

Sensitive: NSW Government

92nd Meeting - Public Libraries Consultative Committee MINUTES	
DATE	Tuesday 3 December 2019
TIME	1pm to 2.30pm
LOCATION	Sr William Dixson Research Library
CHAIR	Jan Richards AM
EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Cameron Morley (State Library)
MEMBERS ATTENDING	Dr John Vallance (State Librarian) Cr Dallas Tout (NSWPLA, Wagga Wagga City Council) Cr Lesley Furneaux-Cook (LGNSW, Burwood Council) Philip Edney (NSWPLA, City of Canada Bay Council) Robert Knight OAM (NSWPLA, Riverina Regional Library) The Hon. George Souris AM (Library Council NSW) Cr Romola Hollywood (NSWPLA, Blue Mountains City Council) Damian Thomas (LGNSW)
APOLOGIES	Sarah Taylor (NSWPLA, Shoalhaven Council) Cr Les Lambert (NSWPLA, Narromine Shire Council) Dr Ursula Dubosarsky (Library Council of NSW)
SL NSW STAFF	Philippa Scarf, Catherine Bryant
ITEM 1: PRELIMINARY MATTERS	
1.1 Welcome and Apologies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair opened the meeting with an acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners, the Gadigal. • It was noted that two NSWPLA representatives were apologies, and that Association's Executive Officer Adele Casey was attending as an observer. 	
1.2 Notification of Other Business	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil 	
ITEM 2: MINUTES, BUSINESS ARISING	
2.1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minutes of the Meeting of 22 July 2019 were approved. 	

2.2 Business Arising

- **Public Library Funding Strategy**

Cameron Morley advised that 47 applications had been received from councils for Public Library Infrastructure Grants requesting over \$12M in funding. Assessment will take place over December and January, and the Grants Committee meeting will be scheduled for early February.

Subsidies and subsidy adjustment funding is being paid out to councils between November and February. Most councils had submitted their subsidy applications as at the date of the meeting.

- **Western NSW Strategy**

Cameron Morley advised that the strategy outlined at the previous meeting had progressed, and that State Library staff (including Indigenous Engagement staff) will visit Broken Hill and Wilcannia between 9-11 December to discuss library service needs with community stakeholders. A report will be brought to a future meeting.

- **NSWPLA Renew Our Libraries Campaign**

The Committee discussed the NSWPLA campaign, noting that the Association had launched Phase 2 in November 2019 along with a document entitled *The State of Our Libraries Report*.

It was noted that the objectives of phase 2 are to persuade the NSW Government to index the funding beyond 2022/23 and to legislate the full amount of the funding. In addition, Members of Parliament had been invited to participate in “Love your Library Week” which the Association had scheduled for 2-8 December 2019.

Clr Dallas Tout advised that there had been an error in the *State of Our Libraries Report* which referred to “40 years of successive state government budget cuts”. Clr Tout apologised for this error on behalf of the Association and advised that the error had been corrected.

Cameron Morley noted that state government funding for public libraries had increased from \$8.5M in 1979/80 to \$36.5M in 2019/20.

In discussion Dr Vallance explained that from the State Library’s perspective the ongoing campaign and *The State of our Libraries Report* have confused councils, libraries and the public about the certainty of the Government’s \$60M commitment. It was noted that State Library staff are regularly reassuring councils about the funding increases, and that some councils have expressed surprise when the increases were paid. The State Library considers that the campaign has taken attention away from the significance of the funding increase. In addition, the campaign has resulted in significant work for State Library staff in drafting responses to form letters sent by councils to Ministers and local members.

Dr Vallance also expressed concern that councils may not pass on the full amount of increases to libraries. This is considered the most critical risk to future funding increases.

The Hon George Souris AM noted that the per capita component has been legislated, and that this is appropriate, however there is no obvious basis or precedent for legislating the other components of the funding. In discussion it was noted that the non-per capita components are important to ensure smaller councils receive adequate funding and to enable grant programs.

