Sensitive: NSW Government

93rd Meeting - Public Libraries Consultative Committee MINUTES

DATE	Tuesday 1st December 2020
TIME	2:30 PM to 4:00 PM
LOCATION	Online via Microsoft Teams Meeting (for any members onsite, the meeting held in the Garling Room on Level 1).
CHAIR	Jan Richards AM (Library Council of NSW)
EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Cameron Morley (State Library)
MEMBERS ATTENDING	Dr Ursula Dubosarsky (Library Council of NSW) Philip Edney (NSWPLA, City of Canada Bay Council) Cr Lesley Furneaux-Cook (LGNSW, Burwood Council) Robert Knight OAM (NSWPLA, Riverina Regional Library) Cr Les Lambert (NSWPLA, Narromine Shire Council) The Hon. George Souris AM (Library Council NSW) Sarah Taylor (NSWPLA, Shoalhaven Council) Damian Thomas (LGNSW) Cr Dallas Tout (NSWPLA, Wagga Wagga City Council) Dr John Vallance (State Librarian)
APOLOGIES	Cr Romola Hollywood (NSWPLA, Blue Mountains City Council)
SL NSW STAFF	Philippa Scarf
MINUTES	Samantha Mantakoun

ITEM 1: PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1.1 Welcome and Apologies
• The Chair opened the meeting with an acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners, the Gadigal.
1.2 Notification of Other Business
• The "My library gets me" campaign which the State Library developed for the library membership campaign was launched in Library and Information Week. Many libraries were running with reduced hours and services due to COVID-19, so the decision was made

to postpone the campaign and determine a time in the new year when it would be more appropriate to relaunch the initiative.

ITEM 2: MINUTES, BUSINESS ARISING AND ACTION REGISTER

2.1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- The previous minutes of the 92nd Meeting of the PLCC held 3 December 2019 was approved.

ITEM 3: PAPERS FOR DISCUSSION AND NOTING

3.1 2020/21 Public Library Funding Strategy (review of Out of Session paper from June 2020)

The Committee reviewed the papers which had been circulated and approved out of session in June 2020.

The Minister for the Arts approved the payments to councils in late June, and the funding strategy is now in progress. It was noted that $12 million in subsidies had been paid to councils to date, with another $10 million scheduled to be paid in December 2020.

Cameron Morley advised that councils that have yet to apply for their subsidies will be reminded before Christmas.

It was also noted that the Public Library Infrastructure Grant program for 2020/21 was launched according to the timetable. Twenty seven applications were received by the due date. Assessment of the applications received is under way, and the Grants Committee is scheduled to meet in February 2021.

3.2 Increased public library funding – results to date

Cameron Morley briefed the Committee on the results of the increased public library funding to date, as reported by councils.

It was noted that councils need to report on the funding as part of their annual applications for subsidy, including budget details, narrative statements and statements of operations. In addition, councils provide detail in their applications for grants.

The Committee considered a spreadsheet which had been circulated, which summarises the results per council. It was noted that 50% of councils did not increase their library budgets by at least the amount of the funding increase. Many councils actually decreased their library budgets, some by significant amounts.

The aggregate statewide expenditure on public libraries did however increase by more than the State Government increase, due to some large councils undertaking major capital expenditure.

It was agreed that the State Library will do further analysis once the more detailed Statements of Library Operations forms are lodged by all councils. This will enable the itemisation of operational and capital funds, which may provide a clearer picture.

Clr Furneaux-Cook observed that libraries were closed between March and June, so there will have been some reductions to expenditure as a result. This was noted and it was agreed that it

was important to identify trends in budgets prior to approaching councils for further information about funding decreases.

The State Library considers that it is critical that the additional funding improves libraries over the 4 year period, and that gaps are identified that will assist with future bids. If library budgets decrease and there is no improvement in library service provisions it will be difficult to achieve further increases to funding.

3.3 COVID-19 and public libraries

The Committee discussed the public library response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Public libraries were closed from 23 March 2020 until June 2020 due to the NSW Public Health Order, and after reopening libraries operated under various restrictions which were set out in the Health Order and a COVID-19 Safety Plan for Libraries that was issued by NSW Health.

The State Library worked closely with the Department of Premier and Cabinet and NSW Health over the period, providing input into the Safety Plans. The State Library provided regular updates to NSW public libraries and local councils throughout 2020, and channelled feedback on library needs and experiences to NSW Health.

The Committee thanked the State Library for its work on behalf of public libraries throughout the pandemic.

