



Public Libraries Consultative Committee Unconfirmed - Minutes of the 87th meeting

Date and time	Monday, 12 March 2018, 10.00am-11.30am
Location	Unaipon Room, Level 1 Macquarie Building
Chair	Jan Richards AM (Library Council of NSW)
Members in Attendance	Dr John Vallance (State Librarian) Dr Lisa O’Sullivan (State Library) Adele Casey (NSWPLA, Bland Shire Council) Cr Dallas Tout (NSWPLA, Wagga Wagga City Council) Cr Les Lambert (NSWPLA, Narromine Shire Council) Cr Romola Hollywood (NSWPLA, Blue Mountains City Council) Cr Lesley Furneaux-Cook (LGNSW, Burwood Council) Margaret Kay (LGNSW) Michael Caulfield (Library Council of NSW) Philip Edney (NSWPLA, City of Canada Bay Council) Robert Knight (NSWPLA, Riverina Regional Library)
Apologies	The Hon George Souris AM
SLNSW staff attending	Mylee Joseph Philippa Scarf Cameron Morley
Minutes	Susan Smith (State Library)

Minutes

Item 1: Preliminary Matters

1.1 Welcome and apologies

- The Chair welcomed Dr Lisa O’Sullivan, Executive Director, Public Libraries and Engagement, State Library of NSW. The members introduced themselves and their roles to Dr O’Sullivan.
- Mr Knight notified the committee that he was President- elect of the Australian Library and Information Association, and was warmly congratulated.
- Apologies were accepted on behalf of The Hon George Souris.

1.2 Notification of other business

Nil notified.



Item 2: Minutes, Business arising and action register

2.1 Minutes of the 86th meeting

- The Chair requested comments on the minutes of the 86th meeting held on 5 December 2017. Cr Tout had questions on the public library funding bid, Public Library Infrastructure Grants (PLIG) and Professional Development, which were covered as Business Arising from the previous minutes. There being no other alterations to the minutes, approval of the minutes as read was recorded.

2.2 Business arising

2.2.1 Public Library funding bid

- Cr Tout asked about the bid level recommended to Library Council, and suggested that the sentence in the draft Minutes needed clarification. Mr Morley explained that the Library Council had been advised of the NSW Public Library Association's advice that a figure of \$50M per annum was the desired target. This was noted, however the Library Council understood that the Library needed to prepare a defensible bid in consultation with Treasury, and the Department of Planning and Environment. The bid has been submitted to Treasury requesting \$31.5m in year 1 rising to \$40m over the forward estimates. It was agreed that the December Minutes would be amended to clarify that the stakeholder associations supported bidding for the \$50M figure.
- Dr Vallance recommended that future funding bids state that funds are required to fulfil statutory obligations.

2.2.2 Public Library Infrastructure Grants

- Mr Morley advised that the Grants Committee had met in February 2018 and reviewed grant applications referring on 31 of 50 applications as approved for Library Council consideration at their meeting the following week.
- It was noted that the Library Council requested that details of projects funded through the grants are brought back to the Council for information. It was recommended that a presentation on projects funded over the 4 years is prepared for the joint Library Council / PLCC meeting in December 2018.
- The approved applications are now with the Minister's Office and grant announcements are anticipated soon.
- Mr Caulfield responded to the query about the quality of the applications. He acknowledged that whilst many more than the 31 approved applications had appropriate needs, their applications had failed to establish a considered value proposition. It was recommended that Mr Morley and the PLS team provide some grant application assistance for future rounds.

2.2.3 Advice from Crown Solicitor

- Ms Scarf updated the meeting on the progress of the advice from the NSW Crown Solicitor's Office regarding the Australian Performing Rights Association's approach to various NSW libraries seeking licence fees for public access computers. It was observed that APRA had made similar demands to some interstate libraries.
- The Crown Solicitor has advised that the APRA claim has no basis, and suggested two avenues:
 - a. to respond to APRA's demands saying they have no basis for a claim; or
 - b. as above and invite them to substantiate the basis for their claim.
- the Committee unanimously agreed to take approach (a.).
- the Committee asked for the Crown Solicitor's advice to be circulated out-of-session.



