

Sensitive: NSW Government

89th Meeting - Public Libraries Consultative Committee MINUTES

DATE	Tuesday, 4 December 2018
TIME	1pm – 2.30pm
LOCATION	Unaipon Room – Level 1, Macquarie Building, State Library of NSW
CHAIR	Jan Richards AM
EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Cameron Morley (State Library)
MEMBERS ATTENDING	Dr John Vallance (State Librarian) Adele Casey (NSWPLA, Bland Shire Council) Cr Dallas Tout (NSWPLA, Wagga Wagga City Council) Cr Les Lambert (NSWPLA, Narromine Shire Council) Cr Lesley Furneaux-Cook (LGNSW, Burwood Council) Margaret Kay (LGNSW) Michael Caulfield (Library Council of NSW) Philip Edney (NSWPLA, City of Canada Bay Council) Robert Knight OAM (NSWPLA, Riverina Regional Library) The Hon. George Souris AM (Library Council NSW)
APOLOGIES	Cr Romola Hollywood (NSWPLA, Blue Mountains City Council)
SL NSW STAFF	Philippa Scarf
MINUTES	Honorine Jarkey (SL NSW)
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. • Apologies received from Cr Romola Hollywood (NSWPLA, Blue Mountains City Council) • It was noted by the Chair that this is the final meeting for Michael Caulfield. Michael's contribution over 9 years on the Library Council, including 6 years on the Grants Committee was warmly acknowledged. • The Chair noted that this would also be Margaret Kay's last meeting. Margaret was thanked for so ably bringing the perspective of Local Government NSW to the Committee. It was also noted that Damian Thomas would be the Association's new representative in 2019. 	
1.2 Notification of Other Business	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil 	

ITEM 2: MINUTES, BUSINESS ARISING AND ACTION REGISTER

2.1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- The Minutes of the Meeting of 23 July 2018 were approved.

ITEM 2: MINUTES, BUSINESS ARISING AND ACTION REGISTER

2.2 Business Arising

- 2018/19 Public Library Funding Strategy**

Cameron Morley reported that the Minister had approved the Public Library Funding Strategy for 2018/19 as recommended by the PLCC and Library Council, and that all councils had been invited to apply for subsidy and subsidy adjustment payments.

The Minister also announced that at least \$5M from the Regional Cultural Fund would be allocated to public library projects for eligible councils, and that a further \$1M would be allocated for a metropolitan council public library grant program later in 2018/19.

Applications for the Regional Cultural Fund were due on 21 September. State Library staff provided comments on the merits of the public library-related applications for the information of the Regional Cultural Fund assessment panel.

ITEM 3: PAPERS FOR DISCUSSION AND NOTING

3.1 Public Library Funding Model Principles for 2019/20 and Beyond

It was noted that the Premier, the Hon Gladys Berejiklian, and the Minister for the Arts, the Hon Don Harwin announced a significant new public library funding package on 24 August 2018, totalling \$60M over the forward estimates to 2022/23.

This is the largest single commitment to increasing public library funding by the NSW Government since the Library Act was introduced in 1939.

The staging of the increase over the 4 years will be as follows:

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Increase	\$12.95M	\$14.03M	\$15.09M	\$16.94M
Service NSW	\$0.25M	\$0.25M	\$0.25M	\$0.25M
Total	\$13.2M	\$14.28M	\$15.34M	\$17.19M

The Committee discussed the elements of the increase.

The commitment includes an increase to the per capita subsidy amount, as follows:

Year	New per capita amount
2019/20	\$2.45
2020/21	\$2.55
2021/22	\$2.65
2022/23	\$2.85

This is a 54% increase in per capita subsidy payments by 2022/23 for all councils.

Subsidy Adjustment - additional funds

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
\$2,000,000	\$2,150,000	\$2,250,000	\$2,250,000

Note that the 2018/19 Subsidy Adjustment pool is \$5.737M.

This is a 39% increase in available subsidy adjustment funds by 2022/23.

Public Library Infrastructure Grants

A new grant program totalling \$6M per annum will commence in 2019/20. This fund is considerably larger than the previous Public Library Infrastructure Fund, which provided \$15M over 4 years.

