

Leadership for Libraries – Task and Finish Group
10 March 2015 14.00 to 16.15

Attendees:

Dr Paul Blantern (Chair) – Chief Executive: Northamptonshire County Council
Mike Cooke – Chief Executive: London Borough of Camden
Felix Greaves – Deputy Director of Science: Public Health England
Laura Caton – Senior Adviser: Local Government Association
Dominic Lake – Deputy Director of Arts, Libraries and Cultural Property: Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Keira Shaw – Head of Libraries: Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Brian Ashley – Director, Libraries: Arts Council England
Jonty Claypole – Head of Arts: BBC
Jane Ellison – Commissioning Editor: BBC
Roly Keating – Chief Executive: British Library
Mark Taylor – Director of External Relations: Chartered Institute of Librarians and Information Professionals
John Dolan – Trustee: Chartered Institute of Librarians and Information Professionals
Kathy Settle – Director of Digital Policy and Departmental Engagement: Government Digital Service
Sue Wilkinson – Chief Executive: The Reading Agency
Ciara Eastell – President: Society of Chief Librarians
William Sieghart – Chair: Independent Library Report for England
Anna Wadsworth – Secretariat: Department for Culture, Media and Sport/ Department for Communities and Local Government
Ed Vaizey – Minister for Culture and the Digital Economy

Apologies:

Jo Miller – Chief Executive: Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
Pat Ritchie – Chief Executive: Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
Dr John Newton – Chief Knowledge Officer: Public Health England

Introductions

Taskforce members set out their expectations and what their organisations can bring. This included:

- Support for digital enablement, network and content
- Alignment of agendas with other relevant bodies such as Public Health England
- Working in partnership to help and improve libraries whilst recognising local accountability and requirements
- Recognise important role of workforce including volunteers
- Build on existing good practice, research and value
- Mobilise energy and focus
- Recognise role of libraries as community hubs whilst maintaining intrinsic library values

Terms of Reference

Draft Terms of Reference agreed (**Appendix A**). Subject to diaries the taskforce aims to meet on a monthly basis for first six months and then review.

Priorities and milestones

The objectives for the taskforce as set out in the report are:

1. To support the creation of a national digital library network
2. To respond to the outcomes of the current e-lending pilots and continue to work with publishers, libraries and others to secure the adoption of models supported by the pilots
3. To encourage and develop the library workforce and especially new recruits and graduates
4. To develop sector-led best practice guidelines to help local authorities when working with volunteers and community-led libraries

Agreed priorities

- **Digital enablement** – including the provision of universal WiFi access, e-lending, digital shared network and quality content. Links to report's objectives 1 and 2
- **Libraries adding value** – Making stronger, strategic links between libraries and other policies such as health & wellbeing and business & economic growth. Links to report's objectives 1 and 4
- **Best Practice** – Helping Local Authorities and library services through sharing and linking to existing/new best practice. Building sustainable long-term models for libraries/community hubs. Links to report's objective 4
- **Workforce** – skills needed to help the library workforce deliver these priorities and to take on new roles as part of wider service provision. Links to report's objective 3

Action: Secretariat to identify and contact representative from a Further Education institution to be involved with the workforce priority

Funding

Department for Culture, Media and Sport have secured 2015/16 funding to support the taskforce in year 1. Any further resources required including contributions/ support from central and local government, the library sector, private, public or third sector foundation organisations would need to be identified and potentially bid for.

Following the meeting it was announced in Budget 2015 (18 March) that Central government is providing **£7.4 million funding to support libraries** in England to enable WiFi access. This is a complimentary scheme to that announced by BT and Barclays (17 March) to fund a pilot for WiFi in 80 libraries and 20 community centres in areas of social deprivation.

British Library

The British Library presented their proposals for a new model for library partnership which taskforce supported in principle and will consider detailed business case at future meeting.

The Minister for Culture and the Digital Economy joined meeting and set out his aims for the taskforce:

- Look for opportunities for collaboration through co-operation and sharing of services/resources including opportunities for working with other partners and sectors
- Build on and share best practice agenda
- A national digital library network
- Continue to engage with Other Government Departments to highlight how libraries deliver their initiatives

Communication

Articulate offers/packages of support to Local Authorities, Government Departments, library sector and wider partners.

Regular updates via websites, blogs and other social media.

Action: Secretariat to compile and share list of taskforce contacts within the group

Presentation by BiblioCommons on Unified digital presence for public libraries

Background

The Society of Chief Librarians has begun work to envision a unified digital platform for all public libraries in England. This new digital platform for public libraries will improve how library customers can access, understand, and use the information and resources that libraries provide, including book catalogues, digital resources, IT training, events calendars, and library locations and opening hours. This web platform will help bring new users into public libraries, both virtually and physically, and enrich the library experience for existing customers.