3.4 NSW.net Report to PLCC

The Committee noted the following progress report.

Since April 2020 to the end of October 2020 the following services have been delivered:

1. Internet Connectivity
NBN upgrades:
NBN service upgrades for councils and public libraries are continuing with the availability of NBN services. Between July and October 2020, 39 x NBN services were installed and 10 x NBN installations are currently in progress.

Fibre internet service upgrades:
Between July and October 2020, nine x 1Gigabit fibre internet services have been installed and three new service installations are currently in progress.

Firewall upgrades:
Firewall upgrades were completed for nine libraries.   Upgrades were due to the upgrade of internet services.

WMS Hotspot Controllers: Many wireless hotspot controllers are at least 10 years old and require replacement. Some have already been replaced however, the remaining controllers still need replacement. A schedule of replacements has been developed and will be undertaken in the first half of 2021.

SonicWall Firewalls:
Following notification about vulnerabilities in the range of installed firewalls in many councils and libraries, firmware upgrades will be undertaken by NSW.net to prevent possible security

issues.   Some upgrades are currently in progress with high priority given to the Councils and Libraries who have shared firewalls and later to Library only firewall sites.

2. eResources
indyreads®
The indyreads™ platform:

- can host and distribute ePub, PDF, MP3 & MP4 files via a web browser and Android and IOS App
- provide a legal framework to libraries to facilitate the direct licensing of community published content using the NSW Public Library Agreement for the Purchasing of Electronic Content
- is supplied at no cost to the NSW public library network
- allows libraries to operate as aggregators of locally important content including material sourced from local publishers, authors, writing organisations and historical societies
- can host digitised manuscripts, monographs, journals and oral histories recordings sourced from a libraries local studies collection
- allows libraries to create segmented collections for access by their registered members (community licensed content and/or material purchased with library funds from the Odilo Marketplace).

The rollout of the indyreads eContent management platform to the NSW public library network is nearing completion (94% of NSWPLN configured). The statewide collection currently contains 15,000 eBook titles sourced from Australian independent publishers, as well as international content including reference, modern literary, classic fiction and non-fiction titles and a curated collection of self-published content. PLS has worked closely with NSWPLN language specialists to create collections in languages other than English. Recent acquisitions include 450 Chinese titles, 253 Spanish titles and 100 Romanian titles.

During the rollout of the platform PLS trainers held weekly webinar orientation sessions for public library staff.

Monthly social media campaigns promoting the collection along with bookmarks and banners have been distributed to the NSWPLN.

For the period of reporting, there have been 25,127 loans and 4222 reservations.
Discussions are underway with Corrective Services to explore the possibility of extending access to the indyreads platform to inmates in Corrective Services facilities.

Statewide Databases:
Following an extensive review of the Statewide licensed database suite, conducted by the Content Working Group, which included a statewide satisfaction survey, the decision was made to renew the subscription unaltered.

The 2020/21 suite of Statewide Databases includes:
Academic Search Premier
Australia/NZ Reference Centre
Australia/NZ Points of View
Consumer Health Complete
GreenFile
MasterFile Complete

Novelist Plus
Literary Reference Center Plus
Science Reference Center
eBook Public Library Collection
History Reference Center
Hobbies and Craft Reference Center
EBSCO provide monthly training webinars which are promoted to the NSWPLN

NSW.net Consortia Opt-in Offer Scheme:
Over 80 Consortia Opt-in offers were negotiated with 26 vendors for digital content products including aggregated collections of subject-specific digital journals, magazines, newspapers, videos, music, eBook and Audio content as well as access and discovery software.
Product trials:
The Content Working Group reviewed Medici.tv., a classical music, dance, and theatre performance media platform. Following a NSWPLN product evaluation the product was included in the NSW.net Consortia Opt-in offer scheme.

3. Wireless Access Point Replacement Program

Since 2011, NSW.net has installed a vast number of Wi-Fi hotspots in metropolitan and regional public libraries. At the time, a Wi-Fi hotspot solution known as the Wireless Management System (WMS) was developed by NSW.net's partner, Hitech Support, to specifically meet user needs.

WMS was initially deployed in roughly half of metropolitan and regional public libraries.   In 2011/12, the NSW Government's Revitalising Regional Libraries initiative provided the State Library with $2M over a four-year time frame to support internet connectivity for NSW public libraries including new technologies like Wi-Fi. During this rollout, NSW.net installed WMS Wi-Fi hotspots in all remaining regional public libraries (126 sites over the 4 years).

The WMS solution is unique in that it offers control and comprehensive reporting. Features can be turned off or on to suit library needs and the system is also compatible with NBN services.

