

**Minutes of a meeting of the Downend and Staple Hill Library User Group  
6.00pm Thursday 15 June 2017 at Downend library**

1.	<b>Public Session:</b> No members of the public present	
2.	<b>Present:</b> Tina Hanks (Chair), Margaret Uppington, Councillor Shirley Potts, Rachel Betts, Annette Norley, Sue Poole, John Abraham, Helen Egarr	
3.	<b>Apologies:</b> Beryl Bellamy, Councillor Mike Bell	
4.	<p><b>Matters arising from Minutes of April meeting</b>  <i>Election of Officers:</i>            It had been agreed that Tina, no longer having any conflict of interest would chair the meeting. Tina also confirmed her willingness to continue in this role pending a decision as to any changes to the LUG. This was unanimously accepted. Election of Vice Chair was deferred for the same reason...</p> <p><i>National Libraries Strategy - Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016 to 2021.</i> Rob Wilson the Minister responsible for taking this forward lost his seat in the General Election. It is not yet known who will succeed him. <b>(We now know it is John Glenn, MP for Salisbury.)</b></p>	
5.	<b>Correspondence</b> None.	
6.	<p><b>Library Service Review update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New staffing structure - A comprehensive consultation with staff has now been completed and responses analysed by Human Resources, with the final report due to be signed off imminently. Across the board there has been a 30% reduction in staff, achieved in part through early retirement/voluntary redundancy (ER/VR). Appointments to the newly posts of Group Librarian and Senior Library Assistant will be made in early July. Library assistants will then be allocated to posts, taking into account where possible personal preferences, and to meet the exigencies of the service.</li> <li>• Open Access (OA) – A rolling programme of building works will require a fortnight’s closure for all sites mid-July onwards for IT and CCTV cabling etc. and building modifications. Provisional dates for Downend are 12 – 23 August; Staple Hill in mid September. This will be followed by staff training and customer induction. Members welcomed the suggestion that they could help with this. A lot has been learned from Bradley Stoke which has had OA since February. Shirley raised her concerns that, with OA, libraries would be at increased risk of anti social behaviour from youths similar to that experienced recently at Emersons Green and at Staple Hill in Page Park and Page Community Centre. John was not aware of any issues at either Bradley Stoke or at OA libraries in other authorities and of course CCTV is in operation and our security company is on call. Shirley emphasised that social media allowed youths to communicate very quickly and re-group at different locations</li> <li>• Sue raised the issue of “tailgating” John acknowledged that this was possible, but OA users agree not to let this happen as part of “terms and conditions” and CCTV can identify anyone who infringes this. Members felt concerns about personal safety could deter older users in particular, especially during the dark winter months. They will of course still be able to visit during core staffed hours. Groups will be encouraged to use the space and add to the busyness of the library.</li> <li>• Customers will have access to the full range of facilities and stock: Computers, printer etc. At Bradley Stoke access will be extended to the whole of the library by the autumn.</li> </ul>	

<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Future of the library user group</b></p> <p>Each Library User Group, representing one or more libraries currently meet three times a year, plus one extra at yate a total of 25 meetings. John advises that this will not be sustainable under the new structure with increased demands on staff and one librarian per cluster, with a much wider strategic remit than at present. With this in mind John invited members to consider how they might like the Group to change and adapt to the changing needs of the service:</p> <p>Suggestions and comments included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Friends Group similar to that at Emersons Green where there is a fluid approach to meetings and residents and users are invited to themed events/discussions such as the Annual Service Plan. This might be more suited to our needs than the Page Park Friends model which has quite defined goals including that of fundraising.</li> <li>• Encourage younger people to have their say; build on links with Tina at Downend School. Use the Participate Model as at Yate through which teenagers take a role in developing and running activities for younger children</li> <li>• A combination of formal and more informal meetings with the opportunity for hands on activities e.g. Using Ancestry</li> <li>• We need to do more to publicise the group and encourage discourse through an occasional open forum; fliers in books etc.</li> <li>• What is the function of the Group? A way to share information about the service; a source of reliable volunteers to help at events and with surveys; provides an opportunity for members to make a difference to the service; generate ideas.</li> <li>• Tina felt that the Group gave structure to the consultative process and suggested that it should meet twice a year.</li> <li>• Members were interested to know if other library authorities have User Groups and/or “Friends” and how they operate.</li> </ul> <p>In conclusion it was agreed that the views of Emersons Green “Friends” be sought on how the two groups might join forces.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Librarian’s Report</b></p> <p>Members noted with interest the wide range of activities hosted by both libraries. Staff are now busy preparing for Animal Agents this year’s Summer Reading Challenge. Everyone was very impressed with the eye catching range of materials and exciting programme of activities which were sure to be well received by youngsters and parents alike.</p> <p>Rachel suggested that to create a “café culture” ambience, refreshments could be offered (in addition to regular coffee mornings). Agreed that it would not necessarily be feasible for staff to serve the drinks, but that self service hot water flasks (pump pots) could be made available.</p> <p><b>Shared Reading Scheme/South West Region of Readers</b> - Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer “Reader Leader” or who would like to find out more about this innovative project is very welcome to attend a meeting at Staple Hill library 2.30 – 4.00pm Tuesday 27 June. Full details attached</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><i>Alderman Jim Cullimore:</i> Jim has very reluctantly decided to stand down as a member of the Group. Agreed that Helen would write to thank Jim for his many years loyal service and support to the Group and our libraries.</p> <p><i>Bristol Libraries</i> - John reported that Bristol libraries are facing severe budget cuts which could see the number of service points reduced from 27 to 10. For more information and to take part in the consultation please go to <a href="https://www.bristol.gov.uk/council-spending-performance/your-neighbourhood-consultation-2017">https://www.bristol.gov.uk/council-spending-performance/your-neighbourhood-consultation-2017</a></p> <p>It will be interesting to monitor the knock on effects for South Gloucestershire</p>	

	<p>libraries particularly on those closest to Bristol.</p> <p><i>Christmas on the Hill</i> –Shirley informed the meeting that due to a combination of factors, it will not be possible to hold the parade this year. However the planning committee is working hard to ensure that there will instead be a more extensive programme of activities and events in Fountain Square, the main shopping area and in community venues and churches. It was agreed that it was vital that the library would again this year be a hosting site and that it would be staffed all day.</p>	
9	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b> TBC following consultation with the Emersons Library Friends Group</p>	