



Public Libraries Consultative Committee

Minutes of the 79th meeting

Date and time	Monday 4 April 2016, 11am to 1pm
Location	Garling Room, State Library of NSW
Chair	Jan Richards
Members in Attendance	Alex Byrne (State Library), Lucy Milne (State Library), Clr Graham Smith (NSWPLA), Clr Julie Hegarty (LGNSW), Robert Knight (NSWPLA), Adele Casey (NSWPLA), Margaret Kay (LGNSW)
State Library Staff in Attendance	Cameron Morley (State Library)
Apologies	Jennifer Alp (NSWPLA) Clr Linda Gill (NSWPLA) Andrew Tink (Library Council)
Minutes	Philippa Scarf (State Library)

Minutes

Item 1: Preliminary Matters

- 1.1 Jan Richards welcomed Margaret Kay, Strategy Manager Social and Community, Local Government NSW to the Board.
- 1.2 The Board NOTED the retirement of Andrew Tink and acknowledged his outstanding contribution to both the Public Libraries Consultative Committee and the Grants Committee.

Item 2: Minutes, Business arising and action register

- 2.1 The Minutes of the 78th meeting held on 7 December 2015, which had been circulated, were confirmed and accepted as a true record.
- 2.2 Business arising is covered throughout the Agenda.
- 2.3 **Progress report on the Public library funding strategy 2015/16 (Cameron Morley)**
The Deputy Premier and Minister for the Arts Troy Grant MP announced the 2015/16 Public Library Infrastructure Grants recipients in March. Unsuccessful applicants have been encouraged to contact the State Library for feedback.

NSW Public Library Association representatives advised that the staggered approach to announcing successful grants resulted in some confusion and frustration for library managers. It was noted that this would be raised with the Grants Committee at its mid-year meeting.

Recommendation

The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the progress report on the Public library funding strategy 2015/16.



Item 3: Priority business

3.1 Fit for the future: strategic response update (Cameron Morley)

The NSW Government's Fit for the Future Initiative will reform local government in NSW through council mergers, new collaborative structures (Joint Organisations) and a new approach to governance in western NSW (the Far West Initiative).

As at March 2016, 151 NSW local councils provide 101 library services across 376 locations. The two broad types of library service in NSW are independent (one council, one library service) and regional (multiple councils, one library service).

A paper and associated spreadsheet presented to the December 2015 meeting of the PLCC examined the implications for library services in light of the recommendations for council reform published by the Office of Local Government (OLG) in September 2014 and the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in October 2015.

Subsequent to the December meeting, on 6 January 2016, the Minister for Local Government referred 35 merger proposals to the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government for examination and report under the Local Government Act. In addition to the Minister's 35 councils merger proposals a number of councils have submitted their own proposals. As a consequence, the Minister has put forward a number of additional proposals for adjacent areas for examination and reporting, in the event that the council-initiated proposals proceed.

An updated spreadsheet was presented to the Committee to reflect the 35 proposals (and potential variations), and the likely effect on public library services.

Effect of Reform

Where two or more councils merge to form a new council, or move to joint arrangements, the merger of the former councils' library services will necessitate the integration of Library Management Systems (LMS), collections (including record metadata), membership data, as well as integration of staff, policies and procedures.

State Library Support for Public Libraries in Transition

Early indications from some councils are that mergers will provide the opportunity to review library services and strategy. Councils will be encouraged to use the State Library's public library consultancy and review service for advice on service development that is compliant with the Library Act and consistent with standards, guidelines and industry trends.

The State Library will contact councils with the offer of assistance once new councils are proclaimed. The State Library will also assist with the development of new agreements for regional and cooperative library arrangements in compliance with the Library Act 1939. A number of councils have contacted the State Library for advice in February and March about the development of cooperative library agreements.

The State Library of NSW has refined a checklist of issues that will need to be addressed to ensure the effective transition of library services to the new arrangements.

The State Library has been in contact with the NSW Office of Local Government to discuss library service transition. Initial indications from the Office are that councils will be able to apply for funds under the Stronger Communities Fund to assist with the integration of library services and systems.

The Committee discussed the impact of amalgamations on public libraries and the capacity of the State Library to assist public libraries with the transition if all occur simultaneously. Cameron Morley advised that the State Library has developed a robust checklist to assist libraries to deliver services. Initially a focus on "high impact"



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amalgamations (those libraries with separate library management systems, collection management processes etc.) and/or smaller libraries.

Margaret Kay advised that it would be most beneficial if the Amalgamation Toolkit developed by Local Government NSW included the checklist developed by the State Library.

