



Minutes

English Public Libraries Stakeholder Working Group (EPL)

Date	Tuesday 18 July 2023
Time	15:00 – 17:00
Location	Virtual Meeting

Present:	Luke Burton	Director, Libraries, Arts Council England (ACE) (Chair)
	Kathryn Boothroyd	Library Services Manager, St Helens
	Kevin Hadfield	Group Manager Culture and Information, East Riding Libraries
	Kathryn Harrison	Development Manager: Libraries & Information Services, Wakefield
	Alison Hoolihan	Officer, Libraries Development Team, ACE
	Sophie Lancaster	Senior Manager, Libraries, ACE
	Lauren Lucas	Advisor – Culture, Tourism and Sport, Local Government Association (LGA)
	Dave Lloyd	Service Development Manager
	Neil MacInnes	Head of Libraries, Galleries & Culture, Manchester City Council
	Iain Moore	Commercial Director, Libraries Connected
	Nick Poole	Chief Executive, CILIP, The UK library and information association
	Claire Robe	Lead for Libraries & Heritage, Kingston
	Kelly Saini Badwal	Head of Cultural Services, London Borough of Sutton
	Kamal Shah	Community Managed Libraries Peer Network (CML)

	Adam Tulloch	Chief Executive, Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians (ASCEL)
	Sue Wells	CEO, Lincs Inspire
	Liz White	Head of Public Libraries and Engagement, British Library (BL)
	Sue Wills	Assistant Director Arts, Culture & Libraries Surrey County Council
Guest:	James Gray	Marketing and Advocacy Manager, Libraries Connected
Apologies:	Prof. Steven Broomhead	Chief Executive, Warrington Borough Council
	Isobel Hunter	Chief Executive, Libraries Connected
	Simon Smith	Libraries and Museums Manager, Reading Libraries

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 1.1 Luke Burton welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 There were no interests to declare.

3. GENERAL ELECTION AND PARTY MANIFESTOS

- 3.1 Luke introduced James Gray to the group. James updated the group on Libraries Connected's work on consulting with members and stakeholders to agree on key priorities to feed into policy documents going into the next general election, helping to focus communication over the next 12 months.
- 3.2 Priorities suggested by LC are:
- Libraries First – libraries to be the first port of call to deliver a range of local services
 - A programme of repairs and upgrades
 - A digital inclusion strategy

Action

- Funding to tackle isolation and loneliness (building on warm hubs)
 - Extension of the BIPC network, especially in rural areas
 - Early years – a number of possible priorities around early childhood development inequalities, guidance for local authorities on developing early literacy, and updating the EYFS framework to expand the role of libraries.
- 3.3 Nick commented that there will be a move to mission-driven government and that it will be important to set libraries up as the answer to the missions, as opposed to asking for a library-specific mission. Nick agreed that LC's priorities are right but they need to be framed into responses to the missions of the political parties. CILIP are keen to work with LC on this.
- 3.4 Sue Wills suggested there should also be a focus on creative digital skills, and different library governance models should be mentioned. Sue also commented that priorities could be formed once Baroness Sander's report has been published. Luke added that fiscal events may also affect priorities over the coming months.
- 3.5 Sue Wells noted that all public libraries should be included in priorities, including charities and CMLs. Sue also suggested that it's necessary to look at the bigger issues and at how libraries can link in with these e.g. health, education. Kevin agreed and stated that libraries' impact in health isn't fully represented. James said he would be interested to hear how this can be reflected as a in the priorities.
- 3.6 Neil highlighted libraries' role in the place-shaping agenda and also their contribution to the regeneration of the high street as additional priorities. Liz agreed that libraries supporting place-making and regional partnerships is a very strong theme which is reflected in the LKN and BIPC network, partnerships led locally but delivering nationally.
- 3.7 Lauren informed the group that LGA lead members are currently joining conversations around wider corporate messaging. LGA are focussing on the 4 themes in the [Cornerstones of Culture](#) report – access and inclusion, creative growth, education and skills, and health and wellbeing. Lauren also noted that digital inclusion and early years are strong themes.
- 3.8 Nick stated it is important to consider devolution and the need for regional lobbying. It will be necessary to look at how local libraries engage at a local level and what they offer. The new Libraries Ireland strategy presents a joined-up offer, if English libraries present as a joined up offer then all libraries need to be able to deliver that offer.
- 3.9 Sue Wills suggested a larger piece of work on how libraries can match the recommendations from government departments once a new government is in position.

4 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- 4.1 Luke asked for the group's reflections on recent suggestions of increased anti-social behaviour being seen in libraries. Luke informed the group that he has had conversations around trauma-informed training, in relation to homelessness but which could possibly be expanded to support staff dealing with wider issues. Iain also noted that Libraries Connected have recently commissioned Jo Launder to look at guidelines around ASB, and Nick reminded the group that CILIP's *Managing Safe and Inclusive Library Services* will be published soon.
- 4.2 Neil stated that Manchester is seeing a change from ASB involving young people to a wider range of people because libraries are supporting people who have fallen between the cracks of public services. There was research, pre-pandemic, looking at the value of having social workers situated in libraries, perhaps there is a piece of work around this. Dave agreed that Coventry are also seeing an increased in adults affected by the cost-of-living crisis. Kelly stated that Sutton has some issues with ASB from students but have introduced new systems to overcome this which are now in place and working well.
- 4.3 Sue Wills added that libraries are commissioning health services, as a form of income generation, which then attracts vulnerable people into the libraries. Also, some libraries have an older, female workforce and so workforce development needs to be considered in this context.
- 4.4 Luke commented that libraries are affected by other services not having capacity for library staff to refer onto. Library staff need to be provided with the skills to deal with vulnerable people without expecting them to be health workers. Kamal agreed that training is important for staff and volunteers around people experiencing trauma and complex issues. Iain stated that there is scope for partnership work with social work networks.
- 4.5 Sophie suggested LGA's [Debate Not Hate](#) campaign for members might be suitable for officers. Lauren agreed to get an update on this.
- 4.6 **ACTION: SOPHIE TO LOOK INTO DEBATE NOT HATE.**

