



**Public Libraries Consultative Committee**  
**Minutes of the 85<sup>th</sup> meeting**

<b>Date and time</b>	Tuesday 26 September 2017, 11.00am-1.00pm
<b>Location</b>	Unaipon Room, Level 1 Macquarie Building
<b>Chair</b>	Jan Richards AM (Library Council of NSW)
<b>Members in Attendance</b>	Adele Casey (NSWPLA) Cr Dallas Tout (NSWPLA) Cr Les Lambert (NSWPLA) Cr Romola Hollywood (NSWPLA) Dr John Vallance, State Librarian Margaret Kay (LGNSW) Hon George Souris AM (Library Council of NSW) Michael Caulfield (Library Council of NSW) Philip Edney (NSWPLA) Robert Knight (NSWPLA) Cameron Morley, A/Executive Director, Public Libraries and Engagement, State Library of NSW Philippa Scarf, A/Manager, Public Library Services, State Library of NSW
<b>Apologies</b>	Cr Lesley Furneaux-Cook (LGNSW)
<b>Minutes</b>	Susan Smith, State Library of NSW

**Minutes**

**Item 1: Preliminary Matters**

**1.1 Welcome and apologies**

The Chair opened the meeting at 11.00am and conducted an Acknowledgement of Country before she welcomed attendees including the new State Librarian, Dr John Vallance; introductions were made around the table by each of the PLCC attendees.

**1.2 Notification of other business**

Nil notified.



**Item 2: Minutes, Business arising and action register**

**2.1 Minutes of the 84<sup>th</sup> meeting**

- Cr Les Lambert moved that the Minutes of the 84<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 24 July 2017 be confirmed and accepted as a true record; this was seconded by Cr Romola Hollywood. The Chair thanked the Committee and recorded approval of the minutes as read.
- Cr Lambert asked about the progress of the bulk loans and was advised that this would be covered at item 4.1 today.

**2.2 Address by State Librarian**

- The Chair introduced Dr John Vallance and commented that the State Librarian's presentation to the Foundation had been very well received.
- Dr Vallance outlined his vision for the State Library and a renewed focus on service and access for readers, with a special emphasis on relations with public libraries.
- He reported that he had attended a Library Council visit to Coffs Harbour yesterday, and plans to continue to visit public libraries and strengthen the important relationship between the State Library and public libraries. Dr Vallance considers that the State Library can learn from public libraries, especially in the design of public spaces, and reader services.
- To date he has taken an interest in the Library's bulk loans service, and noted that Ministerial interest in this topic was high as there had been correspondence from constituents regarding recent changes to the service.
- Dr Vallance views the Library as an important hub in a civilised community and noted that they tend to reflect their varied demographics in terms of the services offered.
- In this respect the State Library needs to become more agile in representing our readers too. Dr Vallance explained his rationale for 'unpacking' our different types of users; this involved moving away from language such as 'clients' which he considers distances our readers and over-homogenises our constituencies.
- Dr Vallance identified catalogue access improvements as one priority. His objective is to make our catalogues more user-friendly, make collections – including picture collections - more accessible, and to make the Library one of Sydney's great destinations. This will be achieved through a renewed focus on service to readers and visitors, improvements to the Library's bookshop, café, galleries and events, as well as improvements to website access.

**Item 3: Papers for DISCUSSION & NOTING**

**3.1 Public Library Funding model 2018-19**

- Mr Morley and Ms Scarf spoke to this paper.
- Mr Morley advised that he had submitted a briefing paper for the Minister, Secretary and Deputy Secretary on 14 September which outlines the importance of renewed funding from 2018/19, and that the Library is preparing a budget bid in consultation with the PLCC.
- It was noted that the Library's CFO had contacted Treasury and been advised that November and February would be key dates for submission of bids ahead of the 2018/19 Budget.
- The Committee considered the paper and noted the following in discussion:
  - The elements of the proposed funding bid which comprise the components of the funding are endorsed.
  - The Associations plan to develop stories around public library needs that will assist with advocacy in support of the funding bid. This advocacy package would consider opening hours, access to



government services through libraries, return on investment, and to highlight the good work of libraries in supporting community outcomes.

