

# Libraries Partnership Board

## Agenda

13<sup>th</sup> November 2.00pm till 3.30pm

### Teams

<b>ATTENDEES:</b>	Lynton Green (LG), Eleanor Blackburn (EB), Cheryl Siddall (CS), Rachel Ralston (RR), Peter Lewenz (PL), Gary Borrowes (GB), Amanda Juggins (AJ), Joan Grimes, Kate Gibbons (Minutes), Linda Riley (LR), Susan Morris (SM), Jim Billington (JB), Gill Mortimer (GM), Andrew Mortimer (AM), Janet Evans (JE), Philip Forshaw (PF), Fiona Barry (FB)
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Garry D'Arcy

<b>MINUTES</b>	<b>AC TI ON</b>
<b>Welcome and apologies.</b>	
<p><b>Minutes and matters arising from last meeting (Enclosed)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minutes approved.</li><li>• Building Refurbishment Updates</li></ul> <p><b>EB</b> - Noted that the refurbishment programme is not included on the agenda and the rationale for this is that, aside from snagging lists, all the building work is now complete.</p> <p>EB referred to the recent, formal reopening celebrations at Birchwood Community Hub and Culcheth Library.</p> <p>The redevelopment at Birchwood saw the library relocate to the tennis and leisure centre, creating a Hub at the site. The works programme as part of the redevelopment project extended beyond the library with a new spin studio, refresh of changing rooms as well as the relocation of the library to the site. The library based at the school has now closed. Wednesday 8 November saw the official reopening of the site.</p> <p>Friday 10 November saw the official reopening of Culcheth library. It was an exciting event with representative from local residents and business in attendance. Writer, Frank Cottrell-Boyce delivers workshop and book signing with local schools. EB formally thanked Janet Evans for arranging Frank Cottrell-Boyce.</p>	

	<p>Two great events to celebrate the closure of the refurbishment programme.</p> <p><b>LG</b> - Thanked all for their input into the building refurbishment programme. Fantastic, joint piece of work by all involved.</p> <p><b>JB</b> – For the record, JB, on behalf of FOCL, raised how grateful they are for the amount of support the FOCL have received from senior managers at WBC and how WBC have listened. It has not been a smooth journey, but the group appreciate all the time invested. Agreed Warrington is fortunate of the role that Professor Steven Broomhead nationally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet Report Update</li> </ul> <p><b>EB</b> – Advised, a report went to cabinet on 9 October 2023. A copy of the report was shared by GD in advance of the report being presented to cabinet. Report publicly available. EB shared link - <a href="https://teams.microsoft.com/l/message/19:meeting_NTE4YjM2NGYtNTZiO0MDFILWE4YjQtYmRiZDJKNmVmMzhi@thread.v2/1699885197368?context=%7B%22contextType%22%3A%22chat%22%7D">https://teams.microsoft.com/l/message/19:meeting_NTE4YjM2NGYtNTZiO0MDFILWE4YjQtYmRiZDJKNmVmMzhi@thread.v2/1699885197368?context=%7B%22contextType%22%3A%22chat%22%7D</a></p> <p>The report provides a story of the great work that has been undertaken across Warrington’s library service. Such as the work on the public library strategy (both versions); refurbishment programme and the activity programme delivered by the LiveWire’s library team. The report includes a photo montage of the refurbishments in the appendix. EB said the report is a good news story.</p> <p><b>PL</b> – Thought it was an excellent report that succinctly outlines the journey that took place. Would be great if a public piece was done on this to celebrate all that has been achieved.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> EB to follow up with WBC comms.</p>	
	<p><b>Library Service Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation delivered by RR – Link presentation.</li> </ul> <p><b>RR</b> - Highlights of library services since our last meeting: Borrowbox Autumn crafts National poetry day Silver Sundays Birchwood &amp; Culcheth re-openings</p> <p><b>Digital Highlights:</b> Action counters terrorism training. Get online week – drop-in sessions delivered by library staff.</p>	

**Events**

Childrens mini lit fest – 10 different schools brought 5-10 children each.

**Current projects**

Autism groups to improve our accessibility offering.

Warm welcome spaces are running between November 2023 and March 2024.

Our user survey went live on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023, and will run for the month.

We have currently received over 750 online completions and more hard copy returns in libraries.

**Looking forward**

Mini winter challenge – online reading challenge.

Lunar New Year – Warrington Central event.

Shakespear – murder mystery event at Penketh library.

