

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland Consultation Response to Falkirk Council Savings Options 2015-18

1. CILIP in Scotland (CILIPS)ⁱ is the Scottish arm of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. CILIP is the leading professional body for librarians, information specialists and knowledge managers. Many of our members work within local authorities.
2. We have recently developed an advocacy strategy for school librariansⁱⁱ supporting and highlighting the importance of these services. We therefore welcome the opportunity to comment on the options contained in the Council's consultation document which proposes to reduce the School Library Service (SLS) by £325,000 by "reorganising our current provision and resources we could provide a decentralised service within each of our secondary schools which would also serve all cluster schools."
3. The proposal advances the loss of ten FTE posts while suggesting that services can be maintained in a decentralised model. However, we find it difficult to envisage how this can be achieved without detriment to current service levels. We believe some more detail on exactly how services are to be reorganised would be helpful here.
4. CILIPS recognises that Falkirk Council is facing difficult choices regarding where to reduce spending on services as a result of significant financial pressures. However, CILIPS maintains that SLS expertise are key factors in the improved delivery of curriculum outcomes, attainment of the goals of education, promotion of literacy and reading, information literacy and technology use and should be retained.
5. The Curriculum for Excellenceⁱⁱⁱ requires resources to be readily available, accessible, diverse in range, age appropriate and stimulating in context. The SLS provides expert support for curriculum development and effectively shares 120,000 high quality resources with family centres, nurseries, primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, home educators, foster parents, student and probationer teachers, Speech & Language professionals, health professionals, Community Education workers, staff and students at Forth Valley College.
6. CILIPS holds that the concept of 'literacy across the curriculum' within CfE is best supported by access to information in a wide range of formats, and with the support of trained information professionals. The SLS is a key player and

partner in the delivery of the Falkirk Council's Literacy Strategy and active literacy.

7. CILIPS contends that this pool of expertise and resources needs to be safeguarded from closure because it is a cost effective method of developing, extending and exploiting the material available to educational establishments across the authority.
8. The SLS in Falkirk underpins the objectives contained within Scottish Government policies for a smarter Scotland^{iv}, the Literacy Action Plan^v and Scotland's Digital Future^{vi} by providing professional support in preparing children for the challenges of life in the 21st century in areas such as literacy, internet safety, information and digital literacy, and encouraging reading for pleasure. The service:
 - Manages Bookbug within Falkirk Council, this includes promoting the Bookbug programme and proactively delivering the message of the importance of sharing books with babies and young children;
 - Promotes reading for enjoyment, e.g. Learning to Love Books' sessions with pupils, RED Book Award, an added value offer to support the Scottish Children's Book Award, leading on national initiatives within the Council – Book Week Scotland, Storytelling Festival, National Poetry Day, World Book Day - enabling author visits to nurseries and schools;
 - Delivers storytelling and information literacy sessions with nursery and primary school children;
 - Works with hard to reach families as well as looked after and accommodated children & young people, young offenders in partnership with Community Learning & Development, Social Work Services and the Polmont Young Offenders Institute.
9. CILIPS hopes that Falkirk Council will be mindful of research which highlights that school libraries impact positively on educational attainment, successful learning outcomes and positive attitudes to learning.^{vii}
10. In conclusion, CILIPS believes that school libraries are unique in 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.

ⁱ <http://www.cilips.org.uk/>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.cilips.org.uk/storage/schoollibrarianadvocacystrategyv3.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/>

^{iv} <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/Strategic-Objectives/smarter>

^v <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum/ACE/Literacy3>

^{vi} <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Economy/digital/Digital-Dialogue/ExploringDigitalDialogue>

^{vii} http://www.scottishlibraries.org/storage/sectors/schools/SLIC_RGU_Impact_of_School_Libraries_2013.pdf