

MINUTES OF B.L.A.S.T USER FORUM
Meeting Held at Blakenall Library
Blakenall Village Centre
On Saturday 16th January 2010 at 11am

Present

Alison Ball AB
Vera Ball VB
Patsy Breakspear PB
Margaret Cartwright MC
Dennis Latham DL
Dina Tepin DT
Stuart Williams SW

Apologies

Caroline Crolley CC
Simon Pugh SP
Max Vincent MV

Dina welcomed all to the meeting

RESIGNATION

Action DT

Dina has received a resignation from the Forum. Max Vincent is unable to participate with the group due to personal circumstances. Dina will send a letter of thanks for all his contribution to the group and wish him well.

GRANTS

Action DT

Margaret has had confirmation of the grant for £3474 from Grass roots. This will arrive in the next few days and Dina will be able to pay the outstanding invoices she has for the hire of rooms in the church hall for the over 50's and the toddler groups to enable them to keep running during the refurbishment of the library and purchase of the Cinema equipment.

It was suggested that we could invite Mike Gaffney who is an information officer at the Council to the next meeting as he has experience of sourcing funding and could perhaps suggest some other grants we could apply for.

IDEAS FOR POSSIBLE FUNDING

Action DT SP

LNP pledges, we need to put forward a request for funding from the LNP. We may be able to put a case forward for the Raise awareness of parenting pledge. Dina will talk to the early year's librarian and ask if she can set up courses that could be run in the library, we may be able to utilize and possible link with the current toddler group or any other relevant organisation such as midwives etc. Another section we may be able to access could be helping immigrants etc by possible looking at purchasing books in other languages.

Dina has viewed the link Stuart sent about an electronic book reader and associated equipment that would help partially sighted people read books or letters etc. All the group agreed this was a good suggestion and Dina will liaise with Simon and follow this up. Stuart suggested to get the reader stand as well as this would enable the reader to be free standing.

REFURBISHMENT PROGRESS

Action DT

Dina informed us that the work has been progressing although she is only allowed to view from a safe distance. The bad weather has not held up the workers but there has been a slight delay in the deliveries that were expected putting the project slightly behind schedule, although they are still giving a completion expected date of end of July 2010.

Dina has been in consultation about interior colour schemes etc and we all agreed a fairly neutral / pastel scheme would be best as it will not date so quickly and will make future maintenance easier. Stuart suggested a look at the local Cannock cinema for ideas as they have just been refurbished. Dina will ask the architect to put some designs and colour ideas on disk for us to be able to view.

As the interior of the theatre section of the library was being removed for re development it was found that the original block paving that runs throughout the library is also in the theatre. This will be saved.

There is a site meeting next Thursday, Dina informed us that up to now there have been no major problems or changes to the plans. Dina will speak to the site manager and try to arrange for Stuart to go and photograph progress at various stages of the development as this could be used to show the public the work that has gone in to the new library when it opens and also to keep the public interested in developments.

Dina will try and arrange a site visit for all the group later in the development when there are less health and safety issues. Details to follow

CURRENT LIBRARY SERVICES

Action DT

The Portacabin is working well although of course with present weather conditions it is very cold. Dina stated that they are at the moment reviewing the book selections available and working to ensure that the most popular reading groups are catered for and that there is a re stocking of these on a regular basis to give good choice for the reading public. The Portacabin is being frequented mostly by the elderly and young families. There have been a few problems with the small delivery van that brings in requests and changes of stock. The local community wardens are being very strict on the parking regulations and Dina is in touch with someone to try and get a slight relaxation on the rules to allow for deliveries. Stuart suggested a contact for Dina to try,

LIBRARY OPENING AND PROMOTION

Action All

The group need to think about the opening and who we can invite and what we can do to celebrate the event. There are no immediate funds for the opening. If anyone has contacts with famous people from Bloxwich can they bring info to the next meeting and we can decide who we would like to approach. Stuart suggested we have a stall at the Bloxwich Carnival to promote the library, Denis offered to man the stall and supply a hand cart that we could use. It was suggested that we could sell ex library books to boost funds. As Stuart is on the Carnival committee he will look in to getting an application form.

Stuart did offer to put a section on the Bloxidge Tallygraph about the library redevelopment and also to produce a booklet about the history of libraries in Bloxwich.

Everyone thought this was a good idea. Stuart asked Dina to produce a couple of short paragraphs to introduce the library redevelopment.

We need to start thinking about approaching groups who could use the theatre space for meetings etc, Denis stated that he has already approached WS3 and they could be interested.

We need to think about the refreshment area in the library and get tenders for this. Denis put forward a suggestion of someone who is already in the catering trade and runs a café in Bloxwich. Patsy suggested a preliminary 12 month contract with perhaps a 6 month probationary period in case there are any problems.

IDEAS FOR THE NEW LIBRARY

Action All

At future meetings the group will put forward ideas on what new developments could be included in the new library such as e books, second hand book shop etc. Can all members please think about this.

It was suggested that a wall in the library be left blank and used for children to design a mural, this could be in the library or even in the reading garden, and local schools could be invited to do displays and promotions.

Stuart suggested a Plasma screen that could be used to promote new books dvd's etc and also have a screen saver of a fish tank to reflect the tank that used to be in the library when it originally opened.

It was pointed out that it is very dark around the library at night and that might put people off attending evening events, as this could be a safety issue.

It was suggested we may need to review the planned lighting for the front of the building and possibly contact someone about street lighting, to make the library theatre a more inviting centre.

CONSTITUTION

Action DT

Dina circulated copies of the constitution for all to read and make any comments on. The following changes were suggested:

Aims point 5

Include Writers

Dina will amend and all members will sign at next meeting.

The Meeting closed at 13.00

Next meeting 13th February 2010 at Blakenall Library 2pm