

Library Models in New South Wales

checklist 

April 2008

State Library of New South Wales

***checklist* Contributors**

Public Libraries NSW – Country

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Note: The ***checklist*** list is not exhaustive. If you have comments/ additions for the list please contact Public Library Services:

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Introduction

In March 2007 Public Libraries NSW – Country published *Library Models in New South Wales at a Glance: summary report* by John A Liddle.

At the time this report was issued it was agreed that a checklist of some the matters that a local government authority would need to consider when reviewing the local library model would be of value.

The State Library of NSW, Public library Services division has consequently developed this checklist in association with Public Libraries NSW – Country. This checklist is intended to be a starting point and seeks to provide some guidance to researching different library models.

It is recommended that local government authorities considering a change to their library service model contact the State Library of NSW, Public Library Services (PLS). PLS will provide advice on the requirements of the Library Act 1939 and contact details of NSW Library Managers who can provide additional expert advice.

Note that the *checklist* list is not exhaustive. If you have comments/ additions for the list please contact Public Library Services on telephone (02) 9273 1527 or email: pls@sl.nsw.gov.au

Kathleen Bresnahan
Assistant State Librarian, Public Library Services
4 April 2008

checklist

Why do you want to change?

- Consider your motivation or rationale for changing – there are costs involved in changing your library service model and each model brings unique pros and cons
- When is a regional library service too big? Consider the complexity of liaising with multiple councils.
- When is a library service too small to operate as a stand alone service? Will the service be financially viable and able to adequately serve the needs of the community?

What do you want to change to?

There are a number of library service models that you may wish to consider:

- a regional library service (section 12(1) of the Library Act - where local authorities agree that one local authority manages the provision of library services on their behalf)
- a cooperative library service under section 12(2) of the Library Act - where local authorities agree that certain functions are managed by one local authority on their behalf). Encompasses formal cooperative agreements and less formal agreements such as purchasing agreements.
- This may take the form of sharing library management systems (eg Shorelink), cooperative purchasing and processing (eg Port Macquarie and Kempsey), sharing staff expertise (eg Western Riverina Community Library), or aligning with other libraries in the network (eg. LADD)
- a cooperative – with other institutions, for example cooperation with TAFEs, universities, CTCs, RTCs, etc
- a stand alone service – one council, one library service

What is the local political environment?

- Is autonomy and retention of local identity a priority to you local authority?
- Is there strong regional support and cooperation across councils?

- Consider existing and potential relationships between member councils
 - relativity of power between councils
 - managing the dynamics of the member councils
 - level of commitment and contribution of member councils

What will the financial implications be?

- is it cost effective
- how are the costs allocated
- what is the funding formula for the region / cooperative
- will a new model affect the library service's ability to attract grant funds - is there an advantage in a regional or strategic partnership application
- what is the status of reserve funds especially for replacement of mobile libraries, library management systems, etc
- how will costs be redistributed if one or more members withdraw?
- will there be economies of scale
- what is the cost of joining
- what is the cost of withdrawal
- what opportunities are there for aggregation of services / costs
- what is the level of commitment and contribution of member councils
- what telecommunications infrastructure is required / available
- are there advantages in joint purchase of library materials and technology

How will the library service be managed?

- compliance with the Library Act 1939 & Library Regulation 2005
- robustness of the library agreement including disputes resolution processes, entry and exit of parties, dissolution, etc
- the role of the Executive/ Administering Council when entering into a regional agreement under the Library Act 1939
- the role of the Executive Officer in relation to a regional library service

- reporting relationships between the Regional Library Manager and branch library managers, member councils, library committee and other library partners
- formal communication framework
- how will financial reporting be documented and communicated between member councils
- lease agreements for infrastructure (eg buildings, fleet, photocopiers, ICT, etc)
- ownership, maintenance, management and control of assets (buildings, fleet, photocopiers, ICT, etc)
- relationship/ communication between Library Manager and member councils / library committees/ other partners
- allocation of time to council relationships –v- operational requirements
- service level agreements – including professional development of staff to deliver the services specified
- library service planning – how will regional and branch library planning be undertaken
- strategic development – will member libraries be able to undertake local initiatives
- management and planning – centralised versus local
- staffing – centralised versus local control
- marketing and promotion of library and information services
- cooperative projects

Consider the physical environment – geography & demography

- population growth – increase or reduction anticipated in the next 10 years
- what are the distances to be covered – courier costs for example / regular schedule of visits to branches / telecommunications costs, etc
- do opening hours at headquarters facilitate access for clients visiting from outlying areas, for example to the reference collection

- do 'outlying' residents come to your regional centre or go elsewhere for shopping/ services

What are the service and staffing implications?

- access to specialists/ professional staff can overcome a lack of council experience and local capacity
- employment opportunities
- ability to attract qualified staff
- professional development - the opportunity to provide training / mentoring / staff exchanges / career paths / professional networking
- programs / events – number, type, capacity to deliver
- centralised coordination for programs and resources, eg children's activities
- lowest common denominator may determine service levels
- a service level agreement may set minimum service levels
- employment opportunities
- will there be increased collection access – regional collections may be larger, reference collections more in depth and stock rotation refreshes the collection
- standards, performance measures, benchmarking
- shared library management system and catalogue(s)
- how will the unique local studies collections be managed in a regional / cooperative arrangement
- is there a need for a client newsletter?

What are the infrastructure considerations?

