

Minutes of the Student Library Liaison Group Meeting 18 March 2009

Present: Cathryn Gallacher (chair), Joy El Dieb, Peter King, Chris Prior, Chris Raistrick, Sophie Rigg, Jennifer Scherr, Mike Wall

Apologies: Charlie Done, Sarah Harrop, Tobin Webb

1. Minutes and matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be correct.

Matters arising -

CG reported that the Library's Enquiry Services review had led to a trial of a 'meet & greet' service at the Arts & Social Sciences Library (ASSL) in the early weeks of the Autumn term. This provided basic information and orientation to many new and returning students unfamiliar with the layout of the library during the refurbishment period. Enquiries became fewer, but more detailed after the first four weeks. The outcome of this experiment will be a roving enquiry service (drawing on a pool of library staff) assisting enquirers as they move around the floors of the library. This service will be reviewed in time.

2. Issues to be raised by student representatives

SR reported that her impression was that students were much happier with the ASSL since the refurbishment, though there were still concerns about the number of books available. Some students were not aware of, or unable to use effectively, the range of online resources available.

CG responded that the Library was working to encourage academic staff to involve library staff in their programmes so that they may develop the study skills of students.

SR said that students tended to think that the ASSL building was unhealthy in terms of heating and ventilation.

PK responded that the original build of the ASSL had not included air conditioning or double glazing. Staff sympathise with students in this respect, as conditions are not better in staff office space.

3. Library opening hours

PK reported that the 28% increase in ASSL opening hours since February had been well received. This increase was a response to student demand.

Staffing at the Social Medicine Library would be withdrawn in the near future, turning this into a reference only branch. The lack of demand for staffed services justified this step.

4. Refurbishment plans

SR commented that the social areas on the ground floor of the ASSL are often very busy, and ideally would be larger to cope with demand.

MW responded that, within the constraints of the physical space available, seating had been increased on the ground floor with the refurbishment. The intention was that these busier areas would help preserve quieter study spaces on the floors above.

MW reported that

- the lighting on the second floor of ASSL would be renewed in the Summer Vacation. The amount of study space available should be adequate at this time of year, and disruption would be minimized
- self-issue services should be running in the ASSL and Medical Library very soon
- refurbishment plans for the Education Library had been slightly delayed while the University considered its spending plans, but project funding and planning is in place.
- design work on the Chemistry Library had been completed to allow costings to be submitted to the University for consideration
- the Wills Library would benefit from Centenary Campaign funding; development of the library would need to retain the character of the building while meeting the needs of users.

5. Book purchases

PK provided further information about the article that had appeared in Epigram concerning the Library's halt on book buying. Book buying would resume as soon as funding permitted: the reduction in the amount of money available had been caused by the exchange rate's effect on journal prices. Bristol's journal provision is a real strength, and as good or better than that of peer Universities.

6. 2009/10

PK reported that the financial position for the forthcoming academic year is not bad. The Library will look at its book and journal buying to ensure an effective balance is achieved.

7. SCONUL arrangements

JS reminded student representatives that access to other university libraries is available to Bristol students under the SCONUL reciprocal scheme.

8. AoB

SR enquired whether there was any funding allocated to films and DVDs. These are important for several arts subjects, including English, Drama and Modern Languages. PK replied that funding was allocated to the purchase of film materials for such courses.

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