



## Minutes

### English Public Libraries Stakeholder Working Group (EPL)

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Date	Tuesday 13 June 2023
Time	15:00 – 17:00
Location	Virtual Meeting

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Present:	Luke Burton	Director, Libraries, Arts Council England (ACE) (Chair)
	Kathryn Boothroyd	Library Services Manager, St Helens
	Kathryn Harrison	Development Manager: Libraries & Information Services, Wakefield
	Alison Hoolihan	Officer, Libraries Development Team, ACE
	Sophie Lancaster	Senior Manager, Libraries, ACE
	Lauren Lucas	Senior 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 (CMLPN)
	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:	Annette French	Project Manager, Libraries Accreditation Scheme (ACE)
	Tina Morton	Interim Head of Archives Sector Development, The National Archives
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

### Action

- 1.1 Luke Burton welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.
- 1.2 Luke highlighted the new members of the Heads of Service Sounding Board after a recent refresh.
- 1.3 Kamal Shah, the incoming chair of CML was welcomed to the group. Kamal introduced himself and informed the group that he has been involved in the CML since 2014, opening North Harrow Library as a CML in 2018. He highlighted the strength of CMLs as their community contacts and partnerships.
- 1.4 Tina Morton introduced herself to the group. Tina is the policy lead at The National Archives, leading on guidance for the archive sector. Tina is currently looking at TNA's sector leadership offer, including strengthening relationships such as that with ACE. TNA are particularly interested in data and where libraries and archives can work together more effectively.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 There were no interests to declare.

### 3. THEORY OF CHANGE AND WORKPLAN

- 3.1 Luke shared the final draft of the Theory of Change with the group, along with the current associated workplan. Luke highlighted that the documents are internal facing, intended to support the work and governance of EPL. The workplan will be a live document, to be included on EPL's agenda on a quarterly basis. Luke asked for final feedback from the group.
- 3.2 Kelly noted that allyship would sit well in the Advocacy and Communication section on the plan and Luke added that this would be looked at over the coming months, and Kelly agreed that Sutton's allyship document could be shared with this group. Claire noted that the model and workplan were very clear.

**ACTION: Share Sutton's allyship document with EPL members**

**ALISON  
HOOLIHAN**

### 4 EPL WEBINAR

- 4.1 Luke reintroduced the suggestion of a webinar to highlight the role and work of EPL to the library sector, first introduced in the meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023. The content of the webinar would focus on the impacts and priorities of the Theory of Change and workplan. Luke asked the group if they would like to take this idea forward.
- 4.2 Iain agreed with the idea and said that Libraries Connected would be happy to support a webinar. He suggested shifting the emphasis of the content to include testing ideas with the sector. Sue Wills agreed that there should be a more interactive approach, with an ask to the sector. Sue also mentioned that it would be a good opportunity to highlight the work that takes place outside of local authority services.
- 4.3 Luke summarised the group's ideas saying the webinar should be a combination of information sharing (the impacts and priorities), an ask to the sector for their ideas, and a spotlight on the different ways of working within the sector. Iain suggested if the webinar could extend to a 1/2 - 3/4 day 'sector strategy conference', which Luke agreed was a good idea to look into.

- 4.4 **ACTION: Update webinar plan and liaise with LC to find a date**

**ALISON  
HOOLIHAN**

### 5 LIBRARYON

- 5.1 Liz White updated the group on the recent LibraryOn grants programme. Liz noted it had been a high standard of grants and signposted the group to the blog update. Awarded projects involve improving the digital library user's journey and include virtual tours, improving accessibility, digital marketing campaigns, tailoring content,

and a focus on CYP. Over £1m has been awarded and there is a good spread over rural and urban libraries. Liz highlighted that a lot of future learning and best practice around digital transformation will result from the programme.

- 5.2 Sue Wills commented that it had been a very well organised and straightforward application process. Nick enquired about evaluation and how results would be fed back to the sector. Liz said LibraryOn would be working on evaluation of the projects and will be involving CILIP and LGA in this process.

## **6 SHINING A LIGHT REPORT**

- 6.1 Luke proposed to the group a possible update to the 2017 report Shining a Light. This is a very well used piece of work of high quality that is still referred to by the sector. Given that it is now post-Covid and there are new challenges faced by the sector, is it time to refresh this report? Sue Wills agreed that Shining a Light is very effective in helping conversations at all levels and in helping to secure funding and investment. Luke suggested there may be potential in finding case studies around how the report has been used in practice.
- 6.2 Neil asked if the refresh would cover English libraries only or all of the UK? Luke replied that a conversation would be needed about this, but there could be value in covering the four nations.
- 6.3 Nick agreed about the quality of the report and suggested a refresh might focus on a more regional approach, including city regions and combined authorities. Also, it may be beneficial to consider the presentation of the data within a refresh and a Power BI dashboard/tool that would allow users to interrogate and analyse locally may be useful.