Service NSW Kiosks

\$250,000 per annum is available over 4 years to fund the roll-out of Service NSW Kiosks to interested public libraries. This will be an opt-in program, and further details will be shared ahead of 2019/20. State Library staff have had preliminary discussions with Service NSW. Service NSW is preparing a prospectus for libraries, and planning a pilot for the kiosks.

Outback Letterbox Library

The Library Council of NSW provides funding to Broken Hill City Council to enable the Broken Hill City Library to operate the Outback Letterbox Library for residents of Central Darling Shire and Unincorporated Western NSW. The annual funding will be doubled to \$200,000 to improve collections, delivery and promotion. The State Library will work with Broken Hill and Central Darling to review this service.

OPTIONS

The State Library prepared a range of draft models for the allocation of the subsidy and subsidy adjustment payments over the 4 years, for the Committee's consideration.

Per capita component

Firstly, the per capita component was discussed. The most recent published ABS population figures were used for the modelling, and it was noted that actual figures will vary in accordance with future population figures.

It was noted that councils with large populations will receive significant increases due to the increase in the per capita amount, for example:

Council	Population	2018/19 \$1.85	2019/20 \$2.45	2020/21 \$2.55	2021/22 \$2.65	2022/23 \$2.85
Blacktown	356,859	\$660,189	\$874,305	\$909,990	\$945,676	\$1,017,048
Canterbury Bankstown	367,519	\$679,910	\$900,422	\$937,173	\$973,925	\$1,047,429
Northern Beaches	269,378	\$498,349	\$659,976	\$686,914	\$713,852	\$767,727

Councils with small populations, on the other hand, will receive relatively insignificant increases through the per capita component, for example:

Council	Population	2018/19 \$1.85	2019/20 \$2.45	2020/21 \$2.55	2021/22 \$2.65	2022/23 \$2.85
Bourke	2,720	\$5,032	\$6,664	\$6,936	\$7,208	\$7,752
Brewarrina	1,687	\$3,121	\$4,133	\$4,302	\$4,471	\$4,808
Cobar	4,713	\$8,719	\$11,547	\$12,018	\$12,489	\$13,432

Subsidy Adjustment

The Committee agreed that the magnitude of the increase to the per capita component prompts a review of the Subsidy Adjustment, because applying the new total funding pool to the existing formula would result in a distribution of the new funding which significantly advantages councils with large populations. This is due to both the per capita increase and because there are population-based aspects of the existing Subsidy Adjustment.

If the existing model of Subsidy Adjustment were to be used, the result would be an even larger disparity in payments between large councils and small councils.

The State Library advised that the insignificant increases for small councils that would occur if the existing model is applied would not be enough to make a meaningful difference to the quality of the library services for these councils.

It was agreed that a new approach to the Subsidy Adjustment is to be considered, which recognises that the larger councils will benefit significantly from the per capita increases, and therefore do not need Subsidy Adjustments as proportionally large as those received under the existing model.

Conversely the new approach should recognise that small to medium councils do not benefit as much

from the per capita increases, and therefore ought to receive higher amounts of Subsidy Adjustments under any new model.

In principle it was agreed that a smaller Subsidy Adjustment for larger councils, and a larger Subsidy Adjustment for smaller councils will produce a fairer result on a statewide basis, enabling small to medium councils to improve library services appreciably, without unduly compromising the significant increases that will be enjoyed by larger councils due their per capita payments.

Three approaches to the Subsidy Adjustment were considered:

- 1) Preserving the current model.
- 2) Allocating a flat rate to all councils (dividing the \$7.745M equally)
- 3) A mid-point approach, between 1 and 2.

Following discussion, it was agreed that a flat rate approach was most equitable because it increases the payments for small to medium councils very effectively, and moderates the increases for the larger councils.

Noting that the larger councils will receive large increases through the per capita component, the Committee agreed that this approach to the Subsidy Adjustment has equitable results and may be the most effective, at least for the 4 years of increases.