As a result of a public tender for the work, Society of Chief Librarians appointed BiblioCommons, a Canadian company that works to transform how libraries serve communities online. The initial phase of the project, which is funded by a £30,000 grant from Arts Council England, will research consumer and library sector needs and create a vision and roadmap for the unified digital platform. Work on stage 1 is expected to complete by Spring 2015.

Date of next meeting: To be agreed

Action: Secretariat to invite Councillor Ian Stephens, Chair of the Local Government Associations' Culture, Tourism and Sport Board, to next meeting

Action: Secretariat to canvas for dates/location for next meeting including options for video links

APPENDIX A: LEADERSHIP FOR LIBRARIES - TERMS OF REFERENCE

Ministers and the Local Government Association will jointly set up a Task and Finish Group (Leadership for Libraries) to take forward the recommendations of the Independent Library Report for England, published 18 December 2014. Please see **Annex A** for a summary of the report's recommendations.

This taskforce will jointly report to the Chair of the Local Government Association's Culture, Tourism and Sport Board and Ministers (Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Department for Communities and Local Government).

The Local Government Association's Culture, Tourism and Sport Board Chair and the Ministers will appoint the taskforce Chair and Members, agree the work programme, resource, and meet every six-months to review progress.

The taskforce's role is to:

- Develop, agree, implement and monitor a work programme that includes clear deliverables and will take forward the recommendations of the Independent Library Report for England, in line with the direction and resources agreed by the Local Government Association and Ministers.
- Work closely with local government and the members of the taskforce.
- Identify and agree a process to commission activity that is needed to achieve the taskforce's work programme.
- If necessary, set up working groups to lead specific projects. The taskforce will agree the Chair, membership, remit, resource and reporting requirements for any working groups.
- To identify key phases in programme of work to allow a review of progress and personnel.
- Submit six-monthly written updates to the Local Government Association and Ministers, and an annual progress report that will be made publicly available.
- Keep local government and partners referred to below involved, engaged and informed about the work of the taskforce.
- Identify risks to achieving the work programme and put in place appropriate mitigation.

The taskforce will operate in accordance with the following principles:

- Work in accordance with the principles of the sector's approach to improvement, in particular recognising that councils are responsible for their own performance and improvement, and that they are accountable to local communities for their library service.
- Harness and develop further councils' collective responsibility for libraries improvement, drawing upon the contributions of local government and of relevant partners who may bring expertise and different perspectives.
- Build upon and add value to existing good practice, partnerships and other activity that is already supporting public libraries.
- Be transparent, inclusive and timely.
- Be accountable to local and central government through joint reporting to the Local Government Association's Culture, Tourism and Sport Board Chair and Ministers.

Membership of the taskforce will be:

- Chair – Local Authority Chief Executive
- Local government - Chief Executives from nominated Local Authorities
- Society of Chief Librarians
- Arts Council England
- BBC
- British Library
- Central Government
- Chartered Institute of Librarians and Information Professionals
- Local Government Association
- The Reading Agency
- Public Health England
- Other organisations may be invited to join individual taskforce meetings, in response to agreed priorities

Members of the taskforce are expected to attend each meeting. When a member is unable to attend, they should notify the Chair, so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Members must declare to the Chair any interest or potential conflict of interest in matters that might be considered by the taskforce.

The frequency of taskforce meetings will be agreed at the first meeting when members are invited to agree a work programme.

It is expected that the taskforce will operate for three to four years. The work programme, resource, membership and terms of reference will be agreed on an annual basis by the Local Government Association's Culture, Tourism and Sport Board Chair and Ministers.

The Secretariat will be responsible for organising taskforce meetings and any other meetings deemed necessary to achieve the work programme. Notes of each taskforce meeting will be circulated to the members within seven working days.

Responsibility for minute taking will rotate between central and local government.

Annex A – Independent Library Report for England recommendations

For central government

- To make available funding to enable local authorities to extend WiFi access, computer facilities and workforce training for all public libraries in England
- With local government, jointly establish a library taskforce, led by councils, in partnership with others interested in the sector: to provide leadership; to implement the recommendations and to help reinvigorate the public library service in England
- To have greater cross-government recognition and support for libraries
- To seek to secure changes in European and UK copyright law to enable the Public Lending Right to include remote e-loans in its next legislative term

For the taskforce

- To support the creation of a national digital library network
- To respond to the outcomes of the current e-lending pilots and continue to work with publishers, libraries and others to secure the adoption of the models supported by the pilots
- To encourage and develop the library workforce and especially new recruits and graduates
- To develop sector-led best practice guidelines to help local authorities when working with volunteers and community-led libraries

For local government

- With central government, jointly establish a library taskforce, led by councils, in partnership with others interested in the sector: to provide leadership; to implement the recommendations and to help reinvigorate the public library service in England
- Through the taskforce, to develop a vigorous culture of mutual support among local authorities through the sharing of good practice/resources and to seize the opportunities for even greater collaboration
- Through the taskforce, to consider all available options for the delivery of their library service
- Through the taskforce, to encourage more community involvement in the management of libraries through a variety of models