## **7 DATA**

- 7.1 Luke updated the group on the latest developments in the work to create a joined-up approach to data across the sector. The data working group are currently discussing the best way to deliver a proof of concept, roadmap and blueprint to frame this work and result in a data platform that will allow for local, regional and national interrogation.
- 7.2 Iain and Libraries Connected are about to begin data collection for 22/23 as the proof of concept for this work. Iain highlighted that the aim is to get a full dataset by September which will align with CIPFA definitions, and will allow for longitudinal analysis. The data will show month by month comparisons to allow for a more granular analysis.

- 7.3 Luke noted that it is important to align this work with Baroness Sanderson's review and Sue Wills emphasised the importance of having a clear comms message around this work, and Luke agreed that advocacy and education/skills development also need to be part of this work.
- 7.4 Neil commented that library use has changed since the pandemic, rather than declined, and noted that the way libraries present the story of the data is important. Kelly agreed, stating that visitor figures do not tell the full story nor demonstrate the full impact.
- 7.5 Tina informed the group that similar discussions around data and demonstrating value and impact are happening in the archives sector. CIPFA have discontinued archive data, meaning TNA have picked up this work and now would like to improve on it. In the long-term, TNA would like a dataset across the whole archive sector. Tina noted that TNA are working with the ACE Libraries Team on how and where they can align on data, stating it is a good time to do so given that archives now have the same sponsors as Libraries in DCMS.

## **8 SECTOR UPDATES**

### **8.1 MANCHESTER LIBRARIES – NEIL MACINNES**

- Hosted the new Secretary of State, Lucy Frazer, at Central Library in March
- The new library strategy was launched in February
- A user satisfaction survey has results of 93% of respondents being satisfied with the library service, up 3% since Covid.

### **8.2 ST HELENS LIBRARIES – KATHRYN BOOTHROYD**

- A new 5-year draft strategy has been launched
- Successful funding in the form of ACE NPO, Heritage Lottery Funding connected to the Borough of Culture funding, ACE place-based funding, and LIF round 2.

### **8.3 SURREY LIBRARIES – SUE WILLS**

- Currently looking into libraries as cultural hubs.

### **8.4 WAKEFIELD LIBRARIES - KATHRYN HARRISON**

- Currently waiting to find out about budgets

- Submitted funding proposals for Know Your Neighbourhood and ACE
- Two libraries are currently being refurbished

#### **8.5 SUTTON LIBRARIES – KELLY SAINI BADWAL**

- Currently moving towards a self-access model
- Modernisation plan going to consultation

#### **8.6 COVENTRY LIBRARIES – DAVE LLOYD**

- Hosted the Digital Spaces webinar in June
- Looking into submitted an ACE bid to further develop the Digital Spaces work
- Part of the Good Things Foundation and digital inclusion in libraries report, launched in June

#### **8.7 ASCEL – ADAM TULLOCH**

- Have just recruited 6 new trustees and an executive team.
- Beginning to establish a youth engagement network and about to start working with school libraries

#### **8.8 CML – KAMAL SHAH**

- Now have 3 members of staff working for the network
- A CML mini-conference is taking place in London at the end of June
- Looking at new ways to promote CML

#### **8.9 CILIP – NICK POOLE**

- Workforce mapping data will be published on 14 June. This includes data on skills within the sector and EDI.
- Future Libraries project – have contracted Shared Intelligence to take this forward
- Working with National Lottery Heritage Fund on projects that will increase participation and engagement in libraries. This work will also include a full evaluation.

#### **8.10 LIBRARIES CONNECTED – IAIN MOORE**

- The Libraries Connected seminar and awards will take place on 19 and 20 June

- Applications from libraries for the Know Your Neighbourhood DCMS fund are coming and there will be an engagement event in September for this
- E-licensing – positive discussions with publishers and the project will be launching in October
- Regional project – currently recruiting for two Regional Development Managers to support funding and projects in the nine LC regions
- Impact in the East of England report – to be launched at the LC seminar

#### 8.11 **BRITISH LIBRARY – LIZ WHITE**

- LibraryOn grants programme is underway
- Camden Libraries have now joined the Living Knowledge Network
- There were Hay Festival screenings across 16 libraries
- BL have just launched the 'How do you feel?' page on their website (on the back of Warm Libraries)

### 9 **ACCREDITATION**

- 9.1 Annette updated the group on the progress of the Libraries Accreditation scoping work. Annette then invited the group to discuss the advice model to be part of the scheme. Nick commented that it is important not to over-engineer the support eco-system which will develop over time, suggesting that CILIP, for example, could design training tools to support the scheme. Assigning a support role to one organisation may be too much of an ask.
- 9.2 Sue Wills highlighted that there is different nuancing in the way that statutory library services manage CMLs within their remit compared to how they manage libraries and that this should be taken into account during the accreditation process so that statutory library services with CMLs are not negatively impacted.
- 9.3 Neil noted that it is important that the scheme is sold to the sector as a voluntary development framework. Annette agreed, emphasising that the scheme is not an accreditation standard and is not tied to investment.

**Date and location of next meeting:** Tuesday 18 July 2023, 15:00 – 17:00 Virtual Meeting.

