

## DRAFT

### Minutes of the Student Library Liaison Group Meeting 30 October 2008

Present: Cathryn Gallacher (chair), Joy El Dieb, Sarah Harrop, Peter King, Chris Prior, Chris Raistrick

Apologies: Alison Alden, Charlie Done, Jennifer Scherr, Tobin Webb, Mike Wall

#### 1. Minutes and matters arising

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

Item 7 – JED introduced Chris Raistrick. Chris will attend to provide a PG student presence in the group. JED reported that the PG Union had recently gained several volunteers from the student body to assist in their work, and would consider who of these might also attend the Student-Library Liaison Group, or provide feedback to it. Following the election of student course representatives in the academic departments Charlie Done would be seeking their details from the Deans of Faculties for similar purposes.

#### 2. Issues to be raised by student representatives

No issues raised.

#### 3. Enquiry Service Review

CG reported on the review to identify good practice across the branch libraries in supporting user enquiries. Findings showed that the smaller branch libraries were able to assist users with enquiries and developing library skills in more detail than at the Arts & Social Sciences Library (ASSL).

To improve the situation at ASSL, in the first two weeks of term a rota of staff had provided a 'meet & greet' service for new and returning students. 'Roving' enquiry support to answer ad hoc questions on the library floors has also been introduced on a trial basis. The roving enquiry service is being monitored to establish at what points of the day it is most effective.

JED welcomed this, and suggested that face to face contact is often more productive than other forms of communication (such as web FAQs). CG confirmed that face to face support is the focus for the current range of developments.

**Action: CG to give feedback from the trial periods at the next meeting.**

#### 4. Extended Library opening hours

PK reported that funding for extended library opening at the ASSL would take effect early in 2009, enabling opening hours to be extended to 8.00am-12.00 midnight all

year round (except University closures), plus 24/7 opening for 8 weeks around exam times.

JED welcomed this, and reported positive feedback on the extension of opening hours at the Geography Library which had also recently taken effect.

## 5. National Student Survey (NSS)

CG reported that she is currently looking at feedback from the NSS, with particular emphasis on library issues. While library provision in many subject areas is rated in the top quartile of results, subjects supported at ASSL are lower. The results suggest 3 issues behind this: ASSL opening hours, the building and facilities in the ASSL, the availability of books. While the first two issues are being addressed directly, the third issue is more complicated. The following factors need to be considered:

- Budgets: despite increases in library budgets the inflation of journal subscription prices means that book budgets are affected, with ASSL subjects affected most. The Library continues to seek a proper balance between book buying and the journal subscriptions required for academic research.
- Library skills: students need to know how to use the available resources effectively, and it appears that ASSL users may not be as well-versed in library skills as other groups. The Library is addressing this by improving enquiry services, and is also seeking to encourage academic departments to promote the importance of information literacy when planning and delivering courses.
- Communication: the Library wants to improve communication in all directions to identify problem areas. This includes encouraging more student feedback, and encouraging academic staff to communicate the needs of their student groups when planning course reading for the year.

JED agreed that academics must involve the Library in planning course reading lists, though practical and administrative issues in departments around staff teaching arrangements and timetabling can make this difficult. CG stated that her report will be discussed at a senior level; administrative and planning issues ought to be taken into account if these are a cause of problems in the Library's support for teaching and learning.

## 6. Library and Information Resources Provision Strategy

CG reported that the Library is beginning work on a new resources strategy now that the existing strategy period (2005-2009) is drawing towards its final year. A variety of information gathering methods will be employed and students will be consulted once a provisional set of main aims has been developed.

## 7. Refurbishment plans

PK reported on behalf of MW. The Library buildings strategy has two parts:

- project to create a new library (Libris project) which will take some years to deliver
- rolling programme of refurbishments to existing branch libraries.

The current refurbishments are more or less on course: the fully refurbished spaces of the Medical Library are due to open after Christmas, the reopening of the ground floor of the ASSL may be delayed slightly, but is still expected early in the new term.

Refurbishment of the Education Library will begin after Christmas, and should be completed by the summer. Refurbishment of the Chemistry Library is in planning stages; the Physics library may be refurbished after Chemistry. The current refurbishment of the Social Medicine building will have some impact on the Social Medicine Library.

JED asked if there were any images available that could be displayed to give library users some idea of what the refurbished ASSL would look like. PK responded that those received so far were not good enough, but that MW was seeking better images from the architects.

CG reported that complaints so far had been mainly about noise, especially drilling, at certain times of the day. JED suggested that students might be advised to find their own solutions to this, such as the use of personal music players.

## 8. Libris

PK reported on the Libris project. The invitation of expressions of interest from architects (the invitation was published in the Official Journal of the European Union) had provided around 140 expressions of interest. A long list of 8 firms was created, which has now been reduced to 4 firms with very good track records. The final choice is likely to be made in the new year, with the completion date for the building expected to be 2012 at the earliest. Tobin Webb represents students on the project board.

## 9. AoB

JED asked if there were any plans relating to Library services at Langford in the light of other developments on the campus. PK responded that the Library operates the Veterinary Sciences branch library there, and the Library Management Team had no plans for major changes to the service provided through this branch.

CR asked if there were any plans to provide vending machines for computer consumables in the refurbished branches. SH responded that this had been considered, and had not been completely ruled out as an option for the future, but that items such as memory sticks would, in the near future, be sold at library counters