An additional advantage of the flat rate is its simplicity, because it dispenses with the complex combination of components that make up the 2006-2018 Subsidy Adjustments, and removes the distortions in payments to amalgamated councils.

When combined with the per capita payment, the total percentage increase by year 4 is in the region of 22% for large councils, and 40-68% for the smallest. In dollar terms, this would be an increase of \$248,821 for Canterbury-Bankstown, and \$44,573 for Brewarrina.

Cr Tout suggested that a nuanced approach to the flat rate for small, medium and large councils may be a variable to consider. Cameron Morley suggested that a reference to the SEIFA Index or similar indicator of council need may also be of use. Possible thresholds for small, medium and large councils could be up to 20,000, 20,000 to 100,000, and over 100,000.

It was agreed that the State Library would do further modelling on the flat rate approach to the Subsidy Adjustment and bring the models back to the March 2019 meeting.

It was also agreed that a *local priority grant* component is retained as part of the Subsidy Adjustment. This ensures that a portion of the funds is allocated library improvement projects each year, approved by the State Library. Under the current model at least 30% of the Subsidy Adjustment is to be allocated to a local priority project. The Committee agreed that an increase to the minimum percentage of the funds allocated (at least 50%) would have merit.

Grants Program

It was noted that the additional funding includes \$24M for a new grants program, with \$6M allocated per annum.

This is a larger annual fund than the previous Public Library Infrastructure Grants Program which provided \$3M in 2014/15, then \$4M per annum from 2015/16 to 2017/18.

The PLCC had previously noted that the \$200,000 ceiling on the Public Library Infrastructure Grants did not enable the provision of grants to a magnitude that reflected the cost of significant library building projects.

With \$6M available per annum the State Library proposed that raising the ceiling of the maximum grant to \$500,000.

Furthermore, it was suggested that a two-tiered system similar to that used for the 2018/19 Regional Cultural Fund could also be considered, with a different level of detail required for applications for funding below and above \$200,000.

The Committee agreed to the proposed increased maximum grant, and two-tiered approach.

It was noted that the previous program was targeted to infrastructure, with library buildings, spaces and information technology projects being the main beneficiaries of the funds. The Committee discussed the possibility of expanding the range of project types to include new collections and programs, however recommended that infrastructure and capital improvements are to be retained as the focus of the program.

The Committee considered that the increases to the subsidy / subsidy adjustment components were more appropriately targeted to support library collections and programs.

The PLCC recommended:

1. Further modelling of a flat rate Subsidy Adjustment to be brought back to the March 2019 Meeting.
2. A Local Priority Grant component is retained, with at least 50% of the Subsidy Adjustment allocated to the Local Priority Grant.
3. Increasing the maximum Public Library Infrastructure Grant to \$500,000.
4. A two-tiered grant program, with a higher level of documentation required for grants in excess of \$200,000.

3.2 Indyreads Roll-out

Ross Balharrie, A/Lead NSW.net, attended and presented a paper on the indyreads roll-out, including a demonstration of the platform.

The Committee noted that the December 2018 commencement of the statewide rollout of the indyreads™ local eContent management platform, following the successful trials with Parramatta and Leichhardt Libraries.

The indyreads™ platform will be made available to all NSW public libraries for free, and contain an opening collection of approximately 6000 statewide licensed eBook titles sourced from Australian independent publishers, a selection of titles in languages other than English as well as international content including, small press and indie genre fiction, reference, modern literary, classic fiction and non-fiction titles.

To facilitate access to the indyreads™ platform, each library will be asked to provide SIP2 server settings to set up basic portal access via an internet browser and the indyreads™ IOS and Android Apps.

Initially NSW.net will select a small sample of metropolitan and regional libraries with different library management systems. Once these services have been successfully configured, a staged roll out of the indyreads™ platform will proceed with the remaining libraries. NSW.net will provide support and training during the rollout of the platform.

Phase two of the indyreads™ rollout is scheduled for mid-2019. This will explore opportunities for interested public libraries to upload digitised manuscripts, books and oral histories sourced from their local studies collections.