2.2.4 Professional Development

- Cr Tout enquired about Professional Development training plans which were discussed at the December 2017 meeting but not specifically covered in today's agenda. Ms Scarf explained that 10 sessions of Collect Connect Community have been scheduled for 2018.
- Family History training was identified in previous research as a growth need area for librarian development and would be included in two of the scheduled Collect Connect Community workshops in the latter half of 2018.
- In addition, there were 20 positions in the online TAFE course *YA why not?* offered to public libraries in February 2018.
- Additional cultural competency courses would be offered as an online course so that more regional participants could be included.
- *Novelist* training will be offered in regional centres including Dubbo, Grafton and Wagga Wagga.
- the Library had addressed the concerns of PLCC members by making more training options available regionally and online to address the issue of distance, which makes it difficult for regional staff to regularly attend sessions at the State Library.
- Cr Tout advised that NSW PLA had allocated funds for travel to support training and requested face-to-face training options to be included this year in regional areas. It was agreed that the link to the online training calendar would be sent around to members out-of-session.
- The Chair asked that future PLCC papers include an Appendix detailing public library professional development including Aboriginal Cultural Competency, LIAC and Drug Info workshops.

Item 3: Papers for DISCUSSION & NOTING

3.1 Remaking of Library Regulation 2010

- Mr Morley briefed the Committee on this item.
- The staged repeal and remaking of the Regulation had been delayed for the past three years whilst the Fit for the Future local government reforms were in progress.
- The State Library has advised the Parliamentary Counsel's Office that there is no reason to postpone the remaking of the Regulation for a fourth year.
- The Committee discussed the utility of the Regulation and noted that it enables the Library Council and local councils to regulate the use of their respective libraries.
- The Committee particularly noted two items that were highlighted in the paper, the prescribed amount for subsidy (clause 18) and penalty units.
- Regarding the prescribed amount for subsidy, Mr Morley advised that the remaking of the Regulation is not a mechanism that can be used to increase public library funding. In order to increase the amount, commensurate funding would first need to be secured through the Budget process. The Committee noted this advice.
- Ms Kay asked when the last increase to the prescribed amount occurred. Mr Morley advised that the last increase to the prescribed amount was in 1997, however since this time increases to council payments have been allocated according to formulae developed in consultation with the PLCC, and approved by the Minister at the recommendation of the Library Council. The prescribed amount of \$1.85 per capita is one component of the annual payments.
- It was noted that in 2017/18 council payments ranged from \$2.44 per capita for the largest and least disadvantaged local government areas, to \$13.06 per capita for the smallest, most isolated and



disadvantaged local government areas. The payments over and above \$1.85 per capita are distributed via the subsidy adjustment formula, which is not set out in the Regulation.

- If there are sufficient funds available in the future, and an increase to the prescribed amount is considered appropriate, an amendment to the Regulation could be pursued without waiting for the next five yearly review.
- In discussion, it was further noted that a simple increase to the prescribed amount is likely to disadvantage small to medium sized councils, and that the preference of the PLCC and the Library Council since 1997 has been to allocate funds using per capita and needs-based components.
- Cr Tout suggested circulating to the Committee a previous discussion paper on the per capita amount. This was agreed.
- Cr Hollywood queried the appropriateness of setting out the per capita amount or other aspects of the formula in the Regulation. Following discussion, it was agreed that there was no desire to amend this clause of the Regulation at this time.
- Penalty units were discussed and it was noted that one penalty unit is equivalent to \$110, therefore breaches of the Regulation by library users could attract a fine of up to \$220. More serious matters that may occur in libraries such as vandalism or assault are matters for the police and would be dealt with under the *Crimes Act*.
- The Chair noted that most libraries use the Regulation to develop library rules and codes of conduct for library use.
- Cr Furneaux-Cook raised the issues of unattended minors in libraries, and individuals using the libraries as a place of business. Ms Scarf advised that the State Library has developed policy guidelines for public libraries based on the Regulation and other relevant legislation which address these matters.
- Cr Furneaux-Cook queried the clauses pertaining to library fines for the late return of material, particularly the appropriateness of the \$50 cap for individual items (clause 8), given the high value of some items. Mr Morley clarified that this cap is on the late fee per item borrowed, and that libraries may also charge a replacement fee for items that are damaged or not returned, which is equivalent to the item's value and cost of processing (clause 7).
- It was noted that late fees are an income stream for some public libraries, but that not all libraries opt to charge these fees.
- Mr Knight suggested that training for public library staff on the operation of the Regulation and other policies would be valuable. It was agreed that the State Library would develop a program on these topics.
- The Committee agreed with the State Library recommendation that the Regulation is to be remade without change.

