



## **Locality Library Panels Constitution**

### **1. Name**

1.1. The name of this committee is the \_\_\_\_\_ Locality Library Panel

### **2. Aims and Objectives**

2.1. The objectives of the \_\_\_\_\_ Locality Library Panel are to provide;

2.1.1. A focus for local service delivery by Dudley Libraries, within the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services, and,

2.1.2. A mechanism to involve Councillors users and community users in the running of the library service.

2.2. The business of the Panel shall concern itself with strategic and general operational issues.

### **3. Terms of Reference**

3.1. The meetings of the Panel shall be conducted in public (please refer to 7.2 for further clarification), with the exception of specific agenda items when the public will be excluded from the relevant part of the meeting. Items deemed appropriate for public exclusion will be agreed by the Chairman of the Panel in consultation with the Locality Manager in accordance with current Council committee practice for public exclusions. Meetings will be publicised not less than 14 days in advance.

3.2. The Panel can discuss and shall be consulted on any matters affecting the operational and strategic management of library services under the control of the Council's provision of a statutory library service within the \_\_\_\_\_ Area.

3.3. The Panel has the power to make recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet Member Libraries and the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services.

3.4. Within the consultative framework the Panel will consider:

3.4.1. The planning and development of library events and activities programmes.

- 3.4.2. The preparation of the \_\_\_\_\_ Locality Library Plan and Review of Plan on a quarterly basis.
- 3.4.3. Information on performance relating to the \_\_\_\_\_ Locality, including improvement of the service and good practice.
- 3.4.4. Ideas for service improvement, development and change.
- 3.4.5. The development and monitoring of user consultation for purchase of library stock.
- 3.4.6. Current policies and the scope for development including possible local variations.

#### **4. Membership**

- 4.1. The Locality Library Panels will consist of 5 library users – made up of at least 1 representative from a youth group or a library member under 18, 1 representative from a library reading or writing group, 3 general library user representatives including minority and/or disability representatives and 5 Councillor representatives. Nominations and selections for the Panel members are determined as follows;
  - 4.1.1. **Library Users**
  - 4.1.2. To be eligible for election and continued membership of the Panel the Library user representatives must be current members of Dudley Libraries or use the library for a service or function. Library User representatives must not be employees of Dudley MBC or Councillors and shall not be the subject of a criminal conviction, which has not been spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. All disclosures of such convictions must be made to the Locality Manager who will treat these in confidence and will provide advice on queries relating to the definition of 'spent' convictions.
  - 4.1.3. The election process for Library User representatives must be fair and democratic. The procedure for the election of library representatives will be by election, with each representative standing for 3 years. In order to achieve a rolling programme the first panel members will draw lots to decide if they will stand for 1, 2 or 3 years for their first term.
  - 4.1.4. Library User representatives will retire upon completion of their term of office which will be a maximum of 3 years. A representative can stand for re-election if they so wish. If a representative wishes to retire before the end of their term of office they must make this known to the panel in writing so that a replacement representative can be elected. The replacement representative will serve on the Panel for the remainder of the original representative's term.
  - 4.1.5. All retiring Library User representatives will continue to hold Office until the outcome of the elections is announced prior to the first recognised meeting of the year.
  - 4.1.6. In the event that a Library User representative does not attend three consecutive Locality Library Panel meetings without acceptable apologies, the representative

will be deemed to have vacated their position, and elections will be held in accordance with the election procedure. The replacement representative will serve on the Panel for the remainder of the original representative's term.

- 4.1.7. The Panel may invite expert members to contribute to the work of the Panel when appropriate. The expert can contribute to the debate, but will not have the right to vote.

#### 4.2. **Councillors**

- 4.2.1. The Councillor members of the Panel will be nominated by the \_\_\_\_\_ Area Committee Chairman based on the political proportional representation of that Committee.
- 4.2.2. Councillors will serve for one year provided that they continue to be in office for the whole of that period.
- 4.2.3. Should a Councillor fail to attend two consecutive meetings without acceptable apologies, they will be referred to the Group Leader to take appropriate action.

### 5. **Equal Opportunities**

- 5.1. The Panel shall operate in compliance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and will operate fairly and without discrimination against any person or persons due to their age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religious beliefs, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, political activities, social class or spent convictions.