Phase three will focus on the direct licensing of digital content by interested public libraries from community authors, writing associations, musicians, historians and local publishers.

The State Library will continue to actively explore new partnerships with Australian independent publishers for the acquisition of content with the aim of developing a collection of statewide licensed ebook titles which complements existing public library collections.

The PLCC congratulated the State Library on the initiative and welcomed the impending roll-out.

3.3 Library Council Guidelines on Privacy and Children's Services - Update

Philippa Scarf presented the paper.

It was noted that the State Library had instructed the NSW Crown Solicitor to review and update the Library Council Guidelines relating to privacy and children in NSW public libraries to reflect legislative changes and service provision.

The policies were tabled at the Strategic Network Committee meeting on 19 October for comment. The Strategic Network Committee noted the updated policies for approval by the Public Libraries Consultative Committee.

Decision: The PLCC considered and approved the updated Privacy Guidelines for NSW Public Libraries and Children's Policy Guidelines for NSW Public Libraries.

3.4 eResources Refresh

The Committee considered a paper by Kathleen Alexander which outlined a series of planned initiatives to promote higher awareness and usage of the suite of fully subsidised databases available to all NSW public libraries through NSW.net.

Decision: The PLCC noted the plan.

3.5 Portable Local Studies Collecting

The Committee considered a paper by Ellen Forsyth outlining the planned portable local studies collecting project for public libraries.

Two types of digital collecting kits (scanning and oral history) will be developed and made available to public libraries to assist with the collection of local studies material.

This idea was inspired by the Archivist in a backpack program from Southern Historical Collection (SHC) at the Wilson Special Collections Library at the University of North Carolina. These kits in backpacks (oral history) or wheeled suitcase (scanning) contain items to assist a community-based historian conduct and record oral history interviews and begin assembling photographs, letters, documents and meaningful artefacts. In NSW our target would be public libraries to enable them to more effectively collect material for local studies collections focusing on working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or people who are culturally and linguistically diverse. This will include collecting in languages other than English.

FRAMEWORK

Portable local studies collecting project has three main elements:

1. Equipment

Oral history or scanning kits would be made available to twenty councils. The kits would contain basic collection care material as well.

2. Training

Basic collection care, oral history or scanning training will be coordinated by the State Library for the library staff that will be using this material.

3. New library resources

This project will provide the participating libraries with new local studies material in areas which are under collected. There will be regular video conferences with the participants for peer support. Cataloguing and adding to Libraries Australia for access through Trove is crucial as is the material being available online.

EVALUATION

As well as reporting by the library participants, interviews will be conducted by State Library of NSW staff with library staff and a selection of the local people who have provided interviews or materials for inclusion in the library collections. These interviews will provide additional information to assist in the evaluation of this project. Results of this project will be reported by the State Library of NSW.

Decision: The PLCC noted the plan.

ITEM 5: OTHER BUSINESS

5. Joint Meeting with the Library Council – 3pm to 4pm

The President welcomed Library Council and PLCC members, followed by introductions.

- Mylee Joseph presented the revised Standards and Guidelines for NSW Public Libraries (Living Learning Libraries).

The standards have been significantly revised to enable libraries to compare performance with other libraries divided by population cohort. Medians for performance in key indicator areas have been calculated for each cohort.

The revision was in part made necessary by the significant council amalgamations which occurred in 2016 and 2017. The latest public library statistics have been used to set the revised benchmarks.

The Library Council welcomed the revision and noted the significant work that has taken place for this new edition. The new edition will be published early in 2019.

- Kate O'Grady presented the revised People Places library building planning tools.

These include more sophisticated spreadsheet for the calculation of spaces required for services to be offered from new libraries; a smoother curve for calculating library size based on population served; and a new tool which assists with planning for services within existing library spaces.

The new tools will be published online, along with revised text, in 2019.

Decision: The Library Council noted the reports and thanked the PLCC for its work and advice over 2018.

NEXT MEETING	
DATE	Monday, 25 March 2019
TIME	11am to 1pm
LOCATION	Unaipon Room, Level 1, Macquarie Building – State Library of NSW