The Committee:

1. **NOTED** the Remaking of the Library Regulation 2010 paper.

3.2 Early Literacy Project – Update on Progress

- Ms Joseph attended the meeting and presented the report.
- In response to the Committee's endorsement of the development of a state-wide early literacy framework for public libraries, the State Library engaged the Macquarie University Institute of Early Childhood to conduct a research project. The Institute's Dr Emilia Djonov is leading the research phase of the project, which is titled: "Developing a context-sensitive framework for supporting early literacy across NSW public libraries".
- Ms Joseph reported that the project's literature review and initial recommendations are ready for publication, and presented the findings, which state:



“Public libraries have the unique capacity to promote and support early language and literacy by:

- providing a welcoming learning environment for all children and their families, inclusive of differences in age, gender, ethnicity, class and cultural background
- offering free, year-round access to a diverse range of books (fiction and nonfiction) and other resources (toys, multimedia, and electronic), and drawing on research in children’s language, literacy and learning to critically evaluate new resources before including them in the children’s collection
- promoting a love of reading, books and knowledge in young children and their families
- helping to build reading habits in children from an early age by encouraging the borrowing of age-appropriate children’s books and other materials, and in this way enabling children and their families to be part of a community of readers and library users
- developing a positive disposition to early language and literacy learning not only through access to literacy resources but also through language-rich interactions that respond to, encourage and enhance children’s knowledge and interests; such interactions are essential for empowering children and their families to access and engage with the meanings in the literacy resources that libraries offer
- hosting information sessions for parents on why and how families should support early language and literacy development from birth
- developing strategies to help reach socio-economically disadvantaged communities who would benefit enormously from library resources and programs that encourage families to engage their children in emergent literacy practices at home.”

- The Committee expressed its enthusiastic thanks for the report and its emphasis of the public library’s unique and valuable position as the first library for young people.
- Mr Morley noted that the research was commissioned in response to a PLCC recommendation which followed the ALIA Summit on Literacy in 2013.
- Ms Joseph advised that the next step would be to develop practical training based on this pedagogical philosophy, probably in train-the-trainer format. It is anticipated that there will be uptake of the report both nationally and internationally in libraries and early literacy circles.
- Ms Joseph advised that the report would be published on the State Library website.
- Cr Hollywood suggested that the research report would make a good media story, and Cr Lambert requested that the Library Council write to the Premier to highlight to her that public libraries help achieve the Premier’s Priorities. This was agreed.
- Dr O’Sullivan agreed to develop a communications plan along with her team to maximise publicity. It was agreed to keep the PLCC committee informed of the communication strategy.
- The Chair reported her intention to bring the report to the attention of the International Federation of Library Associations next week at the meeting in The Hague.

The Committee:

1. **NOTED** the Early Literacy project briefing paper.

3.3 Multicultural Library Services in NSW public libraries

- Ms Joseph presented the paper.
- In March 2017, after discussion with the Strategic Network Committee, the State Library appointed DiverseWerks to undertake a formal review of service delivery to establish how well public libraries in NSW meet the needs of their local non - English speaking background communities. These services were compared against *Living Learning Libraries: standards and guidelines for NSW public libraries* and the *Multicultural benchmarks* as updated in 2016 by the NSW Multicultural Working Group. The research methodology



included a contextual review, online state-wide survey of public library stakeholders, data identification and analysis and consultations with public library staff, existing CALD library users and future CALD library users.

