

## **Planning Our Future**

### **Consultation response from CILIP in Scotland**

1. CILIP in Scotland (CILIPS)<sup>i</sup> welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposals. CILIPS is the Scottish arm of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), the leading professional body for librarians, information specialists and knowledge managers.
2. CILIPS recognises and understands the very difficult choices being faced by Argyll and Bute Council as a result of significant financial pressure but is extremely concerned by the proposals being considered for library services in the region. These include:
  - a) Removal of school librarians in secondary schools (10 FTE)
  - b) Withdrawal of the mobile library service (3.5 FTE)
  - c) A reduction in library management costs (1 FTE)
3. The proposal to remove all school librarian posts runs counter to current national initiatives aiming to support and enhance literacy and will inevitably lead to a poorer overall educational experience for pupils. A body of impact studies highlight the contribution of school librarians to improved attainment and achievement.<sup>ii</sup>
4. CILIPS maintains that school libraries are valuable for their ability to support teaching and learning and should be the central resource of the school, open every day and staffed by a professionally trained librarian. We therefore urge you to reconsider ending professionally staffed school library provision in Argyll and Bute.
5. Argyll and Bute is predominantly made up of small, geographically isolated, rural communities. The population dispersion and island locations of this highly rural community create special challenges in library service delivery. For some, under these proposals, library services could be a ferry journey away.
6. CILIPS understands that the isle of Mull is served by a mobile library service and its withdrawal would leave no library service on the island. There is no indication how the impact of removal of mobile library services will be mitigated for those who are frail, elderly or not capable of independent travel to a mainland library location.

7. The Scottish Government's own research<sup>iii</sup> cites the fact that almost three quarters of adults participate in cultural activity, the most popular being reading for pleasure. However, CILIPS contends that the cultural aspect of a public library service is only one facet of their contribution to community and individual wellbeing. Professionally run library services support local communities in accessing information and informal learning opportunities, promote active citizenship and are key partners in realising the Scottish Government's ambitions for digital participation.<sup>iv</sup>
8. CILIPS therefore urges you to reconsider the proposals in relation to cutting library services in the region and provide more detail on how the suggested cuts will be mitigated under the current proposals.

---

<sup>i</sup> [www.cilips.org.uk](http://www.cilips.org.uk)

<sup>ii</sup> [http://scottishlibraries.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/SLIC\\_RGU\\_Impact\\_of\\_School\\_Libraries\\_2013.pdf](http://scottishlibraries.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/SLIC_RGU_Impact_of_School_Libraries_2013.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/16002>

<sup>iv</sup> [www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/04/6821/0](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/04/6821/0)