

Public Libraries Working Group Meeting 17

12:30pm Tuesday 1 February 2022

WALGA

ATTENDEES

Nick Sloan	Chief Executive Officer, WA Local Government Association (Chair)
Susie Moir	Policy Manager Resilient Communities, WA Local Government Association
Margaret Allen	Chief Executive Officer & State Librarian, State Library of WA
Jenny Archibald	Member, Library Board of Western Australia
Caroline Jones	Vice President, Public Libraries WA
John Dixon	Director Digital Transformation and Strategy, Office of Digital Government
Jude Thomas	Local Government Professionals (WA)
Rob Leicester	Manager Core Programs Industry and Economic Development, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
Cr. Marie O'Dea	Elected Member, Shire of Plantagenet
Steve McQuade	Manager Public Libraries and Literacy, SLWA (Secretariat)
Nina Hewson	Manager Strategic Policy Coordination, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (filling in for Jodie Holbrook)

APOLOGIES

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

MINUTES

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. Susie Moir introduced Nina Hewson who was proxy for Jodie Holbrook.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLUTION:

The draft Minutes of the meeting of 15 December 2021 were endorsed unchanged.

3. Actions

3.1 Review actions from previous meeting

3.1.1 Inform members of PLWG when the State Local Government Partnership Agreement for the Provision of Public Library Services in Western Australia has been published on the State Library of WA website.

- Complete. Partnership Agreement was published on the SLWA website on January 31.

Action

- SMC will share the link with PLWG members.

3.1.2 Status update to be provided on the Draft Local Level agreement.

- Ongoing. The agreement is going back to the State Solicitor's Office for further advice.

3.1.3 WALGA and SLWA to set up a framework for further sector consultation on the public library regulations, to be brought back for review by PLWG.

- Discussed in Strategic Matters, Item 4.2 Draft Public Library Strategy.

3.1.4 PLWG members to provide feedback on the draft Public Libraries Strategy through Steve McQuade before the end of the year.

- Complete

3.1.5 Circulate the revised draft Strategy among PLWG members either out of session, or at the next PLWG meeting.

- Complete

3.1.6 Circulate a couple of proposed dates for the next meeting.

Ongoing. SMC has been liaising directly between Margaret Allen and Tanya to determine an appropriate date.

4. Strategic Matters

4.1 Updating the *Library Board (Registered Public Library) Regulations 1985*

- SMC provided a brief report with background on previous actions.
- Alison Oliver, Susie Moir and Steve McQuade have met to discuss steps for further consultation. Aim to produce a discussion paper to be distributed through WALGA's networks to CEOs for feedback. Alison Oliver has commenced work on the paper but will send to Susie Moir and Steve McQuade prior to distribution.
- MA noted that it would be valuable to know how many local governments are relying on the Regulations as opposed to local bylaws. SM commented that the discussion paper would go through WALGA's governance team to ensure this information is ascertained.
- NS recommended feedback be provided directly to SMC.
- JT asked to clarify who will be involved in the engagement process for the Regulations review. SM answered that the paper would go through WALGA and be distributed to CEO's.
- PLWG endorsed the consultation approach outlined in the report.

4.2 Draft Public Library Strategy

- SMC provided a paper that outlined the key changes made to the draft Strategy following the previous meeting. PLSWG recommend strong implementation planning by PLWG to complement the Strategy, as well as establishing an evaluation framework around outcomes. I&J Phillips can assist with this but will incur additional cost. PLSWG also propose a community survey to compliment the community consultation being undertaken by I&J Phillips. Finally, the paper outlines a timeline for this work to be completed.
- Discussion among PLWG as to the recommendations put forward by the report. JA commented that there was no clear implementation plan in the draft Strategy, which could cause confusion during consultation. NH suggested including guiding questions in the consultation or survey to assist with feedback.