- level of control of facilities and services
- level of control of staff – are they employed by the Administering/ Executive council or are they employed by the participating Councils
- telecommunication infrastructure – cost/ availability

- standard of buildings
- library management system – capacity to maintain and upgrade
- IT support – within the library service and within the participating council(s)
- vehicles – library car/ van, Library Manager car, etc
- mobile libraries – standard, suitability, age, capacity, etc
- administrative support
- will there be a shared website if it is a regional or cooperative service
- responsibility for collection of statistics, development of performance measures, benchmarking, etc.
- is there a need for a staff newsletter, or other regular communication in regional/ cooperative services

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Additional sources of information

NSW Local Government Councils Comparative Information

Department of Local Government, 2005/06 issue is available at:

http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/documents/Comparatives/Comparatives_2005-06.pdf

Table of contents *[extract from Table of Contents]*

Part A

Introduction

Classification and grouping of councils

Council profiles

Profile of council areas in alphabetical order

Data collection and analysis

Maps of NSW, Sydney and Inner Metro Local Government Areas

Part B

Rating

Average rate per assessment

- residential
- farmland
- business

Outstanding rates & annual charges

Percentage movement in rates and annual charges revenue from previous year

Percentage movement in user charges and fees revenue from previous year

Financial

Sources of income from continuing operations

Total continuing operations income per capita

Dissection of expenses from continuing operations

Total expenses from continuing operations per capita

Current ratio (unrestricted)

Debt service ratio

Capital expenditure ratio

Corporate

Number of equivalent full time staff

Compliance with statutory reporting deadlines

- Annual report received by department
- State of the environment report received by department
- Financial report received by department
- Access and equity statements
- Social/community plans

Library services *[From 2006/07 this information will appear in Public Library Statistics as detailed on the following pages.]*

Library *[operating]* expenses per capita

Circulation per capita

Recreation and leisure services

Net recreation and leisure expenses per capita

Community services

Community services expenses per capita

Public Library Statistics

Public Library Statistics, State Library of New South Wales.
2005/06 issue available at:

http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/statistics/2005_2006.html

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Summary Statistics 1989+

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Table 1a	Voted Expenditure, Subsidy and Special Purpose Grant
Table 1b	Expenditure and Subsidy: By Councils - Summaries
Table 1c	Expenditure and Subsidy: By Library Service
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Table 2b	Circulation: Books by Category
Table 2c	Circulation of Non-Book Material
Table 2d	Circulation of Separate Collections
Table 3	Total Stock as at ...
Table 3a	Total Bookstock as at June ...
Table 3b	Total of Non-Book Material as at June ...
Table 3c	Total serials as at June ...
Table 3d	Separate Collections as at June ...
Table 3e	Acquisitions and Discards
Table 4	Registered Borrowers at June ...
Table 5	Service Points and Hours of Opening as at June ...
Table 6	Full-time/Part-time Library Staff as at June ...
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Table 8	Summary of Comparative Statistics
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Table 10	Total Expenditure
Table 10a	Expenditure Per Capita
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Table 13	Adult Periodical Titles as at June ...

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Table 16	Circulation of Library Materials
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Table 16c	Circulation Per Staff Member
Table 17	Total Staff at June ...
Table 17a	Population Per Staff Member
Table 17b	Total Qualified Staff at June ...
Table 17c	Population Per Qualified Staff Member \
Table 18	Document Delivery
Table 19	Library Visits
Table 20	Internet Access for the Public
Table 21	Total Information Requests

From the 2006/07 issue the following additional information will be published in *Public Library Statistics*:

- **Library Operating Expenses Per Capita – as part of Table 1a**
- **Expenditure on Library Material by Library Service – Table 1d**
- **Circulation by Council – Table 2e**
- **Non-Resident Members by Council – Table 4a**

Taking services into the future: a manual for country library services

Department for Victorian Communities, Local Government and Regional Services Division, August 2003. 247 pages. Available at:

<http://www.dvc.vic.gov.au/web20/dvclgv.nsf/allDocs/RWPC74AAD6AEB604BE3CA2571700031DBB4?OpenDocument>

Scroll down to the **Technology** heading (note that the publication covers much more than technology).

- Part 1 is on Organisational Culture – Operational Analysis: pages 1-92
- Part 2, section 4 is on Financial analysis: pages 93-200
- Part 3 is the Attachments document, pages 201-247 which includes:
 1. Pro forma Chart of Accounts for Country Library Services
 2. Depots – Summary of Capital and Recurrent Costs
 3. Model Pro forma Service and Funding Agreement

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Library Specification Manual

Manual to guide Public Libraries in the Preparation of a Specification for their Library Services, State Library of NSW, June 1999, 68 pages. Available at:

http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/library_mgt/lib_management_docs/libraryspecificationmanual.pdf

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Restructuring of Library Services

Restructuring of Library Services Manual. State Library of NSW, August 1999, 45 pages – deals with change management.. Available at:

http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/docs/restruct.pdf

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Library Models in New South Wales at a Glance

Library Models in New South Wales at a glance: summary report by John A Little, J L Management Service Pty Ltd, Public Libraries NSW – Country, March 2007, 24 pages. Available at:

http://www.cpla.asn.au/resources/documents/2007/pdf/Models_final.pdf

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Library Models in New South Wales

Library Models in New South Wales: works in progress. A research project to facilitate stakeholders' understanding of library models by John A Liddle, J L Management Service Pty Ltd, Public Libraries NSW – Country, October 2005, 204 pages.

Report available from: Public Libraries NSW – Country.
For contact details see <http://www.cpla.asn.au/>

Regionalisation in Victorian Public Libraries

Regionalisation in Victorian public libraries by Adele Kenneally. *Aplis*, Vol 19, No 1, March 2006, pages 13-17.

Pages 15-16 include a list of advantages and disadvantages of regional libraries – note that in Victoria regional libraries are incorporated under the Victorian Local Government Act, sections 196 and 197.

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