Plan of Action:

1. The State Library will continue to develop and refine resources to assist the transition, in consultation with councils and the Office of Local Government.
2. State Library to provide the checklist to LGNSW to incorporate into the Amalgamation Toolkit.

Recommendation

The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the Fit for the Future strategic response update.

3.2 Indigenous Services Strategy (Kirsten Thorpe)

Monica Galassi presented the Indigenous Services strategy and action plan to the Committee for endorsement.

Background

A report was provided to the September meeting reporting on the 2015 survey of Indigenous Services in NSW public libraries. The results of the survey outlined a need for more concentrated work to develop support for Indigenous Services across the NSW public library network.

Following the analysis of the survey results, the strategy *Indigenous spaces in library places: building a vibrant public library network inclusive of Indigenous peoples and communities* has been created, to support and encourage development of public library services in this area. A preliminary scope document was presented to the December meeting, for noting and feedback, in December 2015.

Once endorsed, the *Indigenous spaces in library places: Building a vibrant Public Library network inclusive of Indigenous peoples and communities* will be disseminated across the public library network. An Action Plan for 2016 has been developed that is both realistic and achievable. The first priority is to build awareness of the strategy across public libraries.

Recommendation

The Public Libraries Consultative Committee ENDORSED the action plan and *Strategy for public libraries Indigenous spaces in library places: building a vibrant Public Library network inclusive of Indigenous peoples and communities*.

3.3 Public library funding model options (Cameron Morley)

Background

The Library Council submitted an options paper to the Minister for the Arts for consideration in October 2014. The Minister's Office subsequently advised that any new model for the public library funding will need to be considered after the Fit for the Future local government reforms are introduced.

The State Library has engaged Savills Pty Ltd to assist with the development of possible funding models that reflect the agreed principles. The models will also need to be scalable, so that they may be applied to the range of councils that are proposed as part of the Fit for the Future process.

To date the investigation has included the suitability of including alternate measures of community need (such as the SEIFA index) and factors which reference the value and impact of library services to communities.



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Further information will be brought to the Committee as the model is developed.

Recommendation

The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the briefing on the development of funding model options.

Item 4: Information papers

4.1 Public Library Data on Conduit (Mylee Joseph)

Cameron provided the Committee with an overview and demonstration of the Conduit system showing the functionality and report formats that have been developed over February and March 2016.

Background

The State Library of NSW collects, collates and publishes annual financial and statistical data from NSW local councils and their libraries, in support of the Library Council of NSW's duty to make careful inquiry into the operation and management of every local library in NSW (Library Act 1939, s5).

The data assists with recommending subsidies under s13 of the Act, and enables the State Library and public libraries to identify trends, costs, performance and benchmarks.

The public library financial data is collected from the 151 councils providing library services via the Statement of Library Operations form that is part of the annual subsidy application that councils submit to the State Library. This had been a paper-based system since 1944 until the current financial year.

The collection of usage statistics from NSW public libraries was achieved using a paper-based system from 1944 to 2003. The collection was automated in 2004 when the State Library subscribed to the Bibliostat system, which is currently operated by Baker and Taylor and hosted in the USA.

The PLCC noted the replacement of Bibliostat with Conduit at the Committee's July 2015 meeting.

The Conduit system enables the online lodgment of both the council financial data (pertaining to library services) and public library statistics. In addition the system enables a variety of report formats and data visualisation.

The collection of data from the councils and libraries for the 2014/15 financial year commenced in October 2015. The State Library worked closely with the company who developed Conduit over the past five months to make the system operational and functional. In addition, Public Library Services has worked closely with councils and libraries on the data collection.

As at 22 March 2016 all councils have entered their data, and all but one library service has entered their statistics. Quality assurance of the data is in progress.

Once the data quality assurance has been completed, the functionality will be made available to public libraries and councils.

Recommendation

The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the demonstration of the Conduit system.



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4.2 Unclassified DVDs in public library collections Crown Solicitor advice (Cameron Morley)

Advice from the Crown Solicitor's Office in relation to unclassified DVDs in public library collections was tabled for noting by the Committee.

Recommendation

The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the advice from the Crown Solicitor's Office with regard to unclassified DVDs in public library collections.

4.3 indyreads pilot and demonstration (Ross Balharrie)

Ross Balharrie updated the Committee and provided a demonstration of the local eContent management platform pilot now referred to as the indyreads pilot.

