



Vision

Create a vibrant and sustainable network of South Australian Public Libraries who are at the forefront of innovation.

Mission

Provide leadership and direction for the South Australian Network through aligning resources and providing an independent voice for Network members.

Public Libraries SA

President's Report: November 2009

On behalf of the Public Libraries of SA Executive I present this Annual Report December 2008 to November 2009. The Executive continues to operate within the framework of the PLSA Action Plan 2008-2011 and within this report I link the actions and activities undertaken by the Executive to this plan. Very much the strategy based around an agreed action for the Network, enabling you to chart and monitor the progress of the plan.

This year we have all been engaged in and challenged by two key projects, which will shape the future development and sustainability of the Public Library Network and public libraries:

1. The One Card One LMS Project: ACTION 1.6
2. Engaging Sue McKerracher to work with PLSA on an Advocacy and Lobbying campaign leading to the MOU: ACTION 1.6.8 and 1.6.9

Key Attendances at the ALIA Summit in Canberra and National Conferences, workshops and telephone links. ACTION 2.2, 2.3, 4.6, Through this participation in the summit and collaboration between the State based Public Libraries Associations, ALIA and PLA we are supporting the development of a National set of Library Standards responding to best practice and innovation.

Minister Hill has written to the LGA indicating that they wish to commence discussions around the MOU and currently supporting documentation is being written and compiled. It is imperative that we respond to calls for information as such information and analysis is vital to our case for continued and increased funding. The briefing papers and notes that are sent out for your information and discussion are but a starting point and ensure that we communicate on the same page and send a uniform message. Fact Sheet 4 and further briefing notes will be out by the end of this week.

The Two-day Conference held in May this year was an outstanding success, building on past successes and challenging us all to Build Balance! The program was excellent and Key Note Speaker Tony Durcan from the UK discussed the importance of and how to engage with elected governments, communities and addressing the changing needs and expectations. He quoted "Increasingly the libraries of the new millennium are no longer simply repositories for books but serve as a civic gathering place and stimulus for neighbourhood and community revival. Public libraries are being designed as part of larger Public spaces making the library space more open to opportunities for sociability"

We were invited to morning tea by the Director of the State Library to celebrate the 175th birthday of the State Library of SA and were very graciously welcomed to the Mortlock Chamber by Alan. Thank you Alan for your kind invitation and warm welcome. These celebrations along with the shift of Public Library Services to the State Library were two key milestones in library development. The shift a frustratingly long time coming, has resulted in an area accommodating PLS which is inviting and bright, well laid out and welcoming. I also acknowledge the energy, time and personal commitment that was required by the Management team to reshape PLS in line with the review of these services undertaken in 2008. From the outside such a restructure and shift appears to occur seamlessly, I commend all on the excellent outcome and look forward to a rewarding and ongoing relationship between PLS and PLSA Executive and the Network.

Two key pieces of research were undertaken and have been used in the advocacy campaign:

1. PLSA Membership Retention Report (Synovate)
2. An independent analysis of public library funding resources in South Australia (ABS)

I commend these pieces of research and would urge you to familiarise yourselves with the outcomes. Both have very good Executive summaries. I attach the Executive summary of the ABS consultancy as this has recently been completed.

As mentioned at the last Quarterly the PLSA Executive has agreed to review the governance arrangements of PLSA. A brief was prepared and Strategic Matters were engaged (Leanne Muffett) to undertake the consultancy. The Brief is attached for your information. The initial timeline was quite tight, targeting the November AGM for discussion with members, however the Governance review, which includes the constitution, has taken considerable energy and many changes and the draft will come to the March meeting. Time frame was October (when Bernie and Bill returned from

Overseas and Helen from leave) to November with draft to November quarterly and information to be distributed prior to the meeting. Quite tight! I have received a question re this review and quite rightly it is the member's charter and as such they will have an opportunity to contribute. I gather that this will occur at and be on the agenda at the March Quarterly.

Consultation with the members is important hence engaging Sue McKerracher to present and workshop on the MOU at the August Quarterly and to have ongoing dialogue was a communication and engagement strategy that has been pursued and continues to evolve. You will note that this is an agenda item for the November Quarterly.

Members of the Executive chair committees and working parties and regularly report, These can be tracked on the website monthly. These reports are being compiled for your information. At the time of this report they have not been received for publication. Your representatives are:

1. One Card One Library/ILMS Steering Committee (Julie Weller)
2. PLSA Website (Helen Kwaka)
3. Marketing (Shane Cathcart)
4. Future planning of public libraries (Julie Morgon) REPORT at PLS
5. JULA (Dee Moloney)
6. Community Languages (Bill Roche)
7. Statistics Working Party (Julie Weller) COMPLETED BiblioStats selected
8. Adult Programs Group (Helen Kwaka)
9. Collection Development Group (Julie Weller)
10. SALCYS (Lyn Spurling)
11. Manager's Forum (Abby Dickson)
12. Libraries Board Guidelines (Julie Weller)
13. Databases (Julie Weller) SELECTED BUT ONGOING
14. PLS Standing Committee: (Bill Roche and Helen Kwaka, Libraries Board Chair Janice Nitschke)