The State Library advised that a more viable strategy will be to work collaboratively as part of the state budget process and four year forward estimates. The key will be to demonstrate that the increased funds resulted in clear library improvements, and that needs are identified to inform future bids.

The two associations (NSWPLA and LGNSW) were invited to work with the State Library toward these outcomes.

It was agreed that the NSWPLA and State Library would collaborate on messaging for councils which sets out the importance of allocating the additional funding in support of library needs, and to note that annual reporting of this allocation will be used by the State Library for future bids.

ITEM 3: PAPERS FOR DISCUSSION AND NOTING

3.1 Reclassification of public libraries under Section 7.11 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The NSWPLA raised this matter at the July meeting.

The following progress report was noted by the Committee:

- Blacktown City Council wrote to the Library Council of NSW on the matter on 26 August 2019.
- Following consideration, the Library Council of NSW wrote to the Minister for the Arts on 28 October 2019 requesting that the Minister for the Arts raises the matter with the Minister for Planning.
- The Minister for the Arts subsequently wrote to the Minister for Planning on 12 November 2019 requesting that the matter is considered.

Further consultation with local councils and developers will likely be necessary as the matter is considered.

The State Library will bring information to a future meeting.

3.2 Public Library Membership Campaign

The State Librarian suggested that the State Library and public libraries work together on a library membership campaign with the objective of attaining 50% membership across NSW.

Committee advice was sought, including representatives for a working group to develop the campaign.

It was noted that:

- The Library Act 1939 sets out that any person may enter a public library in NSW and use the services and collections.
- Public library membership is available free of charge to all NSW residents.
- People do not have to be members to use public library facilities, services or collections onsite at libraries. People must register as a member in order to borrow collection items.
- The State Library collects membership statistics from NSW public libraries.
- The most recent published statistics (2017/18) show that there were 3,286,454 public library members in NSW, or 42% of the NSW population (7,858,147 as at 2017/18).
- The membership percentage has been in the low 40s for much of the past decade (41% for the 3 years leading up to 2017/18).
- The population for 2018/19 is 7,985,324, so an additional 706,208 members will be needed to attain 50%.

- Membership per library service is not uniform – many library services have membership above 50%, while others range down to 20%.

In discussion, comment was made that the membership figures are not entirely reflective of library usage and that library membership numbers may not always be accurate due to the different culling system between libraries.

The Committee supported the concept of the membership campaign. A range of ideas were canvassed in discussion, including:

- encourage councils and libraries to have pop-ups or information stands in shopping centres within communities to target different demographics.
- social media templates.
- approach libraries with high membership rates and look at their practices.
- encouraging children to be members, instead of the common scenario of 1 membership person per family.
- the campaign should drive numbers and also have an underlying focus on retention. Part of the marketing strategy should be to identify the reasoning behind why people join their libraries, as well as highlighting the benefits of being a member.
- campaign elements to be easily incorporated with other initiatives such as the national “Raise a Reader” campaign, the Children’s Laureate and the State Library’s *Books in the City* program.

It was agreed that PLCC stakeholders will work with the State Library’s Media and Communications branch to develop the campaign, with further discussion to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

3.3 State-wide Integrated Library Management System – LGNSW Motion

A resolution passed at the 2018 NSW Local Government NSW Conference called for the NSW Government to investigate the development and introduction of a statewide library management system.

Resolution 61: Lane Cove Council – Statewide library management system for all NSW Councils
That Local Government NSW calls on the NSW Government to investigate development and introduction of a Statewide library management system to provide communities throughout NSW greater access to larger collections and library resources and materials.

The Government has subsequently asked the State Library to investigate and report on this matter.