2024 Litfest is taking place in June 2024.

**JB** – I am delighted with renovation of the library, but we need it open more. We have raised it with Rachel previous and would urge officers to look at this. We have the lowest amount of time available to residents out of all Warrington libraries.

**EB** – We have increased opening hours at Culcheth after we changed the opening hours at Warrington central via reallocation. Recently, tweaks to opening hours have been made, however there is still only so much we can do due to availability and capacity of current staff. We hear the request, and we will continue to look at this.

**GB** – Silver Sunday and autism group – two areas where it would help if we investigated more deeply. We do not know how many people in Warrington have autistic members of the family. We know there is a large number who qualify for silver Sundays, but we need to know more around autism. These areas can look at making an in way in improving the deficit since covid.

Winter reading challenge – the story house in Chester is doing something similar. One of things we do not do as much as we might is cross boarder collaboration. Do we talk to Cheshire and see how these things went or can we carry out a joint event?

Pleased to hear of the event and it being online to engage the children.

**CS** – Thank you Garry. The team are doing well. With regards to collaboration there is a regional network which we attend every quarter and a number of initiatives and events come out of this as well as joint grant and funding applications.

**GB** – Have we done any of these collaborations recently?

	<p><b>CS</b> – We are still in recovery on the back of covid. Libraires have some significant structural changes effecting capacity so we have not focused on this, but we pick it up where we can e.g., with Halton.</p> <p><b>JE</b> – This evening, the majority of people will not know, Panorama features Julia Donaldson and importance of libraries and reading. We need to know what is going on nationally. This is FYI only.</p> <p>Opening galas, last week there were six different people bringing bags of books with their children. People expect the library to be open and it is not. Volunteers could help to fill the gaps e.g., over lunch time. People asking why we are not open.</p>	
	<p><b>Library Report 2022/23</b></p> <p><b>RR</b> – The last report of this kind was 2019/20. I have tried to keep it to the same format and updated the tables and statistics.</p> <p>Team members have produced a small report of their highlights which covers the six strategic aims.</p> <p><b>LG</b> – Over the period of covid, the report shows the impact of this, but also shows how well we in Warrington are recovering.</p> <p><b>GB</b> – Figures within an appendix would be helpful. CIPFA is the only thing we have from previous years to compare to. Are you still submitting CIPFA returns?</p> <p><b>RR</b> – Yes, we are.</p> <p><b>GB</b> -It would be helpful if we could have a copy of the return for Warrington. I can look back on previous ones and compare.</p> <p><b>CS</b> – Garry D’Arcy usually sends these out in a word format so I will pick this up with him.</p> <p><b>EB</b> – It is an extra piece of work for us so I would ask what the purpose of this is, as we are not allowed to provide it in the format CIPFA produce it in, therefore we have to extract it and put it in a new format which is a large piece of work.</p> <p><b>GB</b> - The CIPFA reports are no longer made public. The government are not funding it and is the reason why we do not have access to our own information. CIPFA advised they have no issue with us releasing our own statistics to our own people.</p>	

**EB** – We have shared this, and it is not the case of us not wanting to share it, it takes time to format in a way in which it can be released. Therefore, what is the information being used for?

**GB** -For comparison to previous years.

**EB** – Is the report which RR has provided not allowing this?

**GB** – It does not cover it all which means we are unable to carry out a detailed comparison.

**CS** – CIPFA provides a benchmark against other authorities. It therefore is not a benchmark on us, it is if we are up or down on current trends. It would be a piece of work for our team to pull together the information you are asking for and it would take the team some significant work to complete this.

**GB** – I am not interest in comparing Warrington against the others, it is the detail on ourselves we need compare. We can take this request outside of the meeting to find a way forward with this.

**LG** – Yes, that is fine. If there is a way around it, we can look to pick it up outside of the meeting.

**EB** – If you email me and Garry D’Arcy on this.

**PL** - The figure on live members, 16k in past 12 months, 4.5k actual members, what was this pre-covid?

**CS** – It was a lot more than this, it was around 22k members. A member is someone who uses the library in a 12-month period. We lost some over covid, plus we have carried out some data clensing. Therefore, it is down on previous years as a result of covid.