- MA suggested that provision of services to Aboriginal communities be specifically mentioned within the Strategy. MO commented that local government is not necessarily the best provider of library services and suggested the Department of Education or CRC's may be more appropriate. SMc commented that this may fit well within the 'community-led' pillar, in regards to engaging with communities to determine what services they want as opposed to who provides them. MA noted that collaboration with Department of Education and schools is becoming more problematic in regard to public access and child safety.
- MO questioned the relevance of the term 'industry' in the 'libraries supporting communities' pillar. SMc commented that this pillar aimed to encourage projects and collaborations such as the Better Beginnings program between SLWA and Rio Tinto.
- JA asked how the consultation process was going to take place. SMc clarified that I&J Phillips will make contact with the identified community groups within the nominated local governments. The additional survey could then be open to all local governments.
- JD provided suggestions based on the feedback from DTS's own consultation process, mainly that documents be tailored to suit the communities being approached, for example translating documents for CALD community groups to ensure valuable feedback. JD also recommended including surveys and posters within the library itself as opposed to outsourcing.
- RL noted that I&J Phillips is being asked to complete a broad set of deliverables-survey, consultation and evaluation. SMc noted that with a background in statistics I&J Phillips is well placed to complete the survey work but that there needs to be more discussion with them around CALD and Aboriginal consultation. CJ commented that it would be valuable to refer back to the consultancy brief to check the scope of the engagement with I&J Phillips.
- JT commented that the draft strategy validates current public library activities as opposed to encouraging change. JT also noted that the first pillar 'Community-led library services' may be misleading as libraries have legislative requirements that can complicate a community-led approach. SMc clarified that the pillar refers to deep, ongoing community engagement and that implementation planning and consultation will be key. CJ noted that the strategy could encourage a significant shift in regard to service provision.

- MA suggested talking to Office of Multicultural Interests about consultation with CALD communities. MA also recommended further discussion about Aboriginal communities to determine an effective approach.
- Discussion as to concerns about the timeframe. I&J Phillips have stated that they can complete the require work under the current timeline. JD observed that the timeframe is very short with such a broad scope for the consultation. MA noted that any translation of material will add additional time and cost. MA observed that there is pressure to complete this work, preferably before September 2022.
- Discussion as to additional costs associated with the community survey. Decision made to cover additional costs as per the previous formula (SLWA to cover 50% of the costs, other PLWG organisations to cover the other 50%). MA noted that SLWA can underwrite the full cost of the additional work. Feedback on costs to be provided directly to Steve McQuade.
- Discussion as to costs associated with the implementation plan and evaluation framework work to be undertaken by I&J Phillips. PLWG endorse a higher figure then \$15,000 if necessary, with SLWA underwriting future costs. SMc to provide PLWG with a budget for additional work for 2022-2023 at next meeting.

Recommendations

1. *APPROVE the draft strategy presented as the basis for community consultation.*
PLWG broadly support the draft strategy, noting the need for specific language in relation to Indigenous communities.
2. *APPROVE the matrix for community consultation, including the Local Government Authorities proposed to be involved.*
PLWG approve the matrix for community consultation, with the recommendation that the selection of the remote local government authority is changed (e.g. Dundas or Gascoyne).
3. *APPROVE the addition of a general community survey to be undertaken by I&J Phillips Management Services in addition to the existing community consultation approach, with any sharing of costs to be discussed between PLWG members.*
PLWG approve the addition of a general community survey in addition to the community consultation undertaken by I&J Phillips. PLWG members to discuss with Steve McQuade individually as to financial contributions.
4. *APPROVE I&J Phillips Management Services to work with PLSWG and PLWG to develop an implementation plan and evaluation framework to support the delivery of the strategy, with any sharing of costs to be discussed between PLWG members.*

PLWG broadly approve I&J Phillips to develop an implementation plan and evaluation framework, with costs to be shared between PLWG members pending receipt of a 2022-2023 budget.

5. *APPROVE the timeline for endorsement of the final strategy.*

PLWG approve the timeline.

Action

- **PLWG members to discuss financial contribution for additional survey work individually with SMc.**
- **SMc to provide PLWG with budget for additional work on the draft Public Libraries Strategy for 2022-2023 at next meeting.**

5. Standing Items

5.1 Tiered Model & Funding

- Complete.

6. Other Business

- None

7. Key messages to Stakeholders

- Communicate progress timeline to stakeholders.

8. Next Meeting date + meeting schedule

- SMc to circulate meeting date, pending liaison with Tanya and MA.
- PLWG aim to set the next meeting for late March, pending work completed by I&J Phillips.
- Location to be determined.

Action

- **SMc to liaise directly with Tanya and MA to determine meeting date.**

9. The meeting closed at 13:40 pm.