- Mr Souris advised that the national comparison analysis would be improved with the addition of information on per capita expenditure, to highlight the NSW position in comparison with other states.
  - Cr Tout advised that the proposal is too conservative in terms of the amount of funds to be sought. The paper sets out \$31.5M for 2018/19, increasing to \$35M by 2021/22 (including a \$5M capital grants fund). Cr Tout on behalf of the NSWPLA suggests that \$50M is the benchmark that should be aimed for through this bid, possibly commencing with \$35M in 2018/19 and increasing to \$50M by year 4 (including a \$10M capital grants fund). The public library representatives on the Committee agreed that this larger amount would be desirable.
  - The Library Council and State Library members of the Committee noted this advice from the Association.
  - Mr Morley commented that feedback from the failed 2014 bid for a \$50-\$60M funding pool indicated that the need for such a significant increase was not demonstrated, therefore this current draft bid had been developed with incremental increases built in which are based on population growth, CPI, infrastructure needs and connectivity needs.
  - It was also noted that at present the recurrent funding for 2018/19 is \$23.5M. The proposed figure of \$31.5M for 2018/19 outlined in the paper would represent an increase of 34% from the Treasury perspective.
  - The State Library agreed to reconsider the amount that will be requested through the bid, and that the Library Council will be briefed on this advice from the NSWPLA and LGNSW representatives on the Committee. It was however noted that the Library will need to submit a bid which is defensible.
- Cr Lambert queried the 50% decrease in funding from councils for grant projects between 2015/16 and 2016/17, and was advised that this was because more major library projects were built by councils in 2015/16.
  - The Library will continue to work on the bid, including highlighting how libraries support State Government priorities.
  - The Committee agreed that any increase to council payments ought not result in commensurate reductions to council budgets. Mechanisms to guard against this would need to be built into funding agreements, with the objective of ensuring that any increase to State Government funding is realised as an increase to public library budgets.
  - Cr Tout moved that the recommendation be amended to include the following:
    - The NSWPLA expressed concern that the total funding of \$31.5M for 2018/19 is too low.
  - The amendment was approved.

The PLCC:

1. Received the attached 2018/19 Public Library Funding Proposal, and endorsed the elements of the proposal.
2. Recommended the bid for consideration by the Library Council, noting Cr Tout's amendment.

### **3.2 State Library professional development**

- Mr Morley advised that the recommendation to combine various training programs was based on suggestions from PLS team member, Kathleen Alexander, to consolidate some presentation opportunities into a two-day, more conference-like program. It was noted that the current travel subsidy would be applied to regional staff.



- Cr Lambert asked whether it would be more effective to provide the presentations as part of a roadshow in several regional locations, as it may be difficult for regional staff to be released for two days consecutively.
- Mr Knight commended the concept of aggregating the training days, however, he queried its competition with the SWITCH conference and whether it would attract the staff targeted; he pointed out that staff from small libraries might find it difficult to leave their libraries for two days and that it is practitioners rather than senior staff/library managers that need to attend. It was agreed that it would be important to include Blue Jeans conferencing technology to expand the uptake.
- Cr Tout suggested that it would be a good idea to vary the content of keynote speakers to reflect the regional needs of the roadshow's location.
- It was agreed that the concept had merit and should be brought back to a future meeting with further consideration of a roadshow program – possibly alternating between a centralised delivery location and regional locations each year.