Background

With the progressive uptake of eBooks and eReader capable devices by the Australian community, public libraries have actively been trialing a variety of commercial options for the provision of digital content to their members. The current distribution model for supplying eBook content to public libraries is controlled by a handful of eBook aggregators. The aggregators directly negotiate with publishers for the distribution rights for digital content and then on-sell (generally via a licence agreement) to the public library sector. The content is stored on the vendor's proprietary platform and access to the licensed titles is typically governed by a contractual agreement between the parties which is akin to a rental arrangement.

The current publishing and distribution ecosystem for digital content has not been favourable to public libraries in Australia. Content availability has been a major issue with the big 5 publishers initially withholding eBook titles from public libraries. Fortunately there has been improvement in this area over the past 12 months with the major publishers providing public libraries with access to an increasing portion of their digital inventory via the major library eBook aggregator vendors.

A number of initiatives in the United States have pioneered the development of local eContent management platforms. These initiatives explored alternative approaches to the acquisition and licensing of content, one of which has been shown to be more favourable to public libraries (ownership over temporary access and discounts based on bulk purchasing), whilst still adhering to the principles of one copy one loan and the use of Digital Rights Management (DRM) as favoured by the major publishers and content creators. The content is sourced primarily from midlist, independent publishers and self-published authors (mainstream popular titles continue to be leased via mainstream aggregators).

indyreads

In 2015 the State Library of NSW investigated the viability of establishing an eContent management platform for NSW public libraries. After extensive research the Spanish library technology vendor Odilo was selected as a partner for the pilot.

The platform is now established and is the first of its kind in Australia. The platform has been named indyreads, and trials have commenced with Leichhardt and Parramatta Libraries.

The aims of these trials are to test the platform and work with community authors and independent and mid-list publishers, including open access publishers, to explore ways of making locally important content more readily available to readers.

This innovative platform enables the pilot sites to smoothly integrate the eBook content into their catalogues, providing a seamless experience for library users to access and download the material via a diversity of devices including smartphones, tablets, eReaders and PC's.



To facilitate the acquisition of eContent from Australian publishers the State Library of NSW developed the NSW Public Library Agreement for Purchasing Electronic Content. The agreement creates a framework which supports perpetual access rights, content preservation and accessibility. The agreement stipulates a one copy one loan model as a default with the flexibility to accommodate greater concurrency at the discretion of the rights holder. The agreement also permits segmented content acquisition and shared consortia collections.

The indyreads pilot also aims to explore the suitability of the platform for hosting digitised local studies publications including, ebooks, oral history recordings and video content from the pilot sites collections. Material in languages other than English will also be purchased for the pilot.

Progress

On 29 February, the indyreads pilot was officially launched by the State Librarian and CE, Dr Alex Byrne at Leichhardt Library and on 23 March at Parramatta City Library.

The pilot will conclude in October of 2016. On completion of the pilot an evaluation will be conducted to guide future thinking about improving access to Australian writing and historical materials and the viability of rollout to the NSW public library network.

Recommendation

The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the pilot of the indyreads platform with Leichhardt and Parramatta libraries.

4.4 LIAC Operational Plan 2015/16 (Philippa Scarf)

Background

The LIAC Operational Plan outlines activities to be undertaken in 2015/16 with a focus on three program areas: Find Legal Answers service in public libraries, Find Legal Answers online and Partnerships.

Recommendation

The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the LIAC Operational Plan 2015/16.

4.5 Review of *Public Library News* format change (Edwina Duffy)

Edwina Duffy updated the Committee on the review of *Public Library News* and the next steps for refreshing the publication.

Background

Public Library News (PL News) is a publication for NSW public libraries produced by the State Library of NSW. It is published three times a year and is available in print and PDF.

The State Library has reviewed PL News in order to streamline the editing and production process, refresh content and introduce an e-newsletter format.

An editorial committee consisting of State Library staff Edwina Duffy (current editor), Kathleen Alexander, Cathy Hammer and Mylee Joseph was established and met on 24 February 2016 to discuss changes to the publication. The Editorial committee will meet 3-4 times per year to discuss themes and content.

Feedback from the public library network was elicited via an electronic survey in February 2016. Key findings from the survey indicated it is popular and widely circulated within the network. Readers generally like the current layout and design of PL News but believe it could be refreshed. Nearly three quarters of respondents would like to see an online newsletter format for event and program reports, short articles and photos.



The PL News review recommendations include:

- a print publication of two issues per year (approximately 30 pages) featuring longer articles
- an e-newsletter four times per year featuring shorter articles, event and program updates and photos
- an online submission form to streamline the editing process and align with content requirements for the printed publication, e-newsletter and news and highlights pages of the State Library website.