5 DATA UPDATE

- 5.1 Iain updated on the data work for the sector. A joint statement from all stakeholders will be issued to heads of service around this work. All services will be asked for monthly data in order to build a dataset for 22/23 which will include monthly data on loans, footfall, activities, PC use, and Wi-Fi. CMLs will also be invited to take part. As

responses come in, there will be some analysis out in September, with a full dataset by October.

- 5.2 Luke updated on the second strand of the work which will move towards a long-term sustainable solution. The working group are currently looking at an ITT for a consultant to draw up a roadmap and options for this next stage. This will ensure that the work will be in a position to progress if data is part of Baroness Sanderson's review. It is hoped that this second strand of work will be delivered by the end of 2023. LibraryOn will be part of the conversation.

6 ACCREDITATION

- 6.1 Luke updated the group on Libraries Accreditation. Annette has completed her 6 month project looking at the Libraries Connected and Shared Intelligence draft accreditation scheme and converting it to Arts Council ways of working. Annette has written a paper that will now go to ACE Executive Board, recommending how the scheme can be implanted and resources needed.

7 MEMBER UPDATES

7.1 LINCS INSPIRE – SUE WELLS

- Extensive HAF programme about to launch for the summer

7.2 SURREY LIBRARIES – SUE WILLS

- Investment in libraries as cultural hubs
- Two commissions looking at a digital welfare offer and a community connector.

7.3 MANCHESTER LIBRARIES – NEIL MACINNES

- £26m library and leisure centre to be open in August. Have just appointed new trustees for this.

7.4 EAST RIDING LIBRARIES – KEVIN HADFIELD

- Have just started work on the new NPO programme
- Continued work around public health commissioning
- The mobile service has been opened up to other council services, going beyond books.

7.5 COVENTRY LIBRARIES – DAVE LLOYD

- Currently looking at a new library strategy

7.6 CILIP – NICK POOLE

- [Green Libraries Week](#) in October – this will have a Green Libraries map for events and activities
- Guidance on Managing Safe and Inclusive Library Services will be published soon – this will include stock, programming, internet access.
- [Rewired Libraries Conference](#) will be taking place in November – this is a hands-on digital event looking at libraries, knowledge and information in a time of disruptive change.
- [CILIP 125](#) has been launched.
- Future Libraries project is underway looking at library need against population growth etc.

7.7 LIBRARIES CONNECTED – IAIN MOORE

- The [East of England Impact report](#) has been launched and a webinar demonstrating the Economic Values Tool is about to take place.
- A project with Natural England - this will involve small grants to increase access to natural resources.
- Regional work – new Regional Manager roles will start in post in the Autumn.
- Ebooks project – there will be a call-out for pilots in the next few months.
- Know Your Neighbourhood Fund – an evaluator has now been appointed to assess cultural interventions addressing loneliness and volunteering.

7.8 BRITISH LIBRARY – LIZ WHITE

- There have been LKN screenings of the Hay Festival
- LKN have been celebrating BL's 50th anniversary.
- Chinese in Britain exhibition has been evaluated – it had 737000 visitors; 63% felt an increase in local pride; it has resulted in new partnerships outside of the library sector.
- A LibraryOn conference is planned in early 2024 to share best practice around the grant programme.

7.9 WAKEFIELD LIBRARIES – KATHRYN HARRISON

- Summer programmes about to launch
- Know Your Neighbourhood project about to launch with co-production of events and activities and then a roll out
- Wakefield is having a Year of Culture in 2024

7.10 ST HELENS LIBRARIES – KATHRYN BOOTHROYD

- Library service is leading in the Borough of Culture celebrations. The launch had 10000 people attend in the town centre and there has been a grants programme for local organisations and groups to celebrate BofC.

7.11 **LGA – LAUREN LUCAS**

- LGA annual conference has just taken place.
- A new Labour Chair is now in post.

7.12 **CML – KAMAL SHAH**

- A mini conference took place in London.

7.13 **SUTTON LIBRARIES – KELLY SAINI BADWAL**

- Sutton have received a silver trailblazer award for EDI work
- A new framework for The Libraries Consortium has launched.

7.14 **KINGSTON LIBRARIES – CLAIRE ROBE**

- Summer programme is about to launch.
- Looking at how libraries can address loneliness and isolation.
- Looking into anti-terror training (as a result of Martyn's Law).

8 AOB

8.1 Luke suggested inviting Stuart Hamilton to speak at a future meeting following the release of the Libraries Ireland strategy. Neil agreed and suggested it would also be beneficial to invite Pamela Tulloch from SLIC.

8.2 ACTION: LUKE TO CONTACT STUART HAMILTON AND PAMELA TULLOCH.

Date and location of next meeting: Tuesday 5 September 2023,
15:00 – 17:00 Virtual Meeting.