1. One Card One Library: State-wide Library Management System

It was proposed that the next logical step forward for the South Australian Public Library Network, being a single state-wide Library Management System (LMS) which will provide 21st century support for all libraries, and make the resources of all public libraries available to all South Australians

The project continues to evolve and gain momentum, particularly given that the committee now includes a CEO and a Local Government IT Manager and the Project Management Team are well into their contract. The Libraries Board of SA and the LGA continues to be formally involved and the Chair Mr Bruce Linn and Geoff Stempel have presented to Metropolitan CEOs and the LGA State Executive in November. Regular communiqués continue to keep us informed through surveys, memos and updates, key drivers and activities.

For your information the project objectives and drivers are included:

1. Project Objective:

This project will investigate the feasibility of providing a single integrated Library Management System (LMS) for the State's public libraries commencing in late 2010.

2. Project Drivers :

The drivers for this project are:

- To utilise new technologies to provide greater access to information resources for all South Australians through the public library network.
- To provide the state's public libraries with a 21st century library management solution which has aggregate ongoing costs below those which would otherwise be paid by councils for the disparate systems they currently operate.
- To provide all library users greater access to resources and improved service levels.

Bruce will update us at the November Quarterly given the results of the survey will be known and the business planning process will be well underway.

Goal 1 DEVELOPMENT

Welcoming, succession planning, forward planning, program development, professional development, participation in decision making

1.6 Planning for the short and longer term future of the PLN (One Card One Library: State-wide Library Management system)

2. Engaging Sue McKerracher

Working with Sue has been an absolute honour, she is indeed committed to libraries and community, strategic, has vision, thinks outside of the square and has an ability to craft a succinct professional document around an agreed framework. Sue comes to us with very strong credentials supported by her work in the UK when she developed the Little Book Of Libraries and the very successful advocacy and lobbying campaign, empowering library managers and key supporters in effective negotiating and advocacy for libraries and their funding and sustainability.

Given the current financial climate and the imminent MOU negotiations Sue has been engaged to explore, discuss, write, and advise on strategies around:

@ The political and economic benefits of continuing to invest at the current level in public libraries, examples:

- o Relatively cheap way of winning hearts and minds
- o Excellent return on investment (previously sent out)
- (b) The political and economic damage, which would be caused by not investing at the current level in public libraries, examples:

- o Exponentially greater cost of reversing the effects in five years' time
- o Greater pressure on other services, with a higher cost of delivery
- o Angry taxpayers and voters, taking to the streets and airing their views in the media
- © The potentially greater political and economic advantage of investing more in public libraries
- o Positive comparison with other states and territories
- o Source of civic pride
- o Long-lasting government legacy
- o Cost savings in other areas (some states in the US use third-grade reading statistics to determine how many prison beds they will need in 10 years' time)

Sue has prepared the briefing papers that have been made available to you to address issues raised by the LGA in their recent circular to CEOs, information and analysis for the LGA, and is currently working on further information for circulation to managers and we are undertaking an analysis of key components i.e. usage, statistics, Local Government expenditure etc based on:

- o Positive messages and evidence about how libraries support State Government priorities: climate change, health, economy
- o Strong consistent messages: Libraries have never been busier, Libraries have achieved everything and more, Where else?
- o The next step in the campaign

Just a reminder about some key points and milestones that I have previously circulated and you may wish to reflect on for your future discussions:

- o Public libraries in South Australia (SA) have traditionally enjoyed the highest level of funding per capita, outside ACT. Some 25% of funding comes from the State Government (\$85 million over five years) and 75% from local government.
- o The results of this investment can be seen in the usage figures – the growth in the number of items borrowed (an increase of 7.9% between 2001 and 2006) and the fact that SA has the highest level of borrowing per capita (11.67 items per annum compared with the Australian average of 8.68) – and in the high levels of customer satisfaction (Customer Satisfaction Research Program 2007).
- o SA public libraries have built a reputation for innovation and service that is envied by other states and territories.
- o It was the first to introduce the Internet to public libraries and now has the second highest number of public access internet terminals per 10,000 persons (4.09, compared with the national average of 3.13) – only the Northern Territory figure is higher.
- o The Little Big Book Club began in SA in 2006 and has since spread to other parts of Australia
- o SA public libraries were the first to trial the US @ your library concept in Australia

The LITTLE BOOK OF LIBRARIES: <http://www.alia.org.au/summit09>

This book has proven to be an invaluable advocacy tool in promoting the role of libraries. Please send me an email if you have not collected your copy for your Mayor and CEO and in the case of School Community and Joint Use Libraries the Principal, PLSA has purchased books for these strategic partners.

