

CILIP in Scotland
E mailed response to Edinburgh City Council Budget Proposals 2016-2020

Dear Sir/Madam

The following is an initial response from the Chartered Institute of Library Professionals in Scotland (CILIPS) to budget saving option - CF/ST8 (Redesign of library service) in the document 'Briefing – Revenue and Capital Budget Framework 2016/20 – Transformation Programme proposals'.

Firstly, thank you for your reply (sent by Hannah King on 16th December) and for the clarification about the above proposal and in particular the rationalisation process that may see some libraries 'run by local communities'.

We particularly welcome the fact that "engagement with staff, the community, unions and other stakeholders and partners would be undertaken as part of the library review and redesign process in light of the budget decisions taken early next year".

We would like to ask that as the professional body for library and information professionals we are seen as one of the stakeholders and that you please seek our views on any future review or redesign of the library service.

In the meantime we would please like to refer you to the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) policy on the use of volunteers to substitute the roles of paid staff in libraries and ask that this is taken into account during the initial consultation:

"CILIP believes that society benefits from the contribution that trained and skilled library, information and knowledge workers make to developing and delivering services. We do not believe that volunteers should undertake core service delivery or be asked to replace the specialised roles of staff who work in libraries.

Volunteers have long supported and provided highly valuable additional support, working alongside qualified and paid staff, and they should be acknowledged and valued for this role. They should also be given appropriate role descriptions, training and management.

CILIP is opposed to job substitution where paid professional and support roles are directly replaced with either volunteers or untrained administrative posts to save money. This applies to all library and information services in every sector.

If this happens services will suffer and will be unsustainable. What remains would be a library service unable to serve the community comprehensively, support people's information needs or provide everyone with the opportunity for learning and development.

CILIP will not assist in recruiting or training volunteers who will be used to substitute the role of qualified, trained and paid library and information workers.

We acknowledge the difficult times that we live in, but now more than ever, high quality information services are vital to people's lives, and local communities, learners, workers and businesses need the support of a trained and skilled workforce to thrive."

We would also ask that you refer to the recent report from the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC), the independent advisory body to the Scottish Government on library and information services, entitled 'Evidence on the use of volunteers in libraries and on volunteer-run libraries'. This report concludes:

"that while there are useful roles for volunteers to play within libraries, to supplement and support services being offered, volunteer-run libraries without professional inputs or links to the public library service are not the preferred option" and this conclusion is fully endorsed by CILIPS.

The full CILIP policy can be viewed [here](#).

The SLIC Report can be viewed [here](#).

Many thanks for your time and you are welcome to contact us anytime via admin@cilips.org.uk to discuss any of the above further.

Regards

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