk/about-us/our-vision

Music Libraries Trust's questionnaire about music libraries will be focused both on librarians and users of the service, and will be circulated early in 2020.

https://www.musiclibrariestrust.org