The order form and sample pages are available on the ALIA Public Libraries Summit website: <http://www.alia.org.au/summit09> At this page you will also find some sample pages and ideas.

Goal 3 ADVOCACY

Enhance the profile of PLSA, present information to decision makers, lobbying for public libraries

Enhancing the profile of PLSA with local, state and national decision makers
Actively engaging with the Libraries Board, PLS Standing Committee, LGA
Fostering an understanding of the value of public libraries

Goal 4 COMMUNICATION

Information dissemination, promotion with SA & nationally, promotion of services, internal communication

Strengthening internal and external dialogue

Promoting achievements to the SA and National Library network, funders and colleagues

4.3 Promoting the services of Public Libraries to a range of stakeholders (including community)

Public Libraries SA have also been represented nationally at key conferences and Summits. Ms Kimberley Hargreaves was sponsored by PLSA to attend and present at the ALIA National Conference. Members are reminded that support is available to present at such conferences. Information is available on the website and from the Treasurer.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES SUMMIT: I was invited to attend the Summit and continue to participate in regular telephone link ups and workshops. The summit was well attended and key government representatives attended see

<http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/summit09/>

There was a commitment to build on the day, report back to State organisations and develop a National Agenda through programs and dialogue. PLSA sent a submission through.

Submissions for the summit can be found at:

www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/summit09

A key goal of the ALIA Public Libraries Summit was to develop a stronger relationship with the Federal Government in achieving its agendas in a range of portfolios. Ideally, the country's 1,522 public libraries will be regarded as 'national champions' advancing social, educational, cultural, broadband and digital programs and policies.

National Framework

Australia's public libraries network straddles all three levels of government - national, state/territory and local. Services are delivered by a variety of administrative arrangements, which vary both between and within each State and Territory. Services are the most effective where local support and partnership working is strong.

A second key goal of the ALIA Public Libraries Summit is to engage with all three levels of government to develop a framework that supports libraries across Australia to better deliver services to their communities especially in disadvantaged and remote areas advance [COAG](#) and the [Social Inclusion](#) reform agendas.

I have attached for discussion and your comment the ALIA paper 'Developing a vision and national framework for Australian Public Libraries' which has been developed out of the Summit.

The aim of a shared vision and national framework is to provide the Federal Government with proof that public libraries, although managed locally, are able to speak with one voice at a national level and can be invited to take a seat at the table.

We need to ensure that politicians and ministers at the highest level have a clear understanding of how public libraries currently contribute to government priorities, and provide a well-structured, considered and itemised proposal for investment in national programs, which will enable public libraries to increase their contribution to these government priority areas.

Please take the time to respond. Thank you.

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National Public Libraries Standard Project

As previously reported consultants are currently working on a key document for all public libraries and local government: These standards are based on the NSW standards "Living Learning Libraries" and further develop a National perspective. The Executive have agreed to support this National Project through part funding the project to an amount of \$5,000. Thus through establishing further partnerships and dialogue with these Associations we will have access to a set of key National Standards, responding to Best Practice and innovation.

Goal 2 PARTNERSHIPS

Grow partnerships, enhance longevity of projects and processes, effective management of relationships, building foundations

2.5 Developing and strengthening outcomes from relationships with national, state, local and corporate partners

Members of the Marketing Committee have been very active over this period, consulting with the field and agreeing to a statewide vision, goals and strategies:

Marketing for the SA Public Library Network

The Vision:

That marketing for the SA Public Library Network will:

- Be embraced by the public and staff.
- Complement individual local library identity or culture
- Be adaptable to all localities
- Be easily implemented at all levels – state, regional, local

Goals:

- An increase in awareness of public libraries as part of the SA Public Library Network
- An increase in awareness of public library core and other services
- Positioning of the library as the main resource of global information needs
- An improvement in non-user perceptions of customer service and relevance of the library

Strategies - actions:

- Supporting network by sharing marketing resources, strategies and results:
 - PLS intranet to become central repository
- Ensure appropriate notice of campaigns given to network:
 - Two months for campaign
 - Annual plan by preceding October (2010 "One Card" campaign?).
- Offer appropriate training:
 - Strategies to raise awareness within Council.
 - Mentoring scheme

The committee has also supported a number of excellent State-wide marketing initiatives: Library Lovers Day, Simultaneous Storytelling were but two of these very well attended and supported initiative. Congratulations to a very active group.

There has also been a discussion around the PLSA Executive table around questions on notice. Prior to the last AGM questions were raised and answers posted for everyone's information. It has been agreed that we will undertake this again. Please send in your questions by email to the secretary Dee O'Loughlin. I have attached last year's questions and answers.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Executive for their commitment and attention to the issues and their desire to represent you and ensure that we have a sustainable and agile network. I would like to formally acknowledge the endeavours of Shane Cathcart and Julie Morgan and the commitment and energy that they have brought to the Executive and the Network. They are not seeking re-election due to work commitments. Thankyou

Janice Nitschke
President