### **3.3 Drug Info report 2016-17**

- The Chair congratulated the Drug Info team for the delivery of the Drug Info program including the new book, *A Quick Guide to Drugs and Alcohol*, developed with NSW Health and the State Library Mocktail campaign.
- Ms Scarf noted the key achievements as follows:
  - The Drug Info website was redeveloped and relaunched in March 2017. There were 201,048 website sessions for 2016-17.
  - Drug Info collection updated: new resources from the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, NSW Health and NSW Police added to the collection.
  - Development of an interactive information display and public library program to provide access to quality drug and alcohol information for the community. Piloted in Dubbo, Wellington and Canada Bay libraries.
  - Promotional campaigns developed to support public library events throughout the year including Seniors Week and Schoolies Week.
  - Youth Week: 129 promotional kits distributed to 75 public library services to support activities and events.
  - Know Your Standards month: online and in-library mocktail-themed promotional campaign around the Australian Alcohol Guidelines.
  - 37 public library staff from 10 country libraries and 17 metropolitan public libraries attended the combined annual Drug Info and Legal Information forum to discuss service issues and program development.
  - 121 public library staff attended Drug Info workshops in four regional and three metropolitan locations. Evaluations were very positive with 93% of participants rating the training sessions as very good/excellent.
  - 14,707 promotional items (Know Your Standards postcards, pocket guides, Drug Info postcards) distributed to 44 organisations including local councils, educational institutions, health and support organisations and CDAT teams, for a range of outreach and educational programs.

### **3.4 LIAC report of achievement**

- The Committee noted the LIAC Report of Achievements for 2016-17, focusing on Find Legal Answers in public libraries, Find Legal Answers online and Partnerships.
- Ms Scarf explained that a new website had been developed for LIAC. In addition, an updated copy of *Neighbours & the Law* had been developed with grant funding from the SLNSW Foundation. These would be distributed to Legal Aid, legal centres, council managers and all NSW public libraries; it is for sale through the State Library bookshop.



- In 2016-17, more than 120 library staff had been trained.
- The Chair congratulated the LIAC team for their achievements.

**Item 4: Papers for NOTING**

**4.1 Bulk Loans update**

- Ms Scarf provided a verbal update on the bulk loans including both large print and talking books, and the LOTE material. She reported that the EOI for the distribution of these collections to public libraries on long term loan was undertaken in July 2017, and was over-subscribed. Already 6789 large print books and 4380 talking books were distributed to libraries including 5000 to regional libraries. All those libraries that expressed an interest have had their initial allocation. The team is now moving to the multicultural book long term loan distribution. The Library maintain a collection of multicultural books at the Library so that requests from small libraries or libraries with smaller demand can continue to be supplied.
- The Committee recorded that the story of distributing multicultural books to CALD communities was a key story to add to the funding bid.

**4.2 Public Library statistics**

- A correction to the agenda paper was noted – it should be 3.12 million library members for 2015-16.
- Cr Tout suggested that the public library statistics should include State Library numbers, so that a full picture of library use could be made available. The Library agreed to look at ways of portraying this combined usage.
- In response to the Chair’s enquiry, it was agreed that a media release would be sent out about the public library statistics using a 10-year comparison as that increase in usage was dramatic.

**4.3 Public library funding model 2017-18**

- Mr Morley reported that the Minister’s Office had not yet approved the briefing paper on the 2017-18 funding. This delay will have a flow on effect for the Public Library Infrastructure Grants timetable as it will push the deadline for submissions out. It was agreed that a six week minimum was required and that a four week submission period was inadequate otherwise the quantity and quality of grant submissions would be compromised. Consequently, the timetable and Grants Committee meeting may need to be adjusted if there is further delay from the Minister’s Office.

**item 5: Other business**

**5.1 PLCC dates for 2018 Ideas for Joint PLCC/**

- The Chair reviewed the proposed 2018 meeting dates with the Committee. These were agreed except for the September date which the Committee asked to be changed to Monday, 17 September 2017.
- The members asked that the meeting time be changed to 1.00-3.00pm for all the meetings. This will be considered.

**Library Council/PLCC joint meeting topics**

- The Chair requested suggestions for topics to be raised at the joint December meeting of PLCC/Library Council. Dr Vallance recommended highlighting some of the positive stories from public libraries that demonstrated their contribution to the community. Dr Vallance also recommended that a precis of the funding bid be presented at the joint meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.55pm.

## **Sensitive: NSW Government**



### **Proposed Future 2017 Meeting Dates:**

Tuesday 5 December 2017: 1pm-3pm, followed by Joint meeting with the Library Council from 3pm-4pm

### **Proposed Future 2018 Meeting Dates:**

Monday 12 March, 1.00-3.00pm

Monday 16 July, 1.00-3.00pm

Monday 17 September, 1.00-3.00pm

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