

**The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland  
Consultation Response to North Lanarkshire Council Savings Options 2013-14 to 2015-16  
Learning and Leisure Services**

1. CILIP in Scotland (CILIPS)<sup>i</sup> 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 are currently promoting the ‘shoutabout’<sup>ii</sup> campaign, emphasising the importance of professionally staffed school libraries and education resource services. CILIPS therefore welcomes the opportunity to comment on the school library options contained in the Council’s consultation document<sup>iii</sup> which proposes the cessation of the Education Resource Service (ERS) (L&L110) and a review of school based librarians (L&L72). We note these proposals with concern.
3. CILIPS recognises that North Lanarkshire Council is facing difficult choices regarding where to reduce spending on services as a result of significant financial pressures. However, CILIPS maintains that school librarians and educational resource service 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.
4. The Curriculum for Excellence<sup>iv</sup> requires resources to be readily available, accessible, diverse in range, age appropriate and stimulating in context. The ERS provides expert support for curriculum development across the authority for nurseries, 125 primary schools, 24 secondary schools, 11 special schools, as well as a professional development resource collection for teaching staff. It offers a central resource of effectively managed materials, including books, artefacts, story bags, DVDs and items for children with additional support needs which are continually evaluated, revised and developed.
5. 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 a trained information professional.
6. CILIPS contends that the ERS 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. The published performance reports for customer satisfaction with the ERS supports this. During 2010/11 the service:

- supported over 121,241 successful learning transactions by pupils, representing a 68% increase on the previous year; and
  - was used by 98% of primary schools and 83% of secondary schools who borrowed resources <sup>v</sup>
7. The ERS underpins the objectives contained within Scottish Government policies for a smarter Scotland<sup>vi</sup>, the Literacy Action Plan 2010<sup>vii</sup> and Scotland's Digital Future<sup>viii</sup> by providing professional support in preparing children for the challenges of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in areas such as internet safety, information and digital literacy, and encouraging reading for pleasure. We therefore urge North Lanarkshire Council to consider alternatives to closure.
8. The proposal to conduct a review of school based librarians is short on detail about what that review will entail. CILIPS therefore hopes that North Lanarkshire Council will be mindful of research which highlights the link between educational attainment and school library use and that the impact is strongest where libraries are professionally staffed, well resourced and with a good relationship with teaching staff.<sup>ix</sup>
9. 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.

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<sup>i</sup> <http://www.cilips.org.uk/>

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/shout-about/pages/default.aspx>

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=8746&p=0>

<sup>iv</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum/ACE>

<sup>v</sup> Library and Information Service Performance Report 2010-2011 North Lanarkshire Council

<sup>vi</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/Strategic-Objectives/smarter>

<sup>vii</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/10/27084039/0>

<sup>viii</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/981/0114237.pdf>

<sup>ix</sup> <http://www4.rgu.ac.uk/files/ACF1C8D.pdf>