A plan of action has been developed to identify tasks and the timetable for the implementation of the print and e-newsletter versions of PL News.

Recommendation

The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the review of Public Library News and the next steps for refreshing the publication.

4.6 Strategic Network Committee (Cameron Morley, Mylee Joseph, Ellen Forsyth)

To brief the Committee on the progress of the review of public library working groups, conducted through the Strategic and the NSW participation in the National Public Library Standards Review.

Draft project plan for the review of public library working groups

Background

The PLCC discussed public library working groups at the meeting of 22 September 2014, in the context of the merger of the former Metropolitan Public Libraries Association and the former NSW Public Libraries Association.

The PLCC noted the importance of the working groups as NSW public library learning communities and agreed that the State Library work with NSW public libraries and the NSW Public Library Association to support the continuation and development of public library learning communities.

A draft project plan has been developed and will be discussed by the Strategic Network Committee on 6 April 2016.

NSW participation in the National Public Library Standards Review

Background

The Australian Public Library Alliance (APLA) and National & State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) have engaged Melbourne-based consultants I&J Management Services to review and update the national Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries (2012).

These national standards, published by ALIA, are based on Living Learning Libraries: standards and guidelines for NSW public libraries, which were developed by the State Library of NSW in consultation with NSW public libraries, with assistance from Libraries Alive Pty Ltd in 2008.

The NSW standards and guidelines have the status of a Library Council Guideline and are updated annually using the data from the NSW Public Library Statistics.

The national review is notable because the objectives include an exploration of the value and impact of public libraries with a view to making measures of this type more prominent in the standards and guidelines.

Currently, the NSW standards and the National standards are congruent in terms of measures and KPIs. The NSW figures differ from the national figures because the NSW figures are derived from NSW public library medians rather than national medians. This ensures that the NSW KPIs are reflective of NSW practice.



The State Library envisages that this principle of using NSW data within a nationally congruent suite of measures will continue, and that any changes to the National Standards as a result of the current project will be incorporated into the NSW standards and guidelines.

The State Library will host a workshop on the National Public Library Standards on 6 April 2016, convened by I&J Management Services. Workshop participants include the Strategic Network Committee, State Library staff and approximately 20 other public library managers and staff. Participants were selected by an EOI process.

Results of the national review will be brought back to the Strategic Network Committee and the PLCC for consideration.

Recommendation

1. The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the draft project plan for the review of public library working groups.
2. The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the briefing on NSW participation in the National Public Library Standards Review

4.7 Bulk loans pilot progress report (Abby Dawson)

Background

The State Library has been exploring alternative service models for the bulk loan service. Two pilot models are in progress - a floating collection with the large print and talking book collections and a Centre of Excellence approach where a public library will house and distribute a language collection.

Floating collection model

The floating collection pilot commenced in February, with five libraries participating. Each library was sent 25 talking books and 75 large print books. The loans were issued for 6 months, at which point each library will send the books on to another library for six months.

Centre of Excellence model

The first Centre of Excellence pilot commenced in mid-March with the Gujarati collection sent to Blacktown City Library. Blacktown is currently adding the collection to its library management system and it will be available for loan shortly. The collection will be split between Stanhope Gardens Library and the Max Webber Library.

The second Centre of Excellence pilot has commenced with the Italian collection at Leichhardt Library. An MOU has been signed and the books have been sent with a proposed start date of 18 April.

A number of other libraries have expressed an interest in participating in the Centre of Excellence pilot.

Selection of large volume long term loans

In addition to the pilots libraries have been encouraged to borrow more items for longer periods. Since 2015, six metropolitan libraries and one country library have visited and selected between 100 and 500 items to borrow for up to a year. Nine country libraries have opted for large loans of 200 items for a year which State Library staff have selected and despatched.

Future plans

Demand for the bulk loans collections continues to grow (over 124,000 items delivered in 2014/15), and the State Library will continue to explore service models with public libraries that ensure that the collections are made available to communities as effectively and efficiently as possible.



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Recommendation

The Public Libraries Consultative Committee NOTED the update on progress of the alternative service models for State Library bulk loans.

Item 5: Association reports

5.1 NSWPLA report

Clr Graham Smith updated the Committee on NSWPLA matters including strategic planning and research, and cooperation across the network.

Item 6: Other business

6.1 Points for communication

It was recommended that a summary of all agenda items be circulated via a Points for Communication email to NSW public library managers.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1pm.

Next Meeting

Date	Monday 25 July 2016
Time	11am-1pm followed by lunch and a tour of the library
Location	Waverley Library, 32-48 Denison St, Bondi Junction