- Ms Joseph advised that the report provides clear recommendations for improved collaborative services between the State Library and public libraries in areas such as promotion, cataloguing, collection sharing, and cultural competency training. The report has also enabled updating of the NSW benchmarks for public library multicultural services.
- The full report and updated benchmarks are to be launched on 13 March at the Public Library Multicultural Services Seminar being held at the State Library, and will be published on the State Library website.
- The Chair observed that ALIA had noted that libraries are the first place that refugees seek help, however, were not always consulted by authorities about needs.
- The Chair endorsed the multicultural activities of the State Library as the most highly regarded in Australia.

The Committee:

1. **NOTED** the research on the multicultural library services in public libraries in NSW.

3.4 People Places – review and revision

- Mr Morley advised that the space planning tools associated with the public library building guidelines *People Places* require revision.
- These spreadsheet-based tools were last updated in 2012, and could be made more user friendly and reflective of the contemporary demands being placed on public library spaces.
- The Committee considered the Scope of Works for the project, and provided suggestions for inclusion such as the impact of demographic characteristics, population density and co-location on space requirements.
- The Scope of Works is to be issued in March to organisations with prior experience in public library planning or development.
- A report will be brought to the July meeting of the PLCC.

The Committee:

1. **NOTED** the People Places – review and revision briefing paper.

3.5 Indigenous spaces in Library Places: strategy update

- Ms Joseph presented the paper, which outlined the progress of the State Library's Indigenous Service team in visiting public libraries and providing assessment and training.
- The following activities for 2017/18 were noted:
 - Indigenous Spaces in Library Places online toolkit developed
 - Best practice case studies contributed to the toolkit by Blue Mountains City Library, Kempsey Shire Library, Port Macquarie-Hastings Library, Coonamble Shire Library, State Library of NSW, Toowoomba Region Libraries (Qld) and Halifax Public Library (Canada)
 - Connecting Culture: Tracing Ancestors family history training was delivered at Bega, Quirindi, Tamworth, Orange, Lightning Ridge and Newcastle.
 - Indigenous Services workshop for Big Sky Libraries staff at Brewarrina on 14/11/2017
 - SWITCH 2017, launch of the toolkit
 - 43 public library staff from 22 library services participated in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competence Course delivered by CCCA online. Many from rural and regional libraries.
 - Unconference workshop for further learning and collaborative problem solving for public library staff held on 7/2/2018, including guest speakers Nathan Sentance, Project Officer, First Nations Cultural Programs at the Australian Museum and Veronica Murphy, Senior Adviser at the NSW Public Service Commission. Feedback from participants:



STATE LIBRARY®
NEW SOUTH WALES

- 83.33% of public library respondents to a survey about the Unconference said “The event gave me ideas and inspirations to be applied in my library.”
- 100% of respondents said they would rate the quality and structure of the Unconference event as “Excellent” or “Very Good”.
- Cr Lambert asked about statistics on employment of indigenous staff and commented on the possibility of councils securing more indigenous employees in libraries via scholarships and mentorship.
- Ms Kay advised that individual councils collected statistics on staff that self-identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The Committee:

- **NOTED** the briefing paper on Indigenous spaces in Library Places: strategy update.

3.6 Other business

- The July meeting agenda will include discussion and recommendation of the 2018/19 Public Library Funding Strategy.
- It was agreed to email out-of-session updates on the 2017/18 Public Library Infrastructure Grants once they are announced, and the 2018/19 public library grants and subsidies once the Budget is released.

2018 Meeting Dates:

Monday 23 July, 1.00-3.00pm

Monday 17 September, 1.00-3.00pm

Tuesday 4 December, 1pm-3.00pm followed by Joint meeting with the Library Council from 3pm-4pm