WMS deployment includes the provision and installation of a firewall, wireless access points (WAPs) and a hotspot controller.   As many of the WAPs have been in operation for many years now, they have reached their 'end of life'. To address this issue NSW.net has commenced the gradual upgrade of these WAPs.

Stage one of the rollout was completed in 84 libraries.   Public libraries targeted for these upgrades were those with NBN services already installed as the new WAPs enhance the performance of high bandwidth services.

Stage two of the rollout commenced in 2019 and is still in progress. In the 2019/20 year, 239 WAPs were replaced in 38 metropolitan and 133 regional libraries. So far in the 2020/21 year, 32 WAPs have been replaced in nine metropolitan and 14 regional libraries.   The following libraries were targeted for WAP replacements: Bega Valley x 3, Bourke, Blue Mountains x 2, Camden x 2, Campbelltown x 4, Cowra, Batemans Bay x 3, Fairfield, Forbes, Hurstville x 3, Hay, Boorowa, Hornsby, Gordon x 4, Baradine, Mendooran, Wellington, Narrandera, Oberon, Orange, Kurri Kurri and Burwood.

Thirteen metropolitan and 11 regional libraries are yet to be scheduled for 36 WAP replacements. This will occur in the first half of 2021 pending the availability of funds.

Wi-Fi hotspots have vastly increased internet access for the public in public libraries. Since 2011, there have been 47,038,930 total logins and 4,860,742 total devices using WMS.

3.5 Local Studies audit and professional development update

The Committee noted the report prepared by Ellen Forsyth which included partial data from the 2020 local studies audit, an update on the collection equity training for NSW public libraries, and sought advice on training for public library staff in serving the homeless community.

1. Local Studies Collections Audit

Local studies have previously been conducted in 2003 and 2013/2014. The most recent one was conducted this year. The audit or survey was emailed to each council. 111 responses were received including data from an additional nine councils who are part of regional libraries giving a response from 120 councils overall. Initial emails were sent 10 March, but given the COVID-19 pandemic, the date was extended several times, finally closing on 16 October. People were telephoned and received email reminders.

Completion by cohort

Cohort name	Number of libraries completing	Percentage of libraries completing
Rural regional library member	25	22.5%
Rural standalone	18	16%
Urban large	21	19%
Urban medium	25	22.5%
Urban small	22	20%

Completion by location

Location	Number of libraries completing	Percentage of libraries
Rest of NSW	79	71%
Greater Sydney[1]	32	29%

The there is a lot of data to bring together, and work is going slowly on this. Already there are areas of information which will be able to be used to support NSW public library staff. For example, 37 libraries had local studies as part of general library duties, with no specified staff time, and 25 libraries had less than one person allocated to working on local studies. There seems an opportunity to support these libraries with training and advice about how they can collect new local studies material. At present it is not clear what form this will take, but we will consult with some of the libraries involved as part of planning for this.

The table below shows a partial list of NSW public library holdings. There are additional categories of local studies material to be added, but this list is complete for the categories shown

Analog photographs (including slides and negatives) number of items	1,293,404	
Born digital pictures (acquired as digital images including photographs taken by staff) number of items	173,068	
Digitised material any format (copy made from physical original owned by library) number of items	663,078	
Digitised material (copies made from external or non-collection material) number of items	26,440	
Analog prints and posters number of items	7178	

[1] For areas included in this definition see https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/public-library-services/content/digital-practice-guidelines-public-libraries-0

Digital prints and posters number of items	2895		
Analog paintings and drawings number of items	4293		
Digital paintings and drawings number of items	775		
Analog maps including subdivision plans number of items	61,522		
Digital maps including subdivision plans number of items	30,143		
Analog architectural plans number of items	4852	275 linear metres	
Digital architectural plans number of items	918		
Published printed books (analog) number of items	199,712		
Published E books (digital) number of items	433		
Analog zines number of items	5757		
Digital zines number of items	89		
Analog newspapers and periodicals number of items	63,142	48 linear metres	
Digital newspapers and periodicals number of items	13,094		
Microform (including fiche and film) number of items	144,982		
Minute and rate books number of items	11,134		
Analog unbound and bound manuscripts (in linear meters)		5,013 linear metres	
Digital manuscripts number of files plus storage size or file size	194,642		
Analog oral history recordings number of recordings	6035		
Digital oral history recordings number of files plus storage size or file size	5677		
Analog sound recordings other than oral history number of items	1283		
Digital sound recordings other than oral history number of files plus storage size or file size	921		

This is only a very small part of the data available, and it will be a while before more detailed information will be available. Some of the information will be used by other State Library of NSW staff in planning their work with NSW public libraries.

