

ANNUAL LIBRARIES CONFERENCE – FEEDBACK REPORT

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide feedback to the Scrutiny Committee from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals Annual Conference ‘Impact, Inclusion, Information: The Value of Libraries in the Lives of Communities’.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Handbook contains a protocol for use of the Scrutiny Committees budget by members to attend training and conferences relevant to the remit of the Committee.
- 2.2 The Public Library Authorities (PLA) Conference one of the key dates in the calendar.
- 2.3 The Conference took place between 7-9 October 2009 in Bristol and was attended by Councillors Tom Martin and Councillors Graham Hall. A feedback report is attached from Councillor Martin. Councillor Hall will provide oral feedback at the meeting.
- 2.4 The Conference was built around three themes : Local Democracy, Local Involvement, The Power of Reading and Healthy Communities (including case studies on health and well-being and digital inclusion).

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to receive the feedback report from the delegates.

4. Background Papers

- 4.1 Conference packs issued by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.

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Public Library Authorities Conference 2009.

Cllr. Graham Hall and I travelled down from Newcastle Airport by Easy Jet in fifty minutes flying time. After checking in to the hotel a short walk found us in Sam's Pub with real ale and good company. Later we enjoyed a brilliant meal back at the hotel.

Wed. 7 th. Oct. Local Democracy, Local government. Kate Millin, Chair, PLG, and Cllr. Simon Cook, Bristol City Council welcomed us.

Local democracy - the rights of local people to be engaged in service planning and delivery was spoken about by Jayne Hathaway, Director, 2QAB.

Norma McDermott & Angie Weatherhead introduced us to the Public Library Building Awards which included the videos made by those who entered. Could Newcastle be successful?

Julie Finch spoke about Bristol's new museum which is rather different where communities are at the heart of the project reaching out to under represented groups.

John Hicks, Kentwood Associates spoke about Charitable Trusts which have been set up in places like Wigan, Luton and Glasgow.

At the Elected Member' workshop we looked at libraries engaging with young people. Two young people spoke about their experience with the Big Bang Secret campaign and being active through their library youth council.

On the evening we attended the Public Library Awards Dinner with guest speaker Gervase Phinn. It was an excellent evening with Newcastle taking away at least three awards and being put in 'stitches' by the tales from Gervase retired Yorkshire HMI.

Thus. 8 Oct. Impacts and Outcomes. Andrew Cozens, IDeA introduced the principles of outcome based accountability which can become a way of securing strategic and cultural change by moving organisations from a focus on efficiency and process towards making better outcomes the primary purpose.

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Hodge MBE, Minister for Culture and Tourism, DCMS, spoke and was well received. I mentioned to her how well the free swimming had gone in Sunderland which was announced at last years Liverpool conference.

The power of libraries' to engage and benefit citizens in new ways and urge local authorities to have a big new push on using libraries' innovative reading work to deliver key targets. was picked up by Mirander McKearney, Director, The Reading Agency, after Liz Fogan, Chair, Arts Council England, challenge to work with partners.

Terry Ryall, Chief executive, v, sounded a compelling call to action for libraries to engage young volunteers during the economic crisis which is having a catastrophic effect on young people's employment chances.

I visited the Bradley Stoke Library and sports centre, South Gloucestershire, where a common active card was used for several facilities. Nexus are considering a smart card which could be used in a similar way.

We had a surprise procession to Colston Hall for the Civic Reception with rather tall spinning ladies and jugglers leading the way. Afterwards we returned in a similar manner to dinner at the Grand and were entertained by Project Adorno who told jokes about the way books are numbered?!

Fri. 9 Oct. Healthy Community Bob Gann spoke about a memorandum of understanding between the Department of Health and the Society of Chief Librarians to provide those with the greatest need for health care services the opportunity to be given digital access.

We heard about the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM) and the impact of library and information services in multiple disadvantaged communities. Graham asked about the use of native languages compared with use of English.

John Fisher, CEO, Citizens on Line, talked about digital inclusion and delivering the Every Online Programme and undertaking commissioned research and consultancy in this work.

We had a table based discussion on out-come based library services led by a student from the University of the West of England MSc. Course in Library studies.

Andrew Knight drew on experience from international development and the evidence base relating to culture and literacy to suggest ways public library services can play a central role in sustainable community development.

After a quick call in to Sam's bar it was off to Bristol Airport to be greeted by the 'Brazilian Football Team' out for a stag night in Newcastle. A delay in departure found a rather long queue of young men down the length of the plane after take off with funny hats and full bladders waiting for access to the only toilet on board the plane. At Newcastle, after they were given a bit of fatherly advice on the pubs to visit by Graham and best wishes from me for a good night out, they disappeared into the distance as we went in search of the car to return home.

Cllr. Tom Martin