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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**checklist currency**

Issued: 7 April 2008

Last updated: 7 April 2008

**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


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 your local authority?

□ Is there strong regional support and cooperation across councils?
Consider existing and potential relationships between member councils
  o relativity of power between councils
  o managing the dynamics of the member councils
  o level of commitment and contribution of member councils

What will the financial implications be?

  o is it cost effective

  o how are the costs allocated

  o what is the funding formula for the region / cooperative

  o 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

  o what is the status of reserve funds especially for replacement of mobile libraries, library management systems, etc

  o how will costs be redistributed if one or more members withdraw?

  o will there be economies of scale

  o what is the cost of joining

  o what is the cost of withdrawal

  o what opportunities are there for aggregation of services / costs

  o what is the level of commitment and contribution of member councils

  o what telecommunications infrastructure is required / available

  o are there advantages in joint purchase of library materials and technology

How will the library service be managed?

  o compliance with the Library Act 1939 & Library Regulation 2005

  o robustness of the library agreement including disputes resolution processes, entry and exit of parties, dissolution, etc

  o the role of the Executive/ Administering Council when entering into a regional agreement under the Library Act 1939

  o 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

___ OOOOO _______
Additional sources of information
Library Models in New South Wales checklist

NSW Local Government Councils Comparative Information
Department of Local Government, 2005/06 issue is available at:

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:


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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 2a Circulation Breakdown by Format
  Table 2b Circulation: Books by Category
  Table 2c Circulation of Non-Book Material
  Table 2d Circulation of Separate Collections

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  Table 3a Total Bookstock as at June …
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  Table 3e Acquisitions and Discards

Table 4 Registered Borrowers at June …

Table 5 Service Points and Hours of Opening as at June …

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Table 16c  Circulation Per Staff Member
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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:


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:


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   Service Points and Floor Areas Hours of Opening Public Access Technology Transport and Parking Library Community Meeting Room/Facilities
Restructuring of Library Services
Restructuring of Library Services Manual. State Library of NSW, August 1999, 45 pages – deals with change management. Available at:


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For contact details see http://www.cpla.asn.au/

Regionalisation in Victorian Public Libraries


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.