2. Equity in Action: Building Diverse Collections – online course
In August 2020 a request for expressions of interest in participating in the online course *Equity in Action: Building Diverse Collections* was emailed to NSW public library staff. Earlier in the year several PLS staff and one public library person went to this online course provided by Library Journal (USA) and found it provided really practical and interesting training which led to changes in work practices. The course states

> *For libraries to effectively meet their mission of serving the educational, informational, and entertainment needs of their communities, their collections must be diverse and inclusive, offering windows into and mirrors of the vast array of perspectives and stories that make up our world.*

> *Library selectors and readers' advisors must have a keen understanding of the basic frameworks for building and maintaining collections through an equitable lens, including the ability to recognize harmful stereotypes and apply that knowledge to a collection audit.*

Forty library staff submitted expressions, and we were able to fund 20 library staff to participate. We had been planning on paying for 11 – 12 registrations for NSW public library staff, but given the high level of interest were able to increase this. The 20 who are participating are collections staff from public libraries across NSW with slightly more than half of the participants being from outside Sydney. There are three online training sessions of around two hours each as well as many additional resources. Participants retain access to these resources for six months. As well as the online training I am coordinating a weekly catch up during the training so that the participants can discuss what they are learning with each other, and how they are applying these ideas in their workplaces.

The feedback for this training is very positive, with staff sharing ideas with their colleagues. Some libraries have started talking with their suppliers about updating their purchasing profiles to be more diverse, others are looking at how they display material in their libraries so that, for example, all the books on display are not written by white men. People are also these ideas in more depth, and it is helping them look at their library collections differently. One of the aims of this training is developing a better collection for the whole community.

3.Services to the homeless
The Committee considered a proposal to provide professional development training for all NSW library services and staff in serving homeless people.

Damian Thomas advised that many councils provide assistance to homeless people and there is currently an enquiry into the protocol. Before proceeding with the statewide online training, it was recommended that a pilot is undertaken with a smaller group of library staff.

3.6 Constitution of the PLCC

Dr Vallance noted that the Library Council will review the PLCC in 2021 with a view to including more public library representation, and changing the meeting pattern to June and December.

Details will be shared with members in 2021.

3.7 Strategic Network Committee

The minutes of the October 2020 meeting were noted.

3.8 Professional Pathways Presentation from Sue McKerracher ALIA

ALIA CEO Sue McKerracher attended the meeting online, and presented on the Association's new Professional Pathways initiative, which has the goal to a future ready library workforce.

At present, to become a librarian, teacher librarian or librarian technician in the Library and Information Services (LIS) field, there is a heavy reliance on very few universities that offer training and accreditation. (There are currently 3 universities and 12 TAFEs). The future of the professional level roles is reliant on these universities.

There is a need for a variety of skills in the LIS field including librarianship and therefore the proposed ALIA response is to remove barriers where possible and create incentives for people from non-LIS fields to seek out LIS professional status. There is a need for professionals from diverse backgrounds for the current and future generations of LIS professionals.

It was noted by Robert Knight that Librarians are an ageing professional and it is not uncommon for senior public library roles to be held by non-library qualified people.

ALIA is currently investing 1.6 million over 4 years to this project.

To determine that the project has been successful, the achievements would be:
1) There is a secure future for current and next generation LIS professionals from diverse backgrounds
2) Professional accreditation is underpinned by an employer-relevant LIS professional framework
3) There are meaningful and affordable qualifications and continuing professional development.
4) University and TAFE LIS education infrastructure is robust and engaged.

The Committee thanked Sue McKerracher and asked to be kept informed on progress.

3.9 Association Reports

Verbal reports from the NSWPLA and NSW LGA were noted.

ITEM 5: OTHER BUSINESS

Presentation to Jan Richards AM

This was the final meeting for the PLCC Chair Jan Richards AM.

The State Librarian Dr John Vallance thanked Jan and acknowledged her extraordinary work as PLCC Chair over 9 years. Jan's previous service on the Committee was also noted.

Library Council President, The Hon George Souris AM, noted that the Library Council will continue to build on Jan's work, and thanked her for her advocacy of public libraries.

The Committee heartily thanked Jan for her contribution, and wished her well in retirement.

NEXT MEETING

DATE	Tuesday, 29 June 2021
TIME	2pm – 3.30pm
LOCATION	State Library of NSW and online