### 6. **Meetings**

- 6.1. **Frequency - The \_\_\_\_\_ Locality Library Panel will meet on a quarterly basis.** The first recognised meeting of the year will be in \_\_\_\_\_. All Panel meetings will be held in public and advertised accordingly (Please refer to 3.1 and 6.8).
- 6.2. **Quorum** – To be quorate 5 members of the Panel must be in attendance, including at least 2 Councillors and 2 Library User Representatives. If at any time during a meeting the numbers fall below this minimum, then proceedings may continue at the Chairman's discretion, but any recommendations must be postponed to the next meeting of the Panel. An inquorate meeting may proceed at the discretion of the Chairman, but any recommendations must be postponed to the next meeting of the Panel.
- 6.3. **Election of Chair and Vice Chair** – The Panel shall elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman from its membership at the first meeting of each municipal year.
- 6.4. **Items for the Agenda** – The agenda for Panel meetings should be sent out to members of the Panel 14 days prior to the meeting. Therefore, any items for the Panel meeting agenda should be submitted by members of the Panel to the Locality Manager no less than 21 days prior to the meeting. The Chairman does have the discretion to allow exceptions to this in certain circumstances in

consultation with the Locality Manager.

- 6.5. **Agendas and Meetings** – All agendas and approved minutes are public documents (with the exception of those deemed for public exclusion) and shall be available at Locality Libraries and on the Library pages of the Internet. The Locality Manager is responsible for all administrative arrangements relating to the Panel meetings. Minutes of each meeting will be authorised for release by the Chairman (or Vice Chairman in his/her absence) for circulation with the agenda for approval at the next meeting.

## 7. Attendance

- 7.1. **Staff** - All meetings will be attended by the Locality Manager or his/her appointed deputy together with specialist officers and members of the Library Services Management Team as required and requested.
- 7.2. **Public** – Members of the public are welcome to attend the Panel meetings as observers only, (see 3.1). Limits to the numbers attending for health and safety grounds will be observed, with admittance being based on a first come first served basis. Members of the public are unable to participate in the discussion or vote on any issues discussed. A 20 minute open session will be conducted at the end of the meeting for questions or points from the floor to be addressed to the Panel for noting and reporting back through either letter to the enquirer or at a future meeting.
- 7.3. **Annual Reports** – An annual report will be drafted by the Locality Manager in consultation with the Chairman. The Chairman will then submit the annual report to the Cabinet Member for Libraries before the end of May in each year. Once accepted and approved the report will be made available to all library users.
- 7.4. **Rules of Debate** – Each Panel member will have one vote each and in the case of no majority then the person presiding over the meeting as Chairman will have a second or casting vote.
- 7.5. **Travel Expenses** – travel expenses will be paid to the Library User representatives on submission of a standard claim form to the Locality Manager. The payment shall be available in cash to be paid direct to the claimant.

## 8. Code of Conduct

- 8.1. The following are general points of conduct required by all members of the Panel;
- 8.2. Panel members shall not raise individual cases except in an anonymous form to illustrate a point under discussion.
- 8.3. At all times all Panel members shall try to reflect the views of all library users rather than their own personal views or views of particular groups.
- 8.4. Panel members shall respect the full confidentiality of all matters raised in the non-public sessions of the Locality Library Panel (see paragraph 3.1). In addition members of the Panel shall not use their positions to try to obtain information or favourable treatment for either themselves or their families and friends. Failure to

comply with these conditions can lead to suspension or removal from the Panel.

- 8.5. Suspension or removal of a member from the Panel will be at the discretion of the Panel following a majority vote.
- 8.6. Councillor representatives of the Locality Library Forum are required to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct and library user representatives are required to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in any matter under discussion. (A Locality Library Forum member has a personal interest in a matter where the business under discussion affects the well-being or financial position of them, members of their family or people they have a close association with. A member's personal interest is also prejudicial if the matter under discussion affects their financial position (or the financial position of those they have a close association with) and if a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard their personal interest to be so significant that it is likely to prejudice their judgment.)

## **9. Amendments to the Constitution**

- 9.1. All proposed alterations shall be given to the Locality Manager in writing for consideration by all 5 Locality Library Panels borough wide.
- 9.2. Any amendment to this Constitution shall require approval by a majority vote from the five Locality Library Panels.