**PL** – What is a concessional member? Is it to do with age?

**RR** – Over 60’s or people in receipt of benefits, as they get reduced fines and fees.

**PL** – How do e-loans link in with hard copy loans in the data? I have noticed e-loans have increased enormously.

**CS** – Do you mean in terms of e-loans vs live members?

**PL** – Yes.

**CS** – To get access to an e-loan you will need a library card and register to access.

	<p><b>RR</b> – 269k is hard books, e-book loans are on top of this figure.</p> <p><b>PL</b> – Any reason why central library recovery has been fairly modest?</p> <p><b>RR</b> – We were disappointed on its recovery compared to other libraries, we have put in place an action plan and it has picked up since the implementation of this, and the trajectory is definitely positive now and we are keeping an eye on this.</p> <p><b>PL</b> – That is good news, thank you.</p>	
	<p><b>Library Insourcing update</b></p> <p><b>EB</b> – Overview of the proposal and decision to insource was provided during our last meeting. All services LiveWire currently deliver will come back in house to Warrington Borough Council for direct management including the TUPE of the full staff workforce into the Warrington Borough Council management and payroll structure.</p> <p>This is a huge programme of work with complexities. We are going back to cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> December to reiterate the decision which has already been made to inhouse the services, but to also provide further detail around the legal and financial implications and the process of insourcing.</p> <p>The target transfer date is 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024 which we are currently working towards. Between now and then we have consultation with staff to take place.</p> <p>It is a complicated period of time, me, CS and KG are working on this. Be mindful it is a sensitive period of time for staff. We are communicating as much as we can, but there will still be questions.</p> <p>From a service delivery perspective, there will be no change to services and for customers as a result of this insourcing, however that does not mean a review will not take place at some point in the future.</p> <p><b>CS</b> – I ask for your support around our staff, and I ask for you to not talk to them about it as it is a worrying time. It is a large piece of work in a short space of time. Staff will be consulted with and will be TUPED over so you will still see the same staff delivering the services post transfer as you see now.</p>	
	<p><b>Future of Library Partnership Board</b></p> <p><b>EB</b> – We are in a period of change between now and March 2024. This means we also need to reflect on the Library Partnership Board, and its direction of travel. We have finished delivering the refurbishment programme. We will not</p>	

	<p>require representation from LiveWire and Warrington Borough Council going forward as we will be part of the same organisation.</p> <p>It is time now to look at the terms of reference and what its future remit is. Is it more of an engagement group with oversight of the strategy and a critical friend? If we can start the thinking around the table on the future of the group.</p> <p>We will look to present potential terms of referring at the next meeting.</p>	
	<p><b>Future Board meetings</b></p> <p><b>EB</b> – In the immediate time frame we have the insourcing to priorities so we will hold any future meetings during this time.</p> <p><b>LG</b> – We are looking at mid-March or early June for our next meeting subject to completion and elections.</p> <p><b>JE</b> – I do not know what the rules and regulation of the Library Partnership Board are, but we use to meet face to face, and we have not in a while, but I do believe that we should meet face to face. This group has changed in what it looks at, we made progress in the early days where now we review paperwork and there is still a lot to do. I feel we work more effectively when we meet face to face and hold more meetings where we can share ideas.</p> <p><b>EB</b> – I think this is really helpful and aligns with our initial thoughts around engagement.</p> <p><b>JB</b> – When we had the meeting with medical people at Culcheth health centre, they pointed out there are a large number of people wanting appointments when they do not really need them, they just needed someone to speak to. They were keen to link up with us to deliver this. Covid got in the way, therefore maybe we should pick this back up and pilot this service?</p> <p><b>GB</b> – This is really encouraging to hear. We need to be looking beyond. We have the framework in the strategy. RR mentioned action plans at every library which is positive, as ambition translates into actions and results which I would like to know more about. I would like to support and input into this and incorporate it into the function of the partnership going forward.</p> <p><b>LG</b> – Thanks GB. They are all really good contributions and we need to take this away and think how we incorporate it into the terms of reference.</p> <p><b>CS</b> – Some of the things GB talks about is what RR is trying to work on with library friends’ group, so we have a basis to build upon. I would like to thank all members for their work and contributions.</p>	

	<p><b>Contributions from the public gallery</b></p> <p><b>AM</b> – Can I suggest we have a physical meeting in March. The libraries and Library Partnership Board would benefit from input from those actively involved in friends of libraries.</p> <p><b>LG</b> – I agree, we will try and do this as much as possible going forward. Maybe we look at the next meeting being at Culcheth.</p>	
	<p><b>A.O.B</b></p> <p>None</p>	