The Committee’s advice was sought on the motion, and the following was noted:

- there are 89 public library services in NSW, with 373 library locations.
- current data compiled by the State Library shows that there are 6 LMS providers in use by councils across NSW.
- there is a high degree of cooperation across NSW, with at least 58 councils being party to regional arrangements where they share an LMS.
- there is considerable brand loyalty among some areas of NSW, for example most libraries in Central Western NSW use the Civica LMS, while libraries in South Western NSW use the Libero LMS.
- the 89 existing contracts across the 6 providers are of varying lengths.
- the need for a statewide LMS has not been raised with the State Library by councils or libraries, nor by stakeholders at the PLCC or Strategic Network Committee.

- a shared LMS would not, of itself, provide communities throughout NSW greater access to larger collections and library resources and materials.
- previous examination of a statewide approach with NSW public libraries in 2012 found that many public libraries and their councils prefer to be able to enter a competitive market for LMS, and that the selection of a single statewide provider may hinder future competitive arrangements.
- having different LMS providers in the market is desirable.

Decision:

The Committee does not recommend a statewide LMS for NSW. The State Library will prepare advice for the Government in response to the LGNSW Conference Motion.

3.4 NSW.net WAP Phase 2

The Committee noted Joyce Azzopardi's paper on the progress of the rollout of End of Life (EOL) replacement Wireless Access Points (WAPs) to NSW metropolitan and regional public libraries.

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.

Since the completion of stage one, WAP replacements have been completed in another 17 libraries following ADSL2 service upgrades to NBN. The libraries are Lennox Head, Town Hall, Customs House, Waterloo, Grafton, Urunga, Bellingen, Maclean, Iluka, Dorrigo, Cobar, Griffith, Ballina, Brunswick Heads, Lismore, Murwillumbah and Mullumbimby.

Wi-Fi hotspots have vastly increased internet access for the public in public libraries. Since 2011, there have been 44,761,251 total logins and 4,579,176 total devices using WMS.

3.5 Indyreads Training Rollout

Catherine Bryant attended and presented an overview of the indyreads training package that had been piloted with staff from two libraries.

The Committee was advised that the training will be rolled out to all libraries in 2020 incrementally as indyreads is implemented.

3.6 Other Business

- **UTS Information Studies Course**

The Committee noted that the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) has advised that it will discontinue its Information Studies course once current students have completed their studies. This is one of the few remaining courses that confers a librarian qualification in Australia.

The Strategic Network Committee has noted the difficulty that many NSW libraries have had with recruiting librarians. Robert Knight OAM advised that ALIA is due to meet with UTS on the matter.

- **NSWPLA Report**

Clr Dallas Tout advised that feedback has been received from some library managers seeking assistance with messaging to their councils about the importance of spending the increased funding on meaningful projects.

It was agreed that the NSWPLA and State Library would collaborate on a template for the Narrative Statement and other annual reporting collected by the State Library that will assist councils to communicate and document the improvements that result from the funding provided.

- **LGNSW Report**

Damian Thomas noted the Intergovernmental Agreement was signed between the NSW Government and councils on 14 October 2019.

The agreement commits the State Government to consideration of councils' financial capability and budget cycles before they are asked to provide new or expanded functions, and consultation with LGNSW before proceeding with any significant new laws or policy initiatives that will impact on the sector.

- **Library Council Visits to Public Libraries**

The Library Council toured Shellharbour, Kiama, Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee and Wollondilly libraries on 13 and 14 November, and received positive feedback from councillors and council staff.

2020 proposed visits include libraries at Green Square, Darling Harbour, Carnes Hill, Wentworth Point, Narrandera and Richmond-Tweed.

- **Interlibrary loan courier**

The State Library has appointed Australia Post to provide all mail and courier services. This means that the Sydney Metropolitan Interlibrary Loan Courier will move from its current provider to Australia Post in early 2020. The State Library will be in touch with participating libraries with details in the new year.

Next Meeting

Date	Monday 20 July 2020
Time	11 am to 12.30 pm
Location	Macquarie Room