

Public Libraries Working Group Meeting 13

12:00pm Monday 17 May 2021

WALGA

ATTENDEES

Nick Sloan	Chief Executive Officer, WALGA (Chair)
Susie Moir	Policy Manager Resilient Communities, WALGA
Margaret Allen	Chief Executive Officer & State Librarian, SLWA
Jenny Archibald	Member, Library Board of Western Australia
Caroline Jones	Vice President, PLWA Representative
John Dixon	Director Digital Transformation and Strategy, Office of Digital Government
Steve McQuade	Manager Public Libraries and Literacy, SLWA (Secretariat)

APOLOGIES

Jodie Holbrook	Director Local Government Policy & Engagement, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
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MINUTES

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and acknowledged the impact of Cyclone Seroja on confirming a date for the meeting. Attendees introduced themselves as many new attendees present, particularly Nick Sloan, Jenny Archibald and Steve McQuade.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLUTION:

The draft Minutes of the meeting of 7 October 2020 were endorsed unchanged.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 State Local Government Partnership Agreement

- MA provided an overview and background information on the *State and Local Government Agreement for the Provision of Public Library Services in Western Australia* (State Local Government Partnership Agreement).
- SM confirmed that DLGSC is working on creating a glossy version of the Agreement and should be ready to publish shortly.

- NS observed that the State Local Government Partnership Agreement is subordinate to the State Local Partnership. Work is now taking place on the draft of a new State Local Government Partnership Agreement for this term of government.
- NS suggested that the *State and Local Government Agreement for the Provision of Public Library Services in Western Australia* be checked to ensure that it reflects the strategic priorities of the new State and Local Government Partnership Agreement. MA suggested that this be placed on the agenda for future consideration.
- The PLWG noted the *State Local Government Partnership Agreement for the Provision of Public Library Services in Western Australia*.

3.2 PLWG Terms of Reference

- NS observed that outstanding vacancies on PLWG need to be filled.
- Discussion on DLGSC possibly nominating a proxy for Jodie Holbrook while she is on secondment at the Minister Carey's Office. MA questioned whether the nominee should come from the local government side of DLGSC as opposed to a Culture and Arts side, particularly with the separation of the ministers.
- NS suggested raising with Tim Fraser to discuss whether there is a need to appoint a new member to PLWG.
- Discussion as to how to appoint a new Tier 2 regional local government representative, with the decision being made to go through the WALGA selection process. CJ suggested ensuring that the appointment is promoted through the PLWA membership to public library officers. MA suggested highlighting library knowledge as a key criterion. NS suggested that consideration be made as to whether there should be an emphasis on operational or elected member representation.
- DPIRD representative- NS proposed a direct approach to the Director General to seek a nominee as the most appropriate avenue.

Action

- **MA to contact Tim Fraser to discuss nominating a proxy or new member to PLWG.**
- **NS to put Tier 2 regional local government representative through the WALGA selection process.**
- **CJ to promote the WALGA selection process through PLWA**
- **NS to approach DPIRD seeking a nominee for PLWG.**

3.3 New Model Update

- MA provided an overview and background on the development of the new *Tiered Model to Support Public Library Service Delivery in Western Australia*.

- MA indicated that Tier 1 libraries can take up to 20% of their State Library grant in cash for use on technologies and services but that this may change in the future. Public library stock is currently owned by the local governments.
- JD asked about the differences between Tier 2 and 3's financial and service support they receive. MA answered that financial support is determined by a formula as seen on the agenda. Tier 3 libraries are primarily determined by very limited hours of operation, staffing and resourcing while Tier 2 libraries fall between metro and Tier 3- they can be multi-branch libraries but still with limited hours and staffing. SM observed that there is a level of self-determination in delineating Tier 2 and Tier 3 libraries.
- JD observed that if Tiers are based purely on population, some libraries in small areas that need more service support may be missed. MA observed that those Tier 3 libraries may not have expertise or staff to implement support and would require extra funding.
- The PLWG noted the New Model Update.

3.4 Local Level Agreement Update

- MA provided background on draft agreement.
- CJ observed that there are still some outstanding questions to consider in the draft before sending out the Draft Agreement to local governments.
- Decision made to undertake further review and consultation of the draft agreement.
- Aim to have LG feedback in advance of July 2021 to go to Library Board in July 2021

Action:

- **SM to send through final draft of agreement to NS.**
- **CJ to provide specific feedback on the final draft to NS.**

3.5 New Funding Allocation Model Update

- MA provided background on last years trialled grant process. There were less Tier 1 applications than expected, but the applications for Tier 2 and 3 libraries were over-subscribed with many requests for public-use PCs. Another observation from this process was that many applicants had never written a grant application before. Highlighted the opportunity for collaboration between metro and Tier 2 and 3 libraries.
- SM observed that State Library have run feedback sessions for the Tier 2 and 3 libraries with support from staff from City of Canning and City of Fremantle, as well as offering to review draft grant submissions.
- NS asked about streamlining the acquittals process. MA advised the first round of acquittals are being processed and the learnings from that would inform the process.
- The PLWG noted the new Funding Allocation Model updates.

3.6 Future Strategy Update

- CJ provided short background as to the formation of the reference group and planning and implementation of the Blue Sky Thinking showcases, as well as updates on the Future Public Library Strategy. The group will now need to collate data from Menti and the iThink platform, to inform a report to PLWG on the next stage of the strategy development. This is aimed to be complete in July 2021.
- JD requested data from iThink platform be shared with Office of Digital Government.
- MA requested clarification of the direction of the reference group going forward after the completion of the report, possibly through engaging a consultant and/or co-design process.
- Decision made to see what's in the report before making further decisions on best way forward.
- The report to be circulated out of session and a paper prepared for the next meeting with options for implementation.
- Acknowledgement of the working group, particularly Caroline Jones.

Action:

- **CJ to share data from iThink with Office of Digital Government.**
- **CJ/SM to prepare report for PLWG by end of June.**

4. Other Business

- PLWA has made the decision to go forward with a marketing campaign and will soon start discussions with SLWA. Main contact is Alison Oliver (PLWA).

5. Key Messages

- PLWG will be seeking to fill the two vacancies from DPIRD and from a Tier 2 Local Government.
- The trial of grant funding for Public Libraries under the new model was successfully completed and the first of the ongoing grant rounds is now open.
- PLWG is focussing on the future and will be closely monitoring the outcomes of the future strategy workshops.

Action:

- **SM and CJ to draft key messages to stakeholders.**

- 6. Next Meeting Date: TBC. Probably around the second half of July at SLWA.**

4. The meeting closed at 1:00 pm.